



RICHARD MURPHY LEADERSHIP AWARD

Honoring the legacy of Richard Murphy, former Commissioner of Department of Youth Services and champion of the youth of New York City, we are pleased to announce the establishment of the Richard Murphy Leadership Award.

The Richard Murphy Leadership Award will be awarded annually to a person or persons who have made extraordinary accomplishments in the field of youth services, and who embody the intelligence, enthusiasm, and caring for the children of New York City that were exemplified by Richard Murphy.

RICHARD L. MURPHY

Richard Murphy was a social policy innovator and tireless advocate of young people, who served as Commissioner of the Department of Youth Services under Mayor David N. Dinkins. As Commissioner, Murphy greatly expanded the scope of the agency, creating YouthLine, a 24/7 emergency youth hot line, and creating the Beacon Centers which transformed schools into community centers, providing constructive engagement to youth and families in out-of-school time.



Murphy became engaged in youth issues in the late 1960s as a recent college graduate finding part-time work as a city social worker, but that was just the beginning. Upon learning that as many as 200,000 New York City students were skipping school each day, many of them getting into trouble, Murphy founded the Rheedlen Foundation, to help truants finish school. Murphy began winning trust and respect in Harlem by handing out day-old bread on the streets in the morning. On Fridays, he gave children a quarter to call him on a pay phone if they ran out of food over the weekend, all while wearing his trademark colorful bowtie. Now known as the Harlem Children's Zone, the organization serves over 12,000 youth and their families through a model that has been replicated nationally.

As a visionary leader in the field of youth development, Murphy worked with other nonprofit organizations, including Food Change, which, with his help, started the Food and Finance High School in Manhattan. Murphy also served as director of the Center for Youth Development and Policy Research (previously the Academy for Educational Development) in Washington DC and championed the concept of community youth mapping and the replication of community schools, focusing on building the capacity of local leaders to improve youth outcomes. Murphy cofounded the Neighborhood Family Services Coalition and founded iMapVentures.

Richard Murphy had an extraordinary impact on the youth of New York City and his friendship, mentorship, and support empowered the afterschool community to significantly improve children's lives.