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D.A. KATZ ANNOUNCES COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS CHIEF COLLEEN BABB AWARDED PRESTIGIOUS THOMAS E. DEWEY MEDAL FOR OUTSTANDING WORK

Queens District Attorney Melinda Katz announced that Colleen Babb, Executive Assistant District Attorney of the Community Partnerships Division, is the Queens County recipient of the seventeenth annual Thomas E. Dewey Medal.

The Thomas E. Dewey Medal is awarded each year by the Association of the Bar of the City of New York to an outstanding assistant district attorney in each of the City's five District Attorney's offices and in the Office of the City's Special Narcotics Prosecutor. Chief Babb accepted the award during a ceremony on Tuesday evening, December 14, 2021, which was attended by many of her colleagues.

District Attorney Katz said, "Colleen Babb has brought tremendous experience and vision to our Community Partnerships division. Under her leadership, Community Partnerships has played a significant, visible role in each of the diverse neighborhoods in Queens, participating in more than 800 public events, engaging more than 400 local leaders who currently serve on our community advisory councils, awarding nearly \$3.5 million dollars in grants to deserving partner programs this year to help our young people and sponsoring gun buyback events to take hundreds of dangerous firearms off our streets."

Chief Babb said, "As prosecutors, we have the burden to prove cases beyond a reasonable doubt and get convictions based on the evidence. However, we must understand that our Office's credibility in the community matters. Our communities are made up of our witnesses, our victims, our defendants, and prospective jurors. Looking back on my career, I realize that my years as a prosecutor were all part of the foundation to help usher in DA Katz' vision for the Office of the Queens District Attorney, one that is that focused on a community-based approach to prosecution. Because ultimately, it is not about how many people you can put away but how many people you can save. It is about how many young people you can reach, so that they do not see the inside of a courtroom. That is how you create public safety. I am honored to have received this award and congratulate all the honorees!"

With more than 25 years of criminal justice experience, Babb joined the Queens District Attorney's Office executive leadership team in January 2020, shortly after DA Katz took office. She has served as Queens Borough Chief of the New York City Law Department Office of Corporation Counsel and was previously Deputy Bureau Chief of the Early Case Assessment Bureau, Deputy Bureau Chief of Criminal Court Grand Jury, First Deputy Bureau Chief of Major Narcotics Investigations and Executive Assistant District Attorney of the School Advocacy Bureau with the Brooklyn District Attorney where she worked since 1994.

Also receiving this year's honors were Odalys C. Alonso of Bronx County, Susan Axelrod of New York County, Michele Molfetta of Richmond County, Kelli M. Muse of Kings County and Lisa Tompkins of Special Narcotics.

Among prosecutors in New York County, Thomas E. Dewey is remembered as having ushered in the era in which the District Attorney's office has been staffed by professional prosecutors chosen on merit rather than through political patronage. Dewey first came to the public's attention as a prosecutor in the 1930s, instituting successful criminal proceedings against gangsters, bootleggers and organized crime figures of the day. By 1937, Dewey was elected District Attorney of New York County, where he served one term before resigning to run for governor.

The Thomas E. Dewey Medal was first awarded on November 29, 2005.

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