

**Suffolk University Sawyer School of Management  
Masters in Public Administration Honors our Menino Scholar**

Perhaps you may not recognize her name, but you will certainly see her influence in hundreds of teens and adults who have been fortunate enough to know Patty McMahon. McMahon, Executive Director of the Mayor's Youth Council and Youthline for the city of Boston, is a first year MPA student. She also is this year's recipient of the prestigious Menino Scholarship.



Her current role as Executive Director of the Mayor's Youth Council and Youthline can be easily summed up with one word, "empowerment." The Mayor's Youth Council consists of 38 high school juniors and seniors who are directly involved in local, state and federal issues. These volunteers represent each of the neighborhoods of Boston and they meet with Mayor Menino on a regular basis to offer their concerns and suggestions on youth issues.

Since 1994, McMahon has brought the youth council to Washington D.C to meet with high ranking officials such as President Bill Clinton, Vice President Al Gore, Attorney General Janet Reno, Senators Edward Kennedy and John Kerry, Secretary of Education Richard W. Riley, U.S. Labor Secretary Alexis Herman, and more recently, with staff from President Bush's Council of Environmental Quality Control. Her passion is to facilitate leadership skills and to help youth develop perspectives on and positive solutions to public problems. "When young people have an active role in government, they see how they can get involve to make a difference, and may even consider government service as a career option." says McMahon. Her influence and impact extends beyond the borders of the Boston area as Boston Mayor Thomas Menino has shared the success of his youth council with other mayors. Over 100 cities have looked to McMahon for assistance in developing their own youth councils, including 7 international cities.

In 1996, McMahon established the Youthline program and it is still part of her current position. This peer listening line and online data base of youth resources is staffed by teens and helps to connect young people to job opportunities, health care resources, summer camps and more. In addition, their web site has online teen guides for issues ranging from college planning to teen consumer rights.

Her tireless work was recognized in 1995 when she was the recipient of a City of Boston Shattuck Award for outstanding public service. It's easy to see how this award found its way into McMahon's hands. In a graduate school recommendation letter for McMahon to Suffolk University, Mayor Menino wrote "I have seen first hand how she listens to teens, encourages them to achieve, and is able to facilitate communication between teens and adults. Patty has an extensive knowledge of how to get things done in City government based on experience, and is well known around City Hall for her endless energy, enthusiasm and new ideas."

Beyond her work with the young people, for over twenty years she served in various capacities on the executive board of the Cedar Grove Civic Association in Dorchester. "It is vitally important to be involved in your local community." McMahon stated, "We need to encourage neighbors to come together to be part of the solution."

How did McMahon end up at Suffolk? She recalled, "Many former youth council members were requesting letters of recommendation for graduate school"--perhaps another tell-tale sign of her success as a public leader. These letter requests prompted her to think about the value of an MPA in helping to shape her perspectives on her current work and future career.

In the words of Patty McMahon; "It's important to realize the difference between public and private management. Public managers need to consider a much broader variety of public perspectives and viewpoints. They must have a sense of social responsibility and passion for public service in order to meet the public's ever changing needs."

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To learn more about the Mayor's Youth Council visit: <http://www.bostonyouthzone.com/MYC>