

## A smile and a friendly chat can start the day off right for students and parents



A smile and a friendly word might seem like small gestures, but they can go a long way in starting the day off right for people young and old.

This is a philosophy that guides Nancy Scott Stanley in her work as a crossing guard and one which guided her to accept the Community Safety Award this past year from the Town of Aurora.

Ms. Scott Stanley, a former educator, was recognized for her work by the Town with the 2020 Community Safety Award, a part of Aurora's Community Recognition Awards program.

The Community Safety Award is presented to an individual or organization "dedicated to the promotion or support of an initiative that improves community safety," recognizing that "safer communities only happen when individuals take action to make a difference."

"Nancy not only looks to protect the safe arrival of students that pass her crosswalk before and after school, but she also ensures families and other members of the public are safe on the road," said Mayor Tom Mrakas, who presented the award virtually in light of the global pandemic. "Rain or shine, Nancy is on duty with a smile on her face. Nancy understands that families count on her to protect and look out for the best interests of their children. That is why she always looks to educate the public when she sees unsafe actions taking place.

"Nancy has made it her priority to get to know the families who cross her street daily. It has become a valuable part of their morning routine and it instills confidence in these families by showing how much she cares. The parents of younger children feel fortunate to have such a dedicated individual guiding their children to school and when their kids begin walking to school on their own, parents know they can trust Nancy will make it safe for them to do so."

"Nancy's continued efforts to go above and beyond ensuring the safety of all who cross her path make her a deserving recipient of this award."

Ms. Scott Stanley said she was "honored" to be selected for the award.

"It means a great deal to me," she said. "Over the years, I have become very good friends with our crossing guard. I simply began by coming to the corner to greet our students, parents and their dogs, and help them safely cross our busy street.

?I try to greet the students every day with a simple, ?Hello! How are you? Enjoy your day.' If our students and their families can feel safe and secure getting to and from school, they can become very happy souls. What a wonderful way to start the day! Through rain and snow, and wind and ice, it is so important that they can safely get to their destinations.?

By Brock WeirEditorLocal Journalism Initiative Reporter