

2019 Linda Lee Martens

## *Community Health Hero Award*

### **Mitch Incarnato**

“If we all help each other, the world and our community are automatically a better place.” This is how Mitch Incarnato describes his motivation to volunteer at eight organizations that help improve the lives of people, especially children, here in Island County. His peers describe him as generous, modest, and dedicated to the work he believes in.

Mitch is one of the newest volunteers at Island County’s Court Appointed Special Advocates program, and his compassion and commitment have not gone unnoticed. As a CASA volunteer, Mitch advocates for the best interest of children removed for their homes due to abuse or neglect. In order to do this, Mitch conducts an independent investigation of each child’s situation, and prepares reports to the court with recommendations focused on each child’s right to a safe and nurturing home. These reports are invaluable in helping our judges make well-informed decisions that significantly affect children’s lives.

Mitch clearly loves children. He is a counselor every year with Camp Erin – Children’s Bereavement Camp, where he supports 5-6 year olds who have suffered a loss in their lives and benefit from being with peers and counselors that understand them. He has volunteered with Equestrian Crossings, an organization for children and adults with special needs get the opportunity to ride horses, and currently works regularly with one man in a wheelchair to ride. Mitch volunteers with Gifts From the Heart Food Bank in Coupeville, Sound Water Stewards, the Langley Whale Center, Hearts and Hammers, and Hospice.

Mitch wrote of his seven years of work with hospice: “I am honored to be with these people and help them through their process. So many of our elderly are alone.” It is reminiscent of the legacy of Linda Lee Martens, who believed it was a privilege to serve. For his long-time, and ongoing service to the children and adults of Island County, the Island County Board of Health and Community Health Advisory Board are pleased to present Mitch Incarnato with the 2019 Linda Lee Martens Community Health Hero Award.