

Chris Collins Receives 2024 Isaiah Thomas Award

December 12, 2023 | In The News

Worcester Telegram & Gazette- Nov 19, 2023

WORCESTER — What do several former newspaper publishers, numerous company presidents, philanthropists, Worcester's first city manager, a former Worcester bishop who later became a cardinal and the man behind Spag's "Home of Spag-tacular Values" have in common?

They all have the distinction of having been honored with the Isaiah Thomas Award, which abruptly ended in 2017. But, after a six-year hiatus, the prestigious tradition is about to start up again.

Mark W. Fuller, a 2014 recipient of the Isaiah Thomas Award, is part of an effort to bring the prestigious honor back into the fold.

In fact, three generations of Fuller men have won the distinction, starting with Mark's great-great-uncle George F. Fuller, in 1956, and Mark's father, Russell E. Fuller, in 2002.

"I consider this to be a civic duty-type of an award that goes to individuals or couples who have demonstrated a love for the Worcester community and who have provided leadership, their own personal time, their own talent or expertise and, without a doubt, also their own personal finances," Fuller said.

J. Christopher Collins, of counsel at Mirick O'Connell, will be the recipient of the 2024 Isaiah Thomas Award. He will be recognized for serving on numerous boards for nonprofits in Worcester and receiving numerous accolades from the Central Massachusetts Housing Alliance, the March of Dimes, the Boy Scouts of America, the United Way and the Nativity School.

Collins will be honored on April 5 at Mechanics Hall. The 7 p.m. program



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and dinner will follow a 6 p.m. cocktail hour.

“It will be quite the gala,” Fuller said. “And it’s really going to be a return to the former structure.”