

## The Long Island Board of REALTORS® Honors Laura Copersino as the 2020 REALTOR® Spirit Award Recipient



*By Christina DeFalco-Romano*  
*Public Relations & Communications Programs Manager*



**Laura Copersino**

The Long Island Board of REALTORS® (LIBOR) has named Laura Copersino as its 2020 REALTOR® Spirit Award recipient. The REALTOR® Spirit Award recognizes a remarkable member who has made an incredible impact on their community through selfless and dedicated

volunteer work. In addition, LIBOR gifts the organization through which the honoree volunteers time and talents a \$5,000 donation.

This year's recipient is an extraordinary example of how REALTORS® strengthen communities by following their hearts and helping those in need.

On December 12, 2018, Laura's life was forever changed when her son Daniel passed away from an undetected heart condition at the age of 27. Daniel had just recently celebrated his third anniversary of sobriety. In those three years, he led an active and impactful life, passionately helping to guide others struggling with addiction on the path to living a clean, sober life.

The outpouring of life-changing stories from those who Daniel had known and helped, inspired Laura to establish the Daniel Copersino Foundation in his memory in January 2019. The Foundation provides funding to support charitable substance abuse programs, provides grants for individual

treatment and brings substance abuse awareness to the community.

Laura spearheaded several projects in 2019 with the assistance of the Foundation's Board of Directors including a \$17,000 contribution to the treatment scholarship program at St. Christopher's Inn treatment facility. Through this scholarship program, many men in need of treatment were provided with grants enabling them to get the help they so desperately needed to help change their lives.

In November 2019, the Foundation held the Whitestone Substance Abuse Awareness and Education Fair at a local school with a dozen rehab and detox facilities present to share information and help both those struggling with addiction and their loved ones. The event helped shed light on the opioid epidemic in the community and highlighted treatment facilities for those seeking recovery.

Most recently, the Foundation has adapted their efforts to meet the changing needs of the community during the COVID-19 pandemic. With restrictions on public gatherings, the foundation offered virtual support and assistance for those seeking in-person meetings and support groups.

Through the Foundation, many lives have been touched, received treatment and changed. It can even be said that lives have been saved. Not only the individuals battling with addiction, but their family members and loved ones that have received support

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## President's Message

By Matthew Arnold  
LIBOR President

Wow, what a year this has been! As we approach the end of 2020, I'd like to reflect on the many achievements that this extraordinary year has brought and acknowledge the amazing staff and our membership as a whole, who have made all of our accomplishments possible.

Serving as President this year has given me an inside view of the inner workings of our association, and the support we receive from our staff, whose knowledge and expertise are unsurpassable. It was more apparent than ever during these turbulent and challenging times, that the best interest of our members is the top priority of staff.

Throughout the past year, each department adapted to meet the needs of our members in all areas of advocacy, professionalism and education.

Our Education and Communication departments collaborated to bring insightful webinars, discount education courses and digital marketing tools to our members. They assiduously kept members up to date with information and programs on current required materials and access to updated resources on fair housing.

The Communications department also worked hard to strengthen our community relationships by aiding organizations such as the Long Island Coalition for the Homeless and City and Island Harvest, who have been responding to our neighbors in need during this unprecedented crisis.

Our Government Affairs department remained committed to advocacy on behalf of our members at the local, state and national levels.

Leading our superb staff is CEO Tessa Hultz, whose leadership, intelligence and innovative thinking kept our association moving forward when many other businesses and organizations were shutting down. I am so grateful for Tessa's guidance in ensuring our association's success for the future.

Thank you for allowing me to serve as your President in what has proven to be quite a year. I am proud of how we joined together to face the challenges brought upon us. It was an honor to serve you and I wish you all continued health and prosperity. Make 2021 a great year! ●

## REALTOR® Spirit Award Recipient

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and guidance as well.

"I am so proud to recognize Laura Copersino as this year's REALTOR® Spirit Award recipient. In honoring Daniel's memory, passion and devotion, Laura has made it her mission to help others change their lives for the better," said LIBOR President Matthew Arnold. "Her compassion and determination to help those in need in our community, is the embodiment of the REALTOR® Spirit Award."



The REALTOR® Spirit Award was created in 2006 and has since recognized more than 50 local REALTORS® for their outstanding commitment to community service. REALTOR® Spirit Award charities have received more than \$60,000 in donations. In addition, each winner receives local publicity, which generates additional donations and inspires new volunteers to get involved and make their communities a better place to live. ●

# Government Affairs Year in Review

By Bo Patten

Vice President of Government Affairs

2020 threw us a curve ball, but like you, we adapted our business model and have shifted our approach to advocacy at all levels of government on behalf of our members.

Right at the end of 2019, Nassau County approved much needed legislation on cooperative housing thanks to the help of many of our members and staff who had been lobbying for this. Earlier this year, our BOD approved policy positions on several topics important to our industry. In addition to the State and Federal elections, there were two local special elections of interest in our jurisdiction.

In Queens, Councilman Donovan Richards joined a crowded field to run for Queens Borough President. In Suffolk County, Jason Richberg ran to replace Presiding Officer DuWayne Gregory, who left the County Legislature to become a Babylon Councilmember. In both races, a group of LIBOR members met with the candidates, vetted them with questions important to our industry, and chose to support both Mr. Richberg and Councilman Richards. We were thrilled that both won and have maintained an open door with our department on issues important to our members.

Speaking of Queens, this year our department grew and added Mr. Geoffrey Mock to the team! Geoffrey represents LIBOR as the Government Affairs Director for Queens. Upon joining LIBOR, he went quickly to work networking and growing our connections by making introductions with several New York City Councilmembers from Queens.

Marlo Dilts continues to represent us in Nassau and Suffolk Counties. This year we had our first local Advocacy Day in Nassau and Suffolk. Modeled after NAR's Mid-Year and NYSAR's Lobby Day, this afforded us the opportunity to engage several of our members with members from both County Legislatures. We also had a great Coffee with the Candidates running for U.S. House of Representatives from New York's 2nd District.

We utilized NAR's Grant program for several place-making projects that will show the community that



REALTOR® means more than just selling or buying houses. In Queens and Huntington, LIBOR was able to provide hand sanitizing stations in parks and other public areas to help our fellow residents do everything they can to stay healthy and safe. In Suffolk County, we are continuing to finalize a project that would install bicycle repair stations at various trailheads throughout the county.

2021 is going to be another big year for us. Just when you think election season is over, local elections will happen all over Queens and Long Island. We look forward to continuing to involve our membership in the process of candidate vetting next year.

We can't wait to see you soon both virtually and in person. May the rest of your 2020 be well and stay healthy! ●

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### LIBOR Supports REALTOR® Education

LIBOR recently contributed \$5,000 to the NYS Real Estate Education Foundation (NYSREEF), in support of REALTOR® education. The mission of the Foundation is to foster greater knowledge and professionalism among REALTORS® by providing scholarships for high-level, national designation courses, thereby enhancing the public's real estate transaction experience.

If interested in participating in national designation courses, members are encouraged to fill out the scholarship application for consideration. Visit [nysreef.org](http://nysreef.org) for all application and deadline information.

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