

Rainbow from page A1

Recognition breakfast put on by the Farmington/Farmington Hills Multicultural/Multicultural Community Council. The capacity crowd sat at tables covered with a prism of color - in napkins, placemats and confetti stars. Seventy-one school and community members received certificates while Samir Haddad and Bev Papat - both longtime members of the community council's steering committee - were presented with the council's Chairpersons' Awards.

"I am just blown away by this," Granholm said to the audience in Shannon Hall. "I wish we could clone you, all and bring you to other communities, because this is really an amazing thing. A very amazing thing, for a bedroom, suburban community to be able to come together and make a statement about how important multiculturalism is."

Haddad, director of bilingual state and federal projects for Farmington Public Schools, was instrumental in last year's first "Many Faces, One Future - Our Community's Heritage Festival." Papat, director of Farmington Community Libraries, was honored for serving in numerous capacities. She chaired a new committee which sponsored a book discussion group for the first Heritage Week last fall. Her staff are sponsoring an annual "Carousel of Cultures" program for children.

A ways to go

During her passionate keynote, Granholm saluted the awardees and their efforts to strive toward the legacy left by Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. to "build a better world" for all people.

"Just a week ago... we celebrated Dr. King's birthday," Granholm said. "And the legacy he left us certainly appears in the faces of those you will be honoring this morning."

"And if Dr. King were here today he would certainly look out at this room and say 'We have so much to be proud of. You've come so far.' I think he'd be so proud, proud of the people you are honoring this morning. And I know I am preaching to the choir a little bit. But I do think that Dr. King would hold up a mirror to our country, and say, 'While we have come a long way, we still have a long way to go.'"

Granholm illustrated that point, bringing up recent American hate crimes, such as the dragging dead of African-American James Byrd; the beating murder of a gay man, Matthew Sheppard; a shooting at a Los Angeles day care center "because they (children) were Jewish." (She said the suspect in the California shooting spree was sentenced earlier this week.)

Extraordinary

"As I think about these repulsive crimes, these reflections of hate that are bubbling up in our nation's consciousness, we all have to wonder - how, how, how did it get that way?" continued



On cue: East Middle School's Encore Choir entertains at the Rainbow breakfast.

Granholm. She added that such examples of violence are usually bred by unfamiliarity, fear of the unknown.

With such rage-filled hate crimes, "humanity is replaced by an extraordinary evil," Granholm said. "The only antidote is extraordinary action, like the people you are honoring this morning represent. Extraordinary hate, I think, has to be

answered with extraordinary vigilance, extraordinary unity, extraordinary actions and extraordinary love.

"You've got to go over the top. We have got to expect more from ourselves."

Speaks volumes

Before and during breakfast, guests were entertained by the Harrison High School String Chamber Ensemble, directed by

Mark Phillips, and by the East Middle School Encore Choir, directed by Preston Brown.

Hosts were Mercy High School student Andrea Baker and Harrison High School student Dave Kinchen, both award recipients.

Also giving thoughts about the program were Nancy Bates and Bill Hartsack, mayors for the cities of Farmington Hills and Farmington, respectively, and Farmington Board of Education



Honored: The Chairperson's awards went to Bev Papat and Samir Haddad.

President Frank Reid.

"This crowded room speaks volumes about our two communities," Bates said.

After the program, Kinchen said students who won awards "see promise, hope and diversity for the future, that's the common thread." He concurred with Granholm about how other communities do look at the work being done throughout Farmington Hills and Farmington, through organizations such as the MCMR community council. "People in government, people in the state are looking to Farmington and Farmington Hills," Kinchen said. "We are being watched locally, in the state and nationally."

Setting an example

Farmington/Farmington Hills Cultural Arts Coordinator Nancy Coumoundouros, who also won an Rainbow Recognition award, said the program demonstrated the fact that so many people from all walks of life in the two communities are committed to multiculturalism.

"Anyone whose ever faced prejudice head on understands the importance of this organization," Coumoundouros said. "And I think it sets an example for anyone who sees the great work that's being accomplished."

According to MCMR community council co-chair Karen Bolsen, the message is building momentum, judged by the growing number of Rainbow Recognition award recipients.



Welcome: Andrea Baker of Mercy High School and David Kinchen of Harrison High were hosts for the breakfast.

She cited several other recipients, such as the Martin Luther King Jr. Candlelight Vigil and Heritage Festival, as furthering the cause of celebrating diversity.

"When you're learning about people and wanting to share your heritages, it doesn't have to be done in one way," Bolsen said.

Key quotes from Granholm's address at Rainbow breakfast

Following are some of the comments made by Michigan Attorney General Jennifer Granholm at Thursday's Rainbow Recognition Awards Breakfast in Farmington Hills:

"It's almost easier to amend the laws that are between the covers of the law book than it is to amend the stuff that's between the ears. And that's really where the deep work has to occur..."

"I think here this is a bit of an anomaly in Farmington Hills and Farmington. It speaks volumes about you all. But you will leave this room and go out into your respective workplaces and communities that may not be here, and people who may not believe as you do. And you know, we all have a lot of work to do in going forward..."

"You've got to go over the top. We have got to expect more from ourselves. We have to live, love and respect for others everywhere, every day, all of us in a thousand big and small daily

acts; where you go to the post office, in line at the grocery store..."

"These are times of extraordinary fear and they call for extraordinary courage and I think it is great and courageous of Farmington Hills to be putting this on this morning. And if I could export it, I will..."

"Aldo Vagnazzi's here and I know Andrew Raczowski is here. You know, people making a statement from both sides of the aisle. That is what we are all about..."

"His (King's) dream was all about the rainbow that you are all honoring this morning, and it is a simple and eloquent dream that grows that at the deepest core of who we are as citizens of this country who honor every man and woman and child based only on their status as an American. And not (be) hold back because of race, or physical ability, or religion or the plumbing that God gave us..."

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