



MELISSA AGARD  
STATE SENATOR

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### **Senator Agard Honored with Community Impact Recognition**

MADISON - Senator Melissa Agard (D-Madison) was honored by Briarpatch Youth Services with a Community Impact Recognition for her work for the past decade to support homeless and runaway youth. The award is inspired by a [story by Wangari Maathai](#) of a hummingbird who “will do the best I can”.

Senator Agard released the following statement regarding the recognition:

“I am so grateful for all that Briarpatch has done for the youth of our community over the past 50 years and I am proud to have played a role in supporting their important mission. Over a decade ago, during my time on the Dane County Board, my eyes were truly opened to the issues faced by homeless and unaccompanied youth in our community. I was fortunate to meet several community leaders who were willing to partner with me and together we created Make Room for Youth to raise awareness of the homeless and unaccompanied youth in our community. We were able to work with Briarpatch, to create the first youth homeless shelter in Dane County.

“Too many people don’t understand the full picture of what homelessness looks like here in Dane County and in our state. When people think of homelessness - they may not think of a 14 year old sleeping on a friend’s couch, living in an abandoned car during a Wisconsin winter, or staying with strangers. But this is happening right here.

“As I moved on to state government - I continue to work hard to elevate the voices of our youth in the Capitol. While I am in the minority - I earnestly reach out to members of the majority party to see what we can accomplish together. I work hard to lift the voices of those who are too often voiceless.

“This month I introduced a Joint Resolution to recognize November 2021 as Runaway Prevention month in Wisconsin. This resolution had strong bipartisan support with over 30 Democrats and Republicans signing on. If you can identify the problem, you can fix the problem.

“Now it is time to get to the gritty, challenging work of finding solutions to support the youth who need us. “

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