



**Rep. Murphy, Rebecca Onie presented with New Frontier Awards  
November 24, 2009**

(NECN: Josh Brogadir, Cambridge, Mass.) - Two leaders under age 40, distinguished in their respective fields of public service, were honored at Harvard's Kennedy School's Institute of Politics with John F. Kennedy New Frontier Awards for their accomplishments.

"I was lucky to grow up in a family that believed that we are never too old or too young for public service," said Caroline Kennedy, president of the John F. Kennedy Library Foundation first honored U.S. Representative Patrick Murphy, a Pennsylvania Democrat, who read a passage from her father that sits on the young congressman's own desk in Washington.

"Each man must decide for himself the course he will follow," Rep. Murphy read.

The 36 year old is the first veteran of the war in Iraq to serve in Congress.

"In 2006, when I came home and decided to run for Congress, I had \$322 in my bank account. When we won by .6 percent, that was .6 percent, I once again took an oath to support and defend the constitution of the United States, against all enemies foreign and domestic," he told the assembled crowd.

"It is a particular honor to receive this award because the words and acts of John F. Kennedy and his brothers Robert and Edward have not only been an inspiration to me, but actually a guide for me," said Rebecca Onie.

Recipient number two is the Harvard graduate, and 32 year old originally from Brookline, co-founder of Project HEALTH, a Boston-based non-profit that has put hundreds of college student volunteers in a position to help some of the poorest inner city patients in the country.

Her conversations with pediatricians in Boston went like this.

"Everyday Rebecca, I have patients that come into the department, and the child has an ear infection or the child has an asthma exacerbation, and I prescribe antibiotics or an inhaler. But I know the real issue is there's no food at home. I know that the real issue is that this family is living in a car," she told the crowd.

Murphy is a strong proponent of repealing the 'Don't ask, don't tell' policy of the U.S. military and spoke to us about President Barack Obama's proposed troop increase in Afghanistan.

"Unlike Iraq, the mission in Afghanistan where they attacked us in 9/11, is always in every American's heart and mind. And the fact that we have to get it right."

I asked if that means we should have more troops or pull the troops out of there.

"I think that means that we have to make sure that we ask the tough questions now and not after the fact," Murphy said.

Onie believes prevention is the key part of health care reform.

We asked her about bills being debated in Congress.

"What we actually need most right now is just forward motion. I'm a big believer that probably the most important thing that could come of this is a plan and a demonstration that we as a country can actually gain traction," Onie said.

This is the sixth year for these annual awards.

Past honorees include Illinois Attorney General Lisa Madigan and Newark, New Jersey Mayor Cory Booker.