



BOWDOIN COLLEGE

Commencement

2026



SHARON DALEY, Doctor of Humane Letters (LHD)

Citation by Hannah Reese, *Associate Professor of Psychology*

Sharon Daley, for more than two decades, you brought health care, comfort, and trust to Maine's island communities.

As director of island health and nurse aboard Maine Seacoast Mission's service boat, the *Sunbeam*, you worked tirelessly to bring health care to some of Maine's most hard-to-reach communities. You travelled on the *Sunbeam*, by lobster boat, pickup truck, golf cart, and foot to see your patients. When you got to them, you listened. You set aside preconceived notions and let the islanders tell you what they most needed.

Then, time after time, you rose to meet those needs. You provided primary care, lab work, vaccinations, behavioral health care and addiction services, nutritional support, and hospice coordination. You connected islanders to mainland hospitals, clinics, and specialists via telehealth long before it became common practice. When the COVID-19 pandemic struck, you drew attention to the unique vulnerabilities of the islanders, advocating for enough vaccines to protect the entire community. Recognizing the needs of older islanders, you founded the Island Eldercare Network to ensure that they have the knowledge and support necessary to age in the places they call home.

Your work, though, was never just about delivering services. It was about building relationships. It was about treating people with dignity, respect, and genuine care. In private conversations, in everyday encounters, you created the conditions under which proud people could ask for help. You became the person islanders turned to when they had nowhere else to turn.

In all of this, you created something durable: a form of health care rooted in place, sustained by relationship, and responsive to the evolving needs of the community.

For what you made possible across Maine's island communities, Bowdoin is proud to confer upon you the degree of doctor of humane letters, *honoris causa*.