



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Diane J. Savino

## Senate honors 'Women of Distinction' across New York Celebrates the women who make all our lives better

DIANE J. SAVINO May 26, 2010

| ISSUE: **WOMEN**

(Albany, NY) Each year, the New York State Senate honors a select group of outstanding women who make our world and our lives better. Today, the 13<sup>th</sup> annual Women of Distinction celebration recognized 57 women whose contributions have enriched the quality of life in communities across New York.

\*\*\* View the New York Senate video honoring the 2010 Women of Distinction at

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=draknAbQJtg> \*\*\*

Senate members from both sides of the aisle chose this year's nominees for their dedication to community and their achievements in education, the arts, health, and business. The women selected have not only achieved great success on an individual level, but on a social level as well, strengthening our state and making it a better place.

Senator Ruth Hassell-Thompson (D-Mt. Vernon) said, "It is with great pleasure that I join with my colleagues to recognize these remarkable women who represent the very best of what New York State has to offer. As leading members of our communities, role models and entrepreneurs, these women have devoted themselves to improving the world for others, and for that, they should be honored and thanked."

Senator Liz Krueger (D-Manhattan) said, "I am proud and honored to be a part of the celebration that recognizes the excellence of these amazing women. The strength of these women can be found in the countless lives they have touched and the organizations they have enriched. In honoring them we speak not just for the Senate, but for the entire State of New York and the many people who have been affected

by their hard work and dedication."

Senator Betty Little (R-Queensbury) said, "Chandler Ralph is well-known for all she's doing to ensure high-quality health care in the North Country. But her concern for others goes far beyond our region. As the founder of the Helena Ptochia Foundation, Chandler is doing something incredible in Ghana, West Africa to help woman suffering from obstetric fistulas. Women suffering from this painful condition, which occurs while delivering a baby, are often abandoned by their husbands and ostracized by other villagers. With proper care, these women can recover. Chandler's work is bringing hope to thousands of women."

Senator Suzi Oppenheimer (D-Westchester) said, "I am honored to be in the presence of so many accomplished women and am especially pleased to celebrate the achievements of my dear friend, Dr. Eileen Santiago. By establishing one of the first full-service community schools in Westchester County, Dr. Santiago has enriched the lives of countless children, providing them with the tools and support that will sustain a lifetime of learning."

Senator Andrea Stewart-Cousins (D/WF-Westchester) said, "The Contemporary Women of Distinction Celebration is a recognition of those in our community who have selflessly distinguished themselves as exemplary leaders and role models and have devoted themselves to improving our communities, strengthening our families and serving as examples to others. Helen Henkel is someone who is deserving of this honor for her extraordinary contributions to the City of Yonkers and to the quality of life of all New Yorkers."

Senator Catharine Young (R,I,C-Olean) said, "I am proud to honor Helen Worth as a Woman of Distinction, and prouder still of the recognition she has earned from her neighbors, colleagues and friends for all that she has done toward the betterment of her community. She has touched the lives of many children, and has been a wonderful inspiration to thousands of people living with HIV/AIDS throughout the world. Her courage is unmatched and this recognition is very well deserved."

Senator Shirley Huntley (D-Jamaica) said, "It is with extraordinary pleasure that I would like to congratulate the great nominees for the Women of Distinction. Whereas their tireless efforts and outstanding accomplishments can not only better our nation with their great works but also become a part of history. These women have set a shining example for the young women of New York State and indeed all over the world. They have set the bar for what is and can be the great success for all people."

Senator Diane Savino (D-Staten Island/Brooklyn) said, "New York State women, from the revolution through the abolitionist, suffrage, labor, and civil rights movements, have distinguished themselves in every important endeavor this nation has undertaken. From my own district, Community Health Action of Staten Island created our first LGBT center, the largest HIV/AIDS service and testing provider in New York. Diane Arneth, executive director of that non-profit, honored the Senate today by joining the ranks of the New York Women of Distinction, which officially stands at 400 plus, however in reality is millions strong. Congratulations Diane Arneth and the New York Women of Distinction."

Senator Toby Ann Stavisky (D-Whitestone), the first woman elected to the State Senate from Queens County said, "The women honored through this program exemplify all that is the best in making our communities better places to live. They are examples, mentors and friends and they inspire us to greater endeavors and higher achievements."

Senator Velmanette Montgomery (D-Brooklyn) said, "The women being honored this year continue a proud tradition of leadership, intelligence, generosity and public service. They exemplify the best of New York State's most valuable natural resource: our sisters, our mothers, and ourselves. Congratulations to all."

Over the course of the past 12 years, more than 400 women have been honored as Women of Distinction. Nominees have included women from the worlds of business, academia and civic life, as well as those who have performed heroic or selfless acts, made significant discoveries, or excelled against difficult odds.