



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

David J. Valesky

## Senator Valesky Names Judy O'Rourke New York State Senate Woman of Distinction

DAVID J. VALESKY May 14, 2014

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Syracuse— State Senator David J. Valesky (D-Oneida) announced today that Judy O'Rourke, director of undergraduate studies at Syracuse University, has been selected as the 53rd Senate District's 2014 Woman of Distinction. O'Rourke was recognized for her work in developing the Pan Am 103 Remembrance and Lockerbie Scholars programs at SU, which honor the memory of the 35 students lost in the 1988 bombing of Pan Am Flight 103 over Lockerbie, Scotland.

“Judy O’Rourke responded to a horrific act of terrorism by creating a program that fosters community, friendship, and education,” Sen. Valesky said. “The students she mentors return to Scotland to become leaders and advocates for preventing terrorism, and I am pleased to honor her as this year’s Woman of Distinction.”

For the past 25 years, O’Rourke has been the American face of the Lockerbie Scholars Program and has been the liaison between Syracuse University and the families of the Pan Am victims. She has counseled and advised the nearly 50 Lockerbie Scholars who have each attended Syracuse for one year as visiting scholars following their graduation from Lockerbie Academy. In addition, she has been recognized by the Victims of Pan Am 103, of which she is a board member, with an award for “Keeping the Spirit Alive,” and in February she was made an honorary member of the Order of the British Empire.

O’Rourke is also a member of various SU councils and advisory boards including the Academic Coordinating Committee, the Advising Sub-committee of ACC, the Administrative Group for Academic Processes, and the Remembrance Scholarship selection committee. As co-director of SU’s Center for Scholarship & Fellowship Advising, O’Rourke works with faculty members to recruit, select, and mentor students who are eligible to apply for post-graduate fellowships such as the Rhodes, Marshall, and Fulbright. She is currently a member of the University Senate and has worked on various Senate committees.

The Syracuse-Lockerbie Scholarship Program was established in 1989 to honor the 270 individuals lost in the bombing of Pan Am Flight 103 over Lockerbie, Scotland in December 1988, including 35 SU students and 11 Lockerbie residents. The program provides two students from the Lockerbie Academy, a high school in Lockerbie, Scotland, the chance to study for one year at Syracuse University.

The Remembrance Scholarship is one of the highest awards a Syracuse University student can receive. The scholarships were established in memory of the 35 students enrolled in the Division of International Programs Abroad who were killed onboard Pan Am Flight 103. A scholarship of \$5,000 is awarded each year to 35 undergraduate students chosen for distinguished scholarship, citizenship, and service to the community.

The New York State Senate's "Woman of Distinction" program was created in 1998 to honor New York women who exemplify personal excellence, or whose professional achievements or acts of courage, selflessness, integrity or perseverance serve as an example to all New Yorkers. Since the inception of the program, more than 400 women have been honored as Women of Distinction.