



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Catharine Young

## Woman of Distinction Dorothy Button Honored by State Senate

CATHARINE YOUNG September 29, 2014

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*Ashford woman recognized for distinguished service and accomplishments*

OLEAN – A lifetime of service was recognized this weekend as Ashford’s Dorothy Button was honored and recognized for being a 2014 New York State Senate “Woman of Distinction.” Senator Catharine Young (R,C,I-Olean) chose Mrs. Button as the 57<sup>th</sup> Senate District’s honoree because of her long and impressive record of accomplishments that include service in the U.S. Coast Guard, years of dedicated work on behalf of fellow veterans, and decades of volunteerism as a firefighter and EMT.

“Dorothy has served her country and community in so many ways,” said Senator Young. “Everything she has done over the years makes her an ideal Woman of Distinction. Without a doubt she is worthy and deserving of this honor, which is why I am so happy she is being recognized today.”

“As a firefighter and EMT, Dorothy is a natural leader with an inspiring dedication to helping others. Her record speaks for itself and tells the story of a woman who has humbly given of herself in order to make her community a better place for everyone,” said Senator Young.

“This is truly an honor,” said Mrs. Button. “To have my friends and family here today and be recognized by Senator Young in this way is a very humbling experience. Everyone who has helped me throughout my life deserves recognition too. I couldn’t have done it without them.”

At a ceremony held in Albany early this year, Mrs. Button and other distinguished women from across New York State, each representing a different Senate District, were lauded for their contributions to our state. The New York State Senate Woman of Distinction honor was created in 1998 to annually pay tribute to those women in New York who have demonstrated remarkable character, initiative, and commitment in serving their neighbors, strengthening our communities, and acting as role models that all should strive to emulate.

Mrs. Button grew up in the Town of Ashford, New York, where a call to service and helping those around her was always a very meaningful part of her life.

She attended and graduated from Springville-Griffith Institute before earning an Associate Degree from Hilbert College in Hamburg, New York, and a Bachelor of Arts in Interdisciplinary Studies from SUNY Fredonia.

In 1989, Mrs. Button then began what would become a 20-year career with the Coast Guard Reserve at the Coast Guard Station in Buffalo.

Her experiences there included work securing our ports and harbors, two years of active duty protecting the American homeland in the wake of 9/11, and a two week tour of active duty in Louisiana assisting in Hurricane Katrina recovery operations after the August 2005 storm.

With the Coast Guard Reserve, she was awarded over 20 notable awards and decorations recognizing her devoted service to our country.

As a veteran, Mrs. Button is also an active member of the American Legion's Ashford Memorial Post No. 1576. For 12 years she has served on multiple committees and in leadership roles at the post, county, and district levels.

Among her groundbreaking achievements with the American Legion, she was the first woman to serve as the 8<sup>th</sup> District Commander, and just the second woman to serve as Cattaraugus County Legion Commander.

Along with being a veteran, Mrs. Button is a proud member of the Seneca Nation of Indians and was previously Director of the Nation's Veterans Department, where she assisted fellow Native American vets in receiving the services they have earned.

Mrs. Button also has a long and distinguished record as an EMT and volunteer firefighter. For 22 years she has helped save lives as an EMT and firefighter with the West Valley Volunteer Fire Company. She is also a fire commissioner for West Valley Fire District One, a director of the Southwestern Volunteer Firemen's Association, a past member and chair of the Cattaraugus County Fire Advisory Board, and a member and past treasurer of the Southwestern Regional EMS Council. She is also the former secretary of the American Red

Cross Southwestern Chapter Board of Directors.

With her husband of 16 years, Larry Nagel, Mrs. Button resides in the hamlet of West Valley and is currently pursuing a Masters Degree in Strategic Leadership from St. Bonaventure University.

“As an official New York State Senate Woman of Distinction, Dorothy Button’s life of selfless and generous service to others is an inspiration and will finally receive the recognition it deserves. Dorothy is worthy of our deepest respect, admiration, and heartfelt thanks,” said Senator Young.

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