



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Lee M. Zeldin

Erica Boynton

LEE M. ZELDIN May 13, 2013



Women of
DISTINCTION
HONORING WOMEN IN NEW YORK

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Award: HONORING WOMEN IN NEW YORK

Year: 2013

Erica Boynton captured the energy from the grief of a personal tragedy and harvested it into something that would help others. Tragically, in 2009, her 15 year old son Christopher was murdered by a member of a gang.

Ms. Boynton suffered the loss of her son and then dedicated her life to stopping gang violence. She has helped spearhead several community events geared toward intervening in gang recruitment of youth. Dedicating herself to speaking with the youth members of her community, she is the first parent to ever speak before the students of the Brentwood School District about alternatives to gang involvement. Her campaign to get teens to “Speak Up” has spread from the middle schools to the high schools in both Central Islip and Brentwood.

Grief stricken but unwavering in her commitment, Ms. Boynton helped found the Brentwood Association of Concerned Citizens (BACC) in 2010, a community nonprofit organization that advocates for the prosecution of gang members. Together with other parents and concerned citizens, she helped organize several meetings with various elected officials as well as community leaders demanding action against gangs in her community.

A true activist and leader, Ms. Boynton also assisted in Brentwood’s first, and now annual anti-graffiti campaign and neighborhood clean up, removing gang tags and giving the community a much needed facelift.

Since the inception of BACC, Ms. Boynton has lead the way in the fight to apprehend and convict gang members in her community who took the lives of local youths. She continues to actively provide alternative outlets for the adolescents in her community through mentorship, education and instilling self pride. Together with the Town of Islip, she helped

refurbish several parks that were once unsafe, giving everyone a more pleasant and safe place to play.

Since the day she lost her son in 2009, Ms. Boynton has made it her mission to prevent another tragedy. She is still advocating and fighting to ensure her sons murderers are convicted in federal court. Through all of her work, she is truly an inspiration.