



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

John A. DeFrancisco

Marsha K. Connor

JOHN A. DEFRANCISCO May 13, 2015



Women of
DISTINCTION
HONORING WOMEN IN NEW YORK

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Award: HONORING WOMEN IN NEW YORK

Year: 2015

Marsha K. Connor, an American Gold Star Mother, was elected President and Treasurer of the American Gold Star Mothers, Chapter #15, in October 2013.

As the chapter's president, Ms. Connor's consistent goal is to increase fellowship among the Gold Star Mothers and to perpetuate the noble principles for which their children fought and died. She also promotes respect for our nation, by assisting veterans and active-duty military members in the Central New York community.

In 2014, the New York Department of American Gold Star Mothers appointed Ms. Connor to the position of Americanism Chairman. Since then, she has successfully directed and encouraged her chapter members to increase their participation in all patriotic events, like the annual Veterans Day Ceremony.

Ms. Connor became an active Gold Star Mother about a year after her beloved son, Lieutenant Patrick Kelly Connor, a Navy Flight Officer, was killed during a combat mission in the Persian Gulf War in 1991. During Patrick's burial ceremony at Arlington National Cemetery, she was presented with the folded American flag and a Gold Star Mothers pin. Ms. Connor knew that she wanted to forever honor her son's strong faith and ideals.

In 1992, Ms. Connor and her family established the Lt. Patrick Kelly Connor USN Scholarship to help develop new leaders in the United States Military. To date, 31 high school graduates from Central New York have been proud scholarship recipients. Her family is also extremely proud that the Syracuse VA Medical Center dedicated its conference room in memory of Patrick on February 2, 1998, where pictures and service medals grace the walls.

Ms. Connor has also been the Veterans Administration Volunteer Service Chapter Chairman since 2006. In this role, she works to provide hospitalized veterans with various personal supplies and clothing. She also visits hospitalized veterans to lift their spirits through various activities and to offer their family members resources and support.

Raised in Missouri, she graduated from the Columbia School of Nursing with a BSN. She was an operating room nurse at the University of Missouri Medical Center until she moved to New York with her husband, William, in 1985. She then became an operating room nurse at Community General Hospital, where she helped care for countless patients until she retired from the hospital after nearly 20 years. In addition, she has been an active member with Stonecroft Ministries, a non-denominational organization with active outreach to military wives and families.

Ms. Connor attributes much of her inspiration to her faith, family and community. She currently resides in Marcellus with her husband. The couple's oldest son, Jeffrey, is an active duty Naval Officer, helping to develop a new naval surface craft. Their youngest son, Scott, currently lives in Philadelphia and works in the healthcare research field.

Ms. Connor has dedicated her life, both personally and professionally, to improving the lives of others. She is an unsung hero and a true testament to the power of strength, hope and patriotism. Her tireless efforts will have a long-lasting impact on her community, state and nation.