



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Susan Serino

Kathie Freston

SUSAN SERINO May 20, 2015



Kathie Freston

Award: Honoring Our Veterans

Year: 2015

United States Marine Corps

Kathie Freston served the United States Marine Corps, earning top secret security clearance in 1953, and running the Enigma Machine at the communications center of the USMC Headquarters at Quantico, Virginia. Armed escorts accompanied Ms. Freston everywhere on base, as she was responsible for the accurate decoding, re-coding and delivery of the messages coming and going; representing the most sensitive information, operations, equipment and troop movements, and security.

With no “Imitation Game” movie about her experiences with wartime, nor fanfare about her skill sets and integrity, nor mention of the novelty at the time of being a female Marine, Ms. Freston passes off the enormity of her post in true Marine fashion, “I was doing my job.” She went on to earn her Captain’s bars before exiting the military in 1961.

Honored as a 2014 “Emerging Trailblazer” by the Putnam County Chambers of Commerce, and the 2011 Town of Kent “Volunteer of the Year,” Ms. Freston has continued her tradition of providing service to her country. After active United States Marine Corps duty, and while in the Reserves, Ms. Freston earned her Masters of Arts from New York University, beginning a 32-year career as a teacher. When she realized the social studies textbooks were lacking, Ms. Freston traveled around the world during the summers of 1958-1965, participating in archaeological digs in order to enrich her students’ experiences. She displayed a level of dedication most people would never even consider.

Following her lifelong passion for Drama, Theater and the Stage, Ms. Freston is considered an innovator in the arts. At 76, she tried acting herself, leading to her being cast in plays at the Aery Theatre productions at Phillipstown Depot Theater, New York City’s “The Producer’s Club,” and in Roger Simon’s “Bard at the Bar.”

Kathie Freston has gone above and beyond for her entire life. She excelled as a soldier in the United States Marine Corps and became a teacher, sculpting the minds of our youth. Ms. Freston has dedicated her life to her community and to the arts, tirelessly working to make her community an even greater place.