



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

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HONORING THE LEADERS AMONG US: SENATOR RITCHIE'S WEEKLY COLUMN

[PATTY RITCHIE](#) November 23, 2015

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All around us, women are stepping up to the plate; embracing leadership roles and making a difference in our region and beyond. Whether they are entrepreneurs who are running successful businesses, volunteers who contribute countless hours to nonprofit organizations, women in medicine who devote their lives to keeping us healthy or girls who are reaching new heights in athletics or personal achievements, we can all learn something

from the people who are paving the way for others who will follow in their footsteps.

Celebrating the accomplishments of these leaders is one of the goals of the “[Upstate Women’s Leadership Council](#),” a nonpartisan, non-political group which I formed alongside Rep. Elise Stefanik, Jefferson County District Attorney Cindy Intschert and other women from throughout our region. Recently, more than 200 women attended the Council’s inaugural event, which featured a keynote address by Lieutenant Governor Kathy Hochul, as well as networking and mentoring opportunities. In addition, individuals nominated by the Council to be honored for their leadership were recognized. The event’s honorees included:

Margaret “Peggy” Coe: A Jefferson County resident, Margaret “Peggy” Coe is known throughout the North Country for her decades of volunteer work with a number of organizations including the American Association of University Women, Girl Scouts, the Jefferson County Historical Society, the Watertown Urban Mission and others.

Dr. Jan Turcotte: A retired general surgeon, Dr. Jan Turcotte is known for her focus on breast care, which has had a significant positive impact on the health and well-being of countless women throughout the North Country.

Penny Morley: The Prevention Services Director at Oswego County’s Farnham Family Services, Penny Morley has played a key role in working to prevent the spread of illegal substances in schools throughout Central New York.

Keely O’Connor: A Carthage High School student known for her artistic abilities, Keely O’Connor won the 2015 Congressional Art Competition for New York’s 21st Congressional District. In addition, she also recently designed the 75th Anniversary Commemorative pin for the Carthage chapter of the International Association of Lions Clubs.

The Massena Lady Raiders hockey team: Known for their leadership both on and off the ice, the Massena Central High School's Lady Raiders hockey team took home the squad's first-ever state title earlier this year when they defeated the Kenmore Devil Dogs 3-0 in Buffalo.

The Heuvelton Lady Bulldogs basketball team: The Heuvelton Lady Bulldogs basketball team made history when they they defeated South Kortright during the New York State Girls Class D Championship in March and took home the high school's first-ever girls' basketball title.

By recognizing the accomplishments of our local leaders, we're encouraging others to follow in their footsteps. The Upstate Women's Leadership Council hopes to make recognizing individuals who are making a difference in our region a part of future events. If you have an idea for someone to recognize—or would like more information on the Council and how you can be involved—I invite you to [click here](#).