



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Susan Serino

SERINO AND AMERICAN HEART ASSOCIATION TEAM UP FOR UNIQUE WOMEN'S HEALTH INITIATIVE

SUSAN SERINO March 11, 2016

| ISSUE: **WOMEN'S HEALTH, HEART HEALTH, HEALTH AND WELLNESS**



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Launch 'Don't Mess With Stress' Campaign

POUGHKEEPSIE, NY—On the heels of National Women's Heart Health Month, Senator Sue Serino (R, C, I—Hyde Park) and the American Heart Association have teamed up to launch a unique women's health initiative, —*'Don't Mess With Stress'*—aimed at helping women of all

ages beat the stress to improve their heart health. Senator Serino announced the initiative today at a press conference in Poughkeepsie alongside Kristin Judd, Executive Director of the American Heart Association, Dutchess County Executive Marcus Molinaro, and representatives from the county, local women's organizations and leading healthcare professionals.

*“Last year, I was hospitalized with blood pressure issues that—left-untreated—had the potential to change my entire life,” **Senator Serino said.** “I learned right then and there, you don’t want to mess with stress. This initiative is meant to keep the message of women’s heart health going—it’s all about awareness and reminding women that no matter how healthy you may be, the fact remains that heart disease is the number one killer of women and we have to be vigilant in listening to our bodies.”*

The ‘Don’t Mess With Stress’ program will bring a series of workshops to women’s and professional groups throughout the community over the course of the year that aim to help women recognize their signs and symptoms of stress, learn about the long-term health repercussions of unchecked stress and develop a list of simple changes they can make in order to better manage that stress.

*“The American Heart Association is so pleased to be involved in this countywide health event. We know that 80% of heart disease can be prevented by making simple lifestyle changes that are within our control,” **said Kristin Judd, American Heart Association, Executive Director.** “When stress is excessive, it can contribute to everything from high blood pressure to digestive issues. Reducing stress and taking time for your health is so important when we look at prevention of heart disease and stroke.”*

With cardiovascular disease currently representing the leading cause of death worldwide, this initiative aims to raise awareness for the severity of risks associated with the disease and to provide local women with tips and tricks that they can easily incorporate into their everyday lives to improve their health and reduce their risk of heart disease.

The Dutchess County government kicked-off the program today by holding the first workshop for County employees, building on County Executive Molinaro’s initiative to make

Dutchess County the healthiest county in New York.

Dutchess County Executive Molinaro said, *“Alleviating stress is an important component of our holistic approach to population health and our initiative to make Dutchess County the healthiest county in New York. The physical effects of stress are undeniable, and today’s ‘Don’t Mess with Stress’ workshop is a great collaboration that will benefit our county employees and their families. I applaud Sen. Serino for working with Dutchess County’s Department of Behavioral and Community Health to host this event, which could very easily save lives. I look forward to future partnerships to improve the health of Dutchess County residents.”*

The Dutchess County Commissioner of Behavioral and Community Health, Dr. Henry Kurban, MD, MBA, MPH, FACPM, **echoed his point saying,** *“From headaches and insomnia, heartburn and rashes, among numerous other symptoms, stress can take a physical and mental toll on one’s health. The techniques and tips learned at today’s ‘Don’t Mess with Stress’ event can diminish the effect of stress on the body and mind, promoting better overall health. Our DBCH staff thanks Sen. Serino for her dedication to helping Dutchess County reach its bold goal of becoming New York’s leader in healthy outcomes.”*

The workshops will be run by leading cardiologist Doctor Ronald Tatelbaum, M.D. and Shelley Tatelbaum, M.S., C.G.T, a leading counselor specializing in mindfulness-based stress reduction, both of whom were at the press conference to describe their work and the importance of the initiative.

In discussing the workshop’s emphasis on the mind/body connection, Doctor Ronald Tatelbaum, M.D. said, *“The first step of any change is to raise awareness. The mind/body connection is real, and bottom line, it’s about owning your feelings and making a choice.”*

His wife, Shelley Tatelbaum, M.S., C.G.T., agreed, saying, *“The mind is known to be a factor in stress and stress-related disorders and programs like this will cultivate greater awareness of the ways unconscious thoughts, feelings, and behaviors can undermine emotional, physical, and spiritual health.”*

Lea Bishop, who’s organization, the Women’s Professional Network (WPN) will also be hosting a workshop emphasized the importance of stress management as a form of professional development saying, *“The WPN Women’s Professional Network is an educational and networking organization dedicated to promoting the professional development of women from throughout the Hudson Valley. The WPN supports Senator Serino’s ‘Don’t Mess With Stress’ initiative to bring much-needed focus on women’s cardiovascular health through careful management of stress. Since stress is a major contributor*

to cardiovascular disease, the number one killer of women, reducing stress is a critical factor in improving the overall health and lives of women.”

The workshops are being offered free of charge to local women's groups and target everyone from working women, to stay at home moms, to college students. Groups interested in hosting their own workshop are encouraged to contact Donna Reyer in Senator Serino's office at 845-229-0106.