



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

James Sanders Jr.

## Senator James Sanders Jr. Honors 2016 Woman of Distinction - Chitra Singh

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State Senator James Sanders Jr. (D-Rochdale Village) honored Chitra Singh as his 2016 “Woman of Distinction,” an award given through the senate to outstanding women living and working in New York State whose contributions have enriched the quality of life in their community and beyond.

“Chitra’s devotion to helping others is admirable and makes her well deserving of the title, Woman of Distinction,” Sanders said. “Her commitment to the consistent betterment of her

community is an inspiration.”

Chitra Singh is an artist and songwriter from Richmond Hill who shares her love of music by performing for various community groups, as well as children and the elderly. In this way and others, she works to preserve the Guyanese arts and culture of her heritage. She has also volunteered with the Caribbean Equality Project, Rajkumari Cultural Center’s senior programs and Tassa in the Park for children.

In addition, Singh has provided assistance at numerous citizenship workshops in Richmond Hill, worked with the Richmond Hill Business Improvement District and Sadhana, a group who have put forth an effort to clean up Jamaica Bay.

Singh grew up in Georgetown, Guyana, where her family taught her at an early age about the importance of helping others. She would accompany her mother as she visited shelters and homes for the disabled children to read stories to them. She immigrated to New York as a teenager, exploring new opportunities in the United States, and eventually settling in an area of Richmond Hill known as Little Guyana.

She found a new kind of family in the people she met at the Rajkumari Cultural Center, a non-profit arts organization, which allowed her to reach out to all generations of Indo Caribbean people and create a space to preserve Guyanese arts and heritage. Through this work, she began to realize how many people around her were suffering with immigration and identity issues, and tried to help them.

With her guitar, Chitra Singh has shared her love of music with the young and elderly by singing folk songs as a reminder of the good days that have passed and the ones to still come.

“When our community is well, our country will grow strong,” Singh said, “and the world will be a better place for all of us to find peace and love.”