



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

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## Ellen White

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HONORING WOMEN IN NEW YORK

***Ellen White***

Ellen White is a community leader, entrepreneur, mom and amazing resource for children with developmental disabilities on the South Shore. With dedication, compassion and humor, Ms. White has created inclusive and fun communities for all, and is a role model to many.

Ms. White is the creative force behind South Side High School's successful Centre Stage Program, which pairs special education and general-education students to perform an entertaining show each year. Since its founding, Ms. White has helped write, direct and

produce the all-inclusive play, which has grown to a cast of over 100 students who perform for almost 2,000 people, and has become a popular collaborative community.

It was through Ms. White's experience with Centre Stage that BackYard Players & Friends (BYP & Friends) was born. As students graduate, many experience a decline in their social interactions and community involvement. Ms. White, along with her sisters, Joan Kelly and Christine Daly, co-founded BYP & Friends - an inclusive, arts based program designed to enhance the social and interpersonal skills for teens and young adults.

Ms. White is currently building an outdoor creative play space called "Mary's BackYard," pulling together different community groups to design and build a beautiful, interactive space that will include elements of music, art, science, literature and theatre. The goal of "Mary's BackYard" is to create positive and meaningful experiences for the community at large, as inclusion inspires people to work together and learn from each other.

Ms. White's credentials do not end with wildly popular arts programs. Ms. White, whose sons all played lacrosse, has also served as President of Rockville Centre Lacrosse and founded the girls lacrosse program.

Ms. White has lived in Rockville Centre for more than 20 years and is married to Chris White. They have four sons: Tim, Christopher, Ryan, and Terence.