



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Andrew J. Lanza

## Senator Andrew Lanza Honors Doreen P. Cugno, President And CEO Of The St. George Theatre, With The Women of Distinction Award

ANDREW J. LANZA May 4, 2018



*Senator Andrew Lanza said: “Doreen Cugno is a truly remarkable person whose extraordinary efforts and contributions to the Arts bring great pride to all of Staten Island. I am honored to recognize Doreen’s achievements and remain grateful for her continued work at the St. George Theatre.”*

Albany, NY- Each year Senator Lanza honors women in our community who have exhibited outstanding work and are deserving of special recognition by the New York State Senate as a “Woman of Distinction.” The Women of Distinction program was created as part of the

Senate's celebration of Women's History Month. In addition to recognizing present-day women, each March, the Senate hosts a display that honors other distinguished women from New York's past, from leaders of the 19th Century suffragist movement to pioneers in education, science and the arts. Honorees in the annual event have included leading women from the world of business, academics and civic life, as well as those who have performed heroic or selfless acts, made significant discoveries or provided examples of personal excellence against difficult odds.

This year Senator Lanza selected Doreen P. Cugno, President & CEO of The St. George Theatre Restoration Inc., who has contributed to the Staten Island community through her extraordinary work and dedication to the St. George Theatre. Within her role as President & CEO, she oversees the daily operations, which includes planning, managing budgets, programming, fundraising, and restoration projects. The St. George Theatre Restoration, Inc. is a non-profit 501(c)3 organization dedicated to the restoration and the development of the theatre as a cultural and performing arts center for Staten Island and all of New York City. The non-profit was created by the late, Mrs. Rosemary Cappozalo, and her daughters Doreen P. Cugno and Luanne Sorrentino, to save the St. George Theatre from being demolished. In 1929, it opened as a lavish movie palace and vaudeville theater. The St. George Theatre boasts beautiful Spanish/Italian baroque style paintings, chandeliers, stained glass windows, grand staircases, an incredible dome and one of the largest cantilevered balconies ever built. The theater was padlocked for over 30 years and fell on hard times with a few attempts to reopen it through the years. The three women were the driving force to bring this theater back to life, to resurrect it to its splendor. Today, the St. George Theatre is a thriving 1,900-seat performing arts center that hosts an array of live entertainment and educational programming. The theatre has played host to numerous world-class entertainment acts such as Tony Bennett, Ringo Starr, Diana Ross, Jerry Seinfeld, Jackson Browne, Jason Mraz, Melissa Etheridge, Smokey Robinson, and hundreds more. The

organization has grown from three ladies and a dozen volunteers to a staff of seven full time employees, 100 part time employees, over 100 volunteers and a dedicated Board of Directors.

In addition to her work at the St. George Theatre, Doreen is a member of the League of Historic American Theaters, Association of Performing Arts Presenters, Staten Island Economic Development Corporation Women's Counsel, and the Chamber of Commerce. From 2008 until presently, she has been a Board Member of The Friends of Thirteen, Inc. and currently is the Chairperson of the Community Engagement Committee.

Before her career at the St. George Theatre, she was a choreographer at Ms. Rosemary's Dance Studio in addition to being an educator within the Archdiocese of New York. Within her educational career, she received a B.A. in Dance with a minor in Music from Point Park University. Doreen currently resides in Staten Island with her husband Michael and two children, Michael Scott and Rose.

On May 1, the NYS Senate honored Doreen P. Cugno as the 24th Senate District's 2018 Woman of Distinction during a special ceremony at the State Capitol of New York. This ceremony displayed her photograph and her biography will become part of a special exhibit proclaiming the contributions of the exemplary women throughout New York State.

Senator Andrew Lanza said: "Doreen Cugno is a truly remarkable person whose extraordinary efforts and contributions to the Arts bring great pride to all of Staten Island. I am honored to recognize Doreen's achievements and remain grateful for her continued work at the St. George Theatre."

Doreen P. Cugno said: "Words can't express the gratitude I have for being recognized as a New York State Senate Women of Distinction and being among iconic ladies in history. Yesterday was a surreal day to cherish and a day to celebrate the bright future of

the St. George Theatre! It was a privilege to be a special guest in the Senate Chamber to watch Senator Lanza hard at work for Staten Island. My sisters and I are blessed to continue the work of our mother, the late Mrs. Rosemary, sharing our passion for the arts in the community we love most, Staten Island. Thank you Senator Andrew Lanza and Staff for recognizing the work we do for our borough!”