



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Terrence Murphy

## Senator Murphy Honors 40th Senate District's Women Of Distinction

TERRENCE MURPHY June 11, 2018

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Pleasantville, NY - A Westchester County Legislator, a Minister, and scores of selfless volunteers were among the fourteen women honored by Senator Terrence Murphy at his 2018 Women of Distinction ceremony. Hosted by Pace University, the June 7th event celebrated the accomplishments of women throughout the Hudson Valley who have made their communities better places to live through their achievements in business, charitable works, and education.

"I look forward to this ceremony every year. Our honorees were nominated by their peers and community leaders, and it is always a pleasure to recognize their accomplishments," said Senator Murphy. "Too often, selfless acts of service go unnoticed. The annual Women of Distinction Ceremony is a tradition that recognizes the positive impact made by women throughout the 40th Senate District. Our honorees come from diverse backgrounds with a wide variety of valuable talents. Because of their work, our communities have continued to grow and prosper."

Caroline Murphy, a registered nurse, educator, and the wife of Senator Murphy, served as the evening's Master of Ceremonies. "Our Women of Distinction honorees have turned their dreams into successful business ventures, volunteered to give back to their communities, and taken leadership roles in education and government," said Mrs. Murphy. "Tonight is our opportunity to recognize their accomplishments and say thank you for all that they've done."

Vanessa Herman, Assistant Vice President, Government and Community Relations for Pace University, welcomed the honorees and guests on behalf of the college. She also recognized the successful partnership between Pace and Senator Murphy. "We're here tonight to honor some very special women. I'd also like to honor a very special man, Senator Murphy. From the very beginning, he's understood our mission and has sought to help our students. When our students wrote the Elephant Bill, it was a two-year process to get it passed into law, which was spearheaded by Senator Murphy. That's a perfect example of the perseverance and tenacity of your State Senator. Another is the very room we're in. It used to be an old gym that was in need of repair. With a grant secured by Senator Murphy, we turned this room into a state-of-the-art meeting area that's in use virtually every night."

**Deb Milone of Peekskill, Executive Director for the Hudson Valley Gateway Chamber of**

**Commerce**, was hailed by Senator Murphy as the 2018 Statewide Woman of Distinction honoree. Many elected officials were on hand to support the nominees, including Westchester County Legislator John Testa, Peekskill Mayor Andre Rainey, Mount Kisco Mayor Gina Picinich, Mount Pleasant Town Supervisor Carl Fulgenzi, Patterson Town Supervisor Richard Williams, New Castle Town Supervisor Robert Greenstein, Village of Pawling Mayor Robert Lifflander, Yorktown Town Councilman Tom Diana and Mt. Pleasant Councilman Anthony Amino.

**The 2018 Women of Distinction Award recipients are:**

**Marianne Burdick (Patterson)** - Marianne has worked for the Putnam County Department of Health (DOH) for 30 years, has served on the Town of Patterson Zoning Board of Appeals for 27 years, and is a member of the Patterson Master Plan Committee. She helped develop a number of DOH initiatives, including the Putnam County Smoking in Public Places Law, and also founded the Putnam County Feral Cat Task Force.

**Hon. Margaret Cunzio (Mt. Pleasant)** - Margaret is currently serving her second term on the Westchester Board of Legislators. A New York State Certified teacher and administrator, she teaches at Iona College and Western Connecticut State University and is also a fitness professional at Equinox in Armonk. She previously served on the Mount Pleasant Architectural Review Board and is involved with the Mount Pleasant Recreation Center senior program.

**Suzanne Grant (Mt. Kisco)** - Suzanne is devoted to volunteering, helping to expand educational opportunities for students in the Bedford Central School District (BCSD). She served two terms on BCSD's Board of Education and serves on the Student Achievement Committee. She has also served on the Mt. Kisco Conservation Advisory Committee, the Mt.

Kisco Elementary School Association, and is a founding member of Citizens for Byram Lake Reservoir.

**Tuesday Paige McDonald (Peekskill)** - Tuesday is a licensed Minister of Worship at Mount Olivet Church, where she serves as Director of Music, Youth Sunday School Facilitator, and Director of the Youth Ministry. She is also Director of Community and Youth Development for Hudson River Health Care. She has served as NAACP Freedom Fund Chairperson and was honored with a Tuesday Paige McDonald Day by the City of Peekskill in 2015.

**Barbara Reitz (Carmel)** - As the Coordinator for the Putnam Youth Court Program for the past 30 years (which is run by her husband Judge James Reitz), Barbara has worked with over 1,700 youth court members and families, and has given back nearly 500,000 service hours to her community. A board member for Cornell Cooperative Extension, she has also volunteered for the American Heart Society, March of Dimes, Salvation Army, MS Walk, Make a Wish and the Hartford Children's Hospital Cancer Unit.

**Bonnie Schwartz (Pound Ridge)** - A former Councilwoman for the Town of Pound Ridge, Bonnie has served as President for the Pound Ridge Lions, Vice President of the Fox Lane Association, and is a member of the Board of Trustees for the town library and the Pound Ridge Conservancy. Her volunteer work extends to Pound Ridge Drug and Alcohol Prevention, the Pound Ridge Office of Emergency Management, the Jewish Family Congregation Class, Pound Ridge Boy and Girls, and the Pound Ridge Organ Donor Drive.

**Carol Shanesy (Croton-on-Hudson)** - Carol has been Treasurer of the Croton Housing Network for over a decade and serves as Treasurer of the Jane Lytle Memorial Arboretum. She is coordinator and scheduler for the Croton Community Blood Drive, was a member of the Croton Caring Committee, and is a long-time Election Inspector at Westchester County

polling locations.

**Rita Ann Sharples (Cortlandt)** - Rita is a member and past board member of the Hudson Valley Gateway Chamber of Commerce. As President of the Rotary Club of Cortlandt Manor, she and the Club assist in the annual Oscar Party at the Muriel H. Morabito Community Senior Center, host an annual holiday breakfast, co-sponsor the annual summer movie series and plan the annual tree lighting ceremony.

**Marie Stewart (Village of Pawling)** - The owner of the Yarn and Craft Box for 28 years, Marie is past President and Vice President of the Pawling Chamber of Commerce, and currently serves as their Secretary. She is also a member of the Pawling Record Newspaper Newspaper Committee and the Guidebook Committee. For the past 15 years, she has collected items for the victims of abuse and impoverished children, distributing them throughout Dutchess County.

**Bobbe Stultz (Lewisboro)** - Bobbe is a founding member of the Lewisboro Land Trust, serving on its Board of Directors. She was instrumental in establishing the Meditation Garden at the Old Field Preserve; the Native Plant Garden at the Leon Levy Preserve; and renovating the Brownell Preserve, St. Paul's and Old Goldens Bridge Rail Trails. She continues to be a strong advocate for affordable housing, particularly the Lewisboro Commons development.

**Barbara Taberer (Somers)** - Barbara has been the Director of Senior Services and Programs for the Town of Somers for over 16 years. She is an advocate for seniors and has been an Elder Voices Partner for the Westchester County Office of the County Executive, and served on the Advisory Committee of the At Home in Somers, on the Board of Director for ALOFT, and the Westchester Transportation Advisory Committee. She also volunteers for the Somers Meals on Wheels program.

**Gloria Tobias (Yorktown)** - Gloria worked in the attendance office at Lakeland High School from 1965 to 1992. She was recognized in 1988 for establishing the Vietnam Veterans Memorial at the school. She was on the committee to rebuild the Shrub Oak Memorial at the John C. Hart Library and is still actively involved in organizing the Annual Memorial Day Ceremony.

**Betsy Towl (New Castle)** - Betsy was the Executive Director of the New Castle Historical Society for 22 years. She led the Greeley House Campaign to purchase and restore the historic home, secured grants from the Greater Hudson Heritage Network Conservation and Museum Association of New York and received a Lower Hudson Conference of Historical Agencies & Museums Historical Services Award. She has also been Community Director for the Girl Scouts.

**Olenna Truskett (Southeast)** - Olenna serves as Vice President for the Town of Southeast Cultural Arts Coalition, which she helped establish in 2010. She spearheaded the effort to restore the historic Southeast Old Town Hall and has volunteered her time and talent to help the Putnam Arts Council, St. Mary's Parent Association, Prelude Ballet Ensemble, 4H Club, Tri-County Science Fair, and Dancers at Union Hall.