



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Pamela Helming

## Senator Helming Honors Palmyra Woman As NYS Woman of Distinction

SENATOR PAM HELMING May 1, 2019

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GENEVA – Senator Pam Helming announced that Ms. Marya Vande-Doyle, of Palmyra, has been selected as the honoree from the 54<sup>th</sup> Senate District for the 2019 New York State Senate Women of Distinction. With her husband, Bill, Ms. Vande-Doyle founded The Green Angels, a Wayne County-based charitable organization that supports children and families throughout our region. She was nominated for Women of Distinction by Ms. Tricia Kuntz.

“New York State Senate Women of Distinction provides a terrific opportunity to recognize women whose outstanding work and significant contributions have made a difference through their families, careers, and community service. Marya Vande-Doyle is the epitome of a Woman of Distinction, a transformative leader who is changing lives, and someone who is an inspiration and mentor to the people around her. She is committed to and passionate about serving children and families in need while balancing family commitments and a demanding career. Her work with The Green Angels has left a notable impact on those who have benefited from the organization’s generosity. For example, during the Free-Cycle holiday program last year, I met a young woman and her mother who went from being clients of The Green Angels to being volunteers with the organization. That shows that ‘Giving Forward and Back’ isn’t just a slogan for Marya and The Green Angels; it is a way of life as they seek to connect those in need with people who can help meet their needs. Marya is worthy of this prestigious honor, and I am pleased to recognize her as my 2019 Woman of Distinction,” Senator Helming said.

Ms. Vande-Doyle grew up in Palmyra, moved away as an adult, and returned with her husband, Bill Doyle, and sons, Liam and Cylas, to be closer to family. She is Director of Medical Services Program Development, Wellness, and Telemedicine at Excellus BlueCross BlueShield. In 2008, Ms. Vande-Doyle and Bill used a bonus check to create The Green Angels. Focused on helping children live healthier, happier, safer lives, they wrote a business plan and filed for nonprofit status. Ms. Vande-Doyle went to the library to read about grant writing so she could grow the organization.

In December 2008, Ms. Vande-Doyle and The Green Angels held their first Free-Cycle event, an annual program designed for local families in need of gifts for their children. Since then, the holiday program alone has grown to serving more than 850 people in a single day while the Free-Cycle has evolved into a year-round referral program. The organization receive

referrals on a daily basis from Wayne County school districts and agencies such as the Wayne Behavioral Health Network, Wayne County Public Health, Newark-Wayne Community Hospital, Victim Resource Center, and Wayne County Rural Health Network. The Green Angels respond quickly with toys, books, supplies, food, clothes, and infant items in an effort to support children and families in need.

Ms. Vande-Doyle and The Green Angels now serve well over 1,000 individuals per year throughout the Wayne County and Webster area with the Free-Cycle program and daily deliveries to local families. The organization is supported by around 200 volunteers, one paid, part-time associate, and an active and involved board of directors. In fact, many of the people the organization has helped in the past have now returned as volunteers to support the program, which exemplifies the organization's motto of "Giving Forward and Back."

The organization also prints a Community Resource Guide. When a young mom shared she didn't know who to call for free diapers and told Ms. Vande-Doyle she would scrape soiled diapers and reuse them wet, Ms. Vande-Doyle was so moved she created the free health and human services directory. With support from the Wayne County Rural Health Network and Rochester Area Community Foundation, more than 65,000 copies have been distributed since 2009.

As President of The Green Angels since its inception, Ms. Vande-Doyle has built a solid foundation and positioned the organization for future growth and success. According to Ms. Kuntz, Ms. Vande-Doyle's nominator, Ms. Vande-Doyle puts in countless hours of coordination and compassion alongside her family, including her husband, sons, parents, and in-laws. Together, they help community members in need while also creating a powerful volunteer opportunity for hundreds of others. Ms. Vande-Doyle is known to work tirelessly, sometimes driving late at night to rural homes with diapers and formula to help a mom in need.

Ms. Vande-Doyle said, “The Green Angels is empowered by the energy of a wonderful community and the vision of an extraordinary volunteer team. I am just one of many who make our outreach happen.”