



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Daphne Jordan

# Recognizing Our Hometown Heroes Serving in the Fight Against COVID-19

SENATOR DAPHNE JORDAN April 24, 2020

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43RD NYS SENATE DISTRICT



**JULIE SQUADRITO**

Duncan's Dairy Bar and Cakes by Duncan

**TOM KOVAL**

Halfmoon

**KYLE BELOKOPITSKY**

Twin Town Little League

**PATRICIA KLIMKEWICZ**

HVCC Health Sciences Dean & U.S. Navy Nurse

**DENISE AYOTTE**

Halfmoon



Last week my “Hometown Heroes” recognized local businesses in 43rd Senate District – Regeneron, Ames Goldsmith Corp, and Fred's Tents and Canopies Inc. – for their important work in the fight against COVID-19.

Today, I want to recognize more Hometown Heroes from across my 43rd Senate District, individuals, and businesses whose selfless service, volunteerism, and generosity are helping

our communities. My thanks to all our Hometown Heroes!

Julie Squadrito, Duncan's Dairy Bar and Cakes By Duncan's

Julie Squadrito, of Duncan's Dairy Bar and Cakes by Duncan, own a laser cutter that makes custom acrylic and wood cake toppers for customers. Julie also belongs to a Facebook group for users of this laser where people share ideas for special projects. Several of the members of the group were talking about hooks and how they were donating them to local medical professionals during the COVID-19 outbreak. The hooks are important because instead of connecting the mask behind an individual's ears, which eventually get sore, an individual can instead use the new acrylic hook to connect both sides of their face mask. Julie had some extra acrylic and decided to make a few of these hooks for facemasks to see if there was a demand. Julie has since given out close to about 2,000 of these special hooks with more requests coming in. The hooks have been provided to local hospitals, nursing homes, medical transports, medical offices, and even grocery clerks. Julie has shipped these hooks to as far away as North Carolina's University Health Care in Chapel Hill. Julie informed me that several people have come forward and provided donations toward the cost of materials and that she'll continue providing the hooks for as long as needed.

Tom Koval, Halfmoon

The Town of Halfmoon has a large population of senior citizens and Tom Koval has been busy collecting non-perishable foods to get to Town officials for assistance in keeping our seniors fed and out of harm's way at the stores. The collection point is his office located at 110 Button Road in the Town of Halfmoon. Tom said that individuals wishing to support this cause should stop anytime day or night with donations. There is a large brown metal box in front for donations covered by camera surveillance so anything dropped off will be safe. Donors don't need to encounter anyone unless they wish too. Tom also encourages everyone

to help donate blood as there is a life-threatening shortage.

Kyle McCauley Belokopitsky, Twin Town Little League

Kyle Belokopitsky of Wynantskill is the Executive Director at NYS PTA. She's also the driving force behind a special food donation drive at Twin Town Little League. The food drive helps ensure that local families with children have enough food during the COVID-19 pandemic. Local families in need are invited to help themselves, reflecting a strong community spirit.

Kyle was quoted in a Channel 13 story about the food drive saying "We talk about community baseball, and we're raising children to be good community citizens. It's not just about running the bases. It's a really great way to remind all of our players who can't be out here playing that they — especially Twin Town and all the little leagues and all families — really have to find ways to give back."

Patricia Klimkewicz, HVCC Health Sciences Dean, U.S. Navy Nurse

Patricia Klimkewicz is a Halfmoon resident, Hudson Valley Community College's (HVCC) Dean of Health Sciences and has been deployed as a Navy Nurse as part of the COVID-19 response in New York City.

A registered nurse and a commander in the United States Navy Nurse Corps, Patricia is serving at the Javits Convention Center, which was temporarily set up to treat COVID-19 patients in New York City. On April 19, she was promoted to Captain in Times Square. Prior to becoming Dean, she was a professor in the Nursing department for 19 years. She has previously been deployed to Kandahar, Afghanistan, and Landstuhl, Germany.

Denise Van Der Volgen-Ayotte, Halfmoon

In response to the Coronavirus and the urgent need for facemasks, Denise Ayotte decided to start making these in-demand items to help people stay healthy. Denise believes, in her words, that there is a need to “help each other and do for each other.”

Denise made the masks for West Crescent Fire House because they are like family to her. She is presently waiting on elastic to make more and is having a hard time finding the necessary elastic. Denise will continue making facemasks to help individuals and first responders during the COVID-19 pandemic.