



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Anna M. Kaplan

Dr. Cynthia Orellana Chosen as 'Woman of Distinction' for 2022 by NYS Senator Anna M. Kaplan

ANNA M. KAPLAN October 3, 2022

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Annual tradition recognizes outstanding, accomplished women throughout New York State

Dr. Cynthia Orellana recognized for her tireless efforts to help students, particularly from immigrant families, to succeed and thrive academically while also giving back to the community as a volunteer

Photo caption: Senator Anna M. Kaplan presents Dr. Cynthia Orellana with a plaque commemorating her selection as the 2022 Woman of Distinction from the 7th Senate District in Nassau County. [Download](#)

hi-res image here.

CARLE PLACE, NY (October 3, 2022) – Today, **State Senator Anna M. Kaplan** (D-Port Washington) announced that **Dr. Cynthia Orellana** of Westbury, NY has been selected as the **2022 New York State Senate Woman of Distinction for the 7th Senate District**. The annual tradition recognizes outstanding, accomplished women throughout New York State.

Senator Anna M. Kaplan said “It’s my honor and privilege each year to select one exemplary woman from our community who sets herself apart from all others through her work to make our world and our lives better, and I’m thrilled to recognize Dr. Cynthia Orellana as my Woman of Distinction for 2022. Dr. Orellana is a trailblazer who has dedicated her life to helping her students to grow and thrive academically while also giving generously of herself to support local community groups and promoting the importance of language and culture. Dr. Orellana is a treasured member of our community, and an inspiration to us all.”

Each year, the New York State Senate recognizes a group of outstanding women whose accomplishments and dedication can be lauded and celebrated. These Women of Distinction are each selected by their respective State Senators as role models who step up to serve their communities and their neighbors.

Cynthia Orellana, Ed.D. is Chair of the World Languages Department and an 8th grade Spanish teacher in the Westbury School District, where she teaches Spanish to Hispanic students to strengthen their native language and culture. She was born in California to Salvadoran parents, and lived in El Salvador for 11 years before returning to the United States in 1985. She began 7th grade in the Westbury School District, studying English as a Second Language. Her lived experience allows her to appreciate the struggles that many of her students face when arriving in the United States from a different culture, because they're struggles she herself has overcome.

The challenges she faced didn't prevent her from reaching great heights in her education, however, as she went on to receive a Bachelors Degree from SUNY Old Westbury, a Masters Degree from Queens College, and her Doctorate from St. Johns University.

Outside of the classroom, Dr. Orellana is deeply engaged in community service. She chairs the Hispanic Committee of Saint Brigid's Parish, is a volunteer with A New Beginning Animal Rescue, a nonprofit organization dedicated to helping homeless, senior, or sick dogs, and she is the secretary of the Hispanic United of Westbury organization.

See more about Senator Kaplan's 2022 Woman of Distinction Honoree by clicking [here](#).