



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

George M. Borrello

CCA CEO Tina Zerbian Named 2023 Woman of Distinction

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ALBANY – Sen. George M. Borrello announced that Tina Zerbian, CEO of Connecting Communities in Action (CCA), is the 2023 New York State Senate “Woman of Distinction” for the 57th Senate District.

Established in 1998, the New York State Senate Woman of Distinction Award is hosted annually to pay tribute to women who have demonstrated remarkable character, initiative and commitment in serving their neighbors, strengthening our communities and acting as role models.

Zerbian is the Chief Executive Officer for Connecting Communities in Action, Inc. (CCA). She was honored during a ceremony in Albany Tuesday. Sen. Borrello will host a celebration for her this summer in the district.

Sen. Borrello said he chose Zerbian as the 57th Senate District’s honoree for her humanitarian contributions and her service to others and the community.

“Every day Tina contributes to the well-being of our community. Her care and concern for others is amazing. She is the embodiment of ‘service before self,’” Sen. Borrello said. “Because of her compassion-driven leadership, CCA is recognized across New York and the country for innovation and results in the human services world.”

Donald A. Jones, President of the CCA Board of Directors, has worked closely with Zerbian since he joined the board in 2008.

“It is wonderful news that Tina is being recognized as ‘A Woman of Distinction’ by Sen. Borrello,” he said. “I can tell you her leadership, vision, and passion is second to none. I know that the vulnerable people in our communities are provided much needed services from all Tina has done professionally over all these years. Congratulations Tina! Well deserved.”

Assemblyman Joseph M. Giglio said Zerbian’s commitment to serving others is evident in the success of CCA.

“I was delighted to hear that she was named a 2023 New York State Woman of Distinction,” Assemblyman Giglio said. “Tina has dedicated herself to a life of service and helping others. Under her guidance, the expansion of services provided by Cattaraugus Community Action, now Connecting Communities in Action is admirable. They do so many good things to improve the lives of others. I am so pleased that she is receiving this award.”

As a college student, Zerbian said she thought she would become an educator like her grandmother, sister and brother. While a graduate student, she started teaching at a camp for troubled youth, an experience that opened her eyes to greater needs in the community.

“I was working with kids who needed a lot more than an education. They had more serious issues impacting their lives,” she said. “I started thinking if I could help people address those issues, whether it be poverty or another adversity, it would make more of a difference.”

That realization led to a four-decade career devoted to helping others improve their lives and that of their families.

Zerbian has held the role of CEO of CCA since 1984, and has been a Certified Community Action Professional since 2010. She is a Nationally Certified ROMA Implementer and is a Certified Financial Social Worker. Under her leadership, CCA became the first not-for-profit weatherization agency in New York to manage the weatherization programs of four counties. As such, it is test program for the entire state.

Zerbian is a member of multiple boards and committees — NYS Weatherization Policy Advisory Council, NYS Community Services Block Grant Advisory Council, NYS LIFE Steering Committee, NYS Community Action Association Board of Directors, and the Board of Universal Primary Care.

Her work has led to a number of awards and well-deserved recognition including being named Woman of the Year by the Enchanted Mountain Business and Professional Women’s Club (1990) and the Alumnus of the Year for Leadership Cattaraugus (2008). She has also received the NYS Community Action Association’s Administrator of the Year Award (2000) and the “Friends of Civil Legal Services Award” from the New York State Unified Court System (2004). In 2019, she was inducted into the Notable Women in Human Services Hall of Fame.

Zerbian lives in Ellicottville, NY, with her husband, Tom. They have two adult sons and are expecting their first grandchild later this year.

“Our community is a better place to live because of Tina Zerbian,” Sen. Borrello said. “She is a leader in the very best sense of the word and it is my privilege to honor her as this year’s ‘Woman of Distinction.’”

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