



Senator Andrea Stewart-Cousins



Senator John J. Flanagan



Women of
DISTINCTION
HONORING WOMEN IN NEW YORK

May 1, 2018

Dear Friends,

Proudly observing our 20th anniversary, the New York State Senate welcomes you to this year's Women of Distinction celebration. This event showcases outstanding women living and working in New York State whose contributions have greatly enriched the quality of life in their communities and beyond.

From the women's suffrage movement 150 years ago to the present day, women have played a crucial role in New York State's political, social and economic development. Today we recognize a select group of women who represent the qualities of leadership, compassion, and diligence. Let us celebrate their hard work and subsequent success individually, but also be mindful that today's honor spotlights the groups they are involved in and the causes they fight for.

These New York State women of outstanding accomplishment and importance are well-deserving of today's recognition. Many of the honorees have overcome battles, given countless hours of service to their community, and achieved extraordinary milestones.

On behalf of the New York State Senate, we would like to send our warmest regards to all of you attending the Women of Distinction celebration, and we offer our sincerest congratulations to all of the women being honored in today's celebration. Your dedication, commitment and success are an inspiration for all New Yorkers.

Andrea Stewart-Cousins

Senator Andrea Stewart-Cousins
Democratic
Conference Leader

John J. Flanagan

Senator John J. Flanagan
Temporary President of the Senate
Majority Leader



2018 Women of Distinction Honorees

by Senator

Senator	Honoree
Joseph P. Addabbo, Jr.	Patricia J. McCabe
Frederick J. Akshar, II	Carole Coppens
Marisol Alcantara	Wendy Genao
George A. Amedore, Jr.	Cheryl Hage-Perez
Tony Avella	Nora Constance Marino
Jamaal T. Bailey	Sherene Hall
Brian A. Benjamin	Maria Cruz
John J. Bonacic	Roberta Byron-Lockwood
Phil Boyle	Rhianna Quinn Roddy
Neil D. Breslin	Nell Stokes
John E. Brooks	Tamara Baker
David Carlucci	Roxanne Watson
Leroy G. Comrie	Khayriyyah H. Ali
Thomas D. Croci	Pat Matthews
John A. DeFrancisco	Elizabeth Baldwin
Martin Malavé Dilan	Virgie Jones
Simcha Felder	Joan Pastore, DSW
John J. Flanagan	Leslie Kennedy
Rich Funke	Alice Holloway Young
Patrick M. Gallivan	Janet Zinck
Michael N. Gianaris	Maritza Muñoz
Martin J. Golden	June A. Johnson
Joseph A. Griffo	Linda Romano & Jacqueline Romano
Jesse E. Hamilton, III	Donna Mossman
Kemp Hannon	Marcee Rubinstein
Pamela A. Helming	Laurie Crane
Brad Hoylman	Dr. Meera Shah
Christopher L. Jacobs	Sister Gail Glenn, SSJ
Todd Kaminsky	Hope Coleman
Brian Kavanagh	Amy Breedlove
Timothy M. Kennedy	Lucy A. Candelario



2018 Women of Distinction Honorees

by Senator

Senator	Honoree
Jeffrey D. Klein	Monique Johnson
Liz Krueger	Rachel Levy
Andrew J. Lanza	Doreen P. Cugno
William J. Larkin, Jr.	Elizabeth Rowley, CFRE
Kenneth P. LaValle	Shirley Ruch
Elizabeth O'C. Little	Judy A. Calogero
Carl L. Marcellino	Coleen Cole Spinello
Kathy Marchione	Lynda Bryan
Velmanette Montgomery	Katie Davis
Terrence P. Murphy	Deborah Milone
Thomas F. O'Mara	Kathryn J. Boor, Ph.D
Robert G. Ortt	Robyn L. Krueger
Kevin S. Parker	Gail L. Smith
José R. Peralta	Norma Jimenez
Roxanne J. Persaud	Pamela Hardy-Lockley
Elaine R. Phillips	Lin Pan
Michael H. Ranzenhofer	Beverly L. Mancuso
Patricia A. Ritchie	Mary Lou Rupp
Gustavo Rivera	Tiesha C. Jones
Joseph E. Robach	Louise Novros
James Sanders Jr.	Gina Vasquez
Diane J. Savino	Samantha Ross
Susan Serino	Christina Boryk
José M. Serrano	Mary Eileen Fitzgerald
James L. Seward	Dr. Renee Scialdo Shevat
Toby Ann Stavisky	Dr. Diane B. Call
Andrea Stewart-Cousins	Detective Kayla Maher
James N. Tedisco	Dr. Irina Gelman
David J. Valesky	Linda Brown-Robinson
Catharine M. Young	Shannon Ozzella

Women of
DISTINCTION

HONORING WOMEN IN NEW YORK



NEW YORK STATE SENATE

Women of
DISTINCTION
HONORING WOMEN IN NEW YORK

Program

Musical Performance by:

Albany High School Albanettes
and
Troubadours

Welcoming Remarks

Senator Elizabeth Little
Senator Andrea Stewart-Cousins
Senator John J. Flanagan

Presentation of Awards

Julia Lilkendey

Closing Remarks



Women of **DISTINCTION**

HONORING WOMEN IN NEW YORK

The New York State Senate
is taking special note of the enormous
contributions that women have
made throughout the state and nation.

The women honored in this program
have enriched the quality of life in the

Empire State and beyond.

Their achievements should be
a source of pride and inspiration
to all New Yorkers.





Women of **DISTINCTION** HONORING WOMEN IN NEW YORK

Khayriyyah H. Ali

Khayriyyah H. Ali is a staunch supporter and advocate of adult and higher education initiatives that assist underserved and underrepresented populations.

Ms. Ali currently serves as the Executive Director of the Queens Educational Opportunity Center of the State University of New York. The Center, administered by York College of the City University of New York (CUNY), supports the academic and career training of more than 1,000 students annually to prepare them for the workforce or for future higher education opportunities.

In addition to her work with CUNY, Ms. Ali is also the Project Director of the largest Test Assessing Secondary Completion (TASC) testing site in the United States. TASC replaced the GED exam in New York State.

Ms. Ali has worked for more than 40 years in the areas of adult education, youth development and human services, community and economic development and community mental health. She mentors youth and several non-profit organization leaders, sharing her professional expertise and commitment in service to her local community.

In addition to her membership with numerous community service organizations and agencies, Ms. Ali is currently an officer and board member of the York College Family and Child Center and the South East Queens Muslim Collective, and serves as Vice President of the EOC Director's Association. Ms. Ali is also a certified Holistic Aromatherapist and is the owner of a small business in Jamaica, New York.

A graduate of New York Institute of Technology's Master of Professional Studies (MPS) and Behavioral Science (BS) programs, Ms. Ali is married, a mother and grandmother.

Khayriyyah H. Ali was selected as a 2018 Woman of Distinction by Senator Leroy G. Comrie.





Women of DISTINCTION

HONORING WOMEN IN NEW YORK

Tamara Baker

Tamara Baker's family and her community have always been her first career. While raising her four children, she served as Vice President of her local Civic Association and volunteered to teach preschool in the Lindenhurst School District. When her three daughters expressed interest in Girl Scouts, Ms. Baker became a Girl Scout Leader, serving for 12 years. As her son grew to scouting age, she became a Boy Scout Leader, while also raising funds for the Troop.

One day, in a doctor's office, Ms. Baker met and played with children undergoing cancer treatment. Extremely touched by these children and their illness, the grandmother of five looked for a way to help them. From deep inside her came the idea for blankets, thus beginning *We Care Blankets*. Starting small, Ms. Baker and several volunteer crafters crocheted and delivered blankets to a local hospital. As word spread, many more crafters volunteered their talents. Before long, *We Care Blankets* was delivering to more than 30 hospitals throughout the Long Island and NYC Metro areas and other parts of the United States, and has done so for 17 years.

Ms. Baker and other crafters also create sweaters, booties, hats and blankets for financially needy newborns in need of clothing to wear home. They send the lovingly hand-wrapped items to hospitals' neo-natal units and newborn nurseries.

The Ronald McDonald House has also been receiving blankets for siblings of young cancer patients from Ms. Baker's group, and blankets were also sent to disaster-area shelters in the aftermaths of Superstorm Sandy and Hurricane Harvey.

Ms. Baker's family has learned the beauty of helping others. Her granddaughters have donated their hair for wigs, raised funds for Harvard Hospital Pediatric Cancer Unit, and wrapped and delivered the blankets that *We Care Blankets* so generously create.

Currently residing in Massapequa, Ms. Baker's hope is that cancer will be eradicated in her lifetime and that *We Care Blankets* volunteers will knit and crochet blankets only for healthy newborns departing the hospital. Ms. Baker has distinguished herself among her peers and has truly earned the title of "Woman of Distinction."

Tamara Baker was selected as a 2018 Woman of Distinction by Senator John E. Brooks.





Women of **DISTINCTION**

HONORING WOMEN IN NEW YORK

Elizabeth Baldwin

Elizabeth “Beth” Baldwin of Camillus is a tireless community volunteer and advocate for breast cancer research. For 20 years now, her mission has been to help find a cure for breast cancer, while supporting those and their loved ones fighting the disease.

After her mother was diagnosed with breast cancer in 1990, Ms. Baldwin and her mother turned heartbreak into courage and joined their efforts with doctors at Upstate Medical University in Syracuse to create the Carol M. Baldwin Breast Cancer Research Fund of Central New York.

As the organization’s Executive Director, Ms. Baldwin is dedicated to raising funds to provide research grants for breast cancer prevention and treatment. To date, her work has funded millions of dollars in grants. She is also committed to providing emotional support for patients and their families, often seen at local healthcare facilities sitting with and supporting those who are waiting for chemotherapy, or at her New York State Fair booth raising awareness about breast cancer treatments. She also organizes several events to help raise funds for a cure.

In addition, Ms. Baldwin has volunteered in other ways, including providing the homeless with food and clothing, and demonstrating a true devotion to helping others in her community. Through her compassion and contributions, she has touched the lives of many individuals and created positive change.

Born and raised on Long Island, Ms. Baldwin attended Alfred G. Berner High School in Massapequa, graduated from C.W. Post-Long Island University with a degree in criminology, and served as a substitute teacher for many years. She is a devoted mother of six and the proud grandmother of several grandchildren.

Elizabeth Baldwin was selected as a 2018 Woman of Distinction by Senator John A. DeFrancisco.





Women of **DISTINCTION** HONORING WOMEN IN NEW YORK

Kathryn J. Boor, Ph.D.

Kathryn Boor's entire career has been driven by a passionate commitment to New York State's farm and food community. Ms. Boor grew up on a small family dairy farm in Chemung County and served as the Chemung County Dairy Princess. These were the first steps in a journey that has taken her to Wisconsin, Kenya, and California, before returning to her roots in 1994, where she became the first woman on the Department of Food Science faculty at Cornell University.

Appointed Dean of the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences (CALs) in 2010, Dr. Boor oversees the second-largest college at Cornell University.

Armed with a Ph.D. in Microbiology, Dr. Boor established the Food Safety Research Laboratory at Cornell University, which today is a renowned leader in improving the safety and quality of New York's and the nation's food supply. She has always remained true to her roots in the dairy industry, with her lab staying focused on the quality and safety of locally produced fluid milk and dairy products.

Under Dr. Boor's direction, the College has redoubled its efforts to meet emerging needs spanning from farm to consumer. She is currently working to establish an Institute for Digital Agriculture, and has brought new life into student majors including Environmental Sciences & Sustainability and Plant Sciences. Dr. Boor has revitalized food product development and food safety training with, among numerous initiatives, the establishment of an Institute for Food Safety.

Dr. Boor's leadership of Cornell CALs has played a central role in making the Empire State's farm and food community a national and worldwide leader.

Kathryn J. Boor, Ph.D. was selected as a 2018 Woman of Distinction by Senator Thomas F. O'Mara.





Women of **DISTINCTION**

HONORING WOMEN IN NEW YORK

Christina Boryk

Christina Boryk is the Executive Director of Rebuilding Together Dutchess County (RTDC), an organization dedicated to transforming the lives of low-income homeowners by improving the safety of their homes and revitalizing our region. Since she joined RTDC in 2010, the organization has partnered with over 2,800 volunteers to complete more than 300 home repair projects, investing a market value of \$2.9 million into communities across Dutchess County.

Under Ms. Boryk's leadership, the organization has been honored with several awards of distinction, including the Dutchess County Economic Development Corporation Business Excellence Award and the Gateway to Entrepreneurial Tomorrows, Inc.'s Organization of the Year Award. With Ms. Boryk at the helm, RTDC was recognized nationally when it was selected as a Rebuilding Together Communities of Promise recipient in 2014. It was one of nine select affiliates to receive individualized coaching and support to help the organizations grow, develop and build capacity.

Ms. Boryk's passion for volunteerism was fostered early in her life at Loyola University, Maryland, when she participated in an immersion trip to Mexico with fellow students, working in an orphanage to assist with building maintenance. This experience fostered Ms. Boryk's executive leadership roles, which expand 20 years, and reflects her deep commitment to strengthening her community. She previously served as Executive Director of The Chamber Foundation, the Education Foundation of the Southern Dutchess Chamber of Commerce, with oversight of six education programs including Leadership Dutchess and Youth Leadership, two scholarships, and four annual fundraising events.

Ms. Boryk is a Certified Lead Renovator, and is a graduate of the Hudson Valley Pattern for Progress Fellows Program and Leadership Dutchess. She is a member of the Foundation for Vassar Brothers Medical Center Young Ambassadors and the President-Elect of the Poughkeepsie South Rotary Club.

Christina Boryk was selected as a 2018 Woman of Distinction by Senator Susan Serino.





Women of **DISTINCTION** HONORING WOMEN IN NEW YORK

Amy Breedlove

Amy Breedlove has established herself as an effective community leader in Brooklyn, currently serving as the President of Brooklyn's Cobble Hill Association (CHA), whose mission is to protect and preserve the historic neighborhood. Under her leadership, the CHA is at its largest dues-paying membership in 60 years and oversees 13 active committees.

Ms. Breedlove started her community involvement by opposing inappropriate building changes in the landmarked district of Cobble Hill. As president of the CHA, she works tirelessly, leading the organization to promote the common good and general welfare of the Cobble Hill community in order to make civic and social improvements.

The CHA has represented the community during a land use action by the developer and the City of New York on the former Long Island College Hospital (LICH) campus in Cobble Hill. The CHA worked with elected officials, City Hall and the city agencies to set up a Construction Period Task Force to mitigate the negative impact to the community. Under Ms. Breedlove's leadership, the CHA is pushing to lessen the impact to the neighborhood from the BQE Rehab Project, including pushing for better open and green space along the project corridor.

Ms. Breedlove has a background in activism and has fought for women's and LGBTQ rights. She also serves on the board of Stonewall Community Development Corporation, whose mission is to provide affordable, supportive and safe housing to LGBTQ seniors in New York City. She has worked at an architecture firm as the managing director, and continues to consult with architectural and design firms on their business practices. Creating a better-built environment and promoting the community are her passions.

Ms. Breedlove and her family live in Cobble Hill.

Amy Breedlove was selected as a 2018 Woman of Distinction by Senator Brian Kavanagh.





Women of **DISTINCTION**

HONORING WOMEN IN NEW YORK

Linda Brown-Robinson

Linda Brown-Robinson was born in New York City and raised a proud New Yorker in Mt. Vernon before relocating to upstate New York in 1968. There, her activism first took hold. Her parents instilled in her the idea that she must always vote, and when she volunteered with her husband on a political campaign in the 70s, she caught the political bug.

Ms. Brown-Robinson is an active and hands-on member of a number of local boards, organizations and commissions, including CNY N.O.W. (National Organization for Women), Boys and Girls Club of Syracuse, Onondaga County Aging Services Advisory Board, Onondaga Elders, Inc., and many InterFaith Works' sub-committees. She currently serves on the Executive Committee for the Onondaga County Democratic Committee, as well as the Democratic 5th Ward Committee.

Since November 2016, Ms. Brown-Robinson has served as President of the Syracuse Onondaga NAACP, the national civil rights organization. During her administration, she has introduced a number of "firsts" for the branch, creating the first annual State of the Community address and 90-Day Vision Plan, as well as a long-term succession roadmap for moving the branch forward. She is an entrepreneur who owns her own event planning business, "In The EVENT Of..."

Over the years, Ms. Brown-Robinson received numerous awards for her commitment to community service. Most recently, she was presented with a proclamation award from NYS Comptroller Thomas DiNapoli, and in 2017, she was celebrated as the City Democrat of the Year. The CNY Girl Scout Council presented Ms. Brown-Robinson with an appreciation of service award and made her a lifetime Girl Scout. In addition, she has received numerous NAACP local, state, and national awards and commendations.

Ms. Brown-Robinson likes to spend her free time shopping with her lady friends. But her greatest passion is traveling with her husband (with many side trips to Florida to visit their adult children, grandkids, and the pride of the family, great-grandchild little JoJo). She has traveled both domestically and abroad, to 47 of the 50 states and five of the seven continents.

***Linda Brown-Robinson was selected as a 2018
Woman of Distinction by Senator David J. Valesky.***





Women of **DISTINCTION**

HONORING WOMEN IN NEW YORK

Lynda Bryan

Lynda Bryan is a community-involved, hardworking mother and grandmother who currently serves as Town Clerk in the Town of Halfmoon. As a young woman and single mom in the 1970s, she started her own business, successfully operating a florist shop from her home while single-handedly raising her children. Ms. Bryan's generous spirit and kindness meant that she always was there to lend a helping hand to others and put their needs above her own.

For 25 years, and with the help of her sisters and friends, Ms. Bryan has organized Christmas parties for the residents of Bishop Hubbard Senior Apartments. She gives her time and provides materials at a senior complex where the residents make Boxwood trees for the holidays. In addition, she has worked at the Halfmoon Senior Center craft fair and helped the Center obtain a new senior van.

Ms. Bryan can often be found at the Clifton Park-Halfmoon Public Library, working on the Two Towns - One Book program. Her love of history and the community in which she has lived her entire life led her to be named President of the Halfmoon Historical Society where, among many projects, she organized a historic gowns display. Ms. Bryan has worked tirelessly on community events, including the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Moving Wall and currently on the historical markers program for the Town of Halfmoon.

Since 2011, Ms. Bryan has volunteered as Secretary to the Saratoga County Town Clerk's Association and is always ready to lend advice and assistance to new town clerks. Her strong work ethic and willingness to help others, wherever needed, has earned her the respect and admiration of all those with whom she comes into contact – whether in her role as Town Clerk, as community advocate or as a devoted mom and grandmother.

Lynda Bryan was selected as a 2018 Woman of Distinction by Senator Kathy Marchione.





Women of **DISTINCTION**

HONORING WOMEN IN NEW YORK

Roberta Byron-Lockwood

Roberta Byron-Lockwood is the President/CEO of the Sullivan Catskills Visitors Association (SCVA), the official destination marketing organization for Sullivan County. She brings a rich history of tourism experience and is responsible for marketing, promoting and selling the Sullivan Catskills to the world.

Prior to her tenure at SCVA, Ms. Byron-Lockwood was the Regional Tourism Director for Central New York, serving simultaneously as Assistant Deputy Commissioner of Marketing & Advertising for Empire State Development and Tourism Director for "I Love New York." She was selected as a delegate from New York State at the only White House Tourism Conference under President Bill Clinton, served on the Governor's Tourism Advisory Board under two governors, is a founder of the New York State Tourism Promotion Agency Council, and hosted the Governor's Catskill Challenge.

Ms. Byron-Lockwood earned a Master's Degree in Business Administration and Public Administration from SUNY Plattsburgh. Currently, she serves as President of the Regional Environment and Agriculture Program, Scenic Wild Delaware River Executive Board Member, Sullivan County Chamber of Commerce, Sullivan County Partnership for Economic Development, New York State Tourism Industry Coalition and SUNY Sullivan Curriculum Advisory Board.

A dedicated member of the community, serving as past Chair of WSUL/WVOS Heart-a-Thon, Boys & Girls Club of Sullivan and Orange Counties and Sullivan County Renaissance, Ms. Byron-Lockwood has received over 40 awards in leadership, marketing, and tourism development. These awards include I Love NY Individual Achievement, NYSTIA Excellence in Tourism (3), the SUNY Sullivan Women Who Make a Difference and the Sullivan County Partnership Distinguished Service Award.

Under Ms. Byron-Lockwood's leadership, visitor spending in the Sullivan Catskills has grown over 20% since 2009. She is currently developing cutting-edge training programs to entice Metro New Yorkers, domestic and international travelers from China, Germany, Switzerland, Ireland, the UK and Australia.

***Roberta Byron-Lockwood was selected as a 2018
Woman of Distinction by Senator John J. Bonacic.***





Women of **DISTINCTION**

HONORING WOMEN IN NEW YORK

Dr. Diane B. Call

Diane B. Call is President of Queensborough Community College. Her career spans four decades at Queensborough and the City University of New York (CUNY) in virtually all major areas of administration and academics.

As Provost, Dr. Call led the Academic Affairs Division to create a student-centered learning environment in collaboration with her faculty and Student Affairs colleagues. Among her many outstanding achievements are programs for the recruitment and retention of faculty and a faculty development program. Dr. Call's partnership with Student Affairs led to the implementation of the Freshman Academies for all full-time freshmen, and the establishment of an assessment protocol to measure their success.

Dr. Call holds a Doctor of Education degree in College and University Administration, a Master's degree in Community College Administration and a second Master's degree in Student Personnel Administration, all earned from Teachers College, Columbia University. Additionally, she holds a Certificate in Curriculum Development from the Harvard University School of Education.

Dr. Call was an Adjunct Professor at Long Island University, C.W. Post Graduate School of Education, and an Adjunct Associate Professor at Queensborough's Department of English. In her years at Queensborough, Dr. Call instituted the Instructional Support Services Center and Learning Lab and has led Admissions Services, Skills Assessment Testing, Academic Advisement, College Discovery and CSTEP. She consolidated Tutorial Services and the Writing Center, substantially increasing the number of students served.

Dr. Call has served as a member of the Strategic Planning Steering Committee of the College of Aeronautics (now Vaughn College), a Consultant to the United States Department of Education, Higher Education Programs' Division of Institutional Development, and Consultant to the New York City Public Schools on Health Occupation Vocational Programs.

Diane B. Call was selected as a 2018 Woman of Distinction by Senator Toby Ann Stavisky.





Women of **DISTINCTION** HONORING WOMEN IN NEW YORK

Judith A. Calogero

Judith A. Calogero is a planner with over 35 years of real estate and community development experience with an emphasis on affordable housing development and finance. Her past work includes five years as Commissioner of the New York State Division of Housing and Community Renewal, where she directed an executive branch agency and two public authorities.

Since 2009, Ms. Calogero has been running Calogero Partners, a consulting firm that specializes in community planning and the development and financing of affordable and mixed-income/mixed-use housing projects.

Throughout her career, Ms. Calogero has been involved in the planning and financing of more than 730 housing projects involving more than \$5 billion in public and private financing. During her 12 years in government service, she helped to create and implement new programs to expand financing options for affordable single and multi-family housing, improve housing accessibility for persons with disabilities, and enhance the economic vitality of main streets.

In addition to her government service and consulting work, Ms. Calogero has worked for several other companies, including as Northeast Regional Director for RBC Capital Markets, CEO of the New York Housing Conference and Executive Director of the New York State Rural Housing Coalition.

Ms. Calogero has been involved with numerous nonprofit and civic organizations throughout her career, and has focused her recent volunteer work in the City of Glens Falls, where she resides. As chairperson of the Glens Falls Industrial Development Agency, and secretary of the Greater Glens Falls Local Development Corporation since 2007, Ms. Calogero has been directly involved in the City's efforts to revitalize its downtown area. She represents Mayor Hall on the board of the Economic Development Corporation of Warren County, and she has been directly involved in the City's participation in the State's Downtown Revitalization Initiative.

Ms. Calogero holds degrees from Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute and The College of Saint Rose.

Judith A. Calogero was selected as a 2018 Woman of Distinction by Senator Elizabeth O'C. Little.





Women of **DISTINCTION**

HONORING WOMEN IN NEW YORK

Lucy A. Candelario

Lucy A. Candelario was born and raised in Buffalo, NY and has spent nearly 30 years in the nonprofit industry, devoting herself to not only to the betterment of the City of Good Neighbors, but also to the people who call it home.

Ms. Candelario is a graduate of Grover Cleveland High School and the University at Buffalo, where she earned her Bachelor of Arts Degree. She currently serves as Executive Director of Erie Regional Housing Development Corporation -- The Belle Center, one of the largest, all-encompassing human service agencies located on the Lower West Side of Buffalo. She took on this role after spending nearly 20 years with another crucial not for profit agency, West Side Community Services.

During her time as Executive Director at West Side Community Services, Ms. Candelario introduced science-based programming to the range of human services the center already offers. The youth-oriented programs still running offer opportunities for Buffalo's most underserved kids to positively channel energy and relieve stress, and engage with role models and educational resources throughout the community.

Ms. Candelario's leadership has never been more evident than this past year, when Puerto Rico was devastated by Hurricane Maria's 155 mph winds and in desperate need of assistance. In the weeks following the disaster, Ms. Candelario sprang into action here in Western New York, making the Belle Center a primary drop-off location for much needed donations. For two months, Ms. Candelario led volunteer efforts, oversaw local telethons, and managed donations, all while holding weekly meetings to inform the public on donations received and future plans to disburse them in Puerto Rico.

This type of leadership is no surprise to those who know her. Ms. Candelario's involvement in the WNY community is extensive, with her serving as a member of the board of trustees for The Buffalo & Erie County Public Library, Buffalo Prenatal-Perinatal Network, Inc., The Community Action Organization, West Buffalo Charter School, Buffalo Community Center Collaborative, the Hispanic Women's League and MUDPIES Children Museum.

Above all, Ms. Candelario puts family first, and is the proud mother of Daniel and Victoria, grandmother of Daniel Jr. and Dominic, and mother-in-law to Dariana. Ms. Candelario's favorite quote is by Helen Keller: "The best and most beautiful things cannot be seen or touched – they must be felt with the heart."

Lucy A. Candelario was selected as a 2018 Woman of Distinction by Senator Timothy Kennedy.





Women of **DISTINCTION**

HONORING WOMEN IN NEW YORK

Hope Coleman

Hope Coleman, a lifelong advocate for children and education, has worked in childcare her entire career and was the director of several childcare centers prior to her retirement.

Currently, Ms. Coleman coordinates the Peninsula Section of the National Council of Jewish Women's annual "Back to School Store" event. The program provides a bevy of school supplies and materials — from winter coats to backpacks to pencils — to children in need. Each summer, hundreds of disadvantaged children from across Nassau County go "shopping" with an adult volunteer, selecting school supplies and other items for the upcoming school year. The goods are donated and volunteers staff the event.

Through the annual program, Ms. Coleman ensures that children not only leave the store with the physical materials to make their school year a success, but also with increased self-esteem, allowing them to make their own decisions, while having a back-to-school shopping experience just like every other student their age. While the children pick out supplies, parents receive a myriad of services including free nutrition advice and health screenings. Ms. Coleman's efforts have helped more than 3,500 children who have participated in the program.

Residing in Baldwin, Ms. Coleman and her husband Michael have called Long Island's South Shore their home for nearly 40 years. They have two children, Joanna and Lee, and two grandchildren, Allison and Jacob.

Hope Coleman was selected as a 2018 Woman of Distinction by Senator Todd Kaminsky.





Women of DISTINCTION

HONORING WOMEN IN NEW YORK

Carole Coppens

Carole Coppens has served as Executive Director of the YWCA Binghamton and Broome County since June 2000. She holds a Master's Degree in Exercise Physiology from the University of Colorado.

Ms. Coppens was elected to the Board of Directors for the YWCA USA in 2008 and served two terms ending in 2013. She was also nominated to the YWCA World Service Council in October 2008, and currently serves on the Steering, Nominating and Advocacy committees for the Supportive Housing Network of New York. Ms. Coppens also serves as Chair of the Governance Committee for the Homeless of the Southern Tier.

Ms. Coppens has received numerous awards during her career. In 2002, the Broome County Status of Women Council recognized her as a Woman of Achievement. In November 2011, the City of Binghamton established The Human Rights Commission; Ms. Coppens was appointed by the Mayor as a founding member. She also served on numerous local not-for-profit boards, including the SOS Shelter, Southern Tier AIDS Program, League of Women Voters and the American Heart Association.

Recently, Ms. Coppens received several citations for her outstanding commitment to developing innovative supportive housing for the homeless in Broome County from the New York State Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance, Homeless Housing and Assistance Corporation. She was also recognized by the New York State Assembly and Senate for outstanding leadership and dedication in restoring the historic YWCA building.

In 2017, the New York State Senate and Assembly presented Ms. Coppens with a Legislative Resolution commemorating the 125th Anniversary of the YWCA of Binghamton and Broome County. Broome County and the City of Binghamton have cited her work with the YWCA as well, and she was nominated to serve on the Broome County Family Violence Prevention Council and also inducted into the Binghamton Rotary Club # 64. Ms. Coppens maintains a professional membership and certification with the American College of Sports Medicine.

Ms. Coppens currently lives in Apalachin, New York with her husband and cat.

Carole Coppens was selected as a 2018 Woman of Distinction by Senator Frederick J. Akshar, II.





Women of **DISTINCTION**

HONORING WOMEN IN NEW YORK

Laurie Crane

Laurie Crane, of Huron, is an elected official in Wayne County who is also a nurse, volunteer and advocate for her community.

As the Town Supervisor in the Town of Huron, Ms. Crane also serves on the Wayne County Board of Supervisors. Since beginning her first term in 2008, she has made a significant impact on her town and her county through her leadership. Ms. Crane is the chairwoman of the County's Government Operations Committee and also serves on more sub-committees than any other supervisor in Wayne County history.

Most notably, Ms. Crane represented her constituents during the flooding along the Lake Ontario shoreline in 2017. She stood up to the International Joint Commission, the governing board of lake water levels, at multiple public hearings, and was a resource and advocate for the residents of Wayne County during this difficult time.

In addition to her role in local government, Ms. Crane is also a registered nurse who is highly respected at Rochester General Hospital. She volunteers at many local charities and serves on several boards, including the Wayne County EMS Advisory Board, the Wayne County Soil & Water Conservation District and the Wayne County Action Program, where she serves her own community, as well as neighboring Seneca and Ontario counties.

Friends and colleagues laud Ms. Crane for the passion she has for her work, remarking also that she is greatly loved and admired for her willingness to lead by example.

Notably, Ms. Crane continues to dedicate her time and efforts to the community while she faces many personal struggles, including her own current battle with cancer.

Laurie Crane was selected as a 2018 Woman of Distinction by Senator Pamela A. Helming.





Women of **DISTINCTION**

HONORING WOMEN IN NEW YORK

Maria Cruz

Maria Cruz, originally from Puerto Rico, has been an advocate and visionary for the residents of Taino Towers and the East Harlem community for more than 45 years. She is currently the Executive Director for ARCO Management Inc./Taino Towers. In this position, some of Ms. Cruz's many accomplishments include the creation of the complex's Senior Citizen Park, organizing holiday fundraisers, and the renovation of the Touro College building that conducts several academic programs for the children and older youth of Taino Towers and the larger community.

In 1999, Ms. Cruz organized the first annual Taino Family Day, an event to unify all residents throughout East Harlem. It continues today, almost 20 years later.

In 2002, Ms. Cruz, along with Irving "Magic" Johnson, inaugurated the Magic Johnson Computer Learning Center to provide computer classes to both Taino Towers residents and the local community. It currently serves senior citizens, adults and young adults, Spanish speakers and offers after-school programs for children.

Ms. Cruz is a board member on the East Harlem Council for Human Services, working closely with local officials. She has served as President of the Tenant Association for her apartment building; was Vice President for the East Harlem Little League Baseball organization; and in her spare time, she has organized bus trips for neighborhood children to amusement parks and ball games. Ms. Cruz has successfully encouraged and assisted a number of tenants to return to school and further their education, enabling them to re-enter the work force and no longer need public assistance.

Ms. Cruz has received many awards, including a Commendation from the State Comptroller for leadership and service and from The Puerto Rican Hispanic Task Force in appreciation for years of dedication to the Latino Community of East Harlem.

Ms. Cruz is the proud mother of four wonderful children.

Maria Cruz was selected as a 2018 Woman of Distinction by Senator Brian A. Benjamin.





Women of **DISTINCTION**

HONORING WOMEN IN NEW YORK

Doreen P. Cugno

Doreen P. Cugno is President & CEO and Co-Founder of Staten Island's St. George Theatre, where she oversees day-to-day operations and the multi-million dollar capital restoration projects.

In 2004, she, her late mother, Rosemary Cappozalo, and her sister, Luanne, created St. George Theatre Restoration, Inc., a non-profit organization, to save the St. George Theatre from destruction. Opened in 1929 as a lavish movie palace and vaudeville theater, it fell on hard times and was padlocked for over 30 years. The three ladies were the driving force to bringing this theater back to life. Today, it is a thriving 1,900 seat performing arts center that has hosted world-class entertainment acts including Tony Bennett, Diana Ross, Jerry Seinfeld, Smokey Robinson, and hundreds more. The organization has grown from its three founders to a full-time staff of seven, 100 part-time employees, over 100 volunteers, and a dedicated board of directors.

Ms. Cugno is a member of the League of Historic American Theaters, Association of Performing Arts Presenters, Staten Island Economic Development Corporation Women's Counsel, and the Chamber of Commerce. She previously served as a Cultural Development Fund Panelist for the NYC Department of Cultural Affairs. She holds a B.A. in Dance with a Minor in Music from Point Park University.

Before her current duties, Ms. Cugno had an extensive career as a dance educator/choreographer in Staten Island for over 20 years. She is the co-owner of Mrs. Rosemary's Dance Studio, established in 1959. She also taught art, and kindergarten to eighth grades, at a local Catholic school from 1988 to 1995.

Ms. Cugno resides in Staten Island with her husband Michael and two children, Michael-Scott and Rose.

Doreen P. Cugno was selected as a 2018 Woman of Distinction by Senator Andrew J. Lanza.





Women of DISTINCTION

HONORING WOMEN IN NEW YORK

Katie Davis

Katie Davis is a devout Christian woman who believes in the pure, unchanged, unchallengeable Word of God. Mrs. Davis is an active member of Antioch Baptist Church in Brooklyn, where she serves as Vice Chair of the Trustee Board. In this role, Mrs. Davis creates an atmosphere where members can identify and embrace their purpose through Bible study, prayer, praise, worship and a consistent desire to develop their spiritual gifts. Mrs. Davis believes that steadfast efforts at seeking God's Kingdom before all else will empower members to be leaders in the church, in their homes and in their communities.

An active civic leader, Mrs. Davis has served on the boards of several organizations in Central Brooklyn, and is passionately entrenched in voter registration efforts. She educates and encourages young people to register, become informed voters, and to vote, ultimately cultivating their leadership potential. Moreover, she inspires them to put God first in their lives and promotes a culture for them to give back to their communities.

Mrs. Davis is a graduate of Columbia University with a Master's degree in Public Health Administration. She was Deputy Director for Administration at Kingsboro Psychiatric Center in Brooklyn prior to her retirement from the New York State Office of Mental Health.

Currently, Mrs. Davis is President of the Community Council for Medgar Evers College. Under her outstanding leadership and commitment to education, the Council has awarded well over \$200,000 in student scholarships.

Mrs. Davis' desire to embrace, empower and encourage others illustrates that she lives a life where God is indeed the center - "But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you." Matthew 6:33

Katie Davis was selected as a 2018 Woman of Distinction by Senator Velmanette Montgomery.





Women of **DISTINCTION**

HONORING WOMEN IN NEW YORK

Mary Eileen Fitzgerald

Mary Eileen Fitzgerald was born in the Bronx on January 17, 1923. Her mother came to this country from Ireland with only \$1.25 to her name. Ms. Fitzgerald's father passed away when she was only 15, so she had to find work to help support herself and her mother. In 1952, she took her Civil Service test to become a police officer because she thought, "it would be an interesting job." On December 1, 1952, Ms. Fitzgerald became a member of the New York Police Department (NYPD).

Ms. Fitzgerald was a pioneer in her field and had an illustrious 31-year career serving the citizens of New York in the NYPD. Ms. Fitzgerald broke down barriers on the Pickpocket Squad and then in the Intelligence Division. She was promoted to Detective in 1959, and promoted again to Detective Second Grade in 1968. Ms. Fitzgerald also won the June 1971 "Cop of the Month" award, served in the Bureau of Policewomen, the Queens District Attorney's Squad, the Special Frauds Squad and the Office of the Chief of Detectives.

During her time in the NYPD, Ms. Fitzgerald was tasked with protecting several of the 20th century's most iconic women, from Israel's Prime Minister Golda Meir and Queen Sophia of Spain, to First Ladies Jackie Kennedy, Lady Bird Johnson and finally, Nancy Reagan.

It was guarding Jackie Kennedy that Ms. Fitzgerald considers the highlight of her career. Dressed in plain clothes, she strolled the streets of New York City a few short paces behind her charge, watching carefully for threats.

Ms. Fitzgerald retired from the NYPD in 1983 at the age of 60. She now resides on Roosevelt Island and still has a photo of Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis, signed, "With best wishes, Jacqueline Kennedy" hanging inside her apartment, along with pictures of her great nieces and nephews.

*Mary Eileen Fitzgerald was selected as a 2018
Woman of Distinction by Senator José M. Serrano.*





Women of **DISTINCTION**

HONORING WOMEN IN NEW YORK

Dr. Irina Gelman

Dr. Irina Gelman of Johnstown is a tireless public servant who serves as the Director of Public Health for Fulton County.

Dr. Gelman has led the way in the field of rural health care by pioneering an innovative tele-medicine initiative aimed at improving access to care. Visiting a doctor for a routine, non-emergency issue or something as simple as a prescription renewal can be a challenge for those living in rural communities. Under Dr. Gelman's leadership, Fulton County residents now have a new option for non-emergency medical diagnoses with the new telehealth program.

With her preliminary medical background in surgery and clinical care, Dr. Gelman, a PACE University graduate, grew up in Brooklyn and went on to receive her doctorate degree from the New York College of Podiatric Medicine. She obtained a Master's Degree in Public Health at Nova Southeastern University College of Osteopathic Medicine, and earned a HANYS Academy for Healthcare Leadership certification from Cornell University.

Currently a PhD candidate in the Public/Community Health track, Dr. Gelman is working on her dissertation entitled, "The Utility of Telehealth Initiatives in Rural Areas of NYS."

Dr. Gelman also is a small business owner, serving as President and principal owner of EMVI Inc., a family-owned and operated chocolate company located in Broadalbin. She serves as the Treasurer of the Fulton-Montgomery Regional Chamber of Commerce, and received their 2018 Family Business Award.

In 2017, Dr. Gelman was honored with the Rural Health Champion Public Health Award by the Adirondack Health Institute, recognizing her by her colleagues as a trailblazer and visionary. She is a member of the NYS Medical Reserve Corps, a comprehensive volunteer management system of trained health care professionals to assist state and federal officials in public health emergencies. In addition, she continues to be a leader in developing public health policies in the fight against the terrible scourge of heroin and opioid abuse.

Dr. Gelman and her husband, Victor, reside in Johnstown and are the proud parents of three children, Emily, Mia and Michael.

***Dr. Irina Gelman was selected as a 2018
Woman of Distinction by Senator James N. Tedisco.***





Women of **DISTINCTION**

HONORING WOMEN IN NEW YORK

Wendy Genao

Wendy Genao was born and raised in Washington Heights. She attended Mercy College, where she earned an undergraduate degree in Liberal Arts, and later, a Master's degree in Special Education. Ms. Genao went to work for the Department of Education as a special education teacher, giving her all in order to help the children of her community. With the goal of helping the underserved, she moved on to a social work position with the Department of Human Resources.

From a young age, Ms. Genao worked in her father's 40-year-old business, Dyckman Car Services. An economic pillar in Washington Heights, the business has provided jobs to many families. It was there that Ms. Genao first learned more about her community and the many needs of its residents, and it was there that she became determined to contribute to the betterment of that community.

Ms. Genao has become a voice for her community, dedicating her life to fighting for the rights of others and to helping in any way she is able. Whether she is assisting her neighbors in finding employment, or teaching people about their rights through workshops and events, she is tireless in her efforts.

Ms. Genao believes that progress and improvement in any community and its people starts with education. Her goal is to continue her hard work so that others can achieve their dreams.

Ms. Genao is the proud daughter of two Dominican immigrants and the proud mother of two sons.

Wendy Genao was selected as a 2018 Woman of Distinction by Senator Marisol Alcantara.





Women of **DISTINCTION** HONORING WOMEN IN NEW YORK

Sister Gail Glenn, SSJ

Sister Gail Glenn, SSJ is a lifelong resident of the City of Buffalo and Sister of St. Joseph for 57 years. She has exemplified the virtue of service to others throughout her life, and made a lasting impact on Catholic education in the Diocese of Buffalo.

Sister Gail has dedicated her life as an educator in diocesan schools for over 51 years, serving as principal for 46 of those years. Most of her ministry service has been dedicated in the City of Buffalo's west side community, where she continues to serve today as principal of Catholic Academy of West Buffalo.

As a school principal, Sister Gail's goal has always been to create a climate in which all students feel safe and valued, and where all teachers strive to help each student reach their full potential. As she notes, "Catholic Education has been a part of my life since I was six years old. It has been a privilege and honor to take what I have learned and been given, and share it with our students."

Catholic Academy of West Buffalo, located in the heart of the 60th Senate District's historic Delaware neighborhood, will be celebrating 30 years of excellence in education this year. Under Sister Gail's leadership, the school continues to excel academically, recently ranked by *Buffalo Business First* in the top 10 percent of private, parochial, public and charter schools in the City of Buffalo. The school prides itself on its rigorous academic programs, a wide variety of extracurricular activity offerings, and commitment to preparing a diverse student body to grow both inside and outside of the classroom.

Sister Gail is one of six children to parents John and Frances Glenn. She attended Medaille College and the State University of New York at Buffalo, earning Bachelor of Science and Master of Science degrees in Elementary Education.

Sister Gail Glenn, SSJ, was selected as a 2018 Woman of Distinction by Senator Christopher L. Jacobs.





Women of **DISTINCTION** HONORING WOMEN IN NEW YORK

Cheryl Hage-Perez

Cheryl Hage-Perez is a lifelong resident of Amsterdam, New York, who has devoted her career to providing service and assistance to the most vulnerable members of our community.

Ms. Hage-Perez attended St. Mary's Institute and Bishop Scully High School and earned an Associate's degree from Fulton-Montgomery Community College before beginning her distinguished career as a mental health aide at St. Mary's Hospital. While working full time and raising two children as a single mother, she put herself through The College of St. Rose. There, she earned a degree in social work and went on to work for many years providing care and support to developmentally-disabled adults.

Ms. Hage-Perez served as the Executive Director of the Mental Health Association of Fulton and Montgomery Counties for seven years, where she was instrumental in developing programs and services for individuals with mental illness, including the creation of the Handy Ups and Downs Thrift Store. Today, the thrift store continues to provide employment opportunities for those struggling with mental illness.

After overcoming a bout with cancer with grace and dignity, Ms., Hage-Perez took a position as the Executive Director of Support Ministries, Inc., an agency that provides housing and support to people with AIDS. During her 14 years there, she doubled the size of the program and created many additional services.

The daughter of a decorated WWII veteran, Ms. Hage-Perez comes from a family with a proud military tradition that continues to this day; her grandchildren currently serve in the United States Marines. Ms. Hage-Perez has found her true calling as the Executive Director of the Veterans Community and Housing Coalition, which provides critically needed housing and services to veterans in counties throughout the Capital Region.

Ms. Hage-Perez has secured more than \$350,000 to repair and rebuild transitional housing for homeless veterans. When she realized that she was still short on funding, she organized a major fundraiser, the Veterans Ball. The Ball raised more than \$70,000 in two years to help fund programs and services, and also provides an opportunity for Ms. Hage-Perez to recognize and honor local veterans for their dedicated service.

Cheryl Hage-Perez was selected as a 2018 Woman of Distinction by Senator George A. Amedore, Jr.





Women of **DISTINCTION**

HONORING WOMEN IN NEW YORK

Sherene Hall

Sherene Hall is one of the Bronx's most young, powerful, influential and dedicated civic leaders. Born and raised on the beautiful Caribbean Island of Jamaica, Ms. Hall's dedication to family and community is unquestionable. Since the tender age of 12, she has always loved and been involved in community activities.

Ms. Hall has been a member of the Northeast Bronx Community for over 17 years. She, along with some of her fellow pioneers from the Bridgefield Civic League Inc., began her foray into community service five years ago. Ms. Hall has given her time and talent to several organizations and currently sits on the Board of Directors for the Bridgefield Civic League, Montefiore Hospital and the Morris Heights Health Center, and she serves as the Vice President of the 47th Precinct Community Council.

Ms. Hall's main goal is to build a healthy relationship with police officers in her community so that all can be safe and enjoy mutual trust and respect. She is currently embarking on a community building initiative program called "Civic Corner." This series of events will be geared toward providing the community with invaluable information and creating a medium through which lingering community issues can be discussed and resolved. Ms. Hall's hope is to initiate positive change among community members through these interactive, inspirational, empowering and educational sessions. Her mantra has always been "service over self."

Ms. Hall will continue to be the voice for the unheard and is committed to ensuring that the work she does resonates strategies that foster hope, harmony and good will.

Sherene Hall was selected as a 2018 Woman of Distinction by Senator Jamaal T. Bailey.





Women of **DISTINCTION** HONORING WOMEN IN NEW YORK

Pamela Hardy-Lockley

Pamela Hardy-Lockley is the current President of the Linden Plaza Leaseholders' Tenant Association Council in the East New York section of Brooklyn. A lifelong Brooklyn resident, Ms. Hardy-Lockley was born and raised in the Weeksville and Crown Heights sections of Brooklyn and moved to Linden Plaza in 1975. She graduated from Thomas Jefferson High School and attended Long Island University-Brooklyn Campus. She is a member of the St. Paul Community Baptist Church in Brooklyn.

Ms. Hardy-Lockley, the Board and alternate members, have worked day and night to stop the wave of evictions and to address the issues that have plagued Linden Plaza residents as a result of a 2008 mortgage refinancing, conversion and 93% rent increase. Together, they have assisted hundreds of tenants appearing weekly in Brooklyn Housing Court facing eviction. Working closely with elected officials and other leaders in the community, Ms. Hardy-Lockley and the Council have successfully fostered a better understanding of the housing challenges in their community.

Ms. Hardy-Lockley is also a member of the Brooklyn Mitchell-Lama Task Force's Legislative Committee-Brooklyn Borough Hall; the Mitchell-Lama Accountability and Action Committee (Co-Chair); Brooklyn Tenants United's Task Force on Brooklyn Housing Court; the Coalition for Community Advancement – East New York and Cypress Hills Rezoning; and Community Board 5's Private Development Resident Voices.

Ms. Hardy-Lockley's father, Grand District Deputy Wilbert Hardy (IBPOE of W) and mother, Hazel Cohen, Brooklyn Chapter of the Eastern Stars-(ADA Chapter), taught her and her siblings the importance of community service. Both parents are now deceased, but their spirit of love, understanding and community service lives on in their daughter.

Ms. Hardy-Lockley would like to thank the members of the Linden Plaza Leaseholders' Tenant Association Council, friends and neighbors in Linden Plaza, for their love, prayers, advice, support and criticism . . . "without constructive criticism, we cannot learn and grow."

Ms. Hardy-Lockley has the unwavering love and support of her daughters, Lisa Janelle and Jasmine Renee; sister-in law Jane, who loves her like a biological sister; and stepmother Julia Hagens, who is 104 years young and a wealth of invaluable advice.

***Pamela Hardy-Lockley was selected as a 2018
Woman of Distinction by Senator Roxanne J. Persaud.***





Women of **DISTINCTION**

HONORING WOMEN IN NEW YORK

Norma Jimenez

Norma Jimenez is an outstanding resident of East Elmhurst, Queens, a social justice advocate and avid voice for tolerance who has a long history of volunteerism and community service. Ms. Jimenez' many years of finding solutions to issues that have a negative impact on women and families has earned her many recognitions and awards.

Serving within the social services field and its respective community, Ms. Jimenez works with many institutions throughout Queens County, including in the areas of prevention of domestic violence and elder care. She serves her community board (Community Board No. 3, Queens) and is a member of both the Our Lady of Fatima Church Pastoral Council and the National Organization for Women (NOW).

Ms. Jimenez has also spoken about the role of the media in perpetuating violence against women, fueling negative stereotypes, electoral politics, access to high quality education, affordable childcare, reproductive rights, immigration issues, economic, racial and environmental justice.

A board member of the Queens County Neuropsychiatric Institute, Ms. Jimenez is also part of the Elmhurst Hospital Community Advisory Board, among others. She is a member of the Dominican Women's Caucus in NYC, working to ensure the equitable participation of Dominican women and Latinas in New York City and the greater community.

Born in the Dominican Republic, Ms. Jimenez earned a prominent distinction as an active participant in New York City's public affairs. She is the proud mother of two outstanding citizens.

Norma Jimenez was selected as a 2018 Woman of Distinction by Senator José R. Peralta.





Women of **DISTINCTION** HONORING WOMEN IN NEW YORK

June A. Johnson

June A. Johnson began her community involvement serving on the PTA of her children's elementary school, PS 127, eventually serving as its President for five years. She later became an Executive Board member at McKinley JHS. To this day, Ms. Johnson works on community projects with the same people that were on those PTAs.

After losing her beloved mom to cancer, Ms. Johnson joined the American Cancer Society's (ACS) formation of the Bay Ridge/Dyker Heights/Bensonhurst – Relay for Life, encouraging her school to form a team and then captaining that team. She served as chairperson of Relay for Life for six years, volunteered at ACS for over 20, and is still active today.

Ms. Johnson is actively involved in local school affairs and serves on the School Leadership Team at her grandson's school, the SEEALL Academy – PS/IS 180, even accompanying the students on four of their European school trips. In addition, she belongs to the Garden Club at the Bay View School – PS 102, and plants and maintains the BID planter and two street trees on the corner of her block, as well as her own street tree.

Ms. Johnson has been a member of Community Board 10 for 25 years and now serves as Chair of the Parks Committee. She is also on the Executive Board of Directors of the Narrows Botanical Gardens.

For well over 50 years, Ms. Johnson has been married to the love of her life, Doug. They are blessed with three beautiful children, six fantastic grandchildren, and the best daughter-in-law and son-in-law! Together, as a family, they are all hosting their 5th Annual Blood Drive in memory of their son, brother and uncle, Mathiew D. Johnson. To date, they have collected over 300 pints of blood and counting.

June A. Johnson was selected as a 2018 Woman of Distinction by Senator Martin J. Golden.





Women of **DISTINCTION**

HONORING WOMEN IN NEW YORK

Monique Johnson

Monique Johnson is a native of the Bronx. She is a New York State Chaplain, the President of the Throggs Neck Resident Council (TNRC), a member of Community Board #10 and a Community Partner for the New York Police Department, where she mentors newly assigned officers.

Ms. Johnson dedicates her life to helping and supporting others. She acknowledged her call to activism in 1992 when she first became the President of the TNRC. She believes it takes a village to raise a child, and is committed to building up her community and tearing down every stronghold that plagues the people in her neighborhood. Ms. Johnson is committed to engaging communities and government in dialogue about how to create viable solutions for the problems that people living in public housing face. She is instrumental in integrating service, professionalism, and community activism into the mission and purpose of the TNRC.

Partnerships with elected officials, charity fundraisers, economic development training, social justice advocacy projects and community connection events are the hallmarks of Ms. Johnson's tenure as president. She continues to find opportunities to empower and equip the TNRC through assisting faith-based institutions, community leaders and community members with strategies, plans and advisement. Ms. Johnson is a powerful voice in the community and will continue to blaze trails for the advancement of people living in public housing.

Ms. Johnson holds a Bachelor of the Arts degree in Psychology and Social Work. She is the mother of Jayquan Chambers, grandmother to McKenzie Chambers, an aunt, a great aunt and a child of the Most High King!

Monique Johnson was selected as a 2018 Woman of Distinction by Senator Jeffrey D. Klein.





Women of **DISTINCTION**

HONORING WOMEN IN NEW YORK

Tiesha C. Jones

Tiesha C. Jones is a very active leader in her Bronx community. Ms. Jones began advocating for the residents of NYCHA Fort Independences Houses in 2010, after her daughter was diagnosed with a .45 micrograms level of lead poisoning at the age of four.

Ms. Jones knew she had to bring awareness to the conditions in which her family and other residents were living. In 2012, she ran for the Residents' Council, not concerned with which position she would hold as long as she was part of the change. She was elected President and has since successfully increased lead poisoning awareness, fought for security cameras, new appliances and repairs. Most importantly, she has worked to establish good working relationships with elected officials.

Ms. Jones was relocated to NYCHA Bailey Houses in 2013, and after four months in her new apartment, a pipe burst in the walls and the apartment was severely damaged. With no active resident council, Ms. Jones worked with her fellow residents to form the Bailey Houses Residents' Council. Under her leadership, conditions in general began to improve. The Bailey Residents' Council has only been functioning for three years and has already achieved several goals including obtaining new elevators, new appliances for many residents, security cameras, exterior and interior lights and repairs.

Ms. Jones is working diligently to pass her bill, called "Dakota's Law," named after her daughter. She hopes to protect all children from lead exposure and poisoning by having them tested every year and ensuring adequate inspections of apartments and homes as well. Ms. Jones exemplifies the true definition of community leader.

Tiesha C. Jones was selected as a 2018 Woman of Distinction by Senator Gustavo Rivera.





Women of DISTINCTION

HONORING WOMEN IN NEW YORK

Virgie Jones

Virgie Jones was born in Vienna, Georgia and moved to the Bushwick area of Brooklyn in her early teens. She began her career in business immediately after high school, but after 15 years as a personal banker, her passion for learning and teaching, and her desire to spend more time with her children, led her to a career in education.

Ms. Jones began her second career at her alma mater, JHS 296, and retired more than 25 years later as an Assistant Principal at PS/IS 377, where she held that position for 10 years.

Ms. Jones completed all of her undergraduate, graduate and post-graduate work at night, and has always encouraged others to pursue their career and educational aspirations, regardless of age, race, gender or socio-economic status. Her passion for education has always shone through and exceeded the expectations of her students, classes and schools.

An avid volunteer as well, Ms. Jones has had a tremendous impact on those in her local and extended communities. She has led the youth ministry in her home church, Little Rock Baptist, for more than 20 years, and created the long-standing scholarship ministry that still exists and thrives today.

Ms. Jones' commitment to community is evident in her serving as Chairperson for Youth and Education of Brooklyn Community Board 4 for over five years, and on the Executive Board and Youth & Education Committee of ABENY (Association of Black Educators of NY). She is also an integral part of the Readiness Team for Life Audrey Johnson Learning Center.

Today, Ms. Jones still resides in Bushwick, where she is a strong and active educational advocate. She is the proud mother of two adult children, Deana and Greg Jr., and grandmother to Aiden, Chase and Aubrey.

Virgie Jones was selected as a 2018 Woman of Distinction by Senator Martin Malave Dilan.





Women of **DISTINCTION**

HONORING WOMEN IN NEW YORK

Leslie Kennedy

Leslie Kennedy, a lifelong Long Islander, daughter of a Marine and current Suffolk County Legislator, was born and raised in Commack as one of two children. Throughout her years of work in public service, the healthcare field and in the private sector, she has dedicated her life to making her community better for all who call the region home.

Ms. Kennedy worked for over 13 years as a legislative aide to Suffolk County Legislator Donald Blydenburgh and as an aide to Suffolk County Legislator John Kennedy before becoming a member of the Suffolk County Legislature in 2015. A dedicated public servant, Ms. Kennedy is a constant presence throughout the Town of Smithtown, who is always working to protect quality of life of all of her constituents. While in office, Ms. Kennedy has focused on protecting taxpayers, preserving the Long Island environment and ensuring the safety of students in her community.

Despite her full calendar, Ms. Kennedy is also continuing her education at Suffolk County Community College's Credential in Alcoholism and Substance Abuse Counseling (CASAC) program in an effort to better serve the residents of Long Island.

Prior to her government service, Ms. Kennedy attended nursing school at Suffolk County Community College; she worked at Mather Hospital in a variety of capacities for 30 years. She has also worked in the private sector and at a rehabilitation facility with individuals who have substance abuse issues.

Ms. Kennedy and her husband, John, reside in Nesconset and have four children, John, Kristen, Brian and Gillian.

Leslie Kennedy was selected as a 2018 Woman of Distinction by Senator John J. Flanagan.





Women of **DISTINCTION**

HONORING WOMEN IN NEW YORK

Robyn L. Krueger

Robyn L. Krueger has been a member of the Niagara County community since 1974. She graduated from SUNY Buffalo with a B.A. in Psychology in 1985, and completed various graduate studies in Counseling and Educational Psychology.

Ms. Krueger has worked for Community Missions (CMI) since 1977. She began her employment with the organization in Niagara Falls as a live-in houseparent to six adolescent males, and was named Executive Director in 1994. She celebrated her 40-year anniversary with CMI in September 2017.

Currently, Ms. Krueger serves on a variety of local, county and state committees, boards, and/or associations including the Association for Community Living (Agency Member); Homeless Alliance of Western New York (Board Member); Juvenile Detention Association of NYS (President, Executive Board & Training Institute Chair); Niagara Behavioral Healthcare Network, Inc. (President); Niagara County (NC) Coalition for Services to the Homeless (Chair); NC Mental Health Service Providers Network (Past Chair); NC Juvenile Justice Taskforce (Past Chair-Current Member); and the NYS Association for Psychiatric Rehabilitation Services, Inc. (Board of Directors since 2004, Chair-Human Resources Committee, Past President 2008-10).

Ms. Krueger has also been actively involved with the NYS Office of Child and Family Services (Runaway/Homeless Youth Advisory Board), Empire State Coalition of Youth and Family Services (Executive Board-Upstate Vice President) and the NY Juvenile Re-entry Taskforce (Second Chance).

She is a member of the *Who's Who Among Outstanding Business Executives*, a 2003 nominee for the NYS Senate's Women in Leadership program, featured in *Buffalo Business First* (1/18 Profile), and a graduate of Leadership Niagara's Class of 2004.

Ms. Krueger's many awards include: The 2003 Catholic Charities Community Partner Award; the 2006 Anthony J. Cuccurullo Award by the Juvenile Detention Association of NYS, Inc.; the 2009 Niagara USA Chamber Community Advocate of the Year Award; the 2011 Niagara Award for Management by the YWCA of Niagara Frontier, Inc.; the 2013 Killian Vetter Individual Achievement Award by the Homeless Alliance of WNY, Inc.; the 2014 "I Shall Wear a Crown" Award by God's Woman Vanessa Scott Ministries; the 2015 "Lion of Judah" Award by the Dominion Life Christian Center; and the 2016 St. Vincent de Paul Award by Niagara University.

Ms. Krueger currently resides in Lockport and attends Calvary Episcopal Church, Williamsville.

Robyn L. Krueger was selected as a 2018 Woman of Distinction by Senator Robert G. Ort.





Women of **DISTINCTION**

HONORING WOMEN IN NEW YORK

Rachel Levy

Rachel Levy is the Executive Director of FRIENDS of the Upper East Side Historic Districts, a 35-year-old non-profit organization dedicated to the preservation of the architectural legacy, livability, and sense of place of the Upper East Side.

Ms. Levy has been at the helm of FRIENDS' holistic approach to advocacy for thoughtful neighborhood growth and to slow the increasing pressures of overdevelopment on the Upper East Side. In 2015, Ms. Levy oversaw the public release of a comprehensive planning and zoning study focused on the neighborhood's vulnerability to out-of-scale development spurred on by the City's affordable housing initiatives and the development driver that is the Second Avenue Subway.

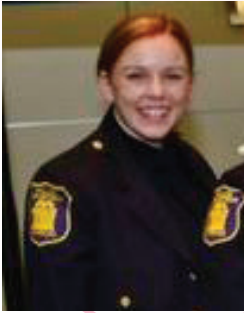
Currently, Ms. Levy's work is focused on identifying policy changes to stem the tide of super tall towers marching up the avenues of the Upper East Side, while also leading the organization's public challenge of addressing several developments that exploit loopholes in the City's zoning rules. Working closely with elected officials, colleague groups and neighbors, Ms. Levy is leading the charge Citywide and continues to push the administration to take action on this issue.

In addition to zoning reform efforts, Ms. Levy leads research initiatives to raise awareness of the history of the far Upper East Side, east of Third Avenue. The immigrant history of Yorkville has been a particular focus and this spring the organization will publish a book, "Shaped by Immigrants: A History of Yorkville." The project brings together original research on the neighborhood, a diverse collection of historic photographs, and contemporary photographs commissioned for this project. The book will support ongoing advocacy to increase landmark designation of this culturally rich neighborhood.

Ms. Levy holds masters degrees in Historic Preservation and Urban Planning from Columbia University's Graduate School of Architecture, Planning and Preservation. Her graduate thesis examined the ways that contextual zoning has been used as a preservation planning strategy in New York City, and contributed to the collective understanding of available tools for preservation advocacy. Ms. Levy is also an advisor to the Historic Districts Council, a board member of Preservation Alumni, and a proud resident of Second Avenue.

Rachel Levy was selected as a 2018 Woman of Distinction by Senator Liz Krueger.





Women of **DISTINCTION**

HONORING WOMEN IN NEW YORK

Detective Kayla Maher

Detective Kayla Maher of Yonkers is loving, caring, and selfless - and it is her extraordinary bravery and heroism in the line of fire that makes her a Woman of Distinction.

Det. Maher was born in the Bronx, one of four children, to Officer Susan Barry and Michael Maher. She attended Lincoln High School and Dominican College and spent each of her spring breaks with Habitat for Humanity, volunteering in underprivileged areas and helping those affected by natural disasters throughout the country. Upon graduation in 2013, she followed in her mother's footsteps and became a police officer, joining the Yonkers Police Department in 2015, where she worked as a Patrol Officer in the Third Precinct.

On September 25, 2017, during her second year on the force, Det. Maher's life changed forever. She and her partner responded to a call about a suspicious vehicle parked outside a home in Yonkers. When she and the other officers approached the car, they were shot at, and Det. Maher was shot in the face. She was taken to Jacobi Medical Center in the Bronx, where she eventually made a full recovery. Det. Maher kept her spirit and humor throughout the recovery process, determined to return to the Department as soon as she was cleared.

Det. Maher was promoted to Detective in 2018, and was named "Outstanding Law Enforcement Professional" by the Detectives Crime Clinic of Metropolitan New Jersey and New York. She was also awarded the 2018 Law and Order Front Line Award. Det. Maher is a member of the Fraternal Order of the Police and Police Emerald Society of Westchester.

Det. Maher continues to serve the residents and the City of Yonkers with a bright smile, a huge heart and a fierce determination, and we are grateful for her service and commitment.

Detective Kayla Maher was selected as a 2018 Woman of Distinction by Senator Andrea Stewart-Cousins.





Women of **DISTINCTION**

HONORING WOMEN IN NEW YORK

Beverly L. Mancuso

Beverly L. Mancuso, the daughter of the creator of the business incubator concept, has spent her entire life working with others. Learning from an early age the importance of listening, she has successfully ‘infiltrated the infrastructure’ of every group or organization for which she has volunteered or worked, and is most comfortable working behind the scenes, while positively affecting others.

A staunch activist, Ms. Mancuso has spent her entire professional life in the not-for-profit and public sectors. Initially working in finance and physician practice management at two hospitals, she pursued further education at Rochester Institute of Technology while working full-time. Following completion of her master’s degree, Ms. Mancuso left the hospital environment and entered the public sector in Genesee County, where she worked as the administrative officer at the Genesee County Health Department. There, she became involved with system transitions and streamlining to create more cost effective and efficient systems, thereby enhancing patient experience.

For the past 16 years, Ms. Mancuso has worked at Cornell Cooperative Extension in Genesee County, 13 years as its Executive Director. She is responsible for the overall leadership of the organization, providing programming including Leadership Genesee, 4-H Youth Development, the Master Gardener Program, and Agriculture. In this role, Ms. Mancuso has been widely recognized as an exceptional connector of community-based organizations, community leaders, volunteers and pretty much anyone she has encountered along her path.

A self-proclaimed “non-joiner,” Ms. Mancuso has been involved in Kiwanis, Boy Scouts, Genesee Country Village, parish councils, the Office for the Aging Advisory Committee, and the Muriel H. Marshall Fund Planning Team. She was a member of the inaugural class of Leadership Genesee in 2001, later receiving the Outstanding Alumnus Award.

Ms. Mancuso will retire in June of this year, and is looking forward to her next great adventure!

Beverly L. Mancuso was selected as a 2018 Woman of Distinction by Senator Michael H. Ranzenhofer.





Women of **DISTINCTION**

HONORING WOMEN IN NEW YORK

Nora Constance Marino

Nora Constance Marino, a Queens County resident for 25 years, has been in the private practice of law for almost two decades, with a focus on negligence, torts, constitutional law, commercial litigation, medical malpractice, and family law, among other areas of specialty.

In 2001-2002, Ms. Marino served her country with distinction as a First Lieutenant in the Judge Advocate General's Corps of the United States Army Reserve, and received an Honorable Discharge. She ran for New York State Senate in her Queens district in 2006, garnering 40% of the vote as a political unknown.

Ms. Marino is a prominent advocate for animals, and regularly does low bono or pro bono legal work related to animal issues. In 2014, she created a not-for-profit organization known as the Animal Cruelty Exposure Fund, whose mission is to expose animal cruelty through media and litigation, while promoting animal advocacy and education. The organization obtained 501(c)(3) status with the IRS in 2015.

In 2011, the Queens County City Council nominated Ms. Marino Queens County representative on the New York City Taxi and Limousine Commission (TLC), and Mayor Bloomberg subsequently appointed her. She has been serving her city as a TLC commissioner, an unsalaried position, for the past seven years. She was recently re-appointed by Mayor de Blasio.

Ms. Marino has acted as a legal commentator numerous times on HLN's "The Jane Velez-Mitchell Show," and in 2014, she was named a "Top Woman in Business" by the popular local newspaper *The Queens Courier*.

Educated at University of California at Berkeley, New York University, and the City University School of Law at Queens College, Ms. Marino is a member of the American Bar Association, New York State Bar Association, New York State Trial Lawyers Association and the American Association for Justice, among others. She is admitted to practice law in New York State, Connecticut and Colorado.

***Nora Constance Marino was selected as a 2018
Woman of Distinction by Senator Tony Avella.***





Women of DISTINCTION

HONORING WOMEN IN NEW YORK

Pat Matthews

Pat Matthews is a daughter of a military family and the wife of an officer. She has lived in the picturesque hamlet of Shirley, New York for over 30 years.

Settling in Shirley to raise her family, Ms. Matthews immediately began to work to better serve her children's underfunded school. Upon discovering that the children were in need of team uniforms, she energized the community to establish a booster club. Today, the club provides numerous scholarships for underprivileged athletes.

In addition to the booster club, Ms. Matthews traveled to Albany to lobby on behalf of the school district to gain support for education. She knocked on doors in her community and met with elected officials and civic leaders to facilitate her mission.

Ms. Matthews is the Chairwoman of the Beautification Committee, a position she has held for over 20 years. Through self-taught grant writing, she was able to write and receive funding to purchase bronze statues for the hamlet. In addition, the Beautification Committee received \$80,000 in state, county and town grants, part of which helped to purchase the statues. After 10 years of accumulating funding, interest and support, the bronze statues became a reality.

In keeping with the character of the community, the Committee chose mainly statues of children playing and learning. There is also a statue of an elderly couple sitting on a bench in front of the Senior Nutrition Center. In addition, a statue of William Floyd, a signer of the Declaration of Independence, stands proudly near William Floyd Parkway.

Ms. Matthews's dedication to the betterment and beautification of her community is widely recognized by her neighbors and family and has greatly improved the quality of life in Shirley.

Pat Matthews was selected as a 2018 Woman of Distinction by Senator Thomas D. Croci.

Pat Matthews was selected as a 2018 Woman of Distinction by Senator Thomas D. Croci.





Women of **DISTINCTION**

HONORING WOMEN IN NEW YORK

Patricia J. McCabe

Patricia "Patti" J. McCabe is a life-long resident of Rockaway, Queens, who has had a long and rewarding career with the Fire Department of New York (FDNY) and is extremely active in her community. Through both her work and her personal commitment to serving the needs of others, Ms. McCabe makes a difference every day in the lives of Rockaway families, FDNY firefighters and emergency medical technicians.

After working for FDNY for 17 years in many different capacities, Ms. McCabe now serves as the Administrative Manager to the Chief of the Fire Academy. Over the years, Ms. McCabe and her co-workers have created a tradition of providing Thanksgiving and Christmas meals and gifts to families in need.

Beginning in 2007, Ms. McCabe became involved in providing food and gifts to a family whose child was battling leukemia. The next year, her coworkers asked, "Who are we taking care of this year?" Since then, with the generous help of colleagues, friends, the Rockaway Greybeards organization, and her own family members, Ms. McCabe has been able to offer Thanksgiving and Christmas meals and joy to hundreds of families.

Ms. McCabe's community activism is not limited to holiday helping hands, however; she also reaches out to local churches and her support network when local people are facing personal financial emergencies, suffering from cancer, or are otherwise in need. Ms. McCabe knows she is making a difference when she contacts a family with offers of dinner or other aid, and they respond, "I didn't know what we were going to do. Thank you."

A parishioner of St. Rose of Lima RC Church in Rockaway, Ms. McCabe has been married to her husband, Frank, for 35 years, and they have a son, James. He and his fiancée, Nicole, have a daughter, Gabriella, who is the light of Ms. McCabe's life. She is also blessed with a wonderful mother, Patricia Tuite.

Patricia J. McCabe was selected as a 2018 Woman of Distinction by Senator Joseph P. Addabbo, Jr.





Women of **DISTINCTION**

HONORING WOMEN IN NEW YORK

Deborah Milone

Deborah Milone is the Executive Director of the Hudson Valley Gateway Chamber of Commerce. She has served in numerous volunteer and formal capacities and is renowned for her selfless dedication to the community.

Before joining the Chamber, Ms. Milone was a District Sales Manager at Yellowbook, Vice President of Sales and Marketing for Guide Communications and Publisher of the *Peekskill/Cortlandt Herald*.

Ms. Milone currently serves on the Government Action Committee of the Business Council of Westchester, and the Advisory Board of New York Area Energy Alliance. For her extensive involvement in community service, and her exceptional work and leadership, she has often been recognized by the Westchester County Board of Legislators and state and local elected officials.

Ms. Milone serves on the board of the Peekskill Business Improvement District; as Vice Chair of the Zoning Board of Appeals for the City of Peekskill; as the first woman President of the Peekskill Rotary Club and Paul Harris Fellow; as Volunteer Coordinator on the Executive Committee of the Peekskill Celebration Festival; as Silent Auction Chair and Foundation Board Member for the Hudson Valley Hospital Center; as Chairman of the Board of the Hudson Valley Gateway Chamber of Commerce; and on the Budget Advisory Task Force for the City of Peekskill.

Ms. Milone is a magna cum laude graduate from New York Institute of Technology with a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree. She has lived in Peekskill for 28 years with her husband, John, and their two dogs.

Deborah Milone was selected as a 2018 Woman of Distinction by Senator Terrence P. Murphy.





Women of **DISTINCTION**

HONORING WOMEN IN NEW YORK

Donna Mossman

Donna Mossman has lived in Crown Heights for over 38 years. She is one of Brooklyn's prominent affordable housing advocates and leaders, who has directed efforts to educate, protect and empower tenants for many years.

Ms. Mossman is a founding member of the Crown Heights Tenant Union, a tenant-led community organization that educates tenants on their rights, provides training and assists them in organizing their buildings.

In addition, Ms. Mossman has a strong commitment to social justice. Prior to working in the field of housing advocacy, she was involved in several projects affecting communities of color. Before joining the Crown Heights Tenants Union, Ms. Mossman worked as an administrator at Medgar Evers College and served as a staffer with the NAACP Legal Defense Fund, fighting for racial justice and human rights throughout the world.

After her family was pressured to move out of their rent-controlled apartment, Ms. Mossman jumped into action. She vowed to fight to protect other Brooklynites from being forced out of their homes; she credits her mother, a union delegate, for teaching her about standing up and fighting for her civil rights. When Ms. Mossman's family was at the point of being displaced, she took matters into her own hands.

Ms. Mossman will retire from the Crown Heights Tenants Union later this year to focus on her family; however, she will continue to be a voice for all.

Donna Mossman was selected as a 2018 Woman of Distinction by Senator Jesse E. Hamilton, III.





Women of **DISTINCTION**

HONORING WOMEN IN NEW YORK

Maritza Muñoz

Maritza Muñoz, Director of Housing Services, joined Woodside on the Move, Inc. in 2008. She leads departmental strategy around affordable housing, including one-on-one case management, *Know Your Rights Workshops*, landlord-tenant mediation, the organizing of tenants in buildings, leadership development/training of tenant leaders, media outreach, advocacy initiatives and campaigns for improving conditions and eliminating loopholes in housing laws.

Woodside on the Move, Inc. is a grassroots community organization that works to build a better community for Western Queens through holistic services to improve the quality of life for neighbors. The organization helps tenants secure and maintain affordable housing, pro bono legal clinics, afterschool and summer programming for students, adult English-language training, computer skills classes and public events.

Ms. Muñoz has dedicated her career in Queens to helping immigrants, tenants, and neighbors achieve a better life through finding high quality, affordable housing that provides a safe, healthy home for their families.

Under her leadership, Woodside on the Move, Inc. launched a Housing Legal Clinic with a retired judge of the New York City Civil Court's housing division, helping tenants achieve justice and have a better quality of life.

Additionally, Ms. Muñoz introduced a walk-in legal counseling service in partnership with the Jewish Association for Serving the Aging and Queens Legal Services. Thanks to her outstanding performance, the housing department has achieved the recognition and attention it deserves.

Ms. Muñoz holds a Bachelor of Arts degree in Education from the University of Guayaquil-Ecuador. Prior to her current position, she worked as a teacher for elementary, middle and high school students in Guayaquil-Ecuador for five years, in addition to working in the private sector.

Maritza Muñoz was selected as a 2018 Woman of Distinction by Senator Michael N. Gianaris.





Women of **DISTINCTION**

HONORING WOMEN IN NEW YORK

Louise Novros

Louise Novros and her family have been fixtures in the Rochester community for many decades. In addition to her years of community involvement, Ms. Novros has also managed a successful home-based secretarial service for over 35 years.

Ms. Novros' community activism began in 1985 when she founded the Roselawn Neighborhood Association. In 1987, she and the presidents of five other neighborhood associations formed Brighton Neighbors United, which now encompasses 32 Brighton neighborhood associations. Over the years, Ms. Novros has served on the Brighton Master Plan Committee, the Brighton Beautification Committee and the Brighton Communications Task Force, while also serving as an Election Inspector and Coordinator for East and Central Brighton.

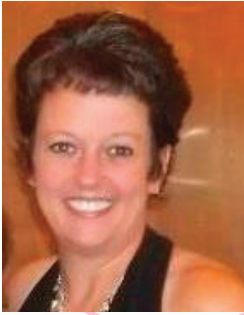
With a passion for service, Ms. Novros has also worked with groups that aim at bettering the Rochester area as a whole. She has served on the Strong Memorial Hospital's Patient Advisory Board, was the Administrator for both the Brighton Chamber of Commerce Board and the Rochester chapter of Choice in Dying, and worked with the AIDS Rochester Wills Clinic, among others.

In 2005, Ms. Novros was elected to the Brighton Town Council, serving through 2017. In this role, she was instrumental in bringing several large-scale events to Brighton. To help clean up the environment, she founded the town's Clean Sweep, now in its 11th year and attracting over 450 participants annually. She also established the semi-annual electronics and shredding recycling events, as well as the reoccurring pharmaceutical "Take Back" program, yielding 117 tons of electronics, 90 tons of shredding and 16 tons of medications to date.

Every day, Ms. Novros demonstrates her deep commitment to making her community a place where people want to live and stay. Her motto is, "Only she who attempts the absurd can achieve the impossible!"

Louise Novros was selected as a 2018 Woman of Distinction by Senator Joseph E. Robach.





Women of DISTINCTION

HONORING WOMEN IN NEW YORK

Shannon Ozzella

Shannon Ozzella has dedicated two decades of her life and career to helping people who are among society's most vulnerable: those who have been victimized by crime. As the Crime Victims Coordinator for the Allegany County District Attorney's office, Ms. Ozzella has been widely recognized for the expertise, compassion and extraordinary commitment that she brings to her work, guiding and aiding victims through the criminal justice process. Over the course of her career, she has touched the lives of thousands of men, women and children in their fight for justice and healing.

Following several years working with crime victims at Cattaraugus Community Action, Ms. Ozzella joined the District Attorney's office in 2000. In her role, she stands by crime victims during every step of their difficult journey through the criminal justice process. Her responsibilities include explaining and preparing victims to testify at trial, writing orders of protection, assisting with preparing victim impact statements, connecting victims with crisis and counseling services and notifying victims when perpetrators are released from prison.

Recognizing the special needs of child victims, Ms. Ozzella played an important role in the creation of the Southern Tier Child Advocacy Center, which opened in 2007. The facility provides a safe, coordinated and multi-disciplinary approach to helping child victims of sexual and physical abuse.

With a commitment to remaining at the forefront of her field, Ms. Ozzella has received advanced training in advocacy for child victims and victims of sexual assault and domestic violence. She has also received training in applied suicide intervention and skills. Recognition for Ms. Ozzella's dedication and achievements has come from all corners. She has received citations from Congressman Tom Reed, Senator Cathy Young, Assemblyman Joseph Giglio and the Cattaraugus County Legislature. She is the recipient of numerous awards including the Victim Services Award from Cattaraugus Community Action (2000) and the Community Kindness Award from the Allegany County Mental Health Association (2013).

In describing her work, Ms. Ozzella has said that while it is very difficult, the rewards come when she hears from people she has helped. She recalled one young man who "reached out to me to tell me how much his life had changed because of me. Those are the days I love and I realize why I do this. Those are the days that keep me going."

Shannon Ozzella was selected as a 2018 Woman of Distinction by Senator Catharine M. Young.





Women of **DISTINCTION**

HONORING WOMEN IN NEW YORK

Lin Pan

Lin Pan has been in the real estate industry for over ten years and founded Lin Pan Realty on Long Island in 2012, primarily focusing on residential real estate. From Manhattan to Long Island, the team under her lead provides one-step service covering residential, commercial, management and development for customers' needs.

Clients choose to work with Ms. Pan for her outstanding service, ethics, experience and expertise. Her strong base of loyal, repeat customers is the reason she has been so successful for more than a decade. Repeat buyers and valued clients all trust her professional counsel and judgement on multi-million dollar deals.

While her team is deeply rooted in Chinese culture, Ms. Pan reaches across every population to help individuals and families achieve their home buying dreams. She contributes greatly to her community, sponsoring events such as the Long Island Chinese Association's Chinese New Year Parade, USTC Alumni Great Neck Chinese Association's Great Neck Chinese New Year Celebration, the Great Neck Annual Easter Egg Hunt, Nassau Police Child ID program, and the Chinatown BID. Ms. Pan also serves her community as Vice President of the Long Island Chinese American Association, and as an active member of the Long Island Board of Realtors and Long Island Commercial Network.

Throughout her career, Ms. Pan has received many honors. She was named "20 Under 40 Rising Stars" by the Long Island Board of Realtors in 2012, the only Asian-American broker to receive this award. In 2014, the Overseas Chinese Affairs Office of the State Council asked her to join its "Workshop for Overseas Chinese Entrepreneurs," and in 2015, she received the Community Award from the Asian Economic Advisory Commission for Nassau County.

*Lin Pan was selected as a 2018 Woman of Distinction
by Senator Elaine R. Phillips.*





Women of
DISTINCTION
HONORING WOMEN IN NEW YORK

Joan Pastore, DSW

Joan Pastore, DSW, has long been a part of the Southern Brooklyn community which she proudly serves. She is the Director of the AMICO 59th Street Senior Citizen Center and now oversees the Eileen Dugan Senior Center in the Carroll Gardens section of Brooklyn.

Dr. Pastore sits on the Bio Ethics Committee and Institutional Review Board for Research at Maimonides Medical Center. She is a past member of Community Board 12, where she was Vice Chair of the Social Services Committee and a member of the Transportation and Legislative Committees.

More recently, Dr. Pastore was appointed as a Commissioner for the Age Friendly Commission. The Commission is a partnership between the Mayor's Office, the NYC Council and the NYC Academy of Medicine, which works with City government, businesses and the non-profit sectors to ensure that the City is addressing the challenges of an increasingly older population.

In addition, Dr. Pastore is a social work educator. She is a Clinical Assistant Professor at the Stony Brook Graduate School of Social Welfare and also serves as an Adjunct Assistant Professor for the New York University Graduate School of Social Work.

Dr. Pastore maintains a private psychotherapy practice for adults and adolescents in the Kensington-Windsor Terrace community in Brooklyn.

Joan Pastore, DSW, was selected as a 2018 Woman of Distinction by Senator Simcha Felder.





Women of **DISTINCTION**

HONORING WOMEN IN NEW YORK

Rhianna Quinn Roddy

Rhianna Quinn Roddy is Scholarship America's Executive Director, managing the Families of Freedom Scholarship Fund, a fund established by President Clinton and Senator Dole in the aftermath of 9/11. The Fund supports post-secondary education for the children and spouses of those lost on 9/11 and, to date, has awarded \$148 million in scholarships to over 3,300 students.

Prior to joining Scholarship America, Ms. Quinn Roddy held the positions of Chief Marketing Officer for Lighthouse International and Vice President of Global and Domestic Tourism for NYC & Company, the official tourism bureau for New York City. Her background also includes more than 20 years with Delta Air Lines in a variety of executive roles in the U.S., Europe, India and Asia, where she led international marketing efforts.

Ms. Quinn Roddy was appointed Strategic Communications Advisor by the U.S. Undersecretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness at the Pentagon. Her work has been recognized by many organizations, including the Irish government, for her work in promoting tourism. Ms. Quinn Roddy was asked to be Grand Marshal of the St. Patrick's Day Parade in Dublin, Ireland, the first female Grand Marshal in the history of this parade! She has also been recognized by Manhattan's YWCA, where she was inducted into their Academy of Women Leaders for her many achievements in business and contributions to the successes of other women.

Ms. Quinn Roddy is a current board member of The Bridges Association, the Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation, NYC & Company's Executive Committee and the U.S. Chambers of Commerce boards in Ireland, Belgium and the United Kingdom.

Ms. Quinn Roddy earned a BA from Stony Brook University and an MBA from the University of Phoenix. She spent three years at the Sorbonne and College de France in Paris and also attended Kent University in England. She currently lives on Long Island with her husband, Eugene, and their young son, Conor.

*Rhianna Quinn Roddy was selected as a 2018
Woman of Distinction by Senator Phil Boyle.*





Women of **DISTINCTION** HONORING WOMEN IN NEW YORK

Linda Romano and Jacqueline Romano

Sisters-in-law Linda Romano and Jacqueline Romano are two exceptionally professionally accomplished women who have also dedicated a lifetime of service to their community.

They are both high-ranking executives at The Fountainhead Group, Inc., a leading manufacturer of applicators for the consumer lawn and garden and professional products industries. The company is also their family business, which was founded in 1888 and today boasts gross revenues in excess of \$60 million.

In addition to helping run a highly successful business, they have both been tireless volunteers in the community.

Linda was President of the Board of Trustees of the New Hartford Public Library and a long-time Trustee of Utica College. She has served as Co-Chair to the Oneida County World War II Memorial Trip Committee and was instrumental in the establishment and funding of the Oneida County Chapter of the Syracuse University School of Law Wohl Family Veterans Legal Clinic, which provides free legal services to United States veterans. She is also a founding member of the National Long Distance Running Hall of Fame.

Jackie currently serves as Director of the Oneida County Sheriff Law Enforcement Foundation, Committee Co-Chair for the House of the Good Shepherd Sponsorship Committee and Board Member and Fundraising Chair for the Stevens-Swan Humane Society. She previously served on the Board of Directors for the United Way of the Valley and Greater Utica Area, as treasurer of the Mohawk Valley Export Council and with various local nonprofit committees.

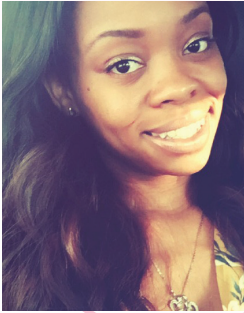
Jackie lives in New Hartford with her husband, John Romano. They have two sons, Dominic and Francis, and two stepdaughters, Francesca and Alexandra.

Linda resides in New Hartford with her husband, Russell J. Petralia, and their daughter, Whitney.

This dynamic duo truly exemplifies the notion of being involved and giving back to one's community to make for a better quality of life for everyone.

*Jacqueline Romano and Linda Romano
were selected as 2018 Women of Distinction
by Senator Joseph Griffo.*





Women of **DISTINCTION** HONORING WOMEN IN NEW YORK

Samantha Ross

Samantha Ross was born and raised in Coney Island, Brooklyn. At an early age, she possessed a strong appreciation for her neighborhood that motivated her to volunteer at local community based organizations. She enrolled in the Explorers Program at PSA#1, obtained a job as a Camp Counselor at the Boys and Girls Club and fed the less fortunate at Coney Island Gospel Assembly.

In January 2014, Ms. Ross was hired as a Community Liaison for Mark Treyger, Council Member of the 47th Council District, representing Bensonhurst, Gravesend, and Coney Island. As a longtime resident of Coney Island, Ms. Ross was honored to serve the people of her community on the Councilman's behalf, and this position allowed her to delve into the growing issues in her neighborhood. Ms. Ross soon realized that although Coney Island is a neighborhood with rich history and spirit, it also had profound challenges: low income, subpar education, and homelessness. She coordinated events such as the Back-to-School Blast, Free Family Movie Nights, clothing drives, HSE classes, Senior Work Out events and job fairs. Her diligence and passion for event planning earned her a promotion as Director of Special Events.

In January 2015, Ms. Ross' younger brother was a victim of gun violence. The unnecessary shooting gave her a new outlook on life and she became obsessed with the idea of decreasing gun violence in her neighborhood. She joined forces with local residents to coordinate Stop the Violence basketball tournaments, youth empowerment, drug awareness seminars, Unity Day and Free Concerts by the Beach. She recruited the assistance of residents, which aided in the decrease in crime. Amazingly, and because of everyone's hard work, there were no shootings in the summer of 2016.

Ms. Ross hopes to one day start a non-profit organization to benefit youth. She continues to work in Coney Island with hopes it flourishes into the beautiful and vibrant neighborhood she knows it has the potential to be.

Samantha Ross was selected as a 2018 Woman of Distinction by Senator Diane J. Savino.





Women of **DISTINCTION**

HONORING WOMEN IN NEW YORK

Elizabeth Rowley, CFRE

Elizabeth Rowley has been with the Community Foundation of Orange and Sullivan County since 2013, and currently serves as its President and CEO. There, she works with the Board of Directors, professional advisors and volunteers to plan, structure, implement and monitor an effective development program that will increase endowed and non-endowed assets, develop and maintain good relationships with nonprofit organizations and steward current and prospective donors.

During Ms. Rowley's time with the Foundation and since its inception, charitable assets have grown to over \$28 million, with nearly \$10 million in charitable grants and scholarships from their 270+ funds distributed back into the community.

An Orange County native with a strong background in development, marketing and the nonprofit sector, Ms. Rowley worked at Inspire – Orange County Cerebral Palsy Association and the Town of Wallkill Boys & Girls Club prior to joining the staff at the Community Foundation.

In 2004, Ms. Rowley graduated from Emerson College with a degree in Marketing and Communications, and is a 2008 graduate of Leadership Orange, obtaining her Certified Fundraising Executive certification in 2014. She serves as the Immediate Past-President of the Mid-Hudson Valley Association of Fundraising Professionals, is a Sustaining Member of Junior League of Orange County, a member of the Board of Directors of Safe Harbors of the Hudson, a Trustee on the Orange Regional Medical Center Foundation and a member of the Hospice of Orange and Sullivan Auxiliary.

Ms. Rowley currently resides in Newburgh with her husband, Bill Fioravanti, and their daughter, Mira.

Elizabeth Rowley was selected as a 2018 Woman of Distinction by Senator William J. Larkin, Jr.





Women of **DISTINCTION**

HONORING WOMEN IN NEW YORK

Marcee Rubinstein

Marcee Rubinstein is a true advocate for children and her community.

After 14 years as a Speech-Language Pathologist in New York City, Ms. Rubinstein devoted over 25 years of her career to BOCES, representing a 40-year commitment to helping and educating children. She was first elected to the East Meadow Board of Education as a Trustee in 2009 and quickly won re-election. In 2012, she was elected Vice President.

While raising her sons, she became involved in the PTA, serving in every office and ultimately being elected President of both the Special Education PTA and the East Meadow PTA Council. Additionally, she serves on the executive board of the Nassau County Region PTA as Scholarship Chair. Ms. Rubinstein has worked on numerous district committees, including Compact for Learning, Planning and Management, Budget Advisory, and Special Education.

Ms. Rubinstein is a co-founder and has been a co-coordinator of the Special Education Resource Center and Library, a member of East Meadow Kiwanis Club, where she currently serves as President, member of the East Meadow Chamber of Commerce, Council of East Meadow Community Organizations, the Carmen Avenue Civic Association, the Community Association of Stewart Avenue, and co-advisor for the East Meadow Aktion Club, a service leadership program for adults with disabilities, to name a few.

Ms. Rubinstein received both her undergraduate and graduate degrees from Brooklyn College in speech therapy. Even in retirement, she still works with people, especially those with special needs, and gives her time as a speech consultant.

Ms. Rubinstein resides in East Meadow with her husband, Barry. They have two adult sons, Lonny and Marc, and a daughter-in-law, Ashley.

Marcee Rubinstein was selected as a 2018 Woman of Distinction by Senator Kemp Hannon.





Women of DISTINCTION

HONORING WOMEN IN NEW YORK

Shirley Ruch

Shirley Ruch has dedicated her career to improving the quality of life for special needs students and their families. A tireless advocate, devoting both her time and talents to improving her community, Ms. Ruch is deserving of recognition as the “Woman of Distinction” for the First Senate District.

Prior to moving to New York, Ms. Ruch worked as a teacher in a multi-handicapped classroom in the public school system. Over the past 30 years, she has run a private speech and language practice in Sag Harbor, providing speech and language services across the East End of Long Island. Her specialty is working with clients who have diagnoses of autism, attention deficit disorder and learning disabilities. Ms. Ruch has a coaching certification through the Mentor Coach program and was trained in the Relationship Development Intervention program. She received her Bachelor’s Degree from Miami University and her Master’s Degree from Ohio State in Communications, with a minor in Special Education.

Ms. Ruch frequently presents at various organizations to educate and train parents and colleagues on techniques to facilitate communication development in children, teens and young adults. She has operated social skills groups and mentoring programs to facilitate the development of meaningful communication for special needs clients. Ms. Ruch also provides group training sessions for parents, as she believes in educating and training the whole family when working with a client.

Ms. Ruch witnessed first-hand the frustration parents experienced when helping adult children look for employment after leaving the school system. She put her professional expertise to use, addressing that critical need by founding the South Fork Bakery. South Fork Bakery provides focused skill training and employment for special needs adults.

A native of Ohio, Ms. Ruch moved to Sag Harbor in 1980. She and her husband have lived and raised their three adult children there. Ms. Ruch’s contributions have positively affected her community, and established a legacy for future generations.

Shirley Ruch was selected as a 2018 Woman of Distinction by Senator Kenneth P. LaValle.





Women of **DISTINCTION**

HONORING WOMEN IN NEW YORK

Mary Lou Rupp

Mary Lou Rupp's life and career are rooted in commitment to her family and community.

A native of Heuvelton, in St. Lawrence County, Ms. Rupp graduated from Heuvelton Central School and SUNY Potsdam. She joined the St. Lawrence County Clerk's office in 2003, quickly rising through the ranks until her appointment as Deputy County Clerk. She became County Clerk in 2011, and later won election to that position by a wide margin.

As Clerk, Ms. Rupp continued the office's strong tradition of excellent customer service, growing the successful Motor Vehicles operation, which channels millions of dollars in non-tax revenue to help balance the county's budget and protect county residents from rising property taxes.

Ms. Rupp has worked hard to modernize the County Clerk's Office, introducing electronic recording, which gives banks, attorneys, title companies and others a paperless option to securely record documents.

In addition, Ms. Rupp developed a countywide Veterans' ID program, which provides valuable discounts from participating local businesses to men and women who served. She enthusiastically joined with Senator Patty Ritchie to honor and remember those still serving through her office's annual participation in the Senator's "Christmas Cards for Our Troops" program.

Ms. Rupp has used her office to encourage life-saving organ donation and to support community events such as the Ogdensburg Boys & Girls Club Expo, Senior Health and Wellness Fairs and "Lights on the River."

Prior to her public service, Ms. Rupp and her husband, William, owned and operated several successful restaurants, including a number of Jreck's Subs locations and Simply Sandwiches in Ogdensburg.

The couple are especially proud of their two daughters, Abbie and Kelsie, and two grandchildren.

Mary Lou Rupp was selected as a 2018 Woman of Distinction by Senator Patricia A. Ritchie.





Women of **DISTINCTION**

HONORING WOMEN IN NEW YORK

Dr. Meera Shah

Dr. Meera Shah is a family medicine physician and a strong advocate for women's medical rights, particularly in underserved areas. She graduated from George Washington University Medical School in Washington D.C., and completed her family medicine residency at Mount Sinai/Beth Israel Medical Center and the Institute for Family Health in New York City. Dr. Shah has an MS in Nutrition from Columbia University and is currently completing an MPH at Columbia University.

Dr. Shah has been working at Callen-Lorde Community Health Center, a federally qualified health center in lower Manhattan serving the LGBT community. She is certified by the American Academy of HIV Medicine and provides care to those living with HIV and to those who identify on the gender spectrum. Additionally, she is trained in colposcopy and high-resolution anoscopy services, and she launched a Long Acting Reversible Contraception program at Callen-Lorde.

Outside of her role as a physician, she is actively involved with the Physicians for Reproductive Health and enjoys being a vocal advocate for sexual and reproductive health access, including safe abortion procedures, for all. She lends her voice to the community by serving as a frequent contributor to *Bedsider* and has been interviewed by *The Independent*, *Teen Vogue*, *Buzzfeed* and *Think Progress*.

Beginning this summer, Dr. Shah will continue to leverage her expertise and advocacy as the Associate Medical Director for Planned Parenthood Hudson Peconic with aims of expanding their services to include gender affirming care as well as HIV prevention care.

Dr. Meera Shah was selected as a 2018 Woman of Distinction by Senator Brad Hoylman.





Women of **DISTINCTION**

HONORING WOMEN IN NEW YORK

Dr. Renee Scialdo Shevat

Dr. Renee Scialdo Shevat is a true Renaissance woman with a diverse record of accomplishments in business, education, community outreach, healthcare and tourism.

Dr. Shevat earned an undergraduate degree from Nazareth College, a Master's degree from Syracuse University and a doctorate from the University of Rochester. She has worked on several college campuses, including Syracuse University, the University of Rochester, SUNY Potsdam and SUNY Cobleskill.

Currently, Dr. Shevat is President and Owner of the Herkimer Diamond Mines, an award winning Kampgrounds of America (KOA) park in Herkimer. She oversees two international wholesale businesses – Herkimer Diamonds and Out of India to Herkimer – spreading the Herkimer name and products around the globe. She also developed a regional visitor center and marina, Unlocked Legends, which incorporates 72 regional businesses at the New York State Thruway exit in Herkimer.

Dr. Shevat is deeply devoted to quality of life issues. Currently, she is a board member for Genesis, an organization focused on the Mohawk Valley community, and serves on the Mohawk Valley Regional Economic Development Council. Dr. Shevat has also served on the SUNY College Foundation Board of Directors, on the Board of Trustees of Cobleskill Regional Hospital and Mary Imogene Bassett Hospital, on the SUNY Statewide Strategic Planning Committee, and as Board Member and President of the Friends of Bassett.

Dr. Shevat has been honored by the Commission of Independent Colleges and Universities, the Genesis Group, Kampgrounds of America and Gems and Lapidary Wholesalers. She was named Woman of the Year by the YWCA in Oneida/Herkimer Counties.

Dr. Shevat and her husband, Sam, maintain homes in Herkimer and Cobleskill. They are the proud parents of sons Rudolph, John, and Samuel III.

***Dr. Renee Scialdo Shevat was selected as a 2018
Woman of Distinction by Senator James L. Seward.***





Women of **DISTINCTION**

HONORING WOMEN IN NEW YORK

Gail L. Smith

Gail L. Smith is Chief Customer Officer (CCO) for MetroPlus Health Plan, a wholly owned subsidiary of the New York City Health + Hospitals (H+H). As CCO, Mrs. Smith oversees the Customer Services Division, which includes Call Center Operations, Business Operations, Enrollment & Membership, Training & Audits, Intergovernmental Relations and Facilities Operations.

Mrs. Smith first entered public health care as Director of Managed Care for Kings County Hospital Center at a time when managed care was a relatively new concept. She joined MetroPlus in 1997 as Director of Customer Services and Network Development. At that time, MetroPlus had approximately 40,000 members; today it has over one-half million. In her current role at MetroPlus, Mrs. Smith manages a staff of approximately 275 employees. She works diligently with her staff to foster relationships with members, prospective members, providers, community based organizations, community advocates, and state and local officials to provide access to quality healthcare for the low-income eligible, underserved, and mainstream populations of New York City.

Mrs. Smith's passion for helping others extends outside her work at MetroPlus. She is a community activist whose extracurricular activities include working as an executive board member on Community Board 14 in Brooklyn and as Co-chair of the Education, Libraries and Cultural Affairs Committee. Mrs. Smith also sits on the Perkins Local Advisory Board at Kingsborough Community College and on the Junior League of Brooklyn Community Advisory Committee. In 2009, she was appointed by the Governor to the Medicaid Managed Care Advisory Review Panel (MMCARP), and is Past President of the 1801 Dorchester Road Tenants' Association, where she served for 25 years.

Mrs. Smith resides in the Ditmas Park section of Brooklyn.

Gail L. Smith was selected as a 2018 Woman of Distinction by Senator Kevin S. Parker.





Women of **DISTINCTION** HONORING WOMEN IN NEW YORK

Coleen Cole Spinello

Coleen Cole Spinello has leveraged her experience as a business executive in the retail and hospitality industries to cater to the needs of children and the Glen Cove community. For over 15 years, Ms. Spinello has been a Nassau County Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA), helping countless children ensure that their voices are heard and that they are placed in a safe, caring and secure environment.

In addition to her commitment to CASA, Ms. Spinello is one of the co-founders of Glen Cove's Bully Proof Project and is a volunteer for many Glen Cove programs, including Kids Play Day and the July 4th Children's Bike parade. She also helped start Glen Cove's community garden at Big Ralph Park and is a vested member of the city's Beautification Commission and The Interagency Council.

Ms. Spinello's generosity can be seen in the bright eyes of a young nine-year-old girl named Mia who was suffering from renal failure. In October 2016, Ms. Spinello donated her kidney to Mia so that this young child could have a bright future filled with hope, dreams and the love of life.

A resident of Glen Cove for over 18 years, she is an active member of St. Rocco's parish, where she manages both the church's food pantry and outreach program. She is a proud aunt, stepmother and dog mom.

Continually dedicating her time and energy to those in need, Ms. Spinello is an exceptional woman whose life and selflessness is a testimony to her devotion to others. She is truly an inspiration to the people and families she touches and the community in which she lives.

Coleen Cole Spinello was selected as a 2018 Woman of Distinction by Senator Carl L. Marcellino.





Women of DISTINCTION

HONORING WOMEN IN NEW YORK

Nell Stokes

Nell Stokes came to the Capital District from Alabama in 1963. She soon became active in the community, running for a seat on the Albany School Board. Her commitment to her community grew from there, as she became involved serving on numerous boards of directors, including with the Downtown Day Care Center, Neighborhood Resource Center, Parsons Child and Family Services and the South End Improvement Corporation. Ms. Stokes also served as an Albany County Election Inspector for 18 years, and on the Capital Area Council of Churches' Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial/Scholarship Committee for 23 years, 19 of those as its Chair.

In 1980, while employed by the Albany YWCA, Ms. Stokes created, designed and implemented the Black American Essay Contest, which encouraged students ages 8 to 18 to develop their skills in research and writing. The contest continued for more than 15 years, with excerpts from each winning essay seen on local television stations each day during the month of February.

Ms. Stokes has served on panels at Hudson Valley Community College, the State University at Albany, Russell Sage College, Schenectady County Community College and Siena College. She has been a recognized public speaker, columnist and poet, and has written, directed and produced several plays with themes on education, faith, hope and love. She is a co-founder of the Black Women's Association of Albany and a member of the League of Women Voters, NAACP and the Underground Railroad History Project of the Capital Region, Inc.

Currently, Ms. Stokes is a volunteer with a one-on-one after-school tutoring program for children in the 1st, 2nd and 3rd grades.

Retired from the Albany County Department of Social Services, Ms. Stokes says her faith sustains her and God uses her gifts for His glory.

Nell Stokes was selected as a 2018 Woman of Distinction by Senator Neil D. Breslin.





Women of **DISTINCTION**

HONORING WOMEN IN NEW YORK

Gina Vasquez

Gina Vasquez is the founder and president of Flowers of Hope NY, a 501(c) community-based organization that promotes family and community bonding through dance exercise and fitness for the body, mind and soul. Ms. Vasquez has used her creativity and motivational skills to build bonds between Flowers of Hope and the New York City community, organizing cancer walks, free NYC Parks and Recreation performances, and a support network for members.

Ms. Vasquez is a clinical social worker who has dedicated her life to improving the lives of families and children. She has experience working with geriatric communities, as well as with victims of trauma and abuse. Ms. Vasquez is an active volunteer who combines her passion for belly dance choreography with her knowledge of social work, offering a nuanced approach to trauma therapy through dance and song.

Currently, Ms. Vasquez works as a therapist at the New York Psychotherapy Clinic. She earned her Master's Degree in Social Work at Adelphi University, where she graduated with a 4.0 GPA. She also studied at York College within the City University of New York, where she enjoyed courses in psychology and human behavior, while simultaneously interning at a nursing hospital.

Ms. Vasquez's interest in volunteering has grown steadily throughout the years. She expanded her volunteer work to include helping immigrant children improve their reading and writing skills, and volunteers her time for childhood cancer patients at the oncology clinic at Mount Sinai Hospital. She has also instilled a deep sense of community involvement in her children, who also volunteer regularly.

Gina Vasquez was selected as a 2018 Woman of Distinction by Senator James Sanders, Jr.





Women of **DISTINCTION** HONORING WOMEN IN NEW YORK

Roxanne Watson

Roxanne Watson received a new heart in 2010 and has been on a mission to educate people about the life-saving value of organ donation. Through her work with New York's Campaign 4 Life and Donate Life NY, she has personally signed up more than 10,000 potential donors – believed to be a world record.

Ms. Watson's efforts have led Rockland County to the top position in the state for the number of organ donor sign-ups. She was also selected as one of six winners among more than 3,500 entries in a worldwide competition on life-changing goals for her efforts to create a global organ donor foundation.

In 2006, Ms. Watson, then 51, suffered a heart attack and was told she would need a transplant. The operation took place July 16, 2010, at Montefiore Medical Center. Her donor, 23-year-old Mike Bovill, was a Coast Guard serviceman who was returning to base on his motorcycle when he was struck by a truck on the George Washington Bridge on July 11, 2010.

“Michael Bovill was a true American hero who served his country proudly and saved five lives,” Ms. Watson says. She is determined to encourage as many people as possible to sign a donor card, especially minority populations which statistically need the most organs.

In 2016, Ms. Watson won a Folio: Eddie Award for, “What a Silent Heart Attack Sounds Like,” an article published in the American Heart Association's *Heart Insight* magazine. In 2017, she was featured in a national television advertising campaign and the home-improvement show, “George to the Rescue.”

Ms. Watson resides in Nanuet. She earned an AA in Liberal Arts: Humanities and Social Sciences in 1987 and a BA in History from Columbia University in 1989.

Roxanne Watson was selected as a 2018 Woman of Distinction by Senator by David Carlucci.





Women of **DISTINCTION**

HONORING WOMEN IN NEW YORK

Alice Holloway Young

Alice Holloway Young, born in Warren County, North Carolina, received a Bachelor's degree from Bennett College, and Masters and Doctoral degrees in education supervision and administration from the University of Rochester. She began her career with the Rochester City School District in 1952, pioneering as an African-American educator over the next four decades.

Dr. Young's impact on the Rochester City School District is immeasurable. She was one of the District's first African-American teachers, the only African-American reading specialist in the District at the time, the first African-American vice principal and principal of elementary schools, and the first Title I director. Dr. Young wrote and supervised the District's first integration programs, including the Urban Suburban Program, which continues to grow to this day.

The recipient of many awards during the past 50 years, Dr. Young continues to be recognized for her unparalleled dedication to the field of education. She is a former fellow at R.I.T., a charter member of the Athenaeum and a former president of the five county Rochester Area Chapter of Phi Delta Kappa Fraternity, the Delta Kappa Gamma International Education Society and the Rochester Chapter of The Links, Incorporated.

Dr. Young was named trustee in 1961, helped to establish Monroe Community College, served as a chair of its trustees for 20 consecutive years (1978-1998) and was recognized as the trustee who has served New York State community colleges the longest.

Dedicating her life to "breaking down fences so that others may shine," The Alice H. Young Teaching Internship for Ethnic Minority Graduate Students and The Alice Holloway Young Society for Charitable Giving are both named in Dr. Young's honor.

*Alice Holloway Young was selected as a 2018
Woman of Distinction by Senator Richard M. Funke.*





Women of **DISTINCTION**

HONORING WOMEN IN NEW YORK

Janet Zinck

Janet Zinck is a life-long resident of Henrietta who feels privileged to have served her community. As Councilwoman for the Town of Henrietta for 16 years, she understands first-hand the concerns of the residents of her community, whether old, young, rich or poor. While on the Town Board, she was the liaison to the Henrietta Public Library, the Recreation Commission and a past Chair of the Finance Committee.

Ms. Zinck is also a leader outside of town government. She is a Professor in the Department of Hospitality and formerly served as Coordinator for Cooperative Education at Monroe Community College (MCC). She has received numerous awards for her work in education, being honored with the Co-Curricular Special Achievement Award and selected as Faculty Advisor of the Year at MCC, named to *Who's Who Among America's Teachers at Community Colleges* numerous times, and has received the Student Teaching Award of Excellence from Nazareth College. Ms. Zinck has also been inducted into the Rush-Henrietta Alumni Council's Distinguished Alumni Hall of Fame and has received the State of New York (SUNY) Chancellor's Award for Excellence in Teaching.

Ms. Zinck has always been deeply committed to her community and profession. Currently, she serves as Vice President of the International Society of Travel & Tourism Educators, as well as on the committees for the RH Bicentennial and the Rochester Real Beer Week 5K, which benefits Camp Good Days and the Park Point Summer Concert Series. In addition, Ms. Zinck and her family have always been deeply involved in supporting Juvenile Diabetes programs.

Ms. Zinck returned to school to obtain her Bachelors and Master's degrees, all while raising her children. She and her husband are blessed to have four daughters, Leslie, Allison, Meagan and Rebecca, and seven grandchildren.

Janet Zinck was selected as a 2018 Woman of Distinction by Senator Patrick M. Gallivan.





Previous Honorees 1998

Belinda Alvarez-Groneman
Mary Anderson
Lois Andrascik
Chris Bailey
Susan Barbash
Geri Barish
Joan Barkley
Sister Mairead Barrett
Jeanine Bondi-Steinman
Susan K. Brustmann
Marie Burghard
Joan Cashon
Carol Cassell
Sister Dolores Castellano
Charlotte Conable
Carol L. Constantino
Margaret Dadd
Jane D'Amico
Aline Euler
Ilene Flaum
Mary Jane Fox
Janice W. Gay
Eileen Gentilcore
Gloria Richardson Griffin
Jane Hamburger
Elizabeth Harvey
Patricia A. Hickey
Pamela C. Johnston
Loretta Jones
Katherine E. Keough

Natsue Kobayashi
Joy Levy
Barbara A. Manwaring
Nancy Mariano
Margaret McCaughey
Carmen Montanez
Dianne Sackett Nannery
Sr. George Aquin O'Connor
Lorraine Pace
Mary Jane Pauling
Mary Anne Pietrzykowski
Jeanie D. Roberts
Marie A. Russo
Theresa Santmann
Christine Conniff Sheahan
Jean Sherlock
Muriel Siebert
Beverly Sills
Laura Spalter
Leontina Stern
Maria A. Thomson
Stephanie Edith VanAuken
Mary Ann Varvaro
Janet Walsh
Frederica Warner
Charlotte Watson
Elaine Wick
Patricia Willsea
Doris Buckley Wolf



Previous Honorees 1999

Nan Ackerman
Eileen "Tally" Almquist
Jean Argetsinger
Juanita Lorraine Bass
Dorothy "Dot" Bavaro
Sabina Rosemary Cardali
Mary Ann Carey
Maureen Clancy
Sheila Cohen
Gayle Cratty
Ava Dorfman
Nancy Duff
Barbara Edwardsen
Josie Fernandez
Geri Fessler
Jo Ann Fiorentino
Carolyn Fish
Connell Frazer
Betty Slavicek Gastelua
Regina Keller Gil
Jane Golub
Kathleen Granchelli
Sister Audrey Harsen, O.P.
Eileen McKenna Hickey
Roni Horowitz
Donna DiSunno Iorio
Joan Johnson
Vicki Joshpe
Frances "Mickie" Kayne
Dr. Christine G. Khanna
Naima Kradjian
Nina Larrabee

Dr. Linda Leest
Joan Hope MacNaughton
Margaret Magnus
Takako J. Michii
Deborah Naybor
Chloe Ann R. O'Neil
Elizabeth Osborne
Francis McMillan Parks
Donna deLuca Periconi
Irene M. Prazak
Dorothy Reister
Anne Reyen
Ann Marie Rossi
Deborah Running
Carolyn Rush
Lisa Marsh Ryerson
Sandy Scaccia
Mildred Scharf-Ehrenfeld
Therese Schoeneck
Charlotte Smallwood-Cook
Shari Hall Smith
Frances Sodrick
Geraldine Spinella
Sheila Strassburg
Alana Sweeny
Terry Troia
Mary Kathleen Tucker
Betty Cooper Wallerstein
Lynn Westbrook
Patricia Hill Williams
Joanne Wisor
Carolyn Wittreich



Previous Honorees 2000

Laura Ahearn	Melissa Lahtinen-Penfield
Joie Anderson	Thelma P. Lally
Betty Angelino	Louise Levine
Lillian Barbash	Marlene Markoe-Boyd
Sarah Jane Bernhardt-Clifford	Eleanor McDonald
Judith S. Bloch	Karen Joy Miller
Patricia Brown	Marian Mullet, R. N.
Melina Carnicelli	Anne Paolucci
Tammy Carnrike	Madeline Patterson
Jacqueline Carway	Tillie Peck
Sister Marie R. Castagnaro, S.S. J.	Elizabeth Potts
Donna Chittenden	Frances Pratt
Nellie Coakley	Captain Priscilla "Chris"
Dr. Mary DeRose	Ramirez-Lynch
Tamara Denysenko	Gertrude Rieur
Carol Sue Detweiler	Jean Robbins
Lynda Distler	Wilma Rogalin
Noel Donohue	Lynn Rosen
Eve Fertig	Sharon Saunders
Sister M. Bethany Fitzgerald	Lisa Savyon
Angela Forte	Joan Schumaker
Florence B. Fuller	Paula Sharf
Geraldine Futrell	Linnea Shaver
Ruth Finnegan Garner	Claire Shulman
Norma Gorman	Arlene Sitterly
Barbara Hadel	Mary Jane Smith
Joy Hansen	Dawn Sullivan
Lucille Helfat	Alyson Sweetser
Nikki Henkin	Cathryn Thomas
Sister Elizabeth Hill, C.S. J.	Amy Torrey
Anne Humphrey	The Honorable Sandra L. Townes
Ann Irvin	Ellen Tuohey
Lisa Israel	Kathy Urschel
Arlene Johnston	Joanne VanZandt
Barbara Kearns	Georgia Verdier
Clara B. Kellner	Reba White Williams
Helen Kelly	Delores Cooper Kershaw



Previous Honorees 2001

Crystal A. Abers	Dottie MacVean
A. Trudy Adell	Lucinda Sloan Mallen
Heather Ross Benedict	Susan Marino, RN
Phyllis Besch	Sister Theresa Martel
Dr. Helen Illick Breed	Rev. Colette Matthews
Margaret "Mugsie" Burch	Claire McIntee
Buhrmaster (Coolman)	Carol Naylor
Margaret Buzzell	Angie Miller
Elizabeth "Betty" Cochrane	Gertrude Hess Parker
Lucy F. Codella	Ann Petrus
Dr. Vivian Cody	Frances Pizzola
Barbara Cohen	Wendy Powers
Wendy Csoka	Annie Rabbitt
Victoria DeVantier	Chandler M. Ralph
Patricia C. Donnelly	Victoria Rosenberg
Pat Finnerty	Helene Donlan Sacco
Amy Fischetti	Irene Scheid
Miriam M. E. Garcia	Roberta C. Schofield
Sister Rose Vincent Gleason	Carol Silva
Dr. Lois Goldsmith	Bobbi Smith
Betsy Harrison	Cathy Stewart
Susan Helsinger	Vivian Street
Pat Hieronymus	Dolores Thompson
Doris Hunter	Dr. Mary Ridgway Tinker
Deborah S. Johnson	Belina Venuti
Jacqueline Keller	Dr. Nora Volkow
Abby Kenigsberg	Nancy Wackstein
Renee Krieger	Ethel L. Walker
Carole LaPlante	Shirley Waters
Margaret A. Leahy	Jill Way
Patricia Lindi Linekin	Harriet Weber
Catherine Linfoot	Sister Martha Winum, D.W.
Hon. Gaetan B. Lozito	



Previous Honorees 2002

Kathleen Barton
Debbie Basile
Nancy Bernheim, Esq.
Marilyn Bitterman
Patricia Bodnar
Andrea Clark Brown
Prudence Carabine
Margaret Carroll
Fredrika Conway
Judy Dagostino
Margaret Requa DeFrancisco
Rita DiMartino
Kathryn R. Doolittle
Anne DuPrey
Laura Elliot-Engel
Peg Ellsworth
Madeleine Fitzgibbon
Marguerite Flood
Maude Frank
Michelle Fratti
Dr. Anne DuVal Frost
Mimi Galgano
Roberta Giordano
Carol Gresser
Rosemary Gunning
Mary Pat Hancock
Dr. Debra Handel
Dr. Ruby Elinor Hare
Violet Haufsk
Dr. Evelyn Blöse Holman
Donna A. Holt
Mary Ellen Jones
Patricia Knapp

Angela Koenig
Lorraine Krup
Mary Anne Krupsak
Ursula LaMotte
Gloria Lettow
Carol Mahoney
Nancy Manfredonia
Marlene Marciniak
Doreen Marks
Ligia Mendoza
Mary Holt Moore
Nancy Naples
Rosemary Nesbitt
Theresa Pagano
Eve Pawelski
Judith Peckham
Dr. Jana Pulkrabek
Dr. Greta Rainsford
Jean Raymond
Zakia Robana
Jill Rooney
Dr. Stella Pandell Russell
Janice L. Schaefer
Joanne Shenandoah
Susan Sherwood
Rachel Spivey
Dr. Susan Swain
Barbara Wilcox Thuesen
Linda Laursen Toscano
Fanny Villarreal de Canavan
Sister Vincent Marie Wilson
Elizabeth L. Young



Previous Honorees 2003

Beverly Anania	Harlene Holzschuh
Sheila Appel	Paula S. Howk
Dr. Asma Barlas	Dolores Marie Hutton
Amalia V. Betanzo	Cindy Intschert
Cynthia Bianco	Carolyn James
Maggie Brooks	Stephanie Joyce Kahn
Francine Brown	Jean Kelly
Janet Madonia Calano	Susan Lacerte
Minerva China	Gay Lenhard
Francine Cieri	Elizabeth Letterese
Karen Coleman	The Hon. Carol MacKenzie
Delaine Cook-Greene	Nancy Marr
Joan Correale	Milagros Martinez
Carol Crews	Virginia E. Maurer
Melissa A. Croke	Barbara B. Melvin
Elizabeth Currier	Lynn Millane
Lucille Cuttler	Rose V. Moroney
Eva de La O	Sister Margaret "Peggy" Murphy
Dr. Donna Denier	May Newburger
Lee Gridley Dibble	Sister Kathleen Osbelt
Maxine Dowler	Janet Ottman
The Hon. Sandra J. Feuerstein	Raquel Pachas
The Hon. Patricia M. Filiberto	Edith Palmer
Annette S. Foley	Vivian Papson
Jane Fox	Elizabeth Sanchez
Sister Monica Galligan	Gladys Serrano
Georgiana Gehret	Leslie Stolzenfels
Barbara L. Germain	Marianne Teta
Ann Marie Gianni	Cynthia Theiss
Bertha Governale	Terri Thomson
Priscilla Halagao	Sister Marguerite Torre
Grace Hausmann	Colleen Tyll
Nancy Henry	Vivian Warren
	Fran Weisberg



Previous Honorees 2004

Margaret Pataki
Nancy L. E. Andrews
Sarah Anker
Joan Bachert
Kathy Ballesteros
Margaret C. Bandy
Frances Barbieri
Lisa Barile
Marcella Beigel
Rochelle Berger
Judi Bosworth
Mildred Browne
Sheila Burrell
Jaqueline P. Cady
Brigitte Castellano
Sister Anne P. Clancy
Mary Ellen Clausen
Elizabeth Colon
Desiree M. Croteau
Edith Davey
Dr. Tammie Lee Demler
Nora Detweiler
June Douglas
The Hon. Karen A. Drago
Marcia Dugan
Sherry Eaton
Barbara Ellenberger
Denise Frangipane
Pearl "Pi" Gentile
Roberta A. Gerold
Gladys Goesch
Yvonne Goodhill
Katherine Heaviside

Maud Haggstrom Kramer
Deborah Kueber
Judith Lang
Ronnie W. Lawrence
Marion Leonardo
Mary E. Luckern
Jacquelyn Maher-Brucia
Sister Regina McAuley
Joanne Meyer-Jendras
Joyce E. Mulleedy
Susan Murray-Tetz
Marlene Norfolk
RoseMarie Panio
Barbara Picard
The Hon. Maxine Postal
Barbara Ernst Prey
Dawn Rafalski-VanName
Patti Call Riner
Marcia Rocco
Althea O. Roll
The Hon. Lea Ruskin
Gladys Santiago
Anita Saunders
Nancy Schwartz
Eleanor Scott
Carolyn Gifford Seymour
Aileen Ortlip Shea
Carolyn Short
Louise K. Sira
Beth Strong
Ann Toglia
Barbara N. Webber
Gwendolyn Webber-McLeod



Previous Honorees 2005

Senator Patricia K. McGee
Catherine T. Andrews
Mary Angerame
Jolene Bender
Dr. Helen Blanchard
Sister Elaine Bohrer
Diane Brown
Angie M. Carpenter
Eleanor Charwat
Judith J. Chin
Marilyn Ciancio
R. Carol Coltrain
Alice T. Cone
Phyllis Connelly
Mary L. Cotter
Elizabeth W. Cree
Angie M. Cullen
Debrah A. DeLuke
Carol L. Dunn
Elizabeth "Beth" Fipps
Roseann Gentile
Sandra Gerry
Roberta A. Goldenberg
Jo Greene
Rosalyn Haber
Sara Jean Hammel
Susan R. Holliday
Edith Hunter
Roberta Keller
Kate Kelly
Ruth Kempisty
Marianne Laine

Henrietta Magner
Donna Matteson
Dorothy M. McCloskey
Virginia M. Greene Meehan
Helen Meittinis
Mary Beth Murphy
Maxine Neal
Arlene O'Dell
Dr. Karen A. Oates
Diana W. Petrosky
Melissa Quimby
Jennifer Rimmer
Helen Woodward Rivas
Francine Roland-King
Rosemary E. Rose
Susan Gordon Ryan
Ruth Sayer
Mary Schilb
Dr. Ruth H. Scott
Constance Wilmsen Stafford
Patricia Standish
Nada Tannen
Marie N. Taver
Deborah Tascone
Sharen Trembath
Peggy Vergis
Donna M. Vitagliano
Gail Volk
Frances M. Walton
Mary Ellen Whitney
Karen B. Wolfson



Previous Honorees 2006

Kathleen M. Balus
Stacey Branchini
Gertrude A. Butera
Rita Cleary
Shirley Connolly
Andria De Lisle-Heath
Benita "Be" Denmark
Leah S. Dunaief
Patricia Duo
Denise Ford
Joanna S. Fowler, Ph.D.
Janice Grieshaber
Lisa M. Heath
Audrey Jacullo
Carolina Minetto Lazzari
Judith Limpert
Maureen Lodes
Amy J. Maniscalco
Molly McMaster
Alyse Middendorf

Ann Muro
Marlene R. Papa
Dr. Regina S. Peruggi
Joyce Peisker Ratushny
Mary Holmes Reid
Cheryl Rogowski
Susan C. Rounds
Sister Ann Sakac
Jill Salerno
Michele Sedor
Deborah F. Stanley
Carolyn Stiffler
Barbara J. Stuchinski
Lana J. Taylor
Linda G. Toohey
Beverly Towers
Joan Vogt
Dorothy A. Wentland
Gale E. Wolfe



Previous Honorees 2007

Renee J. Abdou-Malta
Neme Alperstein
Stephanie Bail
Corinne Brown
Linda L. Cellini
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