



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR  
Diane J. Savino

## Senator Savino Secures Funds to Send Local Youth Football Champs to National Championships

DIANE J. SAVINO December 3, 2009

| ISSUE: **YOUTH**

| COMMITTEE: **CIVIL SERVICE AND PENSIONS**



### *Community joins in effort to support the Staten Island Hurricanes*

**(Staten Island)**—Senator Diane J. Savino (D-North Shore/Brooklyn) today announced a successful fundraising campaign to send local champions, the Staten Island Hurricanes, an all-volunteer youth football organization with four different weight divisions, who qualified for the National Championship Games in Orlando, Fl, from December 5th to the 12th. The team, part of the American Youth Football League has strict standards for its team members, requiring the kids to be in good academic standing, as well as volunteer in their community. The coaches act as mentors to the players, providing tutoring and assistance with homework, as well as teaching self-respect, responsibility, and civic engagement.

The team, made up of over one hundred kids, many from modest incomes, were having difficulty paying for the cost of the trip—approximately \$400 per child—over \$10,000 for the entire team. Senator Savino began a joint community fundraising effort, raising \$8,700, thus allowing the team to participate in the games.

“The Hurricanes are Staten Island’s best kept secret. They are volunteer-run and parent-managed. This is a team of kids that perform not just on the field, but in the schools and in their community. It’s a requirement. We’re trying to develop well-rounded young people here, the future leaders of our community. We wanted to make sure that every kid had the chance to participate in the National Championships in Florida and with the help of many people in the community, they will be able to do just that,” said Senator Diane J. Savino. Coach Jay Williams said, “This is a great experience for Staten Island and the Hurricanes. We’re fortunate to represent Staten Island and New York City in the American Youth Football Championships. Many thanks to Senator Savino and all the other contributors for supporting our organization.”

Patricia Thomas, mother of one of the players, Coco Thomas, 16, said, “The team plays such a special role in his life. The coaches help them, take them to practice, even study hall. They teach the players how to be responsible young men and women. We appreciate Senator Savino’s efforts and those of the community for helping us and for acknowledging the kids who work so hard.”

The list of contributors are as follows:

State Senator Diane J. Savino	\$2,500
Richmond County Savings Foundation	\$2,000
Staten Island Terminal	\$1,500
Atlantic Salt	\$1,200
Health Plus	\$1,200
Daniel Berman	\$1,000
Dock Builders Local	\$500
State Assemblyman Matthew Titone	\$300
Downtown Business Council	\$250
Anthony Gaeta Democratic Club	\$250

In addition, Adewale Ogunleye, defensive end for the Chicago Bears, regularly contributes to the organization.

To make a contribution to the team, please contact Senator Savino’s office at 718-727-9406 or send a check, made out to the Staten Island Hurricanes" to PO Box 20297, Staten Island, NY 10302

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