



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Craig M. Johnson

## Senator Johnson Honors Local Women of Distinction

CRAIG M. JOHNSON March 3, 2010



Eighteen women from across the 7th Senate District and beyond were honored during Senator Craig M. Johnson's Third Annual Women of Distinction ceremony.

The honorees were recognized for their work in education, community service, advocacy, neighborhood activism, and other areas.

“Each of these trailblazers represents a different field and comes from different backgrounds and different experiences. However, what binds them together is their commitment to

improve the quality of life for their neighbors and in their neighborhoods,” Senator Johnson said. “I am very proud to have had the opportunity to recognize them, especially during Women's History Month.”

Mindy Alpert, of Great Neck, was a torchbearer during the 2002 Olympic Games and has dedicated herself to helping her community. A regionally ranked tennis player, she was selected to represent the United States in Women's Tennis for the Pan American Maccabi Amateur Olympic Games . She has spent 10 years as a financial adviser helping those from all backgrounds and economic situations become financially fit. Her work earned her numerous accolades, included being voted one of Long Island's 15 most influential women in 1999. After being diagnosed with Multiple Sclerosis- Alpert joined the National Multiple Sclerosis Society, Long Island Chapter and served as board chair from 2004 to 2007. She still coaches tennis and badminton at Great Neck High School.

Ann Marie Curd, a corporate law attorney, was recognized for her dedication and service to the greater Manhasset community. She was instrumental in the creation of the Council of Greater Manhasset Civic Associations and served as its president from 2006 through this past September. During her time as president, she strengthened the organization, which is now a powerful voice for the residents of the Manhasset area.

Maureen Droge, the Executive Director of the Westbury Senior Center, is being recognized for her tireless work on behalf of Westbury's seniors. She started as a part-time secretary at the Senior Center and was promoted to Assistant Director, and later, Executive Director. She is responsible the center's operations and for overseeing its programs. She has also become an outspoken advocate on senior issues.

Joyce Gorycki, of Mineola suffered an unimaginable tragedy when she lost her husband in the 1993 Long Island Rail Road Massacre. From this loss sprung a long and impressive record

of community service and advocacy for tighter gun control laws. She is a board member and co-chair Long Island Chapter of New Yorker Against Violence and has been recognized numerous times for her work to reduce the number of illegal guns on our streets. Gorycki, who works for the Village of Mineola, is also finance Chairwoman of the Mineola Mustang Run Committee, a member of the Interfaith Alliance of Long Island, a member of the Mineola Historical Society, a Block Captain of the Mineola Neighborhood Watch and an early supporter of National Cleaners Association's "Coats for Kids" drive.

Anna Kaplan won her first term as a member of the Great Neck Library Board in Jan. 2008 and now serves as its Vice President. She was born in Tabriz, Iran, and was sent to the United States during the Iranian Revolution. Separated from her family for many years, Kaplan learned English and pursued a legal career. She attended Stern College for Women at Yeshiva University and the Benjamin Cardozo School of Law, becoming one of the first Persian American women to receive a Juris Doctor degree.

Marianna Wohlgemuth and her sister, Marietta DiCamillo, both of North New Hyde Park, were at the forefront of the community's fight against Jamaica Water Supply, a company which was overcharging and exploiting its customers. After a decade-long struggle, Jamaica was dismissed and a public water authority – the Water Authority of Western Nassau County – was established.

Both have continued to serve their communities in other ways. DiCamillo is the president of the North Lakeville Civic Association and is an Assistant Treasurer for the Great Neck Library Board. Wohlgemuth has served as an unpaid commissioner to the water authority since 1995 and is president of the Lakeville Estates Civic Association.

Sister Constance Kelly, of the Parish Social Ministry of St. Peter Alcantara Parish in Port Washington, is being honored for her work with Port's immigrant and non-English speaking

communities. From her work in Port, to her travels to Chile and Guatemala, Sister Kelly has dedicated herself to helping the impoverished and providing care to the most vulnerable among us.

Tamie Zacchea mobilized parents within the Sewanhaka Central High School District after late bus service was cut to public and non-public school students within the district. Zacchea and her group organized a petition drive that drove home the importance of this service. Late bus service was restored after Senator Johnson helped secure a \$150,000 state grant to help cover the budgetary shortfall.

Ellen Makofsky, of Port Washington, is being recognized for her work in helping establish Landmark on Main Street and serving as a longtime member of its board. Her work at Landmark, which included the restructuring of its bylaws, is an extension of her legal career, where she is one of the true pioneers in the practice of elder law in Nassau County. Makofsky is also an active member of the Port Jewish Center, and served on the Board of trustees as a Vice President for many years.

Since moving to Floral Park, Nadia Holubnyczyj- Ortiz, has worked to make the village assessable to all. A member of the village's Disabilities Committee, Holubnyczyj- Ortiz has worked toward making all village facilities compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act. She and Floral Park Village Trustee Mary Grace Tomecki met with Senator Johnson last year and, as a result, Senator Johnson secured a \$100,000 in state funding for Floral Park to improve handicap access to municipal buildings.

A Floral Park resident since 2002, Holubnyczyj- Ortiz works as a speech language pathologist.

Nancy Massaro is being honored for her work on behalf of the Floral Park Community. A past president of the North End Civic Association, Massaro was also the first woman to run for village trustee. Additionally, she sits on the Parish Council for Our Lady of Victory Church and is a member of Voice of the Faithful, a group that supports children who were abused by members of the clergy. She is also the moderator of the local television show "Nancy's Corner."

Hillary Rutter, as Executive Director of the Adelphi Breast Cancer Hotline and Support Program, oversees one of the the most comprehensive and valuable resources for breast cancer survivors and their families. As Rutter has sought to fill the program's core mission of providing information and support to those who need it, she has also been fighting for the hotline's survival. Last year, the Governor sought to cut eliminate \$294,000 in state funding for the program. Rutter, working with Senator Johnson and others, was able to get the funding restored.

Florence Lisanti was honored for her decades of involvement in the New Hyde Park Community. Lisanti was the first-ever woman to be elected Trustee in the village of New Hyde Park and is the current village historian,. She has also been a vital part of the local PTA and volunteers with the Chamber of Commerce.

Dr. Linda Glazer, who grew up in New Hyde Park and lives in Great Neck, has spent the last three decades advancing medical social work, and has been focused on the region's deaf community. For the past 14 years, she has been practicing medicine at the North Shore LIJ Hearing and Speech Center, where she provides counseling, and runs a support group for adults with hearing loss and cochlear implants. She additionally serves as a field instructor for graduate social work students, training the next generation of medical social workers.

Ann Tountas, a New Hyde park resident, has made a difference in the lives of the seniors in her community through her work at the Herricks Community Center. She has been a key organizer of the center's Alzheimer's Day Program since 1988 and currently serves as the director of the program.

Lisa Tyson, as Director of the Long Island Progressive Coalition has dedicated herself to improving the lives of all residents of Long Island. Under her leadership, the LIPC has become a strong voice for change in Nassau and Suffolk counties.

Stephanie Sokenis, of Hicksville, is the event and charity organizer for the Hicksville Chamber of Commerce. Under her supervision, the Hicksville Chamber is an active member organization that sponsors numerous programs and activities from casino night to the Hicksville Street Fair.

The Adelphi NY Statewide Breast Cancer Hotline and Support Program can be reached at 1.800.877.8077, or <http://www.adelphi.edu/nysbreastcancer>.

These women were honored by Senator Johnson at a recent dinner at the Swan Club in Glenwood Landing. The event was co-sponsored by the Long Island Fund for Women and Girls. Flowers were donated by Tropical Zion, 100 Radcliff Ave., in Port Washington.