



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Thomas F. O'Mara

## **O'Mara honors Yates County health professional as 2014 New York State Senate 'Woman of Distinction'**

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**Albany, N.Y., May 13**—State Senator Tom O'Mara (R-C, Big Flats) paid tribute to [Lauren R. Snyder](#), a long-time public health professional in Yates County, as a New York State Senate "Woman of Distinction" at an awards ceremony in Albany on Tuesday.

Snyder, a Penn Yan native who served as the Yates County Public Health Director for 28 years before retiring in 2009, represented O'Mara's 58th Senate District at a statewide tribute event in the Legislative Office Building in Albany as part of the state Senate's 17th Annual "Women of Distinction" program.

O'Mara said that Snyder's lifelong commitment to public health, including her 33 years at Yates County Public Health, produced many enduring contributions that continue to help protect and improve the health and safety of Yates County and regional communities and residents.

"For nearly four decades, Lauren Snyder has been a positive, driving force behind countless achievements to improve the health, safety and well-being of the residents of Yates County and our entire region," said O'Mara. "Her commitment, leadership and vision have produced a remarkable record of accomplishment and dedication to stronger, healthier communities and neighborhoods. I'm extremely grateful to have this chance to recognize Lauren as a 'Woman of Distinction.' It's a well-earned and well-deserved tribute."

Snyder was born and raised in Penn Yan, graduated from Penn Yan Academy, the University of Buffalo (RN, BSN) and the State University of New York at Brockport (MPA). She was employed at Yates County Public Health for 33 years, including 28 years as Director before her retirement in 2009.

Among numerous groundbreaking contributions, Snyder was instrumental in 1997 as a co-founder of the S2AY Rural Health Network, which for nearly two decades has been the catalyst for notable health improvement projects across Yates County and regionally. She remains active in the network as a coordinator on a Neighborhood Health Status Improvement project known as "Our Town Rocks" in Dundee.

She also remains active in numerous civic, business and community service organizations, including the Dundee Rotary Club; Milly's Pantry; Yates Christmas for the Needy; Dundee Mobile Food Pantry; and as a Medical Reserve Corps Volunteer.

She has been the recipient of several of the region's most prestigious civic awards including the Dundee Rotary Paul Harris Fellow Award, Finger Lakes Health Systems Agency Sage Award, ProAction Shining Star Award, and the NYS Association for Rural Health's Worker of the Year Award.

Yates County Legislator William Holgate and current Yates County Public Health Director Deborah Minor nominated Snyder for this year's "Woman of Distinction" award.

Minor said, “Lauren is a true grassroots leader with heart and commitment for her community and the vision to see what might be possible. She focuses on the strengths of those she serves and has a true talent for motivating others into action.”

Holgate said, “As project coordinator of ‘Our Town Rocks,’ Lauren has given the communities of Barrington, Starkey and Dundee the opportunity to see improvements in health, pride and appearance, and bring our towns closer together.”

The Senate's annual "[Women of Distinction](#)" program, which began in March to coincide with Women's History Month in New York State, allows senators statewide to select one honoree from their respective legislative districts for this distinguished, statewide tribute.

O'Mara's past honorees have been:

-- in 2011, [Carol Berry](#) of Hornell, a long-time regional library professional and director of the Dormann Library in Bath;

-- in 2012, [Virginia “Ginny” Houseknecht](#) of Watkins Glen, a long-time area Cornell Cooperative Extension educator and leader, and founder of the Southern Tier Parkinson's Disease Support Group; and

-- last year, [Beverly “Bev” Stamp](#), co-owner and operator of Lakewood Vineyards in Watkins Glen, a long-time and beloved ambassador of New York State's nationally and internationally renowned wine and grape industry.

Following is the biography that accompanies Snyder's “Woman of Distinction” award:

*If, as it's been said, good health and good sense are two of life's great blessings, then Lauren R. Snyder has successfully devoted a lifetime as a public health professional to promoting this ideal.*

*Born and raised in Penn Yan, NY, Lauren graduated from Penn Yan Academy, the University of Buffalo (RN, BSN) and SUNY at Brockport (MPA). She was employed at Yates County Public Health for 33 years, including 28 years as Director before her retirement in 2009. She is widely admired as the driving force behind countless achievements to protect and improve the health of Yates County's residents.*

*The list of her past community affiliations is long and impressive. She remains active in the Dundee Rotary Club; Milly's Pantry; Yates Christmas for the Needy; Dundee Mobile Food Pantry; and as a Medical Reserve Corps Volunteer. She has been the recipient of several of the region's most prestigious awards including the Dundee Rotary Paul Harris Fellow Award, Finger Lakes Health Systems Agency Sage Award,*

*ProAction Shining Star Award, and the NYS Association for Rural Health's Worker of the Year Award.*

*In 1997, Lauren was instrumental as a co-founder of the S2AY Rural Health Network, which for nearly two decades has been the catalyst for notable health improvement projects across Yates County and regionally. Lauren continues her work with the network.*

*A strong proponent of a grassroots, "place matters" philosophy to target health care to the specific demographics of communities and neighborhoods, Lauren's visionary commitment, public health leadership and positive approach have made and will continue to make enduring contributions to her community.*

*Lauren and her husband Alan "Herbie" Snyder have been married for 44 years and are the proud parents of two daughters.*