



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Patty Ritchie

## **MORE THAN 200 TAKE PART IN UPSTATE WOMEN'S LEADERSHIP COUNCIL'S FIRST EVENT**

[Patty Ritchie](#)

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More than 200 people filled Jefferson Community College's Sturtz Theater Monday evening for a discussion on leadership with Lt. Governor Kathy Hochul that touched on seizing opportunities, networking and the importance of confidence when it comes to achieving goals.

The discussion was part of the first event hosted by the "Upstate Women's Leadership Council." Formed earlier this year, the Council is a nonpartisan group comprised of local leaders and led by Senator Ritchie, along with Rep. Elise Stefanik and Jefferson County District Attorney Cindy Intschert that aims to increase opportunities for the personal and professional advancement of women throughout the Central and Northern New York regions.

"We have all faced roadblocks on the road to becoming leaders, and as we all continue on our own personal paths, it's so important that we reach out and lend a helping hand to others along the way," said Senator Ritchie.

"That's the goal of the Upstate Women's Leadership Council—to foster connections between local women who are looking to become better leaders, and in turn, create better opportunities for everyone. I'm thrilled that so many local women have taken an interest in being a part of this group and would like to thank Lt. Governor Hochul,

as well as the members of the Council for making our first event such a success.”

“When it comes to leadership roles, the bottom line is that we all have the potential within us to get involved in the process and take a seat at the table,” said Lieutenant Governor Hochul.

“Initiatives like the Upstate Women’s Leadership Council are key to empowering women and encouraging them to work together to achieve great things. I’d like to thank Senator Ritchie, as well as the entire Council for inviting me to be a part of their first event and wish them the best of luck as they continue their mission of creating more—and better—opportunities for women.”

In addition to Lt. Governor Hochul’s keynote address, the Council’s inaugural event also included mentoring and networking opportunities for attendees. Individuals nominated by the Council to be honored for their leadership were also recognized. Honorees included:

**Margaret “Peggy” Coe**, a Jefferson County resident who is known throughout the North Country for her decades of volunteerism with a number of organizations;

**Dr. Jan Turcotte**, a retired general surgeon whose focus on breast care had a significant positive impact on countless women throughout our region;

**Penny Morley**, Prevention Services Director at Oswego County’s Farnham Family Services who has focused on preventing the spread of illegal substances in schools throughout Central New York;

**Keely O’Connor**, a Carthage High School student who won the 2015 Congressional Art Competition for New York’s 21st Congressional District;

**The Massena Lady Raiders hockey team**, which won the 2014-2015 NYSPHSAA state title in February; and

**The Heuvelton Lady Bulldogs basketball team**, which took home the New York State Girls Class D Championship in March.

Monday’s event was made possible with help from a number of sponsors, including Jefferson Community College, “Bella’s” bistro, Timeless Frames and St. Lawrence County Clerk Mary Lou Rupp.

In addition to co-chairs, current members of the Upstate Women's Leadership Council include:

*St. Lawrence County Clerk Mary Lou Rupp*

*Maureen Missert*

*Lisa Weber*

*Deborah Stanley*

*Jennifer Ashcraft*

*Trese Bannister*

*Faye Beckwith*

*Irene Carman*

*Karen Clark*

*Erica Demick*

*Madeline Donovan*

*Kristi Eck*

*Lisa Familo*

*Beth Fipps*

*Carolyn Fitzpatrick*

*Lauren French*

*Laurina Greenhill*

*Melissa Ringer Hardy*

*Shari Hogan*

*Jessica Hyde*

*Lisa Jeschawitz*

*Carole McCoy*

*Andrea Montgomery*

*Sheriff Colleen O'Neill*

*Michelle Pfaff*

*Hartley Bonisteel Schweitzer*

*Cherie Shatraw*

*Jennifer Stevenson*

To become a member of the Upstate Women's Leadership Council, and help with future events, as well as networking and mentoring initiatives, [click here.](#)