



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Thomas F. O'Mara

Senator O'Mara and colleagues honor Chemung County native, Dean of College of Agriculture and Life Sciences as 2018 'Woman of Distinction': Kathryn J. Boor honored at Senate's statewide tribute in Albany on Tuesday

THOMAS F. O'MARA May 1, 2018

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Albany, N.Y., May 1—State Senator Tom O'Mara (R,C,I-Big Flats) and his Senate colleagues tonight honored **Kathryn J. Boor**, a native of Chemung County and currently the Ronald P.

Lynch Dean of the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences (CALS) at Cornell University, as a 2018 New York State Senate “Woman of Distinction.”

O’Mara solicits districtwide nominations for the annual tribute. Boor represented O’Mara’s 58th District at the Senate’s 20th Annual “Women of Distinction” awards ceremony on Tuesday in the Legislative Office Building in Albany. She joined approximately 60 other honorees representing senatorial districts from throughout New York.

O’Mara said, “Kathryn Boor has earned and deserves this recognition. She exemplifies everything that the Senate’s ‘Woman of Distinction’ tribute honors in public service. Her commitment to New York State agriculture, and food science in particular, has long been unmatched. She grew up on a Southern Tier dairy farm and you cannot find a stronger advocate for our dairy farmers and the dairy industry overall. Her tenure as the Dean of one of the world’s foremost agricultural universities has produced landmark achievements in education, food safety, public awareness and cutting-edge research. Dean Boor can be proud of a remarkable lifetime of achievement and contribution up to now. But we are fortunate that she’s just getting started!”

Julie C. Suarez, Associate Dean of Cornell CALS who nominated Boor for this year’s award, said, “Dean Boor’s passionate commitment to New York’s farm and food community, and the Cornell CALS Land Grant mission of education, research, and outreach, is unparalleled. Her vision of a healthy and vibrant food-based ecosystem in the Southern Tier and beyond is truly inspiring, as is her ability to see past the short-term challenges to the real opportunities ahead for our local farmers and food producers. She’s touched the lives of thousands of students, helping to shape the next generation with an enthusiastic belief in what is possible, not just what is practical, through encouraging a life-changing culture of innovation.”

Born in Elmira, Boor grew up on a family-owned dairy farm in Horseheads. She earned a Bachelor of Science (BS) in Food Science from Cornell in 1980. These were the first steps in a journey that took her to Wisconsin (where in 1983 she earned a Master of Science in Food Science from Wisconsin University), Kenya (where she completed a two-year assignment, from 1981-1983 with Winrock International working with limited-resource farmers) and California (where she earned her PhD in Microbiology from the University of California, Davis in 1994) before returning to **Cornell CALS** in 1994 as the first woman faculty member in the Department of Food Science.

Boor was appointed Dean of the college in 2010. She leads the second-largest college at Cornell and oversees 350 faculty, 3,600 undergraduate students and 980 graduate students. During her tenure, the CALS has consistently ranked as one of the top three universities in the world in both agricultural sciences, and plant and animal sciences.

She established the Food Safety Research Laboratory, which today is a renowned leader on 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.

Of her lifelong love of and commitment to food science and the mission to ensure a safe, affordable, nutritious food supply worldwide, Boor has said, "That has been my North Star, so to speak, as long as I can remember, my entire life."

Under 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. She has brought new life into student majors including Environmental Sciences & Sustainability and Plant Sciences. She has revitalized food product development and food safety training with, among numerous initiatives, the establishment of an Institute

for Food Safety.

She currently resides in Trumansburg.

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 longstanding regional library professional and director of the Dormann Library in Bath;
- > in 2012, **Virginia "Ginny" Houseknecht** of Watkins Glen, a longtime area Cornell Cooperative Extension educator and leader, and founder of the Southern Tier Parkinson's Disease Support Group;
- > in 2013, **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; and
- > in 2014, **Lauren R. Snyder**, a public health professional from Penn Yan who served as the Yates County Public Health Director for 28 years before retiring in 2009;
- > in 2015, **Linda Thomas**, owner and operator of the Wellsburg Diner and recipient of a prestigious "Small Business Excellence Award" from the U.S. Small Business Administration;
- > in 2016, **Dawn R. Smith**, Transition and Care Management (TCM) Program Manager at the Bath VA Medical Center and a well-known local veterans advocate; and

> last year, **Carmella Hoffmann**, Owner and Operator of Sunset View Creamery in Odessa (Schuyler County).

Read more on Dean Kathryn J. Boor **[HERE](#)**.