



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Velmanette Montgomery

Martin de Porres Group Homes honors Senator Montgomery at their 1st Annual Community Champion Gala

Senator Velmanette Montgomery

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Martin de Porres Group Homes honors Senator Velmanette Montgomery at their 1st Annual Community Champion Gala. The organization honored Senator Montgomery for her leadership on juvenile justice issues, including passage of Raise the Age legislation in New York State.

The evening also honored:

* **Andre Durham**, who came to the Martin De Porres Family as a resident in their Close to Home program and now serves our country as an E5 Sergeant in the 423rdTC Company at Fort Carson in Colorado.



* **Dianne Dyson Heggie** recently retired following a 44-year career in the field of child welfare; for more than 30 years, she was a direct practitioner in the areas of residential care, child protection, and staff training.



* **Oscar Hopkins**, “the Mayor of Springfield Gardens” and the owner of Hopkins’ Barbershop, a neighborhood institution in its 54th year of existence.



Martin de Porres Group Homes has provided community-based services for at-risk youth in Queens, New York since 1974. Martin De Porres Group Homes is accredited by the Council on Accreditation, and a member organization of the Child Welfare League of America, and the Council of Family and Child-caring Organizations (COFCCA). Historically, the organization contracted with the Administration for Children's services, NYS Division for Youth, and now the NYS Office of Children and Family Services, to provide community-based group home care and supervision for dependent, neglected, abused, and adjudicated youth from 1974 to the present. Because of the small size of the agency and the presence of committed staff, the agency was able to adjust to many challenges between 1974 and the present. Initially, most of the youth placed at Martin de Porres were voluntary placements, persons in need of supervision, with a small number of adjudicated youngsters. As the "crack epidemic" disrupted families in the 1980's, the agency was able to provide services to youngsters placed by Family Court because of findings of abuse or neglect against the caregivers. During the 1990's, preventive services helped to decrease the demand for residential beds, and there was an increase in referrals from the Family Courts for placement of juvenile delinquents.

To learn more about the Martin de Porres Group Homes and their impact they are making on the lives of young people in our state, visit <https://mdpyfs.org>

To learn more about Senator Montgomery's work on Raise the Age, visit:

<https://www.nysenate.gov/newsroom/press-releases/velmanette-montgomery/raise-age>

<https://www.nysenate.gov/newsroom/articles/velmanette-montgomery/senator-velmanette-montgomery-introduces-raise-age>

<https://www.nysenate.gov/newsroom/articles/velmanette-montgomery/senator-montgomery-raise-age-about-all-us-who-have-made>

<https://www.nysenate.gov/newsroom/articles/velmanette-montgomery/senator-montgomery-discusses-raise-age-and-school-prison>