



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

George M. Borrello

African-American Center for Cultural Development Founder Della Moore Presented 2021 Woman of Distinction Award by Senator Borrello

GEORGE M. BORRELLO September 25, 2021

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OLEAN, NY – Surrounded by family, friends and colleagues, Della Moore, founder and Executive Director of the African American Center for Cultural Development, was honored Saturday by Senator George M. Borrello as a 2021 New York State Senate “Woman of Distinction.”

Dignitaries and community leaders gathered at Trinity United Methodist Church in Olean to recognize Ms. Moore for her achievements and contributions to the community. Senator George Borrello said he selected Ms. Moore as the 57th Senate District’s honoree in recognition of her efforts to preserve the history of African Americans throughout the region, and her more than four decades of community

leadership and volunteerism.

“Since she moved to Olean in 1972, from her native Philadelphia, Della Moore has devoted her life to helping others and giving back to her adopted hometown,” Senator Borrello said. “She is an inspiration and a leader in every sense of the word and I’m very proud to honor her as this year’s Woman of Distinction.”

Ms. Moore founded the African American Center for Cultural Development in 2010. As the center’s director, she has worked to raise awareness of the talents, lives and history of African Americans in the Southern Tier and of the region’s key role in the Underground Railroad.

Ms. Moore said she’s honored to be recognized, but quickly added the credit doesn’t belong to her.

“I am doing what God has instructed me to do and all the glory goes to Him and I’ve been blessed with beautiful people who helped me on my journey,” she said

Sen. Borrello said that modesty is typical of Ms. Moore.

“Like so many exceptional women who came before her, Della isn’t driven by a need for recognition,” Sen. Borrello said. “She’s motivated by a sincere desire to help people and serve her community. Della exemplifies the spirit of service at the heart of the ‘Woman of Distinction’ award and is worthy of our respect and admiration.”

Ms. Moore’s granddaughter, Joleen Moore, said her grandmother’s spirit of giving is felt by everyone she meets.

“She is a guardian angel to everyone she comes in contact with,” Joleen said. “She has always told me, ‘Bud pray about it and let it go, God will work it out.’”

Olean Mayor William Aiello has known Ms. Moore for decades.

“Della Moore’s contribution to Olean is significant,” Mayor Aiello said. “Her exhaustive research, hard work, patience and perseverance has definitely made Olean a better place to live. But it is her optimism and enthusiasm, traits that she passes on to whomever she meets, that make her a leader in our community. She is the definition of a Woman of Distinction, and on behalf of the City of Olean, I congratulate her on receiving this prestigious award.”

Assemblyman Joseph M. Giglio echoed that sentiment.

“Della Moore is one of the most deserving people I can think of to be named a New York Senate Woman of Distinction,” he said. “Everything Della does is done with distinction - from community service, to the preservation and promotion of African American history and culture, to faith, to friendship, to love of family. Della shows the true meaning of inclusion, someone who sees everyone she meets as a friend and worthy of compassion. Every once in a while the Lord sends us a really good person. In this case, he sent us Della.”

Many throughout the Olean area met and befriended Ms. Moore during her 32 years working at Tops Friendly Markets in Olean. She began her career as a cashier at Tops in 1972 shortly after moving to Olean and left as a department manager.

Despite the demands of family and work, Ms. Moore constantly sought to enhance her education, earning an Associate's Degree from Alfred University, a Bachelor's Degree in English from St. Bonaventure University, a Master's Degree in history from St. Bonaventure University and a Master's Degree in black history from Temple University. She has taught at Jamestown Community College and at Julius Nyerere University of Kankan in Guinea, West Africa.

Known for her community involvement and volunteerism, Ms. Moore has served on the Olean City School District Board of Education, the Genesis House Board of Directors, the NeighborWorks Board of Directors and the Cattaraugus County Arts Council Board of Directors.

Ms. Moore also serves on the Greater Olean Area Council of Churches Board of Directors, the Rebuilding Together Board of Directors, the Historians Advisory Committee for the Cattaraugus County Planning and Tourism Department and the Olean Historical Society Board of Directors. She has volunteered at the Olean Food Pantry and at the Olean Family YMCA as well as the International Foundation for Education and Self-Help and with AmeriCorps.

“Della's commitment to her community and serving others is an inspiration and example to all of us,” Senator Borrello said. “Her legacy of service is an example to us all. She's a role model to women and men of all ages and her legacy is the countless lives she's touched on her journey. We're blessed to have her among us.”

Established in 1998, the New York State Senate “Women of Distinction” Award pays tribute to women who have demonstrated remarkable character, initiative and commitment in serving their neighbors, strengthening our communities and acting as role models.

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