

News from Senator George M. Borrello 57th Senate District

Representing Allegany, Cattaraugus, Chautauqua, and portions of Livingston County

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JONES MEMORIAL PRESIDENT/CEO EVA BENEDICT RECEIVES 2020 WOMAN OF DISTINCTION HONOR FROM SENATOR BORRELLO



The region's elected officials joined Senator Borrello to celebrate Jones Memorial Hospital President/CEO Eva Benedict as a New York State Senate "Woman of Distinction." From left to right: Assemblyman Joe Giglio; President/CEO of Strong Memorial and Highland Hospitals, Steven Goldstein; Congressman Tom Reed; Eva Benedict; Senator Borrello; Wellsville Mayor Randy Shayler; Jones Memorial Board Chairman Richard Ewell.

WELLSVILLE, NY – Surrounded by family, friends and colleagues, UR Medicine – Jones Memorial Hospital President and CEO Eva Benedict was honored Friday by Senator George M. Borrello as a 2020 New York State Senate "Woman of Distinction."

Dignitaries, including Congressman Tom Reed, and community and health-care leaders, gathered Friday at Wellsville Country Club to recognize Ms. Benedict for her achievements and contributions to the community.

Senator Borrello said he chose Ms. Benedict as the 57th Senate District's Woman of Distinction honoree for her extraordinary achievements and dedication to preserving health-care quality and access for the community.

"Eva Benedict has devoted nearly 40 years to the field of health care and Jones Memorial Hospital, starting as an ICU nurse where she cared for the most critically ill. Constantly learning and building on her experience, she rose through clinical and leadership positions that expanded the depth and scope of her contributions, culminating with her appointment as Jones Memorial President and CEO in 2007," Senator Borrello said.

“Along the way, she established herself as one of the most accomplished health-care professionals in Western New York and a determined advocate for rural and community hospitals. She is a leader in the very best sense of the word and I am very proud to honor her as this year’s ‘Woman of Distinction.’”

Ms. Benedict said the honor belongs to her team at Jones Memorial, not just herself.

“This recognition is such an honor and one that I have to share with my team at Jones Memorial,” she said. “Early in my nursing career I realized the impact teamwork has on patient care. From the patient bedside to the administrative suite, we all have the same goal: providing the highest quality care to our community. Thank you all for making this award possible.”

Congressman Tom Reed of New York’s 23rd Congressional District cited Ms. Benedict’s deep commitments to the hospital and the community as her defining strengths.

“It’s clear Eva Benedict’s hard work, professionalism, and advocacy for rural hospitals has left its mark on the community,” said Congressman Reed. “Patients across the area are better off because of Eva’s efforts and deep commitment to Jones Memorial Hospital. This is the kind of leadership that defines Wellsville and makes me so proud to represent our district. We’re going to keep celebrating individuals like Eva as a prime example of what’s possible when you work together, prioritize high quality care, and pour your heart into addressing the needs of a community. Congratulations Eva.”

Richard Ewell, Chairman of the Jones Memorial Hospital Board of Directors, credited Ms. Benedict’s leadership and focus on sound business practices with guiding the hospital’s success.

“On behalf of the Board of Directors of Jones Memorial Hospital, we could not be more pleased that Eva is receiving this well-deserved award,” Mr. Ewell said. “As a hands-on board, we have seen Eva consistently use her experience, strong leadership skills, work ethic and good business sense to accomplish the hospital’s critical goal of caring for the community.”

Steven I. Goldstein is Senior Vice President of the University of Rochester (UR) Medical Center and oversees UR Medicine regional hospitals. He also serves as President and CEO of Strong Memorial and Highland Hospitals in Rochester. Mr. Goldstein said Benedict’s commitment to excellence makes her a great health-care executive and patient advocate.

“She is a recognized expert on rural health care, and her insights have been instrumental in helping Jones Memorial Hospital provide outstanding high quality services for the Wellsville community. I am delighted to see her receive this well-deserved recognition,” he said.

Assemblyman Joseph Giglio of New York’s 148th Assembly District said Ms. Benedict’s advocacy for rural health care has benefitted not only Jones Memorial Hospital, but hospitals and health-care facilities across the region.

“I am pleased that Eva Benedict is this year’s New York Senate “Woman of Distinction” Award recipient,” he said. “This is a well-deserved honor. Eva is a dedicated professional who has shown exemplary leadership in the community and the hospital for decades. I am thrilled to add my congratulations upon this momentous occasion.”

“Eva Benedict’s ongoing dedication to providing and improving health care and wellness in our area is a Wellsville asset we enjoy every day. Wellsville appreciates Eva Benedict and we congratulate her on this well-deserved honor,” said **Wellsville Mayor Randy Shayler**.

Senator Borrello said the crisis caused by the COVID-19 pandemic brought into sharp relief the importance of rural health care.

“We all have a heightened appreciation for the dedication of our health care professionals. Whether they be doctors and nurses or hospital CEOs like Eva, they all work together to sustain and advance the most vital of society’s services – providing quality health care to our citizens and saving lives,” Senator Borrello said. “Eva’s leadership shows she recognizes and supports this truth by emphasizing a team-oriented approach and ‘people first’ culture within the hospital. As a result, Jones Memorial is strong and moving forward, even as the larger environment for rural hospitals remains challenging. Her example truly deserves to be recognized and celebrated.”

Established in 1997, the New York State Senate Woman of Distinction award is hosted annually to pay tribute to women who have demonstrated remarkable character, initiative and commitment in serving their neighbors, strengthening our communities, and acting as role models.

Ms. Benedict started her career at Jones Memorial Hospital as a Critical Care Staff Nurse in 1981. In the decades that followed, her accomplishments and dedication propelled her upward through the ranks of the hospital’s administration and management, culminating with her appointment as President and CEO in 2007.

Her tenure has provided visionary leadership for Jones Memorial at a pivotal time for small, community hospitals. She helped the hospital evolve in conjunction with larger changes occurring in health care.

In 2015, she led an evaluation of potential partners, culminating in Jones Memorial’s affiliation with the University of Rochester Medical Center. She continues to serve both Jones Memorial and the University as an active member of the affiliate leadership team.

In her leadership role, Ms. Benedict has made a priority of educating elected leaders about the unique role of rural community hospitals. In 2018, she was honored for that advocacy with AHA’s Grassroots Champion Award. The award recognized her effective, persistent advocacy before the United States Congress and her work with the New York State Congressional Delegation to advance federal policies that enable rural and small community hospitals to deliver innovative and patient-centered care throughout the state.

Most recently, she helped the hospital secure a \$17 million Health-care Facility Transformation Grant, an intensive, two-year effort. The grant will help secure Jones Memorial’s long-term viability by funding capital improvements that support new revenue streams. Among the elements of the project are the expansion and modernization of the surgical services suite and an initiative to integrate behavioral health and primary care.

A native of Bath, NY, Ms. Benedict received her Bachelor of Science in Nursing from the State University at Albany and her Master of Science in Nursing Administration from St. John Fisher College. She and her husband, Neil, live in Wellsville and have two grown daughters and five beautiful grandchildren.

“Eva Benedict truly represents the best of our community and is an outstanding role model for women of all ages. She exemplifies the spirit of service at the heart of the ‘Woman of Distinction’ award and is worthy of our respect, admiration and thanks,” said Senator Borrello.

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