



State Senator Velmanette Montgomery

25th New York Senatorial District
Ranking Member, Children & Families

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

SENATOR MONTGOMERY HONORS BESSIE EDWARDS AS HER 2019 WOMAN OF DISTINCTION

Senator Montgomery was proud to honor Bessie R. Edwards as her 2019 Woman of Distinction. Ms. Edwards is a lifetime resident of Brooklyn, born in Bedford Stuyvesant and has made a tremendous impact on her community. She has always been committed to helping and inspiring others to achieve their goals. She believes that all things are possible and that the key to achieving any goal is to start by taking the first steps, and the rest falls into place.



“Bessie Edwards is a longtime sister, friend, constituent and community leader. She is absolutely committed to serving the needs of the community and meets people where they are. It has been an honor to work with her on so many issues over the years,” **said State Senator Velmanette Montgomery.**

With an interest in community issues, education and professional development, Ms. Edwards reinvented herself to match her evolving interests and workforce needs. She began her professional career as a clerical skills teacher for OIC, a jobs training program, and within just a few months, she saw how people’s outlook on



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life turned from hopelessness to life with a future. Ms. Edwards co-founded Pizzazz Meeting and Events Planning Group, a special events management company that planned non-profit and corporate conferences and events throughout the United States. Then, to share her entrepreneurial experiences, she created a course in Special Events Planning, serving as an adjunct at New York University and Kingsborough Community College.

Ms. Edwards has been a real estate professional since 2000 and founded B.R. Edwards Associates Real Estate (BREA), an independent boutique real estate firm specializing in residential, condos, coops and investment sales in 2006. She is past president of the Bedford Stuyvesant Real Estate Board, where she served from 2011-2013 and remains an active member of the board to this day. Additionally, Ms. Edwards brings her real estate knowledge to educate community leaders and residents on the importance of home ownership in Black communities and the steps needed to purchase, maintain and keep a home.

Ms. Edwards is one of the founding board members and Executive Director of Central Brooklyn Jazz Consortium (CBJC) where she works to preserve jazz as an art form through the development of audiences and the nurturing of institutions and individuals throughout Brooklyn. This year CBJC is celebrating its 20th anniversary with a renewed purpose to effect Jazz as well as other cultural expressions: dance, theater, visual arts, comedy, and poetry by engaging young people and getting music into the schools. She is a member of the Age Friendly Advisory Committee of Bedford Stuyvesant and Crown Heights, where she helps to ensure that senior citizens are able to age in place. She is a Board member of Brooklyn Neighborhood Housing Services, President of the New York Club at Bridge Street AWME Church and is active in Bedford Stuyvesant community organizations.

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