



*Center  
for the  
Women of New York*

**28<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Luncheon**

**April 18, 2015**

**Douglaston Manor and Golf Club**



**CWNY's Resource, Conference and Learning Center  
207 Totten Ave., Fort Totten, NY**

## Who We Are . . . . .

Since our founding in October of 1987, the Center for the Women of New York has shown that women working together can be an effective force. We are a voluntary, non-profit organization existing primarily on dues from our members and on the volunteer efforts of business, professional and community women. Our goal is to be a resource center for women and advocate for women's rights and full equality in our society.

Currently, we operate out of office and classroom space donated by Queens Borough President Helen Marshall at Queens Borough Hall in Kew Gardens, Queens during our renovation of a landmarked building at Fort Totten in Bayside, Queens.

The Center for the Women of New York, formerly the Queens Women's Center, is designed to be a research and conference center and "living" museum, dedicated to recording and aiding women's struggles to achieve full equality in our society. Through a Women's Studies Committee, we will record the history of the women's movement in the areas of economy, legal resources, culture, education, religion, art forms, sports, labor, business and all policies and practices that affect the lives of women and their families.

The first action of the CWNY was to spotlight domestic violence and spearhead the effort in the courts to overcome legal obstacles for providing adequate protection for women who live in crisis situations. Our efforts in this area continue. We are part of the Queens Borough President's Task Force on Sexual Harassment and Domestic Violence, as well as other groups working in this vital area to provide services to victims and for educational programs aimed at prevention of these crimes and improving the lives of women.

Our regular monthly meetings have included programs on pay equity, women and money, sex trafficking and domestic violence, education, women and health, and legislative issues. Along with our traditional services, we offer a weekly Job Readiness Workshop, career counseling, help line, Legal Assistance Clinic, Money Management Clinic and Support Groups for crisis situations and life issues. To help meet needs for job training, we have offered instruction in computers and basic career exploration courses. Our new location will enable us also to resume programs that had to be suspended during the renovation, such as additional training classes, cultural programs, and a Walking Club.

Our annual "World of Working Women" conference and Job Fair is co-sponsored with us by the Women's Bureau of the U.S. Dept. of Labor, area colleges, businesses, governmental agencies and others. Also, we continue to run education programs on women's health and reproductive rights. We work in coalition with other women's organizations that advocate for issues important to women both locally and globally. Our CWNY is joining the effort in Congress to renew the struggle for the Equal Rights Amendment. We are also leading the effort to focus on the problems of female soldiers and sexual harassment, domestic violence and sex trafficking, and are part of a coalition for pay equity and attaining full opportunities for economic self-sufficiency. We have a strong link with the colleges and universities in the area. They provide us with interns who are afforded the opportunity of working directly with clients. We also train young people and provide employment experience for women making career transitions.

***Join us at the Center for the Women of New York.  
We need and welcome everyone.  
Call (718) 793-0672 or email us at [centerwny@yahoo.com](mailto:centerwny@yahoo.com)***

# PROGRAM

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12 P.M. - 1 P.M.

## ◆◆ NETWORKING ◆◆

1 P.M. Welcome: Susan Cohen, *President, CWNY*

Salute the Flag: Catena Vallone and Sofia Luetich

Introduction of Special Guests:

Ann Juliano Jawin, *Founder & Chair, Board of Directors, CWNY*

Susan Cohen, *President, CWNY*

## ◆◆ LUNCHEON ◆◆

### Women of Distinction

Letitia James, *Public Advocate of New York City*

Helen Sears, *Deputy City Clerk, Marriage License Bureau, and*

*Former Councilwoman, 25th Council District, Queens*

### Women in Leadership Awards

Vivian C. Hardison, *Assistant District Governor, Rotary Int'l, District 7255*

Beth Meixner, *Founder and President, Moxxie Network, LLC*

Leslee Mavrovic, *DSW, Senior Vice President, Social Work Services & Resident Life,  
Parker Jewish Health Services*

Lourdes M. Ventura, *President, Queens County Women's Bar Association*

### Youth Leadership Awards

Saleha Aktar

Billy Duke

### CWNY "Good Guy" Awards

*Honoring the men who support our efforts and share our goal  
of achieving equal rights for women*

Honorable Daniel Dromm, *New York City Council*

Moses Ojeda, *Principal, Thomas Edison, CTE High School*

Honorable Jose Peralta, *New York State Senate*

Jim Smith, *Newsday editor (Retired), United Veterans Beacon House*

## ◆◆ ENTERTAINMENT ◆◆

Musical selections by Bill Gati

## ◆◆ RAFFLES & SILENT AUCTION ◆◆

## Honorees

### Hon. Letitia James



On January 1, 2014, Letitia James was sworn in as Public Advocate for the City of New York, the first woman of color to hold a citywide position in our city's history. She has successfully pushed forth proposals to bring Universal School Lunch and police body-worn cameras to New York City. Her office re-launched the city's Worst Landlords Watchlist.

Previously, as a NYC Councilmember representing Brooklyn's 35<sup>th</sup> District, Ms. James introduced the Safe Housing Act, which became City law in 2007. In 2012, her legislation addressing oversight of high-cost service contracts with the City of New York was passed into law. As Chair of the Council's Sanitation Committee, in 2010 Ms. James pushed through an expansion of the City's residential recycling program.

Ms. James is a graduate of CUNY's Lehman College and Howard University Law School and can be seen in the Atlantic Yards documentary, "Battle for Brooklyn." She worked with the NYS Legislature, served as a public defender, and as NYS Assistant Attorney General.

### Hon. Helen Sears



Helen Sears is Deputy City Clerk, Marriage License Bureau. Ms. Sears began her public service career as a health-care professional. She worked as Director of Government and Community Affairs for the Health and Hospitals Corporation at Elmhurst Medical Center. She went on to serve as a board member of the NYC Health Systems Agency.

She further worked as a Senior Specialist for the NYC Department for the Aging. She then founded the Catherine Sheridan Senior Center and the Marjorie Riley Center.

Ms. Sears has served as Democratic District Leader in the 34<sup>th</sup> Assembly District and as NYC Councilwoman representing the 25<sup>th</sup> District, which encompasses parts of Jackson Heights, Elmhurst, East Elmhurst, Rego Park, Woodside and Corona. She served as budget negotiator representing the borough of Queens and the City of New York, as the first Chair of Women's Issues, Chair of Standards & Ethics, Chair of Government Operations, Chair of the Task Force on NYC Hospital Closings as well as serving as a member of the Finance, Health, Juvenile Justice, Land Use and Zoning & Franchises committees.

She has been praised for her outstanding work, including securing first-time federal funds to redesign transportation patterns in her community.



## **Vivian C. Hardison**

Vivian Hardison, entrepreneur, certified professional coach, teacher, mentor, lover of life and of all things that are wholesome, fun and engaging is involved with Rotary International as an Assistant District Governor for Brooklyn, Queens, Nassau and Suffolk County.

With an educational background and extensive work experience in pharmaceutical research and drug development, which has allowed her to travel across the globe, she started and ran a successful medical-legal consulting firm for over 15 years. In addition, her volunteer work in Rotary has primarily been in chartering new Rotary Clubs and in supporting membership retention. She received a special district citation for her work in membership for the Rotary Club of Glen Cove, where she is a member. In 2010, she was chosen to represent District 7250 as the Team Leader of the Cultural & Vocational Exchange to Taiwan, RC. Her passion extends to helping veterans who served to preserve and protect our future and helping children who are the future.

Her first two books, coming this fall, are: *The Courage to Walk Away* and *How You Feel Matters...Life is Supposed to Feel Good*. Life has taught her: “You do not have to run from trouble...just do not invite it into your life.” Vivian believes in “living life on purpose instead of vicariously.” Go forth and live life to its fullest!!!



## **Beth Meixner**

Beth Meixner is the Founder & President of Moxxie Network LLC – launched in 2008 as a unique women's organization promoting generations of women in business – creating an entirely new paradigm for a women's organization and attracting sophisticated, senior-level businesswomen in the area.

In 2012, Beth established Moxxie Mentoring Foundation, Inc., a nonprofit corporation which expanded on the mentoring program as an outgrowth of Moxxie Network LLC.

As Director of Sales and Marketing for Target Group Media, she spearheaded business development and marketing efforts, and developed successful branding strategies and marketing campaigns for such notable clients as Donald Trump. Beth continues to freelance with Target Group Media.

She has earned a BS from SUNY Oneonta and an MBA from Adelphi University. Beth is a Board Member of the Girl Scouts of Nassau County and a member of the Global Advisory Board for the IMPACT Leadership 21 Summit. She has appeared in numerous publications, radio, and internet TV shows, spoken at numerous events, and received several awards for leadership.



## **Leslee Mavrovic, DSW, LCSW-R, ACSW, BCD**

Dr. Leslee Nyman Mavrovic is the Senior Vice President for Social Work Services and Resident Life at Parker Jewish Institute for Health Care and Rehabilitation. A highly regarded lecturer and educator, she earned her Master's degree from New York University and her Doctorate, with a concentration in gerontology, from Yeshiva University. She is a Licensed Clinical Social Worker, a Board Certified Diplomate and member of the Academy of Certified Social Workers. Dr. Mavrovic is a founding member and past chair of the Social Work South Council of LeadingAge, and has acquired more than 25 years' experience in geriatric psychiatry.



Dr. Mavrovic has been celebrated by the Queensboro Council for Social Welfare and granted the "Award for Outstanding Service to Queens County." She was also recognized as one of the "Top Ten Women in Business" by Queens Business Today/Queens Courier.

Research interests continue to inspire Dr. Mavrovic and include Alzheimer's Disease, patient/family satisfaction, end of life care and advanced directives. Her years of experience at Parker have made her a passionate advocate for those in need of health care and rehabilitation.



## **Lourdes M. Ventura**

Lourdes Ventura is an Associate at Ahmuty, Demers & McManus. She has returned to the firm after serving in the NYS Senate as Special Counsel to the Senate Majority Conference, Counsel for Latino and Immigrant Affairs to the NYS Senate President, and Deputy Chief of Staff overseeing the minority policy and finance departments.

Ms. Ventura also served as an Assistant Attorney General for the Civil Rights Bureau of the NYS Attorney General's Office and as a prosecutor at the District Attorney's Office of Queens County.

Ms. Ventura is a Past President of the Latino Lawyers Association of Queens County and under her leadership the organization was the recipient of the 2005 Award of Merit for local bar associations as well as a special recognition honoring the organization by the District Attorney of Queens in 2006.

Ms. Ventura received a B.A., Honors and a J.D., Honors from the State University of New York, Buffalo.



## **Hon. Daniel Dromm**

Daniel Dromm has been a progressive leader in Queens for over 20 years. Dromm was elected to the NYC Council in 2009, representing District 25 (Jackson Heights and Elmhurst). He serves as the Chair of the Education Committee. In the City Council, Daniel has been instrumental in obtaining funding for local hospitals and park improvements, has led the effort to enact Local Law 6 certifying that all undocumented immigrants in City foster care get put on a path to citizenship, helped to reform Stop and Frisk policies and implemented real policing solutions, and worked to promote local small businesses.

Prior to his election, Dromm, an award-winning NYC public school teacher, was chosen as "Outstanding Teacher of the Year" by his school's principal and in 2009 he was named "Educator of the Year" by the Kiwanis Club of Sunnyside. He has also received the Marsho-Raimo Award from the United Federation of Teachers (UFT).

Dromm is the founder of the Queens Lesbian and Gay Pride Committee and organized the first Queens LGBT Pride Parade and Festival, which he still participates in on the first Sunday in June in Jackson Heights.

Daniel Dromm graduated from Marist College and earned his Master's degree at City College. He lives in Jackson Heights.



## Moses A. Ojeda

Moses Ojeda, the Principal at Thomas A. Edison C.T.E. High School, has been an educator for 20 years. Upon graduating from Thomas A. Edison CTE High School, he enrolled in a five-year program to become an IT educator, and in 1998 he returned to his alma mater in that capacity. In 2008, he became the department head of CTE at Thomas Edison, and was instrumental in adding programs like Computer Forensics and Robotics/S.T.E.M. Currently, the school offers the most CTE programs, has the highest passing rate of industry certifications in the city, and has increased opportunities and resources to promote women in non-traditional careers. Moses shares his vision for CTE with aspiring principals of new schools. He is a graduate of Adelphi University, where he earned a Master's degree in Educational Leadership and Technology.

Moses is the recipient of the Who's Who Among America's Teachers 1999, UFT CTE Teacher of the Year 2005, MOUSE Squad Coordinator of the Year 2006 and 2007, Senator Padavan Teacher of the Year Award 2008, and Champion of Digital Literacy by Certiport in 2012.



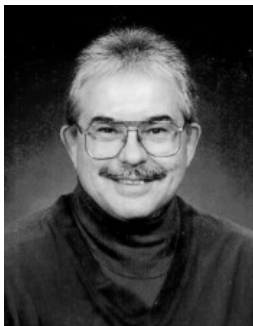
## Hon. Jose Peralta

Jose Peralta became the first Dominican-American elected to the NYS Senate in March 2010 after winning a special election to complete the term of Hiram Monserrate. He was reelected that same year in a general election.

Sen. Peralta represents the 13th State Senate District, covering Jackson Heights, Corona, Elmhurst, East Elmhurst, and parts of Woodside and Astoria, the most diverse district in the US. Sen. Peralta is a member of the Senate Black, Puerto Rican, Hispanic & Asian caucuses, and of the Puerto Rican Hispanic Task Force. His sponsorship of gun-control legislation and a bill requiring microstamping on bullet-casings has drawn the ire of the National Rifle Association.

Sen. Peralta is a champion of economic development and job creation at Willets Point and neighboring communities and is a fighter for immigrants' rights. He spearheads the drive to rejuvenate Roosevelt Avenue and has worked to heighten awareness of domestic violence and protect battered spouses from further abuse.

Sen. Peralta received a B.A. in Psychology from Queens College, where he was the student body president, a position that allowed him to work on issues pertaining to higher education, issues he continues to fight for on the Higher Education Committee of the Senate.



## Jim Smith

Jim Smith, of Williston Park, is a Vietnam War veteran and has been a contributor to the *Mineola American* since 1988. He retired in December 2014 after being a *Newsday* sports reporter and features editor since 1966.

Jim is a veterans' advocate, board chairman of United Veterans Beacon House and writes a column called A Vet's View for the Anton newspapers in Nassau County. His book *Heroes to the End* on his 1971-72 tour in Vietnam as a reporter for Stars and Stripes is due out shortly.

Jim is the Secretary at the Unitarian Universalist Congregation at Shelter Rock, where he is a longtime member of the Women's Group. He partnered with the Women's Group to bring Lydia Cacho, a foe of domestic violence in Cancun, Mexico, to speak and raise funds in Manhasset, and helped publicize a program at Shelter Rock by the Service Women's Action Network (SWAN), which advocates for female military victims of sexual trauma.

Jim's mother Dorothy, 91, is his inspiration and the reason, he says, for his belief in the Feminine Divine.





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Congratulates the Honorees of today's  
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We are proud to celebrate

*Jim Smith*

Author, Newsday Features Editor (*retired*) and Veterans advocate  
Board Member, United Veterans Beacon House  
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***On their 28<sup>th</sup> Anniversary***

**Anita Blank**

***Congratulations***

***to all the Honorees***

**with Special Thank You**

**to The Honorable Danny Dromm**

**and to The Center for the Women of New York**

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***The Honorable Helen Sears***

**Congratulations to all  
of today's honorees!**

From

**COUNCIL MEMBER**

**Daniel  
Dromm**



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all of today's honorees for your dedication to  
improving the lives of women.*

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***Women's Concerns Committee Members  
& Andrea Adams, Former Member (Retired)***



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