



NIKE The official publication of New York State Women, Inc.

VOL. 70 ■ ISSUE 2 ■ WINTER 2020/2021



Our Mission

To connect and build women personally, professionally, and politically.

Our Vision

To empower women to use their voices to create positive change.

Our mission is to

CONNECT
and build
women
personally,
professionally,
and
politically.

Dated Material — Deliver Promptly

Are YOU a member of NYS Women, Inc. yet?
Time to check us out at nyswomeninc.org

#NEWYORKTOUGH



Clear vision, clear leadership.

-Jacquie Shellman
NYS Women, Inc. President, 2020/2021

Holiday Greetings! As I write this message the weather has turned colder, leaves have fallen, and the fall board meeting and the special meeting of membership have adjourned with a powerful result, a change to our mission and vision which are now included in our state bylaws.

ARTICLE II: MISSION/VISION

The mission of NYS Women, Inc. shall be to connect and build women personally, professionally and politically. The vision of NYS Women, Inc. shall be to empower women to use their voices to create positive change

How fitting that the theme of this NIKE is CONNECTING. To accomplish our goals, we need *Clear Vision, Clear Leadership*. We need to connect with you the member and those who are interested in our organization. Membership in New York State Women, Inc. is an opportunity for women to connect and build themselves thereby enhancing self-confidence, finding their voice. Membership promotes connecting with women, not only in our community and workplace, but across the state from Staten Island to the Adirondacks to Buffalo and the Southern Tier.

You ask, “What’s so important about connecting?” Google searches provide the following:

Social connection improves physical health and psychological well-being. One study showed lack of social connections is a greater detriment to health than obesity, smoking and high blood pressure. Social connectedness therefore generates a positive feedback loop of social, emotional and physical well-being. Psychology Today

Paraphrasing Jessica Fabrizi’s (Founder of One Degree to Connect) Benefits of Connecting People: People you know who have potential, but do not know each other yet, will be more powerful by being connected, thereby adding value to the organization. If you provide people with a connection, they more than likely will connect you

with others who will thereby expand your network. When you are then asked, “How did you meet so and so?” you will be able to point to NYS Women, Inc. How many times will it take for someone to ask you, how to join this amazing connected organization?

WE HAVE TO STOP KEEPING NYS WOMEN, INC. THE BEST KEPT SECRET AND WE NEED TO DEVELOP A SHORT BUT POWERFUL ELEVATOR SPEECH.

COVID-19 did not stop us from connecting during these last several months. We were continually “Zooming” if we could not meet in person. Most Zoom meetings are recorded and accessible on our website (www.nyswomeninc.org). I actually installed the officers of Central New York via Zoom and attended the monthly meeting of Professional Women of Sullivan County. Zooming’s benefits are no worries about lodging, travel, weather, or contagion. Remember to invite members of your executive committee and board chairs to your meetings. We would love to attend and Zooming increases the possibility of attendance.

Our mission says we shall *connect and build women personally*. You just never know where you will meet these amazing women. You just have to get out of your comfort zone and introduce yourself, carry a business card with our logo and your business logo, if you have a business. I met Ann Martin from the 261 club of Greater New York-Rochester at a virtual event. A non-competitive group whose purpose is to connect all women socially through movement, regardless of ability. These social connections help to empower each other as women. 261 is number of the first woman runner in the Boston marathon, 1967: Katherine Switzer. I believe they are looking to expand, what a way to get out into the community to generate interest in the younger generations. www.261fearless.org.

Our mission says we shall *connect and build women politically*. The WNY Women’s
Continued on page 7

2021

MONTHLY
15 Communicator deadline

JAN
15 NIKE submissions deadline

MAR
20 NYS Women, Inc. Spring Board Held virtually via Zoom.

JUN
11-13 NYS Women, Inc. Annual Conference Killian's Event Center Waterloo, NY

NIKE Submissions

All contributed articles must be original work; all previously published works must be accompanied by the publisher's authorization to reprint. NIKE reserves the right to edit contributed articles for clarity and length, and reserves the right to refuse to publish any contributed article.

The articles contained in NIKE express the views of the individual authors and do not necessarily represent the views of New York State Women, Inc. NIKE is distributed for information purposes only, with the understanding that neither New York State Women, Inc. nor the individual authors are offering legal, tax or financial advice.

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To connect and
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and politically.

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From the Editor

Hopeful New Beginnings




WE'RE PHYSICALLY APART, BUT CONTINUE TO be together in spirit, and in our new mission "to connect and build women personally, professionally and politically."

As this issue of *NIKE* goes to press, COVID-19 vaccinations from Pfizer and Moderna are being rushed to hospitals and nursing homes across New York State and the rest of the country. It's a time for hope, new beginnings, and a new year. NYS Women, Inc. also is starting anew with our refreshed mission and vision.

How does your chapter fulfill our initiative to "connect?" We have some examples of what chapters across the state are doing (page 8) as well as how they're positively impacting their communities (page 11).

Claire Knowles, member of the Buffalo Niagara Chapter, has written an inspiring article that reflects on the power of actively connecting (see the next page).

Check page 13 for The NY Grace LeGendre Endowment Fund fellowship information for 2021 plus how your chapter could apply for a special grant.

And, throughout this issue, we've included quotes from women on the power of connection, that we hope will inspire all our readers and members of New York State Women, Inc. 

-Joyce DeLong

We don't accomplish anything in this world alone... and whatever happens is the result of the whole tapestry of one's life and all the weavings of individual threads from one to another that creates something. – Sandra Day O'Connor

NIKE MARCH 2021 ISSUE DEADLINE: JANUARY 15, 2021. Please type *NIKE* in your email subject line and send to the attention of Joyce DeLong, *NIKE* editor, at PR@NYSWomeninc.org. Previously published material must be accompanied by a letter from the publisher with permission to republish and credit line to be included with the article.



Our Mission:
To **connect** and build
women personally,
professionally and
politically.

by Claire Knowles

New York State Women, Inc.’s mission has rightfully been modified to emphasize the word, **connect**. To connect is an active verb. It means to unite, to bind together, to join, link, yoke, or fasten together – as when one person reaches out to another, and that other person willingly receives that touch of connection. Once we connect, we can then go about fulfilling our mission of helping to build women personally, professionally and politically. Then we can also support and promote the collegial and collective voices for empowering women across the spectrum.

Important impetus:

Yet it all starts because one person has the willingness to “connect” with another. There has to be an *impetus* to connect. And generally, that impetus has a positive element to it. How do you show initiative to reach out and connect within New York State Women, Inc. and beyond?

Think about it. Who is the person that took initiative to reach out and invite you to become a member of New York State Women, Inc.? Someone chose to connect with

you. That someone’s positive impetus to connect and invite was intentional. Now multiply that power of intentional connection; allow it to interlink and interconnect, so now we have a network of positive connectors!

Purposeful word: Connect

When Katharine Smith asked if I’d consider writing an article on the power and purposefulness behind this one word **connect**, my mind went into overdrive!

Continued on page 14

See page 8 for more inspiration on how our members and chapters are connecting during these COVID times.

Chapter and Region News

Professional Business Women of Rome – 5

- submitted by *Beth Jones, president*

The Rome Chapter held its first Zoom meeting on September 29. Our guest speaker was one of our members, **Patrolman Hollie Silverman** of the Rome Police Department. Hollie's topic was "How does the new bail reform affect us, our family, and our community?" Patrolman Silverman explained how repeat offenders are released out on bail. She stated how important it is to have a security system in place with a camera system. Hollie has been invited to give us an update on bail reform at a later time.

Our October 21 meeting was also held via Zoom with guest speaker **Mike Joyce** from Invesco, an investment company. His topic was the "10 Truths No Matter Who Wins the 2020 Presidential Election." Members **Heather Sullivan** hosted this event and **Sara Ayala** sent out reminders with contact information.

The Rome Chapter teamed with the Rome Chamber of Commerce to celebrate our annual National Business Women's Week event.

Our annual award, "YELLOW ROSE OF CHALLENGE" was presented to **Michele Salisbury** by **Beth Jones** on October 23 in the Rome Chamber's conference room. Michele also received a Certificate of Excellence.



Michele Salisbury is the CFO and director of finances, contracts and diversity as well as board secretary of NYSTEC, a nonprofit technology consulting company. Michele was awarded for her leadership role with her work and our community. She's a standing member of our chapter.

Pictured (left to right) John Calabrese, first vice chairman of the Chamber Board of Directors, Michele Salisbury, Beth Jones; chapter president.

Professional Women of Sullivan County – 3

- submitted by *Carena Collura*

The Professional Women of Sullivan County would like to introduce to you to our new Region 3 Director Karin Pantel, EdD, RN, CNE. Karin is a vibrant and valued member of our chapter. She is always willing to take an active role in any of the endeavors of the organization. Currently she is our recording secretary.



Karin is a retired registered nurse. While working and raising her family, she earned the honored distinction of Doctor of Education in Nursing. She has been a professor at SUNY Sullivan and currently is an adjunct professor at Excelsior College. She is a member of the Tau Kappa

At-Large Chapter of which she is an active member.

Karin has worked as a nurse both with the Older Adult Transitional Support Services of Sullivan County and the New York State Fair in Syracuse.

Karin is married to A.J. Pantel, owner of Pantel Electric. They have four children: Jason, Shannon, Josh and Zach and have grandchildren. They also have a beloved fur baby, Quincy!

Richmond County Chapter – 2

- submitted by *Carolyn Fazzolari, communications chair*

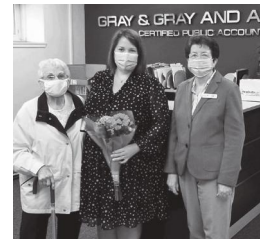
Richmond County members made a monetary donation for a worthy cause which supporting needy families during the Christmas season. Thanks to arrangements made by **Neale Steiniger** and **Phyllis Alma** gift cards to local supermarkets for three families were purchased and were placed in decorated cookie containers. They will be presented to the families. Some Richmond County members posed with the displayed gifts at a holiday dinner gathering (left to right: Margherita Clemento, Neale Steiniger, Phyllis Alma, Carolyn Fazzolari, Theresa Fazzolari, Frida Hooyberg).



St. Lawrence County Chapter – 5

- submitted by *Sue Bellor, president*

The St. Lawrence County Chapter honored **Angela Gray**, Certified Public Accountant with Gray & Gray Associates, as its 2020 Woman of the Year. Pictured (left to right) chapter member **Patricia McGrath**, honoree **Angela Gray**, and **Sue Bellor**, chapter president. She was honored at a dinner at the Lobster House in Norwood with family, friends, past Women of the Year, and members.



Parishville Town Supervisor **Rodney Votraw** signed a proclamation celebrating November 12, 2020 to honor resident Angela Gray as St. Lawrence County's Woman of the Year 2020 Day. Observing the signing are member **Patricia McGrath** (left) and **Sue Bellor** (right).



The chapter hosted speaker **Catherine LaPointe-Vollmer** (above right) at its September meeting. Catherine

Continued from page 2

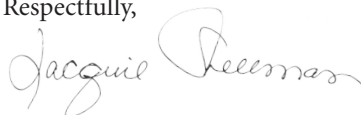
Foundation provided a webinar regarding electing women: *Lessons in Running for Office* which was presented by Katie Burd from Women Elect. Katie discussed the process of running and the importance of women's voices in politics. [womenelect.org](http://www.womenelect.org). To listen to the entire webinar visit <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MmN2oF80rU>.

We are not alone; we have so many opportunities (virtual or in person) to connect, to build and empower women from all areas, in affluent and economically disadvantaged areas. We need to get out of our comfort zone, especially now. Your executive board, region directors, committee chairs, are here to listen and provide opportunities for growing and nurturing your passion to succeed.

Mark your calendars: the spring virtual board meeting will be held on March 20, 2021 and our on-site annual conference will be held June 11-13, 2021. We are being positive and proactive, planning the annual conference at Killian's Event Center, Waterloo, NY. The agenda is not yet finalized but installation will be held Saturday night followed by installation banquet. The traditional memorial service will be held Sunday morning to honor members who have passed away since May 2019. Of course, there will be business sessions and workshops, but more importantly connecting with old and new friends. As always refer to our website to keep abreast of Zoom meetings, chapter events and continuing developments relative to state meetings. <https://www.nyswomeninc.org/Events>.

In closing, as we enter the season of connecting with friends and family, please stay safe and enjoy every precious moment. On behalf of your New York State Women, Inc. Board of Directors, have a very safe and successful 2021! 🍷

Respectfully,



Jacquie Shellman
NYS Women, Inc. President, 2020/2021

is a graphic designer and artist and has published illustrations for children's books, book covers, posters of the North Country and New York State, graphics on magnets and postcards, and web design. Her products are available from Fine Art America and Society 6. She previously worked for Frazer Computing.

The chapter hosted a "Member Spotlight" at its October meeting with **Erica Leonard**, manager of the St. Lawrence Centre. Erica updated



Staten Island Chapter receives the 2019/2020 President's Award

- submitted by Robin Bridson
NYS Women, Inc. immediate past president

Congratulations, Staten Island Chapter!

Due to COVID-19, we weren't able to do many of the things we were used to doing and one of those things was giving out the President's Award. I extended the deadline to the end of September and the theme was how did your chapter cope during COVID-19. How did you stay connected with your members, your community...

I was very honored to award the Staten Island Chapter the President's Award for 2019/2020 at our virtual Fall Board Meeting on October 3, 2020. Their submission included far too many items to list and made my heart feel good! They shared they were proud of what their chapter had accomplished in time of stress and pandemic and I want to share how proud of them that I am!

A future NIKE will include a list of all the wonderful things they did. Be on the lookout!

One thing that has become abundantly clear to me as I have advocated for the health and well-being of girls and women over the years is the innate power we each have within us to establish deep connection with one another and heal ourselves simply by sharing our stories. – **Christy Turlington**

the chapter on the installation of the required infiltration system; the addition of new businesses; and the current events through November at the mall. Erica also spoke personally about her newly purchased home and showed photos with open-concept kitchen and more. October member birthdays were also celebrated with a special dessert.

The chapter had its December luncheon at their new restaurant, The American Grill, when it hosts managers of Renewal House. That evening the St. Lawrence County Chapter will also give its annual donations which help women and their children in domestic times of need.

Feature: How We Connect

We hear from our NYS Women, Inc. chapters.

Despite the difficulties 2020 has brought, NYS Women, Inc. chapters and members have persevered. We're apart because of COVID-19 but in so many ways we're buoyed by our common vision and connectedness. We remain connected together through it all.

The Buffalo Niagara Chapter has been active on Zoom – like so many of our chapters! – holding monthly meetings with inspiring speakers. Every month's meeting has been sponsored by a BNC member, this funds a “swag bag” for each member who attends virtually. The bag includes a mini bottle of wine, snacks, and a sponsor gift.



For our December meeting, members shared holiday memories and family traditions. We dressed in our “best” holiday apparel (including a “Santa Claus,” until the beard proved too itchy!), and held a Christmas carol sing-a-long that proved you CAN spread cheer virtually!

Buffalo Niagara Chapter

Katharine Smith, board member

Greetings from Chadwick Bay! I so wish we had good news about the COVID pandemic but no such luck.

In September we met at Shorewood Country Club and,

of course, were socially distant. We enjoyed appetizers and discussed projects for the upcoming year. In October, we collected food for a food pantry in Fredonia. We also purchased socks for a “cold feet” prevention project with Northern Chautauqua Community Foundation.

Our chapter is trying to meet every month. In October our guest speaker was from the Women's League of Voters who was very informant about absentee ballots and early voting.

We sold Niagara Candy Bars for a fundraiser in November. Proceeds paid for candy bars we distributed to the WCA Home in Fredonia and the Chautauqua Rehab Center and Nursing Home. We usually go the WCA Home and play bingo with the residents but that ugly word “COVID” again arose. So we are still trying to spread some cheer in other ways.

We also planned for Christmas donations for displaced teenagers in our area. Our group purchased sweatshirts and blankets for fourteen teenagers. Then members went shopping for towels, wash clothes, scrubbies, shampoo, conditioner, socks, and the all-important snacks. We wrapped these presents, played Secret Santa amongst ourselves, and had a light supper. (Don't worry: we're under the “10-person rule” so we cannot be raided, although



that might be entertaining and/or exciting!) The loneliness from being cooped up weighs heavy on our hearts. I even said “hi” to a stranger in a TOPS grocery store – they looked at me as if I was insane – so I then profusely apologized. Is the art of conversation dead?

We wear our masks and try not spread any germs, so we stay in touch via email and texting. (Personally, I’m now learning how to use the dumb cell phone or should I say the “smart phone” and “dumb” operator! Even at my age I am learning how to keep in touch electronically. I am not the best at Facebook or posting messages but trying to learn and share.)

On behalf of the Chadwick Bay Chapter, we wish all the members of NYS Women, Inc. a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!

*Chadwick Bay Chapter
Donnie Hover, president*

We continued to hold our annual fundraiser, the Lake to Lake Women Community Calendar for 2021. I just finished organizing, sorting, and labelling 200 calendars for distribution. The year we’ve had with 2020 made it very difficult and time-consuming contacting the advertisers especially, but in all we profited about \$760.

Proceeds from our calendar project benefit awards at graduation time and in the past, when holding our dinner meetings, we’ve paid for the speaker’s meal and possibly a small gift from the proceeds. We’re one of the few chapters that sponsor a community calendar associated with NYS Women, Inc.

This has been our main fundraiser for over 50 years and was originated by Mrs. Mildred B. Freeman, a long-

time member of the then-Geneva BPW. My good friend, Mary Ellen Morgan, knows about the calendar project since she’s a good customer in sales of the endeavor!

*Lake to Lake Women
Nancy Taylor, president and fundraiser chair*

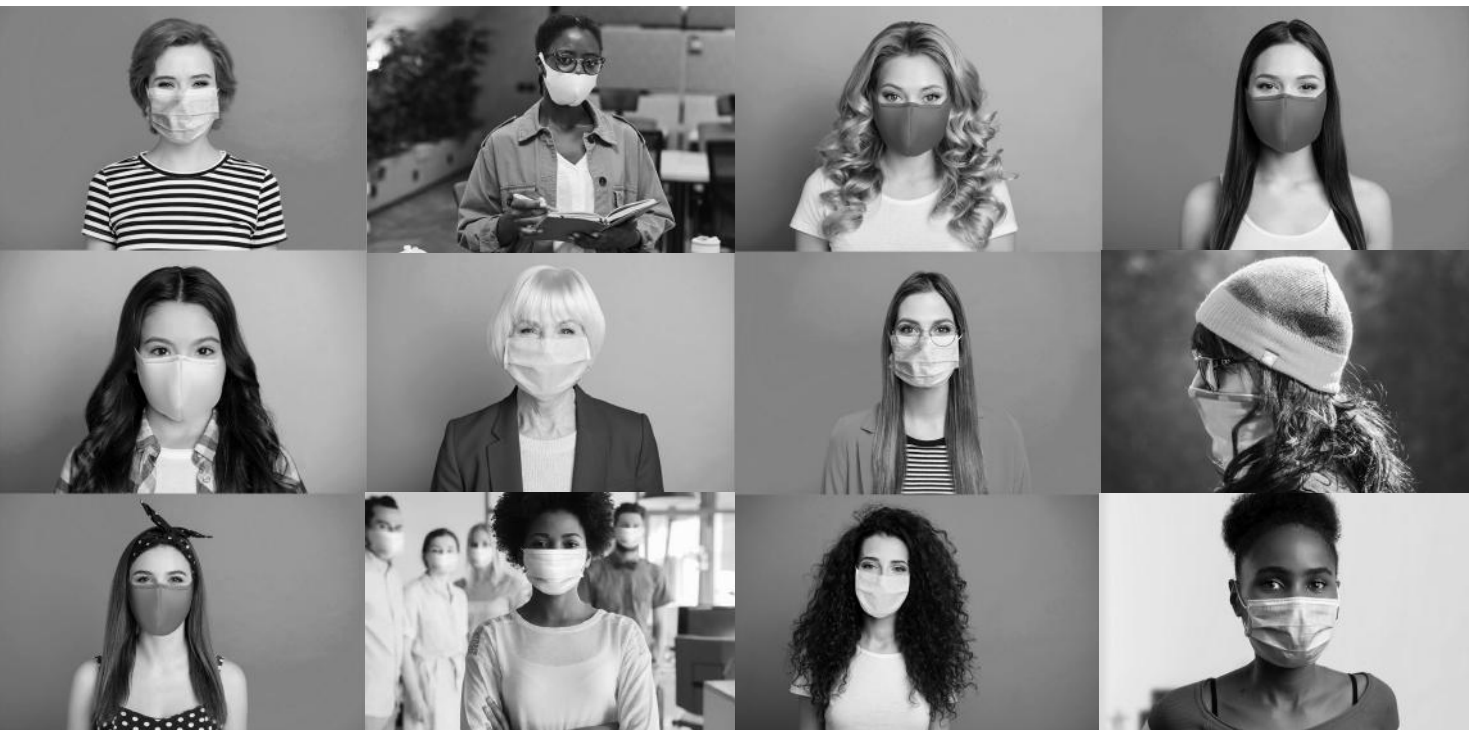
What has the Rome Chapter done this year to maintain our membership and stay connected? Actually, I was very concerned on how our members would remain connected during COVID-19.

I was approached by some Rome members who came up with the idea of holding our programs on Zoom. A member already had a Zoom account and took the lead on this and she sent connecting instructions to members. This has led to informative speakers and our members had the opportunity to see each others’ faces. When our last speaker joined us we had 100% members participation! She was so impressed with our motto and mission.

Each year our chapter teams up with the Rome Chamber of Commerce during National Business Women’s Week and political forums. We select a community leader to receive our “YELLOW ROSE of CHALLENGE AWARD.” This year’s political forum was cancelled, however we found a way to still celebrate our award recipient (keeping all COVID-19 guidelines in place). We took pictures in the conference room with only four people present. Then the event was shared online to all the Chamber members and community leaders.

Team work is the key to stay connected to each other. Reach out to your members for ideas and thank them every chance you can. The Rome Chapter has a close team

Continued on page 12





NIKE All Stars

The 2020-2021 *NIKE* All Star Campaign is in full swing and thank you to our loyal supporters who have already sent their listings in.

Members will have an opportunity to contribute at our annual conference, and chapters, regions and friends of NYS Women, Inc. can send contributions anytime to the *NIKE* Business Manager. Information on contributing can be found on our website.

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Feature: Helping Our Communities

Healing words to help us cope.

-submitted by Pat Fergerson, president of the CNY Chapter

Imagine what kind of tree you'd be. See the seasons pass, the turning of the leaves. And the renewal of spring. Realize your own power to heal, and grow.

"I think of the trees and how simply they let go, let fall the riches of a season, how without grief (it seems) they can let go and go deep into their roots for renewal and sleep. . . Imitate the trees. Learn to lose in order to recover, and remember that nothing stays the same for long, not even pain, psychic pain. Sit it out. Let it all pass. Let it go."

– May Sarton, *The Journals of May Sarton: Volume One*

Buffalo, NY food pantry needs volunteers.

The Family Help Center, a nonprofit dedicated to the prevention of child abuse, operates a food pantry as part of its portfolio of services available to families in need. Food insecurity remains a constant for low income and underemployed households and, since the onset of the pandemic, the agency has seen the use of the pantry skyrocket. The number of people served has tripled over the past nine months with no end to the need and demand in sight.

Prior to the pandemic the pantry was totally operated by dedicated volunteers – primarily senior citizens – with great commitment and passion for the cause. Sadly, due to the pandemic this group of volunteers are unable to participate any longer.

The Center is in great need of new volunteers who have an interest in community service and have a few hours to spare each month. The work is on site at the Center and all socially distant health and safety measures are in place including a touch-free transfer of goods to participants.

If interested in joining a great volunteer team and being part of something special, please contact Executive Director Kate Joyce, at kjoyce@familyhelpcenter.net



Be safe and help keep your community safe.

The CDC recommends universal use of face masks. This fundraiser for the Staten Island Chapter will help you keep your community safe and support a NYS Women, Inc. chapter.

Orders will be shipped right to your door for free. These two-ply face masks come in white or black and are made of 60% polyester and 40% cotton. Delivery is within 5 business days directly from the manufacturer.

- \$15 each/black or white mask
- Reusable and washable
- Sublimated printing ensures a lasting image
- Face masks are NOT medical grade
- Each mask features our NYS Women, Inc. logo
- Cotton, polyester blend; AMERICAN MADE
- Adult and child sizes available
- Orders are shipped FREE direct to you

Order at www.fundraisingmasks.org/product-page/new-york-state-women-fundraiser

For more information, contact Barbara Strype at 718-598-0595 or bas290@msn.com.

STAY CONNECTED WITH US!



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Feature: How We Connect

system because we stay connected and look out for each other.

Professional Business Women of Rome
Beth Jones, president

COVID may have made us scale back our events, but we did not scale back our enthusiasm for helping our community! We gave \$12,000 in scholarship funds to six deserving young women in our community again this year (pictured are four of our recipients). Senator Pam Helming attended our scholarship dinner in July, which was much smaller this year, but for some of the graduates it was the only gathering held to commemorate their graduation.



For the holidays our members once again demonstrated their generosity by giving gifts and numerous gift cards (pictured) to needy families in our community. Although we were unable to host our Women of Distinction event or the annual Wine and Dine Golf Tournament this year, we look forward to bringing these events back bigger and better than ever in 2021!



Professional Women of the Finger Lakes
Teresa Pare, president

The St. Lawrence Chapter is busy as usual; our members are selling chances to win Lotto scratch-off tickets (\$100 value of donated tickets will benefit our high school scholarship). The winner was drawn at our annual holiday gathering – socially distanced of course! – on December 10th. Renewal House representatives have been invited to update us on their ongoing activities to protect and provide for victims of domestic abuse. At that time they'll collect the chapter's donations of goods and/or cash in support of Renewal House.



St. Lawrence Chapter
Sue Bellor, president

During these difficult times, our chapter has continued to do what it does best. Our mission is to improve the lives of women and their families in Staten Island, professionally and personally, through multiple avenues of support and connection. This mission has been witnessed through actions both within our chapter, and reaching out to our community.

Knowing that contact with others is important during

times of confinement, our officers began calling members to check on their safety early in the pandemic. As more members wanted to connect to remind others that they were cared about and remembered, our roster was updated and re-distributed to ensure that members could get through to each other.

As we sincerely missed connecting, sharing time and camaraderie with other members, the chapter began monthly Zoom meetings to replace our regular dinner-meetings and board meetings. Seeing faces has helped keep morale up.

We have also been offering our members Zoom yoga classes to help ease the emotional toll related to the stress of isolation and worry about health.

We realize that many charities and nonprofits need additional support, as well as helpers, at this time. Our chapter will therefore be volunteering this month with Wreaths Across America. It is another way of both giving back to the community and connecting with our members.

Staying connected is a challenge, but we need to think creatively. Friendships and involvement do not have to be on hold while we are all self-isolating. During this time it is even more vital to find ways to connect with each other.

Staten Island Chapter
Margaret Antonello, president

There are SO many initiatives the Steuben County Women Chapter has been doing since the COVID pandemic has taken over. We've had to cancel so many projects and events, that we stood back, and figured out what we could do. That's what women do, RIGHT?!

We made ear savers – a device that can decrease the discomfort of wearing a mask for prolonged periods – and then donated them to residents of a local nursing home. We also made note cards for each resident, just to say have a nice day. We plan on continuing this each month.

We also gave thank you note cards with an American flag tac pin to the nursing home workers. (Personally, I carry the pins with me and hand them out to essential workers, such as grocery clerks, gas station attendants, nurses and workers at doctor offices, cashiers, and drive thru workers.)

Chapter members made baby blankets to give to new mothers at the pregnancy center.

We made and donated hats to a cancer center as well as port savers, which a patient can put on their seat belt so it won't rub on the port. One of our members has cancer and this center has been so good to her we wanted to give back to say thanks.

We're planning to help our local historical society on Veterans Day when they honor local veterans with a dinner. We'll be on hand with gifts and to honor each veteran.

We're in the planning stages with Christmas gifts for
Continued on the next page

NY Grace LeGendre Endowment Fund

NY Grace LeGendre Endowment Fund, Inc. (GLEF)

submitted by Robin Bridson, immediate past president, NYS Women, Inc.

NY Grace LeGendre Endowment Fund has fellowships available.

The NY Grace LeGendre Endowment Fund, Inc. awards fellowships to New York State women who are candidates for masters or doctoral degrees at colleges and universities throughout New York State. A total of \$6000 in fellowships will be awarded in 2021.

The application form for 2021 fellowships is available at: www.gracelegendre.org/Fellowships

Apply for special grants from NY Grace LeGendre Endowment Fund.

The NY Grace LeGendre Endowment Fund, Inc. awards special grants to NYS Women, Inc. chapters and regions, as well as organizations which sponsor educational or research opportunities to further the advancement of working women.

Applications are now available for the 2021 grants at: <https://bit.ly/2Uw6YPX>

residents of a domestic violence shelter. In addition, we honor the shelter workers and give them thank you gifts for all the work they do.

We had to cancel some projects for the Humane Society but we're collecting bottles and cans so they can redeem them. We hold an annual a cookie sale each December to help them, but unless things change that will have to wait until next year.

One of our member's businesses is raffling off a

crocheted American flag or blue line police flag and will donate all the proceeds to our chapter scholarship.

We're planning for next year with the hope that it will be a much better year for all!

We keep in contact by phone and email. The chapter is also still working in different ways to help our community by developing projects that we can do over the internet.

Steuben County Women

Lois Force, president



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As we work to reweave the strands of connection, we can be supported by the wisdom and loving kindness of others.

– Sharon Salzberg

Our Mission: To *connect* and build

Continued from page 5

Here we are in the midst of a pandemic, which by its very nature forces us into the opposite mode of disconnection, restrictions on gatherings, fears and isolation. Indeed, the antonyms to connect leave a glaring negative aftertaste: detach, disengage, divide, part, sever, rupture, disjoin and disunite – words we can't embrace. To our credit we have not been dampened by this pandemic. Sometimes being reflective on what *we are not and what we don't want to be...* helps us to discover *what we actually are and who we want to be!* We have chosen to rise above the pandemic's negative aspects. Despite the pandemic, as New York State Women Inc., we creatively find ways to positively connect. Here are a few ways we're doing that: Learning and using Zoom, supporting each other's personal situations via Facebook and information-sharing, making extra efforts to communicate with each other to keep projects moving forward, reaching out with calls, cards and compassion. We are learning to connect human to human differently. Each of us has a connection enhancement story!

Summary:

We embrace the positive activeness

of this phrase: to connect. Essentially each of us is a *touchstone* – each of us being an engaged impetus to others for a purpose greater than oneself. We connect in friendship, in service, with caring, with compassion, to achieve our endeavors and goals together.

Teaching Metaphor – Be the Light-emitting connector



There's a metaphor (emanating from Buddhist tradition) called "Indra's net of reflective interbeing." It is apropos' for this article. It is a metaphor for your willingness to shine your initiating light, represented by one candle in the middle surrounded by mirrors above and

below and more mirrors placed in an octagon – eight different positions around the center. *That one candle (placed in the middle) – when purposely lit – illuminates into an endless series of connective light – reflecting in all directions – into infinity.* Each of us, like the impetus candle, is an individual being, yet each individual being is also included in the entire phenomenal universe-reflective. The meaning resides in how we choose to actively connect, and to be a reflection for and of others.

At New York State Women Inc. our individual members across this state are illuminating, our connections are strong, so our network reflection is aglow. As it should be! 🕯️

BNC member Claire Knowles is a 2-time Amazon best-selling author, including the book, Can You See Them Now? Elephants in our Midst. A speaker and business leadership consultant, she helps leaders and their teams become the most effective they can be at accomplishing goals (together). Contact her at www.ClaireKKnowles.com at 716-622-7753.

Connecting and Caring

by Katharine Smith



I've been thinking a lot these past couple months about *connecting*, whether with family or friends or my fellow NYS Women, Inc. members. This past November and December have been especially tough. Not only are these the traditional times of year when we all get together to celebrate, but with this nine-month pandemic it's just become even more important to *preserve our connections*.

One of my sisters lives in New Paltz. She's single and lives alone. She also works remotely; she misses the companionship of her co-workers and if she doesn't make the effort to get, out days can go by without her seeing anyone. Over the course of the pandemic we've had long phone and Zoom calls where she's shared her loneliness and feelings of frustration and isolation.

In November I plotted a way for us to connect in person: we spent a weekend together in Geneva. Our "socially distanced" first-floor rooms had patios so we could meet (and eat!) outside. We ordered takeout (Italian one night, Thai the next), took a bunch of walks next to Seneca Lake,

and bought identical fluffy blankets, shopping in Canandaigua. We shared good food, wine, and much-needed laughter that reaffirmed our sisterly connection. It was so, well, "normal" to spend time with her. Even the masks we wore felt normal! (Not something I ever thought I'd hear myself say.)

How appropriate during this time of separation and "apartness" for NYS Women, Inc. to reassess our mission and revise it to include the word "connect." If the year 2020 has shown us anything it's that our organization can help women thrive and grow. In fact, through our "connectedness" we've helped both our members and our communities.

I think the most important thing we can all learn from this pandemic is just how important it is to stay in touch. To make the effort to keep *connected and together* even while we're *apart*. 🍷

The most basic and powerful way to connect to another person is to listen. Just listen. Perhaps the most important thing we ever give each other is our attention.... A loving silence often has far more power to heal and to connect than the most well-intentioned words.
– Rachel Naomi Remen

Cherish your human connections – your relationships with friends and family.
– Barbara Bush

Human connection is based on trust, and it is trust that is continually violated when people do not practice setting aside their narrow self-interests in consideration of the needs and interests of others, such as their coworkers, family, neighbours, and community.
– Diane Kalen-Sukra

Connecting expands possibilities – in work and in life – for ourselves as well as for others.
– Adele Scheele

The power to share has already turned once-solitary activities into social occasions.
– Melinda Blau

Let's just keep asking ourselves this question: "Is what I'm about to do strengthening the web of connections, or is it weakening it?"
– Margaret J. Wheatley

It seems that in connecting to what is true within myself, I help other people to connect. Making genuine connection lies at the beginning of building a real community. – Lily Yeh

We all like to believe we are completely self-sufficient, but at the end of it all, we're all searching for a human connection, something to make it all feel a bit more worthwhile.
– Lauren Mayberry

Dialogue changes isolation and loneliness into connection and interdependence. This, I believe, is the essence of Buddhism. – Vinessa Shaw



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women, INC.



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