

# Community Mayors for Children with Special Needs

## Annual Mayors' Charity Gala

Thursday, May 2, 2024, ❤️ 6:00 PM



Presenting the Dominick Della Rocca Awards



El Caribe Country Club  
5945 Strickland Avenue  
Brooklyn, N.Y. 11234

“No One Is So Tall as When They Stoop to Help a Child with Special Needs”

2024 ANNUAL MAYORS' CHARITY GALA FOR  
CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

HUMANITARIAN AWARDS

*PATRICK HENDRY*

WILL COSS

AND SURPRISE VISIT BY SANTA CLAUS



DOMINICK DELLA ROCCA  
LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

FRANK FERRARA

THURSDAY, MAY 2, 2024

CARIBE COUNTRY CLUB  
5945 STRICKLAND AVENUE  
BROOKLYN, NY 11234

## Founder Special Events



*Hon. Dominick Della Rocca, K.M.*





# **Chief Mayor**

**Humanitarian Award for 2005  
Lifetime Achievement Award 2006**



*Shelley Della Rocca*

*Founder & Chairperson*

*The Dominick Della Rocca Summer Camp Scholarship*

**COMMUNITY MAYOR OF BEDMINSTER, NEW JERSEY  
MEMBER OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

# Honorary Lifetime Mayor

*Shelley Della Rocca*





# Community Mayors for Children with Special Needs

**"NO ONE IS SO TALL AS WHEN THEY STOOP TO HELP A CHILD WITH SPECIAL NEEDS"**

*Founded 1875 • Serving children with special needs since 1950 • Incorporated since 1956*

May 2, 2024

Dear Mayors and Friends,

Once again, I am asking for your loyal support. The Special Needs Community needs us and our programs more than ever. The DOE's District 75 Superintendent, Ketler Louissaint, has often said, "Our service to these exceptional children is essential to their wellbeing and happiness." With our aging membership, each year now is more vital to our future than any other previous year.

We are proud to celebrate this year's honorees. Each one represents the finer side of the human spirit and are true heroes, humble and generous of spirit.

We need, need, need your financial help to preserve this legacy for future generations!!

Our "forever children" need Community Mayors more now than ever before, and WE need the children to remind us to be grateful and nourish our souls. We are all volunteers, and ninety-one cents of every dollar donated goes to our mission.

***Community Mayors is not just an organization, it is an experience!***

Visit our website and enjoy the experience and feel the kindness of giving [www.communitymayors.org](http://www.communitymayors.org).

VOLUNTEERS ARE THE HEARBEAT OF OUR COMMUNITY.

THE LIFE OF A VOLUNTEER IS A LIFE WELL LIVED.

Very personally yours,

*Shelley Della Rocca*

Shelley Della Rocca  
Chief Mayor



#### HEADQUARTERS

***Community Mayors for Children with Special Needs***

9728 Third Avenue, Suite 632, Brooklyn, NY 11209

Shelley Della Rocca, Chief Mayor & President

908-268-9016 • [pres@communitymayors.org](mailto:pres@communitymayors.org) • [www.communitymayors.org](http://www.communitymayors.org)

CHIEF MAYOR & PRESIDENT  
SHELLEY DELLA ROCCA

DEPUTY CHIEF MAYOR & V.P.  
VINCENT PETRARO

CHAIR PERSON BOARD OF DIRECTORS  
CHRISTINE O'CONNOR

EXEC. SECRETARY  
VICTOR CIPULLO

TREASURER  
KENNETH HONIG



GALA CHAIRPERSONS  
VINCENT PETRARO  
CHRISTINE O'CONNOR

JOURNAL COMMITTEE

STEVE CARUSO, VIC CIPULLO, KENN HONIG, ED POST,  
DENNIS VOORDERIS, STEVE VOORDERIS,  
ANTHONY SINDONE, WARREN JOKOBY

PHOTOGRAPHER / JIMMY COPPOLA

# Community Mayors, Inc. History

*“No One Is So Tall As When They Stoop To Help A Child With Special Needs”*

The Community Mayors is a not-for-profit, non-political 501 (c) (3) organization. Founded by “Wireless” Louis Zeltner in 1875 as the Locality Mayors, the organization included Teddy Roosevelt among its notable members. In 1957 the organization was reincorporated as the Community Mayors under the leadership of Dominick Della Rocca, K.M., and The Community Mayors began providing “Recreational Therapy” for children with special needs. Dominick dedicated his life to the children with special needs for 50 years. Today, under the leadership of his daughter, Shelley, the Community Mayors sponsor a series of events benefiting tens of thousands of special children. This concept provides these children with special needs activities that gets them out of hospitals and classrooms, and allows them to experience many activities that would otherwise not be available to them.

The Community Mayors membership includes business and community leaders aided by thousands of dedicated volunteers from uniformed service organizations, businesses, government and the community at large. This is one of the few organizations where all the money raised for the children goes to the children. The most amazing thing is there is no paid staff. The members, officers and volunteers give of their time freely.

The Community Mayors are very proud of their record, serving the needs of so many special children throughout the years. None of these activities or events would have been possible without the generous contributions of those who have donated their time and financial support. Our continuing success is a testament to their dedication and commitment.

We emphasize the outings listed below to illustrate the wide variety of activities the children enjoy. The Community Mayors warmly extends its appreciation and heartfelt thanks.

- ◆ Operation Santa Claus @ JFK Airport, Port Authority hangar #19 (4,000 Children)
- ◆ 12<sup>th</sup> Avenue Santa / Dyker Heights Lights
- ◆ A Day at the Circus/Ringling Bros. Barnum and Bailey @ MSG & Barclays Center (PAST)
- ◆ Intrepid Sea, Air and Space Museum
- ◆ Deno’s Wonder Wheel Amusement Park
- ◆ The New York Aquarium
- ◆ The Bronx Zoo
- ◆ The Prospect Park Zoo
- ◆ The Staten Island Zoo
- ◆ The Brooklyn Botanical Gardens
- ◆ Adventurer’s Family Entertainment Center
- ◆ Luna Park Amusement Park
- ◆ Athletes & Kids at St. John’s University
- ◆ Halloween Party Hayride/Floyd Bennett Field
- ◆ The Dominick Della Rocca Summer Camp Scholarship Fund
- ◆ Earth Day with Students from Poly Prep Country School at the Conference House, S.I.,NY
- ◆ Anthony DeSantis Scholarship Award to a Poly Prep Scholarship Student



**Visit our website and have the Experience: [www.communitymayors.org](http://www.communitymayors.org)**

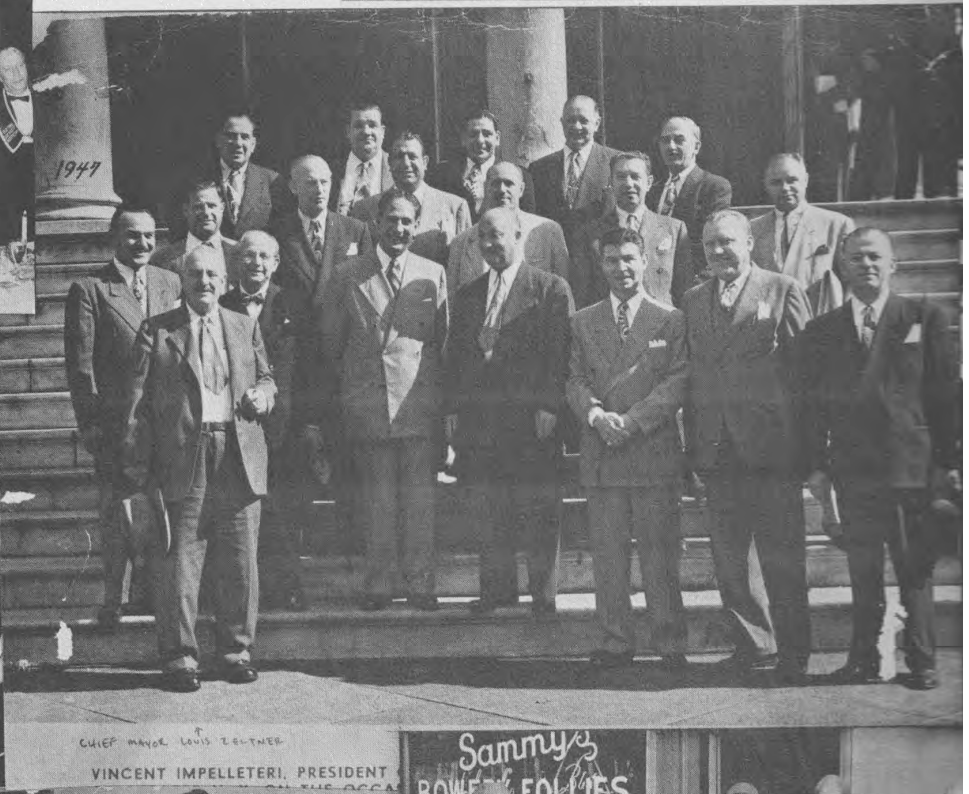
Community Mayors, Inc.  
9728 Third Avenue, Suite 632 / Brooklyn, NY 11209  
(908) 268-9016 • Email: [pres@communitymayors.org](mailto:pres@communitymayors.org)



Dominick being installed as  
Locality Mayor of Fort Green 1950



Louis Zeltner  
Old Time Locality Mayors





THE CITY OF NEW YORK  
OFFICE OF THE MAYOR  
NEW YORK, NY 10007

May 2, 2024

Dear Friends:

It gives me great pleasure to welcome everyone as Community Mayors for Children with Special Needs hosts its annual Mayors' Charity Gala.

New York derives strength from its founding promise to serve as an advocate for diversity, generosity, and mutual uplift, and for nearly 150 years, Community Mayors for Children with Special Needs has joined our city in this noble commitment. This group harnesses the goodwill of its volunteers—including law enforcement officials, first responders, and other public servants—to produce multiple activities each year that benefit young people with developmental and intellectual disabilities. These have included trips to Luna Park, the Bronx Zoo, the Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey circus, and more. However, its most anticipated event is Operation Santa Claus, an annual holiday celebration that transforms a hangar of John F. Kennedy International Airport into a magical winter wonderland where children can receive free presents and meet Jolly Old St. Nick. It has also established the Dominick Della Rocca Summer Camp Scholarship Fund, which enables youth to develop their sense of creativity and independence in a supportive environment. Today, I am pleased to applaud Community Mayors for Children with Special Needs for its efforts to make long-lasting memories, empower the next generation, and unlock the unlimited potential of our city and its people.

On behalf of 8.3 million New Yorkers, please accept my best wishes for a wonderful event and continued success.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Eric Adams".

Eric Adams  
Mayor

COMMUNITY MAYORS FOR CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

## HUMANITARIAN AWARD 2024



*Hon. Patrick Hendry,*  
President of the  
Police Benevolent Association  
of the City of New York

*"No One Is So Tall As When They Stoop To Help A Child With Special Needs"*

## **Patrick Hendry**

Patrick Hendry is a 30-year NYPD veteran and the president of the Police Benevolent Association of the City of New York, the nation's largest municipal police union.

Hendry built his NYPD career as a hardworking patrol cop, first in the Bronx's 46<sup>th</sup> Pct. and later in the 103 Pct. in South Jamaica, Queens, where he is still assigned.

Since his earliest days on the job, Hendry has had a passion for standing up for his fellow police officers. He started out as a union delegate in 2002. By 2007, he had worked his way up to represent nearly 2,000 members as Queens South Trustee. He became the PBA's treasurer in 2018 and kept the union fiscally healthy during uncertain economic times.

On top of that, he served as the chairman of the PBA Widows' & Children's Fund, ensuring that the PBA upholds its obligation to care for the families of fallen heroes.

As a member of the PBA leadership team, Hendry played a key role in negotiating the historic contract agreement the union reached with the city in 2023. He has been working to build on that success since his election as PBA President in June.

Hendry grew up in Queens Village. His father, a union carpenter, and mother, a waitress, were both Irish immigrants. He and his wife Patricia, a school administrator, have raised four kids.



COMMUNITY MAYORS FOR CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

## HUMANITARIAN AWARD 2024



*Will Coss*

Vice President & Executive  
Director of Macy's Studio and  
Branded Entertainment

*"No One Is So Tall As When They Stoop To Help A Child With Special Needs"*

## Will Coss

Will Coss is the vice president and executive producer of Macy's Studios. In this role, Coss is responsible for all aspects of the planning and production of the brand's iconic annual events, including the world-famous Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade<sup>®</sup>, the epic Macy's 4th of July Fireworks<sup>®</sup> and the imaginative Macy's Flower Show<sup>®</sup>.

Before leading Macy's Studios, Coss has production experience across many of the leading networks and content providers in media, such as Nickelodeon, MTV, VH1, YouTube, VICE, NBC and Live Nation.

## *Prayer For The Mentally Challenged*

Lord, bless the mentally challenged, those whose minds do not grow with their bodies. Their disability is not often immediately visible.

They look forward to nothing but the simplest rewards of childlike desires – a warm smile, a touch, a kind word.

Make us, who do not share their limitations, more aware of how we can help them, in gratitude for the mental capacities which You have given us.

Protect them, Lord, from harm; give courage to their families and patience to their teachers, that these, your special children, may reach their highest potential in this life.

Then, as they are unable to seriously offend You, accept them into the heaven You have prepared for the very innocent.

Amen.

COMMUNITY MAYORS FOR CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

## SPECIAL VISIT 2024

### *THE ONE AND ONLY SANTA CLAUS*



Santa Claus

Mayor of the North Pole

*"No One Is So Tall As When They Stoop To Help A Child With Special Needs"*

**Humanitarian Award for 2005**

Operation Santa Claus, Chairman



**HONORARY MAYOR**

*Frank Ferrara*

*"No One Is So Tall As When They Stoop To Help A Child With Special Needs"*



## COMMUNITY MAYORS FOR CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

### **Frank Ferrara**

Frank Ferrara has dedicated his life and career to serving others.

For 31 years, Frank served the people of the City of New York as a member of the NYPD. He joined the elite Emergency Service Unit and achieved the rank of Sergeant Special Assignment. Unfortunately, he was forced to retire after being severely injured in the line of duty.

Frank grew up in the Borough Park section of Brooklyn where he was affectionately known as the mayor of his block, where he forged his friendship with Dominic DellaRocca. Dominic encouraged Frank to participate in the Community Mayors for Children with Special Needs organization. Before long, Frank found himself actively involved in the planning and execution of Operation Santa Claus at JFK Airport which provides an uplifting experience for over 5,000 severely handicapped children. Frank went on to become the Chair of the annual event and held that position for 20 years.

For 15 years, Frank was also an integral part of Kids for Life, a charity that offered aid to terminally ill and handicapped children. Frank is a past President of Kiwanis International and continues to volunteer for other community service groups.

In addition to helping children, Frank is a coordinator for POPPA, a peer support network for police officers. POPPA is dedicated to providing a confidential, safe, and supportive environment for police officers and their families struggling with physical and mental challenges, whether personal or professional. POPPA also strives to stem the physical and psychological impact of stress in order to reduce the risk of PTSD and suicide among police officers.

Frank is also the Fundraising Chair for the NYPD Police Self Support group whose members are police officers who have either been severely injured in the line of duty or are suffering from life-threatening illness.

Frank is a NYS certified emergency psychological technician as well as an emergency medical technician. He has used his training to save numerous lives by preventing suicides or by helping those in medical distress.

Frank and his wife Annalise are the proud parents of Giuseppe, a computer engineer, and Arianna, a Financial Intelligence Analyst. Frank, or Pop Pop as he's called, loves to be beaten up by his grandchildren Constantine, Isadora and Gabriel.

*"No One Is So Tall As When They Stoop To Help A Child With Special Needs"*

COMMUNITY MAYORS FOR CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS



*"No One Is So Tall As When They Stoop To Help A Child With Special Needs"*

COMMUNITY MAYORS FOR CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS



Frank  
Smile!!  
❤️

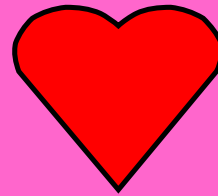


*"No One Is So Tall As When They Stoop To Help A Child With Special Needs"*



# *In Loving Memory*

*Gail Kmitis*



With profound  
sadness we honor  
A caring, kind, and  
Gentle soul.  
You will be missed



*"No One Is So Tall As When They Stoop To Help A Child With Special Needs"*

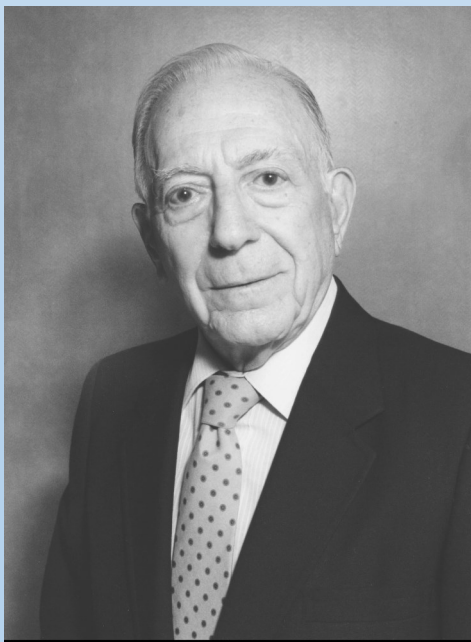
# *In Loving Memory*



Hon. Theodore Roosevelt  
NPPD Commissioner  
Locality Mayor  
President of the USA



Hon. Anthony N. Durso  
Former NYC Commissioner of Jurors  
Clerk of the supreme court  
CM Chief Mayor and Locality Mayor



Hon. Joseph Troisi, M.D  
Deputy Chief Mayor  
60 years



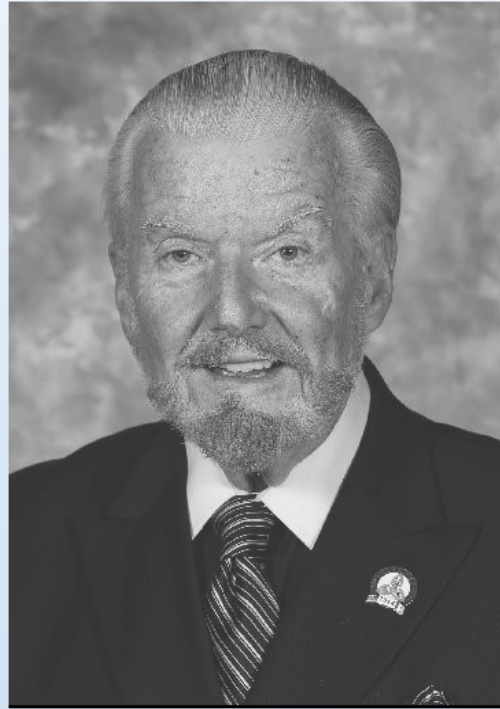
American Hero WWII  
Sgt.-at -Arms



# *In Loving Memory*



Hon. Anthony M. DeSantis  
Board of Director  
DSNY President Columbia Assoc.



Hon. John O'Connor  
Board of Director  
President, St. Patrick's  
Day Parade



Hon. John J. Doherty  
DSNY Commissioner

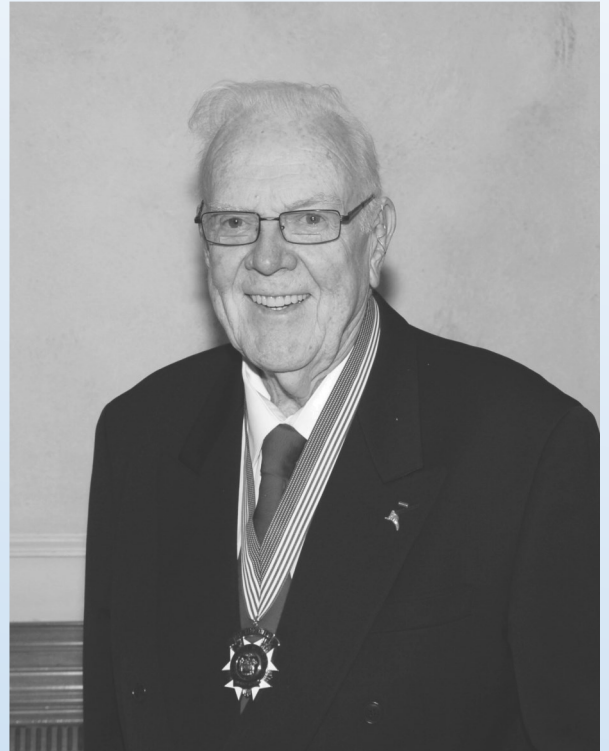


Hon. Steve Brimigion  
Board of Director  
Chairman, 12th Ave. Santa

# *In Loving Memory*



MaryAnn Cheeseman  
First Associate Mayor  
Recording Secretary



Harry Gillan  
Honorary Community Mayor  
FDNY Volunteer



Alberto Zamperla  
Community Mayor of Luna Park



Christine Needham  
Associate Mayor  
Recording Secretary



The heart of a volunteer  
is not measured in size,  
but by the depth  
of the commitment to make a  
difference in the lives of others

~DeAnn Hollis.

In Loving Memory



of

Our Dear Friends and Mayors

*"No One Is So Tall As When They Stoop To Help A Child With Special Needs"*

COMMUNITY MAYORS FOR CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

**MEMBER OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

**Dominick Della Rocca Lifetime Achievement Award 2023**



*Vincent L. Petraro*  
*Deputy Chief Mayor & V.P.*

Humanitarian Award 2008

Dr. Joseph Troisi - Loyalty & Compassion Award 2011

Nicholas Degaeta Devotion to Duty Award 2018

Mayor of Midtown Manhattan

Member of the Board of Directors General Counsel

Co-Chair Journal/Dinner Committee

*"No One Is So Tall As When They Stoop To Help A Child With Special Needs"*

COMMUNITY MAYORS FOR CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

**MEMBER OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS**



*Hon. Joshua Bienstock*

**COMMUNITY MAYOR OF WESTBURY  
Dinner Committee**

*"No One Is So Tall As When They Stoop To Help A Child With Special Needs"*

**Chairperson, Board of Directors**

**Humanitarian Award 2013**



*Hon. Christine O'Connor*

**COMMUNITY MAYOR OF ATLANTIC  
HIGHLANDS MEMBER BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

**Co-Chair Journal/Gala Committee**

*"No One Is So Tall As When They Stoop To Help A Child With Special Needs"*



COMMUNITY MAYORS FOR CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS  
**MEMBER OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

**Executive Secretary**

**Humanitarian Award 2009**

**Dr. Joseph Troisi Integrity, Loyalty and Compassion Award 2015**

**Nicholas Degaeta Devotion to Duty Award 2018**



*Hon. Victor Cipullo*

**COMMUNITY MAYOR OF KINGSBRIDGE  
Co-Chair Op Santa Toy Room  
CHAIRMAN, BRONX ZOO  
JOURNAL & RAFFLE COMMITTEE**



*"No One Is So Tall As When They Stoop To Help A Child With Special Needs"*



COMMUNITY MAYORS FOR CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

**MEMBER OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS**



*HON. John Gabrielle, Jr.*

President, Columbia Association

Department of Sanitation New York

*"No One Is So Tall As When They Stoop To Help A Child With Special Needs"*

COMMUNITY MAYORS FOR CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

**MEMBER OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

**Treasurer**

**Humanitarian Award 2010**

**Dr. Joseph Troisi Integrity, Loyalty and Compassion Award 2014**

**Nicholas Degaeta Devotion to Duty Award 2019**



*Hon. Kenneth D. Honig*

**COMMUNITY MAYOR OF LAGUARDIA AIRPORT  
MEMBER OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

**Chairman - Intrepid Sea, Air and Space Museum**

**Chairman - Floyd Bennett Field Halloween Party**

**Chairman - St. John's Athletes & Kids**



*"No One Is So Tall As When They Stoop To Help A Child With Special Needs"*

COMMUNITY MAYORS FOR CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

**MEMBER OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS**



*Hon. Warren S. Jakoby*

**COMMUNITY MAYOR OF ASTORIA, NEW YORK**

*"No One Is So Tall As When They Stoop To Help A Child With Special Needs"*

## **Humanitarian Award 2005**

## **Dominick Della Rocca Lifetime Achievement Award 2016**



*Hon. Tony Avella*

Community Mayor of Bayside, Queens

Former, New York State Senator

*"No One Is So Tall As When They Stoop To Help A Child With Special Needs"*

**Co-Chairperson of the Staten Island Zoo  
Co-Chair Prospect Park Zoo**

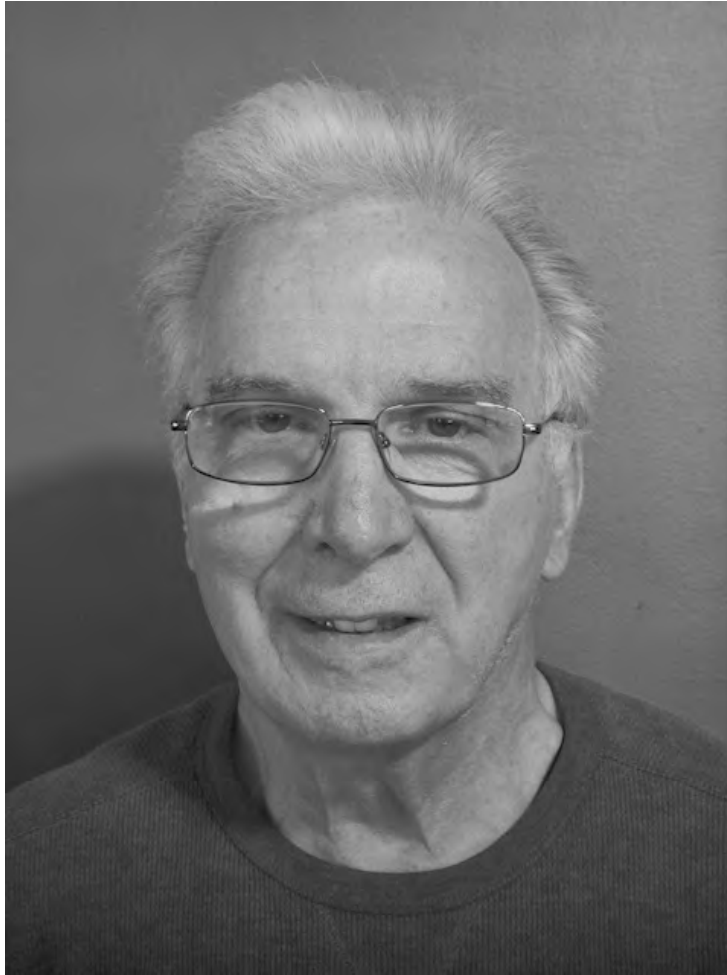


*Hon. Linda Braun*

**ASSOCIATE MAYOR**

*"No One Is So Tall As When They Stoop To Help A Child With Special Needs"*

COMMUNITY MAYORS FOR CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS



*Joe Branzetti*

Associate Mayor

Events Committee

Prospect Park Zoo

Deno's Wonder Wheel

Adventurers Family Entertainment Center

New York Aquarium

*"No One Is So Tall As When They Stoop To Help A Child With Special Needs"*

## **Humanitarian Award 2018**



*Hon. Stephen Caruso*

Associate Mayor  
Journal committee  
Chairman design & production  
Operation Santa Claus  
Committee

*"No One Is So Tall As When They Stoop To Help A Child With Special Needs"*



COMMUNITY MAYORS FOR CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS



*Hon. Peter J. Della Rocca*

**COMMUNITY MAYOR OF NAPLES, FLORIDA**

*"No One Is So Tall As When They Stoop To Help A Child With Special Needs"*

## **Humanitarian Award 2011**



*Hon. Jason Friedland*

President and Owner of Shleppers  
Moving & Storage

*"No One Is So Tall As When They Stoop To Help A Child With Special Needs"*

**Honorary Lifetime Mayor**  
**Humanitarian Award 2008**



*Hon. Alan J. Dubrow*

**COMMUNITY MAYOR OF KENNSINGTON**

**Co-Chair Intrepid Sea, Air and Space Museum**  
**Co-Chair - St. John's Athletes and kids Operation**  
**Santa Claus Committee**

*"No One Is So Tall As When They Stoop To Help A Child With Special Needs"*

## Humanitarian Award 2023



*Honary Mayor*

**Chairman Adventurers' Family Entertainment**

**Co-Chair Bronx Zoo  
Co-Chair Deno's Wonder Wheel**

**The Nicholas Degaeta Devotion to Duty Award 2016**



*"No One Is So Tall As When They Stoop To Help A Child With Special Needs"*

COMMUNITY MAYORS FOR CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS



*Hon. John Ferrara*

Associate Mayor  
Co-Chair Adventurer's Family Entertainment Center  
Co-Chair Luna Park

*"No One Is So Tall As When They Stoop To Help A Child With Special Needs"*



*Hon. Tom Martin*  
Co-Chairman  
Operation Santa Claus

*Bronx Zoo Committee*

*Chairman Deno's Wonder Wheel*

*"No One Is So Tall As When They Stoop To Help A Child With Special Needs"*



## HUMANITARIAN AWARD 2023



*Hon. Eileen Gregan*  
*Honorary Mayor*

**Co-Chair Adventurers' Family Entertainment Center  
Bronx Zoo Committee  
Co-Chair Deno's Wonder Wheel  
Chairperson NY Aquarium, Coney Island  
Chairperson Op Santa Toy Room**

**The Nicholas DeGaeta Devotion to Duty Award 2016**



*"No One Is So Tall As When They Stoop To Help A Child With Special Needs"*

**Dominick Della Rocca Lifetime  
Achievement Award 2017**

**Humanitarian Award 2003**



*Hon. Marty Golden*

**COMMUNITY MAYOR OF BAY RIDGE/DYKER Hights  
Assistant to development and fundraising Catholic Charities  
Former, New York State Senator**

*"No One Is So Tall As When They Stoop To Help A Child With Special Needs"*

COMMUNITY MAYORS FOR CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS



*Jo-Ann Gianinni*

**ASSOCIATE MAYOR**

**Journal / Dinner Committee**

*"No One Is So Tall As When They Stoop To Help A Child With Special Needs"*

**Humanitarian Award for 2006**



*Hon. Marion Grefsted*

**HONORARY MAYOR**

**Co-Chair of Journal / Dinner Committee**

*"No One Is So Tall As When They Stoop To Help A Child With Special Needs"*

COMMUNITY MAYORS FOR CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

**MEMBER OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS EMERITUS**



*Hon. Frank Tabert*

**COMMUNITY MAYOR OF J.F.K. Airport**

**ASSISTANT DIRECTOR OF HOMELAND SECURITY**

*"No One Is So Tall As When They Stoop To Help A Child With Special Needs"*



# **Humanitarian Award 2013**



***Susan Marenoff-Zausner***  
**President**  
**Intrepid Sea, Air & Space Museum**  
**Lifetime Honorary Community Mayor**

*"No One Is So Tall As When They Stoop To Help A Child With Special Needs"*

**Humanitarian Award 2009**



*Hon. Edward (Post) Esposti*

**COMMUNITY MAYOR OF WALL STREET**

*"No One Is So Tall As When They Stoop To Help A Child With Special Needs"*

COMMUNITY MAYORS FOR CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS



*Hon. Msgr. Robert J. Romano*

**COMMUNITY MAYORS CHAPLAIN  
CHAPLAIN NYC POLICE DEPARTMENT**

*"No One Is So Tall As When They Stoop To Help A Child With Special Needs"*

**Chairman Brooklyn Botanic Gardens  
Journal/Dinner Committee**



*Hon. Anthony Sindone*

**ASSOCIATE MAYOR**

*"No One Is So Tall As When They Stoop To Help A Child With Special Needs"*

COMMUNITY MAYORS FOR CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS



*Hon. Willis Smallwood*

Associate Mayor

Former President

African American Benevolent Society Department of Sanitation

*"No One Is So Tall As When They Stoop To Help A Child With Special Needs"*

## HONOREE

### Humanitarian Award 2023



*Teresa Rizzuto*  
*Honorary Mayor*



General Manager, Port Authority of New York & New Jersey  
The Home of Operation Santa Claus

*"No One Is So Tall As When They Stoop To Help A Child With Special Needs"*



**Humanitarian Award 2010**

**Co- Chairman - Intrepid Sea, Air and Space Museum**

**Co-Chairman - Floyd Bennett Field Halloween Party**

**Co-Chairman - St. John's Athletes and Kids**



*Hon. Stephen Sultan*

HONORARY MAYOR

*"No One Is So Tall As When They Stoop To Help A Child With Special Needs"*



*Hon. Barry Seaton*

President  
African American Benevolent Society  
Department of Sanitation  
New York City

*"No One Is So Tall As When They Stoop To Help A Child With Special Needs"*

**Humanitarian Award for 2005**



*Hon. Vincent Tummino*

**ASSOCIATE MAYOR  
AMBASSADOR, INTERNATIONAL COLUMBIA FDNY**

*"No One Is So Tall As When They Stoop To Help A Child With Special Needs"*

## **Humanitarian Award 2015**



*Hon. Dennis Vourderis*

**MAYOR OF CONEY ISLAND**

**PROPIETOR OF  
DENO'S WONDER WHEEL**

*"No One Is So Tall As When They Stoop To Help A Child With Special Needs"*

## **Humanitarian Award 2015**



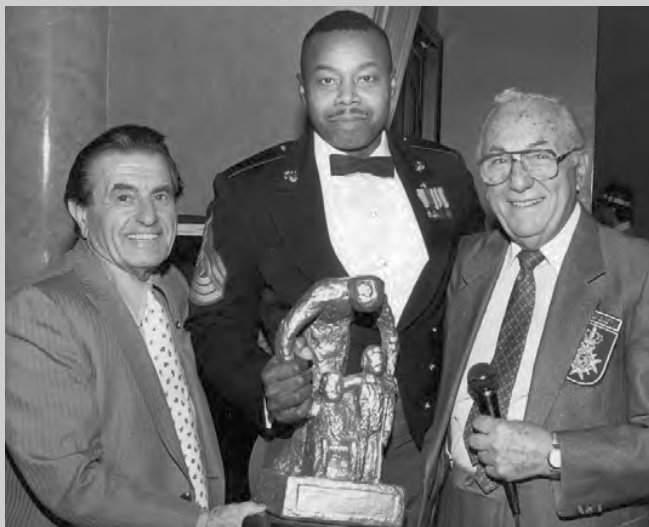
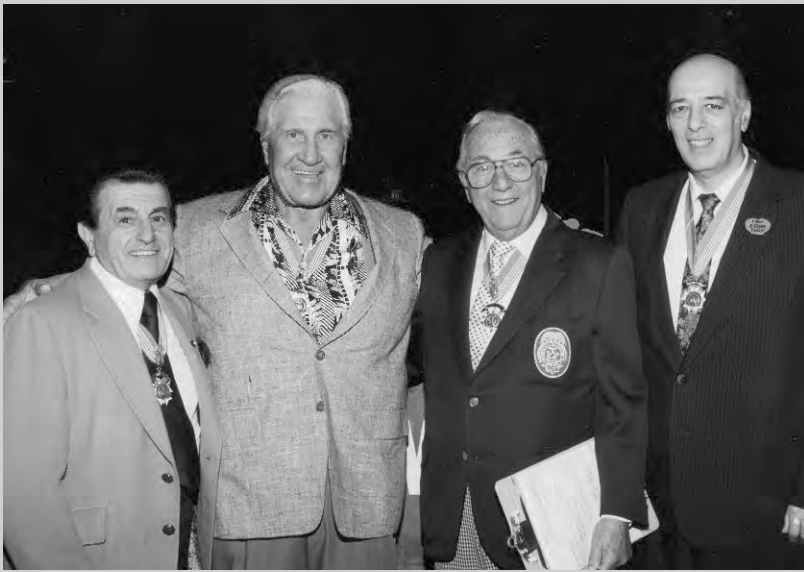
*Hon. Steve Vouderis*

**MAYOR OF CONEY ISLAND**

**PROPRIETOR OF  
DENO'S WONDER WHEEL**

*"No One Is So Tall As When They Stoop To Help A Child With Special Needs"*

COMMUNITY MAYORS FOR CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS



*"No One Is So Tall As When They Stoop To Help A Child With Special Needs"*

COMMUNITY MAYORS FOR CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

# *In Loving Memory*

**Humanitarian Award for 1983**



*Hon. Irwin Feld*

**PAST COMMUNITY MAYOR OF NEW MEXICO AVE.,  
N.W. WASHINGTON, D.C.**

**Founder, Ringling Bros. Barnum & Bailey Circus**

*"No One Is So Tall As When They Stoop To Help A Child With Special Needs"*



**Humanitarian Award for 1990**



*Hon. Kenneth Feld*

**COMMUNITY MAYOR OF VIENNA, VIRGINIA**

**President Ringling Bros. Barnum & Bailey Circus**

*"No One Is So Tall As When They Stoop To Help A Child With Special Needs"*

**The Dominick Della Rocca, KM  
Lifetime Achievement Award 2012  
Humanitarian Award 1992**



*Hon. Diane McKechnie*

**COMMUNITY MAYOR—BOARD OF DIRECTOR EMERITUS**

*"No One Is So Tall As When They Stoop To Help A Child With Special Needs"*

COMMUNITY MAYORS FOR CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

**The Dominick Della Rocca Lifetime Achievement Award 1998**

**Humanitarian Award for 1982**



*Hon. William L. McKechnie*

**COMMUNITY MAYOR—BOARD OF DIRECTOR EMERITUS**

*"No One Is So Tall As When They Stoop To Help A Child With Special Needs"*

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## **Humanitarian Award 2014**



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## **Humanitarian Award 2018**



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Former president Uniformed  
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**to tonight's honorees for their support of the  
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**I would also like to thank my fellow volunteers  
for generously volunteering their time.**

**Your support allows us to continue to fulfill  
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***God Bless America***

***Vic Cipullo***





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CONGRATULATIONS  
AND BEST WISHES TO ALL OF THIS YEAR'S  
HONOREES

Patrick Hendry and Will Coss  
For receiving the Humanitarian  
Award 2024

Especially to  
Frank Ferrara for  
Receiving the  
Dominick Della Rocca  
Lifetime Achievement  
Award 2024

A Well deserved  
Honor

Tom Martin



Congratulations

To the

Honorees

---

Uniformed Sanitationmen's  
Association

Local 831 – IBT

25 Cliff Street  
New York, NY 10038

CONGRATULATIONS  
TO THIS YEAR'S HONOREES

Patrick Hendry

Will Coss

Frank Ferrara

And to Shelley Della Rocca for all she and her  
volunteers do and have done for many years.



In Memory of  
our son and brother, Tommy.

Skip, Patty and Vinny Vigorita

Thank you

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Shelley & Dennis, Peter & Maria  
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Elena, Emelia & Emma**

**"No Man Is So Tall As When He Stoops to Help a Handicapped Child"**

In Loving Memory of a Great Man, and  
a Good Friend to the Community Mayors

## Salvatore Sindone

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TO TONIGHT'S HONOREES

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**Frank Ferrara**

and

*2024 Humanitarian Award Recipients*

**Patrick Hendry**

and

**Will Coss**



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**Congratulations  
to the  
Honorees**

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***Christine & Vincent Petraro***



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congratulations to Vincent Petraro, Gala  
Chair, and all honorees.



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# *Congratulations to the Honorees*

*Patrick Henry, President, PBA of the City of New York  
Frank Ferrara, Chair, Operation Santa & Sergeant, NYPD (ret)  
Will Coss, VP & Exec. Sir. Macy's Entertainment*

*My wife, Vivian passed away from pancreatic cancer, a Year and a half ago. She was a very loyal and a devoted loving wife and a friend to her Family, Church and to the Community Mayors for over 35 Years. She attended most of their events.*



*Vivian dedicated her life to teaching health at Thomas Edison High School. She taught for 37 Years in the NYC Public school system. She also was a mentor to thousands of teenagers for their moral character and their well-being. She loved children. The World is a better place because of Vivian's efforts and she is deeply missed by all.*

*In her last Year, she won the Teacher of The Year award, She was also the UFT Delegate for the school for the last 15 years. Since Vivian passed, there are 2 Scholarships given in Health every Year, and they will be perpetual.*

*I believe that God needed an Angel, and chose Vivian*

*God bless you in heaven,*

*Your loving husband*

***Edward***



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**Best wishes to  
A Dear Friend &  
A Great & Most  
Generous Humanitarian**



**Vincent L. Petraro**

Deputy Chief Mayor & Vice President  
Mayor of Midtown

*for all his efforts and generosity in  
support of the work of the  
Community Mayors for Children  
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**Congratulations to the 2024 Honorees  
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Thursday, May 2, 2024

from

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**Congratulations  
to the  
Honorees**

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***Joshua and Linda Bienstock***

BEST WISHES TO ALL THE  
HONOREES

Rina and Thomas Bove



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**CONGRATULATIONS  
TO TONIGHT'S HONOREES**

Patrick Hendry

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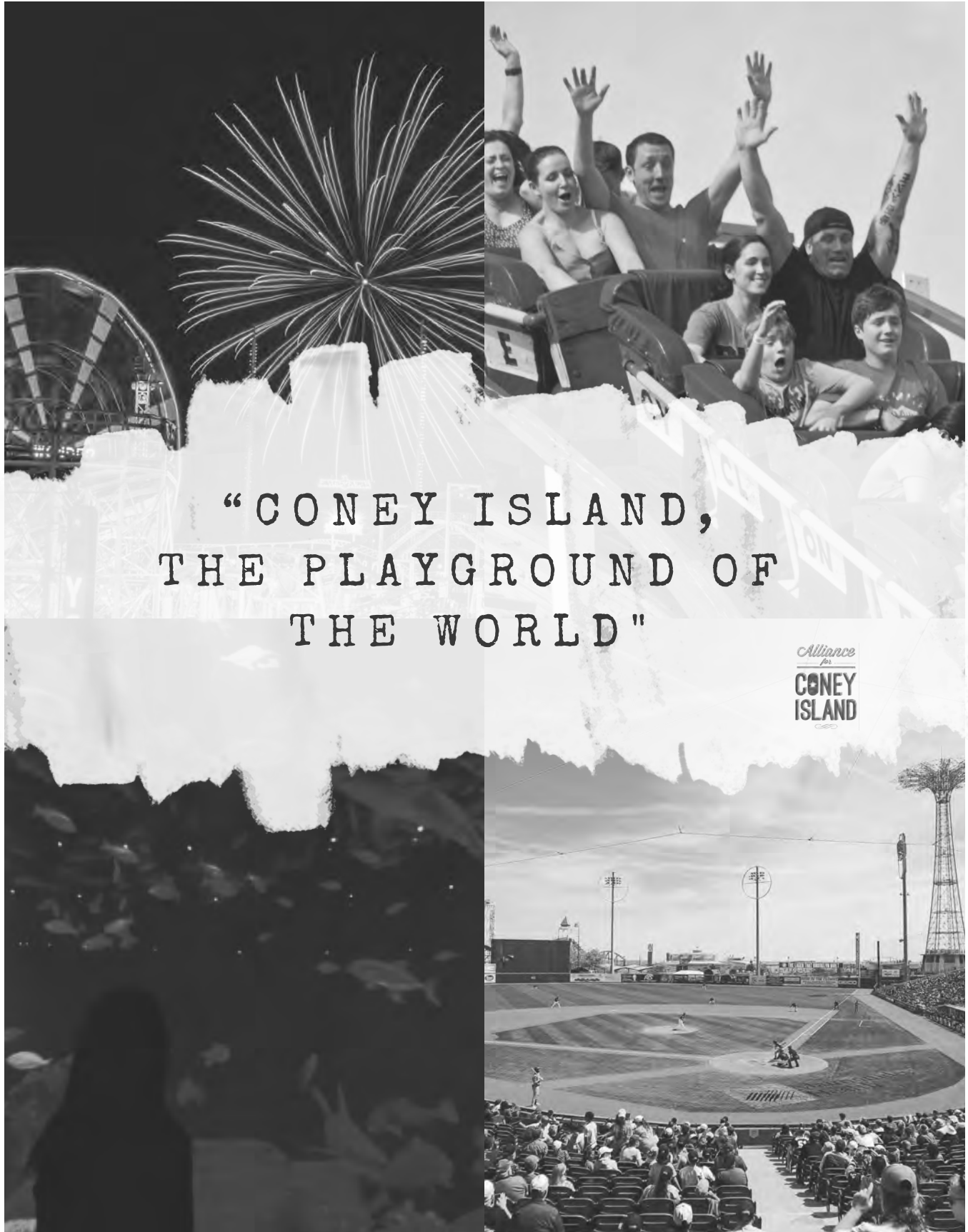
Todd Strier  
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The Officers & Board of Directors of the Columbia Association New York City Department of Sanitation proudly support the Community Mayors for Children with Special Needs and wish to congratulate their 2024 Humanitarian and Lifetime Achievement Award honorees!

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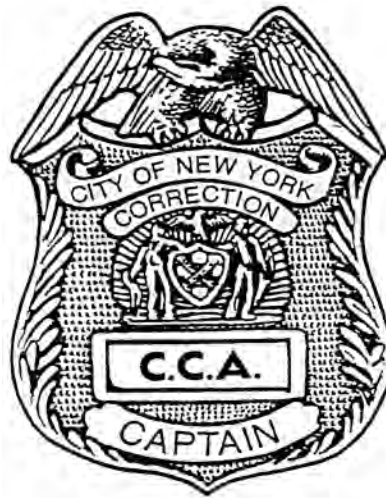
COMMUNITY MAYORS FOR CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

BEST WISHES TO THE

# COMMUNITY MAYORS FOR CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

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**IN MEMORY  
OF**

**Jerome (Jerry) Parker**

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WHO DEDICATED HIS LIFE TO THE EDUCATION  
AND WELL BEING OF CHILDREN  
THE WORLD IS A BETTER PLACE BECAUSE OF HIS EFFORTS  
AND HE WILL BE TRULY MISSED**

**And Congratulations to  
Tonight's Honorees**

*Alan Dubrow*



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**Community Mayors for Children with Special Needs** for their dedication to creating opportunities for mentally and physically challenged children.

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## Congratulations to all the Honorees

"No man is as tall as when he stoops to  
help a handicapped child"  
could not be truer!

Dominick Della Rocca was small in height, but  
was a giant among men for what he  
accomplished for children.

It was an honor to continue his work.

RIP my friend,

Frank Ferrara

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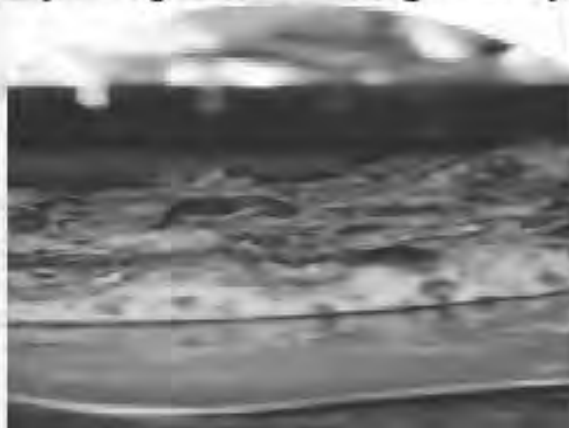
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# Congratulations

to tonight's honorees

and a special acknowledgement to our dear friend

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*"No One Is So Tall As When They Stoop To Help A Child With Special Needs"*



**C**ongratulations to all the Honorees and my Godfather

## Edward Post Esposti

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# Congratulations

to my Vietnam Brother  
50 Years!  
and To All The Honorees



A good friend and lifelong buddy,  
Eddie Esposti, for 44 Years of  
Service with the Community Mayors.  
Here's to you and all the honorees.

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I salute and truly admire the Community Mayors  
for many Years for their generosity, time and for  
children with special needs.

Their sincerity, love and commitment to thousands  
of disabled children that they care for from the five  
boroughs of NYC Schools, at their many special  
events . Especially the dedication to Operation Santa  
Claus at JFK Airport.

I send a blessing to all the Community Mayors for  
the fabulous job they do.

Yours truly,

AnnaMarie Franzese and Family

COMMUNITY MAYORS FOR CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

IN MEMORY OF  
**RUTH SHAPIRO**



**“ONE TUFF OLD BROAD”**

AND IN RECOGNITION OF THE NURSES, DOCTORS AND STAFF AT  
NASSAU UNIVERSITY MEDICAL CENTER ICU

*“YOU NEVER GAVE UP ON RUTHIE”*

WITH LOVE

SUSAN, FRAN, KENN, SAMANTHA, ANDREA  
AND HER FAMILY & FRIENDS

*“No One Is So Tall As When They Stoop To Help A Child With Special Needs”*



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COMMUNITY MAYORS FOR CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS



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OPERATION SANTA CLAUS**



***Robert Sbarra, President  
Richard Ruiz, Vice President***

*"No One Is So Tall As When They Stoop To Help A Child With Special Needs"*



# The Theodore Korony Post #253 American Legion Family

## Legion Post #253 Officers

Anthony Ferrara, Commander  
Dave Leich, 1<sup>st</sup> Vice Commander  
Sammy Ravelo, 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice Commander  
John Lanci, 3<sup>rd</sup> Vice Commander  
Colleen McCarthy, Adjutant  
Hon. Y. Gonzalez-Taylor, Finance Officer  
Gene Defrancis, Chaplain  
Charlie McDougall, Sgt. At Arms  
Patrick Devine, Judge Advocate  
Tom Hansen, Historian

## Auxiliary #253 Officers

Judy Lanci, President  
Carolyn Engeldrum, 1<sup>st</sup> ViceP resident  
Lorraine Johnson, 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President  
Dianne Lanci, 3<sup>rd</sup> Vice President  
Jan Salveggi, Finance Officer  
Kate Devine, Chaplain  
Dolores Stoltze, Sgt. At Arms

## Squadron #253 Officers

Gabriel Mujica, Detachment Commander  
Joe Ferriolo, Vice Commander  
Arthur Cullen, Chaplain  
Tony Salimbene, SAL Advisor

Korony Post Color Guard - Guy Richardson, Charlie McDougall, Sal Caruso, Christine Ryall,  
Gabriel Mujica & Ed McGee



**"For God and Country"**

*"No One Is So Tall As When They Stoop To Help A Child With Special Needs"*





I'm worried I'll miss having fun with  
the Community Mayors

Linda Braun

*"No One Is So Tall As When They Stoop To Help A Child With Special Needs"*



*"No One Is So Tall As When They Stoop To Help A Child With Special Needs"*

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To the Community Mayors for Children  
with Special Needs

Thank you for all of the work you  
do.

Congratulations to Frank Ferrara, Patrick  
Hendry and Will Coss

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Rich Santangelo, President

COMMUNITY MAYORS FOR CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

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CONGRATULATIONS

TO OUR

2024 HONOREES

---

Ann & Frank Tabert



*Congratulations*  
*Community Mayors*  
*2024 Honorees*

*Cav. Vincent A Tummino*  
*Community Mayor FDNY*

*"No One Is So Tall As When They Stoop To Help A Child With Special Needs"*

**Hsiang L. Chen, M.D., F.A.C.O.G.**

**Congratulations to  
All the Honorees**

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*"No One Is So Tall As When They Stoop To Help A Child With Special Needs"*

COMMUNITY MAYORS FOR CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

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**Mayor Edward Post Esposti**

for his  
**44<sup>th</sup>** Year as a Community Mayor

*"No One Is So Tall As When They Stoop To Help A Child With Special Needs"*

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**C**ongratulations  
to all the Honorees and  
to my friend

**Edward Post Esposti**

Celebrating his 44th Year as a Community Mayor

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Edward on your 44th Year  
and to all the Honorees

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**To all the Honorees.  
Glad to support the  
children. Always.**



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# *Congratulations !! to all the Honorees*

*A special thank you  
To the Community Mayors  
For all their hard work and love  
They have given to all the beautiful children  
With special needs for all these Years*

*"Your devotion to the children is  
Truly a blessing"*

*Also, congratulations and a special thank you  
To my Godfather, Edward Post Esposti  
For his now 44 Years or his dedication  
And devotion to the Community Mayors  
In raising money and helping the children  
So they can enjoy these special events  
All Year through*

*Blessings to all*

*Vincent Fiore and Family*

## **PRESCRIPTIONS**



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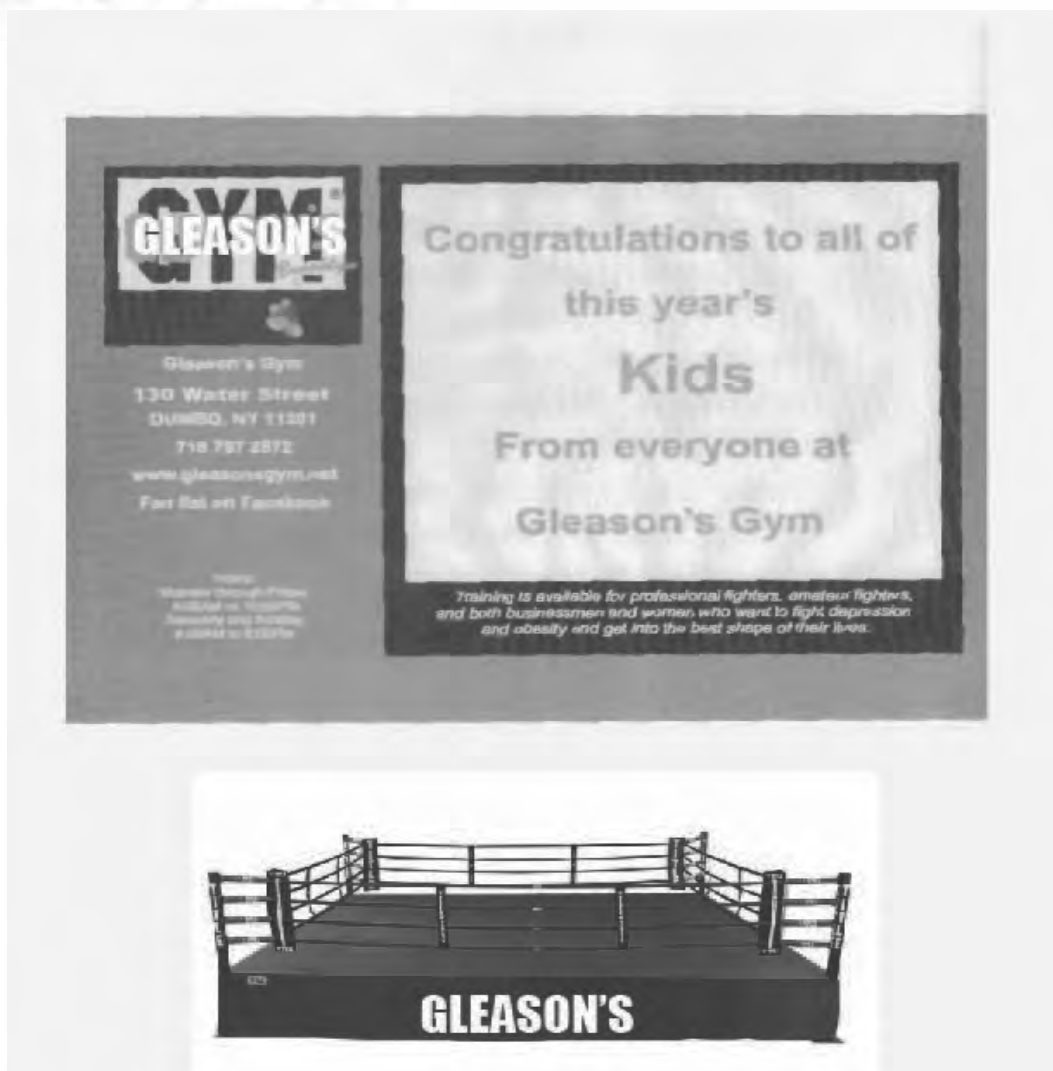
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## *Congratulations*

*I salute the Community Mayors  
For I am a handicapped man myself  
I have attended the Operation Santa Day so many times previously  
I am proud to support the Community Mayors and their mission.  
Your compassion and commitment to the Disabled Children is  
Second to none  
Best wishes,  
Justin Robert Green  
Amateur Boxer  
New York Golden Gloves*



*"No One Is So Tall As When They Stoop To Help A Child With Special Needs"*

# Congratulations to all the Honorees



New York City Fire Department  
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**Would like to congratulate this years honorees**

**Frank Ferrara**

**Patrick Hendry**

**Will Coss**



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## Congratulations to the Honorees

---

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## Congratulations and Best Wishes

---

Ninth Judicial District Court  
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**The Richmond County Public Administrator Congratulates  
Community Mayors for Children with Special Needs  
on Your 2024 Annual Mayors' Charity Gala &  
Congratulations to Your 2024 Honorees:**

**Dominick Della Rocca Lifetime Achievement Award**

**Frank Ferrara**

**Humanitarian Awards**

**Patrick Hendry ♦ Will Coss**

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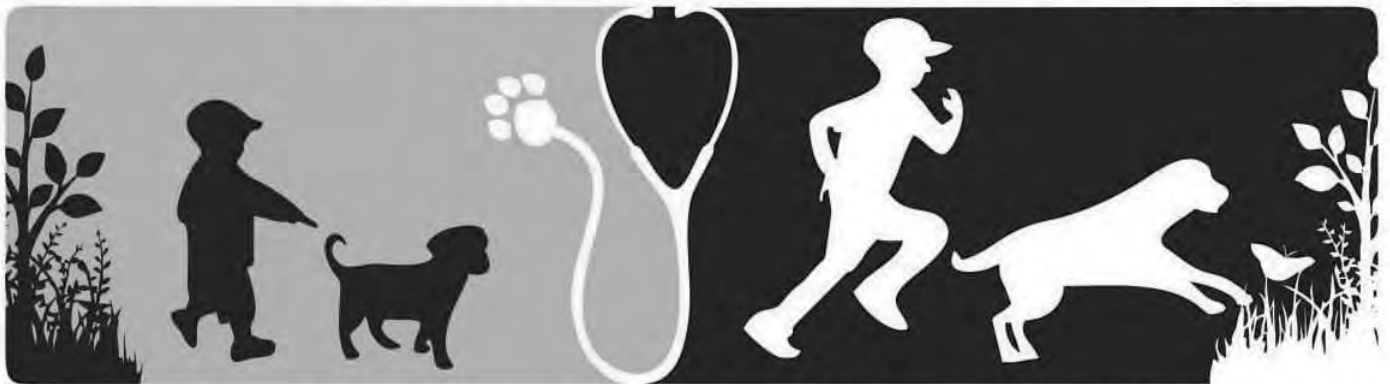
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**Our sincere gratitude to the Board  
and most particularly to my dear friend  
Vic Cipullo for your tireless efforts**

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# Operation Santa Claus





# Operation Santa Claus





# BRONX ZOO

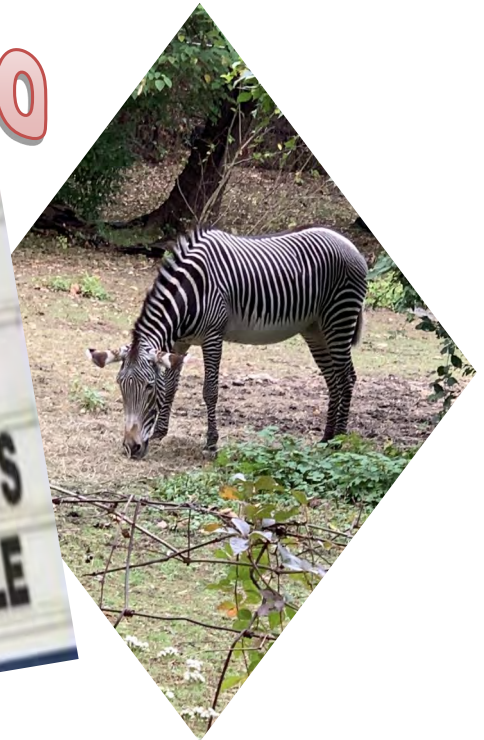




# The Bronx Zoo



SOMETIMES ANGELS ARE  
DISGUISED AS KIDS WITH  
SPECIAL NEEDS TO TEACH US  
HOW TO BE BETTER PEOPLE





# Deno's Wonder Wheel





# Deno's Wonder Wheel





# Deno's Wonder Wheel









# Dominick Della Rocca Summer Camp Scholarship



Kruger  
Twins





# Intrepid Sea, Air & Space Museum



Disability is a matter of perception.

If you can do just one thing well, you're needed by someone.





# LUNA PARK



**To be kind is more important than to be right. Many times, what people need is not a brilliant mind that speaks but a special heart that listens.**





# New York Aquarium

## Our first event post Covid





# New York Aquarium





# Prospect Park Zoo





# Prospect Park Zoo





# St. John's Athletes & Kids



# Operation Santa Claus



Parents of children who have  
invisible special needs  
often feel  
isolated  
judged  
&  
frustrated  
until they meet  
other parents sharing  
a similar journey

by Susan Zajick - Parents Supporting Parents





# Operation Santa Claus



# Operation Santa Claus

**Thank you  
Investors Bank**



AUTISM:  
SAME ROAD,  
SAME BRICKS,  
DIFFERENT VIEW.  
~NICK GONZALES



# Operation Santa Claus



Love  
IT

You'll never see a bigger challenge, than a person with disabilities, trying to do the same things that we take for granted.

Love of Action  
**I AM ENOUGH**



# Operation Santa Claus





# Operation Santa Claus



# Operation Santa Claus

Thank you **SANTA!**





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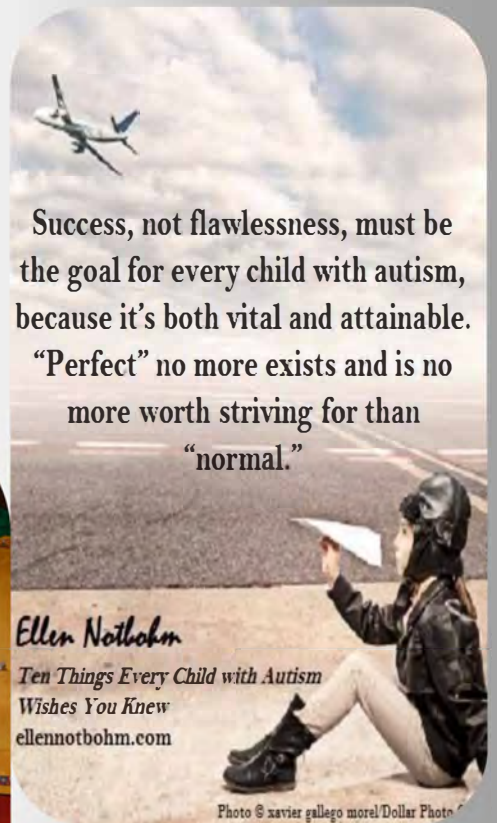




# Operation Santa Claus



# Operation Santa Claus



Success, not flawlessness, must be the goal for every child with autism, because it's both vital and attainable. "Perfect" no more exists and is no more worth striving for than "normal."

*Ellen Notbohm*

*Ten Things Every Child with Autism Wishes You Knew*  
ellennotbohm.com

Photo © xavier gallego morel/Dollar Photo





# Operation Santa Claus



# Operation Santa Claus



WHEN OUR TIME ON THIS EARTH IS DONE. MONEY OR MATERIAL THINGS WILL NOT MATTER. BUT THE LOVE, TIME AND KINDNESS WE'VE GIVEN OTHERS WILL SHINE AND LIVE ON FOREVER..





# Operation Santa Claus





# Operation Santa Claus



**Sometimes  
angels  
are disguised  
as kids with  
special needs  
to teach us how  
to be better  
people.**





# Mayors' Gala





# Mayors' Gala



# **JAMES C. COPPOLA**

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**Congratulations to all of this year's  
distinguished Honorees!**



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# Thank you Macy\*s





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*Thank you!*

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We can never thank you enough for your  
dedication and commitment to our noble cause



# Operation Santa Claus

## THANK YOU SHLEPPERS



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Thank you

John Durso, President

For your continued support serving  
our children with special needs



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CONGRATULATIONS  
TO TONIGHT'S HONOREES

Patrick Hendry

Will Coss

Frank Ferrara

Darlene & Jeff Bernstein

# SILVER SPONSOR

CONGRATULATIONS  
TO TONIGHT'S HONOREES

Patrick Hendry

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## Thank you

For your continued support!

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## Thank you

President NYPD PBA, Patrick Hendry,  
For continuing a seven decade tradition of  
friendship and support!





# Well Done, Community Mayors!

Nationwide Mortgage Bankers and I are thrilled to celebrate the incredible folks recognized at this year's Community Mayors for Children with Special Needs Humanitarian Awards. Special thanks goes to our 2024 Lifetime Achievement winner Frank Ferrara and our Humanitarian Award winners Patrick Hendry and Will Coss. I'm overjoyed to honor their contributions and the waves of positivity they've sent through our communities, inspiring and uplifting everyone around. Their work is an example of the power of compassion and the impact it can have. **Congratulations to the entire Community Mayors community!**



*Richard Steinberg*

**FOUNDER AND CHAIRMAN**  
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