2001 Inductees

Marion Cañedo:

From teacher to principal to administrator to superintendent, Marian Cañedo has held fast to her conviction that educational excellence depends on good programs, proper motivation and an upbeat attitude. Close to 40 years of experience with students is helping Buffalo's first female superintendent of schools meet the challenge of rejuvenating public schools for the 21st Century. And while she is doing that, the former teacher of the year and winner of a National Excellence in Education Award continues to reinforce her image as a role model.

Clotilde Perez-Bode Dedecker:

The name is synonymous with community service, so long has Clotilde Dedecker been involved with local and national organizations. Starting with the Junior League of Buffalo and extending to her tenure as executive director of the Erie County Commission on the Status of Women, Dedecker has shared her dedication, expertise and energy with more than two dozen local institutions. As immediate past president of the Association of Junior Leagues International and a member of national and international committees, she has enhanced her reputation as well as ours.

Diane English:

The creator of the "Murphy Brown," icon of the 1990s' career women has won enough prestigious awards to fill this book and has the talent to keep trophies coming for many more years. A writer and producer, this former Buffalo schoolteacher has gained an international reputation for her television creations and scripts. On her list of credits are "One Hogan Place," "Foley Square," "Ink," and "My Sister Sam." During its 10-year run, "Murphy Brown" won 18 Emmys, a Golden Globe and a George Peabody Award.

Edith Marie Flanigen:

Edith Flanigen, a most inventive chemist, gave us purer water and cleaner gasoline. In her 42-year career with Union Carbide Corporation, much of it with the Linde Division, Flanigen participated in scores of discoveries, including those in molecular sieves that earned her the Perkin Medal. The first woman to receive the country's highest prize in applied chemistry is also one of the few women elected to the National Academy of Engineering. Among her 102 patents are compounds used in water purification and environmental clean-up and in making gasoline cleaner and safer. A Buffalo native and D'Youville College graduate, she retired in 1994 and resides in White Plains. She was awarded the $100,000 Lemelson-MIT Lifetime Achievement Award.

2001 Inductees

Maryann Saccomondo Freedman:

The first woman to be elected president of both the Erie County and New York State Bar Associations has had a distinguished career in both the public and private sectors. As an assistant state attorney general, as a matrimonial referee in State Supreme Court, as a lawyer in private practice and in her deep involvement in the community, she has worked to improve the quality of life and enhance opportunities for women. Her accomplishments have been recognized by her profession, her university and by dozens of community organizations.

Marsha S. Henderson:

She served as the highest ranking woman in Western New York banking who also ranks pretty high in the many community organizations for which she has worked so tirelessly. Marsha Henderson's rise to president of Key Bank's Western District and to an executive position in its Eastern Region is based on more than 30 years of experience in financial services and she has paved the way for countless other women to follow. Her expertise in working with and for people has spilled over into public service that has earned her the Athena Award and a citation from the governor.

Katharine Pratt Horton, 1848-1931:

Katharine Pratt Horton was a society matron who was in the middle of everything new and exciting in turn-of-the century Buffalo. She funneled the energy of the emerging women's club movement through her newly created Buffalo Federation of Women's Clubs. In six years as federation president, she got the government to provide low-cost lunches and health inspections for needy children in city schools and to name a woman probation officer. She gave generously of her riches to scholarships and charity and used her leadership skills to help Buffalo put its best foot forward during the Pan-American Exposition of 1901.

Anna Catherine Murray Kearns, 1892-1938:

Anna Catherine Murray Kearns tried on many hats in the days when women were expected to wear only one. This homemaker and mother of four was a deputy sheriff, a businesswoman, a tireless Democratic Party worker, leader of a band and was the only woman manager of a baseball team. She took her woman's drum corps to parade in the nation's capital. She ran a meat market and founded the Democratic Club of 1000 Women. Along her busy way, she weathered the Recession and found the time and energy to help her neighbors do the same.

2001 Inductees

Elizabeth Jane Letson, 1874-1919:

Shell collector Elizabeth Letson turned a hobby into a career that rewarded her and enriched her native city. The 18-year-old who volunteered to clean the Buffalo Museum of Science shell collection in 1892 became the museum's first woman director just eight years later. Much of what distinguished the museum throughout the 20th Century, an outstanding collection, library, historical records and community outreach, is traced to her tenure. She expanded the museum, added exhibits and attracted more visitors. After serving a decade as museum director, she moved with her husband to Hawaii.

Geraldine C. Ochocinska:

Geri Ochocinska rose through the ranks of a mostly male labor union to become its first female regional director with a leadership style that has inspired admiration from her colleagues and the community. During 35 years in elective positions with the United Auto Workers, she has negotiated contracts, processed grievances, directed locals, trained leaders, built coalitions and organized workers, always driven by a desire to achieve social justice for working men and women. As the first female director of UAW's Region 9 and as board member of Coalition of Labor Union Women, she has promoted the status of women in labor unions.

Gretchen Engstrom Stringer:

Gretchen Stringer walks around with pockets full of energy, humor, inspiration and optimism, all of which she generously shares with anyone lucky enough to bump into her. And there have been scores so blessed over the decades of her business and volunteer careers. Gretchen's distinctive style of leadership has inspired groups from Girl Scouts to Junior League provisionals, from community workers to businesswomen. Building a house, planning a celebration or serving a client, Gretchen goes the extra mile that makes everything she touches special.

The Honorable Rose H. Sconiers:

The road to the State Supreme Court started for Rose H. Sconiers in 1969 when she graduated from Long Island University in Brooklyn and went on to State University of New York at Buffalo School of Law. Her outstanding career path has taken her through legal aid, private practice, community service and teaching. In settling disputes between labor and management as an Assistant Corporation Counsel or assisting and supporting delinquent teenagers as a City Court Judge, the now State Supreme Court Justice Sconiers has established an excellent reputation for getting the job done.