

2002 Inductees



Arlene F. Kaukus:

As the first woman president of United Way of Buffalo & Erie County, Arlene Kaukus touches the lives of everyone in this community. Her work with the organization for the past 22 years has been an extension of her commitment to the community. The programs she has developed and the guidance she has provided have empowered people inside the agency and thousands more in the communities served by the agency. Her support of the Women in Board Governance and the Western New York Women's Fund is the basis for the continuing promotion of women for which she is so famous.

Eunice A. Lewin:

She is designed uncrowned queen and to the hundreds of individuals whose lives have been touched by Eunice Lewin's "passion for service" and to the many institutions that have profited from her leadership, the title is most appropriate. For many newcomers to our community, hers was the friendliest and most welcoming voice. For others, in need of a helping hand, hers was the most willingly offered. A native of Cuba, she came here as a young adult, mastered a new language and culture, excelled in scholarship and has maintained a deep and abiding commitment to her faith, family and community. As a volunteer, professional educator and social worker, she is helping another generation achieve their hopes and dreams.



Belva B. Lockwood, 1830-1917:

In 1879, this Niagara County native became the first woman to argue a case before the United States Supreme Court. It took an act of Congress to get her in but then nothing had come easily to this early feminist. She learned about wage discrimination as a teacher in Lockport and overcame gender bias when she fought her way into law school. Her lobbying efforts persuaded Congress to pass an equal pay for equal work law in 1972 and as a candidate of the National Equal Rights Party in 1884, she became the first woman to run for president. She championed the rights of women, Blacks and the underprivileged.

Joan A. Male:

Joan Male spends her days taking care of other peoples' children. A foster parent, she provides a loving home to needy children; a child advocate, she has empowered others to do the same. She is a protector of abused and neglected children and a friend to adults who really want to be good parents but do not know how. The founder of United Foster Parents and Parents Anonymous has used her parenting skills, her organizational talents and her fund-raising genius to improve the lives of countless children and the adults who care for them. Her compassion and hard work have enabled hundreds of fragile families to survive.



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Nancy A. Naples:

As a businesswoman, public servant and community volunteer, Nancy Naples is a role model and inspiration to every woman. Serving her third term as Erie County Comptroller, she has distinguished herself in government service, displaying the same degree of excellence that identified her private sector career with leading financial institutions and a family business. Her compassion to assist others is exemplified by her volunteer service with the Roswell Park Foundation, Canisus College, and her alma maters- Nardin Academy and Marymount College – and numerous other Western New York institutions, she continues to further the interests of women through her work on the Executive Committee of the WNY Advisory Council for the New York State Division for Women.

Margaret A. Pericak-Vance, Ph.D.:

An internationally known scientist, Margaret Pericak-Vance recently was named director of the Center for Human Genetics at Duke University where she has been a professor in the medical school for more than two decades. The Holy Angels Academy graduate has gone on to become one of the nation's top research scientists in genetics working with teams in the discovery of genes linked to Alzheimer's and research into Parkinson's multiple sclerosis and autism among other diseases. She made Newsweek's list of 100 people to watch in this century. She was the recipient of the Louis-D Scientific Award from the Institute de France.



Catharine M. Weiss:

When there is a job to be done, Catharine Weiss is usually the first face you will see. She is everywhere women want to be. The Erie County Commission on the Status of Women, a Girl Scout meeting, a women's history celebration, a Hall of Fame luncheon, and the conveyer of the Women's Action Coalition is a woman of action. In Amherst, they know her as a citizen adviser, a community worker and planner, a conscientious member of many boards. She is energized by the women and girls she works with and for, and in turn she empowers them and their organizations leaving her community a far richer place.

Mary E. Wood, 1902-1998:

Mary Wood and the Buffalo YWCA made a big decision in 1957. There would not be Black branches and white branches in their organization, there would be only women's branches. When she became the first African American woman to head a major metropolitan YWCA, she sets standards for all of us. She brought her mission for integration and racial justice from the Midwest and Southwest to Buffalo and then to Washington and the world. It was not an easy time to be a high profile Black woman but with courage, dignity, and the power of her example, Mary Wood left her mark on the city and institution she served so well.

