



Local Leaders with Impact  
*a panel discussion*



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## Noam Bramson, Mayor, City of New Rochelle, Leadership Westchester Class of 2015

Noam Bramson has served as the [Mayor of New Rochelle](#) since January 2006 and has been reelected four consecutive cycles, most recently in November 2019. Prior to becoming Mayor, Bramson served for ten years on the New Rochelle City Council.

[Watch this interview](#) of Mayor Bramson by Richard French regarding the City's response to COVID-19.

Bramson has been at the forefront of efforts to strengthen New Rochelle's economy, environment, safety, and quality of life. He has worked successfully to forge public-private partnerships aimed at job creation and economic growth, culminating in the most ambitious downtown development initiative in New Rochelle's history. He has been a strong advocate for thoughtful community planning, including the creation of New Rochelle's award-winning Sustainability Plan, efforts to establish new public access to the Long Island Sound shore, approval of new land use policies to preserve open space, and adoption of the City's largest-ever capital and infrastructure investment. In addition, Bramson has worked in concert with public safety professionals to bring New Rochelle's crime rate down to a fifty-year low.

A strong and effective advocate for his city, Bramson has secured grants for the enhancement of major transportation corridors and the rehabilitation of New Rochelle's playing fields. In 2018, under Bramson's leadership, New Rochelle was awarded the coveted \$10 million Downtown Revitalization Initiative by New York State, and was also chosen by Bloomberg Philanthropies as one of just nine cities nation-wide to receive a \$1 million grant for innovation.

In 2013, Bramson won the Democratic nomination for Westchester County Executive, but lost the general election to Republican incumbent Rob Astorino. During his campaign, Bramson advocated a regional strategy for economic growth and shared services, while emphasizing his support for reproductive rights and sensible gun safety laws.

From 1992 to 2012, Bramson maintained a professional relationship with Congresswoman Nita Lowey, with whom he worked on both governmental and political challenges.

Bramson is a life-long Westchester resident and a product of the New Rochelle public schools. Bramson went on to Harvard University, where he completed his undergraduate degree in three years, and then received a Masters degree in Public Policy.

Bramson has served in leadership roles in numerous civic organizations. He is a member of the Government & Finance Working Group for the Regional Plan Association, a member of the founding Board of Directors of Sustainable Westchester, and a past Board Member of the Westchester Jewish Council. Locally, he has served on the Boards of the New Rochelle Campership Fund, the Castle Gallery, the Fund for Educational Excellence, the New Rochelle Council of Community Services, and the United Way of New Rochelle.



Learn more about Noam Bramson on [New Rochelle's website](#) and through [this video of a student's interview](#) with him



## Colonel Mary Lynch Westmoreland, US Army Retired

Mary Westmoreland is a decorated combat veteran and native New Yorker. She served in two Military Services: US Coast Guard and US Army as an active and Reserve member.

Learn more about Westmoreland through this video [interview with Kim Izzarelli](#).

Westmoreland serves as the [Department of Defense Employer Support to Guard and Reserve](#) NYC Area Chair and NY State Vice Chair. She is President of the Association of US Army Greater NY Statue of Liberty Chapter, an active member of the Board of Directors of the Navy League NY Council, and on the Board of Directors of the United War Veterans Council which organizes and resources the Annual NYC National Veterans Day Parade.

Westmoreland retired at the rank of Colonel from her military career after 31.5 years of active military service on October 8, 2008.

Her broader career began with civilian employment where she held Executive Director positions for university and community Women Centers, Director of Operations for a National educational research and development organization. After serving as a College Admissions Counselor she pursued Post graduate studies at SUNY Stony Brook, Duquesne University.

Westmoreland's military career includes various command positions and senior staff headquarters positions at operational and higher staff levels. A large part of her professional experience was with the Military Police Corps for ten years and later deploying to the Persian Gulf War. As an Adjutant General Corps officer in Human Resources Operations and Policy, and Systems Integrator she led systems modernization and reorganization initiatives; and held various senior leadership positions as executive officer and director positions at the Headquarters Dept of the Army.

After 9/11 Westmoreland was reassigned to the Pentagon to participate in the reconstitution of the Army Pentagon assigned staff. Among her consecutive two-year appointments over that intense period were Executive Director of a Multi-Award Contract Program, Executive Officer to Department of the Army Senior leaders, Headquarters Deputy Chief of Staff Personnel Resources, and Executive Officer to the Chief of the Army Reserve. Prior to her work at the Pentagon she was the Deputy Commander of the US Army Reserve Personnel Command in St Louis, MO. Westmoreland is a graduate of the U.S Army War College in Strategic International Studies.

Since retiring Westmoreland was appointed by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to the National Advisory Committee on Women Veterans. She served for five years and the last two as National Chairwoman.



Learn more about Mary Westmoreland on the [United War Veterans Council's website](#) and through this [video interview with Kim Izzarelli](#).



**Sean Pica, Executive Director,  
Hudson Link for Higher Education in Prison**

Sean Pica leads [Hudson Link for Higher Education in Prison](#), a not-for-profit organization that provides college education, life skills and reentry support to incarcerated and formerly incarcerated men and women to help them make a positive impact on their own lives, their families and communities.

[Hear his commencement address](#) at Ulster County Community College.

Pica has presided over Hudson Link's growth in size and scope. His responsibilities as executive director include program and operations management, business development and fundraising, and development and implementation of the organization's strategic goals and objectives. Since taking over leadership of the organization in 2007, Hudson Link has grown from 60 students attending Mercy College at Sing Sing Correctional Facility, to more than 600 students enrolled annually in college preparatory and college programs in 5 New York State Correctional Facilities. Partnering with Columbia University, Columbia-Greene Community College, Marymount Manhattan College, Mercy College, Mount Saint Mary College, St. Thomas Aquinas College, SUNY Sullivan, SUNY Ulster and Vassar College, Hudson Link has awarded more than 700 college degrees. In addition, Hudson Link is now actively involved in the very important work of providing reentry support, including providing transitional housing, to its more than 850 released alumni to help them successfully transition back into their families and communities. Before joining Hudson Link, Mr. Pica served on its Board of Directors.

Under Pica's leadership, Hudson Link has been featured in several documentaries including: HBO's University of Sing Sing, PBS First Degree, and Moxie Pictures Zero Percent.

Pica received his MPS from the New York Theological Seminary and his MSW from Hunter College. He serves on the New York State Council on Community Re-Entry and Reintegration, is a founding Board Member for the Alliance for Higher Education in Prison, the New York State Consortium for Higher Education in Prison, and the Sing Sing Prison Museum Project.



Learn more about Sean Pica on [Hudson Link's website](#) and through this [video of his commencement address](#) at Ulster County Community College



**Rev. J. Loren Russell, JLR Company,  
Leadership Westchester Class of 2003**

Russell began his professional career as a life insurance agent, quickly rising to sales manager and then senior management. To fulfill his entrepreneurial ambitions, Russell established The JLR Company in 1992 to provide financial planning services in general, “Biblical Economics” services to the religious community, and motivational and developmental seminars and workshops. He served 7 years with the Southern Baptist Convention as the Northeast Strategy Coordinator, Regional Church Finance Consultant and Church Planting Coordinator for NYC.

Here is what Russell shared [when he spoke](#) to the Leadership Westchester class of 2018.

Russell earned the Master’s of Divinity degree from Drew Theological Seminary and received an Honorary Doctorate of Ministry from Virginia University of Lynchburg. Through The JLR Company, Russell provides financial, strategic planning and business consultations to churches, not-for-profit organizations, and businesses nationally, with a specialization in urban church strategies.

Russell’s spiritual and civic commitment keeps him very busy. He ran for City Council of District 17 in the Bronx, New York in 2016; serves as an Associate Minister and Sunday School teacher at both Goodwill and The Greater Universal Baptist Churches, both in the Bronx; is the founder of the Back In Stride Ministry, a ministry designed to help ex-offenders to establish their own businesses; President of the John L. Scott Associate Ministers Auxiliary of the United Missionary Baptist Association; Commissioned Chaplain with New York State Chaplains Workers Task Force; the Clergy Liaison and Vice President of the Precinct Community Council for the 42nd Pct. of the NYPD; Moderator for NYPD Ceasefire Program; President of the Home/Simpson Street Homeowners Association, Bronx, NY; Board member of Harlem Congregations for Community Improvement (HCCI); community representative for the Quality Assurance Committee of Neighbors Home Care, Bronx; past Chairman of the Board of Directors for the Community League of the Heights, NYC; 3 time past President of the Yonkers-East Yonkers Rotary Club, NY, and helped establish and provided voice overs for the Speaking Community Calendar at Bronx Net Cable, Bronx, NY.

Russell also writes a weekly column in the Bronx Chronicle called “[Matters of Faith](#)” ([www.thebronxchronicle.com](http://www.thebronxchronicle.com)), host’s a weekly internet radio talk show, “Matters of Faith: The Radio Show” (Facebook Live), and author/publisher of Matters of Faith: The Book. Russell is also profiled in the book, Children of the Dream - The Psychology of Black Success by Audrey Edwards and Dr. Craig Polite.



Learn **more about Loren Russell here** and through this **video presentation** from when he spoke to the Leadership Westchester class of 2018.



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## April is Global Volunteer Month!

Join us in celebrating the spirit of volunteerism all month long by watching (or re-watching) the record-setting 2020 Volunteer Spirit Awards, which is now available for replay at: [volunteernewyork.org/awards](http://volunteernewyork.org/awards)

*"A testament that the power of volunteering to bring people together will always be more powerful than the things that divide us."*

