

WNY Mental Health Professional Is Senate Woman of Distinction

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BATAVIA — Sue Gagne, a registered nurse and dedicated mental health professional has been named by state Sen. George Borrello as the 2024 New York State Senate Woman of Distinction for the 57th District.

Borrello said he selected Gagne as the district's honoree because of her significant contributions to the mental health field and the vulnerable individuals it serves. Her work has spanned more than two decades and both the nonprofit and public service sectors. She serves as the assistant director of adult services at the Wyoming County Mental Health Department.

"At a time when our communities are experiencing unprecedented mental health crises, we have become acutely aware of the vital role of professionals like Sue Gagne," Borrello said. "Her career has been focused on connecting struggling individuals with services and expanding the availability of resources and programs for rural residents."

First connected to the field when she was seeking help for a struggling family member, Gagne soon realized it was an area where she could make a difference and fulfill her desire to help some of the most marginalized members of society.

Starting at the Mental Health Association of Genesee and Orleans Counties in a part-time support position, she rose to become the executive director. Her next role was as the dual recovery coordinator for Genesee, Orleans and Wyoming counties where she worked to bridge the substance use disorder community and the mental health community.

In 2019, she decided to fulfill a long-held goal by becoming a registered nurse and enrolled in a program at Genesee County Community College, graduating in 2023.

Established in 1998, the New York State Senate Woman of Distinction Award is hosted annually to pay tribute to women who have demonstrated remarkable character, initiative and commitment in serving their neighbors, strengthening our communities and acting as role models.

Gagne will be honored at a ceremony in Albany on May 14 along with honorees from across the state.