

2017 Women of Achievement

Lillian G. Burry, Freeholder, Monmouth County

There has been no woman who could match what Lillian G. Burry has accomplished over the years in the areas of the preservation of historic sites, New Jersey farmland and open space.

As a member of the Matawan Town committee, Lillian spearheaded the preservation of over 80 acres of much needed wetlands around the Matawan Creek. She then turned her goals towards the town to purchase and restore the Historic Burrowes Mansion. The Burrowes Mansion Museum is a historic home built approximately in 1723 by John Bowne III, and was named the Burrowes Mansion when it was purchased by John "Corn King" Burrowes, a successful grain merchant, in 1769, currently on the Historic Homes Registry in Matawan. While also on the town committee, Lillian exposed the illegal dumping of waste oil and hazardous materials in the Burnt Fly Bog, in Marlboro Township, having it declared a Federal Superfund contaminate area, now clean and a public park for all to enjoy.

As Mayor in Colts Neck, she created the Colts Neck Open Space and Farmland Preservation Committee, a model for other towns to follow, which is one of the first and most successful in our state. Over 154 farms and 12,000 acres of land in Monmouth County was preserved and protected from development.

As Director of the Monmouth County Freeholders, Lillian served as liaison to the County Planning Board which oversaw 16,000 acres of county parks, the county library system, the sheriff's office, county clerk, county surrogate and the prosecutor's office. Ex-Governor Corzine appointed her to the Fort Monmouth Economic Revitalization Authority where she oversaw the creation of the youth recreation center. As Chairman of the Veterans' Sub-committee, she helped create a veteran's center, including housing for the homeless veterans and arranged for the VA clinic services to remain at the facility.

Another appointment was to the Sandy Hook Fort Hancock 21st Century Advisory Committee for the National Park Service by the US Secretary of the Interior, Kenneth Salazar. There, she was responsible for the preservation of this historic area and investigating the return of economic activity to the area.

A champion of preservation of open space, farmland and historic sites, Lillian G. Burry is an obvious selection to be a Woman of Achievement. She was nominated by Barbara G. Mitchell.

Mary I. DiMartino, Executive Director, JP Morgan Securities LLC

An outstanding leader in a community has the unique talent of not only having a successful professional career, but someone who divides her time to the success of others. Mary I. DiMartino is exactly that.

Mary began her career as a financial advisor where she spent three years working with governmental clients. Spending 18 years as an invest banker with region program dealer firms, she then joining JP Morgan. As their executive director, she works with state and local governments issuing municipal bonds and serves as Resource Manager for the banking team. She is a member of the Public Finance Women's Network Steering Committee and the Firm's Market Leadership Team. Mary is a senior mentor with JP Morgan's Leadership Acceleration Program that focuses on leadership skills for female vice presidents within investment banking. She also has sponsored Douglass students in their Extern Program.

A dedicated professional, Mary served the community by utilizing her leadership skills on the Board for the YWCA in Trenton, the Lawrence Township Growth and Redevelopment Committee, Lawrence Township Board of Education on the Citizen's Advisory Committee, First Vice President for the New Jersey Women's Political Caucus, President for the Mercer County Women's Political Caucus, member of the Lawrence league of Women Voters, Treasurer of dues for the Greater Princeton Women's Political Caucus, Vice President of the Princeton Area Douglass Alumnae Club Jaycees and representative to the Alumni Federation for Rutgers University.

However, with all of her associations she unselfishly found time to give back to her community as a volunteer counselor for the Trenton YWCA Rape Crisis Program, a troop leader for the Girl Scouts of Delaware Raritan, a Service Unit Director and Co-Director for the Girl Scouts in Central and Southern New Jersey, a Confraternity of Christian Doctrine (CCD) teacher for 8th graders and a member of the Hopewell Valley Chorus.

Mary has made an amazing impact on the lifestyle of women by sharing her knowledge, wisdom and talents for many years and is richly deserving to be a Woman of Achievement. This nomination was made by Valerie Anderson, Executive Director of the Associate Alumnae of Douglass College.

Denise Sellers, Executive Director, Haddonfield Child Care

In a quote by Brad Henry, "A good teacher can inspire hope, ignite the imagination, and instill a love of learning." Those words best describe Denise Sellers, the current administrator of Haddonfield Child Care. She has a strong devotion to children and their educational potential, particularly in the area of literacy. Denise is a frequent visitor in elementary school classrooms, where she presents themed lessons focusing on special topics or holidays. Supplied with posters and crafts, she completes the lesson by personally reading to the class. She believes deeply that children should be everyone's priority and responsibility, that they will naturally gravitate to people who understand and meet their needs, and that good role models can affect multiple generations.

However, this is not her only focus. She is a member of the Board of Trustees of New Jersey School-Age Care Coalition, the network and professional association for afterschool providers, and the MAP to Inclusive Child Care, which promotes inclusion and educates families and professionals about services available for children with special needs or disabilities. She also researched, lobbied for and co-wrote the National After School Association "Code of Ethics," currently used by programs across the country. As a former Quality Advisor and Accreditation Endorser for the National Institute on Out of School Time, and an Afterschool Ambassador, she helped to ensure that all children and families have access to high quality programs and activities after school.

However, working with children is not her only interest. As one of the original members of the Bancroft Business Advisory Committee, Denise has worked to help the organization align vocational and employment programs for adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities with the needs of community businesses.

If you have heard of *Hadrosaurus foulkii*, the New Jersey State Dinosaur, which was discovered in Haddonfield, Denise was instrumental by working with the HATCH Committee, which raised over \$100,000 for the public art sculpture to commemorate Hadrosaurus. She chaired many fun events and activities including the children's parade when Haddy the dinosaur arrived in town.

As part of this Federation, she has been a member of the Evening Membership Department of The Haddon Fortnightly for over 25 years, serving as EMD Chairman, and working in the areas of Education, Arts, Literature, Community Improvement Project, International Issues and many others.

A champion for children, Denise Sellers has a unique way of reaching those who need extra assistance. Through her professionalism, generosity of heart and spirit, she is a Woman of Achievement. This nomination was submitted by Joanne Morris and the members of The Haddon Fortnightly Evening Membership Department.

C. Vivian Stringer, Head Basketball Coach, Rutgers University

When you think of women's college sports, especially basketball, the only name that comes to mind is C. Vivian Stringer, and the amazing Rutgers Scarlet Knights. This championship coach and leader was more successful than her male counterparts in college sports, as she made history in women's basketball, as the first coach to take three different school teams to the illustrious Final Four. Vivian learned the secrets to success early in her career, through determination, hard work, grit, love of the game, teamwork and extraordinary strategic play, as she led her teams from one championship to another. With over 900 victories, she ranks 4th among the all-time Division 1 women's coaches victories list and third among active coaches. She also took her talents and expertise to international play as an assistant coach for the Gold Medal 2004 Olympic Team, Bronze Medal for the 1980 USA Jones Cup, and as head coach led 1982 US Olympic Festival East to a Bronze Medal, and the 1985 US World University Games team to a Silver, among many other world renown sports' wins.

However, Vivian's life was met with personal struggles as she wrote a heartfelt account in a New York Times Bestseller, "Standing Tall, A Memoir of Tragedy in Triumph" in 2008, when she overcame many personal challenges such as the loss of her father when she was 19, her only daughter was stricken with spinal meningitis, the sudden death of her beloved husband and herself, overcoming a battle with breast cancer.

In honor of her dedication to her legacy, in 2008, The C. Vivian Stringer Child Development Center was dedicated at the Nike World Headquarters in Beaverton, Oregon that houses 26 classrooms for learning and development for children between the ages of six months to five years old. In 2009, she was enshrined to the Basketball Hall of Fame in Springfield, Massachusetts.

Vivian has so many championships and awards under her belt, but what she is most proud of is the extraordinary young women that she has coached over the years that have gone on to have successful basketball careers, members of the Olympic Teams, their involvement in community service and work to help those just beginning their basketball skills. Her programs have always had the feel of being a family and many team members have returned to her practice sessions when needed.

As an inspiration to so many women and a shining star for Rutgers Women's Sports and the State of New Jersey, Tina Gordon and the Cagers Club nominated C. Vivian Stringer as a Women of Achievement.