

April 7, 2008

ESSEX COUNTY FREEHOLDERS CELEBRATE WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH

Laura Highsmith Lloyd, Phyllis Salowe-Kaye, Katherine Slattery & Laura Trimmings Honored at March 31st Event

(Newark, NJ) – The Essex County Board of Chosen Freeholders held its Annual Women's History Month Celebration on Tuesday, March 31st, at the Hall of Records. The event was a collaborative effort of the Board and the Office of the Essex County Register of Deeds and Mortgages. The sponsors were Freeholder President Blonnie R. Watson of Newark, Freeholder Linda Lordi Cavanaugh of West Orange, Freeholder Carol Y. Clark of East Orange and Register Carole A. Graves of Newark. The program was held in the Freeholder Board's Chambers and was followed by a catered reception.

The accomplished and highly-respected honorees of this year's event were: Julia Highsmith Lloyd of Newark, Phyllis Salowe-Kaye of West Orange, the Honorable Katherine B. Slattery of Caldwell and Laura Trimmings of East Orange.

Julia Highsmith Lloyd has enjoyed a century-long lifetime of giving and caring. Born in Montgomery County, Georgia, in 1909, she adopted the City of Newark as her hometown in 1934, and currently resides at High Park Garden Housing Cooperative. She served as a Licensed Nurse's Assistant for 25 years at Staten Island's Willowbrook Hospital until her retirement, and is a devoted and long-time member of Newark's Metropolitan Baptist Church, where she taught Sunday School and served on the Missionary Circle for many years. She has also been deeply involved in the Order of the Eastern Star, where she has held numerous positions and received many honors, including Past Worthy Matron and Past Grand Trustee.



(left to right) - Julia Highsmith Lloyd and Freeholder President Watson

Phyllis Salowe-Kaye is a highly-regarded community and consumer activist who currently serves as Executive Director of New Jersey Citizen Action (New Jersey's largest multi-issue consumer watchdog organization), a position she has held for over 23 years. Previously, she was employed by the Essex County Department of Planning & Economic Development as Ass't. Director and as Director of the Ronald B. Atlas Tenant Resource Center. She has been active in the NJ Tenants Organization since 1978, having served as President, Legislative Vice President and Board Member, and has served on numerous statewide task forces as an appointee of governors Corzine, McGreevey and Byrne. Prior to her 30-year career of working with non-profit organizations, Ms. Salowe-Kaye was a teacher in the Newark Public Schools. She is a graduate of Boston University and resides in West Orange.



(left to right) - Phyllis Salowe-Kaye and Register Graves

The Honorable Katherine B. Slattery is currently serving her first full term as a Councilwoman in the Borough of Caldwell. Previously, she served 4 terms on the Caldwell/West Caldwell Board of Election, including 8 years as President, 4 years as Vice President, and as Chair of the Personnel, Curriculum and Buildings & Grounds Committees, as well as liaison to the NJ School Boards Association. She also served on the Caldwell Zoning Board of Adjustment and has been a member of numerous community organizations, including The Bridge, Grover Cleveland Birthplace Committee, Irish-American Cultural Institute and the Arts Council of the Essex Area. A nurse by profession, Councilwoman Slattery earned her B.S.N. from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, was Head Nurse in the Medical/Surgical Unit at St. Barnabas Medical Center, a Classroom/Clinical Instructor at Clara Maass Hospital, as well as a school nurse for the Caldwell/West Caldwell and Fair Lawn school districts.



(left to right) - Katherine Slattery and Freeholder Cavanaugh

Laura Trimmings is a passionate and dedicated educator who currently serves as Principal of the Cicely Tyson School of Performing and Fine Arts in East Orange, a position she has held for more than 22 years. She began her teaching career in Florida before moving to East Orange, where she has served in the East Orange School District since 1969, first as a classroom teacher in English and Anthropology, and then as an Assistant Principal and Principal. She is a member of numerous state and national professional organizations and is widely respected for her expertise in curriculum development. Ms. Trimmings is a graduate of Johnson C. Smith University in North Carolina, and earned her Masters degree in Educational Supervision and Administration from Seton Hall University.

While introducing her honoree, 100-year old Laura Highsmith Lloyd, Freeholder President Watson spoke about the high esteem in which she is held by her neighbors at Newark's High Park Garden, all of whom know her as 'Cousin Laura'. "Even at her age, Ms. Lloyd lives alone, takes care of herself, and continues to be an active member of the community", said the Freeholder President, who recounted that Ms. Lloyd recently contributed \$100 to ensure that the children in the community would be able to have their Halloween Party.



(left to right) - Freeholder Clark and Laura Trimmings

Carole A. Graves, the Essex County Register of Deeds and Mortgages, praised her old friend, Phyllis Salowe-Kaye, recalling their days together as Newark school teachers. "The 1960's were an exciting time of change and of challenging the status quo", said Graves, who served many years as President of the Newark Teachers Union. "Phyllis was an activist then, and she continues to fight for the rights of consumers and the underrepresented to this day!", said Graves, adding, "She will always be true to her convictions."

"To know Kay Slattery, is to love Kay Slattery", said Freeholder Linda Lordi Cavanaugh. "She is the type of woman who, once you talk to her, you feel like you've known for years." During the introduction of her honoree, Freeholder Cavanaugh spoke of the fact that Councilwoman Slattery, like so many other capable and hard-working women, has for years done wonderful work on behalf of her community, "quietly and without fanfare or recognition. But tonight," she said, "it is time to publicly acknowledge what a wonderful women she is."

"She is nothing less than a bulwark of my community," said Freeholder Carol Clark about her honoree, Laura Trimmings. "Ms. Trimmings is *always* working, not only Mondays through Fridays, but on Saturdays and Sundays, too", said Clark, "because for her, the teaching, encouragement and nurturing of our children is a labor of love." Although she has already committed nearly 40 years of her life to the children of East Orange, Ms. Trimmings and Freeholder Clark mused that, "...there's still enough gas in the tank to go a few more miles."



front row - Julia Highsmith Lloyd
back row (left to right) - Laura Trimmings, Katherine B. Slattery, Phyllis Salowe-Kaye



front row - Julia Highsmith Lloyd
back row (left to right) - Laura Trimmings, Freeholder Carol Y. Clark, Katherine B. Slattery, Phyllis Salowe-Kaye, Register Carole A. Graves, Freeholder Linda Lordi Cavanaugh and Freeholder President Blonnie R. Watson

During the program, musical entertainment was provided by 15-year old Brittany Henderson of Newark, a student at Benedictine Academy in Elizabeth, New Jersey, who sang "God Bless America" and "Blue Skies".

Photo credits: Glen Frieson

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