



Dear Friends and Neighbors,

Even as summer winds down, I've been busy with several important initiatives. From announcing historic funding for the district, to honoring incredible members of our community, to collecting donations for school children in need, I've been hard at work bringing resources and special recognition to the people and places in the 146th District. Read on to see what we've been up to!

Bringing \$1 Million Grant to Amherst



Assemblymember McMahon and Speaker Heastie present check for \$1M to the Town of Amherst for the future Amherst Central Park

On Aug. 8, I was honored to welcome Speaker of the NYS Assembly Carl Heastie to our community at a joint press conference at Amherst Town Hall to announce \$1 million in state funding for the future Amherst Central Park. The grant will be used to build an inclusive playground and splash pad in the new park, giving children of all abilities a place to play and keep cool during the hot summer months. Additionally, the funding will be used to support active park programming and bring the first ice ribbon - a trail made for ice skating - to New York State, allowing visitors to enjoy a unique ice skating experience during the winter months. With these enhancements, Amherst Central Park will be the ideal year-round destination for local families.

2022 Women of Distinction



(From left to right) Dr. Melissa Wanzer, Hedwig "De" Moss, Dr. Kenyani Shareen Davis, Assemblymember McMahon, Dr. Bonnie Kane, Sarah Smith-Ronan, Yasmin M. Dara

Last week, I honored six remarkable local women who have dedicated themselves to helping others and making our community a more vibrant place to call home. My annual Women of Distinction Awards allow us to shine a light on the local women who have made invaluable contributions in a variety of fields and positively impacted Western New York. The 2022 honorees are:

Dr. Bonnie Kane - the co-founder and facilitator for the Niagara Alliance for Restorative Practices Inc. (NARP), working to bring restorative justice to Niagara County communities.

Dr. Kenyani Shareen Davis - chief medical officer at Community Health Centers of Buffalo Inc., leading clinical operations for the organization's five clinics spanning Western New York.

Hedwig "De" Moss - tireless volunteer with Big Brothers Big Sisters (BBBS) of Erie, Niagara and the Southern Tier, helping to shape and inspire local youth.

Dr. Melissa Wanzer - professor of communications at Canisius College and a breast cancer survivor, she has dedicated herself to supporting other patients and survivors by connecting them to the services they need.

Sarah Smith-Ronan - an active volunteer in the Williamsville Central School District (WCSD) community for more than eight years who has held many leadership roles, all while serving as a state administrative law judge.

Yasmin M. Dara - a 30-year Amherst resident and leader in the Western New York Muslim community, she has dedicated herself to addressing local humanitarian issues, including providing food to families in need and helping with the resettlement of Iraqi, Syrian and Afghan refugees.

I was happy to celebrate these inspiring women and thank them for their selfless contributions to Western New York and the 146th Assembly District.

Women's Equality Day

August 26 was Women's Equality Day, celebrating the certification of the Nineteenth Amendment, which extended the right to vote to most women in 1920. In the week leading up to Women's Equality Day, I highlighted some great women-owned businesses in Amherst and Williamsville.



First was **Rove Jewelry**, Accessories and Gifts in Williamsville, owned by **Jackie Lennert**. Rove offers clothing, jewelry, and lots of unique gifts and Jackie is a staunch supporter of women-owned businesses as the President of the Buffalo chapter of the National Association of Women Business Owners (NAWBO).

Next was **Life is Succulent** in Eggertsville. **Kristin Metzen** has owned Life is Succulent for three and a half years. Her vibrant store features house plants, succulents, pottery, and soil - all things important for a healthy indoor garden. Kristin is also committed to supporting local artists, featuring their work in her shop and giving them an opportunity for success as well.



Simone Fancher of **The Cheesy Chick** in Williamsville launched Cheesy Chick with a single food truck in 2013. Three trucks, and three years since opening a brick and mortar location, Cheesy Chick continues to thrive, serving up cheesy deliciousness all over WNY. Simone is a finalist for the Business Council of New York State's Minority and Women's Business Award for her resilience and ability to overcome multiple challenges brought on by the pandemic. The award highlights the work of minority and women-owned businesses that are vital to their local economic engines. Congratulations Simone!

Finally, **Clayton's Toys** has been a staple of WNY for over a century. Owned by **Kellie Klos** and **Tera McElligott**, Clayton's is the place for classic and unique games, toys, books, puzzles, dolls and dress-up. Kellie and Tera are carrying on the tradition and long history that this beloved business boasts.



School Clothing and Supply Drive



Assemblymember McMahon with donated clothing and school supplies

During the month of August, we put out a call for back-to-school clothes and school supplies to help support WNY families in need. Thanks to the generosity of the people of Amherst, we collected an incredible amount of donations! On August 20, we delivered them for distribution at the Northwest Amherst Community Center. Thank you to all those who donated. Because of you, a student in our community will be well-prepared for the new school year!

Guidance for Daycare Centers

I'm happy to report that, after my colleagues and I sent a letter to Governor Hochul and Health Commissioner Bassett pushing for a change in guidance for daycare centers, the below updates have been made. Among them—asymptomatic children who have been exposed to COVID-19 do not need to quarantine.

August 22, 2022

Dear Licensed, Registered or Legally Exempt Group Provider:

This letter contains the most recent COVID-19 requirements for child care programs. It replaces all prior guidance, including the letter that OCFS sent to you on May 31, 2022. Please read this information carefully and share it with families.

On August 11, 2022, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) revised their COVID-19 guidance for schools and child care programs. This information can be found at: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/k-12-childcare-guidance.html>. The New York State Department of Health has adopted these guidelines.

Effective immediately, all OCFS child care programs are recommended to follow these revised CDC protocols:

- Anyone with symptoms of COVID-19 should stay out of the child care program for 5 days OR until they receive a negative COVID-19 test (whichever is first). Before returning to program, symptoms should be improving and you should be fever-free for at least 24 hours;
- Anyone who comes to the child care program with symptoms or who develops symptoms while at the program should be sent home and encouraged to get tested. Symptomatic children or staff who are able to wear a mask should do so while at the program. If possible, children with symptoms who cannot wear a mask should be separated from others and provided supervision while waiting to leave the program;
- Anyone who tests positive for COVID-19 should remain isolated at home for a period of at least 5 days and symptoms should be improving and be fever-free for at least 24 hours before returning to the child care program;
- Anyone who tested positive for COVID-19 and is returning to program between days 5 and 10 should wear a well-fitting mask, up through day 10, if they are able to tolerate one. OR may remove their mask following two negative COVID tests taken 48 hours apart. Children who are unable to wear a mask may still return to the child care program if they do not have symptoms;
- Anyone who has had close contact with someone with COVID-19 (this means when they were within six feet of someone with COVID-19 for more than 15 minutes in a 24-hour period) should wear a mask for 10 days whenever feasible. If they do not have symptoms, they do not need to quarantine and can attend the child care program.

The new guidance also changes several prior recommendations, including:

- Removing the recommendation to cohort children;
- Removing the recommendation to quarantine close contacts for most settings (including schools and child care); and
- Adding detailed information on when to wear a mask, managing cases and exposures, and responding to outbreaks.

Please visit the CDC website and familiarize yourself with the content.

Though this guidance is written for COVID-19 prevention, many of the layered prevention strategies described in this guidance can help prevent the spread of other infectious diseases, such as influenza (flu), respiratory syncytial virus (RSV) and norovirus, and support healthy learning environments for all. Please encourage all who are eligible to vaccinate and remind staff and families to stay home when they experience symptoms of illness. Information about COVID-19 vaccines for children 6 months and older can be found here: <https://covid19vaccine.health.ny.gov/covid-19-vaccines-children-6-months-and-older>.

If you have any questions about the most recent COVID-19 updates, please do not hesitate to contact your regulator. Your commitment to the health and wellness of children is greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,



Nora K. Yates
Acting Deputy Commissioner
Division of Child Care Services

Funding and Visiting New Summit Center Facility



Assemblymember McMahon with Summit Center CEO, Dr. Stephen Anderson.

Last year, I secured \$200,000 for The Summit Center and, recently, I had the pleasure of touring their new Summit Academy Enhanced facility. It's been an honor to support this institution which provides important, alternative learning experiences for children with special needs.

Pendleton Farm and Home Days



Assemblymember McMahon with Event Co-Chair, Joanne Zimmerman at the Pendleton Farm and Home Days.

I was on hand for the ribbon cutting of the Pendleton Farm & Home Days on Friday, August 19th. I had a great time at this event in the heart of Pendleton!

Asian Food & Cultural Festival



Assemblymember McMahon with members of the Chinese Club of WNY at the Asian Food and Cultural Festival in Buffalo.

On August 21, I was happy to present an Assembly citation and celebrate the Asian Food & Cultural Festival with friends from the WNY Chinese Chamber of

Commerce at Canalside in downtown Buffalo. It was a pleasure to take part in their traditions and delicious cuisine as they shared their rich culture with our community.

BanglaFest in Williamsville



(From left to right) Congressman Brian Higgins, Dr. Nazmul Khan - President of the Bangladeshi American Social & Cultural Organization of WNY, Assemblymember Karen McMahon - Assembly District 146, Assemblymember Monica Wallace - Assembly District 143, Sibun Nair - New York State Deputy Director for Asian American Affairs.

I had a great time at the second annual BanglaFest at Island Park in Williamsville on July 31. Thank you to all who came out to enjoy the art, cuisine, and music of Bangladesh.

Labor Day



Assemblymember McMahon at the Labor Day Picnic in South Buffalo.

The rain may have washed out the parade, but it didn't dampen the spirits at the Labor Day Picnic in South Buffalo! It's an honor to stand with and salute our brothers and sisters in labor for their advocacy for workers' rights throughout WNY.

As always if you have any questions or concerns, please don't hesitate to contact me at [716-634-1895](tel:716-634-1895) or McMahonK@nyassembly.gov.

Sincerely,

Karen M. McMahon



Karen McMahon

New York State Assemblymember - 146th District

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