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The Louis R. Miller Business Leadership Awards 2022

Wednesday, February 16, 2022 at LiGreci's Staaten



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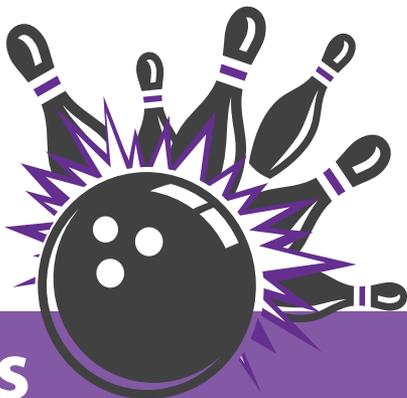


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Rab Wilkinson*

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Today's ceremony recognizes the men and women
who have received awards during the 2021 year
from the Louis R. Miller Awards Selection Committee.

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*All stories written by **Michael Anderson**, Content Development Specialist,
and edited by **Dom Provenzano**, Marketing & Communications Manager,
at the Staten Island Chamber of Commerce.*

*For the full profile stories, visit
sichamber.com/lou-miller-2022.*

Louis R. Miller



Louis R. Miller was a tireless community activist who viewed volunteering as a way of giving something back to his neighbors.

A longtime judge for the Staten Island Advance Women of Achievement program, Miller believed in volunteering as a way to repay everyone for the love of America he found after immigrating to this country.

Born in a small village in Russia, Miller's family moved to Plainfield, N.J., in 1913. He also lived in Burlington Township and Jersey City before moving to New Brighton in the early 1930s. He settled in West Brighton in the 1950s.

His first job while attending high school was in a bakery in Plainfield, where he worked nights for a salary of \$2.25 a week. He eventually entered the insurance field, working his way up to positions as life insurance underwriter and, later, estate planner for the Prudential Insurance Co. on Staten Island.

Miller joined the Solomon Huber Agency of the Mutual Benefit Life Insurance Co., Manhattan, at its founding in 1941, and remained with the firm until 1966. His dedication twice earned him the title "Man of the Year" from the company.

From insurance, Miller entered the world of banking, joining the staff of the former Community National Bank and Trust Co., Oakwood.

After serving as director of business development for four years, he was named trust officer in 1971, becoming responsible for the development and implementation of all corporate pension plans, trust and incentive plans, and estate planning.



A chartered member of the Life Underwriters Association of New York, Miller opened an estate planning office in St. George in 1955, which he maintained for about 20 years.

His recognized expertise in insurance, life underwriting, and estate planning led to lecturing and writing on those topics, as well as serving as a consultant to numerous small businesses on the Island.

One of Miller's pet projects was the Meals on Wheels program. His contributions to the agency were recognized in 1990 when the agency dedicated its new Port Richmond headquarters in his name. Six years prior, it was Miller who suggested the agency move to a new location. Furthermore, it was Miller who helped sell the old building and purchase the new one.

Another important project was the Business Education Development Council, formed in 1993 to serve as a liaison between the business community and the College of Staten Island. Miller helped form the organization because he firmly believed in the need for business owners and professionals to provide continuing education to small businesses on Staten Island.

Miller also supported the Jewish Community Center, the United Jewish Appeal, the Jewish Foundation School, the Staten Island Community Chest, Staten Island Family Services, the Staten Island Institute of Arts and Sciences, the YMCA, the College of Staten Island, and Doctors' Hospital.

He received the Wagner College Distinguished Citizenship Award, and was named a Paul Harris Fellow, the highest honor that Rotary International bestows.

Louis Miller died on August 12, 1994, at the age of 93.

Photos courtesy of the Staten Island Advance.



Brief History Of The Louis R. Miller Business Leadership Awards

In 1993, 24 Staten Island business owners and professionals came together to form The Business Education Development Council (BEDC) for the College of Staten Island, chaired by John J. Amodio. It was formed to act as a liaison between the business community and the College of Staten Island (headed by Dr. Edmond Volpe) to help fulfill the need to provide continuing education to business people on Staten Island.

The BEDC was instrumental in working with Dr. Volpe and Dr. Ronald Sheppard in establishing a Small Business Development Center that year as an outreach of the Continuing Education Department at CSI's campus. The SBDC celebrated its 25th Anniversary in 2018.

One year after its formation, the BEDC wanted to give small businesses recognition for their accomplishments and show them off as role models for others.

However, before the first recognition was given, Louis R. Miller passed away. With the assistance of Brian Laline, editor of the Staten Island Advance, the "recognition" was named, "The Louis R. Miller Business Leadership Award."

The first Chairperson of the Louis R. Miller Business Leadership Award was Hedy Hartman, Executive Director of the Staten Island Institute of Arts & Sciences. She was succeeded in 1999 by Cynthia "Cindy" Garner and in 2007 by Glen V. Cutrona, AIA. In 2011, Janet Langton-Magnuson became co-chair with Mr. Cutrona. In 2017, Solomon Chemo succeeded Mr. Cutrona.

Louis R. Miller Business Leadership Awards Alumni

- 1994**
Al Melniker
Vincent Caputo
- 1995**
Joseph Piccinnini
Georgiana Di Mauro
Stella Ferrara
Linda Salmon
Frank Scarangelo Sr.
William Frew Jr., Esq.
Charles Martino
Dr. Louis Gianvito
Vincent Gattullo
Daniel Schiffner
Robert Mims
Dr. Thomas Carreras
- 1996**
David Rampulla
Barbara Nastro
Richard Lattuga
Gary Bartels
Joseph Marzo III
Mark Loffredo
Loretta McGinn
Egon Salmon
Michael Lombardi Jr.
Peter Milano
Donald Bruns
Louis Buttermark Sr.
- 1997**
Robert Cutrona
Rev. William Epps
Salvador Garcia
Glen Cutrona
Paul Kidder
Camille Carbonaro
Mike Fortunato
Janice Giacalone-Stoffers
Bruce & Kevin Calogera
Bentley Lawall Brown
Linda & Kevin Walsh
Patrick McDermott
- 1998**
Kenneth Popler
Thomas Kinslow
Gerri Gibney
Kathy Meola
Lois & Richard Nicotra
Dr. Ronald Sheppard
Maloy Group
Jerry DeLuca
John Calhoun
Susan Meeker
Paul Ferrara
William Dubovsky
- 1999**
John Casey
Thomas A. Russo
Robert Skeele
Kathryn Whitford
Stephen Margarella
Stanley Friedman
Dana Thomas Magee
Samir A. Farag
Frances Paulo Huber
Carmine Ragucci
Salvatore Esposito
Harold Kaplan
- 2000**
Jennifer Gotlin
Cutrona, Esq.
Lucille Chazanoff
Mario Giammarco
Frank DeMeo
Robert, Donald &
Thomas Farrell
Terrence McGinley
Evelyn Rogers
Rich Grado
Jack & Nick LiGreci
Gladys Schweiger
Tirone Brothers
Sal Calcagno
- 2001**
Susan Huckvale-Arann
Dan Wheeler
Norman Abbate
Alan Poritz
Carol Dunn
William Russonello
Tony Ferreri
Rab Wilkinson
George Kaye
Alberta Brescia
Dr. Mohammad Khalid
Barbara Davis
- 2002**
Bonnie Nalwasky
Linda Allocco
Charles & Diana Milatta
Tom & Linda Carroll
Tom & Frank Scarangelo
Mario Rapaglia & Barry
O'Brien
Diane DiResta
Richard Reetz
Barbara Gigante
Richard Addeo
Ronald Gregg
- 2003**
James McBratney
Fran & Frank Reali
Linda Vinciguerra
Philip & Leonard
Rampulla Melvin Kling
John Shall, CPA
Calvin Sprung
Rose Franco
Gerald Amerosi
Gil Chapman
- 2004**
Alex & John Insera
Matthew & John
Scamardella
Burch Galante
Bill Di Biasi
Rich Salinardi
James Sak, Esq.
Steve Coppola
Al Lambert
Frank Paolino
Edith Suskind
Donna Martucci
John Di Naso
Tom Beyar
- 2005**
Michael Behar
Rosemary Cappozalo
Dorothy Doran
George Esposito
Robert J. Fitzsimmons Sr.
Dr. Joanne Gerenser
Glen Mancuso
Connie Profaci
Henry Salmon
Jon Salmon
Laura Gasparis-Vonfrolio,
RN, PhD
- 2006**
Connie Mauro
Dr. Mark Sherman &
Jacob Carey
Lenore Schwartz
Bruce Behrins
Allen Benson
Donald Bentson
Robert P. Bentson
Luke Nasta
Theodore Atlas, Jr.
- 2007**
Sue & George Kirchoffer
Sari Kingsley
Dr. Theodore Strange
Beverly Neuhaus
Rosemarie Scampas
Donna Long
Paul Campione
Christian Moccia
Thomas DeVito
- 2008**
Gary Angiuli
Dr. Victor P. Avis, DDS
Gerardo Campitiello
Dr. George S. Ferzli
Gregg Gaal
Jeff Henick
Dina R. Rosenthal
- 2009**
Elizabeth Dubovsky
Vincent D'Antuono
George Fehling
Elvis Kraljev
Dr. James V. Malpeso
Raymond Masucci
Rev. Terry Troia
Doreen Zayer
- 2010**
Diane Arneth
John Castellano
Dr. Jack D'Angelo
Gianfranco Franzese
Salvatore Settapani
Clifford Holtermann
Robert Scamardella
Steve White
George Wonica
- 2011**
Vittorio Asoli
Dominick Brancato
Elizabeth Egbert
Marlene Boyd
MaryLee Montalvo
Tomas Morales, PhD
John E. Nikolai
Chris Williams
Brian Farley
Michael Farley
- 2012**
Dr. Peter Albert
Claire Bisignano
Chesnoff,
ABR, CRS
Melanie Franklin Cohn
Barton Horowitz
Michael Lanza
Stefano Sena
Vincent DeMonte
Maria Buonsante
Eve Tarantano
Doug Johnstone
Steve Villamarin
Lynda Villamarin
Louis Villamarin
- 2013**
Solomon Chemo, CFP
Leonora Vaccaro
John Vincent Scalia, Sr.
Christopher Ferrera
Doreen M. Insera, CPA
Cory Schiffer
Allan Weissglass
Dr. Abdul Rehman
- 2014**
Bernard Del Ray
Claudette Duff
Rev. Dr. Daniel Mercaldo
Chad Reyes
S. Joann Scamardella
Salvatore Sottile
Ronald Victorio
Ryan Walsh
- 2015**
Charles Di Bartolo
Robert Gullery
John Kotz
Joseph Marchese
Diana Petrone Vasquez
Maryann Piazza
Lynn Rogers
Jason Serapiglia
- 2016**
Carolyn Aston-Reese
John Constantino
Todd W. Ertlinger
Al Gentile Jr.
Dennis J. McKeon
Nancy Nix
Roy Raeburn
David Sorkin
Zane Tankel
George Zaloom
- 2017**
Alan Aurelia
Dr. Cynara Coomer
Denise Henick
Gregory Perillo
Dr. Carolyn Raia
Frank Siller
Ken Tirado
Scott Weisberg
- 2018**
Dr. Kenneth Byalin
Rev. Dr. Demetrius
Carolina
Keith Cummings
Massimo DiDonna
Annamarie Gulino
Gentile
Danielle Reyes
Debra Surmanek
Tariq Zaid
- 2019**
Genevieve Benoit
Mike Bloomfield
Diane Buglioli
Doreen Cugno
DB Lampman
Mark Lauria
Art Lauter
Luanne Sorrentino
Scott VanCampen
Sean White
Frank Wilkinson
- 2020**
Dean L. Balsamini
Dr. Karen DiBona
Susan Fenley
Thomas J. Hall, Esq.,
Dr. Mark Scamardella
Shawn J. Stradford Sr.
Lakruwana Wijesinghe

Upcoming Events from The Staten Island Chamber

March 9, 2022

Member Meetup

by the SICC and its Three Guilds
Applebee's at The Boulevard

March 25, 2022

SICC / North Jersey Chamber Mega Connect A Virtual Event

May 21, 2022

The Chamber's 2022 Moulin Rouge Gala Above at the Hilton Garden Inn

June 2022

Summer Member Meetup Details TBA

October 19, 2022

The Chamber's 2022 Annual Meeting Details TBA

Register Now at
sichamber.com/events!



Save the Date for Our 2022 Moulin Rouge Gala!

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Chamber of
Commerce

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Saturday, May 21, 2022

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Registration, Sponsorship Information to follow

Design: Vera Naughton www.veranaughton.com

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sichamber.com/gala2022

John J. Amodio

Louis R. Miller Founder's Award



Photo Credit: Flint Gennari / FineArtFotosVideo.com

When Amodio worked at Community National Bank, he struck up a friendship with Lou Miller, who quickly evolved into a valued mentor and surrogate father. In 1994, Miller began planning an event that would honor leaders in the small business community. Unfortunately, Miller passed away before it could come to fruition. In honor of his mentor and friend, Amodio honored Miller's strong legacy by bringing the new event to fruition, naming it the "Louis R. Miller Business Leadership Awards." In the years since, Amodio has carried on Miller's legacy by remaining a committee member of the awards since its inception.

"Lou found me when I started working at Community National Bank. We started talking a little bit and it brought me out of my shell. I became more involved with things in the community, and he introduced me to a lot of people who became an influence on me," recalled Amodio.

When you review Amodio's resume, it's clear he's not receiving the honor based upon his connection to Miller. Instead, he's being honored for his more than six decades of experience in strategic planning, financial services, management, marketing, and problem-solving. When Amodio retired after 50 years in business, he knew what came next. During his career, he worked with businesses of all sizes. But Amodio had a strong focus on small businesses, and realized there were ways to offer his assistance.

"I had all this experience and expertise that God blessed me with, and I wanted to pass it along and carry it forward," he added. After retiring for the third time in 2013, he decided it was time to start paying it forward on a larger scale.

Amodio, who received his CPA license in the late 1960s and previously served as President and

Director of the Staten Island chapter of the New York State Society of Certified Public Accounts, got started by joining the Staten Island chapter of SCORE (Service Corps of Retired Executives). The non-profit organization is the nation's largest network of volunteer, expert business mentors dedicated to helping small businesses get off the ground, grow, and achieve their goals. In 2017, Amodio elevated his role to Chairman of the non-profit organization.

While Amodio's business resume is strong, his devotion to the Staten Island community is just as lengthy. Amodio has volunteered for a host of local organizations, including Vision for Staten Island, Inc. (Director/Treasurer), the Staten Island Chamber of Commerce (Past Chairman), the Staten Island Rotary Foundation (Chairman), the Rotary Club of Staten Island (Senior Member), the Staten Island Community Fund (Director), Staten Island University Hospital (Past Vice Chairman), the Small Business Development Center (Advisor); and Meals on Wheels of Staten Island (former Chairman/Director). He has also lectured at various seminars for the Staten Island Chamber of Commerce, the Staten Island Business Development Center, the College of Staten Island, St. John's University, and Wagner College.

Amodio has been a member for 42 years with the Rotary Club of Staten Island and served as Chairman for the Club's various committees. Armed with his financial background, Amodio was tabbed 27 years ago as the Chairman of the Staten Island Rotary Foundation, which donates funds to many causes throughout the borough. "During those 27 years, we have raised and distributed \$1.9 million to the community. And I'm proud of that and proud that we were able to do that. It's a team effort. It wasn't me alone," he said.

"I've never really looked at it that I was gaining anything from it. I really just wanted to help where I could," he said.

About John:

The best part of my job: Using my experiences to help others.

Some of my life goals include: Spending time with my family, especially my four granddaughters.

My life philosophy: Help others and expect nothing in return.

I am most proud of: Starting the Louis R. Miller Business Leadership Award along with Brian Laline and recognizing over 275 role models from the community. Also, consolidating Meals on Wheels' preparation of food for the homebound at the Louis R. Miller Building, Elizabeth Connelly Pavilion.

I am really good at: Resolving problems and getting others to resolve their problems.

I admire: People who are humble and give to others.

Some important things I would like you to know about me: Lou Miller mentored me and I considered him my "surrogate father."

Linda Baran

President & CEO, The Staten Island Chamber of Commerce

Not-For-Profit Business Category



Photo Credit: Flint Gennari / FineArtFotosVideo.com

The number of local businesses the Staten Island Chamber of Commerce has impacted in its over 125-year existence is immeasurable. The same can be said for Linda Baran, who has been with the non-profit organization for more than a quarter of that time. Baran, who began as a bookkeeper in 1986, moved through a number of different roles, including overseeing Membership Development, Community Relations, Special Events, and Government and Legislative Affairs.

It was while serving as the vice president of Finance and Resources in 2003 that she was selected to serve as interim president at the Chamber. “I really had no intention of being the president of the Chamber. They asked me to step in as the interim president as they looked for somebody. I was beginning to feel more comfortable and felt I could execute the duties that came along with the position, so I threw my hat in the ring.” The search committee agreed. The Chamber’s Board of Directors elected Baran as the first woman President and Chief Executive Officer (CEO) in May 2004.

During her almost 18 years in this role, Baran has maintained the Chamber’s focus on supporting and assisting all businesses in the borough. She is continually studying, developing, and implementing the best ways to continue achieving that goal.

Baran has been a tireless advocate for local causes and issues, especially providing

a strong voice on transportation, including fighting for commercial toll equity and pushing to reactivate the North Shore rail line with Bus Rapid Transit. These days, she's been vocal about the new NYC fast ferry to Midtown and expanding that service to include a Brooklyn route.

"The area I take the most pride in is directly helping local businesses," Baran added. "Sometimes, it can be a very specific request, like when someone calls up and says they're having an issue with a city agency and we're able to assist them."

Her leadership was on display when large-scale events had devastating consequences for the business community. She was deeply involved in keeping businesses afloat after the attacks on 9-11, through the Great Recession, and in the aftermath of Superstorm Sandy. When the COVID-19 pandemic began, Baran quickly helped to establish a City-wide alliance, making the Chamber part of the NYC Small Business Resource Network, to provide guidance and assistance to businesses of all sizes. In the last few months alone, the Chamber has helped small businesses secure tens of thousands of dollars in grants.

"It's not just me. It's the team at the Chamber. It's the wonderful staff we have, and it's the whole network of members. It's a true support system. I couldn't help half as many people without having that network," she said.

About Linda:

Some of my life goals include: Spending more time doing things that make me happy - finding my happy ever after!

The best part of my job: Meeting different people and connecting with so many small businesses.

The most difficult part of my job: Being diplomatic when representing a large constituency with different opinions.

My life philosophy: Treat everyone fairly, and give people the benefit of the doubt.

I am most proud of: My three children, and my beautiful grandchildren.

The quality I like best about myself: I am genuine and a lot like my mom.

Personal interests and hobbies: Traveling to new places, and spending time with family.

I laugh at: Good jokes, conversations with my 3 sisters, whatever strikes me as funny. I have a distinct "giggle."

Carol Bullock

Executive Director, The Pride Center of Staten Island
Not-For-Profit Business Category



Photo Credit: Steve Wakeman / The Pride Center

Before Carol Bullock was a staple in the LGBTQ+ community, she worked at Staples. Following a 30-year career in sales and operations with the office supply giant, Bullock was unsure about her next steps. Becoming the next Executive Director of the Pride Center of Staten Island wasn't on her radar.

Buoyed by the support from her friend and Executive Director of Eden II Programs, Dr. Joanne Gerenser, Bullock attended meetings with the Staten Island Not for Profit Association and spoke with many influential individuals from the local non-profit sector.

"I was interviewing for other regional director sales positions with other companies, so when I went into the interview with the Pride Center, I was so relaxed," said Bullock. "I'm confident that whatever we do in our lives, it's all about dealing with people. And when you're running an organization – to some degree – it's like running a business as well. So, I felt confident in that regard." That confidence was apparent in the interview, as Bullock was named the new Executive Director in December 2017.

"During the first couple of weeks, I would go home and tell my wife something that I learned or an experience that someone shared with me. If you looked at my life, it was pretty simple. I dealt with coming out and all that stuff, but I didn't have a lot of the challenges that I didn't even realize were out there, quite frankly. So, really understanding some of the things that go on day-to-day and the challenges, it just

blew me away,” said Bullock. “To be honest, that’s what fed my passion in the early Executive Director years.”

“Unfortunately, mental health counseling is heavily in demand right now. When I started, we had one or two mental health counselors. And now, we’re up to almost 11, including interns,” said Bullock. “It’s understanding the need and where that needs to go. We didn’t have many services for transgender individuals. So, one of my goals was to get funding and provide a lot more services, such as support groups and other programs. We have added programming that’s relevant to the needs of the community, but some of it has stayed with the core programming.”

Another significant change came this past spring when, after operating out of their St. George headquarters for more than half a decade, the organization moved its headquarters to Willow Avenue in Clifton. Bullock said the Board made it “very clear during that first interview” that they were looking for someone who could find a new space for the center.

What makes Bullock a great community leader is her willingness to meet with individuals with varying viewpoints. Bullock said she is always ready to hold meaningful discussions with others, especially those with opposing backgrounds and beliefs.

“It’s not just that we want equal marriage. There’s so much more than that. There are just everyday challenges that people face,” she said. In the face of those challenges, the LGBTQ+ community is fortunate to have Carol Bullock in their corner.

About Carol:

Community involvement: Eden II Programs, Back to Basics, Staten Island Not For Profit Association, SI4SI with Project Hospitality

Some of my life goals include: Traveling the world.

The best part of my job: Advocating for equal rights. The ability to make Staten Island a more accepting community.

My life philosophy: Do the right thing and seek first to understand.

I am most proud of: My team at the Pride Center and the work they do and the relentless effort they put in to help the LGBTQ+ community on Staten Island.

Personal interests and hobbies: Traveling, hiking, and spending time with my wife and pup.

I admire: Other not for profit leaders and community leaders who look to make Staten Island a better place every day.

Robert J. Fitzsimmons Jr. and Laura L. Volsario

Brokers/Owners, Gateway Arms Realty
Established Business Category



Photo Credit: Lance Reha / JMT Media

When Robert J. Fitzsimmons Sr. founded Gateway Arms Realty Corp. in 1977, the real estate business became engrained within his family. It was inevitable that his children, Robert J. Fitzsimmons Jr., and Laura L. Volsario, would follow in his footsteps.

At its busiest, Gateway Arms Realty Corp. managed 3,500 residential units and 600,000-square feet of commercial space. While that number has slightly decreased through the years, the duo says that has been intentional since they remain active with each and every property or transaction and wish to continue to provide that type of service to all of their clients, while balancing a family life at home.

“We are a boutique sales office. We were guided by our father that when we put a transaction together, it’s about fostering a true meeting of the minds between a seller and buyer. We execute each deal with knowledge and integrity,” said Laura.

In addition to their father receiving a Louis R. Miller Leadership Award in 2005, the siblings also follow in his footsteps with their devotion towards the local community. One of those beneficiaries has been the Seamen’s Society for Children and Families. Assisting that non-profit organization was so ingrained in the Fitzsimmons family that when Robert Sr. passed away in 2019, Robert and Laura established the Robert and Barbara Fitzsimmons Children and Family Fund at Seamen’s Society in 2021 to

continue their parents' desire to help and provide experiential opportunities for children and families in that organization's care.

"My parents brought Robert and me to Chamber events before we were working actively in the business. We went as a family to different community events. Our parents ran the annual calendar drive at Seaman's Society, and our entire office assisted on that fundraiser, so we all worked on that from the time we were young," she said. "My parents instilled in us that if we're living and working in our community, we should support and give back towards that local community."

Ultimately, Gateway Arms Realty Corp.'s success and the subsequent ability to help the community would not be possible if Fitzsimmons and Volsario didn't make a great team. "Over the years, we've realized we have similar, but also different strengths. However, we know our different skillsets create a dynamic team which enables us to grow and excel in our evolving business as we provide our clients with the best possible service," Volsario said.

"One of the best things we have going for ourselves is the family and our commitment to each other, the business, and the community," added Fitzsimmons.

About Robert & Laura:

Some of my life goals include: **(Laura)** Being a great mom, leading and working with our terrific staff, supporting our associate brokers and sales agents, providing my clients with the best real estate support and services, and giving back to the community and to those less fortunate. **(Robert)** Live long enough to see my children accomplish their lifelong goals and hopefully give me some grandkids to spoil.

The best part of my job: **(Laura)** Working for clients during happy and sometimes sad phases in their lives. Guiding them as they navigate the maze of financial, legal, and emotional issues that accompany the sale or purchase of a home. **(Robert)** Consulting others to assist them in achieving their goals.

My life philosophy: **(Laura)** Live life to the fullest. **(Robert)** What you may offer others in life is a direct reflection of what you get back.

I am most proud of: **(Laura)** My beautiful daughter, Jenna. I am incredibly proud of the woman she has become. **(Robert)** My family and seeing the next generation develop.

Something that no one knows about me: **(Laura)** I am a graduate of The French Culinary Institute. **(Robert)** At 17-years-old, I was fortunate enough to travel to Las Vegas as an executive committee member for the Monsignor Farrell Super Dance and present to Jerry Lewis on national television the approximately \$92K we raised for the Muscular Dystrophy Association.

Billy Hanson

CEO, Reliable Office Solutions
Master Business Category



Photo Credit: Flint Gennari / FineArtFotosVideo.com

Billy Hanson never planned to take over Reliable Office Solutions. His dad, Bill, may have thought otherwise. Billy joined his father's office equipment supplier in the late 80's, nearly 15 years after its opening in 1975. Billy quickly began to learn the ropes.

"I always worked there. I did every job in the company growing up. I stocked the shelves and swept the floors. I eventually drove the van and delivered supplies and, when I got older, I started driving the 16-foot box truck," recalled Hanson.

"My father was considering selling the company back in 1999. So I went there to help him. I was leaving Ernst & Young and wanted to pursue a role closer to home, so this served as a stopgap measure. However, I got involved, we decided not to sell, and I stayed on to run the business," said the CEO.

"It took me a few years to really get things on solid footing from a financial perspective. But then, around 2004, I started realizing the only way we would go forward was to add more salespeople. I was fortunate enough to hire a Director of Sales – which is a hard role to fill – but I found the right person (David Powell) right away," he added.

That move turned out to be just the beginning of the company's expansion. Reliable Office Solutions opened a new location in 2006 in midtown Manhattan (which has now relocated to Exchange Place in downtown Manhattan) and followed with another site in 2008 in Cranbury, New Jersey (which relocated to Woodbridge just two years ago).

Hanson stays active in his community serving on the school board at the Millstone Board of Education and Upper Freehold Board of Education. Locally, he is a cabinet member of the Staten Island Economic Development Corporation and an active member of the Bucks Business Network.

“The Bucks Business Network has been really good from the standpoint of getting to know different people. That group is very tight-knit, and if you go to someone from the Bucks, you’re going to get very good service and be treated very fairly. You won’t have to worry about anything because you know they’ll do the right thing and take care of you,” said Hanson.

Customers at Reliable Office Solutions will likely say the same thing about Hanson. Reliable provides discounts to non-profits and ensures they are satisfied with the company’s service. All of this serves to ensure the success and sustainability of the business his father established more than 50 years ago.

“One of the things that really motivates me, and not that there’s any pressure applied, but my father is still around, and we’re very close,” said Hanson. “While doing this, I can watch him see how the business has grown. That experience has been a real pleasure for me. He gave me the trust to start doing this, and it’s nice to see him get rewarded.”

About Billy:

The best part of my job: Working with and developing my team. I also enjoy developing the processes and software development/ implementation in order to achieve those goals more efficiently. Reliable Office Solutions is 100% on homegrown software, whereas virtually all our competitors use industry software, limiting creativity in processes and procedures.

Community involvement: Active member of Bucks Business Network; member of the school board and committee chair at Millstone Board of Education and Upper Freehold Board of Education; Cabinet member of Staten Island Economic Development Corp. (SIEDC); member of Staten Island Chamber of Commerce

Personal interests and hobbies: Spending time with my wife and daughters, running, weight training, playing basketball or tennis, and professional sports, especially the New York Rangers.

I admire: Qualities in others, such as hard work and a sense of selflessness and fairness. I have always had big respect for people who are professionals in their careers. These people don’t take shortcuts and treat each day as if they must be on top of their game. This is something rare these days. Everyone wants to be a jack of all trades and just rush through everything without doing the hard work.

Ettore Mazzei

Owner, Chez Vous Caterers

Established Business Category



Photo Credit: Mike Shane / Mike Shane Photography

When a 12-year old Ettore Mazzei got his start in the restaurant business, he was washing dishes at Lucchese's House of Seafood. "I was washing dishes for about 5-6 years before I cooked, became a bartender, and then moved to the front of the house. I never left the restaurant business," he said.

In 1986, Mazzei founded Chez Vous Catering from his basement. Just one year after the business' inception, Chez Vous took a space at Edgewater Hall, located at 691 Bay Street in Stapleton. Built in 1876, Edgewater Hall was constructed as the original location of Staten Island Savings Bank and was later used as a speakeasy frequented by the Vanderbilts and Barrymores during the Prohibition Era.

In the decades that followed, the business stayed firmly rooted in its Stapleton home. When the opportunity arose to eliminate his lease in 1997, he was quick to jump on the chance to purchase the building and keep Chez Vous Catering in the same spot for years to come.

Mazzei's strongest passion may be reserved for his Downtown Staten Island community. Armed with his general contractor's license, he has purchased, renovated, and built several other buildings, including 701 and 703 Bay Street. Also, since Chez Vous Catering has been at the same location for almost 35 years, Mazzei has provided valuable insight into the area for new or prospective tenants.

With a passion for the arts, the entrepreneur plays a prominent role in providing artists with a platform to share their work. In addition to Chez Vous, he operates the bar and restaurant Amendment 18 – the former home of Dock of the Bay, Uncle Bourbons, and Dock Street -- located in the cellar of Edgewater Hall, where local musicians regularly perform. And he has his own music production company, Dock Street Records. Mazzei also produces the online and print publication *This Way On Bay*, which serves as a resource for residents, local visitors, and tourists along the Bay Street corridor and the surrounding neighborhoods.

Over the past five years, Mazzei has played an integral role in the Staten Island Chamber of Commerce's economic revitalization work in Downtown Staten Island. He currently serves on the Steering Committee that is working to form a Business Improvement District in the area to strengthen and support the businesses along Bay Street in St. George, Tompkinsville, and Stapleton. He's donated space at Edgewater Hall to host meetings, and he regularly participates in clean-up and beautification events.

Mazzei's over-30-year commitment to the neighborhood is as strong as ever. "I'm not going anywhere. I'm going to stay here until the end," he said.

About Ettore:

Some of my life goals include: Making a positive difference in my community and inspiring my children and grandchildren to be the best they can be.

The best part of my job: Celebrating the best part of people's lives and catering their special events.

My life philosophy: Leave a piece of wisdom for the next generation.

I am most proud of: Starting Chez Vous Caterers from the basement of my home in 1986 and expanding/maintaining quality over the last 35 years.

Something that no one knows about me: I am a singer/songwriter and have a rock album called, *Sweet on You*; owner of Dock Street Records and Recording Studio and produced Method Man's *The Meth Lab* album and 2nd Generation Wu's singles and album.

I laugh at: My grandchildren's funny personalities.

I admire: People who master their craft.

Jeanine & John Tardy

Owner & Senior Project Manager, JVN Restoration Inc.
Established Business Category



Photo Credit: The Tardy Family

When JVN Restoration Inc. opened in February 2002, the business started small: a desk, computer, and phone in the Tardy garage, plus a rented space in a warehouse. The new business specialized in fire and water damage removal, mold remediation, asbestos and lead paint removal, and complete home construction. It was an easy transition for John, who tapped into his vast construction experience. Jeanine, however, put her nursing background aside and learned about the behind-the-scenes intricacies of a completely new field rife with rules, regulations, and paperwork.

The duo recalled how they received an overnight call after a storm damaged the glass storefront from the JC Penney at the Quaker Bridge Mall in Trenton, N.J. Without hesitation, Jeanine told John to load the truck with plywood and board up the windows. Stemming from that act alone, the couple said that JVN Restoration Inc. still receives projects from the retailer for other locations in the area.

“It’s just about building relationships and working hard at it. A lot of our clients tell us, ‘The reason why we call you all the time is because I know I can go home at night, I know my job will get done, and I don’t have to worry about it,’” said John.

It’s those connections and quality workmanship that put the company on the brink of its 20th anniversary. The Tottenville business handles between 400 and 600 projects annually, but some noteworthy local jobs include: Gerald Peters and Pandora, both

located inside the Staten Island Mall in New Springville; The Boulevard shopping center, New Dorp; South Beach Psychiatric Center, and Staten Island University Hospital's Ocean Breeze campus.

JVN's portfolio of work is tremendous, but many will say that the heart and soul of Jeanine and John are just as big, if not bigger. The duo will often make donations — whether it's labor, services, or contributions — to worthy people, organizations, and causes around the borough.

The duo was also honored in 2019 by the JCC of Staten Island for the support of that organization and the Sunrise Day Camp, which is operated by The Joan & Alan Bernikow JCC of Staten Island. The camp is the world's first full-summer day camp for children with cancer and their siblings, provided completely free of charge. "We overspend our donations. That much I can tell you. Our budget is blown off the roof," laughed Jeanine. "John is worse than me in that he can't say no. I tell him we need to go over this because he just says yes to everything."

John explained: "It's all about giving back to the community. I believe in karma. If I can do it, I'll do it. Even if I couldn't, I'd still try and do something. And that's how we are."

About Jeanine & John:

Community involvement: The Environmental Contractors Association; the Bucks Business Network; Staten Island Economic Development Corp.; Staten Island Chamber of Commerce; Jewish Community Center; Carl V. Bini Memorial Fund; YMCA; Northwell Health

Some of our life goals include: To be young enough to retire to enjoy life together and travel with family and friends.

The best part of our job: Helping everyone in a favorable way.

The most difficult part of our job: When disaster strikes and people are devastated, trying to convince them that things will get better.

Our life philosophy: It is what it is, stay positive and deal with it.

We are most proud of: Our family and the growth of JVN Restoration Inc., one of the largest WBE environmental companies in New York.

The quality we like best about ourselves: Always trying to find the positive side of people.

We laugh at: When our family gets together and how the grandchildren bring out the best in them.

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Dad, we don't know where we'd be without your guidance, support and love... and we're so glad that we'd never had to find out. It means the world to us that you've always stood by our side even when you didn't agree with our choices... because those were the times when we needed your love the most.

We know God has been really good to us,
And much of it has been through the gift
of having a dad like you.

Thanks for always being there,

Love, Michael, John, Nicole, Bryan & Marilee



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for their dedication in recognizing outstanding
members in our business community

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LINDA BARAN
CAROL BULLOCK
ROBERT J. FITZSIMMONS JR.
BILLY HANSON
ETTORE MAZZEI
JEANINE TARDY
JOHN TARDY
LAURA L. VOLSARIO



BUCKS BUSINESS
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Congratulations to an amazing and dedicated honoree
of the 2022 Louis R. Miller Leadership Award

Linda M. Baran



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With all our love,
Jenna & David, Frank & Megan, Louis & Antoinette
Benjamin, Frankie III, Elizabeth, & Newt

Congratulations, Linda!

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**and for inspiring us
to do the same every day.**

**Love,
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John and Jeanine Tardy - JVN Restoration

Billy Hanson - Reliable Office Systems

Thanks to the Bucks I have been able to build friendships with you all and I am forever grateful for that!

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CEO, Comserv Connect Inc

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- ❖ **Carol Bullock**, The Pride Center of Staten Island
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- ❖ **Ettore Mazzei**, Chez Vous Caterers

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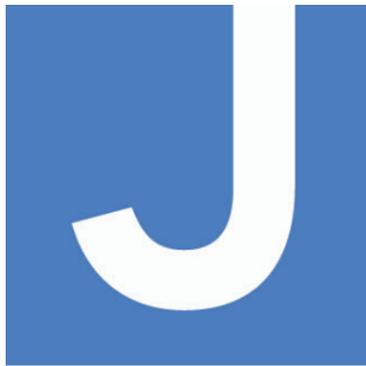
Jeanine and John Tardy
Billy Hanson

JOHN AMODIO, LINDA BARAN,
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LAURA VOLSARIO

on being selected as this year's
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Jeanine, John, and all of
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**We are thankful for all you
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and
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From,

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On being honored by the Staten Island Chamber of Commerce



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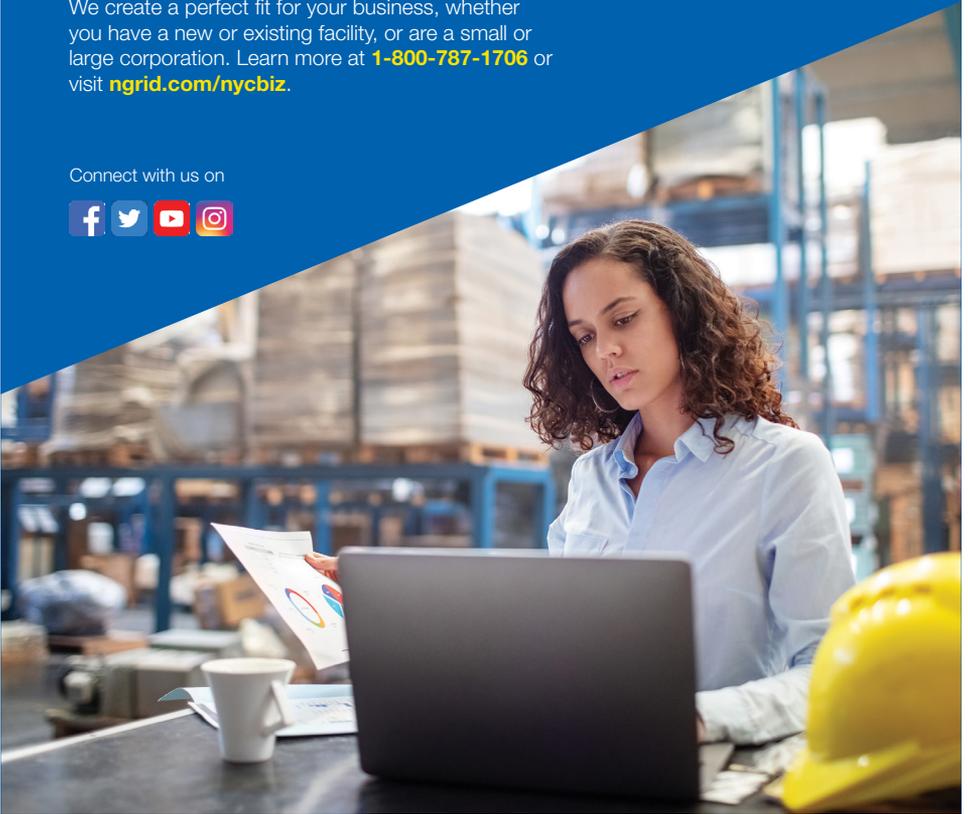
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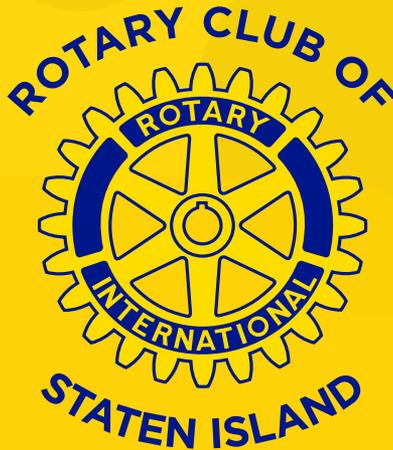
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**Love,
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Dear Billy,

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**Love,
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