

WFWP New Jersey USA honors five amazing women leaders as HerStory Awardees

Katarina Connery
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As many of our readers know, March is Women's History Month in the United States. This is a time when we give special attention to the amazing accomplishments and contributions of women, stories which have largely gone unrecognized in history narratives which are limited in scope. There are also many stories of women leading and serving in New Jersey communities, often quietly and behind the scenes. Thus, as a celebration of Women's History Month, WFWP New Jersey decided to hold a celebration and HerStory Awards Ceremony to unearth those precious stories.



On March 25 at the Peterstown Community Center in Elizabeth, New Jersey, 88 people gathered to hear and honor the stories of five amazing women leaders as HerStory Awardees and one women's organization as receiving an Outstanding Service Award. The HerStory Award was created in order to recognize women not only for their external accomplishments, but also for the stories of pain, heartache, and challenges which are behind the accolades. Each of the awardees shared their deep stories, lessons learned, and wisdom gained from their lives and quest to make the world a better place. It was a deeply moving and uplifting

experience.

The women leaders that were awarded at this event were Ritu Chopra, who inspires people with her coaching sincerity and professional leadership experience that includes managing business and IT operations in Fortune 500 Companies for over 20 years, Marivir R. Montebon, who is a New York-

based journalist that runs her online magazine OSM! (awesome!) which she co-founded with her daughter, Leani Alnica in 2012, Estrella Cash, President and Owner of Cash Financial Associates who also has over 20 years of experience in the business and entrepreneurial arenas, Kamlu Gulrajani, a retired information technology specialist who has been involved in initiatives and organizations focusing on community service, health and wellness, and cultural awareness and heritage in Central New Jersey, and Priscilla Garces, a Climate Reality Leader, mentor and disability advocate/activist.



The awarding ceremony concluded with an Outstanding Service Award to Josephine's Place, accepted by Sheila Casey, Executive Director. Josephine's Place in Elizabeth, New Jersey creates a safe, welcoming space where women have access to classes, workshops and programs that enable them to grow in confidence, develop competencies and life skills, realize their potential, and uplift their families, communities, and future generations.

Overall, it was a wonderfully inspiring way to spend an afternoon. These precious and hard-earned stories and experiences surely had an impact on those in attendance and we hope will ripple out to more in the community and beyond. The Mayor of Elizabeth, New Jersey, J. Christian Bollwage; Councilwoman-at-Large for Elizabeth, N.J., Patricia Perkins Auguste; and Assemblyman

for N.J.'s 20th District, Reginald W. Atkins, also stopped by to offer their congratulations to the awardees and to recognize the occasion of Women's History Month. Several of the participants noted they hope to see this kind of event continue, perhaps even bigger and better next year!

