

2025 Inductees



George Latimer
U.S. CONGRESSMAN
16th District of New York



Ruth Hassell-Thompson
FORMER SENATOR
36th District of New York



Elise Finch-Henriques
Posthumous
EMMY AWARD WINNING
METEOROLOGIST
WCBS-TV New York

MOUNT VERNON HIGH SCHOOL *Hall of Fame* 2025 INDUCTION CEREMONY



**SATURDAY
JUNE 28, 2025
10:00 AM - 1:00 PM**

MOUNT VERNON HIGH SCHOOL
100 California Road | Mount Vernon, New York 10552



Order of Ceremony

PRESENTATION OF THE FLAG

Jada Smith (Grade 12), Diana Polanco (Grade 12), Amya Preston (Grade 12), Matthew Dyer (Grade 12)
Mount Vernon High School

STAR SPANGLED BANNER

Performed by Lauren Satchell

LIFT EVERY VOICE

Performed by Charlize Ford

OPENING REMARKS

Dr. K. Veronica Smith, *Acting Superintendent of Schools*

PERFORMANCE

Denzel Washington School of the Arts 7th Grade Dancers
Instructed by Jennifer Jackson

GREETINGS

Ms. Wanda White, *Board of Education Vice President*

SIGNIFICANCE OF WALL OF FAME

Dr. Pauline Pearce, *Principal of Mount Vernon High School*

READING OF BIOGRAPHY

Dr. Beverley Jones, *Assistant Superintendent of Administration, Climate, & Culture*

VISUAL PRESENTATION

I'm Every Woman

PRESENTATION

The Honorable Shawyn Patterson-Howard, *Mayor of the City of Mount Vernon*

WORDS OF INSPIRATION

William L. Davis, Jr.

ACCEPTANCE SPEECH

Ms. Cheryl L. Davis

CLOSING/PRESENTATION

Dr. K. Veronica Smith



Ruth Hassell-Thompson

Ruth Hassell-Thompson, appointed in 2016 as Special Advisor for Policy and Community Affairs for New York State Homes and Community Renewal, was first elected to the New York State Senate in 2000, where she brought years of public service and community involvement to her post as the Senator of the 36th Senatorial District, representing parts of the Bronx and Westchester Counties during her more than 15-year tenure.

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Ms. Hassell-Thompson has served on the New York State Cannabis Advisory Board and currently is the Chair of the Diversity Board for the School Construction Authority for the City of New York.

During her tenure in the Senate, Ms. Hassell-Thompson served on the following standing committees: Judiciary (Ranking); Crime, Crime Victims, and Corrections (Chair and Ranking); Commerce, Economic Development & Small Business; Alcohol and Substance Abuse; Health; Finance; Rules; Chairwoman, Conference of Black Senators; Chairwoman, Taskforce on Domestic Violence; Taskforce on MWBE. Ms. Hassell-Thompson also chaired the Black, Puerto Rican, Hispanic, and Asian Caucus.

Ms. Hassell-Thompson is the recipient of three Honorary Doctorate degrees; College of New Rochelle, Doctor of Humane Letters; Mercy College, Doctor of Humane Letters; and Eastern Theological Consortium, Faculty of Arts and Sciences, Christ Theological Seminary, Doctor of Humanities. She is an alumna of Bronx Community College.

In May 2023, Ms. Hassell-Thompson founded Third Act Development Consultants LLC, a consulting firm specializing in strategic planning, resource optimization, policy formulation, that provides tailored solutions to meet the client's unique needs.

In December 2023, Ms. Hassell-Thompson retired as Special Advisor for Policy and Community Affairs at the Governor's office and NYS Homes and Community Renewal

Ms. Hassell-Thompson is the proud mother of two daughters, the doting grandmother of two grandchildren and devoted great-grandmother of one great-grandson.



George Latimer

George Latimer (he/him/his), a third generation Westchester native, was born on Nov. 22, 1953 in Mount Vernon to the late Stanley and Loretta (Miner) Latimer. After attending Mount Vernon public schools, Latimer graduated with a B.A. from Fordham University in the Bronx in 1974, as well as a Master's Degree in Public Administration from New York University's Wagner School in 1976.



After completing his education Latimer first became a marketing executive, serving for more than 20 years at major corporate subsidiaries of Nestle, and ITT, with on-site responsibilities for projects with AT&T, IBM and Shearson Lehman. During that time Latimer gained first-hand business and economic experience, having direct involvement with project development at numerous sites nationwide.

A resident of the City of Rye for over 35 years, Latimer ran his first successful race for public office in 1987, earning him a seat on the Rye City Council. Four years later, in 1991, he was elected to the Westchester County Board of Legislators, where he became the first-ever Democrat to win the 7th District seat representing the City of Rye, the Village of Larchmont, and Mamaroneck Town and Village. During the 13 years Latimer was a member of the chamber, he served as Minority Leader and then as the first Democratic Chairman of the Board of Legislators in Westchester County history.

From 1998 to 2001, while Latimer was Chairman of the Board, County property taxes decreased three consecutive years. Additionally, Latimer oversaw the passage of ground-breaking legislation such as the creation of the Human Rights Commission, Smoke Free Workplace Laws, and the Waste Haulers Laws. Latimer has always been regarded as bipartisan, transparent and accessible, appointing Republicans to chair committees, facilitating a fair redistricting plan involving members of the chamber's minority party and outside "good government" groups, and establishing the first cable TV coverage of Board of Legislators meetings.

Elected in 2004 to the State Assembly, Latimer continued a solid record of accomplishment, sponsoring legislation and advancing funding for environmental issues including the protection of the Long Island Sound. During his tenure in the Assembly, Latimer authored more than 20 new laws. Latimer was then elected to the State Senate in November 2012, representing the 37th District comprised of 16 Westchester municipalities.



Elise Finch-Henriques

Emmy Award-winning Meteorologist, Elise Dione Finch Henriques passed away suddenly on July 16, 2023. Elise was born on February 24, 1972 in Flower Fifth Avenue Hospital in New York City to James W. Finch and Charlette Wallace Finch. She was raised in Mount Vernon, New York. She attended the Grimes Center for Creative Education, A.B. Davis Middle School and graduated as a member of the National Honor Society from Mount Vernon High School in 1989.

Elise spent her summer vacations traveling with her family and attending her beloved summer camps, Summer Pines and Camp Hemlock. Under the guidance of our aunt, Nellie Thornton, the 17th President of the Jack and Jill National ; Elise served as the regional President. Elise joined the Westchester Chapter of Jack and Jill as a legacy member in 2019. Elise was an avid dancer who danced at the Regional Academy of Ballet under the direction of Hillary Kelly, and at the Dance Theater of Harlem.

A Proud Hoya, Elise received a Bachelor of Science degree from Georgetown University in 1993. Not long after graduation, Elise moved west to Los Angeles to begin her career in television as a production assistant for E! Entertainment Television. She went on to earn a Master of Science in Broadcast Journalism from Syracuse University's Newhouse School of Public Communications in 1998. She later completed the Broadcast Meteorology Program from Mississippi State University where she received the prestigious Seal of Approval from the American Meteorological Society.

After her graduation from Newhouse, she fulfilled her dream of being on-air becoming a news anchor and correspondent in Austin, Minnesota and Youngstown, Ohio. Elise worked as a weather anchor in Phoenix, Arizona before returning to New York to be a meteorologist at WeatherPlus and then joined WCBS in 2007 where she remained as a delightful presence delivering the weather in her hometown for the next sixteen years.

In 2013, she married Graig Henriques of Freeport, New York at Untermeyer Gardens in Yonkers, New York and in 2016, they welcomed their beautiful daughter, Grace Henriques.



SPECIAL THANKS

Dr. Marguerita G. Circello, Director of ENL and World Languages
Dr. Gayle White-Wallace, Director of PreK, Gifted and Talented, & Special Projects

Dr. Pauline Pearce, Principal of MVHS
Erica Naughton, Mount Vernon High School Assistant Principal
Dr. Evelyn Collins, Principal of Denzel Washington School of the Arts/Program Director

Jenifer Cardillo-Rojas, Senior Typist - MVHS Print Shop

Samantha Cohen, Culinary Arts Instructor
Mount Vernon High School Culinary Arts Students

Cyreeta Collins, Executive Assistant
Joseph Dempsey, Sound Design (DWSA)
Nakia Hiland, School Liaison (MVHS)
Jennifer Jackson, Dance Instructor (DWSA)

MJB Communications
MVCSD Parent Liaisons

Franklyn Scarlett, Head Custodian
Mount Vernon High School Custodial Staff
Michael Thompson, District Videographer
Antoinette Tynes, Lighting Design (DWSA)

Jostens Award

Cruz Deli

Rainbow Gifts & Flowers
West Side Party Rental

This program was designed and printed at the Mount Vernon High School Print Shop



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