

# Press



# Release

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## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## *In Recognition Of Rockland's Nurses*

# **Paul Honors Local Residents For Their Nursing Contributions & Volunteer Service**

## **Benoit, Chacko, Fils-Aime, Joseph & Weinstein 'Selfless In Their Service To Others'**

New City, NY (May 27, 2016) – Rockland County Legislator Aney Paul honors five local residents who have helped better our community through their nursing contributions and volunteer service.

“These nurses exemplify the very best of Rockland – they are selfless in their service to others, both as nurses and as volunteers,” Paul said. “We recognize, honor and thank each of them for their dedication and contributions.”

May is traditionally the month when nurses are recognized, in part because May 12 is the birthday of Florence Nightingale, perhaps the most famous nurse of all.

Paul, a nurse for more than 30 years, has presented Achievement Awards to **Linda Benoit** of New City, **Cicily Chacko** of Congers, **Farrah Fils-Aime** of Spring Valley, **Aelemma Joseph** of Spring Valley and **Jacqueline Weinstein** of Nanuet.

Meet the honorees:

**Linda Benoit** is an active member of the Haitian American Nurses Association. She graduated from Rockland Community College and Dominican College, where she earned her Bachelor's Degree in Nursing. She worked as a nurse at several New York City facilities, including her current position at Mount Sinai Hospital. She also served in the U.S. Army Medical Corps Reserve, retiring as a lieutenant in 2005 after more than 15 years of service.

Benoit has logged many volunteer hours as a nurse, including helping those in need in India, the Philippines, St. Kitts and her native country of Haiti, where each Christmas, she throws a party for the children at the GO Haiti orphanage.

She is mother of three daughters, including one who passed away and whose three children Benoit is now raising. She has a total of nine grandchildren.

**Cicily Chacko** emigrated from India to the United States in 1974. She worked as a nurse at the St. Dominic Convent in Blauvelt, serving the Dominican Sisters, then spent 25 years as a nursing supervisor at the Tolstoy Nursing Home in Valley Cottage. Chacko was the first Indian-born nurse to work at Rockland Psychiatric Center in Orangeburg and the first to retire with 30 years of service.

Chacko is active with many Indian-American organizations, including the Syro Malabar Catholic Church in Rockland, and she helped found the Malayalee Association of Greater New York and the Indian Catholic Association of America. She assisted more than 50 family members in their efforts to emigrate from India to America.

She and her husband, Joseph Chacko, are parents of two children and five grandchildren.

**Farrah Fils-Aime** graduated from Rockland Community College, the Helene Fuld College of Nursing and the College of New Rochelle, where she earned a Bachelor's Degree in Nursing. She is currently pursuing a master's degree in nursing at Mercy College and she holds a leadership position as Nurse Manager at Hudson River Healthcare, Inc.

Fils-Aime, the eldest of five children – and the only daughter – of Haitian immigrants, has been active with the Haitian American Nurses Association of Rockland. She has also aided in rescue and medical missions following the 2010 earthquake that devastated Haiti.

She is the mother of four children.

**Aelemma Joseph** braved cultural attitudes of the time and attended nursing school in India despite the wishes of her father, graduating in 1962 with excellent grades. Her nursing work included service at the tuberculosis hospital in Hyderabad and in the Indian Navy in Bombay (now called Mumbai). After marrying, she moved to Calcutta and worked in hospital settings until emigrating to the U.S. in 1976.

Joseph completed her U.S. nursing requirements in 1980 and began working at Helen Hayes Hospital and then Nyack Hospital, retiring in 2013. She has volunteered with the Hudson Valley Malayalee Association, the India Catholic Association and the Syro Malabar Catholic Church.

She and her husband, Illiparampil Joseph, are parents of three children and grandparents of eight.

**Jacqueline Weinstein** graduated from the Mount Sinai Hospital School of Nursing and earned her Bachelor of Science degree from Mercy College. Her 30 years of experience include nursing in occupational and ambulatory health care, where she emphasized prevention, wellness and counseling, and work in medical, surgical and intensive care units. She has served in supervisory and management positions and her experience includes time at Nyack Hospital, North Rockland Health Center in Haverstraw and the Executive Health Care Group in Manhattan.

Weinstein has been active with nursing organizations and volunteered the American Cancer Society, including service on the Rockland County Unit Board of Directors and as chair of the organization's Cancer Prevention Study in Rockland.

She and her husband, Max, had three children. She also has seven grandchildren and six great children.

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