

# **Bellone Thanks Committee for Work to Help Fund Suffolk Veterans**

## ***Group to Help Disburse \$160,000 Raised by Suffolk County Marathon***

HAUPPAUGE, NY—Suffolk County Executive Steve Bellone met recently with a newly appointed committee made up of veterans and advocates for veterans, which has been formed to disburse funds raised by the Suffolk County Marathon and Half Marathon to Support Our Veterans.

“Members of this very capable committee will review and identify which organizations are best positioned to provide services to our deserving Suffolk County veterans and the agencies that support them,” the County Executive said. “We are proud of what the marathon accomplished, and happy to report that all funds raised will go exclusively to services and programs assisting veterans living right here in Suffolk County.”

The inaugural Suffolk County marathon on September 13 raised a net of \$160,000 and drew more than 3,500 participants from 25 states and three foreign countries. It was one of six races that formed the Suffolk County Veterans Running Series that took place around Suffolk County over several months.

The Suffolk County Marathon Fund Disbursement Advisory Committee was established to make recommendations as to the appropriate distribution of funds by the Suffolk County Veterans Services Agency. It will do so by assessing the needs of Suffolk County’s veteran population, establishing a set of criteria for awarding funds to charitable registered 501(c)(3) organizations providing services to local Suffolk County veterans, and establishing a set of priorities and developing a list of goals and objectives in order to rank grant applications.

“As Chairman of the Veterans and Seniors Committee, I am proud to serve on the Suffolk County Marathon Fund Disbursement Advisory Committee,” Steve Stern, a Suffolk County Legislator who is a member of the committee said. “The inaugural marathon was an extraordinary success and I applaud County Executive Steve Bellone and his entire team for creating this outstanding event to raise money and awareness for those who have so bravely served our great nation,” Legislator Steve Stern said. “I look forward to working with the Committee to ensure that the funds raised will be distributed to organizations that will provide needed assistance and support to our heroes and look forward to future success with next year’s marathon.”

State Senator Thomas Croci, also a member of the committee, said, "It is my honor to serve alongside Gold Star parents such as Dan Murphy, Michelle McNaughton, and Tim Scherer, and others, in order to distribute the funding raised from the greatly successful inaugural Suffolk

County Marathon. I look forward to working with this committee, whose mission is to ensure the funding raised through the marathon reaches those agencies who provide vital services to our veterans here in Suffolk County. Congratulations to County Executive Bellone on this and all efforts on behalf of our veterans.”

Appointed to the committee are:

Thomas Ronayne, director of the Suffolk County Services Agency; Ryan McGarry, designated by the Suffolk County Executive; DuWayne Gregory, presiding officer of the Suffolk County Legislature; Kevin McCaffrey, minority leader of the Suffolk County Legislature; William A. Farley, county commander of the American Legion; Richard Tibbetts, from the Suffolk County VFW Council; Evelyn Gerlette of the American Legion Ladies Auxiliary; Frank DeMarco, past state commander of the Suffolk County AmVets; Steve Stern, chair of the Veterans Service Committee of the Suffolk County Legislature; three Gold Star Family members, Michelle McNaughton, Dan Murphy and Tim Scherer; and three elected public officials who are veterans of the armed forces, New York State Thomas Croci ; Babylon Town Councilwoman Jacqueline Gordon, and Islip Town Councilman John Cochrane.

William Farley, commander of the Suffolk County American Legion; Joseph Regina, Suffolk County American Legion; Suffolk County Executive Steve Bellone, Gold Star father Tim Scherer, Islip Town Councilman John Cochrane, Gold Star mother Michelle McNaughton, Gold Star father Dan Murphy, Suffolk County Director of Veterans Service Agency Thomas Ronayne, State Sen. Thomas Croci, Mary Young, representing Suffolk County Legislator Steve Stern, and Ryan McGarry, representing the County Executive’s Office.