



## A New Chapter EAC Network's Monthly Newsletter

February 2024

### Save the Date Cohalan Cares for Kids 2024 Still Time to Get Tickets!



[Tickets & Sponsorship](#)

Don't miss EAC's Cohalan Cares for Kids 2024 event at the Suffolk County Bar Association on **Thursday, March 14, 2024, from 6-8 PM**. Join us for a night of music, dancing, raffles, food, and more. This year's honoree is esteemed Suffolk County lawyer, Gerard J. Donnelly, Esq., PC. All proceeds benefit and bring awareness to EAC's Suffolk County Children's Center at Cohalan Court, a quality childcare facility, located within the court building, where children play and learn while parents or guardians tend to their court business.

### Inside February's Chapter

**SAVE THE DATE**  
COHALAN CARES FOR KIDS STILL  
TIME TO GET TICKETS!

**HONORING BLACK HISTORY TED  
TALK PLAYLIST**

**SPOTLIGHT:**  
**BOARD OF DIRECTORS'**  
GERI A. GREGOR, CPA &  
DIOSALMA MELGAR, PC.

**CHARITY CHAMPION**  
**BOARD MEMBER**  
EMERITUS ROBERT MCBRIDE  
FIGHTS 4 EAC

**AWARDS**  
EAC PRESIDENT & CEO, NEELA  
MUKHERJEE LOCKEL  
2024 POWER WOMAN OF QUEENS

**AND THE WINNER OF THE FIRE  
ISLAND HOUSE FUNDRAISER IS...**

**GRANT SPOTLIGHT**  
M&T BANK AMPLIFY FUND  
STATE FARM  
SUFFOLK COUNTY

# The Suffolk County Courthouse Children's Center at Cohalan Court



SAVE THE DATE  
EAC's 34th ANNUAL  
GOLF FOR GOOD

Donate & Make a NY  
Impact!

Volunteer & Intern  
Opportunities

Explore EAC Services



## An Inspiring Ted Talk Playlist Honoring Black History

Cultural contributions, philosophies,  
sacrifices, strategies, triumphs, & adversities  
from the African American thought leaders shaping our nation.

### *Playlist Sneak Peak*



T. MORGAN DIXON AND VANESSA GARRISON

**The most powerful woman  
you've never heard of**



CLINT SMITH

**The danger of silence**



CAMILLE A. BROWN

**A visual history of social  
dance in 25 moves**

# BLACK HISTORY MONTH

Insightful Talks offering a fresh perspective on Black identity | TED Talks

Celebrating Black History Month 2024

Listen

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## Spotlight: EAC Board of Directors

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Gerri A. Gregor, CPA

# EAC's Executive Board Spotlight

## *Congratulations to Geri A. Gregor's Advancement as the New Co-Chair of EAC's Board of Directors*

*"Over the years EAC Network opened my eyes to all kinds of hardships and troubles that thousands go through, every day. It hits close to home knowing what people are struggling with... so close to home. I am continuously amazed at EAC Network for its determination to help those in the stickiest of situations, and I am proud to be a part of it."*

-Geri A. Gregor, CPA., Co-chair, EAC Network's Board of Directors

Geri A. Gregor, CPA recently advanced from EAC Board of Directors 1st VP to Co-Chair. She is now sharing the executive position with John R. Durso, President of Local 338 RWDSU/UFCW. EAC is proud and privileged to have this duo at the helm. They're the perfect combination of compassion, courage, contribution, and commitment.

When she's not helping New Yorkers in need at EAC, Gregor manages and directs the **Grassi & Co.**, CPA firm in areas such as business advisory services, forensic and litigation support, and risk management.

Extremely active in the business networking and philanthropic arenas, Gregor serves on multiple boards and earned an impressive list of business and humanitarian awards and recognitions.

***Thank you, Geri, for your hard work, dedication, and uplifting spirit.***



## Welcome A-Board, Diosalma Melgar, PC.

*"My decision to become a community legal advocate not only changed the course of my life, but, more importantly, the well-being of my community."*

-Diosalma Melgar, PC., Board Member, EAC Network's Board of Directors

In 2010, after years in tech, Diosalma Melgar, PC. realized the injustices that were affecting the immigrant population and left her career as Director of Curriculum Development, becoming a legal advocate for the Latino immigrant community in Western Suffolk County.

After getting her law degree, she represented victims of immigration attorney fraud, freed detained prisoners, and educated the Spanish-speaking community in legal matters. Melgar represents a range of clients including first-time homebuyers, immigrants fighting for their



American dream, landlords or tenants seeking amicable resolutions, incapacitated individuals trying to maintain their autonomy while gaining a voice through guardianship and does pro bono work for low-income immigrants through her firm, **The Melgar Law Firm**. She even founded and runs her own charitable initiative, *Comida Para Todos*, which is hosted by a group of Seventh-Day Adventist Churches throughout Suffolk County as well as feeds and clothes thousands of families.

Having served in various leadership roles for schools, charities, and nonprofit organizations, EAC Network's Board of Directors is the perfect place for her.

***Welcome to EAC, Diosalma.***  
***We are honored and fortunate to have you on the team.***

## Charity Champion Board Member Emeritus Robert McBride Fights for EAC

Thank you to EAC's Board Member Emeritus, Robert "The Mighty MC" McBride, President and CEO of **McBride Consulting & Business Development Group** and EAC Network's Board Member Emeritus. He won **Long Island's 18th Fight 4 Charity**. At 63 years old and a first-time boxer, McBride raised over \$70,000 for **EAC Network**, **Operation Healing Forces**, **Winters Center for Autism**, and **The Genesis School**. While he may be new to the ring,

*"I can take a couple of lumps for them, that's for sure. They are very worthwhile charities that all deserve the money," McBride said.*



McBride and Gibson shake and hold Long Island's Fight 4 Charity trophies after the November 20th fight at the Huntington Hilton.



Robert McBride (Right) donates a portion of his winning to EAC Network's CEO and President, Neela Mukherjee Lockel MSW, MPA (Middle) and Chief Development Officer, Robert Strickoff, MS (Left) at McBride's Long Island Offices.



McBride's fans cheer him on as he fights in the ring at Long Island's 18th Fight for Charity.

## EAC's President & CEO Neela Mukherjee Lockel MSW, MPA A 2024 Power Women of Queens

***Congratulations, Neela.***  
***The EAC team is proud you're our leader.***  
***An inspiring woman, role model, & valuable CEO;***  
***you're also an inspiration, friend, & teacher.***


  
 PRESENTED BY
 

**2024 QUEENS HONOREE**  
**NEELA MUKHERJEE LOCKEL, MSW-MPA**  
**President and Chief Executive Officer**  
**EAC Network**


JOIN ME THURSDAY  
**FEBRUARY 29**  
 2024


**TERRACE ON THE PARK**  
**52-11 111TH STREET**  
**QUEENS, NY 11368**


  
 PowerWomenQNS.com

Click for More  
Power

## AND THE WINNER OF THE FIRE ISLAND HOUSE FUNDRAISER IS...


  
**EAC'S FIRE ISLAND HOUSE RAFFLE**  
**And the Winner is...**  
**Nicole Caldararo**



"I am a domestic violence survivor. EAC Network provided my son and his father a safe, comfortable environment to meet and continue to have a relationship for many years. They do tremendous work, and I'm incredibly grateful. Every year I donate money to several charities, and always include EAC. Domestic violence effects all economic and ethnic backgrounds. I never thought it could happen to me; a college educated, upper middle-class woman. But it did. Thank you EAC." —Nicole Caldararo

Thank you, Rodney & Dana Ragen of  
**334 Walk LLC & Double R Contracting** for donating one of your premium  
 Ocean Beach, Fire Island summer homes and making EAC's first  
 live streamed virtual fundraiser an absolute success.

And thank you, Nicole Caldararo for supporting and believing in EAC.  
 Your participation helped make a positive & uplifting impact on the  
 New Yorkers benefiting from EAC's services.

# Grant Spotlight

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## M&T Bank's Amplify Fund



EAC Network is delighted to announce that we've been awarded an M&T Bank Charitable Foundation grant! The Amplify Fund supports community-based organizations with a track record and purpose to increase racial and economic equity in marginalized communities.

This funding helps drive EAC's mission to foster a more compassionate and just society. We're a network of vital programs and resources that ensures every New Yorker has an opportunity to achieve a better life.

- We **Empower** New Yorkers and the communities we call home.
- We **Assist** with access to complex service systems.
- We **Care** for individuals, families, and communities in need.

The Amplify Fund specifically helps EAC's [Long Island Parenting Institute](#) (LIPI) provide the vital classes and skills that positively impact children, promote protective factors, enhance the future well-being of families as well as instill a cycle of positive and effective parenting for generations.

*Thank you, M&T Bank, for the support!*

[Learn About EAC's Parenting Institute](#)

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## The State Farm Good Citizenship Grant



The State Farm Good Citizenship Grant awarded EAC \$30,000 to support [The Teen Driving Equation program](#). In 2023, the program impacted 3,339 Long Island teens by cultivating and enforcing positive driving skills and responsibilities, promoting seat belts, excessive speed and passenger distraction awareness, and instituting a DWI/DWA/Zero Tolerance contract. Speakers at special and outreach events present a comprehensive curriculum on safe driving practices and share personal experiences about driving distractions.

[Learn About EAC's Teen Driving Equation](#)

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## Suffolk County Supports EAC's Opioid Efforts



Suffolk County, through the Department of Health Services, awarded EAC's **Transitional Case Management Substance Use Disorder Program (SUD)** funds to fight opioid addiction.

[Learn More](#)

## Save the Date

### 34th Annual Golf for Good



**EAC's 34th Annual Golf for Good** is a legendary annual event being held this year at Manhasset's North Hills Country Club on **Monday, May 20, 2024**. This year's Honoree is Paul M. O'Brien, Esq. of **Burner Prudenti Law, PC** and The Corporate Citizenship Award goes to the Ragen Family, owners of **Double R Contracting** and **334 Walk LLC**.

The day kicks off at 10 AM on North Hills' lush vistas, fairways, and rolling terrain. Don't miss this celebrated golf experience benefiting New Yorkers in need and the communities we call home.

[Registration & Sponsorship](#)





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