

Katherine Alonge-Coons, LCSWR is nominated tonight for her professional achievements and the impact that she has had upon the mental health community of Rensselaer County. Kathy graduated from Columbia High School in 1977, where she was a member of the National Honor Society, Model Congress and 1976 student representative for the New York State Council for Social Studies. She graduated cum laude in 1980 from Siena College, where she earned a BS in Sociology, a minor in political science and pre-law, a concentration in social work and clinical theory and was an ROTC student, gaining military leadership training. Kathy was awarded a Master of Social Work degree from the State University of New York at Albany's School of Social Justice. In addition, she is a graduate of St Bernard's School of Theology and Ministry having earned a Masters of Divinity in June 2006. Kathy is an ordained Episcopal priest serving the Diocese of Albany as a bio-vocational Vicar at Grace Church, Waterford, NY.

Following graduation, Kathy embarked on a career dedicated to serving the neediest members of our community. Kathy has striven to provide comprehensive mental hygiene services that promote individual growth, interpersonal functioning, rehabilitation and recovery. She served as the Rensselaer County Director of Children's Services, Intensive Case Manager for Children and Youth, and as a clinician in the children's outpatient clinic. Among her many achievements, she developed and established five school based mental health clinic satellites, and was instrumental in the establishment of a co-located integrated care satellite in a Rensselaer County pediatric practice. Kathy has been equally active in the development of the health home serving adults in Rensselaer County. She was recently elected by the NYS Conference of local Mental Hygiene Directors to serve as the chairperson of the Child and Family Subcommittee which works to provide advocacy and input regarding the behavioral health system serving children and youth in NYS. Based upon her superb background, Kathy was appointed as the Commissioner of Mental Health in Rensselaer County in 2012. In that role she is charged with carrying out the department's mission of promoting county based mental hygiene services for thousands of Rensselaer County adults and children by promoting growth, and development, self-help, recovery, consumer choice, inclusion, individualized and integrated care in the least restrictive setting. Upon her appointment, Rensselaer County Executive Kathy Jimino stated "Katherine Alonge-Coons has a long and distinguished career serving the residents of Rensselaer County. Her efforts in the department I am now asking her to lead have had a profound impact on our ability to provide these services". Among the programs she supervises are Outpatient Substance Abuse Prevention, Intervention and Treatment Services; Unified Services for Children & Adolescents; Forensic Services; Rensselaer City Center Outpatient Treatment; Court Consultation; Hoosick Falls Satellite Outpatient Treatment; Intensive Case Management (Adult & Child); Private Proprietary Homes for Adults (PPHA); Adult Home Supportive Case Management; Supportive Case Management (Adult & Child) ; Student Assistance & Preventative programs and MICA Services & Outreach (Mental Illness and Chemical Addiction). Kathy was nominated by Jude Mulvey, who

stated “Kathy’s professional achievements, the impact that she has upon the neediest of the residents of Rensselaer County, and her outstanding service to the residents of Rensselaer County demonstrate that she is worthy of inclusion in the Columbia High School Alumni Hall of Fame.” In addition to her social advocacy, Kathy also serves as a Vicar of Grace Church in Waterford, New York, where she empowers lay leadership and ministry in areas of mission, pastoral visitation and specialized ministries in a growing congregation. She was awarded the 2010 Clergy of the Year by Seton Health Faith Based Nursing Ministries. The East Greenbush Education Foundation is honored to induct Ms. Kathy Alonge-Coons into the Columbia High School Hall of Fame for her professional accomplishments, her ministry, and service to the people of Rensselaer County.