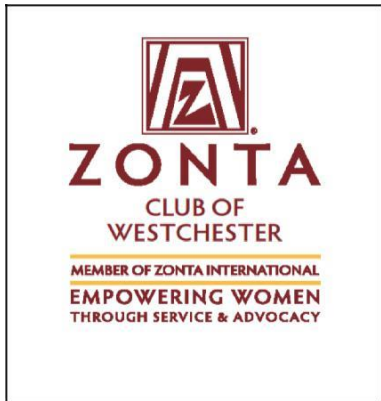


ZONTAGRAM



ZONTA CLUB OF WESTCHESTER
CONSTITUENT OF ZONTA INTERNATIONAL
DISTRICT 3 AREA 1 ORGANIZED 1931

April
2021

Dear Westchester Zontians,

Greetings in the season of Passover, Easter and Spring!!! I hope you are all well vaccinated and anticipating the time when we can meet again in person. I know that I am.

Thanks to our members who attended the Memorial Service for Yvonne C. Job, beloved mother of Dianne, on March 21. It was a very impressive tribute to a life well lived. We continue to express our love and support for Dianne.

I sent a Thank You to Pam Gumms, our speaker last month from **Free the Girls**. She was kind enough to send a copy of her PowerPoint that we hope to review at a future meeting. Nancy has been able to secure NY State Senator Alessandra Biaggi as our speaker for our April meeting.

Please pay your \$50 assessment if you are able. Also Our fundraiser balance now stands at \$925.00 Still accepting late donations!!

More donations were received this month for **Free the Girls** and for EJ's hospital and school mission work. We anticipate that EJ will be leaving for Nigeria in the near future so we will continue receiving and dropping off donations until she departs.

Please send Nancy your service hours if possible. If you have a project or some ideas that you would like us to undertake please let me know.

Our next meeting will be Tuesday, April 20, 2021 at 6:30 PM by zoom. Nancy will send the invitation.

Sincerely,

Joan

President

Joan Mallory

Vice President

Nancy Sanchez-Caro

Treasurer

Garnjana Palmieri

Secretary

Bebe Ahmed
Dianne Job

Director

Laura Dunckley

Director

Nora Gorman

Director

Jamie Hubert

Director

Sheila Sievertsen

Exec. Director/Advisor

Georgia LaBlanc

Zontagram

Jamie Hubert

MEETING
Tuesday
April 20, 2021

Zoom
6:30pm

Speaker:
Alessandra Biaggi
NY State Senator

zontaofwestchesterny.org

www.zontadistrictthree.org

www.zonta.org

info@zontaofwestchester.org

Additional thoughts from Joan

There are presently several legislative issues which are strongly in line with our mission of improving the quality of life for women. I want to highlight three:

1. Equal pay for women is a critical issue for Zontians, as well as women worldwide. March 24, 2021 was NYS Equal Pay Day. I encourage you to go to www.powherny.org to learn more about this issue.
2. **The Violence against Women Act** expired in 2018. On March 18th the US House of Representatives passed a law strengthening and reauthorizing this act. The senate is however blocking it because they object to a clause which restricts domestic abusers from purchasing guns. Calls to our senators are suggested.
3. I attended **NY Lobby Day** on March 25 on behalf of eliminating the loopholes in the child marriage bill. There is a mountain of legal jeopardy for a woman who is not a legal adult. We met with many of the members of the judiciary committee working on this issue. See the attached list and if possible send an e-mail to the assembly members designated as “Maybe.”

Judiciary Committee Member	D/R	Status	Email (@nyassembly.gov Unless indicated)
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Chair	Charles Lavine	D	Promised	lavinec@
Asm.	Thomas Abinanti	D	Spnsr	abinantit@
	Edward Braunstein	D	Maybe	braunsteine@
	Keith Brown	R	Maybe	brownk@
	Majorie Byrnes	R	Promised	byrnesm@
	Catalina Cruz	D	Maybe	cruzc@
	Latoya Joyner	D	Maybe	joynerl@assembly.state.ny.us
	Karen McMahon	D	Spnsr	mcmahonk@
	Marcela Mitaynes	D	Spnsr	mitaynesm@
	Michael Montesano	R	Spnsr	montesanom@
	Michael Norris	R	Maybe	norrism@
	Dan Quart	D	Spnsr	quartd@
	Jenifer Rajkumar	D	Maybe	rajkumarj@
	Rebecca Seawright	D	Spnsr	seawright@
	Phil Steck	D	Spnsr	steckp@
	Michael Tannousis	R	Spnsr	tannousism@
	Latrice Walker	D	Maybe	walker@assembly.state.ny.us
	Monica Wallace	D	Prob. Yes	wallacem@
	Mary Beth Walsh	R	Maybe	walshm@
	David Weprin	D	Promised	weprin@
	Kenneth Zebrowski	D	Promised	zebrowskik@

Support S3086/A3891: Let's End Child Marriage in New York

Child marriage is an urgent problem in New York. The marriage age is 18, but a dangerous legal loophole allows 17-year-olds to marry with parental "consent" and judicial approval.¹ This loophole became law in 2017 in a move that was lauded as an end to child marriage in New York (previously, children as young as 14 were allowed to marry). In fact, the 2017 law did not end child marriage, as 17-year-olds are still children in terms of their limited legal capacity.²

Dangers in the Current Law

- When a minor is forced to marry, the perpetrators are typically the parents. Parental "consent" often is coercion.³
- The judicial review process does not prevent forced marriage, even with the so-called safeguards the 2017 law added, because a minor who is forced to marry also is forced to lie to the judge about it.
- Minors are automatically emancipated upon marriage, likely ending their parents' financial obligation to them, regardless of the minors' level of financial independence.⁴ This can lead to teen homelessness, especially since 70 to 80 percent of marriages before age 18 end in divorce.⁵
- Some 73% of children married in New York between 2000 and 2010 were age 17.⁶ Thus the 2017 law failed to protect 73% of those impacted by child marriage.

Devastating Consequences of Marriage at 17

- Minors, even at 17, can easily be forced into marriage or forced to stay in a marriage. They cannot easily leave home,⁷ retain an attorney⁸ or bring a legal action on their own behalf.⁹ While marriage gives a minor some "rights of adulthood,"¹⁰ those rights are limited and are granted only after the marriage is approved and the minor has endured the trauma of forced marriage.
- Child marriage, even at 17, is a "human rights abuse"¹¹ that destroys girls' health, education and economic opportunities, and increases their risk of experiencing violence.¹¹
- Those who marry before 18 have a 70 to 80% chance of divorcing – and teen mothers who marry and then divorce are more likely to suffer economic deprivation and instability than teen mothers who stay single.¹²

Alarming Statistics

- Nearly 3,850 children as young as 14 were married in New York between 2000 and 2010.
- Some 84% were girls wed to adult men.¹³

Simple Legislative Solution

S3086/A3891 costs nothing, harms no one and saves girls from a human rights abuse. It keeps the marriage age at 18 but eliminates the dangerous loophole that allows marriage at age 17. States and territories across the U.S. are passing similar legislation to eliminate all marriage before 18; if New York does not act now, it could become the "destination site" for child marriage.¹⁴ For more information, visit www.unchainedatlast.org.

¹ N.Y. Dom. Rel. Law § 15.

² N.Y. Dom. Rel. Law § 2: "Anyone under age 18 is an 'infant.'"

³ N.Y. Dom. Rel. Law § 15(3)(b)(iii).

⁴ Vivian Hamilton, *The Age of Mental Capacity: Reconsidering Recognition of Adolescent Marriage*, William & Mary Law School Scholarship Repository (2012), available at <http://scholarship.law.wm.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=2467&context=tcapubs>.

⁵ Based on marriage-license data Unchained retrieved from the New York State Department of Health and the New York City Clerk's Office.

⁶ N.Y. Exec. Law § 532: A child who leaves home is considered a "runaway."

⁷ 66 N.Y. Jur. 2d § 29 (2000): Contracts with children are voidable.

⁸ N.Y. C.P.L.R. Law § 1201.

⁹ N.Y. Dom. Rel. Law § 15(3)(b)(iii).

¹⁰ U.S. Department of State, et al., *United States Global Strategy to Empower Adolescent Girls* (March 2016), <https://2005-2017.state.gov/documents/organization/254904.pdf>.

¹¹ Frisky Reiss, *Why Can 17-Year-Olds Still Get Married in the United States*, Washington Post (10 February 2017).

¹² Vivian Hamilton, *The Age of Mental Capacity: Reconsidering Recognition of Adolescent Marriage*, William & Mary Law School Scholarship Repository (2012), available at <http://scholarship.law.wm.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=2467&context=tcapubs>.

¹³ Based on marriage-license data Unchained retrieved from the New York State Department of Health and the New York City Clerk's Office.

¹⁴ New York has no residency requirement for marriage. See: New York, *Information on Getting Married in New York State*, <https://health.ny.gov/publications/4210>.

April Birthdays

Nora Gorman

23rd

