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39th annual show, women's awards held

By Molly Congdon

## Fashion and fun for a cause in Scotia



The Schenectady Business and Professional Women's Club, Inc. and The Daily Gazette presented "Hats Off to Schenectady," the 39th Annual Fashion Show and Women of the Year Celebration on Sunday at the Glen Sanders Mansion in Scotia. Lisa Germaine gets a round of applause while modeling a dress during the fashion show.

SCOTIA — Tables dressed in red cloth surrounded the runway in the center of the ballroom of the Glen Sanders Mansion for “Hats Off to Schenectady,” the 39th annual Fashion Show and Women of the Year celebration put on by the Schenectady Business & Professional Women’s Club and The Daily Gazette.

“We raise scholarship money for girls and women in Schenectady County,” said Cyndie Powell, president of the Schenectady Business & Professional Women’s Club and fashion show chairwoman. “Our club works so hard together to get this done. Everyone just takes a piece of it and runs with it.”

Last year they were able to raise \$13,500; they hoped to get to \$15,000 this year.

The two women who were selected as the 2015 Women of the Year both have made a significant impact within the community. “They both had the most community service as well as great things happening for them professionally,” Powell said. “They are two amazing women.”

Dr. Martha Asselin, the vice president of student affairs at Schenectady County Community College, has served the school for over 25 years, unflagging in her efforts to create a positive atmosphere where students can thrive. “It’s fantastic,” Asselin said of receiving the award. “It’s the highest accolade I’ve ever received and it’s something that I will cherish always.”

Also honored was Rayn Boncie, the CEO and founder of Things of My Very Own, Inc., a non-profit organization that provides crisis intervention services to children who have been affected by abuse or neglect. “Back when I was in foster care I made a silent promise to my foster sister that when I grew up I would do something to help children like her and I,” Boncie said. “Then back in 2008 when we incorporated everyone said, ‘Rayn, you’re such a nice person, but it’s just not going to happen, you’re not going to make it.’ And last year we provided services to 6,712 individuals.”

Similar to Asselin, she was flattered to be chosen. “It’s a complete honor and it’s also an honor to be standing next to her [Martha Asselin] as a recipient,” Boncie said. “I’m speechless.”

The models for the fashion show were a number of “almost famous” Schenectady celebrities. Each modeled two outfits, a casual ensemble and a fancy one.

Behind the scenes before the show began, makeup was applied, hair was curled and pants were pressed. It was the first time that Carmel Patrick, vice president of development of The Museum of Innovation and Science (miSci), would be walking down a runway. “I thought it would be fun,” Patrick said. “I’m a little nervous, but I’m kind of a big ham so I’m also excited. I know a lot of people in the audience so I’m expecting a lot of cat calls.”

Jeanne Maloy, vice president for Marshall and Sterling Insurance, was also fighting off some nerves. “I’m a little nervous but it’s for a good cause,” Maloy said. “It’s definitely different from insurance.”

Ray Legere, owner of the Armory, and Jim Salengo, the executive director of Downtown Schenectady Improvement Corporation, prepared to strut their stuff modeling Cinch Menswear. It was clear that they were going to have fun.

“We’ve got a back to back move practiced,” Salengo joked.

“Yes, there will be lots of pointing,” Legere added.

Salengo chuckled and said, “We might even make it rain.”





