

The
WESTCHESTER COUNTY BOARD OF LEGISLATORS
celebrates

ALBANIAN HERITAGE MONTH

Monday, November 8, 2021 at 7:00 p.m.

Live streamed from the Board Chamber

<https://westchestercountyny.legistar.com>

PROGRAM

Welcoming Remarks and Acknowledgements

Legislator Benjamin Boykin II, Chairman of the Board

Presentation of Proclamations to



ALBANA KRASNIQI

Presented by Legislator David J. Tubiolo



DR. RIFAT LATIFI

Presented by Legislator Vedat Gashi

[see back for more]

Benjamin Boykin II
Board Chair
Legislator, 5th District

Colin D. Smith
Legislator, 1st District

Kitley S. Covill
Legislator, 2nd District

Margaret A. Cunzio
Minority Leader
Legislator, 3rd District

Vedat Gashi
Legislator, 4th District

Nancy E. Barr
Legislator, 6th District

Catherine F. Parker
Legislator, 7th District

Alfreda A. Williams
Vice Chair
Legislator, 8th District

Catherine Borgia
Legislator, 9th District

Damon R. Maher
Legislator, 10th District

Terry Clements
Legislator, 11th District

MaryJane Shimsky
Majority Leader
Legislator, 12th District

Tyrae Woodson-Samuels
Legislator, 13th District

David J. Tubiolo
Legislator, 14th District

Ruth Walter
Legislator, 15th District

Christopher A. Johnson
Majority Whip
Legislator, 16th District

José I. Alvarado
Legislator, 17th District





ALBANA KRASNIQI

Albana Krasniqi was born and raised in Pristina, Kosovo. She saw firsthand the struggles of an oppressed nation headed for war. That experience was the foundation for her deep-seated drive to volunteer and help families and children at risk. Albana was fortunate to arrive in the United States in 1995 to pursue her education before the war began in 1998. After she arrived in the United States, she continued to assist families in Kosovo whenever given the opportunity. She received a B.S. in Business Administration and Management with a minor in Finance from Mercy College in New York while working full time for the Albanian-American newspaper, *Illyria*. She currently works as a financial analyst for Ambac Assurance Corporation headquartered in New York City.

Even as her career has flourished in the United States, she has maintained close ties to Kosovo through family and friends within the Albanian community, both in the United States and in Kosovo. In May 2007, Albana received “The American Dream” award from the International Institute of New Jersey for her volunteer work within the community. Through community-based volunteer work, Albana began to focus her efforts and donate her time to work with Gift of Life International (GOLI), an internationally recognized non-profit with the primary objective of diagnosing and providing life-saving heart surgeries for children all over the world. She established a fund raising event to implement the first screening mission in Pristina in May 2012 with the objective of helping 25 children. Since then, GOLI has conducted yearly screening missions, and as of April 2021, Albana’s efforts have enabled screening for over 600 children, and raised funds to support sponsoring of over 180 lifesaving open-heart surgeries for Kosovar children. Albana served as a board member of GOLI from 2014-2020, and in February 2014, she received A “Humanitarian Award” from Gift of Life for helping save the lives of Kosovar children. Albana has received numerous awards from a variety of organizations for her important work.



DR. RIFAT LATIFI

Dr. Rifat Latifi is the Felicien M. Steichen Professor and Chair of the Department of Surgery at New York Medical College (NYMC), and Director of the Department of Surgery at Westchester Medical Center and Maria Fareri Children’s Hospital in Valhalla, and the Mid-Hudson Regional Hospital in Poughkeepsie, New York. He previously served as Vice Chairman for Research and Faculty Development at NYMC. Before moving to New York, he was a Professor of Surgery at the University Of Arizona in Tucson. His undergraduate and medical school training were both at the University of Pristina in Kosovo.

Specializing in trauma, general surgery, and critical care—with special interests in complex re-operative surgery, telemedicine, and nutrition support of critically ill patients—Dr. Latifi is a leading force in the field of international telemedicine. He is passionately dedicated to global surgery and international telemedicine as tools of rebuilding healthcare systems in the developing world and post-conflict countries. He established the first teletrauma and telepresence program in Arizona, the Southern Arizona Telemedicine and Telepresence (SATT), which serves residents along the U.S./Mexico border. In addition, he initiated, secured funding, and provided oversight to three national telemedicine program teams in Europe and Africa, for which he received the 2015 American College of Surgeons (ACS) and Pfizer International Surgical Volunteerism award. Since 2006, he has participated as a volunteer surgeon in the Philippines and serves on the ACS Committee on Global Engagement, dedicated to advocating for the medically underserved.

Dr. Latifi received the 21st Century Achievement Award for Health from the Computerworld Honors Program and the International Award for Health Promotion from the Utilization Review Accreditation Commission (URAC). Last year, he was awarded the Westchester County Doctors of Distinction “No Land Too Far Award” and the Certificate of Appreciation for Dedication and Excellent Work for the Multinational Telemedicine System from NATO. He is the author or co-author of more than 250 peer-reviewed articles and book chapters. He has also authored or co-authored and edited 15 books and serves on the editorial boards of a number of peer-review journals.