

Legal Aid advocate recognized for service to community

“Women need to have a voice in shaping the type of community in which we live. If we leave it up to others, we may not like what they give us.”

A vision of a stronger, more vibrant Youngstown has been the on-going inspiration for Legal Aid attorney, Patricia Dougan. A champion for neighborhood investment and community activism, Dougan was selected by [WKBN to be one of four finalists in the Nexstar Media Group’s Remarkable Women Initiative.](#)

The initiative recognizes the contributions women make to improve the quality of life in the communities where they live, work, and serve. Dougan was humbled to learn that a friend and colleague nominated her for the contest.

“I have a passion to help people, and to make the community a better place to live by sustaining what is good about it and working on the things that need changed,” Dougan shared.

In its prime, Youngstown had a high population of homeowners. As steel mills closed leading to massive job loss, homes became rental properties and neighborhoods lost a sense of “investment” from those who lived there.

Shortly after purchasing her own home in Youngstown, Dougan was asked to serve on a citizens’ coalition board, which opened her eyes to what was happening within the community. She joined with other like-minded advocates who longed to see neighborhoods prosper once again.

Dougan has helped over 20 non-profit organizations and neighborhood groups shape the place they call home. Her role at Community Legal Aid has blended nicely with her passion to serve her community. “My involvement in local neighborhoods gives me a background to understand the types of issues that clients are bringing to me, particularly as it relates to housing conditions,” Dougan said.

Her journey into community activism was spurred on by women who identified her strengths and supported her efforts. Dougan believes all women have a duty to develop and contribute their own skills while inspiring other women to do the same.

“When others believe in you, you find the courage to step outside of your comfort zone and fight for those things you believe in,” she shared. “I want to help other leaders recognize their strengths and use them in service to the community.”

Dougan explained that she feels her volunteerism has provided its own rewards, including professional development and networking opportunities. “There is a great sense of satisfaction that comes from working alongside others to accomplish common goals,” she stated.

If selected as WKBN’s Remarkable Woman for 2021, Dougan will participate in a nationwide broadcast on NewsNation on April 10th, The broadcast will highlight the 113 winners from Nexstar’s local competition and lead to one of these remarkable women being named Nexstar Woman of the Year.

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