

EAST ORANGE GENERAL HOSPITAL

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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April 21, 2010

EAST ORANGE GENERAL HOSPITAL TO HONOR NEW JERSEY'S FIRST AFRICAN-AMERICAN FEMALE ASSEMBLY SPEAKER AT ANNUAL FUNDRAISER GALA

East Orange General Hospital Celebrates Growth and Honors Sheila Y. Oliver, New Jersey's first African-American female Assembly Speaker, at the Annual Ball of the Oranges Gala.

East Orange, N.J., April 21, 2010 - On Friday, May 7th, the Foundation for East Orange General Hospital (EOGH) along with special mistress of ceremony and international Grammy winning music legend, Dionne Warwick, will host its Annual *Ball of the Oranges* fundraiser at the Wilshire Grand Hotel in West Orange, NJ. The Gala will honor East Orange's former Assemblywomen and New Jersey's first African-American female Assembly Speaker, Sheila Y. Oliver.

Assembly Speaker Oliver, the second African-American woman to serve in such a leadership role at the state level, is being recognized for her continuous commitment and compassion to East Orange and its surrounding communities. She has selflessly given her time, energy, and resources to improve the quality of life for others.

"As a resident of East Orange, Assembly Speaker Oliver has spent her life advocating for those who are less fortunate, and couldn't fight for themselves," said EOGH President and CEO, Kevin J. Slavin. "Along the way she found the time and energy to work for numerous community organizations dedicated to making life better for those in need. We are honored to celebrate her many contributions and achievements."

The Honorable Assembly Speaker Oliver, who presides over the 214th Legislative Session of the New Jersey Assembly, was first elected to the Assembly in 2003, and re-elected in 2005, 2007 and 2009. She represents the 34th Legislative District, which includes Clifton, East Orange, Glen Ridge, Montclair and West Paterson. In the 2008-2009 Legislative Session, she served as Deputy Speaker Pro Tempore, chaired the Human Services Committee, and served on the Higher Education and Labor committees. She served as Assistant Majority Leader in the 2006-2007 Legislative Session. She also represented New Jersey on the National Conference of State Legislatures' Standing Committees on Human Services and Labor and Economic Development. Of the 50 states, nationally, there are only five women who lead lower houses, and only six who serve as majority leaders.

Speaker Oliver currently serves as Assistant Essex County Administrator and is the former Director of the Essex County Department of Citizen Services and the Department of Economic Development, Training and Employment. Prior to joining the New Jersey Legislature, she served as an Essex County Freeholder from 1996 to 1999 and as President of the East Orange Board of Education for seven years.

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Assembly Speaker Oliver has served on a number of civic boards and commissions and remains an active volunteer. As a former faculty member of several colleges and universities, she has spent most of her career developing and implementing programs designed to address issues of urban development, education, poverty, and economic and social opportunity for disadvantaged populations. Furthermore, she has long been a champion of affordable housing and employment opportunity.

Additionally, she is on the Board of East Orange General Hospital, and was a 2007 inductee in the Women's Foreign Policy Institute for State Legislators. As a co-founder of the Global Women's Leadership Collaborative of NJ, the Assemblywoman has worked with women leaders throughout the State in organizing cultural exchanges with women in Ghana, West Africa.

"Assembly Speaker Oliver truly defines what it takes to be a great leader and role model. She has had significant impact on influencing government policies and education, and has dedicated herself to improving the quality of life in our communities," said Antoinette K. Ellis-Williams, PH.D. & Chair of East Orange General Hospital Board of Trustees. "We are so proud of Assembly Speaker Oliver for all of her unwavering commitment to improving the health and welfare of residents in Essex County and throughout the State of New Jersey."

"East Orange General Hospital is very near and dear to my heart. It is humbling to be honored from an institution that is continuously advancing and expanding its services to help those in need," said Speaker Oliver. "We share in a mutual commitment to inspire and help the communities we serve—especially those who are disadvantaged—to live better, healthier lives."

The *Ball of the Oranges* will be held this year at the Wilshire Grand Hotel, 350 Pleasant Valley Way, West Orange, New Jersey at 6:00 p.m. Proceeds will benefit the implementation of a new state-of-the-art magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) machine and the sustainability of the current programs and campaigns the hospital provides to the local surrounding communities. For more information about the *Ball of the Oranges*, please call 973-266-2980.

About East Orange General Hospital

East Orange General Hospital is the largest private employer in East Orange, and remains as the only independent, fully accredited, acute-care hospital in Essex County. The hospital is the leader in Behavioral Health Services and provides a comprehensive array of primary care and specialty services including Same Day Surgery, Physical Rehabilitation Services, Family Health, Emergency Medicine, Outpatient Hemodialysis, Hyperbaric/Wound Management, Vascular and Medical/Surgical Services. Serving the community for over a century, the hospital recently expanded its services and is continually adding new equipment and programs to provide the highest level of quality and compassionate patient care. For more information on East Orange General Hospital, please visit: <http://www.evh.org>.

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