

Msgr. Sullivan, Mary Sontheimer Win Media Award

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Kathy Welsh

RHINEBECK AND BRONX – Astor Services for Children & Families has announced that Mary Sontheimer, the assistant executive director of Education and Early Childhood Development Programs at Astor, and Monsignor Kevin Sullivan, executive director, Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of New York and member of Astor’s board, have won New York Nonprofit Media’s “50 Over 50” award this year.



Both were honored on Nov. 8 at the Manhattan Penthouse on Fifth Avenue for their inspiring work ethic and outstanding leadership at Astor.

This award honors 50 of New York’s most prominent and accomplished leaders in human services, health care, education and other nonprofits that are over the age of 50 and who strive to make a positive impact on New York through their leadership abilities, achievements, philanthropic efforts, and lasting dedication.

“Mary has enhanced our preschool program, especially to the benefit of the center’s special needs children and their families,” said Celesta Parisi, the interim principal at the Lawrence F. Hickey Center for Childhood Development in the Bronx. “She encourages me to grow daily as a leader with confidence in the decisions that I make for our program.”

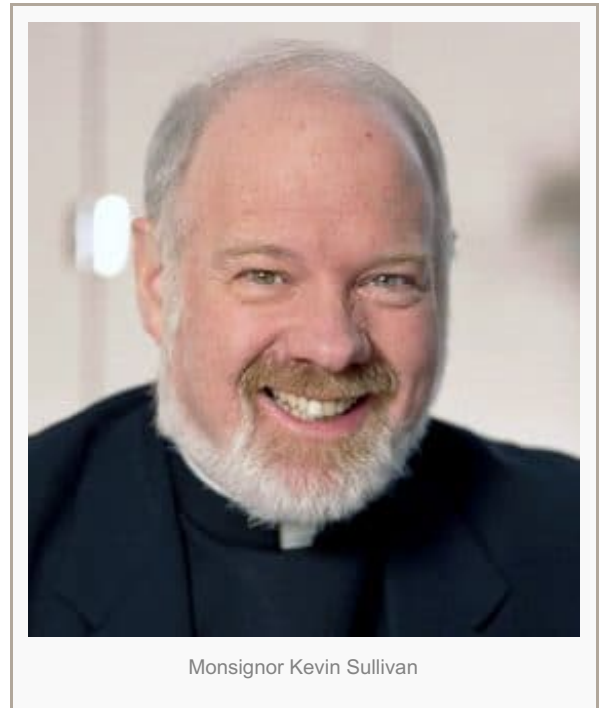
In her 16 years at Astor, Sontheimer has introduced multiple projects at Lawrence F. Hickey Center for Child Development in the Bronx, that have become a part of the curriculum at Astor, including sensory integration equipment and a fully equipped playground, both of which aim to improve students’ socialization and communications skills.

“She never leaves a program visit or a supervision meeting without a ‘How can I help you?’ and ‘What do you need?’” said Parisi. “She is an advocate for her staff, encourages feedback and welcomes all staff to share their concerns and experiences.”

Sontheimer completed her undergraduate degree at SUNY Oneonta before achieving her Master of Public Administration from Marist College in 2005. She began her work with Astor as the center director for the Astor Home for Children in 2001.

Sullivan has been the executive director of Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of New York since 2001, having previously served as its chief operating officer and in other high-level positions. He has been a member of Astor’s board for 17 years.

Of Sullivan’s numerous past and present involvements are memberships with the New York City Council Speaker’s Commission on Homelessness and the Policy and Strategy Committee of the NY Human Services Council, among other endeavors and board memberships.



Sullivan, who studied for the priesthood at St. Joseph's Seminary, was ordained in 1976 by Terence Cardinal Cooke and named Monsignor by John Cardinal O'Connor in 1999. He was born in the Bronx and raised in Yonkers.



Mary Sontheimer and daughter. Photos provided