

Terri Ward
Legislative District 5 Candidate
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Hello, my name is Terri Ward. I am running for Sullivan County Legislature, District 5, representing the townships of Callicoon, Delaware, Fremont, and a portion of Liberty. I am running on the Republican, Conservative, Independence, and Reform Lines. I was born and raised in Sullivan County. It has been my home, my heartbeat, for the last 35 years. My husband of seven years is a NYS Trooper, and we have two children, ages 5 and 2.

My father, James Hess, owned his own construction company and later, when the work took too much of a toll on his body, he was a councilman for the Town of Callicoon and then the highway superintendent for the same town. My mother, Diane Hess, an artist at heart, has been a small business owner and worked for several local companies throughout my childhood, including The Sullivan County Democrat, from which she recently retired. She now enjoys time with her grandchildren.

I have deep roots in this county, but I've also traveled and experienced much of the world. I graduated from the former J-YCS (now Sullivan West) in 1998, Sullivan County Community College in 2000, and SUNY Oneonta in 2002 with a BS in Communications and concentration in Public Relations.

I worked full time throughout my four years of college, sometimes commuting to Oneonta for a night class after a full day on the job.

I became the Vice President of the Sullivan County Chamber of Commerce in January 2005 -- at the age of 24 -- and became President/CEO just four short months later. During my tenure, I procured grants and small business loans, created and implemented Business Expos and new and unusual networking events such as NetWalking and Speed Networking. I assisted flood victims with FEMA and State paperwork more times than I care to remember, and I held hands and cried with businesses when they felt they had nowhere left to turn. I created relationships and gained experience that could never be replaced and will last my entire life. I invented the world's very first solely Mobile Chamber of Commerce and trademarked the name "Chamber on the Run" in order to better serve the rural nature of our business community, as well as cut down on our budgetary expenses. I managed a quarter of a million dollar budget and more than 700 memberships while holding a seat on 12 different non-profit and government boards throughout Sullivan, Orange, Ulster, and Delaware Counties.

I was chosen by the NYS Business and Professional Women's Association as Businesswoman of the Year in 2011 for my work with the business community. I was chosen by Governor Cuomo to hold the only voting seat in Sullivan County on his Mid-Hudson Regional Economic Development Council, where I was able to help secure millions of dollars in money for Sullivan County projects. I assisted in creating the Citizens for NYS Gaming Committee and acted as secretary while we fought tirelessly for the passage and eventual approval of Proposition One -- which would open up the final door for Sullivan County to get a destination resort casino.

I left the Chamber in late 2013 after nearly nine years to work in the private sector and gain as much knowledge as I could there. I worked for the Resnick Group as the director of business development, and I consulted on many of their development projects including The Apollo Plaza, Resnick Supermarket Equipment, Resnick Energy, The Mountain Dale Main Street Revitalization, The Sullivan Hotel, Bernie's Holiday Restaurant, Crust Italian Eatery, Fanatics Sports Bar & Pub, and Brew. Again, the knowledge and relationships I gained are irreplaceable and I will carry them with me for the rest of my life.

I decided to devote more time with my children in late 2014 and became a full-time stay-at-home mom to our two children. While they are my world and I immensely enjoy the time I have with them, I cannot see myself sitting on the sidelines of the exciting developments happening in our county. My parents gave my brother and I the two greatest gifts you can give a child -- things that I hope to pass along to my children -- Roots and Wings. I know where I come from, and I know my county and have deep roots here. But I also know what's out there. I know the great things our county could have in its future, and I want to be part of the plan to get it there. We need to start with basic needs. We need to ensure that our employees are happy and healthy. We need to ensure our roads and bridges are safe and passable. We need make sure our citizens are getting more for every single hard-earned tax dollar they spend, and then we need to simultaneously lower the amount they are paying while still giving them more.

We need to ensure every township receives its fair share of any increased sales tax revenue created by the development of the destination resort casino. We need to expand agricultural-based businesses, and nurture all other small businesses while expanding our tax base. We need to have a professional, bi-partisan team leading our government with one vision, putting all personal issues aside when making decisions and voting on what's best for our county and our districts. We need to build up pride in our communities and rid our county of the poisons on our main streets and back roads. If we repair what's broken on a basic need level, then we can begin to build everything else up.

Please feel free to contact me with any questions, comments or concerns you may have. My number is 845-807-7252, my email is thachieve@yahoo.com, my mailing address is: PO Box 91 Callicoon, NY 12723 or you can find me on Facebook. I look forward to hearing from you! Vote ForWard!