



News Release

GEORGE LATIMER, Westchester County Executive

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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WESTCHESTER COUNTY HEALTH COMMISSIONER DR. SHERLITA AMLER

HONORED BY NEW YORK MEDICAL COLLEGE

Sherlita Amler, MD, is the 2024 Recipient of the William Cullen Bryant Award

(White Plains, NY) — Westchester County Health Commissioner Sherlita Amler, MD is the 2024 recipient of the William Cullen Bryant Award, established by New York Medical College and named for its founder, to recognize remarkable individuals who demonstrate seminal leadership in health care, science, education, business or the arts.

Amler has served as Commissioner of the Westchester County Department of Health since 2011. Amler guest lectures at several evening courses throughout the year on a voluntary basis at New York Medical College, where she holds the titles of Clinical Associate Professor of Pediatrics, Senior Fellow at the College's Center for Disaster Medicine, and Adjunct Professor of Public Health, Epidemiology and Community Health. She led Westchester County's public health response to the COVID-19 pandemic starting in March 2020, when some of the first cases in New York were detected, and played a significant role in the Health Department's campaign to reverse the rising death toll.

Westchester County Executive George Latimer said: "We are thrilled, but not surprised, that Dr. Amler was recognized with this prestigious award. She exudes a professionalism and compassion that is undeniable. Dr. Amler was a steady force throughout the pandemic. We could turn to her and have confidence in her advice. It got us through this."

Amler said: "I am humbled to receive this honor from my colleagues at New York Medical College and it is especially sweet to share the spotlight alongside my husband."

Both Dr. Sherlita Amler, M.D., M.S., Ed.S., RN, FAAP, CEM, and Dr. Robert Amler, MD, M.M.S., M.B.A. FAAP, FACPM received the William Cullen Bryant Award. He is the Vice President of Government Affairs and Dean of the School of Health Sciences and Practice, Professor of Public Health, Pediatrics, and of Environmental Health Sciences at New York Medical College. The awards were presented Thursday at the New York Medical College Founder's Dinner at the Surf Club on the Sound in New Rochelle.

Amler continued: “When I look back, one of the things I am proudest of is the Narcan program we started back in 2015. I think we have trained more than 12,000 people to administer Narcan to prevent an opioid overdose. I have no idea how many lives we’ve saved, but I do know it is more lives than I could ever have saved as a private practitioner in my pediatric office.”

County Legislator Jewel Williams Johnson, a member of the County Board of Health, which works closely with the Health Commissioner, said: “She has really prioritized service for the residents of Westchester County and thrown her whole self into ensuring the best for our County.”

Robert Baker, MD, president of the County Board of Health, said: “I have had the pleasure of working with Dr. Amler from her first days as the Westchester County Commissioner of Health to the present. I have had a front row seat watching her masterful management of the Health Department through many public health emergencies and the technological modernization of the Department as it meets its routine needs to promote public health in Westchester. The public health tripod of vaccinations, a clean water supply and proper sanitation have never been sturdier than under her able leadership. Dr. Amler’s quick response to the COVID pandemic undoubtedly saved tens of thousands of lives in Westchester County as she did her best to instantly quarantine the nursing facilities and other facilities with at risk ill and elderly. I think it is no exaggeration that no other physician has saved more lives in Westchester during their career than Sherlita Amler M.D. I am honored to be her colleague and friend in her tireless efforts to promote public health.”

Amler is a physician, registered nurse and certified emergency manager with many years of public health experience at the federal, state and local levels. In 2005, she helped launch the Center for Disaster Medicine at New York Medical College, where she is a senior fellow. The Center places a special focus on the protection of children and other vulnerable populations during large-scale community disasters.

She has led and supported many other successful public health initiatives and established comprehensive responses across Westchester against threats from opiate abuse and Ebola. She is a past President of the New York State Association of County Health Officers (NYSACHO). In addition, while County Health Commissioner, she briefly served as Acting Commissioner in the Department of Community Mental Health.

Previously as a CDC medical officer, Amler served as a subject matter expert in disaster mitigation and incident command, in particular hospital surge capacity and consequence management from large-scale events.

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