

Ellen E. Grant, Recognized by Influential Women, Continues a Legacy of Breaking Barriers and Empowering Future Leaders

GRAND ISLAND, NY, UNITED STATES, June 10, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Trailblazing Healthcare Executive, Mentor, Author, and Advocate Champions Inclusion, Servant Leadership, and Opportunities for Women Across Western New York

Ellen E. Grant has spent her career opening doors where none previously existed. As the first woman and person of color to serve in numerous leadership positions throughout Western New York, she has built a legacy defined by public service, healthcare leadership, mentorship, and a steadfast commitment to helping others achieve their full potential.

Throughout a distinguished career spanning healthcare administration, mental health services, social work, nonprofit leadership, and public policy, Ellen has consistently demonstrated what it means to lead with purpose. Her groundbreaking accomplishments include serving as the first Vice President of a major hospital, President of a local hospital, Erie County Commissioner of Mental Health, and President of the New York State Association of Counties. She also served as Senior Executive Director of Community Collaborations at Roswell Park Comprehensive Cancer Center, where she cultivated strategic partnerships and advanced initiatives designed to strengthen community engagement and improve access to vital resources.

Across every role, Ellen has remained focused on creating opportunities for others while fostering environments built on collaboration, inclusion, and innovation.

Her leadership journey began in healthcare as a licensed practical nurse working in obstetrics



and psychiatric care. While caring for patients, she discovered a deeper interest in addressing the social and systemic factors that impact individual well-being. This passion led her to pursue social work, earning a Master of Social Work and later a PhD in Organizational Behavior and Communication from the State University of New York at Buffalo. Ellen also continues as a licensed clinical social work therapist.

These academic achievements provided the foundation for a career that would bridge healthcare, public service, leadership development, and advocacy. Over the decades, Ellen has become known not only for breaking barriers herself but also for helping others navigate their own paths to success.

One of her most enduring contributions is the creation of Women Who Lead, a nonprofit mentorship initiative that supports women seeking career advancement and leadership opportunities. The program has since been integrated into the Western New York Women's Foundation, extending its impact and helping countless women gain the confidence, guidance, and support needed to pursue leadership roles.

Ellen has also shared her insights through writing while providing practical guidance and encouragement for professionals seeking to overcome challenges and achieve their goals. Her most recent publication, *The Female Worker's 14 Commandments for Powering Up Your Career*, continues her mission of empowering women to recognize their strengths, embrace leadership opportunities, and persevere through obstacles.

Today, Ellen serves as Senior Health Advisor for Healthcare at O'Donnell & Associates LLC while also leading First Advantage Consulting, a consulting firm she founded in 1998. Through First Advantage Consulting, she works with nonprofit organizations and businesses to develop strategies focused on mental health, community engagement, and organizational effectiveness, as well as executive coaching. Her work reflects decades of experience and a deep understanding of the challenges facing both healthcare institutions and community-based organizations.

Ellen attributes much of her success to the unique opportunities that come from being first. Rather than viewing those moments solely as personal achievements, she sees them as opportunities to serve others and create pathways for future generations. Her leadership philosophy is deeply rooted in servant leadership—the belief that true leadership involves lifting others, creating opportunities, and helping emerging leaders succeed.

She credits her mother and her Aunt Jane as two of the most influential figures in her life. Through their examples, she learned the importance of service, compassion, and helping others. Those values continue to guide her personal and professional decisions today.

Ellen also emphasizes the importance of surrounding oneself with diverse perspectives. She often refers to her trusted network of advisors as her “mentor board,” a group of individuals

from various backgrounds, cultures, and experiences who provide support, guidance, and honest feedback.

Her belief is simple: no one succeeds alone.

That perspective has shaped both her leadership style and her approach to mentorship. Throughout her career, she has dedicated significant time to helping others navigate challenges, identify opportunities, and develop the confidence needed to pursue ambitious goals.

Among the most valuable lessons Ellen has learned is the importance of perseverance. She encourages professionals not to allow others' doubts or skepticism to determine their future. Rejection and setbacks are inevitable, she believes, but success often belongs to those who continue moving forward despite obstacles.

That message is especially important to the young women she mentors.

Ellen encourages women entering their professions to recognize that they are here for a purpose and to remain focused on their goals even when the path becomes difficult. While setbacks are a natural part of any career journey, she believes resilience, faith, and determination ultimately lead to growth and achievement.

Equally important, Ellen says, is building a strong support system. Whether it comes from a mentor, colleague, friend, or an entire community of supporters, encouragement from others can provide the strength needed to persevere during challenging times.

Looking at the broader landscape today, Ellen believes one of society's greatest opportunities lies in fostering greater collaboration among people with differing viewpoints and backgrounds. In an increasingly divided world, she advocates for finding common ground and working toward shared goals that benefit communities as a whole.

A deeply spiritual person, Ellen believes faith guides during uncertain times. At the same time, she emphasizes the importance of personal responsibility, compassion, and mutual support. She remains optimistic that meaningful progress can occur when individuals commit themselves to understanding, cooperation, and service.

The values that define Ellen's life and career—authenticity, spirituality, kindness, and service—continue to shape her leadership and influence. Whether mentoring future leaders, advising organizations, writing, or advocating for stronger communities, she remains committed to making a positive difference.

Outside of her professional endeavors, Ellen enjoys the arts, theater, and building meaningful relationships. She is an avid athlete running 5 marathons, 6 half marathons, 29 turkey trots, and several other length races. These interests reflect the same spirit of connection, resilience, and

empowerment that has characterized her remarkable career.

As a pioneer, mentor, author, and advocate, Ellen E. Grant continues to inspire others through her example, proving that leadership is not simply about achieving success—it is about creating opportunities for others to succeed as well.

Learn More about Ellen E. Grant:

Through her Influential Women profile, <https://influentialwomen.com/connect/Ellen-Grant> or through her website, <https://www.ellenegrant.com/>

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