

THE ISLAND



Frank and Christine Minotti get the John L.F. Sipp Award from District Attorney William Murphy at the Catholic Youth Organization event in the Staaten, West Brighton.



Jerry Cammarata receives the John D. Kearney Humanitarian Award from Kate Rooney, special counsel to state Sen. John Marchi.

ADVANCE PHOTOS ■ IRVING SILVERSTEIN

CYO recognizes 3 for community work

By KIAWANA RICH
ADVANCE STAFF WRITER

Three Staten Islanders were honored yesterday for their community work and dedication during the Catholic Youth Organization's (CYO) annual luncheon, held in the Staaten, West Brighton.

The event also marked the CYO's 55th anniversary.

Honored were Jerry Cammarata and Frank and Christine Minotti.

The Rev. Kevin Sullivan, chief operating officer of Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of New York, said, "The honorees symbolize what's so critical about the church and what's so critical about the CYO. The Minottis do what so many people do in parishes across Staten Island."

Of Cammarata, the Island representative to the Board of Education, he said, "Public officials have a responsibility to act for the common good, and he has done that."

District Attorney William Murphy presented the John L.F. Sipp Award to the Minottis of Oakwood.

Murphy remarked that Sipp was a diligent businessman who made community service his ultimate trademark. "For those who don't know who John Sipp was, he was a renowned bank expert and the reason for the award is he was even more renowned in the area of community service... John Sipp always provided service with a smile and a sense of sincerity," said Murphy.

Murphy noted that as a CYO coordinator at St. Charles R. C. Church, Oakwood, Minotti was responsible for turning the church's four basketball teams into 42 teams and expanding the athletic program to include swimming, track and softball.

Mrs. Minotti is responsible for providing religious instruction at St. Charles School, and she visits the homebound as a Eucharistic minister.

"I would like to thank everyone," said Mrs. Minotti, speaking for herself and her husband, "We are overwhelmed and would like to thank all of you for your trust, your confidence and your loyalty."

Kate Rooney, special counsel to state Sen. John Marchi, presented the John D. Kearney Humanitarian Award to Cammarata.

Ms. Rooney explained, "[Kearney] was a special person to the CYO, he was just involved in so many organizations on Staten Island and he also possessed the gift of being an outstanding public servant and community leader."

Kearney was the longtime public administrator of Staten Island.

She praised Cammarata's service to the community and to children on the Island, and highlighted his participation in a multimillion dollar project that will create a new recreational facility on the grounds of the Mission of the Immaculate Virgin at Mount Loretto, Pleasant Plains. The site will provide a variety of programs for Island youth.

Despite the overwhelming demands of his job, "[He] looks at one child and one individual life at a time," she said.

Cammarata remarked that after Kearney had worked for 20 years as a successful businessman, he decided to take on the toughest government job: That of public administrator. Cammarata said it could have been a very easy job for Kearney.

"But that wasn't John Kearney," said Cammarata. "In 22 years of his career, John never allowed anyone who had died alone or poor on Staten Island to be buried in Potter's Field. When all friends had disappeared, when even family had forgotten, John Kearney showed the charity of Christ for these people who had no one else to speak for them."

Cammarata admitted that he is no John Kearney, but said he was grateful for his job with the Board of Education.

"I get the opportunity to speak for those who have no political voice — our youngsters — and for the often-neglected parents of our city," he said.

The event was co-chaired by Tom McGovern and Kathleen Daly. The honorable co-chairpersons were the Rev. Monsignor Peter G. Finn and Helen M. Vitaliano.

Also attending yesterday's program were: state Sen. Vincent Gentile; Supreme Court Justice Peter Cusick; Supreme Court Justice Stephen Rooney; Civil Court Judge Barbara Panepinto; Marchi; state Assembly members Eric Vitaliano and Elizabeth Connelly; and Advance Editor Brian Laline.