

ANDREW J. SPANO, Westchester County Executive
JOSHUA LIPSMAN, M.D., M.P.H., Commissioner of Health
SUSAN TOLCHIN, Director of Communications

**CONTACT: SUSAN TOLCHIN
MARY LANDRIGAN**

**(914) 995-2932
(914) 813-5013
(914) 813-5000 (After Hours)**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

June 11, 2003

**WESTCHESTER COUNTY FIRST DEPUTY COMMISSIONER OF HEALTH
RECEIVES PRESTIGIOUS PUBLIC HEALTH AWARD**

Patsy Yang-Lewis, M.P.H., the First Deputy Commissioner of Health for Westchester County, has received a prestigious award from the New York State Association of County Health Officials (NYSACHO). The NYSACHO *Public Health Official of the Year Award* was presented to Ms. Yang-Lewis at the association's Annual Public Health Conference in Saratoga Springs on June 2, 2003.

"We are so proud of Patsy Yang-Lewis and feel extremely fortunate to have such a wonderful, capable and dedicated person working with us here in Westchester," said County Executive, Andy Spano. "When the lives and well-being of our population are at stake, we are fortunate to have a person of such high caliber professionalism and character on our team," he added. That sentiment was echoed by many of Ms. Yang-Lewis' colleagues at the Westchester County Department of Health and at NYSACHO.

"This is well deserved award," said Commissioner of Health, Joshua Lipsman, M.D., M.P.H. "We are delighted that Patsy has received this special recognition for all of the important contributions she has made to Westchester County and to the health of the people of New York State through her activities with NYSACHO."

Presenting the award, immediate past-President of NYSACHO, Joan Ellison, remarked that, "Each year, NYSACHO honors one of its members for outstanding work and service to public health. Patsy Yang-Lewis has always represented local public health, and indeed county government, with knowledge and class and often in a contentious environment."

More

The award is presented each year to a public health official who exemplifies leadership in local public health, particularly in the areas of crisis management, policy development and public health promotion. Ms. Yang-Lewis' ability to work effectively with other agencies, her clear and well informed reasoning, excellent judgment, and ability to keep things on track were cited as great assets she brings to the cause of public health.

“Ms. Yang-Lewis has a demeanor that requires respect and attention without her requesting this. I believe that this is evident and occurs due to her gentle but very well informed and focused expressions at meetings. It is evident to me that her thought processes, reasoning, openness and judgment have been very influential in furthering public health efforts for the organization. She always is concise on issues and keeps the group interested and focused,” stated one of her nominations.

Another nomination stated that, “Her [Ms. Yang-Lewis'] ongoing efforts to collect solid data on which to base policy positions, her tireless work with New York State Department of Health staff to address ongoing issues of concern and her advocacy efforts with the state legislature and the Governor's office are all examples of her outstanding leadership.”

During the nomination process, Ms. Yang-Lewis was also specifically praised for her work in the area of Early Intervention. Her colleagues noted that, “Patsy has always been a valuable leader within NYSACHO on Early Intervention issues, and an excellent advocate for and representative of local government concerns related to this program. Over the past year, Patsy has worked tirelessly on several Early Intervention policy issues. Her in-depth knowledge of the legal, fiscal and programmatic nuances of the Early Intervention program make her a valuable and irreplaceable asset to both her own health department and to NYSACHO.”

Patsy Yang-Lewis received her Bachelor of Arts from Brown University and her Master of Public Health Degree from Columbia University, and is currently a doctoral candidate at Columbia University. She is also a graduate of the Center for Disease Control's Public Health Leadership Institute.

Over her 22-year career, Ms. Yang-Lewis has taken on increasingly responsible roles in hospitals and public health agencies. Her positions included Director of Planning at Mount Sinai Medical Center in Miami Beach, FL; Associate Executive Director first at Metropolitan Hospital Center in New York and later at Bellevue Hospital Center in New York; and Deputy Assistant Commissioner of Health for the New York City Department of Health.

More

For the past 12 years, Ms. Yang-Lewis has served with the Westchester County Department of Health, as Deputy Commissioner of Health for Administration from 1990 to 1998 and First Deputy Commissioner of Health since June 1998. From January to May, 2000, she served as Acting Commissioner of Health. Patsy Yang-Lewis also serves as a Visiting Lecturer at New York Medical College; is co-chair of the NYSACHO Maternal-Child Health Committee; and Chair of the New York State Early Intervention Coordinating Council Third Party Reimbursement Task Force.