

Contact: Mitch Donovan, Victor Chamber President  
585-742-1476  
info@victorchamber.com

December 12, 2011  
For Immediate Release:

## **INSPIRED BY AREA'S NATIVE AMERICAN ROOTS, VICTOR CHAMBER OF COMMERCE INAUGURATES "WOMEN OF EXCELLENCE" AWARDS**

*Chamber Currently Seeks Nominations in Three Categories*

Victor, NY—For the first time in its history, the **Victor Chamber of Commerce** formally will **honor the passion, vision, and commitment of exemplary women in Victor with three "Women of Excellence" awards** in early 2012. In recognition and respect for its **rich Native American roots** as exemplified by Ganondagan—the Seneca historic site—the Victor Chamber is **seeking nominations** for women who demonstrate the qualities of *Jikohnsaseh*, the woman known as the "Mother of Nations" for her role in bringing together five disparate Nations into the Iroquois, or Haudenosaunee (HO-dee-no-saw-nee) Confederacy.

Nominations will be accepted in the following categories for a woman who lives, works, attends school, or volunteers in Victor:

- The Youth of Promise Award, for a student
- The Lantern Award (lifetime achievement) for a senior individual (65+)
- The Jikohnsaseh Award, A Woman of Excellence, for overall achievement.

The three winners will be celebrated at the **Victor Chamber Annual Gala on Thursday, February 23, 2012** at the Ravenwood Country Club, 929 Lynaugh Road, Victor, beginning at 6:00 p.m. Nominations will be accepted until Friday, January 13, 2012.

"Jikohnsaseh" (Gi-GON-sa-say) was a woman of great vision and wisdom, and a devoted leader of her people. Leading by example, this brilliant arbitrator and diplomat was instrumental in bringing together the disparate Five Nations into a Confederacy founded on the message of peace and justice—one that pre-dated the American constitution by more than 700 years. Jikohnsaseh's passion for peace among all her people equally also laid out the critical role of women who were instrumental in building and maintaining the Iroquois Confederacy, even to this day.

"We are looking for women who demonstrate these compelling 'Jikohnsaseh' qualities," said Chamber President Mitch Donovan on behalf of the awards committee. "We are encouraging

people in the community to nominate women of compassion, fairness, peace, and vision, who lead for the benefit of her community.” The committee is comprised of individuals who represent various aspects of the Victor community.

“Ganondagan is honored to be collaborating on such an important project with the Victor Chamber of Commerce,” said Ronnie Reitter (Seneca), one of Ganondagan State Historic Site’s interpretive staff.

Nomination forms may be filled out in survey format at [www.honorvictor.com](http://www.honorvictor.com) or they are available by calling 585-742-1476 and requesting the form via email, or for pick-up at the Victor Chamber Office. **Completed nomination forms are due by Friday, January 13**, and should be sent to [mdonovan@victorchamber.com](mailto:mdonovan@victorchamber.com) or by mail to the Victor Chamber of Commerce, 37 East Main Street, Victor, NY 14564. Completed forms also may be dropped off directly at the Chamber Office during regular business hours.

Information on sponsorship opportunities and event ticket purchases are available through Victor Chamber President Mitch Donovan at 585-742-1476 or at [mdonovan@victorchamber.org](mailto:mdonovan@victorchamber.org).

###

*The Victor Chamber of Commerce is the premier business organization that promotes connections, provides resources and advocates on behalf of its members.*