



DISTINGUISHED ALUMNI AWARDS

Ellen Moyer '58



To Ellen Moyer for her lifelong commitment to public service and improving the lives of her fellow citizens in Annapolis and Maryland.

Ellen Moyer, the first female mayor of Annapolis—Maryland’s capital nicknamed the “Sailing Capital of America”—says she’s not much of a sailor. “I get a little seasick,” she said. “But I have a great appreciation for the sport, and Annapolis is internationally known for its sailing events and is home of the National Sailing Hall of Fame.”

Annapolis has also been Moyer’s home for almost 50 years, and she’s worked steadily to improve nearly everything about it, from increasing the number of parks and the public’s access to the water to ensuring affordable housing in the increasingly affluent town and county. After 14 years on city council, she was first elected mayor in 2001 and reelected to a second term in 2005.

Growing up near Baltimore, Moyer recalls an early knack for engaging and organizing people. “I would organize my elementary school classmates to put on a play or convert a school room to a haunted

house for Halloween,” she remembers. After graduating from Towson High School, she entered the University of Maryland. Moyer transferred to Penn State after two years because, she said, “I needed to be a little farther from home.”

Moyer graduated with a degree in the Liberal Arts in 1958 and moved back to Maryland for her first job, district director for the Girl Scouts of America in Anne Arundel County, where Annapolis is located. She’s lived there ever since. After earning a master’s degree in education from Goucher College and teaching, Governor Mandel appointed Moyer to the Maryland State Board of Education in 1972. Later in the 1970s, Moyer served as executive director for the Maryland Commission for Women before becoming director of governmental relations for the Maryland State Teachers Association, a post she held for 23 years.

Long before she was elected mayor, Moyer was first lady of Annapolis when her then-husband Roger “Pip” Moyer was mayor in the 1960s. As first lady, she promoted beautification, recreation, and the arts, including founding the Maryland Hall for the Creative Arts and the Cultural Arts Foundation. As an Annapolis city

council member starting in 1987, and later as mayor, Moyer established Annapolis as an environmental model city, known for its flowers, small parks, street-end gardens, walking trails, and policies to encourage further “greening” of the city. Moyer points to the more than 60 rain gardens that naturally capture water before it enters the storm water management system, as an example of a successful program that other city leaders come to Annapolis to learn about. Moyer’s interest and efforts in environmental issues also earned her a spot as one of the first 50 people selected and trained in former Vice President Al Gore’s climate change program.

Moyer has received countless awards during her lifetime of public service. Baltimore’s business newspaper *The Daily Record* has named her one of Maryland’s Top 100 Women three times. She’s also a three-time recipient of the SPCA’s Distinguished Service Award. The American Society of Landscape Architects recognized Moyer for her commitment to the environment with its Spencer P. Ellis Award. She also received the Fannie Lou Hamer Award for Women of Excellence for contributions to the growth and development of the African American community.

Penn State previously honored Moyer with the College of the Liberal Arts’ Service to Society Award in 2005. Moyer has five grown children and four grandchildren.

