



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Shelley B. Mayer

## Senator Shelley Mayer and Jay Heritage Center Announce \$500,000 in State Funding to Restore the 1838 Jay Mansion

SENATOR SHELLEY B. MAYER July 10, 2024

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**RYE, NY** – New York State Senator Shelley B. Mayer joined Suzanne Clary, President of Jay Heritage Center, and trustees and staff to announce \$500,000 in state funding, secured by Senator Mayer, to restore the 1838 Jay Mansion.

With increased visitation each year, Jay Heritage Center has faced greater need for restoration of the Jay Mansion, which serves as the welcome center to the Estate. The funding will help finish the mansion entryway, build additional ADA compliant restrooms, expand the innovative sustainable geothermal heat and cooling pump systems, and install other amenities to accommodate the increasing audience.

The 1838 Jay Mansion is a national historic landmark that has embraced sustainability, illustrated by many of the modern technological advances to its infrastructure. The Estate will also host programs commemorating America's semiquincentennial in 2026 and the 200th anniversary of the end of slavery in New York State in 2027, which will heighten the Estate's usage and visitation.

**State Senator Shelley B. Mayer said,** "I am very pleased to present President Suzanne Clary and Jay Heritage Center with \$500,000 in state funding to restore the beautiful 1838 Jay Mansion.

The Jay Heritage Center does exceptional work preserving our local history, acknowledging the diversity of our American story, and celebrating American history first-hand right here in our community. It is an exceptional space, and I look forward to the day when everyone can experience and learn about the history of the Jay Mansion and the full story of our United States history.”

**President and Interim Executive Director Suzanne Clary said,** “The Jay Heritage Center (JHC) is enormously grateful to Sen. Shelley B. Mayer for this exceptional \$500,000 grant! Over 35,000 visitors come to the Jay Estate each year and many especially look forward to touring the Greek Revival building designed with iconic emblems of democracy. This transformational grant will expand JHC's capacity to host even more award-winning, inclusive events for our community, our partners, school groups, and educators, and afford them greater access and comfort.”

**Assemblyman Steve Otis, who has worked with and supported preservation and programing of the site since 1986 said,** “The Jay Center has earned great acclaim for their diverse educational programs featuring cultural, political, environmental, and architectural preservation history. Congratulations to Senator Mayer and the Jay Center for this important new state funding that will provide more space for these popular programs. The Jay Heritage Center is one of the most dynamic and active historic not-for-profits sites in New York State. Their ongoing partnership with New York State and Westchester County make the center a destination for school groups, families, and individuals throughout the year.”

**Westchester County Executive George Latimer said,** “We would like to thank New York State Senator Shelley Mayer for her leadership and vision for the Jay Heritage Estate, one of the County’s national historic landmarks and the home of American founding father John Jay. Jay was a noted jurist, governor, peacemaker and anti-slavery advocate, which designated the estate as a stop on Westchester County’s African American Heritage Trail. This \$500,000

grant will help to restore the landmark to its original glory, so it may continue to be used as a host for programs about American history, social justice, architecture and conservation."

**City of Rye Mayor Josh Cohn said,** "Jay Heritage is one of Rye's most important and worthy not-for-profits and the Jay Mansion is one of the jewels of Rye. We are enormously grateful to Senator Mayer for providing funds for the Mansion's restoration."

The Jay Estate is the place where Jay returned to celebrate the end of the American Revolutionary War after he negotiated the 1783 Treaty of Paris with fellow peacemakers John Adams and Benjamin Franklin. Part of the Boston Post Road Historic District, the Jay Heritage Center is a National Historic Landmark that holds significance for many Americans. It constitutes a portion of a 10,000+ year old Indigenous peoples archaeological site and is an important African American Heritage Trail site.

Recently, Jay Heritage Center was awarded a 2024 Best of Westchester Award for public Lectures and Talks.

Many of Jay Heritage Center's partners also attended the press conference, including:

African American Men of Westchester: Lee Jones, Olney Reynolds, Hugh Marriott, George Malone; American Women of African Heritage: President Gloria Welcome, Francine Shorts, Bridget Crichlow, Teresa Murphy; Japan Society of Greater Fairfield County: President Jackie Alexander, Hazue Tamara; Friends of the Rye African American Cemetery: Joan Grangenois-Thomas; Con Edison: Jane Solnick, Governmental Affairs Westchester; Save the Sound: Libby Alexander; Jay Heritage Center Board: President Suzanne Clary, Tim Yates, Olney Reynolds, Tracy Edwards, Lindsay Martin (and her daughter Bea); Jay Heritage Center Staff: Meredith Slater, Lucia Maestro, Alan Drewry, Barbara Specht; Jay Heritage Center Summer Fellows: Zachary Vanderslice (Columbia University), Wena Teng (Columbia

University), Shannon Stemper (Haub Environmental School of Law), Sumana Ali (Haub Environmental School of Law), Kiki Montgomery (Colgate University).

[Watch the full press conference here.](#)

Courtesy Photos:



Photo Courtesy of Kim Crichlow



State Senator Shelley B. Mayer



President Suzanne Clary