



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Lea Webb

Senator Webb Presents Awards to Local Leaders in Honor of Black History Month

LEA WEBB February 20, 2025

| ISSUE: **BLACK HISTORY MONTH, NYS COMMENDATION, NYS EMPIRE AWARD**



(BINGHAMTON, NY) – Today, Senator Webb honored Black local leaders from the Southern Tier in recognition of Black History Month. This celebration, marked by the presentation of four official awards from the New York State Senate, highlights the essential impact and accomplishments of Black individuals and businesses within the community.

This year, Senator Webb presented three Commendation Awards and one Empire Award, recognizing each individual for their dedication to community, service, education, and lasting impact for future generations. Each award celebrated the unique contributions these honorees have made to the betterment of their respective communities, highlighting their leadership, commitment to service, and efforts to inspire positive change.

The awards were presented to:

- **Asia Ambler**, School Mental Health Site Supervisor at Binghamton University Community Schools (BUCS); **A recipient of a NYS Senate Commendation Award.**
- **Dr. Luvelle Brown**, Superintendent of Ithaca City School District; **A recipient of a NYS Senate Commendation Award.**
- **Jesus Clarke**, Owner of Big Zues Barbecue; **A recipient of a NYS Senate Empire Award**
- **Dr. Tracy Hudson**, Assistant Professor at SUNY Cortland; **A recipient of a NYS Senate Commendation Award.**

Senator Webb stated, “Black History Month is a time to celebrate the achievements, resilience, and leadership of those who are making a difference in our communities. I am honored to recognize Ms. Asia Ambler, Dr. Luvelle Brown, Mr. Jesus Clarke, and Dr. Tracy Hudson for their outstanding contributions to entrepreneurship, service, leadership, education, and uplifting the next generation of students. Their dedication and impact within Senate District 52 serve as an inspiration to us all, and I am proud to celebrate their work in building a brighter, more equitable future not just during the month of February but every day of the year.”

“I am deeply honored to receive this recognition from Senator Webb, whom I have had the honor of witnessing her amazing career and I am inspired by her commitment to the work,”

said Asia Ambler. “I have been proud to serve as an educator in the Southern Tier for over 10 years, with an additional five as a youth change agent, and it is a privilege to support the growth and development of our students and families. The most rewarding aspect of my work is building community and connections with people and being a part of their story. I am humbled by this award and thankful for the opportunity to give back to the community I love and that has loved me.”

“I am deeply honored to receive this recognition from Senator Webb,” **said Dr. Luvelle Brown.** “I have served young people and my community in the Southern Tier for nearly 15 years. During that time, I have had the privilege of working and learning with many as we have significantly increased graduation rates, attendance, co-curricular engagement, and many other academic achievement indicators. The achievements along with stability in leadership has contributed to the cultivation of a loving community and organizational culture”.

“I am deeply honored to receive this recognition during Black History Month—a time to reflect on the resilience and contributions of Black leaders, entrepreneurs, and changemakers,” **said Jesus Clarke, Owner of Big Zues Barbecue.** “Thank you, Senator Webb, for this acknowledgment and for supporting Black-owned businesses. Big Zues is more than great food; it’s a space for culture, connection, and community. I dedicate this honor to my family, team, and loyal customers—your support fuels our passion every day. Let’s continue to uplift and invest in each other. And please remember, our words have power, and our children have ears. May God bless.”

“It is a tremendous honor to receive this Black History Award from Senator Lea Webb and to stand alongside so many remarkable individuals who are making a lasting impact in their communities,” **said Dr. Tracy Hudson.** “As an Assistant Professor in the Physical Education Department at SUNY Cortland and the President of the Ithaca Alumnae Chapter of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Incorporated, I take great pride in leading by example—creating

spaces where all people are seen as able, valuable, and responsible. True leadership is about more than personal success; it's about paving the way for others.”

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