



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Andrea Stewart-Cousins

## Senator Andrea Stewart-Cousins Speaks to the Westchester County YMCA Youth and Government Group in Preparation for a Statewide Competition

ANDREA STEWART-COUSINS February 5, 2010

(Yonkers, NY)- On Wednesday, February 3<sup>rd</sup> New York State Senator Andrea Stewart-Cousins spoke to the Westchester County YMCA Youth and Government Group as they prepare for a statewide conference they will be attending next month. Comprised of students from Pleasantville High School and the Yonkers YMCA, the Westchester County Youth and Government Group meets twice a month at Mercy College to learn public speaking skills, civics and legislative drafting. The experience will culminate in early March, when the group travels to Albany for the statewide YMCA Youth and Government conference. The Westchester students will join delegates from YMCA's across New York State to pass bills in a mock legislative session.

Senator Andrea Stewart-Cousins secured funding for the Westchester County YMCA Youth and Government program through a legislative grant last year. She also helped arrange for the students from diverse communities throughout the 35th District to meet in classroom space on the Mercy College campus.

“Providing students with knowledge about the government process and real leadership training is a vital service to our community. I applaud the Yonkers YMCA, Pleasantville High

School and Mercy College for their dedication to continuing this important mission and their enthusiastic collaboration on ensuring the success of this valuable program,” said Senator Andrea Stewart-Cousins.

Established in 1936, the New York State YMCA Youth & Government Program has served thousands of young people over its history. The YMCA Youth & Government Program provides teens with the opportunity to learn about the legislative process as well as provide information on ways to participate in and to petition the government.

As one of the final stages of the program, delegates will meet with their local representatives and lobby for the bills passed in the mock legislature. Over eighty laws passed in the State of New York were first introduced in the New York State YMCA Youth & Government Legislature.