



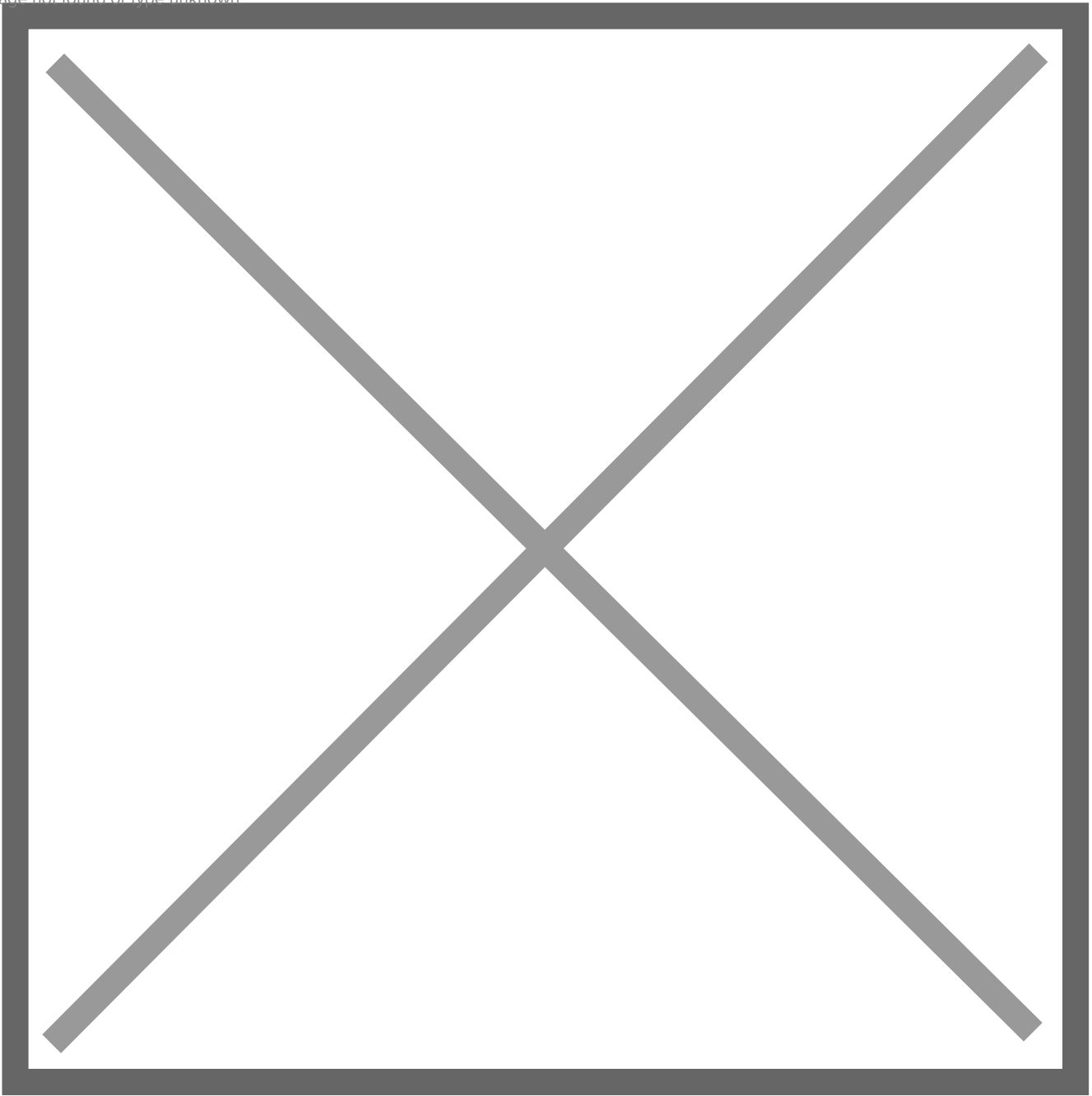
NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

James L. Seward

## Homer Woman Honored As 2014 Senate Woman Of Distinction

JAMES L. SEWARD May 13, 2014

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**ALBANY, 05/13/14** – State Senator James L. Seward (R/C/I-Oneonta) today honored Mary Alice Bellardini of Homer as the 2014 Senate “Woman of Distinction” from the 51st senate district at the 17th annual senate Women of Distinction ceremony at the Capitol.

**“Over the years, I have been fortunate to highlight a number of inspirational, trailblazing leaders through the senate’s Women of Distinction program, and this year is no different,”** said Senator

Seward. **“Mary Alice Bellardini has been a driving force in the Homer community for the past six decades and shows no signs of slowing down.”**

Mary Alice Bellardini is a trailblazing leader who has made countless contributions to present day Cortland County and the community’s future well-being. An honorable elected official, a driven champion of historic preservation and an insightful advocate for economic development, Mary Alice has stayed true to her values while advancing ideals that have benefited the greater good.

**“Mary Alice Bellardini had a true vision for the Village of Homer and as the village’s first woman mayor, helped champion a number of initiatives that are still paying dividends today,”** added Seward.

Mayor Bellardini’s administration was responsible for new water and sewer lines, a much needed public health and economic development enhancement. She initiated weekly summer concerts, reopened the Water Street bridge walkway, and beautified the business district. Mayor Bellardini was ahead of her time championing causes like sustainability and historic preservation long before they were popular mainstream ideals.

Mary Alice Bellardini also co-founded the Landmark Society of Cortland County Inc.

Through her leadership, the group has preserved our history and helped showcase it for future generations. Homer’s historic district alone is home to over 200 structures of note, the largest such district in New York State.

**“Mary Alice Bellardini understands the great value of Cortland County’s history and continues to devote her time and energy to the Landmark Society, ensuring our storied past will be appreciated long into the future. She embodies the meaning of a true ‘Woman of Distinction’ for all of her inspiring and continuing achievements,”** Seward concluded.

The senate's "Woman of Distinction" program was created in 1998 to honor New York women who exemplify personal excellence, or whose professional achievements or acts of courage, selflessness, integrity or perseverance serve as an example to all New Yorkers.

Previous winners in the annual event have included leading women from the worlds of business, academics and civic life, as well as those who have performed heroic or selfless acts, made significant discoveries or provided examples of personal excellence against difficult odds.

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*Photo attached: Senator James L. Seward with 2014 New York State Senate Women of Distinction honoree Mary Alice Bellardini of Homer.*