



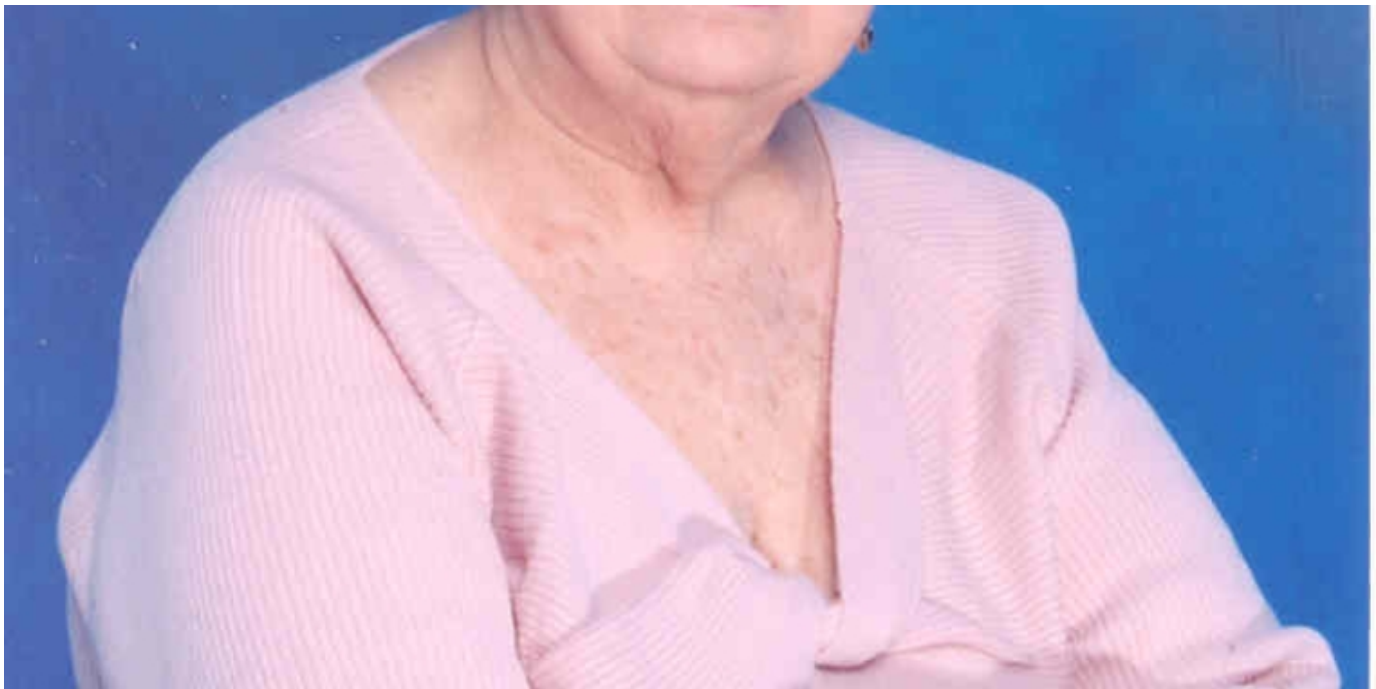
NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Pedro Espada Jr.

Joy Cousminer - 2010 Woman of Distinction

PEDRO ESPADA, JR. May 25, 2010

| ISSUE: **CONSTITUENTS CORNER**



Tuesday May 25, 2010 - Senate Majority Leader Pedro Espada, Jr. and the NYS Senate honored Joy Cousminer as one of several 2010 Women of Distinction in New York State.

Joy Cousminer is President/CEO of Bethex Federal Credit Union, and one of its original founders. She spearheads all strategic planning, daily management, marketing and more.

She has received several awards over the years:

- The Annie Vamper Award from the National Federation of Community Development Credit Unions;
- The Bronx Visionary Award from South Bronx Overall Economic Development corporation;
- The Visionary Award from the Neighborhood Economic Development Advocacy Project;
- The Herb Wegner Individual Achievement Award (considered to be the highest honor in the credit union movement) in Feb. 2006, for her work with the underserved; and
- The Local Heroes Award from Bank of America.

Joy Cousminer and her Credit Union have been providing free tax preparation to generations of low-income residents in the Bronx and New York City, many of whom struggle with the English language. Joy has helped hundreds from being taken advantage of by other paid tax service providers, and has worked past midnight on a regular basis for years during tax season, so no one would be turned away.

“But what I really want you to know about Joy is her unwavering drive to give to her community,” said Senator Espada. “In fact, the Bethex Federal Credit Union was founded by welfare mothers forty years ago, women receiving Aid for Dependent Children, and for the first 20 years of operation, NO ONE, including Joy, received a paycheck. Now that’s dedication.”

Even now, in this recession, Joy and the credit union are going over and above to serve the community. They are the only SBA lenders in the City who are offering start-up loans for small business, and they are taking applications right now.

“For these reasons and more,” said Senator Espada, “ I am deeply proud to be honoring Joy Cousminer as our Woman of Distinction for 2010.”