



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Ruth Hassell-Thompson

## Shawyn Patterson Howard

RUTH HASSELL-THOMPSON May 13, 2015

A horizontal award banner with a pink background and a white border. On the left is a portrait of Shawyn Patterson Howard, a woman with dark curly hair wearing a blue blazer. To the right of the portrait is a large, stylized pink leaf graphic. Further right, the text reads: "Women of" in a cursive font, "DISTINCTION" in large, bold, pink block letters, and "HONORING WOMEN IN NEW YORK" in smaller, grey block letters. At the bottom right, the name "Shawyn Patterson Howard" is written in a large, bold, pink serif font.



Shawyn Patterson Howard

**Award:** HONORING WOMEN IN NEW YORK

**Year:** 2015

Shawyn Patterson Howard serves as the President and CEO of the YMCA of Yonkers. Often referred to as a trailblazer and game changer, Ms. Howard became the first woman and person of color to lead the association when appointed in November 2008.

Ms. Howard is a proud graduate of Mount Vernon High, Howard University School of Social Work, and John Jay College of Criminal Justice where she earned a Master's in Public Administration and Urban Development. Her family, mentors and education birthed in her a spirit of community development and social activism which she maintains to this day.

While widely known for her groundbreaking work in HIV/AIDS, public health, criminal justice, education, housing and urban development, Ms. Howard has developed strong relationships with government and cross sector leaders on a local, state and national level. As a "connector" she has always maintained a strong focus on developing systemic solutions that will address the complex social determinants that have plagued our communities for decades. She passionately works with her staff and community partners to create continuums of service and innovative public/private partnerships to serve those who have been marginalized, disenfranchised and are oftentimes voiceless. Ms. Howard's favorite African Proverb is, "When spider webs unite, we can tie up a lion," or as we say in the Y, we are "Better Together."

Ms. Howard believes in the untapped leadership potential of young people, women and persons of color and has worked tirelessly to help them find their voice, passion and purpose while challenging them to become more intentional about creating their path to "servant leadership."

She credits her work to those she serves, those who have mentored her and continue to support her development, her incredible staff , colleagues and devoted family and friends.

Ms. Howard is the proud wife of Marvin and mother of Nia. She draws enormous strength from her relationship with Christ, her expansive family and the Greater Eternal Light Church where she serves as an Evangelist.