



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Andrea Stewart-Cousins

## Senator Andrea Stewart-Cousins Honored At ArtsWestchester Gala

ANDREA STEWART-COUSINS November 22, 2016

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White Plains, NY - Senator Andrea Stewart-Cousins was honored by ArtsWestchester during its annual gala at the Ritz-Carlton Hotel on Saturday, November 18 in White Plains.

ArtsWestchester is an arts council that works to improve access to the arts to ensure that every resident of the county can explore his or her creative impulses and reap the benefits of artistic expression.

Each year, ArtsWestchester hosts a themed dinner to honor members of the community who have demonstrated a staunch commitment to promoting the arts. This year, ArtsWestchester honored five women who have supported artistic expression throughout Westchester: Mary Calvi, Co-Anchor for CBS 2 News; Barbaralee Diamonstein-Spielvogel, Chair of the New York State Council on the Arts; Maria Ferreira, Area President of Wells Fargo; Emily Grant, an arts patron; and Senator Stewart-Cousins.

Senator Stewart-Cousins was recognized for her long career of fighting for arts funding and improving accessibility to arts programs and activities. As Director of Community of Affairs for the City of Yonkers, she co-founded Riverfest, a vibrant celebration of community and culture on the Yonkers Waterfront, and was instrumental in helping to revitalize the city's downtown landscape through the "Art on Main" program.

"My office helped create this organization to help artists come together, organize, and bring beauty to the waterfront," said Senator Stewart-Cousins.

"Encouraging artistic expression was the first step to revitalizing downtown Yonkers. We supported it, we encouraged it, and we funded it – and everyone in Yonkers can now see the amazing fruits of this labor and understand the importance of investing in the arts."

As a State Senator and Leader of the Senate Democrats, Senator Stewart-Cousins has consistently fought to secure funding for the arts in the State Budget. The 2016-2017 State Budget provides \$46,923,000 for the New York State Council on the Arts (NYSCA), which promotes art programs and provides artists throughout the state with the resources they need to preserve New York's rich artistic heritage.

NYSCA distributed \$461,530 in grants to various arts organizations throughout Senator Stewart-Cousins' Senate District, which encompasses Greenburgh and Scarsdale and parts of

New Rochelle, White Plains, and Yonkers. Recipients of these grants included ArtsWestchester, Yonkers' Youth Theatre Interactions Inc., Elmsford's Greater Hudson Heritage Network, and eight other organizations throughout the district.

“Art has an invaluable impact on our intellectual development and outlook on life,” said Senator Stewart-Cousins. “I saw this firsthand when I taught in Yonkers Public Schools, and I look forward to the day everyone has access to a rich and robust artistic education.”

For more information about ArtsWestchester, please visit: <http://artswestchester.org/>