



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Andrea Stewart-Cousins

## Riverside HS Senior, Recommended by Senate Majority Leader Andrea Stewart-Cousins, is Nominated for Prestigious US Presidential Scholars Program

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**Yonkers, NY** – Upon the recommendation of Majority Leader Andrea Stewart-Cousins, Riverside High School Senior Daniel Leon of Yonkers has been nominated for the U.S. Presidential Scholars Program by State Education Department Commissioner Betty A. Rosa.

The Presidential Scholar recognition is one of the nation’s most prestigious honors for high school students and is awarded after a very selective process. Daniel is one of just 25 students from New York to be nominated as a candidate, and he now moves up in the selection process.

“I’m thrilled that Daniel Leon of Riverside High School was nominated for the U.S. Presidential Scholars Program by Commissioner Rosa. Daniel is an exceptional student who has overcome personal barriers and stands out as a leader among his peers, said State Senate Majority Leader Andrea Stewart-Cousins. “Mastering class materials and tests at school, Daniel has already earned 13 college credits at Westchester Community College. Outside of school, he guides others in how to study and learn. Coming from a working-class immigrant

family, Daniel is determined to show members of his community and extended family — many who have not finished high school — the importance of education. I was proud to recommend him for this prestigious honor.”

“Daniel Leon is the master of his own destiny and a champion for his peers, administrators, and teachers at Riverside High School. Throughout his years in Yonkers Public Schools, Daniel was laser-focused to overcome his educational challenges,” noted Dr. Edwin M. Quezada, Superintendent of the Yonkers Public Schools. With the support of his caring family and teachers, Daniel mastered high school academics and simultaneously earned college credits towards his career goals. Daniel understands the value of an education sharing this passion by helping his peers study and being a role model for his immigrant family and community. He personifies the prestigious Presidential Scholars Program.

Yonkers Public Schools wants to thank Majority Leader Andrea Stewart-Cousins for nominating Daniel Leon and Education Commissioner Betty A. Rosa for choosing Daniel for the prestigious Presidential Scholars Program.”

Riverside High School Principal Dr. Don Solimene shared, “Since entering our building four years ago, Daniel Leon has exhibited true determination and a drive to succeed in all that he does. Daniel has taken a keen interest in the academics and programs at Riverside and has displayed from early on a level of performance above his peers. Daniel’s overall goal is to succeed and to show members of his community that education can pave the way for a better life for immigrants who are trying to achieve the “American Dream.” As his principal, I have seen Daniel grow from a shy 9th grader to a mature and committed young man who has taken on roles and responsibilities beyond his age. I am greatly impressed with Daniel and his academic successes. He has overcome many challenges and barriers to taking on additional responsibilities to help others. We, at Riverside, are very proud of his achievements and look forward to seeing him continue to grow and excel.”

Candidate selection by Commissioner Rosa was based on outstanding scholarship, heavy workload, family responsibilities, overcoming challenges, community and school involvement, leadership, and character, among other qualifications. Daniel Leon was one of five students Majority Leader Stewart-Cousins recommended from her district.

In January, Daniel will join other students who were nominated from all 50 states and will be invited by the US Department of Education to apply for the next step in the Presidential Scholars Process. Semifinalists will then be notified in mid-April and Scholars will be notified in May.

Students ultimately selected by the White House Commission on Presidential Scholars will go to Washington in June to meet national and international figures, including government officials, authors, educators, and entertainers. They will also attend ceremonies and recitals, visit museums and forge friendships with other recipients from around the country.

Students will then receive the U.S. Presidential Scholars medallion at a ceremony sponsored by the White House.

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Senate Majority Leader Andrea Stewart-Cousins represents a significant portion of Yonkers, the Town of Greenburgh, Scarsdale, and parts of White Plains and New Rochelle in the 35th NYS Senate District. To learn more about her legislative and community efforts, [click here](#).

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