



Assemblymember

# SHELLEY MAYER

Fall 2014

## Community Newsletter

### Your Perspective Matters

Dear Neighbor:

*I am honored to have been reelected to my second full term representing the City of Yonkers in the New York State Assembly. Whether you are a homeowner, renter, senior, child, or veteran, I look forward to advocating for you in the discussions surrounding the New York State budget and in the legislative session that begins in January. As always, I appreciate your comments and input!*

Warmly,

Shelley Mayer

### Please join me for a **Holiday Open House**

Thursday,  
December 11<sup>th</sup>  
4:00–6:00 p.m.

35 East Grassy Sprain  
Road, Suite 406B  
Yonkers, NY 10710

### Lawmakers, Businesses Leaders: No Casino in Orange County

Joined by business leaders, including The Business Council of Westchester, and other state lawmakers, including Assemblyman J. Gary Pretlow, D-Mount Vernon and Chair of the Assembly Racing and Wagering Committee, Senate Minority Conference Leader Andrea Stewart-Cousins, D-Yonkers, Sen. George Latimer, D-Rye, Assemblyman Tom Abinanti, D-Greenburgh, Sen. Ruth Hassell-Thompson, D-Mount Vernon, and Assemblyman Michael Benedetto, D-Bronx, I implored the New York State Gaming Commission to reject any license for a casino in Orange County. The plan to build a gaming facility very close to Empire City Casino will jeopardize a proven job-creator and revenue generator. Empire City Casino employs 1,400 people including many from southern Westchester and the Bronx, contributes directly to support the Yonkers Public Schools, and generates roughly \$350 million every year for New York State. We insisted that building any casino or granting any gaming license for Orange County—a short distance from existing facilities in Yonkers and New York City and other possible casinos in Sullivan and Ulster counties—would violate the spirit of the legislation and the constitutional amendment, which allow as many as seven full-scale casinos as part of a plan to create jobs in economically distressed areas of upstate New York.



*Along with Assemblymen Gary Pretlow, Steve Otis, Tom Abinanti, Senator Ruth Hassell-Thompson, and The Business Council of Westchester, I spoke out against siting a casino in Orange County.*

If you would like to receive my e-newsletter or information about events I am organizing, please send your name and email address to: [mayers@assembly.state.ny.us](mailto:mayers@assembly.state.ny.us).

## ASSEMBLYMEMBER SHELLEY MAYER

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## Service Disabled Veteran-Owned Business Act

This past legislative session I was proud to support the passage of A.9135/S.6865, the “Service Disabled Veteran-Owned Business Act,” which provides a comprehensive plan and guidelines to promote service-disabled veteran-owned business enterprises. With the goal of expanding economic opportunity for veterans, this law, which the Governor signed, establishes a program to increase participation of “Service-Disabled Veteran-Owned Business Enterprises” in New York state contracting. New York is home to more than 900,000 veterans, most of whom served in combat, almost 100,000 of whom served in Afghanistan or Iraq. Even though New York has the fourth-highest number of veteran-owned small businesses in the country, returning veterans still struggle to reenter into the economy. This legislation helps Certified Service-Disabled Veteran-Owned Business Enterprises expand and provides opportunities for veterans returning from conflicts abroad to start new businesses in New York.



*With Representative Nita Lowey at the Pace Women’s Justice Center Dinner.*

## Fighting For Universal Pre-Kindergarten for Yonkers

When the legislative session begins in January, one of my top priorities will be fighting to ensure all four-year-olds in Yonkers have access to high quality full-day pre-kindergarten. Research indicates that high quality pre-kindergarten programs are highly effective in closing the achievement gap and increasing opportunity for low-income students. Recognizing the importance of this early investment, the 2014 New York State budget provided \$1.5 billion over five years to implement Universal Pre-K Programs across the state. For the first year of implementation, \$340 million was provided, \$300 million of which was dedicated to New York City and the remaining \$40 million allocated on a competitive basis across the state.

The reimbursement and announcement timetables made it difficult for many districts, including Yonkers, to apply for this funding. However, there are over two thousand students in Yonkers who would benefit from and likely participate in full-day pre-kindergarten if it was offered. Some of these students are participating in the district’s half-day program, but with over seventy-five percent of students eligible for free and reduced lunch, high quality full-day pre-kindergarten is essential for Yonkers children to succeed. I am pleased the Governor recognized the importance of continuing this investment, and I look forward to ensuring Yonkers children and families have access to this important programming.



*Proud to receive the Friend of Labor award from United Food and Commercial Workers Local 1500 for my work on behalf of Mrs. Green’s workers.*



*I was pleased to participate in a ceremony naming a street in honor of Sid Caesar. He was born and raised in Yonkers, and he gained so much of his humor from being around the diversity that was and still is Yonkers.*



*With Yonkers Mayor Mike Spano and Marcus Blacknall at Westchester Disabled on the Move’s Spirit of Independence Award Breakfast.*

## Securing the Arts for Our Public Schools

As a lifelong proponent of arts education within our public schools, I am glad to announce our victory in gaining funds to develop a strong arts program within the Yonkers Public School district. After partnering with ArtsWestchester and fellow Assemblymember Gary Pretlow, we are proud to bring forward a new program that will invigorate our public school curriculum with innovative artist residencies. The funds will be used to establish over 60 artist residencies throughout the Yonkers Public School district. The artists will be selected by ArtsWestchester through a competitive review process, focusing on local artists with classroom experience. In addition to the artist residencies, the program will provide professional development opportunities for teachers, site visits for students to cultural venues, and much-needed art supplies throughout the district. This program will draw on the strengths of the school district and ArtsWestchester to provide the arts programming Yonkers students not only need, but deserve.



With Assemblyman Gary Pretlow in the Columbus Day Parade.



At JCY's Inter-Gen Fest 2014, an intergenerational community event co-sponsored by the Westchester County Department of Senior programs, the Westchester Public/Private Partnership for Aging Services, the NY State Intergenerational Network-Westchester Chapter, Jewish Home Lifecare, Sarah Neuman Center and JCY-Westchester Community Partners, as well as the Livable Communities-Age Friendly, Education and Intergenerational collaboratives.

## After School Funding

In addition to securing \$500,000 for arts programming in the Yonkers Public Schools, I am pleased that Assemblyman Pretlow and I secured a \$500,000 Assembly grant for after school programming in the Yonkers Public Schools. With so many parents of school aged children working full-time and growing concern with educational outcomes, there is increased attention to the time between when children get out of school and their parents get home from work. Working with The After School Corporation (TASC) and the Yonkers Public School District, we will have twenty weeks of after school academic and enrichment programming available in four middle schools in the Yonkers Public Schools. In addition, we will have an analysis of the current after-school programming in Yonkers, as well as needs.

## Governor Cuomo Signed Bill Providing for Accurate and Current Information and Reporting About Missing Vulnerable Adults

Over the summer, Governor Cuomo signed the bill I sponsored that will expand the information and reporting available on missing vulnerable adults. New York State has a missing children clearinghouse and a missing vulnerable adult clearing house, but under current law, law enforcement agencies only have reporting requirements to the Division of Criminal Justice Services on a semi-annual basis for missing children. This new law addresses this situation by authorizing law enforcement departments to include infor-

mation on missing vulnerable adults in these semi-annual reports. Vulnerable adults include individuals eighteen years of age or older who have a cognitive impairment, mental disability, or brain disorder. In addition, law enforcement must determine the missing vulnerable adult's disappearance poses a credible threat to his/her safety. With an estimated 5.2 million Americans with Alzheimer's disease and an aging population, there is a growing need for comprehensive information on these missing vulnerable adults.

## Yonkers State and City Delegations Secure Important Grants for State-of-the-Art Technology Center At Yonkers Public Library Riverfront Branch

Along with members of the Yonkers State Delegation, which includes Senator Andrea Stewart-Cousins, the Minority Conference Leader, Senator George Latimer, and Assemblyman Gary Pretlow, I was joined by Yonkers Mayor Mike Spano to announce \$285,000 combined funding from state and federal resources toward creation of a new state-of-the-art technology

center at the Yonkers Public Library Riverfront Branch. The new technology center will allow the library to consolidate technology instruction in one centralized state-of-the-art location. The space will accommodate classes of up to thirty patrons, who will get hands-on experience with laptops, tablets, as well as a wide variety of popular computer programs. The new room

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## Yonkers Public Library Riverfront Branch • *Continued from page 3*

will also have a digital media lab to allow audio and video production and editing. The lab will have a control room, a recording room, and a 'green screen' for video effects. A third component of the center will be a 'makerspace' room that will allow users to collaborate on projects using 3-D printers and other equipment. I secured \$100,000 in funding through the New York State Assembly's Community Capital Assistance Program (CCAP) for the technology center. The Community Capital Assistance Program (CCAP) provides grants to promote

community improvement within New York, including education, transportation, and economic development projects. Through the 2013-14 Library Construction grant program of the State Education Department, Senator Andrea Stewart-Cousins and Assemblyman Gary Pretlow delivered \$74,946 in funding. Yonkers Mayor Mike Spano and the City of Yonkers Planning Department helped secure a \$110,000 Community Development Block Grant (CDBG), which is a federal program that helps communities address their unique needs.



*Senator Andrea Stewart-Cousins, the Minority Conference Leader; Assemblymember Shelley Mayer; Yonkers Mayor Mike Spano; Stephen Force, Director, Yonkers Public Library; and Edward Falcone, Deputy Director Yonkers Public Library, along with Councilman Christopher Johnson, library staff and Library Board Trustees announcing important grants for state-of-the-art technology center at Yonkers Public Library Riverfront Branch.*



Assemblymember  
**SHELLEY  
MAYER**

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**Community Newsletter**

Join me and the New York State Attorney General's Office for an Important Program:

### **Smart Seniors: How to Protect Yourself from Scams and Frauds**

This program with the New York State Attorney General's Office focusing on scams and frauds that target older adults will outline the warning signs, suggest how to avoid becoming a victim, and explain where to seek help if you think you are a victim. There will be special emphasis on common telephone scams such as the "grandparent scam" and the "foreign lottery scam." The program will be presented by Gary Brown, Assistant Attorney General In Charge, Westchester Regional Office.

**Monday,  
December 15<sup>th</sup>  
1:00 p.m.**

Grinton I. Will Library  
Yonkers, NY 10710

**For more information call 914-779-8805 or email [mayers@assembly.state.ny.us](mailto:mayers@assembly.state.ny.us)**