



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Lea Webb

## Senator Webb Honors Local Women at Her Second Annual Women's History Month Award Reception

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| ISSUE: **WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH**



**(Binghamton, NY)** – Today, Senator Lea Webb hosted her second annual Women's History Month Award Reception at the State Office Building in Binghamton. Webb recognized 14 notable women from across Senate District 52 who have significantly impacted their communities, including small business owners, educators, public servants, and community advocates.

Awards and recognitions were presented to:

- **Dr. Anne C. Bailey**, *New York State Senate Commendation Award Recipient*
- **Dr. Sharon Bryant**, *New York State Senate Commendation Award Recipient*
- **Sharon Chesna**, *New York State Senate Commendation Award Recipient*
- **Stacey Pryor**, *New York State Senate Empire Award for Business Excellence*
- **Chantay Skrine**, *New York State Senate Empire Award for Business Excellence*
- **Mary Kaminsky**, *New York State Senate Proclamation*
- **Ruth Lewis**, *New York State Senate Proclamation*
- **Martha Robertson**, *New York State Senate Proclamation*
- **Josephine Burrell**, *New York State Senate Certificate of Achievement*
- **Dr. Tracy Hudson**, *New York State Senate Certificate of Achievement*
- **Denise Crystallia Dendtler Lee**, *New York State Senate Certificate of Achievement*
- **Karima Legette**, *New York State Senate Certificate of Achievement*
- **Schelley Michell-Nunn**, *New York State Senate Certificate of Achievement*
- **Kelly Tobin**, *New York State Senate Certificate of Achievement*

**Senator Webb stated**, "Women's History Month is a time to recognize and celebrate the invaluable contributions women have made throughout history, highlighting their achievements, resilience, and the ongoing struggle for reproductive freedom and gender equity. I am proud to recognize these local trailblazers, who have done so much for our communities. When we empower women and ensure that they have access to the resources they need to fulfill their potential and follow their dreams, not only do we improve the lives of women, by extension we also strengthen families, communities, and our entire state."

*Quotes in alphabetical order:*

**Said Dr. Anne C. Bailey,** “It is such an honor to receive this award from Sen. Lea Webb, someone I deeply admire. As the founding Director of the Harriet Tubman Center for Freedom and Equity at Binghamton University, I have worked with my team to develop research based solutions for contemporary problems regarding race and ethnicity. Our most recent project, the Downtown Binghamton Freedom Trail, welcomes one and all to walk in the footsteps of heroes and sheroes of the Underground Railroad network and the civil rights movement.”

**Said Josephine Burrell,** “Thank you to Senator Webb for recognizing me for my work in our community. I have spent the last 46 years as a community advocate on Binghamton’s north side, mostly relating to housing for our low-income residents. Over the last several years, my work not only included decent apartments for our residents, but home ownership and economic mobility for our essential, low-income residents. At the age of 81, I am still trying to help establish a tiny homes community for our essential working low-income residents.”

“I am honored and thrilled to be recognized by Senator Webb for my work in the community and NYS throughout my career in community and family services,” **said Sharon Chesna.** “For the past 30+ years, I focused on striving for improvements in services and care for women, infants and families. With this goal in mind, I have had the honor to work with so many dedicated and amazing individuals, government officials and other agencies to effect change and make a difference for women and families. NYS is so fortunate to have leaders such as Senator Webb who identify the need for essential services and fight to ensure our great state invests in health and social need programs and services.”

**Said Dr. Tracy Hudson,** “Receiving this award from Senator Lea Webb is truly an honor, and I am deeply grateful to be recognized alongside other remarkable women who are making

significant contributions as trailblazers in their communities. This acknowledgment inspires me to continue striving for positive change and to empower those around me. As an alumna of SUNY Cortland, it brings me great joy to have returned to my alma mater as an assistant professor. I firmly believe in the adage that you grow where you are planted, and Cortland is my home. Over the past three years, I have intentionally sought out opportunities to give back to my community. Noteworthy endeavors include delivering the keynote address for Cortland's Juneteenth celebration, conducting Youth Mental Health First Aid workshops, and facilitating Kingian Nonviolence training for both the YWCA and SUNY Cortland. These initiatives underscore my dedication to fostering positive change and promoting inclusivity. Thank you, Senator Webb, for your leadership and the inspiration to continue the work of servitude."

"It is an immense honor to be recognized by Senator Lea Webb, a woman I deeply admire and respect," **said Mary Kaminsky, Broome County Legislator.** "Being a lifelong resident of Binghamton, NY, one of the best places to live, has only deepened my commitment to serving our community. For over 40 years, I've been proud to dedicate myself to the nonprofit sector, working tirelessly to uplift those in need and amplify their voices. It's a privilege to call this vibrant city home and to have the opportunity to make a meaningful difference in the lives of its residents every day."

**Denise Crystallia Dendtler Lee,** "As the great Cecily Tyson has said, *"I think when you begin to think of yourself as having achieved something, then there's nothing left to work towards. I want to believe that there is a mountain so high that I will spend my entire life striving to reach the top of it."* "This quote exemplifies my core beliefs and drives me to continue to climb the mountain of opportunity for students and their families. We must continue to encourage our children to strive and thrive to work to the best of their abilities. It is an absolute honor to receive this prestigious award from our 52nd District Senator Lea Webb. I appreciate her thoughtfulness, caring and kind ways. We are blessed to have her as our New York State Senator. May she

continue to do the excellent work in our 52nd District and make us proud!"

**Said Karima Legette**, "It is such a great honor to be recognized by Senator Lea Webb, who was my neighbor on Binghamton's South Side as a young teen. When I think back to that time and my introduction to Binghamton, I was trying so hard to find my voice and a space where I could create my future. I represent many women and families who have come to Binghamton and blossomed into their divine womanhood, as creators, innovators, caretakers, and decision-makers. Together, we each add a special vibrancy to the tapestry that is our community, this district. Throughout my 20-year professional career, my goal has always been to inspire others with love, encouragement, and compassion. Serving as a beacon of guidance for others on their paths toward their dreams allows me to feel the impact that I make. Empowering others on their higher learning journeys has been a cornerstone of my work at Binghamton University, State University of New York. As a public servant, my leadership to the greater community allows me to teach, uplift, and support those around me. I firmly believe that as we climb the ladder of success, it is our duty to lift others along with us, and my mother Ms. Cookie modeled that for me. My wish is for the young women and little girls behind me to know that it is okay to create your own pathway. And, there is support for that. "

"It is indeed a highlight of my life to receive this award from Senator Lea Webb," **said Ruth Lewis**. "I am truly humbled to be included in this group of outstanding, hard-working recipients. I will continue to make voter registration a priority and continue to fight for the underdog. I thank Senator Webb for making my hometown of Binghamton so proud during her first outstanding term as New York State Senator."

"This is an incredible honor to be recognized by Senator Webb for work that comes natural and is my passion. I strongly believe that if each individual has the opportunity to maximize their potential, then everyone will benefit," **said Schelley Michell-Nunn**. "I am very proud of the

programs that have come from my vision and excellent work from a number of co-conspirators, the Hospitality Employment Training Program (HETP), the Ultimate Re-entry Opportunity (URO), the mass viewing of Race: the Power of an Illusion - Understand to Overcome (U2O), to name a few. Tompkins County is a great place to be and a place where you can dramatically and positively impact lives.”

**Said Stacey Pryor, Owner of Sinfully Sweet Cafe in Homer,** “It is a true honor to receive this award today. Thank you Senator Lea Webb for your recognition not only to myself but to all the incredible recipients of today’s awards. Her dedication and commitment to our communities is truly appreciated. I opened my business very naive. Since 2016 I have grown as a business owner and it is because of guidance from other business owners and working with my community. We have now branched into other communities and are helping with fundraising needs and are participating in community events and farm markets. This would not have been possible without the help and support of people such as Senator Webb and other local organizations and dignitaries. Small businesses are essential and on behalf of myself, family and staff I am truly grateful.”

“It’s been a great honor to have served the Town of Dryden and Tompkins County as an elected official for two decades, and to continue the work as a volunteer after retirement,” **said Martha Robertson, Former Chair of the Tompkins County Legislature.** “Collaborating with dedicated, smart, creative advocates, County staff, and fellow legislators, we got some very important things done for this beautiful community and impacted policy and funding at the state level. It’s been a long trajectory, from organizing an Ithaca “Campaign for Children” as a Cornell student in the 1970’s, through being a leader in the Ithaca Sciencenter’s journey to build a permanent museum in the 1990’s, to fighting for climate action and affordable housing in the 2000’s, through to today, I’ve been lucky to work with some incredible people, including our fabulous Senator Lea Webb.”

**Said Chantay Skrine, Owner of Sweetay's LLC,** "First and foremost, I want to thank Senator Webb for this wonderful award and for her dedication to making our community a better place. I am so proud to call the Southern Tier my home for the last 23 years. This community has allowed me to grow into the businesswomen I am today. With 28 years in the culinary and hospitality field, I have used my knowledge to inspire, and motivate others in our community to chase their dreams no matter the circumstance. Having been surrounded by some of the most influential and dedicated people with one common goal, to make our community a place we can be proud of. The importance of leadership is crucial in today's society, leaders are needed more than ever. That's why through my business platform I'm able to reach individuals and share the love that I have not only for food but for the love I have for this community as a whole. I plan to sweeten up the world one treat at a time and I'm so honored to have started here in the Southern Tier."

"It is such an honor to receive this award by Senator Lea Webb and to be recognized with all the other remarkable women who are trailblazers in their communities," **said Kelly Tobin, Executive Director of the Cortland YWCA.** "I call Cortland home and therefore take great responsibility for who we are as a community. In my time at the YWCA we've been able to expand services to meet the growing housing needs for victims of Domestic Violence. In 2022, the YWCA opened it's first permanent supportive housing for women and children survivors of Domestic Violence. In 2023, the YWCA was awarded funding to open another 30 units serving women and men. Thank you, Senator Webb, for your dedication to our community and the YWCA's mission."

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