



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Sean M. Ryan

# **Senator Sean Ryan Selects Jessie Fisher As 2024 ‘Women Of Distinction’ Honoree**

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Senator Sean Ryan presents Jessie Fisher with the 2024 New York State Senate Women of Distinction Award at a ceremony in Albany, May 14, 2024

Community Leader Has Dedicated Her Career to Historic Preservation and the Revitalization of Buffalo and Surrounding Communities

**ALBANY** – On Tuesday, May 14, 2024, New York State Senator Sean Ryan recognized Jessie Fisher, Executive Director of Frank Lloyd Wright’s Martin House, as a member of the 2024 New York State Senate Women of Distinction class of honorees. An alumna of Canisius University with a Master’s Degree in Urban Design and Planning from the University of Washington, Fisher has dedicated her career to using the power of place to build stronger, healthier communities.

She began her career in Buffalo working for Flynn Battaglia Architects, where she led such innovative projects as the Elmwood Village Design Guidelines, the first project of its kind in the City of Buffalo, showing the importance of neighborhood-based planning. She oversaw all aspects of the preservation and conversion of downtown Buffalo’s Asbury Delaware Methodist Episcopal Church into the Asbury Arts Center, the first project in New York State to combine the Historic and New Market Tax Credits, which led to hundreds of historic adaptive reuse projects throughout Buffalo.

As the Director of Planning at Buffalo Niagara Waterkeeper, Fisher led the organization's green infrastructure portfolio, leading to the installation of demonstration projects that resulted in the Buffalo Sewer Authority allocating \$300 million in its consent decree to green infrastructure projects. The results of this work can be seen along Niagara Street and William Street, whose streetscapes have been transformed into places that are better for people and the watershed.

As the Executive Director of Preservation Buffalo Niagara, Fisher transformed the organization. Under her leadership, the Broadway-Fillmore Certified Local Historic District was formed, making homeowner tax credits available as a tool for supporting the community's richly diverse residents. The organization created a revolving loan program to assist with building stabilization for at-risk historic buildings, pioneered a preservation-based receivership program, and convinced Empire State Development to invest \$5 million in stabilizing small-scale, at-risk commercial buildings on Buffalo's East Side.

Fisher is deeply engaged in preservation policy on the national stage, serving on the board of directors of the National Preservation Partners Taskforce, and as part of the steering committee of the Preservation Priorities Task Force. Locally, Fisher has served on the Boards of the Landmarks Society of the Niagara Frontier, Forever Elmwood, the New Millennium Group, and the Buffalo Niagara River Land Trust.

**Senator Sean Ryan** said, "Jessie has always been a steadfast ally for the preservation of Buffalo's historic structures and neighborhoods. This is a well-deserved honor for a community leader who has dedicated her entire career to bettering Buffalo and Western New York."