



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Lea Webb

## Senator Webb Names Mrs. Denise Lee as Her 2025 Woman of Distinction Honoree

LEA WEBB May 20, 2025

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(ALBANY, NY)- Senator Webb proudly recognized Mrs. Denise Crystallia Dendtler Lee as the 2025 Woman of Distinction for New York's 52nd Senate District during the New York State Senate's 27th Annual Women of Distinction Ceremony held on Tuesday, May 13 at the State Capitol in Albany.

This annual celebration honors women from across New York State who have made outstanding contributions to their communities and exemplify service, leadership, and impact. Mrs. Lee, a lifelong educator, community leader, and fierce advocate for equity in education, was chosen for her decades of unwavering dedication to children, families, and the greater Ithaca community.

In addition to the ceremony, Senator Webb introduced a formal resolution in the Senate chamber, commemorating all of the 2025 Women of Distinction Honorees. Senator Webb led a floor recognition during session, where Mrs. Lee was honored before her peers, further highlighting her exceptional impact on the community.

Born in New York City in 1950 and raised in Brooklyn, Mrs. Lee has called Ithaca home for nearly five decades. She is a graduate of Cornell University and holds advanced degrees from Ithaca College and SUNY Cortland. She began teaching in the Ithaca City School District in 1973, launching a remarkable career that spans nearly 50 years. Beyond the classroom, she has been deeply involved with organizations such as the Greater Ithaca Activities Center, Southside Community Center, and Ithaca Neighborhood Housing Services.

“Mrs. Lee is the embodiment of what it means to be a Woman of Distinction,” **said Senator Lea Webb**. “Her lifetime of service as an educator and advocate for children has left a profound impact on countless lives in our community. Through her leadership and unwavering commitment, she has empowered generations to dream bigger, reach higher, and give back. I am honored to recognize her incredible legacy.”

Mrs. Lee has been widely recognized for her work, receiving numerous local and state awards, including the New York State African Studies Association Educators Award and honors from Cornell University’s Africana Studies Center. She was recently honored with a mural at Beverly J. Martin Elementary School for her extraordinary commitment to children.

“I am humbled and honored to receive this recognition,” **said Mrs. Denise Lee.** “My work has always been rooted in love—for my students, my community, and my family. I believe deeply in the power of education and the importance of lifting each other up. I stand on the shoulders of those who came before me, and I remain committed to reaching back and pulling others forward.”

Mrs. Lee is a proud member of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. and the Eastern Stars of New York. She is the mother of four children and continues to inspire through her service, mentorship, and belief in the transformative power of community.

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