



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Siela A. Bynoe

Senator Siela A. Bynoe Honors Sharon Sheppard in the New York State Senate's 27th Annual Women of Distinction Ceremony

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May 29, 2025

ISSUE:

- [2025 Women of Distinction](#)

(Albany, NY) — On May 13, Senator Siela A. Bynoe (SD-6) honored Sharon Sheppard of Rockville Centre during the New York State Senate's annual Women of Distinction celebration. Ms. Sheppard serves as the Assistant Director of the Martin Luther King, Jr. Community Center in Rockville Centre and is the cofounder of Sharon's Pantry. She continues to provide food and resources to others while battling cancer.

Senator Bynoe stated, "It is my great honor to recognize Sharon Sheppard for her strength in adversity and her commitment to service. Despite undergoing cancer treatment, Sharon has continued to work for the betterment of the community. I thank her for demonstrating each day what it means to have a servant's heart."

Ms. Sheppard established a food pantry at the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic to aid those struggling in Rockville Centre. Sharon's Pantry, renamed for its founder in April 2021, has become an essential service for many in the village and now feeds more than 90 families per week. Food is distributed supermarketstyle, allowing people to walk around and choose what they need. The pantry offers milk, eggs, fresh vegetables, canned goods, fruit, cereal, and meats, in addition to other groceries.

Ms. Sheppard also established a cooking academy alongside tutoring, photography, dance, and arts programs at the Martin Luther King, Jr. Center. The academy is a labor of love because cooking is one of her greatest joys. **Ms. Sheppard states,** "It's always been my passion to help people, whether they are well or sick; it's just a natural instinct for me. If I can help these families, I can rest at night."

Amid her hard work and dedication, Ms. Sheppard was diagnosed with breast cancer in July 2020. Even while enduring chemotherapy and experimental treatments, she continued to push herself to keep the food pantry open. Ms. Sheppard is still in treatment today, and the pantry remains open, offering food to the Rockville Centre community.

The New York State Senate's Women of Distinction Ceremony honors remarkable women throughout the state who have made lasting contributions to their communities.

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