



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Andrea Stewart-Cousins

## **Leader Stewart-Cousins Selects Isabel Villar of White Plains as 2013 Woman of Distinction**

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Albany, NY - Democratic Conference Leader Andrea Stewart-Cousins (D/I/WF - 35th District) selected Isabel Villar of White Plains as the 2013 Woman of Distinction from the 35th State Senate District. Ms. Villar is the Co- Founder and Executive Director of El Centro Hispano. She traveled to Albany today to accept the award at an official ceremony in the Legislative Office Building.

“Isabel Villar embodies the virtues of leadership, compassion and service. Thirty nine years ago, she saw an unmet need in the community and has devoted her professional life to addressing it. The organization she co-founded, El Centro Hispano, has created countless opportunities for Latino families to achieve the American dream and is a true asset to White Plains and Westchester County. She is a genuine woman of distinction whose tireless work on behalf of others has made a real difference. I am proud to call Isabel my friend and happy to pay tribute to her today.”

Isabel Villar came to the United States from Cuba in 1966. She graduated from White Plains High School and earned her BA from Manhattanville College. She holds three masters degrees and worked as a teacher and guidance counselor at the Norwalk, Connecticut School District for 32 years. She retired from the district in 2004.

In 1974, Ms. Villar co-founded El Centro Hispano in her home community of White Plains to address the social service needs of the growing Hispanic population of Westchester County. The organization provides educational programs; health,

housing and employment referrals; translation assistance; tutoring programs for children and adults; and other essential assistance to Latino families in White Plains and Westchester. Their mission is to “assist, support and strengthen Hispanic families; to help them become self-sufficient; and to ease their transition into their new culture while strengthening and maintaining their own.”

The State Senate’s Annual Woman of Distinction award is a special honor bestowed upon women whose lives, work, or special accomplishments have contributed to making our communities better, our families stronger and serve as extraordinary examples to others. Each Senator selects an honoree from his or her district.