



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Andrea Stewart-Cousins

## Press Release: Yonkers State and City Delegations Secure Important Grants for State-of-the-Art Technology Center At Yonkers Public Library Riverfront Branch

ANDREA STEWART-COUSINS October 20, 2014

| ISSUE: **EDUCATION**



Yonkers, NY - Members of the Yonkers State Delegation, which includes Senator Andrea Stewart-Cousins, the Democratic Conference Leader, Senator George Latimer, Assembly Members Shelley Mayer and Gary Pretlow, were joined by Yonkers Mayor Mike Spano, to announce \$285,000 combined funding from state and federal resources toward creation of a new state-of-the-art technology center at the Yonkers Public Library Riverfront Branch.

The new technology center will allow the library to consolidate technology instruction in one centralized state-of-the-art location. The space will accommodate classes of up to thirty patrons, who will get hands-on experience with laptops, tablets, as well as a wide variety of popular computer programs. The new room will also have a digital media lab to allow audio and video production and editing. The lab will have a control room, a recording room, and a 'green screen' for video effects. A third component of the center will be a 'makerspace' room that will allow users to collaborate on projects using 3-D printers and other equipment.

Through the 2013-14 Library Construction grant program of the State Education Department, Senator Andrea Stewart-Cousins and Assemblyman Gary Pretlow delivered \$74,946 in funding. "Libraries are outstanding educational resources that open doors to new technology and learning opportunities beyond books and computers," said Senator Stewart-Cousins. "What makes this new center so exciting is its ability to provide any patron the option to print something on a 3D printer or to make a video."

Assemblyman Pretlow said, "I am pleased to be a part of this effort to secure important resources for the Yonkers Public Library as it moves forward on this tremendous project for the city and the residents of Yonkers."

Senator George Latimer explained, "The Yonkers Public Libraries, and libraries across Westchester, are tremendous assets to our community. I am proud to have supported this investment, and I look forward to ensuring communities have these resources going forward."

Assemblymember Shelley Mayer secured \$100,000 in funding through the New York State Assembly's Community Capital Assistance Program (CCAP) for the technology center. The Community Capital Assistance Program (CCAP) provides grants to promote community improvement within New York, including education, transportation, and economic

development projects. Mayer explained, "Now more than ever, public libraries are community spaces where residents access information, learn technology and increasingly develop skills they need to participate in the job market and in the community. The Yonkers Public Library has been at the forefront of this work, and I am thrilled I was able, along with my colleagues, to secure the resources for this important innovative project."

Yonkers Mayor Mike Spano and the City of Yonkers Planning Department helped secure a \$110,000 Community Development Block Grant (CDBG), which is a federal program that helps communities address their unique needs. "This state-of-the-art center is a great way to service our residents with the latest educational and technological resources available," said Mayor Spano. "Today, our students are primarily learning from and interacting with computers, mobile devices and beyond. I thank our state delegation for recognizing the needs of our residents and assisting the funding of our libraries with the equipment that will spark knowledge and innovation."

Stephen Force, Director, Yonkers Public Library, said, "Thanks to the combined efforts of our state and city leaders we will be able to bring a great new resource and new services to our users. This technology center will be something really special."

"It has been the Westchester Library System's pleasure to have helped the Yonkers Public Library receive a matching grant through the New York State Aid for Public Library Construction program to support this digital learning space," said Terry Kirchner, Executive Director, Westchester Library System. "It's exciting to think of all the ways that the new equipment and technology will help individuals learn important technology skills and inspire creativity."

Nancy Maron, President, Library Board of Trustees, said, "This innovative space will serve our creative, inquisitive and entrepreneurial patrons of all ages. We are so grateful to our library administrators, staff, and elected officials for helping make this possible."