



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Andrea Stewart-Cousins

# **Press Release: Senate Democratic Leader Andrea Stewart-Cousins Selects Jane Aoyama-Martin, Executive Director of the Pace Women's Justice Center, as Senate Women of Distinction 2015 Nominee**

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Albany, NY - Senate Democratic Leader Andrea Stewart-Cousins selected Jane Aoyama-Martin, the Executive Director of the Pace Women's Justice Center, as her nominee for the Women of Distinction Award in 2015. The recognition is given to outstanding women living and working in New York State, whose contributions have greatly enriched the quality of life in their communities and beyond. The award, sponsored by the New York State Senate, was bestowed during a ceremony in Albany on Tuesday.

"Victims of domestic violence and elder abuse know they can rely on Jane Aoyama-Martin and the Pace Women's Justice Center to provide assistance and support at one of the most difficult and stressful times in their lives," said Senator Stewart-Cousins. "Jane is a kind, calm, even-keeled woman whose knowledge and passion for her work is clearly evident. The work she does provides the support and assistance that helps victims continue their lives with dignity and strength."

Founded in 1991, the Pace Women's Justice Center in White Plains is a highly respected, multi-faceted legal services center that serves over 2,800 victims and survivors of domestic violence and elder abuse every year. The Center is dedicated to eliminating domestic violence and elder abuse, and provides training, community education and outreach, and free civil legal services to victims and survivors of domestic violence, sexual assault, and elder abuse. The Center also makes legal information and resources readily available to the general public.

“I am deeply honored to be one of this year’s Women of Distinction, and especially thrilled and touched by the recognition from my New York State Senator Andrea Stewart-Cousins,” said Aoyama-Martin. “It has been my true privilege to help victims and survivors of domestic violence and elder abuse move forward with their lives, free from violence. I am grateful that I have been able to pursue a career that I feel passionate about.”

Jane Aoyama-Martin of Irvington has been active in the anti-domestic violence movement throughout her professional life. She is a founding and former Board member of the New York Asian Women’s Center, the first project on the East Coast to organize women on the problems of battering and sexual assault in the Asian communities. She serves on the Board of The Havens Relief Fund Society, a private operating foundation that helps individuals and families overcome crises. She lectures and trains new attorneys, and for many years was a key instructor at the Intensive Trial Skills Training for Effective Representation of Battered Women sponsored by the NYS Office for the Prevention of Domestic Violence. She is an active member of the Westchester Women's Agenda, Westchester County Domestic Violence Council, 9th Judicial District Gender Fairness Committee, Lawyers Committee Against Domestic Violence, NYS Maintenance Standards Coalition, and Westchester Women's Bar Association.

She has spent most of her life in public service. Her first legal job was serving the poor as a legal services attorney in upstate NY. In addition, she has also worked as a NYS Assistant Attorney General, solo practitioner, and senior associate in a private firm. Prior to serving as PWJC’s Executive Director, Jane supervised the NYC Legal Aid Society’s family law practice in the Bronx and Harlem, and co-supervised the Society’s city-wide Domestic Violence Project. Jane graduated from UC Berkeley, School of Social Welfare, and UCLA School of Law. She is admitted to practice in New York and California.