



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Andrea Stewart-Cousins

## Press Release: Stewart-Cousins Honors a Trailblazing Chemist & White Plains Resident Edith Flanigen

ANDREA STEWART-COUSINS June 9, 2015

| ISSUE: **CONSTITUENTS CORNER**



*One of Eight National Media of Science and Technology Recipients in 2014*

Albany, NY - With a Senate Resolution, State Senator Andrea Stewart-Cousins, the Senate Democratic Leader, honored Edith Flanigen today, recognizing the White Plains resident as one of eight recipients of the nation's highest honor in science, the National Medal of Science and Technology. The medal was awarded during a White House ceremony in November of last year, and is the latest accolade during her outstanding career. The now retired 86-year-

old commercial chemist developed a way to refine petroleum that has made gasoline production more efficient, cleaner and safer worldwide. She also invented synthetic emeralds that were used in early laser technology and later as jewelry. Her work also led to advancements in water purification and environmental remediation, with President Obama citing her for her role in helping decontaminate radioactive water at the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear power plant in Japan after the 2011 earthquake. She also holds 109 U.S. Patents and invented more than 200 different synthetic materials.

Born in Buffalo in 1929, Ms. Flanigen credits a nun at her Catholic high school with encouraging her to study chemistry at a time when most girls did not. She graduated from D'Youville College then pursued her Master's Degree which she received from Syracuse University. In 1952, she began her 42 year long career at Union Carbide in Buffalo, moving on to Universal Oil Products, now known as Honeywell, located in Tarrytown. She retired in 2004 but continued as a consultant.

"I am proud to honor a trailblazer in her field of chemistry and a native New Yorker who is deserving of this recognition in our state," said Senator Stewart-Cousins. "Her aptitude for science was recognized early on and encouraged, so that today, her scientific discoveries have made our world a better place." [Click here to view the Senator's complete remarks on the resolution.](#)

"I was truly honored to be recognized by Senator Stewart-Cousins and others who spoke on the resolution, and all those who stood and applauded - I was overwhelmed by the response in the Senate Chamber. It was a joyful experience," said Edith Flanigen following the Senate session.

Ms. Flanigen has also received numerous prestigious awards including the Perkin Medal, becoming the first female recipient of what is considered to be the highest honor in

commercial chemistry. In 1993, she received the Garvan Medal, and in 2002, became a member of the National Inventors Hall of Fame. In 2004, she was recognized with the Lemelson-MIT Lifetime Achievement Award.

A formal copy of the Senate Resolution in her honor will be given to her.