



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

George Latimer

Kate Bialo

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Women of
DISTINCTION
HONORING WOMEN IN NEW YORK

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Award: HONORING WOMEN IN NEW YORK

Year: 2013

Kate Bialo is a true humanitarian who embodies the spirit of giving to others. The founder and executive director of Furniture Sharehouse, Westchester's Furniture Bank, Ms. Bialo has been a resident of Westchester County for over 20 years. Her call to help those in need stemmed from being dismayed by all the usable furniture regularly discarded at the curb, knowing that there are many families who cannot afford a bed to sleep on or a table to share a family meal.

In 2005 she conceived the idea of a "shared warehouse" to collect gently-used furniture and make it available free of charge to families in need. It took two years to raise funds and locate warehouse space, but in 2007, Furniture Sharehouse opened its doors just in time to help dozens of Westchester families affected by disastrous spring floods. In six years, it has provided over 31,000 items of free furniture to more than 6,132 individuals, enabling them to fill their empty apartments and begin rebuilding their lives.

Through her unwavering generosity and her enduring sense of commitment and insight, Ms. Bialo has made a difference in the lives of countless residents of Westchester County. In addition to transforming the lives of thousands of families who have received free furniture, Furniture Sharehouse has saved over 250 tons of furniture from the waste stream and provided furniture donors a tax deduction and the satisfaction of knowing that their furniture has directly helped a family in need. It is run almost entirely by volunteers, including Ms. Bialo, who donates thousands of hours of time assisting clients with furniture selection, organizing inventory, soliciting furniture donations, conducting community furniture drives, and raising community awareness.

Ms. Bialo is a corporate attorney by training, and received numerous awards in recognition of her work with Furniture Sharehouse, including the United Way of Westchester and

Putnam's 2010 Dorothy Allen Community Service Award; the Larchmont-Mamaroneck Tri-Municipal Human Rights Commission's 2011 Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Award; and she was named one of 10 national 2012 Woman of Worth by L'Oreal Paris.