



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

James L. Seward

## Seward Named 2016 YMCA Champion

JEFF BISHOP, COMMUNICATIONS DIRECTOR March 23, 2016

| ISSUE: **YMCA, HEALTH AND WELLNESS, CHILDHOOD OBESITY**



**ALBANY, 02/08/16** -- State Senator James L. Seward (R/C/I – Oneonta) today was honored as a recipient of the “2016 Y Champion” award from the Alliance of New York State YMCAs which represents the 40 independent Ys across the state.

**“YMCAs are true community hubs,”** said Senator Seward. **“The individuals who work and volunteer at the YMCA are dedicated to helping families and individuals reach their fullest potential in terms of spirit, mind and body. I am proud to advocate for our Ys to help make certain they are able to maintain services and enact new community-minded programs.”**

Oneonta Family YMCA Executive Director Frank Russo said, “Senator Seward has been a longtime friend of the Oneonta YMCA and has also stood strongly for all New York Ys. He clearly recognizes the important role YMCAs play in fostering healthy lives and communities.”

Senator Seward has consistently delivered state funding to assist YMCAs and included \$500,000 in the recently adopted senate budget resolution for Healthy Eating and Physical Activity Standards (HEPA) in YMCA afterschool programs

**“The HEPA program takes aim at childhood obesity that often leads to greater health issues down the road. By ensuring children are eating healthy we can stave off serious conditions like diabetes and heart disease, resulting in healthier children and less strain on our health care system. I will be advocating strongly on behalf of the Ys to ensure this funding is included in our final state budget,”** Seward added.

Each year, the Y provides New Yorkers with \$80 million in free, sponsored or subsidized programs and services. These valuable services are delivered by 30,000 cause-driven employees and another 50,000 volunteers across New York State. The Y is an established part of the nonprofit community and partners with local governments, school districts and a variety of other charitable organizations to strengthen communities and families statewide.