



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Andrea Stewart-Cousins

## Senator Stewart-Cousins Teams Up with Local Organizations and Students to Create a New Community Garden During Earth Week

ANDREA STEWART-COUSINS April 20, 2016

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Yonkers, NY - Senator Andrea Stewart-Cousins, the Senate Democratic Leader, celebrates Earth Week by creating a new community garden for freshly-grown produce in Yonkers. The idea for the garden followed a meeting with Food Bank for Westchester, during which they expressed an interest in being able to provide more fresh produce. Senator Stewart-Cousins wanted to do her part, and as a result, contacted local experts at Greyston and Groundwork Hudson Valley to assist in building a new community garden. Greyston identified a vacant

lot that Max Braun, a family-owned meat and food processing company, agreed to donate. The garden is located at 94 Woodworth Avenue (corner of Ashburton Avenue), and will be known as the Max Braun Community Garden. The City of Yonkers helped clear the lot of brush.

Senator Stewart-Cousins thanks the community partners who came together to complete the project including: Food Bank for Westchester, Greyston, Groundwork Hudson Valley, the YMCA of Yonkers, Sarah Lawrence College and the City of Yonkers. "In time, this once vacant lot will become a valuable resource for those who contribute their sweat equity in the neighborhood," said Senator Stewart-Cousins. "We know that healthy eating including fresh produce is so important, yet it can be expensive. With our community partners, together, this urban garden will provide a sustainable and nutritious balance of food for the volunteers, right here in Yonkers."

Gary Braun, the grandson of Max Braun, said the lot had been long neglected, and now, its never looked better.

"Greyston community gardens and environmental education plays a vital role in the community providing not only a place to grow fresh produce, but to learn about the environment and a safe place for families to gather and participate in a great activity," said Patrick James, General Manager of Healthy and Sustainable Communities for Greyston. "For Greyston, nutrition is also an important component of workforce development that we practice through open hiring."

"Groundwork is excited to be providing more access to grow space for the Yonkers community," said Nathan Hunter of Groundwork Hudson Valley.

“Our students recognize the tremendous value of community gardens and are glad to help make this new garden a reality,” says Mara Gross, director of Community Partnerships at Sarah Lawrence College. “These gardens provide food and a place for local residents to gather, socialize and learn from one another.”

The YMCA of Yonkers Interim CEO Vincent Taliaferro said, “Anything that makes Yonkers healthier and stronger is a good thing! Thanks to everyone for making this community garden happen!”

Douglass DeCandia, the Food Growing Program Coordinator for Food Bank for Westchester, first proposed the idea of establishing the garden as part of that organization’s outreach efforts. Special thanks to the volunteers who also assisted from CLUSTER and Leake & Watts, and the children from the Lanza Learning Center for attending.

Senator Stewart-Cousins is consistently ranked as one of the top environmental legislators in New York State, and as the Democratic Conference Leader, she has been at the forefront of her Conference’s efforts to protect our land, air, water and natural resources and fight climate change.