



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Jesse Hamilton

Pia J. Raymond

JESSE HAMILTON May 11, 2016

| ISSUE: **2016 WOMEN OF DISTINCTION**



Women of
DISTINCTION
HONORING WOMEN IN NEW YORK

Pia J. Raymond

Pia J. Raymond, a licensed social worker, writer, artist and entrepreneur, believes that local businesses are integral to their communities and have a responsibility to social service and activism. A fifth generation Brooklynite, Ms. Raymond grew up in a close-knit family in the historic Prospect Lefferts Gardens neighborhood of Brooklyn, and was greatly influenced by the Civil Rights movement.

Ms. Raymond's family opened a sporting goods and awards business in 1963, so much of her childhood was spent learning the business. Following in her family's footsteps, and in the

spirit of entrepreneurship, Ms. Raymond became owner and president of Legacy Awards, a Brooklyn awards and custom garment printing company – a cornerstone in her community for 47 years.

Her psychology and social work background has allowed Ms. Raymond to create meaningful customer relationships at Legacy Awards. She has consistently incorporated her social work skills by mentoring youth and adults about economic empowerment through business ownership.

A licensed social worker, and motivated by her own experience as a wife and mother, Ms. Raymond founded Creating Legacies, an organization that encourages community through “bringing families fun, while bringing families together.”

Ms. Raymond is committed to Kwanzaa’s principle of Ujima (collective work and responsibility) with community service initiatives in Prospect Lefferts Gardens, Crown Heights and beyond. She recently published her first children’s book, Celebrate Smiles, an endearing dialogue of one little girl’s birthday surprise. The tale teaches self-esteem, love and thankfulness, while celebrating the power of smiles.

Inspiring and encouraging us through her activism and actions, Ms. Raymond believes that “...every day that you awake with thankfulness inside, your inner beauty can be shown, with a big bright smile outside.”