



Women of DISTINCTION

HONORING WOMEN IN NEW YORK

Joan Dean

Joan Dean began advocating for street safety after a speeding driver killed her 12-year-old grandson, Sammy Cohen Eckstein, on October 8, 2013. As a result, Ms. Dean is a member of Families for Safe Streets (FSS), an organization comprised of individuals who suffered a loss or injuries due to traffic violence. This tragedy motivated her to advocate for legislation that would influence law enforcement and street redesign to minimize future catastrophes.

In 2015, one year after its founding, Families for Safe Streets, through legislation, reduced the speed limit in New York City from 30 mph to 25 mph. Most recently, Ms. Dean, along with Families for Safe Streets, facilitated the passage of legislation for 750 speed safety cameras in New York City school zones. Through her advocacy for improved safety measures, she has had many meetings with the New York City Mayor, members of the New York City Council and the New York State Legislature. Ms. Dean has also participated in rallies, memorial vigils and organized protests with FSS members. Her efforts have resulted in significant changes on dangerous streets like the long stretch of Amsterdam Avenue in Harlem, where traffic crashes occur almost daily.

Ms. Dean's 35 years of government experience in New York and California has greatly cultivated her activism. She has held several political administrative posts in New York State at the Consumer Protection Board and the Department of Civil Service. In California, Ms. Dean served in the administration of Governor Gray Davis as Deputy Secretary of the Technology, Trade and Commerce Agency, and worked for Senator Dianne Feinstein as Deputy State Director. She has a Bachelor of Arts degree and a Master in Public Administration from the State University of New York at Albany.

Ultimately, Ms. Dean hopes the unwavering dedication to her community will promote a culture of safe driving in New York City. Her passion and determination to protect all generations from traffic violence truly makes her a Woman of Distinction.

*Joan Dean was selected as a
2019 Woman of Distinction honoree by Senator Brad Hoylman.*

