



June 6, 2023

Dear Friends,

The Legislative Session continues at a fast pace with the state budget becoming a major focus and the remaining weeks of the regular session targeting substantive issues that remain.

This newsletter reports on my annual Clean Water Grant workshop that is especially important this year with a record \$425 million in state grants being offered in the 2023 round of applications. This is an excellent year for local governments to compete for valuable state clean water funding.

Important Memorial Day events were held throughout Westchester. I attended eleven meaningful events taking place on the Sound Shore. On the day after Memorial Day, the Assembly passed my legislation to strengthen protections for military monuments throughout the state, an issue I have been working on with local veteran leaders for a number of years.

Below please find news of other events and activities. A full update of progress on pending legislation will follow in the next newsletter.

As always, do not hesitate to contact my office if we can be of assistance at 914-939-7028.

Warm regards,

*Steve*

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### Justin Pearson, Tennessee Legislator in Albany



I had the opportunity to talk to Tennessee State Representative Justin Pearson when he visited the Assembly Chamber in May. Justin was one of the Tennessee 3 who stood up for gun violence victims after the horrible killings at the Nashville elementary school in March. We discussed the importance of democracy and how his speech on the floor of the Tennessee House of Representatives touched the

entire nation. Along with Justin Jones and Gloria Johnson, Representative Pearson spoke eloquently on behalf of the right of legislators to raise issues that the powers that control the Tennessee House sought to silence.

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### **Water Infrastructure Grant Workshop at Jay Heritage**



In May I hosted my annual Clean Water Infrastructure grant workshop where I bring state agency officials together with local governments to learn of the current round of state clean water grants available for 2023.

I have hosted this workshop since the Water Infrastructure Improvement Act (WIIA) grant program I helped initiate was created in 2015 with the goal of maximizing successful applications from Westchester local governments.

This year we had a tremendous show of support from the state agencies with nine presenters from four state agencies. Our lead agency, the NYS Environmental Facilities Corporation provided five presentations followed by the Department of Health, the Department of Environmental Conservation, and the Department of State. Numerous state programs were discussed with our audience of local officials and staff, environmental advocates, and construction industry representatives.

The WIIA and intermunicipal grant programs have provided more than \$2 billion in grants to local governments since 2015, including nearly \$80 million to Westchester municipalities for important clean water projects. Statewide water infrastructure grants have been awarded to over 800 projects in over 500 communities.

More information can be found on the EFC website linked [HERE](#). Applications are due July 28th at 5pm.

Pictured above are most of the speakers from the four state agencies represented. Third from the left is my Assembly colleague Chris Burdick. Third from the right is Suzanne Clary, President of the Jay Heritage Center, which hosted the workshop. Other sponsors were the Construction Industry Council of Westchester and the Hudson Valley, Federated Conservationists of Westchester County, Save the Sound, and the Westchester Municipal Officials Association.

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## Memorial Day 2023



Memorial Day is a tremendously meaningful, solemn, and important occasion to honor the men and women who have given their lives in service to our country. Every year I attend numerous events throughout the Sound Shore. Each community event is different as marked by the tradition and custom special to each ceremony. The differences make each event more meaningful. Above I am pictured alongside Senator Shelley Mayer at the Kemper Memorial in Mamaroneck. Linked [HERE](#) is a clip of my comments at the City of Rye event organized by Rye American Legion Post 128 on the Village Green and recorded by MyRye.com.

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### **STEMTASTIC - A Great Success**



I was thrilled to again attend the STEM Alliance annual STEMTASTIC event at Hommocks Middle School in which science and technology education shows

dividends in the projects from local students. As Chair of the Assembly Committee of Science and Technology, I have promoted the importance of STEM education at earlier grades. STEM Alliance is a longtime leader in these programs. The energy and enthusiasm of the students about their work filled the school. I am pictured here with Polly Lagana and Walter Gabino Rendon of the STEM Alliance. Here is a highlight video from [LMCTV](#) who covered the event.

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**Excelsior Scholarship Application Open for 23-24 Academic Year**  
*SUNY and CUNY Students Whose Families Make Up to \$125,000 Annually Can  
Apply for Tuition-Free College*

Applications Now Open [Here](#), Accepted Through August 31, 2023

The application for the Excelsior Scholarship for new applicants for the 2023 - 2024 academic year is now open. The Excelsior Scholarship allows eligible full-time students to attend a SUNY or CUNY two-year or four-year college tuition-free. The scholarship is administered by the New York State Higher Education Services Corporation.

Students from households with federal adjusted gross incomes up to \$125,000 are eligible for an Excelsior Scholarship award. Students must also:

- Plan to attend a SUNY or CUNY two or four-year college
- Complete 30 credits per year towards their program of study (including Summer and Winter terms); and
- Be on track to graduate with an associate degree in two years or a bachelor's degree in four years

The Excelsior Scholarship is just one of the many ways New York State makes college affordable and accessible. Thanks to New York State's generous higher education funding programs, in 2021-22, more than 263,000 students received state

financial aid, including approximately 30,000 students who attended a SUNY or CUNY college tuition-free because of the Excelsior Scholarship. Visit the [New York State Higher Education Services Corporation website](#) to explore other options available to help pay for college.

For more information about the Excelsior Scholarship Program, please visit <https://www.hesc.ny.gov/excelsior>.

The 2023-2024 Excelsior Scholarship application is open to first-time students entering college in the Fall 2023 term and current college students who have never received the Excelsior Scholarship. Students currently receiving an Excelsior Scholarship do not need to complete this application to receive continued award payments. Students eligible for the Excelsior Scholarship under the Senator José Peralta New York State DREAM Act can apply [here](#).

Applications will be accepted through August 31, 2023.

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## Net Zero Cities - Clean Energy Fair



In May I attended the Clean Energy Fair hosted by the City of Rye Sustainability Committee. The purpose of the fair was to share information about clean energy

technologies that are currently available for consumers. The Fair included vendor tables and a series of panel discussions on how to transition your home to clean energy, electric vehicles and yard waste issues. Congratulations go to the Rye Sustainability Committee for bringing clean energy information to the community. The fair included vendor tables and many opportunities to share information. I am pictured here at the Sustainable Westchester table with their team at the fair, Lauren Kroell, Sara Goddard and Lauren Brios. Sara is Chair of the Sustainable Westchester Board of Directors.

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