

The Westchester County Board of Legislators celebrates

JEWISH AMERICAN HERITAGE MONTH

Monday, May 19th , 2025 | 7PM

WELCOMING REMARKS & ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Board Chair Vedat Gashi

INVOCATION

Rabbi Jonathan Morgenstern
Young Israel of Scarsdale

PRESENTATION OF PROCLAMATIONS



COMMUNITY THANKSGIVING DINNER PROGRAM

PRESENTED BY LEGISLATOR ERIKA PIERCE



COMMUNITY SECURITY SERVICES (CSS)

PRESENTED BY LEGISLATOR JUDAH HOLSTEIN

Vedat Gashi
Board Chair
Legislator, 4th District

Colin D. Smith
Legislator, 1st District

Erika L. Pierce
Legislator, 2nd District

Margaret A. Cunzio
Minority Leader
Legislator, 3rd District

Benjamin Boykin II
Legislator, 5th District

Nancy E. Barr
Legislator, 6th District

Catherine F. Parker
Legislator, 7th District

Jewel Williams Johnson
Legislator, 8th District

Emiljana Ulaj
Legislator, 9th District

Judah Holstein
Legislator, 10th District

Terry Clements
Majority Whip
Legislator, 11th District

David Imamura
Legislator, 12th District

Tyrae Woodson-Samuels
Majority Leader
Legislator, 13th District

David J. Tubiolo
Legislator, 14th District

James Nolan
Minority Whip
Legislator, 15th District

Shanae V. Williams
Legislator, 16th District

José I. Alvarado
Vice Chair
Legislator, 17th District



[see back for more]

Live streamed from the Board Chamber westchestercountyny.legistar.com

The Community Thanksgiving Dinner Program embodies tikkun olam, the Jewish principle of "repairing the world," through enduring community service. Each year, this remarkable effort brings together nearly 1,000 volunteers from diverse backgrounds to provide Thanksgiving meals to more than 4,000 people across Westchester and Putnam counties, and the Bronx.

For over two decades, Temple Shaaray Tefila in Bedford Corners has served as the operation's home base, providing essential facilities including a commercial kitchen, security, and utilities. Volunteers from many communities, including Temple Beth El of Northern Westchester, various churches and mosques, and unaffiliated individuals come together to help their neighbors.

The program provides grocery bags with turkeys and all the fixings for families who cook at home; delivers fully prepared meals to those unable to cook, and supplies catering trays for many community centers and social service agencies including Boys & Girls Clubs, Neighbors Link, Hope's Door, veterans groups, senior centers, and men's shelters.

Preparations begin the Saturday before Thanksgiving, with volunteers of all ages chopping, peeling, and cooking. Others prepare dishes at home, donate funds for grocery gift cards, or shop for supplies. An army of delivery volunteers distributes food throughout the region from Monday through Wednesday of Thanksgiving week.

This inspiring interfaith community project exemplifies tikkun olam in action—repairing the world through compassionate service that strengthens our community bonds.

The Community Security Service (CSS) is a nonprofit headquartered in White Plains, dedicated to safeguarding Jewish communities through volunteer-led security initiatives. As an apolitical 501(c)(3) organization, CSS has pioneered a transformative approach to community protection: empowering Jewish communities to take ownership of their own security.

Starting with a handful of volunteers protecting a New York City synagogue in 2007, CSS has evolved into a nationwide network with thousands of trained volunteers safeguarding hundreds of Jewish institutions.

In Westchester County, CSS has become an integral part of community life, with over 300 trained volunteers working tirelessly to protect synagogues, cultural centers, and community events. Their presence has been especially vital following recent surges in anti-Semitic incidents, providing physical security and peace of mind to local Jewish groups, their neighbors and the broader Westchester community.

By creating safer spaces for religious and cultural gatherings, CSS helps preserve the diverse cultural fabric that defines Westchester County. Their work transcends security, fostering community resilience, interfaith understanding, and collective responsibility.

CSS volunteers receive comprehensive, professional-grade training that equips them to identify threats while maintaining a welcoming environment for all community members. Through their dedication, CSS exemplifies how community-led initiatives can effectively address modern challenges while strengthening bonds across Westchester County's myriad local communities.

Guy Shmuel, CSS's Westchester County Regional Manager will be accepting the award on behalf of the organization.