

## WOMEN'S HERSTORY MONTH

Each year the National Women's Project decides on a specific theme to represent the hard work, drive, extraordinary and often un-recognized determination and tenacity of WOMEN. This year's motto is **Celebrating Women of Character, Courage, and Commitment**. The 3 C's are part of the essential make-up of what makes WOMEN strong.

Women everyday are continuing to make strides and they are following in the steps of our pioneers, such as Susan B. Anthony, Sojourner Truth, Elizabeth Cady Stanton, and Harriet Tubman (to name a few), who laid the foundation to our success. **I encourage all women to continue making strides so we may add our names to this growing list in the history books, we must follow our passion and not settle for anything less.**

In honor of Women's History Month, the New York City Council with the Women's Caucus held a Women's **HERstory** Celebration and Inaugural #WomenLead Celebration. We honored dynamic women in our districts, which have worked tirelessly for our City and have put a great deal of effort into improving our constituents' quality of life. I honored Elsia Vasquez, founder and Executive Director of PALANTE Harlem, for the work she and her organization have done in the community in the fight against displacement. She has armed the village of Harlem with the necessary knowledge and resources to defend their homes through the power of activism and engagement. Congratulations Elsia on the great work, keep the faith, and continue to march forward!

In addition, the Women's Caucus held a Council Women for a Day event in which a young lady from each district was selected to shadow the council member to a Women's Caucus Meeting, a City Council Stated meeting, and other Council activities. Dhyanna, a distinguished resident of District 9 and is a high school junior from the Manhattan Center for Science & Mathematics, was chosen for her exemplary service, engagement in her school and community, and her academic accomplishments. It was a pleasure to have her and the rest of the Council Women for the Day join us in the City Council to see how the city government works and mentor them on their future endeavors.



**It was with great pleasure that I had the opportunity to pass down my knowledge to Dayanna, who was the Council Woman for a Day for the 9th District. She helped me sign-on to important legislation and I valued her opinions and ideas.**



**Glad to honor Elsia Vasquez as the dynamic woman in District 9 for her tremendous efforts and leadership in helping Harlem residents.**

## LYNETTE C. VELASCO COMMUNITY IMPACT AWARD

The Harlem Arts Festival in their 3rd Annual Gala celebrated the life of my former Chief of Staff, Lynnette C. Velasco, whom left this world far too early and was a strong supporter of the arts, by creating the **Lynnette Velasco Community Impact Award**.

Lynnette was my advisor, counselor, and friend. Because of her, she always encouraged me to support the arts. She was an artist, who enjoyed poetry, talking about the arts world and investing and fostering others to follow their creativity. She truly touched so many lives with her warm words, thoughts and embrace. Lynnette was the spirit, voice, compass and the unsung heart of the community.

Words can not express, how happy it makes me that the Harlem Arts Festival is honoring Lynnette in such a magnificent way. I would like to extend my congratulations to the two



recipients of this inaugural award, Linda Walton and Fred Ho, who truly embodied Lynnette's spirit and love for the arts, education and community. In addition, I would like to thank Bryce Zackery, the artist who crafted this award, who used wood and onyx- all in black to completely capture the beauty, essence, strength and creative flow of the women whose namesake graces the award. Once again, thanks to the Harlem Arts Festival, my dear friend's name will live on forever with the **Lynnette Velasco Community Impact Award**.

**Our friend and colleague Lynnette C. Velasco and the Community Impact Award.**