

2009-J920

LEGISLATIVE RESOLUTION commending Woman of Distinction Sheena Wright upon the occasion of her designation for special recognition in celebration of Women's History Month 2009

WHEREAS, Women's History Month, celebrated each year in March, is a time to reflect upon and pay tribute to the women of our State and Nation for their contributions to their communities and their professions; and

WHEREAS, It is the sense of this Legislative Body that women of every economic, ethnic, and religious background have made significant contributions to their community and to the State of New York, and it is appropriate to recognize them and to publicly acknowledge their endeavors which have enhanced the basic humanity among us all; and

WHEREAS, Attendant to such concern, and in full accord with its long-standing traditions, this Legislative Body is justly proud to commend Woman of Distinction Sheena Wright upon the occasion of her designation for special recognition in celebration of Women's History Month 2009, at a special ceremony to be held on March 27, 2009, at the Bronx Library Center, Bronx, New York; and

WHEREAS, A native New Yorker and long-time Harlem resident, Sheena Wright was named the President and Chief Executive Officer of Abyssinian Development Corporation (ADC) in July 2002; she previously served ADC as its Chief Operating Officer; and

WHEREAS, As CEO of ADC, Sheena Wright leads one of the most successful community and economic development entities in the nation; since 1989, ADC has been at the helm of improving the quality of life of Harlem residents by providing comprehensive social services, increasing the availability of affordable housing and homeownership opportunities, fostering economic revitalization through small business development and large-scale commercial investments, enhancing educational opportunities for Harlem youth, and increasing the community's awareness on a myriad of issues through a far-reaching civic engagement unit; and

WHEREAS, Under Sheena Wright's exemplary guidance, ADC has doubled in size and its capacity to comprehensively serve community residents has significantly increased; her diligent leadership brought about the

completion of the Thurgood Marshall Academy for Learning and Social Change, a state-of-the-art facility and the first high school built in Harlem in over 50 years; and

WHEREAS, Additionally, Sheena Wright was instrumental in the ADC launching of The Abyssinian Neighborhood project, a model community development initiative in the area immediately surrounding The Abyssinian Baptist Church; and

WHEREAS, Furthermore, Sheena Wright initiated and oversees the Displacement Prevention campaign designed to prevent displacement of low- and moderate-income families from the Harlem community through civic engagement and preservation purchases of at-risk buildings; and

WHEREAS, Prior to joining ADC, Sheena Wright served as the General Counsel and Executive Vice President of Business Development for Crave Technologies, a minority-owned software company based in New York City and Baltimore, Maryland; from 1999 to 2000, she was a Senior Associate at the law firm of Reboul, MacMurray, Hewitt, Maynard and Kristol, specializing in structuring private equity funds and private equity investments; from 1994 to 1999, she was an Associate at the law firm of Wachtell, Lipton, Rosen and Katz, where she participated in negotiating, structuring and executing complex mergers, acquisitions and securities transactions; and

WHEREAS, Sheena Wright earned a law degree from Columbia Law School in 1994, and was named a Stone Scholar for outstanding academic achieve-

ment; she completed her undergraduate work at Columbia College in 1990, distinguishing herself athletically as well as academically, lettering in varsity track & field and cross-country; and

WHEREAS, While a student at Columbia, Sheena Wright was a founding member of the Pan-African House, a Black student cultural institution and residence on the school's campus; after graduating, she worked for THE NEW YORK TIMES Washington bureau as an Editorial Assistant; and

WHEREAS, Sheena Wright serves on the Federal Reserve Bank of New York Advisory Board, Bank of America's National Community Advisory Committee, Housing First! Strategy Committee, Association for Neighborhood and Housing Development (ANHD) Board and Policy Committee, and Community Board 9; and

WHEREAS, Sheena Wright is also a member of the New York State Bar, the Boards of Citizens Union Foundation, the Albert G. Oliver Program and

the Randall's Island Sports Foundation; in addition, she is the Chair of Sustained Excellence Alliance Corporation; and

WHEREAS, Throughout Sheena Wright's impressive career, she has been motivated to inspire her own generation through community involvement and empowerment just as her mother did before her; and

WHEREAS, With her throughout have been her husband, Gregg Walker, and her three sons, all of whom feel privileged to be a part of her life and rejoice in her achievements; and

WHEREAS, New York State is home to countless women, strong and colorful threads vital to the fabric of our rich heritage, who have and continue to contribute to the advancement of our society; and

WHEREAS, It is the sense of this Legislative Body that when women of such noble aims and accomplishments are brought to our attention, they should be celebrated and recognized by all the citizens of the great State of New York; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to commend Woman of Distinction Sheena Wright upon the occasion of her designation for special recognition in celebration of Women's History Month 2009; and be it further

RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to Sheena Wright.