

2015-K247

LEGISLATIVE RESOLUTION commending the Langston Hughes Community Library and Cultural Center for its outstanding service to the citizens of Queens, New York

WHEREAS, It is the sense of this Legislative Body to recognize that the quality and character of life in the communities across New York State are reflective of the concerned and dedicated efforts of those organizations and individuals who would devote themselves to the welfare of the community and its citizenry; and

WHEREAS, Attendant to such concern, and in full accord with its long-standing traditions, this Legislative Body is justly proud to commend the Langston Hughes Community Library and Cultural Center for its outstanding service to the citizens of Queens, New York; and

WHEREAS, The Langston Hughes Community Library and Cultural Center was, from the very beginning, a unique working partnership between a community-based non-profit organization and a large metropolitan public library system; it set a new standard for providing library services to urban communities; and

WHEREAS, Named after renowned poet laureate, Langston Hughes, the Queens Library's Langston Hughes Community Library and Cultural Center first opened its doors on April 7, 1969; it was conceived by local residents and the Library Action Committee (LAC) of Corona-East Elmhurst, Inc., which was a part of the local Community Corporation, an anti-poverty program in New York City; and

WHEREAS, The LAC submitted a proposal to create the Langston Hughes Community Library to Queens Library Director Harold W. Tucker, who successfully sought funding for this creative idea through the new Library Services and Construction Act; although most projects of its kind were typically funded for three to five years, this "experiment in

community control" was approved for funding from April 1969 through October 1987; and

WHEREAS, In 1985, as a result of a shift in federal funding, a new relationship was established between the LAC and the Queens Library system; Queens Library would be responsible for regular library operations, budgeting and staffing, while the LAC would be responsible for the operations of the after school Homework Assistance Program and the Cultural Arts Program; in 1987, full library status within the Queens Library was granted; and

WHEREAS, In 1999, the Langston Hughes Community Library and Cultural Center moved to a beautiful, new two-story facility that featured state-of-the-art technology, a 150-seat multi-purpose auditorium, an art gallery and homework center, among numerous other improvements; it now hosts numerous concerts, exhibitions, and celebrations, including an annual tribute to Langston Hughes; and

WHEREAS, Today, the Langston Hughes Community Library and Cultural Center is composed of four central components: the Langston Hughes Community Library, the Black Heritage Reference Center of Queens County, the Cultural Arts Program, and the Homework Assistance Program; and

WHEREAS, A valuable resource providing circulating library services to adults, young adults, and children, the Langston Hughes Community Library offers library public computers, online databases, and extensive DVD/VHS collections, as well as educational, informational, recreational and cultural programs; and

WHEREAS, The Black Heritage Reference Center of Queens County houses a 45,000 volume circulating collection of print and non-print materials on The Black Experience; it is the largest collection of its kind in any public library in New York State; and

WHEREAS, The Cultural Arts Program provides many valuable offerings to the community including seasonal creative writing workshops, poetry and literary readings, artist exhibitions, and Africana History lectures and

discussions; in addition, it holds special annual events such as Family Day, the Juneteenth Celebration, and the Annual Authors and Publishers Fair; and

WHEREAS, The Homework Assistance Program offers tutoring assistance to students in first through seventh grade, helping them to complete daily homework assignments and develop skills in reading, comprehension, and mathematics; and

WHEREAS, The success enjoyed by this remarkable institution is in direct correlation to the efforts of the many individuals who have supported the development of the library over the years; and

WHEREAS, Equally commendable are the Langston Hughes Community Library and Cultural Center's superbly-skilled staff, whose involvement is and has always been characterized by an impressive commitment, an unbridled enthusiasm, and an uncompromising standard of excellence in all of their efforts on behalf of the library and the population it serves; and

WHEREAS, Steeped in a proud and distinguished history, the Langston Hughes Community Library may take just pride in its purposeful growth, as it looks forward to continuing to serve the educational, cultural and intellectual needs of the community; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to commend the Langston Hughes Community Library and Cultural Center for its outstanding service to the citizens of Queens, New York; and be it further

RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to the Langston Hughes Community Library and Cultural Center.