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**FIRST LADY CHIRLANE MCCRAY ANNOUNCES PARTNERSHIP WITH
RAFANELLI EVENTS TO RING IN HOLIDAY SEASON AT GRACIE MANSION**

Premier event planning company highlights City's core initiatives with one-of-a-kind decorations



NEW YORK—First Lady Chirlane McCray and Gabrielle Fialkoff, Senior Advisor to the Mayor and Office of Strategic Partnerships Director today announced a partnership between the Gracie Mansion Conversancy and Rafanelli Events to decorate Gracie Mansion this holiday season. The Rafanelli Events team, led by President Bryan Rafanelli worked closely with the First Lady to create designs that reflect several of the Mayor and First Lady's priority initiatives and biggest successes from the first term, including [ThriveNYC](#), [Pre-K for All](#), [AP for All](#) and [the Gracie Book Club](#). The decorations will be viewed by more than 10,000 visitors over the holiday season, including New Yorkers whose families receive services from City agencies.

The ballroom highlights the First Lady's groundbreaking mental health plan ThriveNYC with the ThriveNYC tree. The tree has been adorned with hand-linked paper dolls and ornaments decorated by children from The Children's Aid Society East Harlem Center and Frederick Douglass Center, representing New Yorkers united in their support for one another. The Blue Room spotlights Pre-K for All and AP for ALL with a pencil tree centerpiece and colored pencil orbs. And the Peach Room highlights the Gracie Book Club with a Christmas tree replica made up of 500 children's books donated by Scholastic. Global Brands Group donated 500 pairs of

mitten and 150 scarves to include in garland running along the house's railing. The books will be donated to Children's Aid, the scarves and mittens will be donated to children in need across the City, and the hundreds upon hundreds yards of yarn will be delivered to Materials for the Arts, New York's premiere reuse center, to be used by nonprofit organizations and public schools for arts programming.

"The holiday season is a time for families and communities to come together and celebrate in peace, love and unity. We wanted the décor at Gracie Mansion to capture the excitement of the holidays, while also telling the stories of some of our proudest achievements on behalf of all New Yorkers," said **First Lady Chirlane McCray**. "We're thrilled to partner with Rafanelli Events to tell those stories with creativity and functional art that will be well used when it leaves Gracie, making this year's holiday décor at 'The People's House' an unforgettable event."

"Rafanelli Events has been telling meaningful stories through their gorgeous design for years and we are so lucky to be partnering with them this holiday season," said **Gabrielle Fialkoff, Senior Advisor to the Mayor and Office of Strategic Partnerships Director**. "Through the décor, we sought to tell the story of our New York values of community and inclusion and highlight some of the important initiatives such as Pre-K for All and the Gracie Book club. Thousands of New Yorkers will come to the People's House this holiday season and we are so grateful to share not only the House and its history—but to make it a meaningful experience for all.

"It is my great honor to have worked with First Lady Chirlane McCray and her team to fulfill their vision of the holidays at Gracie Mansion on its 75th anniversary," said **Bryan Rafanelli, President and Chief Creative Officer of Rafanelli Events**. "The house's extraordinary history and beauty was a thrill for me. We were delighted to transform the people of New York City's house with the help of donations from New York artisans and to highlight philanthropic initiatives in our design."

This year marks the 75th anniversary of Gracie Mansion serving as New York City's Mayoral residence, marked this spring with the unveiling of the art installation "New York 1942," which tells the story of New York City and the people who lived in the City during an extraordinary time in US history. Rafanelli Events, one of the nation's premier event planning and design companies, donated its services to further celebrate this milestone. Rafanelli Events previously designed and managed the décor for the last Obama White House holiday seasons under former President Barack Obama and First Lady Michelle Obama.

New Yorkers are invited to see the decorations during the Annual Gracie Mansion Holiday Open House on Saturday, December 16 at 2 p.m. Guests will tour Gracie Mansion in full holiday décor and then head to the outdoor tent to view holiday arts and crafts created by children from all over New York City.





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