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MAYOR DE BLASIO SIGNS LEGISLATION TO CO-NAME 42 THOROUGHFARES AND PUBLIC SPACES

NEW YORK—Mayor Bill de Blasio today signed legislation into law to co-name 39 new and amend 3 previously co-named thoroughfares and public spaces.

Intro. 1054 co-names 39 new and amends 3 previously co-named thoroughfares and public spaces in honor of individuals, cultural icons and entities that made lasting contributions to New York City. New street name honorees include three police officers who passed away in the line of duty: Detective First Grade Randolph Holder, who immigrated to New York City from Guyana 21 years ago and served with the NYPD for five years; Police Officer Kenneth Anthony Nugent, who served with the NYPD for 13 years; and Police Officer Kevin Joseph Gillespie, a four-year veteran of the NYPD.

Members of the Fire Department also have been honored, including FDNY Captain James McDonnell, a 20-year veteran of the FDNY who passed away due to injuries he sustained while responding to a fire; and FDNY Captain John R. Graziano, who served with the FDNY for 26 years and helped in the rescue and recovery efforts after the terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001.

Lastly, cultural icons honored include former New York Knick Anthony Mason, who played on the team for five years; and painter and illustrator Norman Rockwell, who is being honored after a push by the Edward A. Reynolds West Side High School – a DOE school – to rename a block of West 103rd Street near where Rockwell grew up, just in time for the arrival of the Norman Rockwell Museum in New York City.

“Today we honor 42 individuals and cultural icons that helped mold our city into a stronger, safer and more creative place,” said **Mayor Bill de Blasio**. “From the brave individuals who lost their lives in the line of duty, to those who kept New York City culturally significant, these names will forever be a part of our city’s history. I thank Council Speaker Melissa Mark-Viverito, and the members of the City Council who introduced these names this year.”

“This legislation will honor community leaders, clergy, dedicated public servants and – in the case of Detective Randolph Holder Way – an NYPD Officer who bravely served our city and sacrificed his life to keep his fellow New Yorkers safe,” said **Council Speaker Melissa Mark-Viverito**. “All the people who are having streets named for them today are people who have given their lives to New York City in one way or another. Today we’re offering these great New Yorkers a small token of gratitude in the form of these street co-namings.”

“Police Officer Kevin Joseph Gillespie and Detective Randolph Holder, who were killed in the line of duty in 1996 and 2015 respectively, bravely gave their lives protecting the people of this City,” said **Police Commissioner William J. Bratton**. “These men, who were both just 33 years old and in the early years of their careers with the Department when their lives were cut short, will be remembered forever. It’s fitting that the intersection of Grand Concourse and East 183rd Street in the Bronx, near where Officer Gillespie confronted

armed carjackers, and Collier Avenue and Briar Place in Far Rockaway, near Detective Holder's childhood home, be renamed in their honor. Let us never forget their heroism and sacrifice."

"Captain James McDonnell lost his life saving two of his fellow Firefighters from a collapse while battling a fire. Captain John Graziano was taken from us as a result of his selfless work in the rescue and recovery effort at the World Trade Center. They are true heroes to the city they bravely served," said **Fire Commissioner Daniel A. Nigro**. "I want to thank Council Speaker Mark-Viverito and Council Members Matteo and Borelli for sponsoring the bills that will ensure the memory of these brave Firefighters will never be forgotten."

"Who would have thought that the artist most identified for his portrayals of life in small town America has roots right here in the Upper West Side of Manhattan. No doubt his experiences in the Upper West Side helped inspire him to produce powerful works depicting everything from the civil rights movement to FDR's Four Freedoms. I'm grateful to the students at West Side High School for bringing Rockwell's connection to this neighborhood to the attention of the world," said **Council Member Mark Levine, Chair of the Committee on Parks**. "I also could not be prouder to honor the Reverend Dr. Jasper Simmons of Harlem, who was the longest serving ordained minister in the tristate area. His commitment to our community knew no bounds, and I'm thrilled his life and legacy will live on with this well-deserved recognition."

"Today is a historic moment for the Greek- and Cypriot-American community in our city as we officially rename 30th Street between 37th and 38th Avenue in Astoria, 'Εθνικός Κήρυξ - National Herald Way,'" said **City Council Majority Leader Jimmy Van Bramer**. "I'm proud to sponsor this significant commemoration honoring the contributions the National Herald has made to my home neighborhood of Astoria – and to make "Εθνικός Κήρυξ – National Herald Way" the first street in Queens named with Greek lettering. For over a century, the National Herald has been a beacon of progressive press, assisting needy families in the community, and contributing to civic and cultural achievements that make Astoria one of the greatest neighborhoods in our city."

"The purpose of any street co-naming is to cherish and forever preserve the memory of individuals who have had a significant impact on the City of New York, and it is undoubtedly true that the criteria has far been exceeded by Joseph DeNicola, WWII hero Anthony Manifold, and FDNY Captain John R. Graziano," said **Council Member Joseph Borelli**. "I speak on behalf of my entire constituency when I say that these individuals truly deserve this great honor, and I applaud the signing of this legislation, which co-names a portion of Nedra Lane as Joseph DeNicola Lane; a portion of Bradford Avenue as Anthony Manifold Way; and a portion of Getz Avenue as FDNY Captain John R. Graziano Way."

"I am thrilled that Ms. Loretta Ruddock-Smith, a community leader who was so active and so beloved in our neighborhood, is being recognized in a special way. She is more than deserving of this honor, and I hope that the street sign with her name on it will inspire all who see it to be excellent public servants and caring human beings," said **Council Member Fernando Cabrera**.

"By designating Bowling Green in the heart of Lower Manhattan, 'Evacuation Day Plaza,' we are ensuring that this important date in our city's Revolutionary War history will never be forgotten," said **Council Member Margaret Chin**. "I am proud to be part of the effort to honor this date, which played such an important role in the history of our city and the entire nation."

"Demetris Kastanas helped promote Hellenism and Democratic values throughout his life," said **Council Member Costa Constantinides**. "He became a great example of civic engagement to his Greek-American community. As the founder of the Greek television channel, he created an opportunity for the Greek-American community, many of whom were not native English speakers, to directly engage with news and current events. He spread awareness of charitable causes and helped raise donations for worthy organizations such as the Greek Children's Cancer Fund. We are proud to commemorate Kastanas' contribution to Astoria with this street co-naming."

“Through the practice of law, education and ministry, three New Yorkers made an undeniable impact within the 35th Council District, which I proudly represent. I am proud that we can pay tribute to the legacies of Carey Gabay, Dean Derrick Griffith, and Reverend Clarence Norman, Sr. by placing street signs in their honor within the very communities they served in their lifetime,” said **Council Member Laurie A. Cumbo**.

“Diversity Plaza has become the cultural crossroads of the world,” said **Council Member Daniel Dromm**. “It is the place people turn to when disasters occur in their homelands, and is home to many exciting cultural events. On the occasion of Diversity Plaza’s formal naming, I would like to thank SUKHI New York, the Friends of Diversity Plaza, the Neighbor Plaza Partnership, the Department of Transportation and the many other community members who have worked tirelessly to make Diversity Plaza the vibrant and welcoming place it is today. I will continue to collaborate with these stakeholders in an effort to bring additional programming and other improvements to this invaluable public space.”

“Edward F. Guida Sr. was a noble and generous servant of the Corona community. As a City Marshal, he was both loved and respected for his compassion, ethics and for protecting the interest of his neighbors. As a member of the community, he always sought to improve the lives of those less fortunate. From 114th Street to Otis Avenue, members of the Corona and greater New York City area could always count on Edward. It is my pleasure to honor Mr. Guida’s legacy and have a place where this community and the Guida family can commemorate him,” said **Council Member Julissa Ferreras-Copeland**.

“Patrice T.C. Capo was an active member of the community and a role model for all in Bay Ridge. A small business owner, Patrice volunteered her time mentoring youth, and on 9/11, she fed firefighters and joined the bucket brigade. Her legacy will live on perpetually on 90th Street and 3rd Avenue, renamed Patrice T.C. Capo Memorial Way,” said **Council Member Vincent Gentile**. “The Ragamuffin Parade is an institution in Bay Ridge. There is no better way to commemorate the 50th Anniversary of this event than by renaming 74th Street and 3rd Avenue Ragamuffin Way. Each year the parade unites the community – bringing together nonprofit organizations, local businesses, families and civic leaders to experience a tradition that is near and dear to the hearts of Halloween costumed children in Bay Ridge and Dyker Heights.”

“Street co-namings are wonderful New York City traditions that celebrate the rich history of our communities and boroughs, and I am thrilled that two more streets in my district will recognize the enduring contribution of Bronx residents. As of today, Teller Avenue between 169th and 170th will be known as Reverend William E. Thompson Way in recognition of Reverend Thompson’s lifetime of service to the Bronx community. In addition to founding the first African American Church in Morrisania in 1965, Reverend Thompson led youth ministries that educated young people about the life and work of Dr. Martin Luther King, assisted young working mothers in finding low cost daycare options, founded a black history pictorial museum and, upon his retirement from his career as a social worker, continued to serve the community as a New York City school teacher. In many ways, Reverend Thompson was ahead of his time, but his passion for serving the common good remains timeless. I am proud to have this opportunity to recognize Reverend Thompson’s many accomplishments and honor his memory,” said **Council Member Vanessa Gibson**. Today, we also honor and recognize the birthplace of hip-hop in the Bronx, 1520 Sedgwick Avenue, and the creation of an era in our cultural history that has made invaluable contributions to our city. Hip-hop has had an undeniable influence on popular culture and naming the stretch of Sedgwick Avenue in front of 1520 as Hip-Hop Boulevard solidifies our deep appreciation to the hip-hop genre. It is important to recognize our hip-hop pioneers, how valuable hip-hop has become to New York City and pay tribute to its Bronx roots. I am proud to represent the birthplace of hip-hop in Morris Heights, and I am deeply excited to have this opportunity to celebrate the Bronx’s significance in hip-hop history.”

“Today we recognize the contributions Robert ‘PH’ Diaz made both to the hip-hop community at large, and especially to the Park Slope neighborhood he so proudly represented,” said **Council Member Brad Lander**. “From attending P.S. 282 and M.S. 51 in his younger days, to neighborhood shout-outs throughout his musical

career, Diaz had a deep and unwavering pride in being a Park Sloper. Though he sadly passed away at the young age of 39, a newly co-named section of DeGraw Street – now Robert ‘PH’ Diaz Way – will ensure his legacy lives on in the neighborhood he called home. Thank you to Mayor de Blasio and the Robert’s family for organizing to recognize Diaz’s many lyrical and civic contributions.”

“First Sergeant Mendez grew up in Southside and exemplified the spirit of duty and service that makes that community so special. Though he grew up in a time when the neighborhood faced many challenges, Mendez rose above them to build a better life for himself and dedicate himself to a greater purpose. Throughout his more than 18 years of distinguished service in the United States Army, Mendez made his community proud and represented the best that our borough and our city have to offer. First Sergeant Mendez heroically gave his life for his country on April 27th, 2006, in Iraq. It is a privilege to honor his sacrifice in the service of his country with this co-naming, and I hope his legacy will serve as an inspiration for future generations,” said **Council Member Stephen Levin**.

“Thanks to the names adorning these street signs, generations of Staten Islanders will be reminded of the Moore boys, Breandon and Connor, whose heartbreaking loss has come to symbolize the painful and personal tragedies of Hurricane Sandy, and our communities’ collective will to heal and rebuild; and Sergeant Donald B. Geisler, a decorated soldier who died as a prisoner of war at the young age of 20, after serving this country with honor and courage during the Korean War,” said **Council Member Steven Matteo**.

“The co-naming of John Watusi Branch Way is timely and appropriate. In a community that is home to some of the great African-American musical giants of our nation, John Watusi Branch stands out as a leader himself in the important movements that introduced Pan-African historical, political, musical and cultural treasures to new generations, and also as a co-founder of the legendary Afrikan Poetry Theatre on 176th Street and Jamaica Avenue,” said **Council Member I. Daneek Miller**. “Since its founding in 1977 as the first of its type in Southeast Queens, the theatre has continued as a center of African-American celebrations, lectures and artistic performances for the many students, teachers and residents of our city who look to it for cultural enrichment. John Watusi Branch died at the age of 70 on December 28th, 2013 and his legacy still lives on.”

“The City Council tradition of honoring New Yorkers with street co-namings is an important way to connect our fallen officers and community leaders from the past with our residents of the present and the future,” said **Council Member Donovan Richards**. “Detective Randolph Holder was a beloved member of the Far Rockaway community who was known for being the DJ at all the summer barbecues. Now, his family and neighbors can remember his legacy and his sacrifice for the city he loved by looking up at his name with pride on the very streets that he brought so much joy to. In addition, not only was Anthony Mason a proud Southeast Queens native who showed the true passion and fire that represents our community, but he never forgot where he came from and always made time for the young kids who dreamed of following in his path from the outdoor courts and gymnasiums to the World’s Most Famous Arena.”

“Freddy Beras-Goico Way, which will be co-named at 175th Street and Broadway, honors Mr. Beras-Goico for his years spent in entertainment, philanthropy and as a fighter for Democracy in the Dominican Republic. Many in our community will look upon this street with pride in recognition of Freddy’s great work as a writer, actor, radio host and supporter of democratic values during a time in the D.R. fraught with peril,” said **Council Member Ydaniz Rodríguez**. “I am equally proud to honor Mr. Sidney Offerman, on a street where he was most impactful in our community, Elwood Street and Nagle Avenue. Mr. Offerman was instrumental in developing the YM & YWHA of Washington Heights and Inwood into the institution it is today. Sidney Offerman served on the Board of Directors starting in 1945 and helped secure the Y’s then-new building on Nagle Avenue in 1956, where he served as president until his death in 1975. From offering quality services to our aging communities to providing our community’s youngest members the education and active programming necessary to grow up smart and healthy, Sidney and the Y’s impact on Northern Manhattan have been felt for generations. Sidney Offerman Way will stand as a testament to his legacy, and a reminder to our newest generations of the rich history that Sidney was a part of writing for Washington Heights and Inwood.”

“The three distinguished individuals being honored with a street co-naming in the Bronx’s Council District 15 served their communities selflessly and with distinction. The names and memories of Officer Gillespie, Reverend Duncan and Mr. Flynn will now be permanent fixtures in our borough and they will never be forgotten,” said **Council Member Ritchie Torres**.

“Anthony Mason will best be remembered by our generation for his tenacity on the basketball court, particularly during his five memorable years as a member of the New York Knicks. This South Jamaica raised, Springfield Educational Campus PSAL Champion rose from near obscurity to earn acclaim as one of the most fearsome and talented power-forwards of his NBA playing career. All those who admired and cared for Anthony mourned his passing. Now, thanks to his family and loved ones, Anthony Mason will forever be part of this city. This co-naming, which I am honored to have sponsored, celebrates their shared legacy,” said **Council Member Ruben Wills**. “In addition, not enough can be said about the bravery of Qadri Skipper. He lived without limitations despite being afflicted with two rare debilitating illnesses of the blood vessels: Pulmonary Hypertension and Hereditary Hemorrhagic Telangiectasia. When the DOE resisted granting him a specialized transport that would enable him to continue attending school safely, Qadri and his mother Doreen successfully fought for his right to an accessible education. His advocacy for other children diagnosed with these ailments earned him the admiration of physicians and medical researchers across the nation. Qadri posthumously received his diploma from Information Technology High School, which also created a scholarship in his memory. I am honored to have sponsored this co-naming in dedication to Qadri and his family, including his late father William.”

In a statement released by the **New York Knicks**, the team said, “For five great seasons, Anthony Mason proudly donned a New York Knickerbockers uniform like no other of his era. His New York roots, his passion for the City game, his desire to win and his tenacity on defense made him a fan-favorite across the five boroughs and beyond for everyone that watched him in the historic Orange and Blue. We can now stand on Anthony Mason Way in honor of his legacy in the community that he loved and the City he always called home.”

“We are proud of the dedication and vision of the Edward A. Reynolds West Side High School students who worked diligently with our Museum to see Norman Rockwell recognized in his ‘hometown,’” said **Norman Rockwell Museum Director and CEO Laurie Norton Moffatt**. “These students have demonstrated outstanding civic participation through their efforts, and we are so pleased to see Rockwell’s artistic legacy recognized on the street where he was born. We also greatly appreciate Mayor de Blasio’s recognition of Rockwell’s New York roots and ongoing engagement with the City; we know that the artist would be honored to be remembered in his ‘hometown’ in this special way.”

The following individuals, cultural icons and entities will be honored:

Detective First Grade Randolph Holder
Police Officer Kenneth Anthony Nugent
Police Officer Kevin Joseph Gillespie
School Security Agent Sandra P. Cranford
FDNY Captain James McDonnell
FDNY Captain John R. Graziano
Charles Lucania
Vincent Cangelosi
Carey Gabay
Ms. Aida Perez-Loiza Aldea
Edward F. Guida Sr.
Dr. Derrick E. Griffith
Reverend Clarence Norman Sr.

Sergeant Bobby Mendez
John Watusi Branch
Patrice T.C. Capo
Robert “PH” Diaz
Demetris Kastanas
Connor and Breandon Moore
Sergeant Donald B. Geisler
Anthony Manifold
Joseph DeNicola
Tanaya R. Copeland
Loretta Ruddock Smith
Reverend Dr. Jasper Simmons Place
Freddy Beras-Goico
Sidney Offerman
Reverend William E. Thompson
Robert S. Farrell and Donald H. Farrell
Roberta (Bobbie) Jacobowitz
John C. Flynn
Reverend Abner Bernard Duncan
Alfred J. Vigliante
Qadri Skipper
Norman Rockwell
Anthony Mason
Hip Hop Boulevard
Ragamuffin Way
Diversity Plaza
1783 Evacuation Day Plaza
Kips Bay Blvd.
Εθνικός Κήρυξ - National Herald Way

Police Officer Kenneth Anthony Nugent, FDNY Captain James McDonnell and Tanya R. Copeland have been honored prior to today’s bill signing. Their co-named thoroughfares and public spaces are being changed for technical reasons.

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