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**TRANSCRIPT: MAYOR DE BLASIO DELIVERS REMARKS AT VACCINATION
POP-UP SITE AT AL-MASJIDU ADAM COMMUNITY LIFE CENTER FOR HUMAN
EXCELLENCE**

Mayor Bill de Blasio: *Salam Alaikum.* This is very important that we're gathered here. I want to thank Imam Abdul Azeez for his leadership. I want to thank him, and this effort emanated from a very powerful moment. The night we had the memorial, March 14th, to all those we lost to COVID and Imam Abdul Azeez spoke powerfully at the memorial. And then after he said, it's time to start providing vaccinations to the community, at the community centers, at the mosques where people know they can go for help, where they trust their leaders. And that will help people to feel comfortable with the vaccine. We need to take this to the grassroots and the community. That's what will work. That's what the Imam said. And I said to him, we will be there for you, we will be there with you. And we will start to do this working with mosques all over the city.

And now it's happening. And it will grow in the weeks ahead because our Muslim brothers and sisters in this city do so much for New York City. They are such a crucial part of New York City. And we need to show an embrace and respect for our Muslim community. And we need to encourage people to come forward, particularly our younger people. And to my friends, to the imams and the leaders right here, who may have a little bit of gray hair along with me. We will be a good example and we'll help the younger people to know that now that everyone's eligible, it's time to come forward to protect your family, your community, your city, together.

Ramadan, the sacred time is in fact, the perfect time for us to be reaching out because it's a time of faith. It's a time of reflection. It's a time of commitment. It's a time of community. This is exactly when we should be having the conversation about how to protect the members of the community. And we have a way to do it that only takes a few minutes, that is simple, that is proven and safe and free. Let me not forget that. Even though I'm in the presence of high-minded spiritual leaders, temporal matters do count as well. It's free everybody. It's free. And it's more available than ever, more and more sites around the city, easier and easier to get an appointment. This is how we come back, make each other safe, and then bring this beautiful city back. Bring it back in every community, not just to Midtown, Manhattan. Here in the Bronx, in the Muslim community, where people need to feel this recovery. We need a recovery for all of us, for every part of New York City, and that begins with vaccination. So, we will vaccinate, fully vaccinate 5 million New Yorkers by June. And my friends, the imams, and all the leaders in the community are going to help lead the way.

So, at that, first of all, and so importantly, I say *Ramadan Mubarak* to my Muslim brothers and sisters. And an honor now to introduce someone I've known a long time, an amazing spiritual leader in the city, a great interfaith leader, too. I want to emphasize. Someone who has reached across all faiths in times of difficulty and in times of hope to move us forward. My great pleasure to introduce Imam Talib.

[...]

Thank you so much. And I just want to say one concluding point. First of all, a deep thanks to everyone who made this possible. And I want to give special credit to the younger generation too, from my team Mamadou Bah, thank you – where are you? There he is. Thank you so much for helping to organize this. And now as you heard, some of the imams are going to get vaccinated themselves and that will be a blessing. So, everyone, I want you to capture those images and show the whole city the good news that is happening here. Thank you, everyone.

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