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MAYOR DE BLASIO ANNOUNCES NYC MUNICIPAL ID TO GIVE ACCESS TO 1-YEAR FREE MEMBERSHIPS AT 33 OF THE CITY'S MOST ACCLAIMED CULTURAL INSTITUTIONS

With the Municipal ID card, thousands of residents will be able to receive free benefits at members of the Cultural Institutions Group throughout 2015

NEW YORK—Today, Mayor Bill de Blasio announced that the City's Municipal ID, which will launch in January 2015, will give all ID card holders access to one-year free membership packages at 33 of the City's leading cultural institutions, including world class museums, performing arts centers, concert halls, botanical gardens, and zoos in all five boroughs. The Municipal ID/CIG one-year membership will be comparable to each institution's standard one-year individual or family membership package, depending on the institution, and will give ID card holders a range of benefits including free admission, and access to special events, and discounts to museum shops.

The 33 institutions belong to the Cultural Institutions Group (CIG) which is comprised of private nonprofit cultural organizations located on City owned property. The first member of the CIG, the American Museum of Natural History, was created in 1869 and the group has grown to include a diverse cross section of institutions in each of the boroughs. The City provides capital, operating and energy support to CIG members and in turn each institution is charged with providing access to cultural services and programming to all New Yorkers.

See full list of CIG benefits here: <http://on.nyc.gov/1udVL18>

"The municipal ID is a powerful tool to bring more New Yorkers out of the shadows and into the mainstream. It is now also a key that opens the door for hundreds of thousands of more New Yorkers to our City's premier assets in culture, science and entertainment," said **Mayor Bill de Blasio**. "The Municipal ID Card embodies the values we cherish most about inclusivity and equality, and these memberships are another step forward on providing greater access and opportunity for our people."

"New York's wonderful cultural institutions which provide so much vibrancy to this city understand that we're better when we're moving forward together," said **Council Speaker Mark-Viverito**. "I want to thank my Council colleagues, the administration and the Cultural Institution Group for their collaboration on this historic initiative."

"The Municipal ID Program is one that has the potential to transform lives, and to help ensure its success the cultural community, and in particular the Cultural Institutions Group's members, have stepped up to the plate," said **City Council Majority Leader and Chair of", Libraries & International Intergroup Relations Committee Jimmy Van Bramer**. "Culture is always important in our City and with this announcement we are reminded of the centrality of the arts to our City. Access to the arts for all and a more just City is being accomplished with the help of these great institutions. It is a great day."

"The support for the Municipal ID from 33 of the City's most illustrious cultural institutions is a landmark win on the road to implementation of this law, said **Chair of City Council Immigration Committee Carlos Menchaca**. "There is no doubt that New York City residents are set to gain an incredible amount from their participation in the municipal ID card program, and this partnership is a huge part of that. These new cultural benefits will ensure that all New Yorkers are excited about getting a municipal ID card—a key to New York City. I applaud the work of the Administration, The

Council, and all of the community partners and advocates who continue to work tirelessly to make the municipal ID a reality.”

“I am grateful to the Cultural Institutions Group for teaming up to make New York’s municipal ID program the envy of other cities,” said **Municipal ID Bill Sponsor Council Member Daniel Dromm**. “This world-class ID will make our city’s world-class cultural institutions accessible to every New Yorker, from recent immigrant families to students and young professionals. With all of the fun and exciting options that this card will provide, New Yorkers will have no excuse to fail to get a card or to stay at home.”

“The Municipal ID expands access to vital resources and services for residents across New York City,” said **Council Member Ritchie Torres**. “Through partnership with institutions like the Bronx Zoo and New York Botanical Garden, it better ensures that all New Yorkers can enjoy and learn from our world-class cultural organizations. I am proud to stand with Mayor de Blasio, Speaker Mark-Viverito, and my colleagues in the Council to announce this exciting collaboration.”

“It has been such a pleasure working with partners at cultural organizations and across agencies to help develop these membership packages for the municipal ID. I am thrilled with the generous benefits each member of the Cultural Institutions Group will offer to ID holders,” said **Cultural Affairs Commissioner Tom Finkelpearl**. “There is something for everyone at gardens, zoos, museums, and performing arts centers in every borough. The CIG leadership has really come through for all New Yorkers and I will be one of the first in line to get the municipal ID!”

"This is an amazing set of benefits that underscores this card will be a card for all New Yorkers," said **Immigrant Affairs Commissioner Nisha Agarwal**. “We are heartened by the leadership shown by the Cultural Institutions Group and Commissioner Finkelpearl in making this the most ambitious municipal ID program in the country.”

“The Cultural Institutions Group is proud to stand together with Mayor de Blasio, Speaker Mark-Viverito, the members of the City Council, and the Department of Cultural Affairs in actively serving and supporting all our neighbors throughout New York City,” said **Chair of the CIG and Director of the Brooklyn Museum Arnold Lehman**. “The arts and culture bring us together as a community. This is one city – and the Municipal ID dynamically helps to make it so.”

The offer will be available to all Municipal ID holders from the day the program is launched in January 2015 through December 31, 2015. The membership term will be for one-year from the date the individual signs up with a participating cultural institution. The framework for the CIG membership deal came together with the support of City Council after Cultural Affairs Commissioner Tom Finkelpearl was appointed earlier this year. As a former director of a CIG institution, Commissioner Finkelpearl was able to work closely with CIG chair Arnold Lehman and the organizations’ leadership in finding a creative and compelling strategy for CIG member institutions to open their doors even further to all New Yorkers. The package of benefits the CIG has developed demonstrates the central role these institutions play in New York’s civic life.

This free membership package will not be available to existing members of a participating institution or individuals whose membership has lapsed since January 1, 2012. However, existing or recently lapsed members of a given institution can use their Municipal ID to obtain free membership at all other participating institutions.

The 33 participating institutions are listed below by borough:

Bronx

1. Bronx County Historical Society
2. Bronx Museum of the Arts
3. New York Botanical Garden
4. Wave Hill
5. Wildlife Conservation Society (includes Bronx Zoo, New York Aquarium, Central Park Zoo, Queens Zoo, and Prospect Park Zoo)

Brooklyn

6. Brooklyn Academy of Music
7. Brooklyn Botanic Garden
8. Brooklyn Children's Museum

9. Brooklyn Museum

Manhattan

10. American Museum of Natural History
11. Carnegie Hall
12. New York City Ballet
13. El Museo del Barrio
14. Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts, Inc.
15. Metropolitan Museum of Art
16. Museum of Jewish Heritage
17. Museum of the City of New York
18. New York City Center
19. Public Theater/New York Shakespeare Festival
20. Studio Museum in Harlem

Queens

21. Flushing Town Hall
22. Jamaica Center for Arts & Learning
23. Museum of the Moving Image
24. New York Hall of Science
25. MoMA PS1
26. Queens Botanical Garden
27. Queens Museum
28. Queens Theatre

Staten Island

29. Snug Harbor Cultural Center & Botanical Garden
30. Staten Island Children's Museum
31. Staten Island Historical Society
32. Staten Island Museum
33. Staten Island Zoological Society

“The Wildlife Conservation Society, a member of the Cultural Institutions Group, is honored that Mayor de Blasio chose to roll out the New York City Municipal I.D. Card at our Bronx Zoo,” said **Executive Vice President of Wild Conservation Society John Calvelli**. “We, like all of the CIG members, have a long tradition of partnering with the city to bring better services to all New Yorkers. WCS is proud to have worked with our CIG colleagues to bring a membership opportunity to participants, an important cultural component to the MIDC.”

“The American Museum of Natural History is pleased to support the Mayor, the Speaker, and the City Council in their efforts to launch the Municipal ID program and to advance the longstanding partnership between the City and the cultural sector,” said **President of the American Museum of Natural History Ellen V. Futter**. “As the historic first member of the Cultural Institutions Group, the Museum has long been one of New York’s most popular family destinations. The Muni ID partnership allows us to offer to even more New Yorkers—adults and children alike—opportunities to engage with science, culture, and nature in enriching, fun, and inspiring ways.”

“The Municipal ID program offers a great opportunity for the Cultural Institutions Group to engage all New Yorkers, said **Director and Chief Curator of the Studio Museum in Harlem Thelma Golden**. “I’ve enjoyed the many conversations with partners at colleague institutions and in City government and remain confident that the diverse range of ID benefits being offered will provide rewarding experiences to our audiences in Harlem and across the five boroughs.”

“This important initiative gives the Museum the opportunity to extend and deepen its relationship with all New Yorkers, most especially in our home borough of Queens - among the most diverse communities in the United States,” said **Executive Director of the Museum of the Moving Image Carl Goodman**.

“The Metropolitan Museum of Art is delighted to participate in Mayor de Blasio's exciting new Municipal ID initiative,” said **Director and CEO Thomas Campbell and President Emily K. Rafferty of The Metropolitan Museum of Art**. “The Met prides itself on extending access to art to an ever-expanding community—both from around the world and within our own diverse City. Art is a unifying force, and our collections reflect cultures across on the globe. We look forward to this expanded opportunity to connect people to both their heritage and to one another. Indeed, at the Met, the Municipal ID program will be a passport to the world.”

“We are proud to be a part of this initiative that brings arts institutions one step closer toward engaging members of our society in the cultural wellbeing of this City,” said **Executive Director of El Museo del Barrio Jorge Daniel Veneciano**. “We welcome the opportunity to work more closely with the City and its efforts to improve the lives of all New Yorkers.”

“The Municipal ID program with its complimentary membership is a perfect match for Historic Richmond Town which celebrates the diverse American experience. The program brings us new friends of every background from our Staten Island community and beyond, who can now discover stories about people like them who worked together to build this extraordinary city and nation. It’s a win-win for everyone!” said **Executive Director of Historic Richmond Town Ed Wisemen**.

The Mayor signed legislation to create a municipal ID card for all New York City residents on July 10, 2014. The municipal ID will be available for all residents of the five boroughs who meet the program's proof of identity and city residency requirements. The card will be issued at no cost for applicants during the program's first year.

The Municipal ID will be an accessible and safe document that will ensure access to City services and grant admission to all municipal buildings. The City is also working toward connecting the ID with stores, restaurants, discounts and other incentive programs. The City will continue to expand and improve upon the municipal ID card program and benefits after the launch date.

To ensure broad and easy accessibility, the City will establish walk-in enrollment centers in trusted community institutions around the boroughs, and will post the application online for applicants to complete it prior to visiting a walk-in center. In addition, the City will create mobile enrollment units that can travel to neighborhoods across the City. The City will also ensure that the outreach and application processes are accessible to people with limited English proficiency and people with disabilities.

The City will protect the confidentiality of all municipal ID card applications, and will not ask applicants about their immigration status.

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