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**RUSH TRANSCRIPT: MAYOR DE BLASIO DELIVERS REMARKS AT GROUNDBREAKING FOR
CORNELL TECH CAMPUS**

Mayor Bill de Blasio: Thank you so much, Dan. Thank you for your leadership. Everyone here has a lot to be proud of. But Dan, you really have been one of the people who created this from scratch, and have made something extraordinary here. I want to thank you for being a champion for what this project could mean for Cornell, for the Technion, for New York City, for our future – let's thank Dan for his leadership.

[Applause]

The tech community is strong in this city. It is creative. It is innovative. It can do almost anything – except deal with the weather. So, once upon a time, we were going to have this a little earlier. We had a snow delay – the one thing that the tech community could not overcome. But we are finally here. And this is a tremendously meaningful day for New York City, and a tremendously positive day. And I hope everyone recognizes that this is something that's really going to have a transformative impact.

I want to thank so many people who were part of bringing us to this day. I'm going to speak in a moment about the extraordinary work and the extraordinary generosity of my predecessor, Michael Bloomberg. So let me get to that in one second, but before that, I want to thank Cornell's extraordinary president, David Skorton, who – Washington's gain will be New York's loss, but we are thrilled for the leadership he provided. I want to thank Cornell Chair Bob Harrison; Bruce Ratner and MaryAnne Gilmartin of Forest City Ratner; David Kramer of the Hudson Companies.

Some of the folks who played a key role getting us to this day from the government side – obviously, including Bob Steel and Seth Pinsky. Thank you for your great leadership. I want to thank members of my administration who also served in your administration, Mr. Mayor, and are doing work and have been doing great work continuing a lot of this vision – Kyle Kimball of EDC, Maria Torres-Springer of Small Businesses. You heard about Minerva Tantoco and Jessie Singleton – two key members of our tech team and we're so proud of their leadership.

All the folks at EDC – I want to – sometimes, we name specific names and specific leaders, but as Mayor Bloomberg knows, the folks at EDC took this on as a labor of love and they have seen it through. So I want to make sure we give them their due as well.

Of course, our elected officials – thank you to Lieutenant Governor Kathy Hochul – it means a lot to us that she is here. Speaker Melissa Mark-Viverito, Borough Presidents Gale Brewer and Melinda Katz, and Council Member Ben Kallos – thank you all for being here. Let's give them all a round of applause.

[Applause]

And now, I want to give Michael Bloomberg a true compliment, because he doesn't usually do things half-way. And he believed in this vision and this possibility for New York City. And largely due to his will and his sense of vision, we are here today. And it is greatly, greatly intensified by the extraordinarily generous gift he has

made to further this work. I want to thank him for that – following through on a vision he felt so deeply and sticking with it means a lot to all the people of New York City.

And it was not just about this project. It was about a bigger vision – not just a bigger vision of how we had a more educated, learned society, how we would have more and more talent for this city – it was also a bigger vision for our economy and our future. Mayor Bloomberg focused incessantly on diversifying our economy – something that was long overdue. And that meant, necessarily, a focus on the tech community. And Mr. Mayor, you remember a phrase from a great American movie? “If you build it, they will come”? I think this epitomizes it.

I think Mayor Bloomberg’s efforts to create an environment for the tech sector had an extraordinary impact. This is one of the signature elements, and we are proud to be building upon that tradition.

We saw, in just a matter of years, New York City go from a place I think many would consider a backwater of the tech community, to now one of the leading cities on this earth for the tech community. And under Mayor Bloomberg’s leadership – with the great work of EDC and others – Google came here, Facebook came here. More and more leaders came here and found it the indispensable place to be – and that trend is growing.

And EDC, with the competition that was created – the applied sciences competition made a clear statement: that we would be a world-class technology center. It was not a question. It would happen. It was simply a matter of who would be the best fit for this extraordinary vision. Well, I have to say, Cornell University and the Technion – to me, they really are the dream team – two extraordinary institutions with a proven record of leadership, of innovation, of turning out great talent, but also with a larger social commitment – a sense of how to make these opportunities inclusive. And that in itself would have been extraordinary – but Mr. Mayor, this is a good time to say thank you for adding \$100 million dollars to the equation, which all New Yorkers appreciate deeply.

[Applause]

The applied sciences sector will have an extraordinary impact – enhancing this city’s economy, deepening its diversification. And the projection that over the next three decades – more than 48,000 jobs, \$33 billion dollars in economic impact. And we’ll more than double the number of full-time graduate engineering students and faculty in New York City.

This is foundational stuff. This is how you build a future. And it’s happening here, before our eyes. We are so pleased to say that we will now have another jewel in the crown of New York City. And part of what makes New York City great is we don’t rest on our laurels. That’s part of our DNA. We never have. So we never think we have enough. We always think we have to build the next great thing, and you are here to see it today.

This physical campus is not just a location. It is something deeper. It is a sign of the times. It’s an example of things to come and how the world needs to be.

This will be the home to the world’s first – I want to emphasize that point – the world’s first residential high-rise building built to “Passive House” sustainability standards.

Now, “Passive House” makes sense as a phrase –

[Applause]

“Passive House” makes sense, if you think about it, as a pure phrase and its meaning. But I think it’s a very activist notion. It’s a transformative notion. And we’re going to be leaders, showing that this can be done and it can be done everywhere. And it’s part of the leadership we are trying to provide in this city as we address global challenges, environmental challenges, such as we have never seen before.

I want to thank again the mayor for his absolutely groundbreaking efforts to address global warming – not only here, but around the world. We are building on those efforts energetically and with great appreciation for the foundation that we had to start with.

This is one example of how New York City can show – can show the world a model that works in today's reality. It's part of driving us towards the goal this city has set – 80 percent reduction of emissions by 2050.

And this building is a great example. This building will consume 60 to 70 percent less energy than a typical building of its size. That's extraordinary. And if that is taken as an example around the world, that will truly have an effect on this generation and future generations.

Just one or two other things I'd like to note – this – the beauty of this day, the beauty of this effort – it's not just about great technology, great thinking, great innovation. It's also very rooted in the communities of this city. Already, Cornell and Technion are partnering with over a dozen city schools, including Roosevelt Island's own P.S./I.S. 217.

And you heard a moment ago about the Hack Roosevelt Island Day. 90 kids paired up with graduate students to learn to code – 90 kids who now see a possibility for themselves that they would not have known otherwise. This effort was led by a graduate student named Miwa Takaki. And she was committed to giving back to the community.

Now, Miwa graduated in May. And I will now sound a chauvinistic note for New York City – she graduated in May. She grew up in Seattle. There, apparently, is some substantial tech sector on the West coast. I haven't gotten the details about that, but I've heard tell.

Miwa could have gone to the West Coast, but she wanted to be here because the most interesting things were happening here – because she saw the technology community rooted in the larger community here. And she is staying here, and she said, "There's a spirit here that everyone can make a difference, and create change." And that is something we are profoundly proud of.

She'll be starting work at eBay in August, and she has already planning next year's Hack Roosevelt Island Day. So, something bigger is happening that will reach deep into this city. And the energy that has been created here – it will build onto a great tech ecosystem already, and one that is becoming a five borough community, and a community linked to the beautiful diversity of this city.

We knew all along – and Michael Bloomberg and his team knew all along – if we could connect the tech sector to everything else in New York City, we'd have an unbeatable hand to play. Because now, the tech sector is deeply committed to, and connected to, the industries of the city – the fashion industry, the financial services industry, the manufacturing industry. It's growing so organically and powerfully.

And I have to note, again, with a point of pride, more New York companies than California companies sought startup funding in the first three months of this year – suggesting more and more innovation here, more and more energy and possibility here.

[Applause]

We need this community to be of, and by, and for New York. We need more and more of our young people to have opportunity in this extraordinary tech sector – 300,000 jobs now and growing all the time. By the way, nearly half of those jobs do not even require a B.A. So, we're endeavoring to make sure that these great jobs – these jobs with great futures, great pay – reach more and more of our young people. We want to see over time at least half those jobs go to graduates of our public schools. We're going to use our tech talent pipeline and our investments in the CUNY STEM programs to build that talent pool.

We know – if we’re going to fight for more opportunity; we’re going to address the challenge of inequality – the tech sector will be one of the best and most natural allies. And we know that we have to reach all New Yorkers by providing broadband access with the world’s largest, fastest municipal Wi-Fi network. And we’re excited to do that. You can clap for that [inaudible].

[Applause]

So, I’ll conclude by saying, the beauty of this effort – so many things to like about it, and one other thing to like about it is the sheer speed and intensity you’ve seen – from the origin of this idea, to the moment that Cornell and the Technion were chosen, to this day, and the day soon when all these buildings will be built. And all this activity will be buzzing right here on Roosevelt Island.

This is truly a great New York story. And congratulations to all who got us to this day.

[Applause]

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