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**MAYOR ADAMS, MANHATTAN COMMUNITY BOARD 10, EXONERATED FIVE
UNVEIL “THE GATE OF THE EXONERATED” IN CENTRAL PARK**

*Inspired by Experience of Exonerated Five, Gate of the Exonerated Permanently Commemorates
Struggle of Those Wrongfully Convicted and Acquitted*

Gate is First Named Central Park Entrance Since 1862

NEW YORK – New York City Mayor Eric Adams, Manhattan Community Board 10, the New York City Department of Parks and Recreation (NYC Parks), the Central Park Conservancy, and the Harlem community today unveiled the “Gate of the Exonerated,” inspired by the acquittal of the Exonerated Five from the 1989 case, where five young men were wrongly convicted of a crime and unjustly served prison sentences from six to 12 years. Exactly 20 years ago today, on December 19, 2002, the convictions of Antron McCray, Kevin Richardson, Raymond Santana, Korey Wise, and Yusef Salaam were vacated. The newly named gate — Central Park’s first named gate since 1862 — honors all who have been wrongfully convicted and recognizes the ongoing struggle and fight to ensure justice for all. Located on Central Park North between Malcolm X Boulevard and Fifth Avenue, the gate keeps with the park’s tradition of the naming of original entrances in honor of the people of New York City.

The Gate of the Exonerated is a product of more than two years of extensive, in-depth dialogue among the Harlem community and a response to their desire for healing and belonging in the aftermath of the case of the Exonerated Five and its impact on Black and Latino New Yorkers. The experience of the Exonerated Five and their families reflects a historical pattern of unjust arrests and wrongful convictions of Black and Latino young people in the United States. The Gate of the Exonerated aims to shed light on wrongful incarcerations that are a product of inequities inherent in the justice system, and ultimately to honor all those affected.

"The Gate of the Exonerated symbolizes the resiliency of the Exonerated Five and all those who have been wrongfully convicted and serves as a lasting reminder of the grave miscarriage of justice that took place more than three decades ago," said **Mayor Adams**. "Today marks a moment of truth and reconciliation for New York City, and it's only fitting that the most iconic park in the world tell the world this important story. I thank the Harlem community leaders and Manhattan Community Board 10, whose advocacy made this naming, the first in Central Park's history since 1862, a reality."

“The Gate of the Exonerated will serve as a permanent reminder of the resilience of the Exonerated Five and the importance of healing and reconciliation,” said **Mayor’s Office of Criminal Justice Director Deanna Logan**. “The Gate will be a lasting symbol to all that change is possible and that we are all responsible to work toward a city that is safe and fair for all New Yorkers.”

“Manhattan Community Board 10 and the Harlem Community welcome the newly named Gate of the Exonerated as a beacon of hope to the world,” said **Cicely Harris, chair, Manhattan Community Board 10**. “The gate was born out of a Harlem story, but it also tells a broader story of a community coming together to shine a light on social justice through the platform of the iconic Central Park. Manhattan Community Board 10 thanks everyone who worked diligently and tirelessly to bring this worthwhile project to fruition.”

“The commemoration of this entrance is bittersweet,” said **Dr. Yusef Salaam**. “Many lives have been impacted by wrongful convictions across the nation and right here in our community. But when God restores, 100 times more than what was taken is what is given. And 20 years to the day since our convictions were vacated, I can proudly say this Gate of the Exonerated serves as a reminder of the love and support we have received. For that, I am truly thankful and honored — and recommitted to righting the wrongs of our criminal system of injustice to ensure our youth never face what we did.”

“I never reentered Central Park because of what happened to me and my fellow members of the Exonerated Five. Even when my daughter was born, there were moments I wanted to take her because of the beautiful playgrounds for the children, but I couldn’t bring myself to enter,” said **Raymond Santana**. “Now that my daughter is an adult, it’s time for us to go to Central Park, see the Gate of the Exonerated, and once again be a part of the park community.”

“The Gate of the Exonerated speaks to the idea of the exoneration of people across the country and sheds a bright light on all of those wrongfully accused and incarcerated,” said **Sharonne Salaam, mother of Dr. Yusef Salaam; member, Justice4TheWrongfullyIncarcerated**. “Central Park was in our backyard, it was right across the street. By naming a gate in Central Park for this community of New Yorkers, we are taking one positive step forward towards healing.”

“At NYC Parks, we are committed to creating safe, inclusive spaces for all parkgoers, and we are very proud that, from this day forward, this gate will honor the experienced struggle of those who are, and have been, wrongfully incarcerated—especially the Exonerated Five,” said **NYC Parks Commissioner Sue Donoghue**. “I’d like to sincerely thank the task force behind the Gate of the Exonerated, who have worked tirelessly to make this dedication happen. It is our hope that everyone who walks through these gates will take a moment to reflect and remember those who have fought in the face of injustice.”

“The Central Park Conservancy has worked in partnership with communities around Central Park for over 40 years. The Gate of the Exonerated is one of the most meaningful projects that we hope brings healing for the Harlem community,” said **Betsy Smith, president and CEO, Central Park Conservancy**. “As the steward of Central Park, it is our mission to maintain the Park as a respite from the pace and pressures of city life for all New Yorkers and visitors. The Gate of the Exonerated is an extension of this work, one that sends a profound message that the Park is, and will always be, a place for everyone.”

“The naming of the Gate of the Exonerated will rightfully serve as a permanent reminder of one of our city’s greatest historical injustices, recognizing all the lives who have been torn apart by an unfair system and enlightening future generations so that they will not repeat the same mistakes,” said **Manhattan Borough President Mark Levine**. “I commend the Exonerated Five and their families for their tireless fight, as well as the Harlem community, Manhattan Community Board 10,

NYC Parks, Central Park Conservancy, and all the people who contributed towards making this naming a reality.”

In 1862, the Board of Commissioners charged with overseeing the construction of Central Park adopted a plan for the naming of the park’s entrances, which was [inspired by the democratic vision of the park as belonging to all New Yorkers](#). The names they established for the 20 original park entrances were intended “to be representative of the whole people...extend to each citizen a respectful welcome” and recognize the occupations, pursuits, and attributes of all New Yorkers and all those who would visit the park.

[Images and video of the unveiling event](#) will be available 1-2 hours following the event.

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