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MAYOR DE BLASIO APPOINTS ANNABEL PALMA AS TEST & TRACE CORPS' LEAD EQUITY OFFICER

NEW YORK—Mayor de Blasio announced today that Annabel Palma will serve as the Chief Equity Officer of the City's COVID-19 Test & Trace Corps. In her new role, Annabel will fight the disparities laid bare by the COVID-19 crisis and lead engagement with communities disproportionately affected by the virus.

“As we build a massive apparatus to test and trace every case of COVID-19, we are redoubling our efforts to help communities that have been hardest hit by the virus,” said **Mayor Bill de Blasio**. “Throughout her time as a Council Member and Deputy Commissioner, Annabel Palma has spent a career fighting for and representing our most vulnerable communities. In her role as Chief Equity Officer, I am confident that same drive and commitment will shine through, building on our commitment to address the fatal consequences of racial disparities across our city.”

The Test & Trace Corps is the City's new apparatus to test and trace every case of COVID-19. In her role as Chief Equity Officer, Annabel will ensure equity is at the forefront of Corps' core operation, building on the City's commitment to fighting the disparities laid bare by COVID-19.

Annabel will also work with the Racial Inclusion and Equity Taskforce, co-chaired by First Lady Chirlane McCray, Deputy Mayor J. Phillip Thompson, and Deputy Mayor Dr. Raul Perea-Henze, to monitor response and recovery efforts in these communities.

About Annabel Palma

Annabel Palma has worked tirelessly to improve the district in which she has lived all her life, drawing on her definitive struggles with poverty she has dedicated her life to fight for workers' rights and fairer, more responsive representation for her community. She has been a charismatic and relatable leader who understood the everyday issues that impact not only Bronx residents but all New Yorkers.

Annabel's experiences as a young, single mother, struggling to build a better life for her family helped define her approach to the New York City Council and make government more responsive to the needs of the community.

In 1991, Annabel received her Certified Nursing Assistant certification from Bronx Community College. At St. Vincent De Paul Senior Residence, she became a practicing nursing assistant, and was elected as a union representative in 1994.

In 1998, Annabel enrolled as a full time student in Monroe College and earned her Associates Degree in Business Administration, while she worked a full-time job and raised her son. She graduated Summa Cum Laude, and in 1999, was asked to join the staff at 199SEIU NY as a full-time organizer. This is where she would develop her passion for public service by organizing and educating workers on the issues of unfair working conditions and leading health and safety trainings.

In 2003, Annabel was elected to the New York City Council and dedicated her career to providing her community the voice they needed to fight for quality education, safer schools, good paying jobs, affordable housing, a cleaner environment and greater access to health care. She proudly served District 18th as a New York City Council Member for 14 years. During her tenure in the New York City Council, Annabel was instrumental in delivering tens of millions of dollars for projects in district 18th, to renovate senior centers, public schools, youth centers and parks. Through her efforts and support four of the districts' public libraries, received funds that allowed them to open and operate a six day week program. Her advocacy also allowed her to champion funds to expand and modernize the Bronx institutions of higher education as well as the Cultural Institutions.

In 2018, Annabel was appointed by NYC Mayor Bill de Blasio to serve as Deputy Commissioner of Strategic Initiatives in the Department of Social Services-HRA/DHS. She continues her advocacy and commitment to fight for the people of the Bronx and all of New York.

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