



Assemblyman

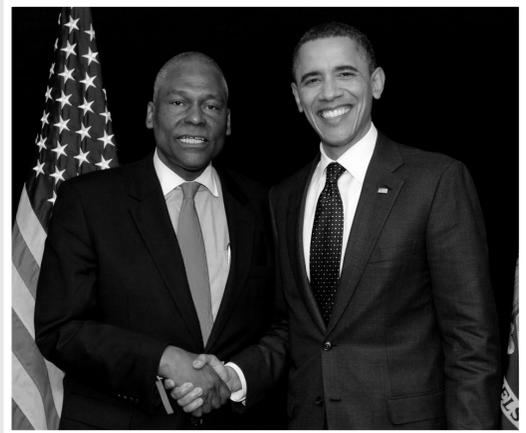
Keith L.T. Wright

Reports to the People

WINTER 2012

Dear Neighbor:

It's that time of year again! Another joyous holiday season is at our doorsteps, and 2013 is just around the corner. Each year in my holiday newsletter, I like to reflect on many of the happenings of the past year while looking onward to the next. In Harlem, the holidays are truly a special time that brings out the best that our Village has to offer—camaraderie, compassion and culture. It is a time to lend a helping hand, to be thankful for the good fortune the past year may have offered you and yours, but most importantly, it is a time to look forward with optimism and aspiration. Certainly, the current economic state of affairs in New York and nation-wide is a challenge but not a hindrance. We here in Harlem are feeling it each and every day, from our bills piling up while jobs remain seemingly unattainable, to budget cuts weakening services provided by not-for-profit organizations which many rely on. Although immediate relief of these problems may not be possible right now, I can promise that with a little patience and optimism, things will get better. In Harlem, we've overcome past challenges by sticking together and we will continue to do so if we work as one.



The re-election of President Obama means we're going into 2013 a stronger Harlem, a stronger New York and a stronger America. Our President will continue to lead our nation out of debt and back into prosperity, rebuilding a strong middle class, and making sure that the wealthiest Americans are paying their share. In New York, we are coming off of the heels of one of the most devastating natural disasters in history, Hurricane Sandy. The strong leadership from our federal, state and city representatives, and the dedication of public servants working around the clock will ensure that we rebuild even stronger. Harlem is growing and moving forward every day, and with such an incredible sense of community, we'll make 2013 our best year yet.

Take a moment over the holidays to really be thankful. If you're able, lend a helping hand to those less fortunate. Let's embrace a new year with the resilience and buoyancy that has always defined Harlem. Please remember that my office is always open to you. All the best to you and yours during these festive months!

Sincerely,

Keith L.T. Wright



Assemblyman Wright, Councilwoman Dickens, Jackie Rowe Adams, co-founder of Harlem Mothers S.A.V.E. and Congressman Charlie Rangel attend a ribbon cutting ceremony at Harlem Hospital.

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Harlem After the Hurricane

After days of anxious anticipation and preparation, Hurricane Sandy touched down in New York and caused astounding damage, truly ravaging our city. The damage in parts of New Jersey, lower Manhattan, Staten Island, Queens and much of Brooklyn will be felt for years, with many residents still slowly putting the pieces back together. Immediately following the hurricane, New Yorkers collectively began to help those residing in areas hit the hardest. During such a stressful and scary time, people came together for the greater good. The month that followed one of the most devastating natural disasters to hit New York in history, was truly inspiring.

In Harlem, there was significant flooding on much of Harlem River Drive and on the East Side near Esplanade Gardens. Strong winds knocked down a number of trees throughout the area, causing damage to several parked vehicles. Fortunately no physical injuries or deaths were reported in our community. After the storm hit, Harlem Hospital and Columbia Presbyterian ran emergency room service only. The Sanitation and Parks Departments worked swiftly and valiantly, fixing most damage sustained from the storm and cleaning up fallen debris and trees very quickly. Most major roadways, including the Henry Hudson Parkway and the George Washington Bridge were closed for days, and public schools were closed for almost a week. While New York City residents patiently awaited the restoration of power and heat, many worked diligently to help organize and route people to safety.

Many first responders put their lives on the line to help our residents who found themselves displaced and frazzled in the aftermath of a very severe storm. I want to thank our local, state and federal emergency-response personnel for helping New Yorkers get back on their feet following the storm. The flood of volunteers who also

came to help rebuild our city was both humbling and immensely helpful. I commend the efforts of all who contributed to this effort following a very scary time in New York.

The damage in New York State from weather-related emergencies over the past two years has been devastating. Hurricanes Irene and Lee, Superstorm Sandy and consecutive early-fall snow storms are evidence that extreme weather is becoming more frequent and dangerous. It is increasingly important that our families are prepared when faced with an emergency. Whether it's a natural disaster like high winds, flooding or lightning, the amount of personal devastation in these situations can be limited by taking proper preventive measures. Every family or household should have an emergency plan and be able to live without electricity, water, heat, air conditioning or telephone service for days at a time if absolutely necessary. If you need help getting organized, the New York State Assembly provides a free brochure on emergency preparedness. Request a copy by contacting my district office at 212-866-5809 or find it on my website <http://assembly.state.ny.us/mem/Keith-L-T-Wright>.

All residents should sign up for the NY-Alert program. This free service provides warnings and emergency information during disaster situations, including road closures, inclement weather events and protective actions recommended by state and city governments and schools. After signing up at www.nyalert.gov or by calling 888-697-6972, emergency information will be sent to your cell phone, your home phone, email or other technologies. You will be able to select the geographic areas or regions you would like to receive information about, such as New York City, or other regions where family and friends may reside.

For those of you who may have relatives or loved ones in areas that are still recovering from Sandy, I have included some helpful information. While we hope that New York will never again face a disaster like this one, it is always best to be prepared.

- <http://assembly.state.ny.us/disasterresponse/>
- The **NYC Office of Emergency Management** is the lead agency for disaster response and is coordinating state and federal recovery efforts in New York City. **Call 311 for service.**
- Hurricane Sandy Helpline: **1-888-769-7243/1-518-485-1159**
- Visit NY-ALERT online at: www.nyalert.gov
- Many states along the Mid-Atlantic and the East Coast have shelters open in response to Hurricane Sandy. Search for an open shelter by **texting SHELTER+ a zip code to 43362 (4FEMA).**
- Latest breaking news via **New York City's Office of Emergency Management**: <http://www.facebook.com/NYCEmergencymanagement>
- **NYC OEM** provides a summary for access to shelter locations, power outage information, mass transit information and disaster assistance: http://www.nyc.gov/html/oem/html/nycsevereweather/weather_home.shtml
- Report damage from Sandy to home or business. As featured on the City's Severe Weather page, in order to qualify for disaster relief assistance, the City must estimate the storm's total effect on city residents and employees. This website form asks you to answer questions about the extent of damage to your property: www.nyc.gov/html/oem/html/nycsevereweather/damage_form.shtml
- **Interactive Map Feature** is available which will show nearby Red Cross shelters and City Evacuation centers based on zip code: <http://google.org/crisismap/2012-sandy-nyc>
- Find information about disaster recovery centers by calling **1-800-621-FEMA** or going to <http://www.fema.gov/disaster-recovery-centers>
- Red Cross National Toll Free Number: **1-800-RED CROSS**



Assemblyman Wright joins honorees and attendees at the 2012 African American Day Parade Breakfast. Pictured are members of the Harlem Youth Marines alongside founder Col. Gregory Collins; Harlem Hospital Chief of Staff, Sylvia White; former New York Knick John Starks; Judge Tanya R. Kennedy and New York State Comptroller Tom DiNapoli.

Assemblyman Wright Hosts 11th Annual African American Day Parade Breakfast

In his 11th year as host, Assemblyman Wright celebrated culture and community with a breakfast at Harlem Tavern before the 43rd Annual African American Day Parade. The event, planned by Assemblyman Keith Wright and the African American Day Parade Breakfast Committee, Inc., was a wonderful success. Three notable African American leaders were honored at the Breakfast, including Sylvia White, Chief of Staff of Harlem Hospital; Colonel Gregory Collins, Harlem Youth Marines Founder and Director; and John Starks, formally of the New York Knicks. The Breakfast is a great event to honor those who have dedicated so much of their time to making our communities better, followed by a lively celebration in the streets of Harlem.

The African American Day Parade Breakfast offers folks from Harlem and beyond a chance to kick off the Parade with great food, music and a celebration of African American heroes. Each year, it just keeps getting better, and this year the turnout, the energy and the sense of community was the best yet! It was an exciting day in Harlem and the pride for our heritage and culture was at an all time high!



Assemblyman Denny Farrell, Assemblyman Wright and Judge Frank Perry enjoy the 43rd Annual African American Day Parade in Harlem.

Election 2012

On November 6th, the American people re-elected Barack Obama to be the 45th President of the United States. In an election as momentous and crucial as 2012, President Obama retained control of the White House, assuring that the needs of communities like Harlem will be addressed in Washington. President Obama will fight for all Americans by continuing to reduce unemployment levels, create jobs, expand opportunity and re-create an economy built to last.

Following Election Day of 2012, things are looking good here in New York and in Washington. Election Day of 2013 will be here before we know it and we must remember to stay involved and stay in-the-know! Stop by my office to get a voter registration form or download one from the Board of Election's website: <http://www.elections.ny.gov/>.



Assemblymember Wright offers a hand to the youngest daughter of his colleague, Assemblyman Denny Farrell, after speaking at the street renaming ceremony for the late Supreme Court Justice Bruce Wright. (See story on the next page.)

Street Renaming for Justice Bruce McMarion Wright

My father, the late Supreme Court Justice Bruce Wright faced adversity and racism throughout his life and career. In his youth, he was awarded a scholarship to Princeton University, but was urged by the administration not to attend when they learned he was black. He was subsequently denied admissions to Notre Dame University on the same grounds. In World War II, he served in the U.S. Army Infantry Division in a segregated unit. Judge Wright spent 25 years on the bench in both criminal and civil court cases. He was very critical of the judicial system and fought to expose its classist undertones. He was elected to the New York State Supreme Court in 1982 and retired in December of 1994.

In July of 2012 a Harlem street corner was renamed in his honor, marking his legacy and commitment to justice. A capstone to the years of criticism Judge Wright earned for offering low bail to poor criminals, Judge Bruce Wright Place now reminds Harlem residents of the type of progress that he spent his life fighting for. The street renaming was a wonderful and gratifying experience for me, my family, our community and for all those who remember what my father fought for. It was a re-

markable tribute and my family and I were honored by the impressive turnout and by the kind words of those who spoke. Again, thank you to all who came, participated, and supported the life and accomplishments of Judge Bruce Wright.



Job Fairs in the Harlem Community

It's no secret that Harlem faces a very real and unacceptable unemployment problem. While the federal numbers regarding joblessness are constantly raising concern, you can almost always triple those numbers and arrive at the unemployment reality in Harlem. Such is the case in many Communities of Color; Harlem was dealing with an unemployment problem before the recession hit.

In conjunction with the New York State Department of Labor and Congressman Charles B. Rangel, my office has hosted 3 job and career fairs in 2012, each a resounding success. Each event grew in popularity, and drew thousands of job seekers ready and willing to meet

with potential employers, unions and social service organizations. The attendees were well-prepared and ready to find permanent positions, enroll in job training programs or obtain relevant information. Many were interviewed on the spot, and the Department of Labor collected resumes to be kept on file in a state database.

"As Chairman of the State Assembly Labor Committee, *one of my highest priorities* is to enact statewide policies which help *my constituents* get back to work. The success of these job fairs was both moving and heartbreaking. Our vibrant Harlem workforce should not be overlooked, and I plan to continue hosting job fairs throughout 2013 to ensure just that!



Community members and employers participate in a Job and Career Fair hosted by Assemblyman Wright and the New York State Department of Labor.

Assemblyman Keith L.T. Wright

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