

BY: Senator PARKER

HONORING Marsha Massiah upon the occasion of her designation as recipient of the Educational & Community Empowerment Award by Young, Gifted, & Black Entrepreneurial Awards, Inc.

WHEREAS, It is the sense of this Legislative Body to recognize and commend individuals whose visionary leadership, dedication to education, and commitment to cultural empowerment have strengthened communities, fostered generational learning, and elevated the voices of historically underrepresented populations; and

WHEREAS, Attendant to such concern, and in full accord with its long-standing traditions, this Legislative Body is justly proud to honor Marsha Massiah, Founder and Executive Director of the Brooklyn Caribbean Literary Festival (BCLF), upon the occasion of her designation as recipient of the Educational & Community Empowerment Award by Young, Gifted, & Black Entrepreneurial Awards, Inc., on Wednesday, February 25, 2026; and

WHEREAS, Founded in 2006 by Carl Gray, Young, Gifted, & Black Entrepreneurial Awards, Inc. is a nonprofit organization dedicated to recognizing distinguished individuals of color across the Americas, the Caribbean, and Africa, celebrating "Unsung Heroes and Heroines" whose leadership, resilience, and service have made a lasting impact across healthcare, business, arts, and community development; and

WHEREAS, Since its founding, the BCLF has become the only literary festival in the United States dedicated exclusively to Caribbean literature and indigenous storytelling, celebrating luminaries such as Jamaica Kincaid, Lorna Goodison, and Dr. Elizabeth Nunez, and advancing the visibility and sustainability of Caribbean literary voices; and

WHEREAS, Born and raised in Trinidad & Tobago, Marsha Massiah draws inspiration from her homeland to build bridges for Caribbean stories, advocating for writers to be recognized as the original storytellers and cultural architects of their narratives while ensuring their intellectual and economic viability; and

WHEREAS, Under her leadership, the BCLF has become a dynamic platform for the diaspora, connecting literature with music, art, folklore, fiction, rhythm, spoken word, and oral traditions, fostering dialogues that celebrate Caribbean heritage and identity while democratizing access to storytelling across generations; and

WHEREAS, Marsha Massiah has conceptualized signature initiatives including the Caribbean Fiction Collection at the Center for Fiction, the Cocoa Pod podcast, and the BCLF Short Fiction Story Competition, providing emerging writers with mentorship, exposure, and pathways to develop their craft; and

WHEREAS, In addition to her literary and cultural contributions, Marsha Massiah leads The Idea Room Corp, a socially conscious communications hub that helps creatives bring their ideas to life, while collaborating with esteemed thinkers, artists, and educators to strengthen Caribbean-American cultural expression and community engagement; and

WHEREAS, With a professional background in instructional design, project management, and creative content production, along with an Honours degree in Caribbean History from the University of the West Indies and graduate certificates from New York University, Marsha Massiah exemplifies the values of scholarship, mentorship, and visionary leadership; and

WHEREAS, Through her tireless work, Marsha Massiah has empowered writers, educators, and cultural practitioners, preserved Caribbean storytelling traditions, and inspired new generations to embrace the pride, creativity, and resilience of their heritage; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to honor Marsha Massiah upon the occasion of her designation as recipient of the Educational & Community Empowerment Award, and to commend her extraordinary contributions to literature, mentorship, and cultural empowerment; and be it further

RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to Marsha Massiah as an expression of the highest respect and admiration of this Legislative Body.