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FINALISTS ANNOUNCED FOR 2nd ANNUAL NYC NEIGHBORHOOD LIBRARY AWARDS

More Than 13,000 Nominations Yield 10 Finalists – From All Five Boroughs

New York, NY – March 23, 2015 – The Stavros Niarchos Foundation and the Charles H. Revson Foundation announced today the 10 finalists for the 2nd annual NYC Neighborhood Library Awards, which celebrate the crucial role of local libraries in serving New York City’s diverse communities. The Awards – unique in honoring individual branch libraries – recognize branches in New York City’s three library systems: the Brooklyn Public Library; Queens Library; and the New York Public Library, which operates branches in the Bronx, Manhattan, and Staten Island.

The Awards generated more than 13,000 nominations from library users. The remarkable response – more than three times the previous record – underscores the vital role that libraries play in our city and reveals the many ways in which libraries support New Yorkers in their daily lives.

The 10 finalists are now being reviewed by a panel of distinguished judges, who will decide which five will win the NYC Neighborhood Library Award and \$20,000 each – the largest cash prize awarded directly to branch libraries in the nation.

The panel of judges, who will select the five winning libraries – to be announced in May – include acclaimed authors **Maira Kalman**, **Jonathan Safran Foer**, and **Jacqueline Woodson**; **Susan Hildreth**, former Director of the Institute of Museum and Library Services; Dutton Children’s Books publisher **Julie Strauss-Gabel**, and **Maya Wiley**, Counsel to Mayor Bill de Blasio. The 10 finalists, accompanied by excerpts from nominations, are:

- **Cambria Heights Library** – Cambria Heights (Queens) – Phillipe, a neighborhood resident, parent, and full-time home-school teacher, wrote: “Our Cambria Heights Library is a priceless resource for us here. It’s here that I learned how to use programs such as PowerPoint that I can use for presentations. My adolescent children have access to a professional recording studio in the TEEN center. They are learning lifelong skills...”
- **Clinton Hill Library** – Clinton Hill (Brooklyn) – Jane, a neighborhood resident, stated: “Seed exchange, coupon exchange, resume workshops, and now exercise classes...I am always impressed by the services provided at this library and how it uniquely promotes community.”

- **Jefferson Market Library** – Greenwich Village (Manhattan) – Deborah, a neighborhood resident, community group member, and Friend of the Library, noted: “The imaginative, dedicated and hardworking head librarian, Frank Collierius, has launched many programs that inspire and teach the local neighborhood of Greenwich Village. Local professors and writers have taught free classes on a range of subjects from cosmology to philosophy to psychology to foreign languages.”
- **Langston Hughes Library** – Corona (Queens) – Carol, a neighborhood resident, retiree, parent, and community group member, said: “In an era of so much ethnic and cultural strife, this is one of the beacons that unites people across ethnic and cultural lines and allow us to see just how much we really do have in common. Through its cultural and educational programs...this institution can continue to bridge and even close the gaps caused by ignorance and misunderstanding.”
- **Mott Haven Library** – Mott Haven (the Bronx) – A neighborhood resident and parent wrote: “As a new mother, the library became a haven and a refuge to go to with my baby specially during the harsh winter months. Its second level is one of the most elegant and spacious kid-friendly spaces I have encountered from all the public libraries. Its welcoming atmosphere has instilled in my daughter an instinctual love for books.”
- **New Lots Library** – East New York (Brooklyn) – Takora, a neighborhood resident, parent, and job-seeker, stated: “I live in a very impoverished neighborhood. Every day is a struggle for everyone but because of this place, we have access to the Internet and books and classes. This library helps people in our community better themselves and become a contributing part of society. Without this branch giving us the tools to do so, a lot of us would have no other way to get help or find things available to us.”
- **Parkchester Library** – Parkchester (the Bronx) – Lawrence, a neighborhood resident and parent, noted: “As an at-home father, I am always looking for activities and programs in the neighborhood for my son who started Pre-K this September. With the help of the Parkchester Library, he went into the school year academically and culturally prepared... When I pick him up from school, he often asks if we can spend some time at the library before we go home.”
- **Stapleton Library** – Stapleton (Staten Island) – Samantha, a neighborhood resident and parent, said: “I live in the projects down the block from this library. Most of the kids I know are on their own after school and don’t always have somewhere to go or something to do... Stapleton Library is a safe place but most importantly a friendly place for them to go after school or on weekends. They organize movie nights, board games day, separate video game time for kids and teens, toddler and baby groups with songs, stories and art.”
- **Sunnyside Library** – Long Island City (Queens) – Tarslima, an immigrant, wrote: “I believe my neighborhood library should win because it helped me to learn English and prepared me for citizenship.”

- **Windsor Terrace Library** – Windsor Terrace (Brooklyn) – Heath, a neighborhood resident and teacher, stated: “We treasure our branch. Windsor Terrace Library has taught my two nieces to read with their children’s programming, has taught my mom to write her memoir with their community events, and brings me the books I read on my way to work each day. Our library enriches three generations of my family on a weekly basis.”

The nomination period was launched in November 2014 on *The Brian Lehrer Show* on WNYC, the media partner of the NYC Neighborhood Library Awards, and ended in December. The nominations were evaluated by Foundation staff and an independent review committee, focusing on libraries that demonstrated exceptional commitment to the needs of their respective neighborhoods. Site visits were conducted of potential finalists.

Last year’s Award winners were not eligible for this year’s Awards. They are Corona Library (Queens), Macon Library (Brooklyn), New Dorp Library (Staten Island), Seward Park Library (Manhattan), and Sheepshead Bay Library (Brooklyn).

About the Stavros Niarchos Foundation

The Stavros Niarchos Foundation (www.SNF.org) is one of the world’s leading private international philanthropic organizations, making grants in the areas of arts and culture, education, health and sports, and social welfare. The Foundation funds organizations and projects that are expected to achieve a broad, lasting and positive impact for society at large, and exhibit strong leadership and sound management. The Foundation also seeks actively to support projects that facilitate the formation of public-private partnerships as an effective means for serving public welfare.

From 1996 until today, the Stavros Niarchos Foundation has made grant commitments of \$1.57 billion / €1.20 billion, through 2,836 grants to nonprofit organizations in 111 nations around the world.

In 2012 and 2013, the Foundation announced two new initiatives of €100,000,000 (\$130 million) each, to help the efforts to address the crisis in Greece. While the initiative in 2012, which has been completed, aimed to provide immediate relief against the adverse effects of the deepening crisis, the one in 2013 aims to address the high percentage of youth unemployment, seeking to create better employment prospects and new opportunities for the young.

The Foundation’s largest single gift (\$796 million / €566 million) is the Stavros Niarchos Foundation Cultural Center (SNFCC) in Athens, which is expected to be completed in 2016. The project, designed by Renzo Piano, includes the new facilities of the National Library of Greece, and of the Greek National Opera, as well as the Stavros Niarchos Park. The SNFCC is a testament and a commitment to the country’s future. It is also an engine of short- to mid-term economic stimulus.

About the Charles H. Revson Foundation

The Charles H. Revson Foundation (www.revsonfoundation.org), established in 1956, operates grant programs in Urban Affairs, Jewish Life, Biomedical Research, and Education. The Urban Affairs program focuses on projects that enhance New York City’s vitality as a leading and livable urban

capital; it continually seeks opportunities to strengthen the city's pluralistic communities and civic spaces, re-envisioning public libraries, affordable housing, and local public affairs journalism to cultivate knowledgeable, creative urban residents. The Jewish Life program operates in the United States, focusing on projects that reinterpret Jewish tradition for an ever-more-diverse community; and in Israel, where the Foundation partners with Israeli organizations to build a stronger, more inclusive society for young people. The Biomedical Research program is devoted to strengthening basic research in the biomedical sciences by awarding fellowships to exceptionally talented scientists. The Education program supports institutions and projects that seek to provide broad access to the knowledge and resources that sustain an informed and engaged citizenry.

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