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WINNERS ANNOUNCED FOR 2nd ANNUAL NYC NEIGHBORHOOD LIBRARY AWARDS

More Than 13,000 Nominations from New Yorkers Yielded the Five Winning Branch Libraries

New York, NY – May 21, 2015 – The Stavros Niarchos Foundation and the Charles H. Revson Foundation announced last night the five winners of the 2nd annual NYC Neighborhood Library Awards, which celebrate the crucial role of local libraries in serving New York City’s diverse communities. The winners emerged from more than 13,000 nominations by New Yorkers, who nominated every single branch 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 five winners each received \$20,000 at an awards ceremony in midtown Manhattan. They were selected from 10 finalists by a distinguished panel of independent judges: 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 five winning libraries – and an excerpt from the nominations for each – follow:

- **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.”

In addition to the five winners of this year’s NYC Neighborhood Library Awards, the other five finalists were presented with checks for \$10,000. Those five were:

- **Cambria Heights Library** – Cambria Heights (Queens);
- **Clinton Hill Library** – Clinton Hill (Brooklyn);
- **Jefferson Market Library** – Greenwich Village (Manhattan);
- **Sunnyside Library** – Sunnyside (Queens);
- **Windsor Terrace Library** – Windsor Terrace (Brooklyn).

All 10 of these libraries also received a unique two-minute video – each crafted to reflect the impact of the particular branch – created by acclaimed filmmakers Juliane Dressner and Jesse Hicks. The videos can be used to promote each of the branches further and to extend public appreciation of the crucial role that they play.

The five winners emerged from a nomination process that began in November 2014 on *The Brian Lehrer Show* on WNYC, the media partner of the NYC Neighborhood Library Awards, and ended in December. Each of the nominations was 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).

The more than 13,000 nominations revealed the wide range of crucial roles played by branch libraries in New York City. They are a welcoming presence, a safe haven, and a quiet place for reflection. They are highly attuned to neighborhood residents: their needs, cultures, and languages. They are the only source of books and Internet for many New Yorkers. They serve as community centers, offering a remarkable variety of programs and activities – from those traditionally associated with libraries (including story time for children and book clubs) to others addressing contemporary needs (such as English as a Second Language, citizenship preparation, and resume-writing) to offerings tailored to specific communities (including many languages and shared cultures).

The demand for library services has only increased in a digital age. A recent report by the Center for an Urban Future – titled *Branches of Opportunity* and funded by the Charles H. Revson Foundation – revealed that over the past decade circulation at New York City libraries has increased by 59 percent, program attendance by 40 percent, and program sessions by 27 percent.

Photos of the winners at last night's awards ceremony, as well as the videos of the 10 libraries, are available by contacting Bob Meadows at 212-576-2700 x237 or bmeadows@goodmanmedia.com.

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 \$1.59 billion / €1.23 billion, through 3,020 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, in addition to its standard grant-making activities, to help address the ongoing 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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