

For Immediate Release
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**GOVERNMENT, COMMUNITY LEADERS CELEBRATE RE-OPENING OF
QUEENS LIBRARY AT PENINSULA
Superstorm Sandy-Damaged Library Is Back, Better Than Ever**

ROCKAWAY BEACH, NY, September 8, 2015 -- Borough President Melinda Katz, Assembly Member Phillip Goldfeder, City Council Member Eric Ulrich, City Council Majority Leader Jimmy Van Bramer, Chair of the City Council Subcommittee on Libraries Andy King, State Sen. Joseph Addabbo, Queens Library's Interim President and CEO Bridget Quinn-Carey and other government and community leaders were on hand today to ceremonially re-open Queens Library at Peninsula. The library has re-opened following a \$3.6 million re-building. During Superstorm Sandy, the seawater surged above four feet inside the library, devastating the interior.

The rebuilt library includes all new library collections, more computers, a completely new interior with an expanded Adult Learning Center, an expanded children's room with an early childhood alcove and enhanced "Family Place" programming, a separate new teen area with gaming, reading and group work areas, self-service check-out and 24/7 check-in, and a program/community room with a separate entry that can be used when the library is closed for public service. Additional sustainability features have been included to help protect it from damage from future weather events.

"Parents across our city know libraries can help develop their child's lifelong love of reading. And in the years since Hurricane Sandy, residents of this community know the importance of having a bright, newly restored library where they can bring their families. That's why our administration made significant additional funding for our city's libraries a top priority this year, and why we're proud to support the rebuilt Queens Library at Peninsula," said Mayor Bill de Blasio.

"Today we celebrate more than just the reopening of a library, but the unveiling of a facility that is more resilient, more technologically advanced and better equipped to serve the community than the library that stood here before the hurricane," said Queens Borough President Melinda Katz. "It was important to open the library before the start of this new school year, and due to collaboration between the Queens Library, fellow elected officials and dedicated members of this wonderful community, we were able to meet this goal. The residents of Rockaway Beach have been so patient throughout the rebuilding process, and their day to celebrate has finally arrived."

State Senator James Sanders Jr. said: "Today we are planting seeds for the next generation to lead us into the next century. This newly redesigned library and its added services will go a long way in enriching people's lives through education."

"Reopening Peninsula Library is a huge step forward in our recovery from Sandy. This new, state-of-the-art facility will serve as an important contribution to our growing Rockaway business district and provide a valuable public space for the community," said Assemblyman Phil Goldfeder. "I am pleased to secure state funds for the project so that Peninsula can be the best possible resource for our families."

"Rockaway Beach will once again enjoy all that Queens Library has to offer," said Councilman Eric Ulrich. "I am proud to have been able to fund the replacement of all the books destroyed by Hurricane Sandy. The newly rebuilt library is a testament to the strength and resiliency of the peninsula."

"The nearly \$4 million investment into fortifying and reconstructing the Peninsula Library solidifies this vital resource for the Rockaway community," said New York City Council Majority Leader and Chair of the Cultural Affairs Committee Jimmy Van Bramer. "This newly reconstructed branch along with new collections and features are a symbol of our City's resiliency and ability to bounce back stronger than ever to provide Queens residents with the important resources and programs that will continue to uplift local residents."

"The Peninsula community was devastated by Hurricane Sandy. But it showed its fortitude and today we are proud to celebrate the reopening of this awesome library with new collections, new computers, new furniture and new features to minimize damage in the event of another major storm," said Council Member Andy King, Chair of the Subcommittee on Libraries. "The Peninsula Community Library is a heralding example of the rebuilding of this community."

"Queens Library is a critical resource in the Rockaways, for adult and childhood education, for job-skills training, as a community gathering place and so much more. We join the community in thanking our elected officials for their leadership, as well as so many who provided funding support and assistance during our time of rebuilding and restoring this essential community hub. I also thank the dedicated staff of Queens Library at Peninsula and the Peninsula Adult Learning Center, who have been here for the community in fair weather and foul," said Bridget Quinn-Carey, Interim President and CEO.

"With every ribbon cutting and re-opening of the Rockaway libraries, the recent one being Seaside Library, our residents and families regain an important resource and community partner after Superstorm Sandy. Now with the re-opening of the fully refurbished Peninsula Community Library, the Rockaway libraries are back and better than ever. I truly appreciate the efforts of all those associated with Queens Libraries and others, who kept the Peninsula Library project moving forward. Their efforts certainly will have a direct benefit to the people of Rockaway," said Sen. Joseph P. Addabbo, Jr. (D-Howard Beach).

"In the wake of Superstorm Sandy, people from all around our region, and from across the globe, saw New Yorkers in need and took action to help. Because of that effort thousands of families were able to begin rebuilding their lives and our neighborhoods; and the Mayor's Fund was humbled to coordinate and direct just some of that goodwill. Today, we are proud to join the Queens community in celebrating the reopening of Peninsula Library – yet another success as a result of that charity," said Darren Bloch, executive director of the Mayor's Fund to Advance New York City.

The ceremony kicked off a week-long community celebration to welcome everyone back to the library.

ADDITIONAL GRAND OPENING EVENTS (admission to all events is free and open to the public):

Tues. Sept. 8, 11 am - 1 pm, free health screenings in the Adult Learning Center

Tues. Sept. 8, 4 pm - Magic Show

Thurs. Sept. 10, 11 am - International Music and Food Day in the Adult Learning Center

Thurs. Sept. 10, 4 pm - Graffiti Art Workshop

Thurs. Sept. 10, 6 pm - Zumba Fitness

Sat. Sept. 12, 10 am - 2 pm, Community Day at the Beach, including Read Along with Ariel the Mermaid, a Magic Show, face painting, balloon art and bracelet making.

Queens Library is an independent, not-for-profit corporation and is not affiliated with any other library. Queens Library serves a population of 2.3 million in one of the most ethnically diverse counties in the U.S. and has among the highest circulations of any public library system in the world. For more information about programs,

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