



## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**Special Event: The New York Archival Society and former Mayor David N. Dinkins honor Idilio Gracia-Peña, former Commissioner of the NYC Department of Records & Information Services for his lifetime of dedicated service in preserving and sustaining the invaluable documentary history of New York City.**

**Thursday April 5, 2018, 5:30 p.m.-7:30 p.m., 31 Chambers Street, Room 111, New York, N.Y. 10007**

Hired by the Municipal Archives as a clerk in 1964, Mr. Idilio Gracia-Peña rose to become Director of the Municipal Archives in 1978. As Director, he was instrumental in transforming the Archives from a warehouse operation to a modern, nationally-recognized research institution. He rescued and accessioned into the Archives some of its most important and iconic collections including 8,000 original architectural records of the Brooklyn Bridge, more than 1,500 drawings of Central Park, as well as thousands of cubic feet of historical mayoral, court, district attorney, Comptroller, and City agency records.

In 1990, Mayor David Dinkins appointed Mr. Gracia-Peña as Commissioner of the Department of Records & Information Services (DORIS). Gracia-Peña negotiated an annual \$1 million grant from New York State's Local Government Records Management Improvement Fund to be used to improve records management at City agencies. He advanced innovative outreach programs including an exhibition highlighting the Archives' holdings related to the newly-discovered African Burial Ground. Mr. Gracia-Peña also served as a charter-member of the Commission on Public Information and Communication.

Upon his retirement in 1995, Mr. Gracia-Peña continued his service to the City through his pioneering work documenting the Caribbean diaspora. From 1997 to 2004, he served as project archivist for the Center for Puerto Rican Studies Archives of the Puerto Rican Migration at Hunter College, City University of New York. Since 2004 he has been the Chief Archivist of the Dominican Archives at the City University of New York.

### **About the New York Archival Society**

*The New York Archival Society mission is: To promote the collection and preservation of matters of historic value with special emphasis on the Greater New York area; to help the Municipal Archives of the City of New York to reclaim all records of the City and the various villages and towns within Greater New York wherever they may now be found; to rescue all ancient documents dealing with the life in this region; to resurrect all artifacts or memorabilia dealing with the life of the American Indian as it existed in the Greater New York region prior to European settlement; and to aid established institutions which provide access to students, visitors and scholars who may wish to learn about the history and background of New York.*