



Hon. Marquis A. Harrison
Chairperson
Minah Whyte
District Manager

CITY OF NEW YORK MANHATTAN COMMUNITY BOARD 10

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April 8, 2025

Louis A. Molina
Commissioner
NYC Department of Citywide Administrative Services (DCAS)
1 Centre Street, Floor 14
New York, NY 10007

Dr. Michelle Morse
Acting Commissioner
NYC Department of Health & Mental Hygiene (DOHMH)
42-09 28th Street
Long Island City, NY 11101

Dear Commissioner Molina and Acting Commissioner Morse,

On behalf of the Manhattan Community Board 10, I write to express our strong support for naming the new Public Health Lab at 137th Street in Harlem in honor of the late Dr. Hazel N. Dukes. This facility presents a unique opportunity to enhance public health resources in our community and to pay tribute to a visionary leader whose life's work was dedicated to advancing civil rights, social justice, and health equity.

Dr. Dukes was a pillar of our community and a guiding force in the fight for justice and healthcare accessibility. Her legacy is deeply interwoven with the history of iconic civil rights leaders such as Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., Malcolm X, and Congressman Adam Clayton Powell Jr. These historic figures inspired and reinforced her steadfast commitment to ensuring justice, equality, and healthcare access for all. As an advocate and mentor, Dr. Dukes uplifted generations of leaders, ensuring that the movement for civil rights and social justice continues in strong and capable hands.

Dr. Dukes' profound impact on public health was evident through her service as the Chairperson of the Health and Human Services Committee of Community Board 10. In this role, she led discussions and convened meetings that facilitated essential conversations regarding the development of this very project, the new Public Health Lab in Harlem. Her leadership in shaping discourse around public health initiatives makes the naming of this facility in her honor an especially fitting tribute to her enduring contributions.

Beyond her work with Community Board 10, Dr. Dukes served as the President of the New York State Conference of the NAACP, where she relentlessly advocated for the rights of marginalized communities and sought to dismantle systemic barriers to healthcare. Her collaboration with the New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, public health campaigns, the American Cancer Society, state and federal agencies was instrumental in advancing policies, programs, and public campaigns that improved health outcomes for Harlem and beyond. One example of her

impact was her recent involvement, prior to her passing, in the public campaign to end the sale of menthol cigarettes to reduce health disparities.

While we understand that a formal naming process for the Public Health Lab may not yet be in place, we strongly urge you, Acting Commissioner Morse, to champion and expedite the establishment of such a process to properly recognize Dr. Dukes' extraordinary contributions. Her tireless dedication to public health and social justice has left an indelible mark on our city, and naming this lab in her honor would enshrine her legacy for future generations.

Dr. Dukes' lifelong work has been widely recognized with numerous accolades, including the Candace Award for Community Service from the National Coalition of 100 Black Women, the Economic and Business Award from the Women's Black Agenda, the NAACP's Spingarn Medal, and the historic distinction of being the first civilian to administer the oath of office to New York State Governor Kathy Hochul. These honors reflect her unwavering commitment to advocating for social justice and health equity.

As we continue the work she so passionately led, we believe that naming the new Public Health Lab after Dr. Hazel N. Dukes would serve as a profound reminder of her lasting impact on our community and as an inspiration for generations to come. The members of Manhattan Community Board 10, along with a broad coalition of community leaders and organizations, stand united in supporting this initiative.

Thank you for your time and consideration. Manhattan Community Board 10 voted unanimously in-support of this letter at the April General Board Meeting on Wednesday, April 2, 2025 with 34 Yes, 0 Recusals, and 0 Abstentions. We look forward to your support in ensuring that Dr. Hazel N. Dukes' legacy is honored in a manner befitting her unparalleled contributions to public health and civil rights.

Sincerely,



Marquis Harrison
Board Chairperson
Manhattan Community Board 10

Cc:

Hon. Eric Adams, Mayor of the City of New York
Hon. Kathy Hochul, New York State Governor
Hon. Chuck Schumer, Minority Leader, U.S. Senator for New York
Hon. Kirsten Gillibrand, U.S. Senator for New York
Hon. Adriano Espaillat, Congressional Representative, 13th District
Hon. Cordell Cleare, Senator, 30th District
Hon. Yusef Salaam, City Council Member, District 9
Hon. Jordan Wright, New York State Assembly Member, 70th Assembly District
Hon. Al Taylor, New York State Assembly Member, 71st Assembly District
Hon. Mark Levine, Manhattan Borough President