

*Thirteenth Annual*

# THE POWER OF WOMEN TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE

*Award Luncheon*

**WEDNESDAY, MARCH 6, 2019**

**ZIEGFELD BALLROOM**

**141 W 54TH ST, NEW YORK CITY**

**11:00 AM VIP NETWORKING RECEPTION**

**12:00 PM LUNCH & AWARDS**

**UNITED WAY  
WOMEN  
UNITED**



United Way  
of New York City



At DPR, we celebrate women who build by sharing stories of empowered women, who are successfully executing complex, technical projects for some of the world's most progressive and admired companies. The goal is simple:

Connect, inspire, develop and advance women.

[www.dpr.com](http://www.dpr.com)



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A Message from  
**Sheena Wright**  
*President & CEO*  
**United Way of New York City**

Dear Friends,

2018 was a remarkable year for the United Way of New York City, and an important one for our country, state, city and importantly women. Everywhere we looked more and more women felt empowered to become leaders on behalf of their communities. This groundswell of engagement has been both encouraging and invigorating.

I am encouraged because we can see very concretely, what happens when intelligent, persistent and creative women come together –

- In five years, students in a challenged community went from 9% of 3rd graders reading on grade level, to 43% significantly outperforming similar schools in their neighborhood and putting them on the path to future success.
- And in three years, almost 1,000 ReadNYC families and Mott Haven residents have accessed resources that include financial literacy, tax preparation, advocacy, academic workshops, and case management, and directly increased their financial resources by well over \$2.5 million.

I am invigorated because achievement of these results confirm that change is possible and fuels us to extend our reach.

The rewards of making our city a place where every child has an equal opportunity to scholastically succeed, and at the same time parents have the opportunity to achieve self-sufficiency is immeasurable. As I witness so many women stepping up to solve our immense challenges, once again, I am empowered to rise to the occasion.

As we cross into this eighth decade for United Way of New York City, I want to express how honored I am to be at the helm during a period where we have such resolute supporters from within and throughout the corporate, foundation and government communities.

Thank you for helping us build a New York City where everyone can thrive.

Sincerely,

A stylized, handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Sheena Wright'.

Sheena Wright

# LETTER FROM THE GOVERNOR OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK



STATE OF NEW YORK  
**EXECUTIVE CHAMBER**  
ALBANY 12224

**ANDREW M. CUOMO**  
GOVERNOR

March 6, 2019

United Way of New York City  
205 East 42<sup>nd</sup> Street, 12<sup>th</sup> Floor  
New York, NY 10017

Dear Friends:

It is a pleasure to send greetings to everyone gathered for the United Way of New York City Women United's 13<sup>th</sup> Annual Power of Women to Make a Difference Luncheon.

We value outstanding organizations whose humanitarian endeavors respond to the challenges of our complex world and make a positive difference in people's lives. Since its inception, United Way has advanced the common good through its focus on literacy, education, poverty, and health care.

With the vision and generosity of many exceptional community volunteers, United Way's Women's United arm has served as a catalyst for positive change throughout the most challenged communities of New York City. I join in congratulating your distinguished honorees – Tonya T. Robinson, Erika Irish Brown, and Gena Smith – and commend, as well, all those affiliated with United Way for the compassionate care and helping hands they provide. Their valued leadership and meaningful contributions have clearly enhanced the quality of life for countless New Yorkers.

With warmest regards and best wishes for an enjoyable luncheon.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading 'Andrew M. Cuomo'.

ANDREW M. CUOMO

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PERFORMANCE \* INTEGRITY \* PRIDE

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# LETTER FROM THE MAYOR OF THE CITY OF NEW YORK



THE CITY OF NEW YORK  
OFFICE OF THE MAYOR  
NEW YORK, NY 10007

March 6, 2019

Dear Friends:

It is a great pleasure to welcome everyone to United Way of New York City's Women United 13th Annual Power of Women to Make a Difference Luncheon.

My administration has made a bold commitment to build a fairer and more equitable future for the people of our city, and these efforts would not be possible without ongoing support from pillar organizations like United Way of New York City that are fueling our progress and helping to lead the way to a better and brighter tomorrow. From working hard to improve opportunities for New Yorkers in need to laying the groundwork for stronger and more united communities across our city, UWNYP has made a tremendous difference, and its Women United Group has played a vital role in furthering its crucial mission. By creating a growing network of dedicated women committed to bettering the lives of their neighbors through advocacy, fundraising, and volunteerism, Women United members have helped support vital outreach efforts, groundbreaking educational programs like ReadNYC, and so much more. I am proud to applaud all those in attendance for continuing to represent the enduring spirit of generosity and service that defines our residents as we strive to create one city, where all can rise together.

On behalf of the City of New York, congratulations to this year's honorees. I offer my best wishes for a wonderful luncheon and continued success.

Sincerely,

Bill de Blasio  
Mayor

# A MESSAGE FROM THE HOST COMMITTEE CO-CHAIRS

From the entire United Way of New York City Women United:

Welcome, and thank you for joining us for the 13th Annual Power of Women to Make a Difference Award Luncheon! Each year, we have the privilege of bringing together a powerful group of New York City's most extraordinary women to celebrate their professional, personal, and philanthropic accomplishments, and we do so in the hopes of making this city more equitable for all.

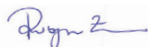
This Luncheon stands as one of our city's most engaging and dynamic change-oriented events. This year's theme centers around using your power, #Iusemypower, to empower other women, to create brighter futures for ReadNYC children, and to mentor rising stars. As you reflect on UWNYC's history and contribution to our community, we invite you to reflect on how using one's POWER can affect change - together our POWER can make an impact.

Thank you to our sponsors and supporters for their generosity. And, most importantly, thank you for joining us as we fight for the self-sufficiency of every low-income New Yorker.



**Laura Clayton-McDonnell**

*Co-Chair*



**Robyn Zivic**

*Co-Chair*

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## GET INVOLVED & ACTIVATE

### **Women United: Who We Are and What We Do:**

Founded in 2002, UWNYC's Women United (WU) is a multi-industry network of accomplished, philanthropically-minded women who bring together their talents and power to make a difference in the lives of low-income New Yorkers. WU is connected to a global movement representing 70,000+ women in 165 communities across six countries, and the network's engagement centers around three pillars: fundraising, personal/professional development, and volunteerism. These talented women advocate, fundraise, and volunteer to solve issues facing our most-deserving neighbors.

A key element of WU's program is support for ReadNYC, the collective impact initiative designed by UWNYC to enable children to read at grade level by third grade—a critical milestone in a child's future success. The WU community has raised over \$5 million for this and other youth empowerment initiatives since its inception in 2013.

### **Annual Women United Membership Benefits and Involvement**

- Connect with like-minded professionals who share a passion for driving social impact.
- Gain exclusive invitations to educational events tackling issues facing NYC families.
- Access volunteer and skills-based opportunities to support our local community.
- Meet notable speakers focusing on topics of personal and professional interest, and participate in social activities such as shopping evenings with fellow members.
- Collaborate with corporate women's networks and employee resource groups.
- Access leadership opportunities via WU executive and subcommittee working groups.

Join Women United today and build your capacity to be a dynamic community-leader, who's helping low-income New Yorkers go from surviving to thriving. To learn more, contact **Meghan Droge** at [mdroge@uwnyc.org](mailto:mdroge@uwnyc.org).

Don't miss your opportunity to be an agent of change!





## Cheryl Wills

*Author, Award-winning Reporter and Anchor  
Spectrum News NY1*

**Cheryl Wills is a veteran anchor for Spectrum News NY1 - she joined the cable network during its launch in 1992 and this year she is celebrating her 25th anniversary with the national news team.** She is the primetime anchor for NY1 Live at Ten and she's also the host of the public affairs talk show In Focus with Cheryl Wills. In 2018, Cheryl became the first African American reporter in NY1's history to win an Emmy Award.

The award-winning journalist is the author of three books about her great-great-grandfather Sandy Wills who fought in The Civil War: *"Die Free: A Heroic Family Tale,"* an illustrated children's book *"The Emancipation of Grandpa Sandy Wills"* and a YA book *"Emancipated: My Family's Fight for Freedom."* Cheryl has been invited to do readings of her Emancipation Series to tens of thousands of students across the country.

Cheryl has interviewed some of the most powerful people in the world including the first woman president of Africa: Ellen Johnson Sirleaf of Liberia. Cheryl's groundbreaking report earned her a prestigious medal from United Nations Correspondents Association. She also scored an exclusive interview with United Nations Secretary General Ban Ki-Moon. Cheryl's personal favorite was going one-on-one with the late great writer and activist Maya Angelou.

In March of 2018, Cheryl was honored with the prestigious Commander's Medal from the U.S. Department of the Army: The Public Service Commendation Medal is the fourth highest public service decoration the United States Department of the Army can bestow upon a civilian.

Cheryl has also received awards from The New York Press Club, The Newswomen's Club of NY Front Page Award, and The Associated Press. In 2017, The Association of Social Studies Teachers I UFT awarded Cheryl Wills The Rosa Parks Award for Social Justice for *"illuminating the struggle for Black equality from The Civil War to present."* In 2017, Cheryl also received the Dr. Martin Luther King Award from three prominent Jewish organizations at The Israeli Consulate for bridging the gap between African Americans and Jews.



### **Erika Irish Brown**

*Chief Diversity Officer*  
Goldman Sachs

**Erika is Chief Diversity Officer, responsible for global diversity and inclusion strategy** and driving inclusive culture initiatives and efforts related to the recruitment, retention and advancement of diverse professionals. She joined the firm as a Managing Director in 2018.

Prior to joining Goldman Sachs, Erika was Global Head of Diversity and Inclusion at Bloomberg from 2015 to 2018. Prior to this, she led diversity hiring efforts at Bank of America between 2009 and 2015 and Lehman Brothers between 2005 and 2008.

Erika's background includes a range of banking and finance roles, including Head of Business Development for Black Entertainment Television, Senior Associate in the high yield capital markets group at Morgan Stanley and Senior Policy Analyst for Domestic Finance for the United States Department of the Treasury. She began her career as an Analyst in the public finance department at Lehman Brothers.

Erika is a member of the Executive Leadership Council, Vice Chair of the Bedford-Stuyvesant Restoration Corporation and serves on the Board of Advisors for Catalyst.

Erika earned a BS in Economics from the State University of New York at Albany and an MBA from Columbia Business School.



### **Gena Smith**

*SVP, Human Resources  
Global Executive & Creative Recruitment  
LVMH Moët Hennessy Louis Vuitton*

**Gena Smith is the Senior Vice President of Human Resources and Head of Global Executive & Creative Recruitment for LVMH Moët Hennessy Louis Vuitton.** A highly experienced human resources executive, Gena ensures that LVMH is best in class at selecting, developing, and retaining senior executive and creative talent. During her tenure with LVMH she has helped to further develop talent at all levels of the organization, including through attracting accomplished senior-level executives, instituting learning and development programs to prepare executives to meet business needs, and promoting mobility for high performing executives across the LVMH brands. She led the first ever Diversity & Inclusion initiative for LVMH launching it across North America in 2012. She has also led the Group's regional gender diversity initiative, EllesVMH which included the Regional CEO's signing of the UN Women's Empowerment Principles.

Prior to joining LVMH in September 2011, Gena was Global Managing Director at Karen Harvey Consulting, where she led the luxury and retail executive recruitment practice worldwide. She previously spent 10 years as an executive search consultant at Russell Reynolds Associates and Ray & Berndtson, working with many leading retail, luxury and consumer brands. Her earlier experience included several years in International Education.

Gena holds a Bachelor's degree in International Business. She also studied French, Greek and Mandarin.

She currently resides in New York City with her husband Carlton Smith and two children, Madeline and Gage.



### **Tonya T. Robinson**

*General Counsel*  
KPMG

**Tonya Robinson joined KPMG LLP as its General Counsel in 2017.** Previously, Tonya served as the Acting General Counsel at the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), working as legal advisor to the Secretary and as principal-in-charge of nearly 600 professionals in HUD's Headquarters, 10 Regional Offices, and 40 Field Offices. Prior, Tonya served as HUD's Principal Deputy General Counsel and, earlier, as Special Assistant to the President for Justice and Regulatory Policy in the White House. She also convened President Obama's National Equal Pay Task Force; co-chaired an interagency working group charged with addressing employment opportunities for previously incarcerated individuals; co-chaired an interagency roundtable focused on leveraging civil legal services to promote access to housing, education, employment, healthcare, and other outcomes; and co-convened the White House Interagency Policy Committee on Human Trafficking.

Before her service at the White House, Tonya was a partner at the international law firm WilmerHale LLP, where her portfolio included a mix of complex commercial litigation, Congressional investigations, and discrete civil rights matters. Indeed, as a young associate, Tonya worked on the groundbreaking University of Michigan affirmative action cases, *Grutter v. Bollinger* and *Gratz v. Bollinger*. Tonya left Wilmer for a few years in 2001 to work as counsel to then-Senator Joseph R. Biden, Jr. on the U.S. Senate Judiciary Subcommittee on Crime and Drugs – her fourth stint on Capitol Hill – and returned to the firm in 2004.

Tonya received her B.A. in Public Policy Studies and a Certificate in Women's Studies from Duke University. She earned a post-graduate degree in African Studies from the University of Cape Town in South Africa, as a Rotary International Ambassadorial Scholar, and her J.D. from Harvard Law School. Upon graduation from Harvard, Tonya served as a judicial clerk for the Honorable Francis D. Murnaghan, Jr. on the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Fourth Circuit.

## ABOUT UNITED WAY OF NEW YORK CITY



United Way of New York City (UWNYC) is a nonprofit organization dedicated to helping low-income New Yorkers make ends meet and lead self-sufficient lives. Working in the poorest communities, we ensure that individuals and families are never one paycheck away from hunger and homelessness, that children can dare to dream and build a future for themselves, and that cross-sector partners can collaborate to provide the resources and infrastructure necessary to support community needs.

Why? Because we believe that when all New Yorkers have a fair chance to succeed, our City succeeds too.

**Our Mission:** to mobilize our communities to break down barriers and build opportunities that improve the lives of low-income New Yorkers for the benefit of all.

**Our Vision:** United Way of New York City envisions caring communities where all individuals and families have access to quality education and the opportunity to lead healthy and financially secure lives. And to accomplish that we must shift mindsets, practices, and policies in neighborhoods of concentrated poverty—and Citywide—to implement and scale what works.

While it's critical to provide our struggling neighbors with immediate resources for survival, we need to offer more to strengthen their households and put them on the path to future success and stability. It's why United Way of New York City focuses on the building blocks for an equal opportunity life, through education, health, and financial stability. And, why we work with partners from all industries toward our long-term goal: *to help New Yorkers make meaningful and measurable progress toward self-sufficiency.*

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\*Self-sufficiency is the ability for someone to have enough income to cover their basic needs—food, rent, child care, health care, taxes, and transportation.

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## PRESIDENT & CEO

Sheena Wright



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salutes  
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of New York City  
and  
Women United.**

We are proud to support

*The Power of Women  
to Make a Difference*

**2019 Award Luncheon.**

**Congratulations  
to this year's honorees!**

**Alan Roth**

*Group Director - Senior Vice President*

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