



PUBLIC ADVOCATE FOR THE CITY OF NEW YORK

Jumaane D. Williams

**STATEMENT OF PUBLIC ADVOCATE JUMAANE D. WILLIAMS
TO THE NEW YORK CITY COUNCIL COMMITTEE ON PARKS & RECREATION
SUPPORTING THE CO-NAMING OF ETHAN ZACHARY HOLDER WAY
JANUARY 30, 2023**

Chair Krishnan and members of the Committee on Parks and Recreation, I am writing in support of the street co-naming proposal before you today which would entail co-naming the corner of 53rd Street and Avenue M, “Ethan Zachary Holder Way”.

Ethan Zachary Holder was a remarkable young man who valued public service, community, and the power of music. Admired and respected by students and staff alike, Ethan first joined Brooklyn’s Public School 771K for children with disabilities as a substitute paraprofessional but after just a few months of working there, he was fast tracked to become a full time staff member. This was unheard of in the school’s history but a testament to the kind of natural-born educator Ethan was.

On October 12th, 2022, Ethan’s life was tragically cut short by gun violence only a block away from PS 771K. Our office joined Ethan’s family, Brooklyn community members and other elected leaders later that month at the school dedication memorial, where we heard staff members recall beautiful stories of Ethan’s kindness and his ability to engage and connect with the students.

I strongly support Councilmember Mercedes Narcisse’s effort to co-name the corner of 53rd Street and Avenue M in celebration and remembrance of Ethan Zachary Holder.

Sincerely,

Jumaane D. Williams
Public Advocate for the City of New York



VICTIM SUPPORT PROGRAM

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION • UNITED FEDERATION OF TEACHERS

52 Broadway, New York, NY 10004

212.598.6853 • FAX# 212.677.6612

January 30, 2023

New York City Council
New York City Hall
City Hall Park, NY, NY 10007

Greetings Honorable City Council Speaker Adams & NYC Councilmembers At-Large,

My name is Katrina Foye, NYC Department of Education & United Federation of Teachers Victim Support Program Coordinator of Brooklyn. The Victim Support Program responds to unfortunate crisis and or criminal situations impacting our public schools with offers of staff counseling, legal representation, and follow-up assistance for line of duty injury claims. Proactively, the VSP provides a multitude of trainings to prevent school violence, incorporate the Dignity for All Students Act and strengthen school safety, working in collaboration with various stakeholders. Each borough has a Victim Support Program Coordinator.

As per the proposal to co-name the Brooklyn street corner of E53rd Street & Avenue M to Ethan Zachary Holder Way, the Brooklyn VSP stands firmly in totally agreement of this great esteem. The tragic death of 19-year-old Ethan was brought to VSP attention with an immediate request to provide counseling for his colleagues. It was during these school visits, my team and I learned of the extraordinary Substitute Paraprofessional Mr. Holder was. With less than three weeks of working at his school site, P771K @ P.S. K203 (located at 5101 Avenue M), the late Ethan Holder was highly impactful and impressionable to coworkers, his special education students and their families, and the particular block in which he modeled exemplary supervision during the bussing of students. It was repeatedly and emotionally shared that Mr. Holder wouldn't leave until he saw every child on and off their school buses.

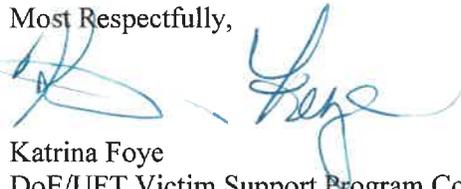
In a rare experience for a new DOE employee, the classroom teacher for which Mr. Holder supported, was able to speak to a six-second video clip she had of Mr. Holder engaging with his students. Described as a natural, she compared him to being the classroom teddy bear and how the students quickly gravitated to him. Through tears she expressed a great loss to the students and herself.

While many will never forget the blood-stained street corner of which Ethan was murdered, it's of greater importance to have a permanent remembrance of what he gave to his special education school community, in such a limited time of professional service. The profound signage of consideration, Ethan Zachary Holder Way will be a risen community asset for countless teachable moments. It'll show generations an ambitious young man, talented in music, with the charisma, ability and knowledge to teach children, aspiring to be a teacher **is possible**, changing the narrative stereotypically associated with the deaths of young black men in Ethan's age bracket.

In closing, please be aware, that the short exceptional work history of Mr. Holder was so affectable to both the United Federation of Teachers and our national teachers' union, the American Federation of Teachers, he was posthumously and historically honored with union membership in both organizations.

The AFT is currently developing a national scholarship in his name. Moving forward, his committed diligence to working with students will be shared to inspire future Paraprofessionals or assistant teachers locally and nationally. Again, co-naming E53rd Street & Avenue M to Ethan Zachary Holder Way is strongly encouraged by the DoE/UFT Victim Support Program. Taken to soon, his legacy must live on. My plea is for each of you to vote in unison to make this proposed endeavor, a reality.

Most Respectfully,



Katrina Foye
DoE/UFT Victim Support Program Coordinator of Brooklyn

The proposal to Co-name the corner of East 53rd Street and Avenue M (Ethan Zachary Holder Way) will be voted on by the City Council on Tuesday January 31st at 1pm.

To whom it may concern,

My wife and I are writing to you in support of the proposal to Co-name the corner of East 53rd Street and Avenue M to "Ethan Zachary Holder Way". This support for this proposal is in honor of 19 year old, Ethan Zachary Holder, a young Paraprofessional, whose life was tragically cut short October 12, 2022 by gun violence.

Every culture throughout the history of humanity has been known to honor the passing of loved ones. In modern civilization we have come to expand that honoring particularly to those who have lost their lives either for a cause of humanity, in the line of active civil services, or both. This is most recognized for the man or women of the Armed Forces of those known as First Line Responders.

Within my own immediate family, my relatives have served the community within the Armed Force, the Medical Field, as well as local civil servants, such as the NYPD and in the NYC DoE. That being said, we must equally view our Educators as members of our first line of defense. As these individuals have dedicated their lives to uplift our children, support their parents, and our communities in the war against ignorance, misinformation, and overall miseducation! Without our educators, society would surely fall to all other crimes as they would no longer be armed with any sense of self, general knowledge, sense of community, and the overarching society.

It is upon the reason, that I recognized Para Professional Ethan Holder, who just serving his community, on active duty as a Teacher, tragically lost his life, just a block away from his post, the school he worked in. This tragic event is in fact a civil servant on active duty for his community, killed in action!

We must not forget to honor Ethan, nor others like him who succumb to a similar fate. We must use this opportunity to create a reminder to the community and all, that we must stand as one, and remember these fallen heroes... whether it be a soldier, a police officer, or a teacher. They are all individuals who use their lives and talents to protect and/or educate the Nation, State, City, and community!

Let us not forget them! It is for all these reasons and more than words can say in this proposal that my wife and I give our support for this proposal is in honor of 19 year old, Ethan Zachary Holder, a young Paraprofessional, whose life was tragically cut short October 12, 2022 by gun violence.

Lastly, it is my hope that we should never come to a point, where there are no longer available streets that can be renamed in honor of these fallen heroes as it would mean we have done our community a disservice in preventing such tragedies such as gun violence from plaguing our streets!

Respectfully yours,

Anderson & Suzanne Moise

Brooklyn NY 11225

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF “EDDIE KAY WAY”
“Eddie Kay Way”
March 8, 1933 to February 15, 2022
T2023-2881

Good afternoon Chair Shekar Krishnan and members of the Committee on Parks and Recreation. 1199 SEIU fully supports the co-naming of the intersection of Avenue N and East 19th Street in Brooklyn “Eddie Kay Way.” Eddie Kay resided there from 1946 until his passing on February 15, 2022. During those years, he built lifelong friendships with residents of the block and within the broader community. He led initiatives that improved city services, such as improved garbage collection and snow removal.

As a young man, Eddie enlisted and proudly served in the U.S. Marines until an honorable discharge in 1955. Thereafter, he joined 1199 SEIU as a rank-and-file member. Eddie impressed the Union’s Organizing Director who recruited him as an Organizer, and the rest is history. He joined the 1199 staff in 1967 assigned to the Queens and Long Island division, where he worked arduously to organize hospitals and nursing homes. As a member of the 1199 SEIU family, he distinguished himself as a leader and advocate for workers’ rights, relentlessly fighting for improved working conditions. He was unquestionably a preeminent labor leader.

Eddie essentially built 1199 in Queens and Long Island. Not only did he successfully organize much of this area, he ran it with an incredible amount of member involvement and militancy. This would become the hallmark of his organizing strategy for the remainder of his life. After his successful effort, he was promoted to Area Director. He went on to lead the organizing drive at NY Presbyterian Hospital, one of the largest medical centers in the City of New York. This organizing assignment had previously been attempted twice before Eddie was assigned.

At 1199, Eddie rose through the ranks from organizer to Vice President, then Executive Vice Present, and Secretary Treasurer, the position from which he retired after 40 years of serving the Union with distinction. Retirement did not end his commitment to fight for workers. He continued to organize and mobilize workers as one of our most active retirees, and train and mentor workers in a myriad of labor unions.

When 1199 went through some a leadership crisis in the early eighties, it was Eddie who led the rank-and-file movement to bring 1199 back to its progressive roots. From this rank-and-file struggle emerged the 1199 led by Dennis Rivera and now George Gresham that is such a strength in the labor movement today. It is not an exaggeration to say that this does not happen without the organizational genius of Eddie Kay.

Through numerous masterful training and organizing campaigns, Eddie became a much sought-after motivational coach and mentor to thousands of workers in a myriad of labor unions, with the objective of teaching the importance of unionization to protect workers’ rights. From the 1960s until he was stricken by a short-term illness in 2021, Eddie travelled the country and

abroad, spreading his knowledge of effective union organization and mobilization. He achieved too many successes to enumerate, but his reach extended well beyond 1199 in New York. He helped build 1199 in many other states such as Pennsylvania and Connecticut. He retired from 1199 as a Union Officer in 1999, and went on to share his depth and breadth of knowledge and experience with labor unions across the country, including LIUNA Local 78 Asbestos Workers, ATU Bus Drivers, U.S.P.S. Letter Carriers, and many others. He also worked on numerous progressive political campaigns. Here in NYC, he worked with the Transit Workers Union to demand staffing changes, a successful campaign that resulted in improvements to mass transit service for all New Yorkers.

His legacy will live on for decades to come, and his many invaluable accomplishments to workers' rights will serve all working Americans forever.

Thank you for this opportunity to express our support for this fearless labor leader.

Presented by: Vladimir Fortunny on behalf of the Kay Family
David Kranz on behalf of the 1199 SEIU-UHWE Family

Dr. Sophia Lubin
Laurelton, NY 11413

Re: Ethan Zachary Holder Way

To whom it may concern,

I am writing in support of co-naming the corner of East 53rd Street and Avenue M Ethan Zachary Holder way. As someone who has known Ethan from the time of his birth to his passing, I can say without hesitation that his work although short at his school and in his community had a lasting impact that needs to be remembered.

My name is Dr. Sophia Lubin and I am proud to say that I am Ethan's Aunt. From the time Ethan was small, he took a strong interest in family, music and being of service to others. These interests lived with him through the course of his life and in his desire to work for the New York City Department of Education. His repour with the students he interacted with as well as his ability to give of himself to ensure those needing support would get the help they need, speaks volumes to his character and the idea that he would have given so much to those he served with more time. I feel it would be such an honor to remember his legacy through this street co-naming to serve as an example to youth and those aspiring to provide a life of service to their communities. I also feel it will shed light on and help to empower the youth of the community against gun violence. Ethan is missed greatly and through this proposal from the community council, he will never be forgotten.

Sincerely,

Dr. Sophia Lubin

January 27, 2023

New York City Council

RE: Ethan Zachary Holder Street Co-Naming

Dear Council Members:

My name is Violine Roberty, and I am (a family friend/community board member/block president) who resides on the block where Ethan grew up. I am supporting the street co-naming for Ethan because Ethan was a public servant and a leader at a young age. Ethan helped and participated in several of our annual initiatives for our block and community (Block Beautification Day, Coat and Toy Drives, Block Clean Up). I remember Ethan helping with our Annual Block Beautification Day when we would clean up the block and plant flowers. Even when we woke him up early to help, he was always willing to serve his community with a smile.

Ethan was a leader amongst his friends. He was dedicated, driven, ambitious, and the kindest young man. While most young people struggle to find their path, he knew that he wanted to become a teacher. He loved the children he taught as a paraprofessional, and they loved him. Ethan was an inspiration to his friends because he was purposeful and understood his role in this world. He was always there for his friends and encouraged them to try harder to reach their goals.

Ethan's death has impacted our lives in ways that I cannot put into words. I think about Ethan, the leader and the impact he had on our community as a young man and how he would have impacted the world as he got older. His death was painful for his loved ones but also for our community. His loved ones lost a loving, kind, intelligent and amazing young man and our community lost a young leader and a servant.

Please consider voting for the street co-naming, this would be such an impactful way to honor Ethan for the service that he provided in his short time in this world. I think about ways that his death can positively influence his community, the group of kids that he loved and his family and friends and this would provide that opportunity for people to see his name and to know that they should always strive for their dreams as he did. It would keep his legacy alive, the legacy of giving back, the legacy of being selfless and the legacy of serving his community. Please help make this happen for us.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Violine Roberty". The signature is written in a cursive style with a horizontal line underneath the name.

Violine Roberty

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: 1-31-2023

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Connie Felker

Address: _____ Manhasset N.Y. 10541

I represent: _____

Address: _____

▶ Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms ◀