

# Beacon On

11<sup>th</sup> annual

## Lights of Hope tree lighting in Harlem



**Christmas Tree**

Edited by Audrey J. Bernard  
Lifestyles/Society Editor

The Jackie Robinson Park Conservancy, Inc. (JRPC) in partnership with Harlem Congregations for Community Improvement, Inc. (HCCI), New York City Parks and Recreation, and the Bradhurst Merchant Association celebrated the 11<sup>th</sup> annual lights of hope tree lighting ceremony at the Jackie Robinson Park and Recre-

ation Center located at 146th Street and Bradhurst Avenue in Harlem, on Thursday, December 11<sup>th</sup>.

In spite of the rain, guests filled the gym at the Jackie Robinson Park & Recreation Center to participate in an evening of song, food, and Christmas lights. Lights of Hope participants were treated to songs performed by the Rev. Shepherd Lee of Baptist Temple Church with Raleigh Spruill and the Joy Wonders who are members of Salvation and Deliverance Church, as well as Sis. Charmaine Yates of Christ Community United Church.

Manhattan Borough Commissioner Bill Castro greeted the audience and the new chair of JRPC, Ms. Beverly Alston, emceed the holiday affair. Local residents and Melba's Restaurant contributed food. The Bradhurst Merchants Association donated gift bags.

The celebration also included a holiday party for neighborhood youth. Twenty-five children received Christmas gifts, played games, ate snacks, had their faces painted and spent time with Santa Clause. This year, Leslie Wyche, community liaison for Council Member Inez Dickens, donned the



**Lamond Mayes of Councilmember Inez Dickens office; Manhattan Borough Commissioner, Bill Castro; Leslie Wyche of Councilmember Inez Dickens office.**

Santa suit and listened to gift requests.

Lights of Hope was created to bring the Harlem community together in celebration of our common goals – lighting the way to brighter futures. It is also a community fundraiser.

Through this event, neighborhood residents support JRPC, HCCI, the precious children of Harlem by purchasing a light of hope for \$10 each from JRPC. JRPC is a not for profit organization, and contributions are deductible as provided by law. For more information, please contact Mr. David Weaver at (212) 281-4887.



**Leslie Wyche as Santa at children's Christmas Party at Park.**



**Soloist Charmaine Yates of Christ Community United Church performing Christmas medley**



**Rev. Shepherd Lee of Baptist Temple Church singing Christmas medley**



**Lucille L. McEwen, president & CEO of HCCI and Beverly Alston, chair, JRPC**



**Performance by Rev. Shepherd Lee, Raleigh Spruill and The Joy Wonders**

*(Photos: Wali Muhammad)*