

“Harlem Inspired” - Yolanda Adams, Regina Belle & others Sing in Support of HCCI’S Youth Program

On Saturday, September 14, 2013, Harlem Congregations for Community Improvement, Inc. (HCCI) hosted its first “Harlem Inspired” Benefit Gospel Concert. The event was the kick off of a concert series that will feature known and local talent and testimony to help support the programs of HCCI. The event was held at the newly renovated First Corinthian Baptist Church in their performing Arts Sanctuary from 7:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. in Harlem, New York. Crowds lined around the block to attend this star-studded Harlem affair.

“Harlem Inspired” was hosted by Liz Black of WBLS 107.5 FM and WLIB 1190 AM - who enlightened the crowd with spiritual enrichment and give-aways. Legendary sensation Regina Belle electrified the crowd with her gut-wrenching testimony that brought the crowd to their feet with hands raised and eyes filled with tears. Gaye Arbuckle proved she is truly an anointed and gifted singer, and from her studies under the tutelage of the late Rev. James Cleveland, left the audience spiritually touched as she ministered in song. John Stanley, vocalist/pianist and

The Rev. Keith Branch and The Branch Company wowed the audience by bringing everyone to their feet, as they clapped their hands and rejoiced. Minister Melody Moore, Praise and Worship Leader at Southern Baptist Church kept the audience motivated with song with the Harlem Inspired Band playing in the background. HCCI board member Rev. Keith W. Roberson thanked his colleagues, Dr. Carl Washington and Rev. Jeffrey Crenshaw for all their help in planning this grand event.

The evening rounded off with Yolanda Adams giving encouraging words of praise through song. HCCI's Board Chair, Dr. Charles Curtis recognized the members and thanked everyone for supporting the event. HCCI President & CEO Derek Broomes thanked the sponsors: Chase Bank, M&T Bank, WinnResidential, H&N Insurance Agency and Financial Group, Inc., Nest Restaurant, Benchmark Title Agency, LLC, Chocolat Restaurant, GAD Cleaners, and others for their support.

"Like most not-for-profits, HCCI is always looking for creative ways to support its programs," said

Derek Broomes, President and CEO, HCCI. "Harlem Inspired! is an inspiring way for our partners and community residents to feel good about giving and helping to sustain an organization that offers an array of vital services to the Harlem community."

Proceeds from this event will help support the vital work of HCCI's Youth Program, which helps to bridge the digital divide for youth in Harlem's Bradhurst area and provides critically needed homework assistance through its after-school programs and support the importance of financial literacy training for community residents and families.

HCCI is a diverse interfaith consortium of congregations established to revitalize the physical, economic, cultural, and spiritual conditions of the Harlem community. HCCI has made a substantial impact on the social and living conditions prevalent in Harlem by developing low to moderate income housing; creating supportive health and human service facilities and programs; providing commercial development opportunities to local businesses; and expanding cultural programs.

