

June 2, 2023

To Whom It May Concern,

As a 24-year veteran of the FDNY and in my current role as the President of the Vulcan Society, I have witnessed firsthand the need for resources in underserved communities in New York City. The Community Warehouse (the "Warehouse"), is an amazingly innovative solution that provides a pipeline of helpful and healthful supplies to individuals who need them the most. Moreover, the Warehouse is a connector in our communities. It serves as a platform that links NYC Firefighters and First Responders directly to individuals in our neighborhoods. It is for these reasons that I am writing this letter of support for The Community Warehouse.

The Warehouse's founder, Rhonda Roland Shearer, has a long track record of philanthropic and innovative endeavors that have provided a vital supply of health and safety products to frontline workers and community organizations. Ms. Roland Shearer created Cut Red Tape 4 Heroes.org (a project of Art Science Research Laboratory, a 501c3), which brought 25 million items of free vital supplies to First Responders and Community-Based Organizations in the five boroughs from March 2020 through today. With the Warehouse initiative, her goal now is to have free health and safety supplies readily available to local residents and first responders 365 days a year and at the same time, be fully ready as an already existing and community accessible stockpile for when another emergency occurs.

This readily available, free supply of health, safety and cleaning supplies, PPE, diapers and other household items will be a living stockpile, carefully curated to address the needs of our community members. In 2021, the expert efficiency and carefully managed operation of the Warehouse "pilot" allowed for 5.8 million items to be distributed over a 60-day period to more than 100 Community-Based Organizations, FDNY, NYPD first responders and health care workers.

The FDNY Vulcan Society membership voted yes to taking a leadership role in cooperation with other minority member affinity groups in FDNY and NYPD and will coordinate with Community-Based Organizations in partnership with the Warehouse.

This opportunity allows for adults and youth in the community to see themselves in our Vulcan volunteers and will be a powerful reinforcement of the Vulcan's commitment to bettering conditions in our neighborhoods. Moreover, this exposure and interaction will inspire youth to consider careers in the FDNY and EMS, helping to build our pipeline of uniformed members of color as well as with brief classes in safety to increase quality of

life for community members. We envision that this level of community engagement and relationship building will strengthen bonds that will have long lasting, beneficial consequences, including allowing for education, information sharing and support for Vulcan Society's community programs and events.

Working with Rhonda Roland Shearer, who is a committed changemaker with a laudable mission to provide assistance and logical remedies to under-resourced communities. Given this, I, and our membership, wholeheartedly support The Community Warehouse and stand in solidarity with her in making The Community Warehouse a permanent part of the fabric of our city.

Sincerely,

Regina Wilson

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President

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