

Save the Date

**BROOKLYN
RISING™**

Empowering Women and Girls Worldwide

*During Women's History Month,
Brooklyn Rising presents the
Shirley Chisholm Woman of the Year 2021
Award to the Honorable Chirlane McCray,
First Lady of New York City*

*Monday, March 8, 2021
6pm to 10pm
at El Caribe Country Club Caterers
in Brooklyn's Mill Basin*



Brooklyn Rising is an artistic activist movement that inspires and celebrates young women of Brooklyn and expresses Solidarity with One Billion Rising, Youth Rising, and V-Day to end violence against women and girls worldwide through activism and artistic expressions—dance, song, spoken word, poems, performance arts, monologues, Double Dutch, and music created in conjunction with talented and visionary young women in Brooklyn USA.

RSVP:

<https://www.brooklynrising.org/events-1/womens-history-month-2021-award-dinner/form>

Chirlane McCray was born in Springfield, Massachusetts and spent her early years there. Her mother, Katharine Clarissa Eileen (née Edwards), was an assembly worker at an electronics factory, and her father, Robert Hooper McCray, was an inventory clerk at a military base. Chirlane is of Barbadian and St. Lucian descent, but traces her grandmother's last name (Quashie) to Ghana. The First Lady is a graduate of Wellesley College (B.A.) and has accepted an Honorary Doctor of Science from the CUNY Graduate School of Public Health and Health Policy. She and Mayor Bill de Blasio live in Gracie Mansion, the official residence, and are proud parents of Chiara and Dante.

Chirlane enrolled at Wellesley College in 1972. While studying there, she became a member of a Black feminist organization known as the Combahee River Collective. After graduating from college, Chirlane moved to New York City to work for *Redbook* and lives in Brooklyn's Park Slope neighborhood. She published an essay in *Essence* in 1979 entitled "I Am a Lesbian." *Essence* later described the essay as "groundbreaking," asserting that it was "perhaps the first time a Black gay woman had spoken so openly and honestly about her sexuality in a Black magazine." The purpose of the essay was to "dispel the myth that there are no gay Black people." Some of her poetry is included in *Home Girls: A Black Feminist Anthology*.

In 1991, Chirlane entered politics. She worked as a speechwriter for New York City Mayor David Dinkins. During the Clinton administration, she worked for the New York Foreign Press Center as a public affairs specialist. She also worked as a speechwriter for the New York State Comptroller Carl McCall and for New York City Comptroller Bill Thompson.

Ms. McCray believes that art is not a luxury and works closely with NYC's Department of Cultural Affairs on dynamic projects with partners like the Public Art Fund and the Studio Museum in Harlem. She oversees the Gracie Mansion Conservancy and is intent on making sure that the programming, installations, and exhibits are more accessible to the public, and better reflect the rich history and many cultures that make up New York City.

Ms. McCray's other responsibilities are extensive. As co-chair of the Commission on Gender Equity, she is a persistent voice for creating a 50-50 city and world. She led the city's Domestic Violence Task Force, and in 2015, with her signature, New York City became the first city in the country to join the United Nations Women's Safe Cities Global Initiative. She also launched and leads the NYC Unity Project, an unprecedented citywide effort to make sure LGBTQIA young people in New York City are safe, supported, and healthy.

PROGRAM

*Reception
6pm to 7pm*

WELCOME ADDRESS BY
MISTRESS OF CEREMONIES SASHAGAY LINDO,
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF BROOKLYN RISING

[MOMENT OF SILENT PRAYER]

*Dinner Served
7pm to 8pm*



KEYNOTE SPEAKER

ZINGA A. FRASER, PH.D.,
DIRECTOR OF THE SHIRLEY CHISHOLM
PROJECT OF BROOKLYN WOMEN'S
ACTIVISM FROM 1945-PRESENT, ASSISTANT
PROFESSOR, AFRICANA STUDIES &
WOMEN'S & GENDER STUDIES PROGRAM,
AT BROOKLYN COLLEGE, CUNY

*Presentation of the Shirley Chisholm Woman
of the Year 2021 Award
8pm to 8:30pm*

Acknowledgments

*Entertainment
8:30pm to 10pm*



DANCE AND SPOKEN WORD
PRESENTATION BY KEOMI TARVER,
DIRECTOR AND CHOREOGRAPHER OF
ABUNDANCE WITH KEO,
ARTISTIC CREATIVE DIRECTOR OF
BROOKLYN RISING



MUSIC PRESENTATION BY
PRIYA DEBERRY,
VIOLINIST

Shirley Chisholm was born in the U.S. of immigrant parents and she represents the Brooklyn experience. She lived in the Caribbean Island of Barbados as a child, returned to Brooklyn as a teenager, and graduated in 1947 with a B.A. from Brooklyn College and earned her M.A. from Teachers College of Columbia University in 1952. She plunged into activism with a variety of educational, religious, immigrant, community, political, and social organizations. In 1964, she was elected to the New York State Assembly and in 1968 was the first African American woman elected to Congress from Brooklyn's 12th Congressional District. In the 1972 United States presidential election, she became the first African American candidate for a major party's nomination for President of the United States, and the first woman to run for the Democratic Party's presidential nomination. Her activism embodied almost every aspect of her constituents' lives: home, church, community, school, health, higher education, internationalism, connections to the Caribbean community, labor, and civil and women's rights. This activism continues today, reflecting the multiplicity of women's experiences in Brooklyn, galvanized by the revival of feminism, and enriched by the diversity of women's lives.



“Unbought and Unbossed”