

Press



Release

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For Immediate Release

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Legislator Davidson Invites Student Katherine Dely to Deliver Invocation at County Legislature Meeting

New City, NY (Feb. 8, 2024) – Just minutes after the Rockland County Legislature concluded its annual Black History Month Celebration, Katherine “Kat” Dely stepped forward to deliver the invocation at the start of the board’s regular meeting.

The 8th grader flawlessly delivered “An Ode We Owe,” an inspiring poem focused on issues important to young people — and Rocklanders of all ages – including climate change, equality, and economic justice.

Rockland County Legislator Beth Davidson invited Katherine to participate Davidson believed the poem was a fitting kickoff to Black History Month and a way to involve youth in calling for climate action. Legislator Davidson chairs the Environmental Committee.

Katherine attends Nyack Middle School, where she is a member of the marching band, and is also an actress. She’ll be in Nyack DramaWorks’ production of *High School Musical 2* next month.

“Katherine did a fantastic job and inspired everyone in the room,” Legislator Davidson said. “Her voice will be heard by other youth and will help lend urgency to the fight for environmental justice.”

The duo spent time in advance of Tuesday’s meeting discussing the poem, its meaning and its potential significance to the generation that will bear the brunt of the climate crisis in the coming decades.

The poem was written by Amanda S.C. Gorman, the first person to be named National Youth Poet Laureate. Gorman first gained wide public attention when she read her poem, “The Hill We Climb,” at President Biden’s inauguration in 2021.

In 2022, Gorman delivered “An Ode We Owe” to the United Nations General Assembly. The poem concludes, “To anyone out there: I only ask that you care before it’s too late, That you live aware and awake, That you lead with love in hours of hate. I challenge you to heed this call, I dare you to shape our fate. Above all, I dare you to do good. So that the world might be great.”

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