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LISC NYC Celebrates 2019 Big Apple Innovation Awards

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On January 29, LISC NYC was pleased to celebrate its 2019 Big Apple Innovation Awards event honoring [Community League of the Heights \(CLOTH\)](#) with our nonprofit Community Commitment Award and [Deutsche Bank](#) with our corporate Community Commitment Award. [See photos of the event here!](#)

Joan Tally, Managing Director of Morgan Stanley’s Community Development Finance Group and Chair of LISC NYC’s Local Advisory Committee, kicked off the night by thanking lead sponsor Deutsche Bank.

LISC NYC Executive Director **Sam Marks** highlighted key programmatic accomplishments for 2018 and acknowledged LISC NYC staff who are implementing work with partners in affordable housing, economic development, health, and policy. He also shared the vision emerging from LISC NYC’s strategic planning process, where community based partners have a powerful collective voice in the policies that are shaping their neighborhoods, and where more real estate assets are taken out of speculative ownership and are being stewarded for community benefit. “We work with partners in communities, in government and in the private sector, who stand in that middle space where market forces meet policy,” he said, and he committed the organization to more targeted, strategic policy and systems work in 2019 and beyond.

Maria Torres-Springer, Commissioner of the NYC Department of Housing Preservation & Development (HPD) introduced our first honoree, CLOTH, saluting the organization’s affordable housing preservation work in Washington Heights. She noted the complexity of the **Essie Jeffries** project, which preserved 65 units of affordable housing through HUD’s Rental Assistance Demonstration (RAD) program, with construction to permanent financing provided by LISC NYC.



Yvonne Stennett, Executive Director of **CLOTH**, accepted the award, noting that partners like HPD and LISC NYC are essential to their ability to implement projects that enable long-time residents of Washington Heights to remain in their neighborhood as it changes. “The work of CLOTH is really about investing in people,” she said.

Kathy Wylde, CEO of the Partnership for New York City, introduced the second honoree, Deutsche Bank. Ms. Wylde noted the bank’s long tradition of civic engagement and community development finance since the early days of the affordable housing industry, and acknowledged how that commitment continues under the leadership of Jim Baek, the Director of the Community Development Finance Group.



Jim Baek accepted the award on behalf of Deutsche Bank, noting that the Bank continues to pursue innovation as a key criteria for where it invests its resources, singling out LISC NYC’s Inclusive Creative Economy Fund as an example where the Bank’s investment helped attract additional impact investor capital to the initiative.

LISC CEO **Maurice Jones** closed out the program, highlighting LISC's upcoming 40th anniversary milestone, and exhorting the attendees to save the date for LISC's 40th Anniversary bash taking place on April 23, 2019.

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