



THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF NEW YORK
OFFICE OF COUNCILWOMAN CARLINA RIVERA

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Members of the Chinn Family, The Committee to Honor Dr. May Edward Chinn, elected officials, and healthcare institutions unveil Dr. May Edward Chinn Place on 1st Avenue at E 29th Street

New York City Councilwoman Carlina Rivera joins with family and community members to honor Dr. May Edward Chinn with the co-naming of 1st Avenue at E 29th Street

NEW YORK, NY – Dr. May Edward Chinn Place street sign was unveiled under 1st Avenue at E 29th Street, co-naming this section of 1st Avenue on “hospital row” after the pioneering doctor, May Edward Chinn. Dr. Chinn was the first African American woman to graduate from the Bellevue Hospital Medical College, now the NYU Grossman School of Medicine, and had a storied career of over 50 years as a practicing physician and a leader in the development of cancer treatment and detection. Dr. Chinn’s Cousin Aklia Chinn, elected officials Councilwoman Carlina Rivera, Manhattan Borough President Mark Levine, Assembly Member Harvey Epstein, representatives from healthcare institutions, and many community members joined the Committee to Honor Dr. May Edward Chinn in this street co-naming ceremony.

Dr. Chinn graduated from Bellevue Hospital Medical College in 1926, and completed her internship at Harlem Hospital, where she was also the first African American woman to work. Due to her race, she was denied the ability to work in NYC hospitals at the time, so she opened a private practice in Harlem and treated a wide variety of patients, including women experiencing chronic health issues due to poor living and working conditions. She began to work with cancer research, and in 1944 she joined the Strang Clinics, now known as the Strang Cancer Prevention Center. She made great advancements in cancer prevention and treatment, especially in her work with detection of cervical and breast cancer.

Dr. Chinn’s life and contribution to medicine and women’s health are being recognized today thanks in large part to the advocacy of the Committee to Honor Dr. May Edward Chinn, Co-Chaired by Michelle Winfield and Dolores Leito. They gathered over 400 signatures and petitioned to co-name the portion of 1st Avenue at E 29th Street after Dr. Chinn. With a letter of support from Community Board 6, Councilwoman Carlina Rivera passed legislation in City Council to approve the co-naming.

The large crowd spoke to Dr. Chinn's influence throughout the medical professions. Speakers Marcia Peters the Chief Operating Officer of NYC Health+Hospitals/Bellevue, Dr. Joseph Ravelle the Associate Dean of Diversity and Inclusion at NYU Grossman School of Medicine, Dr. Michael Osborne the President of Strang Center for Cancer, and Georges Leconte the CEO of NYC Health+Hospitals/Harlem, all spoke to the influence Dr. Chinn had on their specific medical institutions, careers, and the wider impact her work had on society. Kanika Morgan and Jamyce Johnston from the Delta Sigma Theta Sorority spoke about the May Chinn Scholarship, and at least one recipient of the scholarship who is now a doctor attended, among many other Delta Sigma Theta sisters.

Elected officials Councilwoman Carlina Rivera, Borough President Mark Levine, and Assembly Member Harvey Epstein also presented a proclamation from the Mayor's Office declaring Wednesday, September 28 2022 Dr. May Edward Chinn Day.

"Dr. Chinn represents the selfless and caring spirit of Black women around the country. Even with barriers and adversities, she became a trailblazer for Black women in medicine while selflessly serving the residents of the Village of Harlem and New York City. We are grateful to Council Member Carlina Rivera for helping share to the remarkable legacy of Dr. Chinn," said **Michelle D. Winfield activist and Co-Chair of the Committee to Honor Dr. May Edward Chinn.**

"Dr. Chinn was a pioneer in healthcare, medicine, and science, who always made sure to treat everyone – especially those who were left out, forgotten or otherwise marginalized – with the care and the respect that they deserved," said **Council Member Carlina Rivera.** "I am so proud to be able to bring this recognition of her life and her contributions to medicine to 1st Avenue and E 29th Street and hope that everyone who walks by will feel her spirit."

"NYC Health + Hospitals/Bellevue was proud to support the efforts to co-name this street in honor of Dr. May Edward Chinn," said **Marcia Peters, COO of NYC Health + Hospitals/Bellevue.** "Dr. Chinn played a remarkable and groundbreaking role in Bellevue history as the first African American woman to graduate from Bellevue Hospital Medical College in 1926. She was a pioneer her entire life, participating in great advances in science and society. We stand on the shoulders of women like Dr. May Edward Chinn, who used her intelligence, talent and skills to improve the health and lives of her patients and fellow New Yorkers."

"It is important that the City of New York be a leader in honoring women of color, who in the face of racism and sexism Dr. May Edward Chinn continued to achieve despite the numerous barriers placed before her. Her tenacity and leadership should be acknowledged and honored. Thank you to Council Member Carlina Rivera, Community Board 6 and the Committee for Dr. Chinn for co-naming East 29th Street and First Avenue after her. This highlights the advancement of women of color, and the contributions they make to society, though numerous and frequent, often go overlooked," **Assembly Member Harvey Epstein.**

"I am extremely honored to be here today to honor Dr. Chinn and the legacy she leaves behind. I have been so inspired by her incredible work, and am pleased to see so many of my colleagues and so many young people here today because she is such an inspiration and role model for how to not let anything stand in your way," said **Dr. Joseph Ravenell, Associate Dean of Diversity and Inclusion, NYU Grossman School of Medicine.** "I am thrilled that all that she did -- not just for the city or for medicine -- but to break down racism, sexism and advance health equity, is

being recognized today. We all have a responsibility to advance Dr. Chinn's work by providing the very best care to patients no matter who they are or where they are."

[STRANG CANCER PREVENTION CENTER QUOTE]

[DELTA SIGMA THETA SORORITY QUOTE]

"Dr. May Edward Chinn Place commemorates Dr. Chinn's monumental influence on the medical field in New York and beyond, as well as her trailblazing legacy," said **Manhattan Borough President Mark Levine**. "She overcame unspeakable obstacles and discrimination to eventually revolutionize how we approach cancer care by advocating for the early screenings that have no become routine. Thanks to the community members who made this possible, this street co-naming honors Dr. Chinn's perseverance and dedication to medical excellence and compassionate care for all."

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