



CITY OF NEW YORK  
**MANHATTAN COMMUNITY BOARD 10**  
215 West 125<sup>th</sup> Street, 4<sup>th</sup> Floor—New York, NY 10027  
T: 212-749-3105 F: 212-662-4215

**CICELY HARRIS**  
Chairperson

**SHATIC MITCHELL**  
District Manager

**MANHATTAN COMMUNITY BOARD 10**  
**RESOLUTION**  
**Judge Sheila Abdus Salaam Street Co-Naming**

**RESOLUTION:** To support the street co-naming of West 131<sup>st</sup> Street between Adam Clayton Powell Boulevard and Malcolm X Boulevard as “Judge Sheila Abdus Salaam Way”.

**WHEREAS:** During her 40-year legal career, Judge Sheila Abdus Salaam served tirelessly and compassionately as a public servant, mentor, distinguished jurist and community leader. She was the first African American woman appointed to New York’s Court of Appeals, the State’s highest court. She was known for her support of aspiring lawyers, encouragement of new judges and her drive for excellence.

**WHEREAS:** As a native of Washington, DC., Judge Abdus Salaam was one of seven children born to Willena Turner and Alfred Brown. She attended the District of Columbia public schools, graduating from Eastern Senior High School in 1970 as Salutatorian. She attended Barnard College on scholarship, graduating in 1974. She was awarded her Juris Doctorate from Columbia Law School, in 1977, where she was a Charles Evan Hughes Fellow.

**WHEREAS:** Judge Abdus Salaam started her legal career as a public defender at Brooklyn Legal Services and then as Assistant Attorney General in the Civil Rights and Real Estate Financing Bureaus of the New York State Attorney General’s office from 1980 to 1988. Subsequently, she became General Counsel of the New York City Division of Labor Services, serving until 1991.

**WHEREAS:** She was first elected a judge of the Civil Court of the City of New York in December 1991, and then in 1993 and 2007, was elected a justice of the Supreme Court, First Department of the State of New York. In March of 2009, she was appointed to the Supreme Court’s Appellate Division by Governor David A. Patterson. In 2013, Governor Andrew M. Cuomo appointed her to the Court of Appeals of New York State.

**WHEREAS:** Among her many notable legal opinions was her 2016 Court of Appeals decision in Matter of Brooke S.B. vs. Elizabeth A.C. which expanded the legal definition of what it means to be a parent effectively overturning a previous ruling in which the court had held that the non-biological parent in same sex couple relationship had no standing to seek custody or visitation rights following a breakup. She was known and respected as a jurist who with thoughtfulness, compassion and sensitivity, protected the rights of the most vulnerable in society.

**WHEREAS:** Judge Sheila Abdus Salaam gave her time generously to the legal community, and formerly served as president of the New York City Chapter of the National Conference of Black Lawyers Guild, New York City Chapter.

**WHEREAS:** In the courtroom and in the community, Judge Abdus Salaam was a champion for justice. Serving on the boards of Contemporary Guidance Services and Project Brownstone, as well as chair emerita of the board of Harlem Legal Services and Women’s Housing and Economic Development Corporation are a few examples of her commitment to community.

WHEREAS: The residents of the 100 block of West 131<sup>st</sup> Street remember her as a warm, friendly, involved neighbor. She always found time for a friendly chat on her way home from her busy work schedule. She participated in the block association meetings and activities. If she could not attend, she would send a note and/or make a donation to the activity. Most enduring and missed is her warm engaging spirit, coupled with a non-discriminating love for persons from all walks of life.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that Manhattan Community Board 10 wishes to remember Judge Sheila Abdus Salaam by formally requesting that the New York City Council and the Mayor of New York City enact legislation to support the co-naming of West 131<sup>st</sup> Street between Adam Clayton Powell Boulevard and Malcolm X Boulevard to "Judge Sheila Abdus Salaam Way" on February 3, 2021 by a vote of 37 YES; 0 NO; 0 ABSTENTION; and 0 recusals.