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THE COUNCIL OF
THE CITY OF NEW YORK
DEBI ROSE

DEPUTY MAJORITY LEADER
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**Elizabeth Egbert:
Leader. Visionary. Artist. Community Activist. Friend.**

As a leader, Elizabeth ably and expertly led the Staten Island Museum for twelve years. They were not easy years, particularly during the financial crisis of 2008-2009, when the level of governmental and foundation funding and private donations for cultural institutions plummeted for organizations throughout the city.

Undaunted, Elizabeth was the ultimate fundraiser. When she invited you to lunch, rarely did you leave without committing something to the museum – either money, time, or a possible board member referral, usually all three. And she had that rare mixture of charm, personality and determination that made it difficult to say “no” to her; you just didn’t do it. I know this well, as she invited me to lunch one day and by the time we had left I had joined the museum’s board, on which I remained until I was elected to office.

As a visionary, she absolutely transformed the Staten Island Museum. It was always a venerable cultural institution and Staten Island treasure. But there was a time when too few people were aware of these facts. Elizabeth made sure everyone was aware. Not only did she advise the museum in significantly increasing its permanent collection, but she guided it through its most ambitious undertaking ever – the restoration of landmarked buildings here at Snug Harbor to house the museum’s permanent collection and feature exhibitions in areas such as art, natural science and regional history. When the museum debuts its new home next year, Elizabeth will not be there in person, but her spirit and her vision will be in imprinted in every brick and sinew of that building.

As an artist – her first calling and greatest love – Elizabeth had her work exhibited in many of the finest galleries and museums in New York City and throughout the country. But here’s a little known fact: did you know Elizabeth helped plan and build Mesa Arizona’s first public-art project? For years Arizona has been an art mecca. Elizabeth helped design the Desert Pergola, a 150-foot-long walkway made of wood, steel, ceramic and copper covered with hundreds of handmade tiles made by Mesa residents; it was dedicated in 1997.

“Keeping Constituents First”

As a community activist, Elizabeth's dedication to her Staten Island community was boundless. In addition to putting in seven-day weeks to make the Staten Island Museum the best possible museum it could be, she somehow found the time to continue to work on community art projects and serve on numerous boards of directors, including that of the Snug Harbor Cultural Center.

And what can I say of Elizabeth, my friend? I will miss her wit, her energy, her creativity, her loyalty, her drive, her dogged determination, her dedication, her ability to raise money from anyone, her ability to outtalk anyone (including me, and that's not easy!), her vision, her intelligence, her courage. Elizabeth, my friend, I will miss you; Staten Island will miss you; New York City will miss you.

September 21, 2014

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Debi Rose". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a large, prominent initial "D".

Councilmember Debi Rose
NYCC, 49th District