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## PRESS RELEASE

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### **District Attorney Michael E. McMahon Announces New RCDA Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Initiatives Through Partnership with MindOpen Learning Strategies**

*\*\*MindOpen Learning Strategies, a Staten Island based consulting organization, will provide training and coaching to RCDA staff to enhance DEI efforts; in coming weeks, RCDA will host an Equity Workshop for RCDA Leaders, publish a report on RCDA's DEI Efforts and Recommendations on sustaining these efforts, and host an RCDA DEI Community Convening\*\**

Staten Island, N.Y. — As part of RCDA's commitment to ensuring fairness and equality in the criminal justice system and to better serve all Staten Islanders, Richmond County District Attorney Michael E. McMahon today announced a new partnership between RCDA and MindOpen Learning Strategies, a locally based consulting organization, which will provide training and coaching to RCDA staff to help enhance RCDA's Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) efforts.

The partnership with MindOpen Learning began earlier this year and has already included a variety of programming, including the nationally recognized experiential learning exercise, Factuality, as well as a Procedural Justice Workshop with the Institute for Innovation in Prosecution. MindOpen has also held several meetings and workshops with RCDA leadership and staff, including the Leading With Equity workshop, a 2-part series designed and open to all office leaders, supervisors, and staff to learn how to lead while fostering an equitable and inclusive group environment. In the next few weeks and months, RCDA will continue to work with MindOpen Learning and will hold a series of initiatives, including Equity Workshop for RCDA Leaders; publish a report on RCDA's DEI Efforts and Recommendations on sustaining these efforts; and in the Fall host a Community Convening with the public and all our partners working together on this topic. This partnership is led by Project Lead Dr. Elizabeth Speck in collaboration with senior consultants and co-facilitators Sarah Blas and Bobby Digi, all of whom have a long-standing commitment to enhancing equitable outcomes across Staten Island.

“From the moment I became District Attorney in 2016, transforming RCDA into a prosecutor's office to better reflect the diversity of the people we serve here on Staten Island has been a top priority of this administration. Understanding different perspectives, supporting inclusion and diversity, and being open by creating environments conducive to feedback is essential to ensuring the criminal justice system is always a fair and equal place for all,” **said District Attorney Michael E. McMahon.** “To help us further these goals, RCDA has been working closely with locally based consulting company, MindOpen Learning Strategies. Their team of dedicated professionals and experts have deep ties to the Staten Island community and have already assisted RCDA in expanding our diversity, equity, and inclusion initiatives throughout the office. I look forward to continuing this partnership in the coming weeks and months as we work tirelessly every day to keep Staten Islanders safe.”

“We are honored that RCDA selected our proposal, which emphasized an anti-racist approach to achieving the RCDA’s diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) goals both internally and externally as it pursues justice and safety for all citizens of Staten Island. The role of a community’s chief prosecutor in improving the quality of life for all members impacted by crime and violence cannot be underestimated. We share the RCDA’s commitment to DEI work that goes beyond “checking the boxes” to engaging in long-term change,” **said Elizabeth Speck, MindOpen founder.**

“We have a profound opportunity to learn new ways while unlearning the old ways of doing things. The excuse that some of us were not part of the harm that still impacts all of us is as antiquated as the unwillingness to lead the work of building a more diverse, equitable, and inclusive society. Kudos to the RCDA for your courage here, I am hopeful for the future,” **said Bobby Digi Olisa, MindOpen senior consultant and co-facilitator.**

"Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion doesn't start or end with a consultation, it starts with community engagement, assessing the root causes of crime and funding long-term programming to mitigate them, engaging our youth, and working with community leaders to co-create solutions. I am proud to join Dr. Elizabeth Speck and Bobby Digi in building on my strong relationship with District Attorney McMahon and his staff to continue the work for an equitable justice system for every Staten Islander,” **said Sarah Blas, MindOpen senior consultant and co-facilitators.**

MindOpen Learning Strategies provides engaging, transformative learning experiences for individuals, groups, and organizations working toward social justice goals. They specialize in times when team members need to learn new ways to work-- whether it's adopting evidence-based practices, applying an equity lens, capturing meaningful metrics, or any of the countless ways in which success depends on constant readiness for change while keeping a clear mission-driven vision. With the fast pace and competing demands of today's workplaces, it is all too easy to lose the full value of training, coaching, and consulting when employees' minds are somewhere else. MindOpen Learning Strategies seeks to use research-based, field-tested techniques to draw out each participant’s unique expertise and ensure their Minds are Open to taking in new information and skills.

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