

DETROIT CITY COUNCIL

RESOLUTION

In Memoriam

Debra Walker

Mother, Grandmother, and 'Mayor of Corktown'

- WHEREAS,** It is with great pleasure that the Detroit City Council recognize and bestow honor upon Debra Walker, native Detroiter and proud mother of two daughters, Lisa and Lauren, and grandmother of three grandsons, Gabriel, TJ, and Ayo.
- WHEREAS,** Debra Walker was a graduate of Wayne State University, the University of Wisconsin, MSU Extension, and Amos Tuck Graduate School of Dartmouth. While at Chrysler, she worked on issues such as quality control and minority supplier development, led corporate employee community initiatives, and traveled to Mexico and Germany to train employees.
- WHEREAS,** Debra Walker, a longtime resident of the District 6 neighborhood, Corktown, was passionately involved in happenings within and far beyond her neighborhood's borders. Her main goals were to enhance neighborhood safety, and foster channels for communication to ensure residents were aware of issues and opportunities impacting their quality of life. Debra believed Corktown to be the perfect place where progress and preservation can co-exist.
- WHEREAS,** Debra Walker was an exemplary leader who never stopped serving. She volunteered with many causes such as the Detroit Institute of Art, Friends School of Detroit, and had a one-year assignment with AmeriCorps. Further, she sat on many boards and in leadership positions for local organizations including Alternatives for Girls, Peoples Community Services, Friends of Historic Hamtramck Stadium, Michigan-Church Street Neighborhood Advisory Council, Corktown Business Association, Corktown Neighborhood Association, and East End Corktown Block Club. She was also a City Council appointee to and Vice Chair of the Board of Zoning Appeals, where she heard appeals and helped decide issues related to the enforcement of the City's Zoning Ordinance. Highly informed, she was sought out by many for guidance.
- WHEREAS,** Debra Walker founded many initiatives including Mighty Words, an afterschool conflict resolution program; Black CAT (Compassion Action Team), a group working to change economic and social justice issues in Detroit; and Power in Poetry Experience of Detroit (PIPED). A two-time survivor of cancer, she also founded a support group for African American breast cancer patients and their families, Women Achieving Victory and Esteem (WAVE).
- WHEREAS,** Debra Walker has been recognized for her immeasurable contributions to the greater good as the recipient of many awards including the Presidential Point of Light, the Karmanos Heroes of Breast Cancer award, the Eagle Leadership Award, the United Way Torchlighter, and writing and scholarship awards.
- WHEREAS,** In reflecting on Debra Walker's life, neighbors noted how she was the "glue that kept everyone together". She was "a beautiful soul" who acted in "every way possible to improve our community, the neighborhood and the city of Detroit." Residents were "lucky to call her a neighbor and friend". "[T]he hole she leaves in the community is immense" and residents find it "hard to imagine Corktown without her" because they looked to her for "inspiration and guidance." Beyond being an activist, community organizer, writer, poet, and friend, she was affectionately known as a "queen of the whole neighborhood" and "Mayor of Corktown". **NOW, THEREFORE BE IT**
- RESOLVED,** That Council Member Santiago-Romero and the Detroit City Council, hereby join with family and friends to honor the life and legacy of Debra Walker and thank her for making a lasting difference in countless lives.

James Tate
COUNCIL PRESIDENT PRO TEM

Coleman A. Young II
COUNCIL MEMBER

Mary Thelen
COUNCIL MEMBER

Angela Whitfield Callaway
COUNCIL MEMBER

Mary Sheffield
COUNCIL PRESIDENT

Scott R. B.
COUNCIL MEMBER

Katisha Johnson
COUNCIL MEMBER

Robert Johnson
COUNCIL MEMBER

Frankie Smith
COUNCIL MEMBER

December 2, 2022

DATE

DETROIT CITY COUNCIL

RESOLUTION

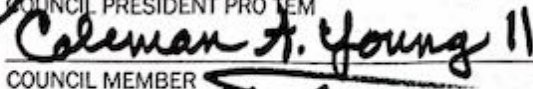
In Memoriam

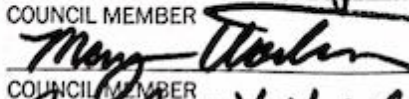
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