

## RESOLUTION NO. \_\_\_\_\_ - 2023

**RECOGNIZING** and honoring Dr. Jenny Laster for her many years of service to our community and her legacy of nurturing and supporting emerging African American leaders and other community leaders in the City of Cincinnati and our region.

WHEREAS, Dr. Jenny Laster is an outstanding example of an entrepreneur and visionary leader, from managing her own consulting firm to her service as president and CEO of The GrassRoots Leadership Academy, an organization that addressed the leadership skill development needs of more than 500 community leaders, activists, and organizers; and

WHEREAS, after retiring in 2005, Dr. Laster returned to the Urban League in 2007, serving as Director of Leadership Development and managing the African American Leadership Development Program, a program that she created and designed to encourage the civic engagement of African American leaders and emerging leaders, and Dr. Laster served as the first Project Director and curriculum design coordinator for the Urban League's African American Leadership Development Program; and

WHEREAS, during her first tenure with the Urban League, Dr. Laster also served as the co-producer of a video entitled "Glorifying the Lions," which is an oral history celebrating the accomplishments of senior African Americans in Cincinnati, and this documentary was later adapted by the Cincinnati PBS affiliate and is one of its featured programs during Black History Month, and this recognition of senior African Americans in Cincinnati eventually led to what is now the Urban League's annual "Glorifying the Lions" awards program which is presented each year as part of its annual meeting luncheon, and in 2006, Dr. Laster received the very award she helped to create; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Laster's career has been diverse, and she has served in many roles to support our community, including serving as the first Executive Director of Cincinnati Works, an organization designed to move low-income individuals into self-sufficiency through full-time employment; Vice President of Human Resources for ATE Management & Service Company in Cincinnati, Ohio; Director of Human Resources for the American Public Transportation Association in Washington, DC; Director of Training for the Bi-State Development Agency in St. Louis; a teacher and Reading Specialist for St. Louis City Public Schools; adjunct faculty for Wilberforce University, Cincinnati State Technical College, University of Cincinnati, and Northern Kentucky University, where she holds graduate teaching status; and Dr. Laster has been a trainer and facilitator for a variety of programs offered by the Center for Closing the Health Gap in Greater Cincinnati, is also a second-year facilitator for the Citizens Engagement Academy, and is the co-founder of Execucircle, a professional development conference for African Americans held annually for more than fourteen years in locations throughout the Caribbean, Africa, and Brazil; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Laster is recognized nationally for her expertise in presenting workshops on topics such as leadership skill development, personal branding, board training for nonprofit

organizations, and strategic planning, and Dr. Laster is also a career coach, working with individuals who are interested in re-engineering their careers; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Laster’s vision for our community’s future compelled her to address the topic of workforce diversity in the late 1980s, a time when there were few consulting firms willing or capable of addressing diversity issues, and along with her secular workshops, Dr. Laster also conducts workshops and seminars for church leadership with special emphasis on visioning, strategic planning, and servant leadership; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Laster held a two-year appointment as the United States Lay Representative to the British Methodist Church, requiring her to travel to the United Kingdom in 2006 and 2007, and during her trip in 2006 to Scotland, she was commissioned by the President of the British Methodist Church to preach in Scalloway, the Shetland Islands, and Dr. Laster also served on the West Ohio Conference Re-districting Team, along with a variety of offices in the United Methodist Church; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Laster has served on many boards including Black Career Women, Inc., Citizens for Civic Renewal, the Cincinnati Museum Center’s Children’s Advisory Board, Leading Women, and the University Hospital Community Advisory Council, and she is the recipient of many awards and accolades, including Fifth Third Bank’s “Person of Courage” award, and Dr. Laster was also honored by the Boy Scouts of America for her leadership in recruiting volunteers to serve in a variety of roles for the Cincinnati Hopkins District, as well as receiving the Dada Rafiki award and *The Cincinnati Herald’s* Nefertiti award; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED by the Council of the City of Cincinnati, State of Ohio:

Section 1. That the Mayor and this Council hereby recognize Dr. Jenny Laster for her visionary leadership, her legacy of nurturing emerging African American leaders and community leaders, and for her many contributions to the City of Cincinnati.

Section 2. That this resolution be spread upon the minutes of Council and a copy be provided to the Dr. Laster by the Council Office of Vice Mayor Jan-Michele Lemon Kearney.

Passed: \_\_\_\_\_, 2023

\_\_\_\_\_  
Aftab Pureval, Mayor

Attest: \_\_\_\_\_  
Clerk

Submitted by Vice Mayor Jan-Michele Lemon Kearney