

**BOARD OF TRUSTEES
UNIVERSITY OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
UDC RESOLUTION NO. 2019-16**

SUBJECT: Conferral of Honorary Degree upon Reverend Jesse Jackson, Founder and President of the Rainbow PUSH Coalition

WHEREAS, pursuant to D.C. Code §38-1202.06(3), the Board of Trustees has authority to award degrees and to establish policy with respect to the award of degrees; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to 8 DCMR §315.2, the President, upon consultation with the Honorary Degree Committee and the Faculty Senate, has recommended that Reverend Jesse Jackson be awarded an honorary degree for his innumerable contributions to our nation as an activist, politician, and advocate for social justice, peace, and change around the world, through a variety of activities, including, but not limited to: serving as an organizer for the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC); the founding of the Rainbow PUSH Coalition; advocating for and leading a boycott to help end apartheid in South Africa; pushing for policy and practice changes to combat hunger, homelessness, drug addiction, improved access to health care, and improved educational services and support for all youth; being elected to serve as a Senator from Washington, DC, in the U.S. Senate, where he advocated for statehood for its residents; becoming the first Black man to run for U.S. President and working to get out the vote and to ensure that all votes are protected and counted; and for garnering the respect and admiration of people and institutions around the world, resulting in over 40 honorary doctorate degrees, as well as the United States' highest civilian honor, the Presidential Medal of Freedom, awarded by President Bill Clinton. His decades of work in human and civil rights and nonviolent social change, plus his fearless leadership, help make him an outstanding role model of the positive influence and effect that an informed and determined citizen can have in our nation and around the world; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to 8 DCMR §315.3, the Board of Trustees must approve the recommendation of Reverend Jesse Jackson by an affirmative vote of three-fourths ($\frac{3}{4}$) of the members present at the meeting of the Board following the meeting at which the recommendation was made.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Trustees of the University of the District of Columbia hereby approves the recommendation of the awarding of the degree of Doctor of Humane Letters to Reverend Jesse Jackson, with all the honors, privileges, and duties pertaining thereto.

Submitted by the Academic and Student Affairs Committee

April 18, 2019

Approved by the Board of Trustees:

April 30, 2019



Christopher Bell
Chairperson of the Board

Proposed Recipient of Honorary Degree for
UDC's Spring Commencement

Reverend Jesse L. Jackson, Sr.
Founder and President of the Rainbow PUSH Coalition

Reverend Jesse Jackson is being recognized for his immeasurable efforts and contributions over almost 50 years on the front lines of the struggle for civil rights, justice, and peace, both nationally and internationally. At great risk to his and his family's personal safety, Reverend Jackson has advocated against racial, social, economic, and gender inequalities, particularly through the nonprofit organization he founded in 1984, the National Rainbow Coalition, known today as the Rainbow PUSH Coalition. He has led protests around the United States and the globe to help reveal unequal, unfair, and unjust conditions, and most importantly, to help other leaders and citizens realize their united power to influence and impact social change. Reverend Jackson has been called the "Conscience of the Nation" and "the Great Unifier," challenging America to be inclusive and to establish just and humane priorities for the benefit of all. He is known for bringing people together on common ground across lines of race, faith, gender, culture, and class. Reverend Jackson is an illustrious and outstanding model of leadership and genuine concern for improving the lives of the most disadvantaged in any community and society. For representing UDC's values so well, we are proud to honor his achievements.



Reverend Jesse L. Jackson, Sr., Founder and President of the Rainbow PUSH Coalition, is one of the foremost civil rights, religious and political figures of our time. For nearly 50 years, he has played a pivotal role in virtually every movement for peace, civil rights, empowerment, gender equality, and economic and social justice the world over.

Born on October 8, 1941, in Greenville, South Carolina, Reverend Jackson was a standout student-athlete who graduated from the public schools in Greenville, who, after turning down a contract to play baseball for the Chicago White Sox, enrolled in the Big 10 football powerhouse, the University of Illinois, on a football scholarship. He later transferred to North Carolina A&T State University and graduated in 1964. He then accepted the Rockefeller Foundation scholarship to pursue his theological studies at the University of Chicago's Chicago Theological Seminary, deferring the completion of his Master's Degree one semester shy of his graduation to begin working full-time for Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King. Ordained to the Ministry on June 30, 1968 by Rev. Clay Evans, he eventually earned his Master of Divinity degree from Chicago Theological Seminary in 2000.

In 1965, he became a full-time organizer for the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC), and was soon appointed by Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., to direct the Operation Breadbasket program. In December of 1971, Reverend Jackson founded Operation PUSH (People United to Serve Humanity) in Chicago, IL, the goals of which were economic empowerment and the expansion of educational, business and employment opportunities for the disadvantaged and people of color.

In 1984, Reverend Jackson founded the National Rainbow Coalition, a social justice organization based in Washington, D.C., devoted to political empowerment, education and changing public policy. In September of 1996, the Rainbow Coalition and Operation PUSH merged to form the Rainbow PUSH Coalition to continue the work of both organizations and to maximize resources.

Long before national health care, a war on drugs, direct peace negotiations between Palestinians and Israelis, ending apartheid in South Africa and advancing democracy in Haiti became accepted public

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Collaboration among our internal and external partners * Public service*

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policy positions, Reverend Jesse Jackson advocated them. His advocacy on these and other issues helped bring the American public to a new level of consciousness and action.

A hallmark of Reverend Jackson's work has been his commitment to youth. More than 30 years ago, he instituted the "PUSH for Excellence" Education program, which received national recognition, including a featured segment on the respected television program "60 Minutes." For more than four decades, Reverend Jackson has visited thousands of American high schools, colleges, universities and correctional facilities encouraging excellence, inspiring hope and challenging young people to study diligently and stay drug-free.

He has continued to be a leading advocate for a variety of public policy issues, including universal health care, equal administration of justice in all communities, sufficient funding for enforcement of civil rights laws, and for increased attention to business investment in under-served domestic communities (a theme that the Clinton administration picked up as the "New Markets Initiative"). Reverend Jackson also supports a broad range of policies to improve education, eliminate poverty, and remind everyone that we are a "One-Big-Tent-America," with room for all, and none left in the margins.

Reverend Jackson's two presidential campaigns broke new ground in U.S. politics, helping to register millions of new voters and boost hundreds of state and local elected officials into office. In 1991, Reverend Jesse Jackson was elected Senator of Washington, D.C., advocating for statehood for the nation's capital and advancing the "rainbow" agenda at the national and international levels. Since then, he has continued to promote voter registration and lead get-out-the-vote campaigns.

As a highly respected and trusted world leader, Reverend Jackson has acted many times as an international diplomat in sensitive situations. For example, in 1984 Reverend Jackson secured the release of captured Navy Lieutenant Robert Goodman from Syria, and the release of 48 Cuban and Cuban-American prisoners in Cuba. He was the first American to bring home citizens from the UK, France and other countries held as "human shields" by Saddam Hussein in Kuwait and Iraq in 1990. In 1999, Reverend Jackson negotiated the release of U.S. soldiers held hostage in Kosovo. In August 2000, Rev. Jackson helped negotiate the release of four journalists working on a TV documentary who were held in Liberia.

On November 2, 1985, Reverend Jackson delivered a major address as he joined ANC Leader Oliver Tambo, Bishop Trevor Huddleston, future Mayor of London Ken Livingstone, Bernie Grant, and future MPs Keith Vaz, Paul Boateng, and Diane Abbot, among other notables, at the 120,000-strong demonstration in London's Trafalgar Square to protest apartheid in South Africa and call on the South African government to free Nelson Mandela. He later met with then-British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher, appealing to her to drop Britain's support for apartheid.

Reverend Jackson has been a consistent and vigorous supporter of the labor movement in the U.S. and around the world. He is known as someone who has walked more picket lines and spoken at more labor rallies than any other national or international leader. From Asia to America, he has worked tirelessly with unions to organize workers, protect their rights, and mediate labor disputes.

In October 1997, Reverend Jackson was appointed by President Bill Clinton and Secretary of State Madeleine Albright as "Special Envoy of the President and Secretary of State for the Promotion of Democracy in Africa." In this official position, Reverend Jackson traveled to several countries on the African continent and met with such national leaders as President Nelson Mandela of the Republic of South Africa, His Excellency Daniel T. Arap Moi of Kenya, and President Frederick J.T. Chiluba of Zambia.

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In February of 2003, people in cities all around the globe marched to prevent the expected invasion of Iraq by the United States. Reverend Jesse Jackson was invited to deliver the keynote address in London's Hyde Park, and with over 1 million people in attendance, this was the largest anti-war rally held in the world on that day.

For his work in human and civil rights and nonviolent social change, Reverend Jackson was awarded the highest civilian honor, the Presidential Medal of Freedom, by President Bill Clinton. He also has received more than 40 honorary doctorate degrees and frequently lectures at major colleges and universities including Howard, Yale, Princeton, Morehouse, Harvard, the University of KwaZulu-Natal in South Africa, Columbia, Stanford and Hampton. He was made an Honorary Fellow of Regents Park College at Oxford University, and received an Honorary Fellowship from Edge Hill University in Liverpool, England. Other honors include Reverend Jackson's invitation to deliver the international keynote address on the life and philosophy of Mahatma Gandhi at an event in New Delhi, India, marking the 50th anniversary of Gandhi's martyrdom. The global event celebrated the strength of non-violent, peaceful protest that Gandhi demonstrated in his uncompromising quest for peace and justice.

One of the best-renowned orators of our time, Reverend Jackson's activism is unparalleled and he has received countless honors recognizing his lifelong work in human rights, civil rights, and the promotion of nonviolent social change. Starting in the 1970s, he has been on the Gallup List of the Ten Most Respected Americans more than a dozen times.

From 1992 to 2000, Reverend Jackson hosted CNNs "Both Sides With Jesse Jackson." He is the author of two books: Keep Hope Alive (South End Press, 1989), and Straight From the Heart (Fortress Press, 1987). In 1996, Reverend Jackson co-authored the books Legal Lynching: Racism, Injustice, and the Death Penalty (Marlowe & Company, 1996) and It's About The Money (Random House, 1999) with his son, former U.S. Representative Jesse L. Jackson, Jr.

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TO: The Board of Trustees
FROM: Managing Director of Finance *David A. Franklin*
DATE: April 18, 2019
SUBJECT: Honorary Degree upon Reverend Jesse Jackson

Conclusion

It is concluded that there is no fiscal impact associated with the University of the District of Columbia (UDC) awarding an honorary degree to Reverend Jesse Jackson.

Background

The President, upon consultation with the Honorary Degree Committee and the Faculty Senate, has recommended that Reverend Jesse Jackson, Founder and President of the Rainbow PUSH Coalition, be awarded an honorary doctorate of laws degree for his distinguished contributions and accomplishments as activist and advocate, on both the national and international stages. For over 50 years, he has fought for social and economic justice, peace, and nonviolent change, and has been recognized for his achievements by over 40 other universities with honorary doctorates, and has earned the highest civilian award in the United States, the Presidential Medal of Honor.

Financial Impact

This request has been approved based upon the information provided. There are no anticipated risks at this time.