

In Memoriam



Jane Castor, Mayor

WHEREAS, the City of Tampa takes pride in recognizing individuals whose commitment and dedication made a lasting impact on our community and its citizens. One of these individuals was **James Arthur Hammond**, a beloved Businessman, Entrepreneur, Public Servant, Civil Rights Activist, Advocate, and Trailblazer who passed away on Wednesday, May 1, 2019 at age 89; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Hammond was born in Tampa, Florida on November 11, 1929 to the late William and Lucille Hammond, and he graduated from George S. Middleton High School 1946, and then attended Hampton University in Virginia, earning an Electrical Engineering Degree and where he was a member of the Reserve Officer Training Corps (ROTC) as a Cadet Colonel. Thereafter, served his country in the United States Army, and rose to the rank of Lieutenant Colonel; and

WHEREAS, while in the military, he established Hammond Electric Company and became the first African American licensed Electrical Contractor in Hillsborough County, and upon his honorable discharge, he returned home to Tampa in 1955 with his late wife Evelyne, and he began his career in public service, and as a business and community leader including serving as the Commissioner of Community Relations for the City of Tampa, where he obtained a \$500,000 federal grant creating the first preschool program in Hillsborough County. He was a National Director for Jim Walter Corporation, he founded Impact Communications, a successful television cable construction firm, and was a founding member of Tampa Hillsborough Action Plan (THAP) where he served as President and Chairman; and

WHEREAS, his dedication to the community set an example for others including serving as Chairman of the Civil Service Board, District Chairman of the Boy Scouts of America, a member of the Board of Directors for the Greater Tampa Urban League and Greater Tampa Chamber of Commerce, was a life member of Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity and the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), and during the 1960's, he formed the "White Hats" whose efforts helped calm racial unrest in Tampa, and he was appointed by four Florida Governors as Commissioner of the Unemployment Appeals Commission; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Hammond was dedicated to education, and his efforts helped bring Hillsborough Community College to Ybor City, he established the *James and Evelyne Hammond Endowed Scholarship* at Hampton University, and the *James A. Hammond Elementary School* in Tampa was named in his honor for his long history of promoting education and race relations. He received numerous honors over his lifetime including being the first recipient of the *Governor's Medal* awarded by the late Governor Claude Kirk for his outstanding community service, recognized by Hampton College as its *25th Outstanding Alumnus* and they honored the Hammond Family as its *Family of the Year*, and he is listed in *Who's Who Among Black Americans and Prominent People* in Florida and nationally; and

WHEREAS, well-known for his selfless dedication to improving the lives of others, his service as an advisor and mentor to bring about positive change, and for his advocacy for equality and civil rights, Mr. Hammond was an inspiration to all who knew him. He will be forever remembered for his devotion and love of his family, ethics, generous nature, and for his "3P" *Philosophy - Positive Mental Attitude, Patience, and Persistence*, and although we are grieved at the loss of this outstanding citizen, his legacy will continue to live on through the improvements he brought to our community and in all those whose lives he has touched.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Jane Castor, by virtue of the authority vested in me as Mayor of the city of Tampa, Florida, do hereby urge all citizens to join me in publicly expressing sorrow and heartfelt appreciation to the James Arthur Hammond Family, his sons Gary, Kevin, and Kerrick, daughter Lisa, Grandchildren, Great-Grandchildren, Great-Great Grandchildren, brother Robert, and other family members, and to express our hopes that they will take solace in their many cherished memories and the considerable impact of his life on our city, state and nation.

Dated in Tampa, Florida, this 10th day of May, 2019.

Mayor 