

In Memoriam



Jane Castor, Mayor

WHEREAS, the City of Tampa takes pride in recognizing those individuals whose commitment and dedication have made a lasting impact on our community and nation; one of these individuals was **David Anthony Straz, Jr.**, a well-respected and beloved Ambassador, Businessman, Philanthropist and Community leader who passed away on Monday, November 18, 2019, at the age of 77; and

WHEREAS, Ambassador Straz was born on October 10, 1942 in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, and attended Marquette University, earning his Bachelor of Science Degree in Business Administration in 1965, and he was a member of Beta Gamma Sigma, National Business Scholastic Honor Society, Sigma Beta Delta and Delta Sigma Pi, and later received Honorary Degrees from Carthage College, the University of Liberia, and from both the Catholic and Polytechnic Universities of Honduras; and

WHEREAS, a very astute businessman, Ambassador Straz built a banking association in Wisconsin, which he sold prior to making Tampa, Florida his home in 1980, where he created another successful banking organization and married his beloved wife Catherine Louisa Lowry and raised his adored daughter Keebler, and his interest in educational and economic opportunities globally led to his dedicated work in Africa and Central America earning him the titles of Ambassador at Large and Honorary Counsel General to both the Republic of Liberia and the Republic of Honduras, and he was instrumental in repairing relations between the United States and Cuba; and

WHEREAS, Ambassador Straz loved the performing arts, education, and community, and he was enthusiastically committed to sharing his passions with others, ensuring excellence and availability to all through his service and generosity in leadership roles on the boards of many organizations including Marquette University, Metropolitan Opera, University of Tampa, Carthage College, Tampa General Hospital, ZooTampa Endowment Foundation, Tampa Yacht and Country Club, the David A. Straz, Jr. Center for the Performing Arts, and the Alliance for Responsible Cuba Policy in Washington, D.C., and he established the David A. Straz, Jr. Foundation, awarding grants to more than thirty organizations, hospitals, universities and more, and his love for his community inspired him to run for Mayor of Tampa; and

WHEREAS, for his lifetime of contributions and achievements, Ambassador Straz received many honors at home and globally including the College of West Africa's *Humanitarian of the Decade Award*, Marquette University's *Alumnus of the Year*, American Association of Jesuit Colleges and University's *Outstanding Business Leadership Award*, he received Hillsborough County's *Key to the County*, and *Keys to the City* from the cities of Tampa, Monrovia, Liberia, and Comayagua, Honduras, and the buildings named in his honor include the *David A. Straz, Jr. Center for the Performing Arts*, the University of Tampa's student dormitory *Straz Hall*, Carthage College Science Center's *David A. Straz, Jr. Center for Natural and Social Science*, Marquette University College of Business Administration's *David A. Straz, Jr. Hall*, ZooTampa at Lowry Park's *David A. Straz, Jr. Manatee Hospital*, Berkeley Preparatory School's *Straz Family Field House*, and the University of Liberia's *David A. Straz – Sinje Technical and Vocational College*, was a Knight of the Humane Order of African Redemption, served as King XCIX of the Ye Mystic Krewe of Gasparilla, and listed in *Who's Who in the South and Southeast*; and

WHEREAS, well respected and greatly admired for his generosity, benevolence, high ethical standards and tremendous compassion for others, Ambassador Straz will forever be remembered for his deep love of his family and friends, his warm heart, as a gracious host, his admirable art collection, and especially for his dedication and generosity to the Tampa Bay community.

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 David A. Straz, Jr. Family, his wife Catherine, daughter Keebler, brother Christopher, 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 and legacy on our community, nation and world.

Dated in Tampa, Florida, this 23rd day of November, 2019.

Jane Castor

Mayor