



Legislation Text

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Fiscal Note

No fiscal impact.

Title

Awarding the 17th Annual Jeffrey Clay Erlanger Civility in Public Discourse Award to Dr. Fabu Carter.

Body

WHEREAS, the Madison Common Council created the Jeffrey Clay Erlanger Civility in Public Discourse Award in memory of Jeffrey Erlanger's great contributions to the City of Madison; and

WHEREAS, the Jeffrey Clay Erlanger Civility in Public Discourse Award Committee has selected Dr. Fabu Carter, an individual who exemplifies the values that are fundamental to this award and were so admirably demonstrated by Jeff Erlanger during his lifetime, as recipient of the 2023 award; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Carter is an educator, activist, poet, and historian whose work has touched the people of Madison for decades; and

WHEREAS, as a longtime Madison leader, she has tirelessly advocated for justice, equity and inclusion and was a critical member of the team that established the Nehemiah Center for Urban Leadership Development, whose purpose is to "foster emerging leaders in the African American community and offers programming for youth, men reentering the community after incarceration and neighborhood economic development;" and

WHEREAS, Dr. Carter served as Madison's third poet laureate from 2008 to 2012 and was the first African American appointed to this position; and

WHEREAS, during her tenure as poet laureate, she increased the presence of poetry in Madison, strived to have poetry published in a variety of Madison-based media such as *Madison Magazine*, *Capital City Hues*, *Asian Wisconsin* and *La Comunidad*; created opportunities for diverse voices to be heard including focusing on the voices of youth and helped initiate the Bus Lines program; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Carter has created countless programs in support of the arts, has been an artist-in-residence at many schools across the region and has served on numerous committees including the Madison Arts Commission, always striving to promote understanding and compassion; and

WHEREAS, for decades, Dr. Carter has been a regular contributor to various media sources - educating our community about African American culture and arts; advocating for diversity and inclusion and all the while never shying away from challenging conversations but instead leading with respect and demonstrating civility in public discourse. As Dr. Daniel Kunene, the South African anti-apartheid activist, once wrote, "Fabu is a kind, gentle person, with a sense of humor and a beautiful smile. Her personality inspires confidence and a sense of security. At the same time, she commands respect and authority through the sheer dignity of her presence. All of which exemplifies her leadership qualities"; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Carter continues her work on behalf of disadvantaged and marginalized communities through her work at the UW School of Medicine & Public Health Alzheimer's Disease Research Center's Inclusion of Underrepresented Groups Program, where she serves as a senior outreach program manager - increasing awareness of Alzheimer's in the African American community; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Carter also leads the Alzheimer's Poetry Project - visiting local nursing homes and leading poetry groups for older adults with dementia; and

WHEREAS, throughout her life's work and across all environments, Dr. Carter has worked to effect change by creating opportunities for civil discourse, celebrating differences and leading with compassion, respect, kindness and honesty. Those efforts make Dr. Carter an excellent choice for this year's Jeffrey Clay Erlanger Civility in Public Discourse Award.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that Dr. Fabu Carter has been chosen to receive the 17th Annual Jeffrey Clay Erlanger Civility in Public Discourse Award; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that Mayor Satya Rhodes-Conway and the Common Council of the City of Madison, Wisconsin, congratulate and thank Dr. Fabu Carter for all she has done, and continues to do, for our Madison community.