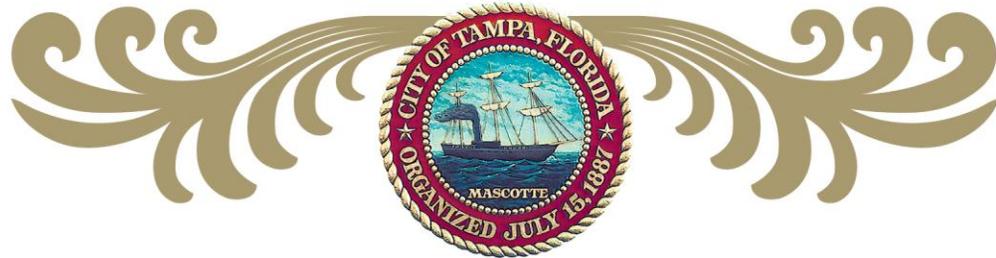


In Memoriam



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 **Dr. Paulette Cecilia Fitzhugh Walker**, a well-respected and beloved Educator, Leader, and Trailblazer, who passed away on Wednesday, October 8, 2025, at the age of 77; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Walker was born on March 4, 1948 in Detroit, Michigan to the late Otis Felton, an engineer and Helen Felton, a teacher, and her early childhood challenges and the strength of her parents' faith and encouragement, shaped the woman she became, and she attended Detroit Cass Technical School, graduating at age 16, and thereafter earned her Bachelor of Arts in Mathematics Education from Michigan State University, her Masters in Guidance and Counseling and her Doctorate in Education from the University of Michigan, becoming a third generation college graduate; and

WHEREAS, beginning her forty-year career as an educator at the Highland Park School District in Michigan, Dr. Walker became its guidance counselor, she was the first Black female systems analyst at Michigan Bell, and in 1990, made Tampa, Florida her home where she joined the University of South Florida (USF) as a professor and academic advisor, retiring as Director of Undergraduate Programs and Internship in 2011, and her dedication as a nurturing educator is legendary, she was beloved by those students she impacted and mentored over the years, and well-respected by her colleagues; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Walker was initiated in Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Incorporated, the largest Black Greek-letter sorority globally, to the Epsilon Epsilon Chapter in 1966, and her involvement was impactful, serving on the local, state, and national levels, becoming its 25th National President in 2013, where she served faithfully with vision, wisdom and integrity, and during her tenure she established a Memorandum of Understanding with the American Cancer Society and the National Institute of Health to bring awareness to various health issues, and her theme was ***Uncompromising Commitment to Communities: Service, Leadership, Empowerment***, and she was beloved for her leadership and passion for service; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Walker's community leadership was extensive including serving on the Mt. Olive African Methodist Episcopal Church's Board of Trustees and its Community Development Center, PACE Center for Girls Advisory Board, Moffitt Cancer Center African American Advisory Board, Mt. Pleasant Charter School Advisory Board, and more, and among her recognitions for her contributions include receiving the *Ronald McNair Scholars Research Mentor* and *Role Model Mentor Awards*, USF's *Outstanding Undergraduate Advisor* and *President's Affirmative Action Awards*, and the Epsilon Epsilon Chapter of Delta Sigma Theta, Inc.'s ***Dr. Paulette C. Walker Endowed Scholarship*** is named in her honor and the **City of Tampa declared August 26, 2017, as "Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Incorporated, Dr. Paulette C. Walker Day;"** and

WHEREAS, known for her commitment to education, her intelligence, analytical mind, and fortitude, and her mantra ***no one can make you feel inferior without your consent***, Dr. Walker will forever be remembered for her deep love of her family, her strong faith, her kind, joyful and witty nature, for her love of butterflies, and as someone who was admired as an unselfish humanitarian who made a significant difference, leaving a positive legacy for others to emulate.

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 Dr. Paulette C. Walker Family, her beloved mother Helen, sons Derek and Lenier, her Grandchildren and Great-grandchildren, and other family members, and to express our hopes that they will take solace in their cherished memories and the vast impact of her life on our community, state and nation, especially those she mentored and supported throughout her life.

Dated in Tampa, Florida, this 17th day of October 2025.

Mayor 