

THE CITY OF SUMMIT

N E W J E R S E Y

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News Release

For immediate release

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Reverend Doctor Denison Harrield receives Summit's annual Volunteer Award

SUMMIT, N.J., March 4, 2020 – At the March 2 Common Council meeting, Mayor Radest and Council members recognized the Reverend Doctor Denison Harrield with an annual Volunteer Award for his decades of dedicated service to the Summit community.

"I am very pleased that the governing body has chosen Reverend Denison Harrield as the recipient of Summit's annual volunteer service award and so thankful for his outstanding work, wise counsel and willingness to participate whenever he is asked," explains Summit Mayor Nora Radest. "Reverend Harrield is a long time resident of Summit and beloved by many residents. I think of him as the conscience of our community."

Reverend Harrield was born in Leesville, LA near the Fort Polk U.S. Army Post, where his father was stationed and his mother was an elementary school teacher. After graduating from Trenton Central High School, he received an academic scholarship to Howard University. He attended graduate school at Brooklyn College and is a graduate of New York Theological Seminary. He received a Doctor of Divinity degree from Livingstone College in Salisbury, NC. Ordained in 1978, Harrield was appointed the Pastor of Wallace Chapel A.M.E. Zion Church in Summit in 1989. Before his calling to Christian ministry, he served in the U.S. Air Force as an Intelligence Officer for eight years and spent 18 years as an employee at NY Telephone Co.

Radest continues: "Reverend Harrield has received awards and recognition for his faithful, dedicated visionary and committed church and community leadership and involvement from many organizations. Council members and I are delighted to add this award to all of his other awards."

Reverend Harrield is a decorated community activist and has received awards for his church and community involvement from the Lions Club, American Legion, Boy Scouts of America, and the Council of Churches. He is a former commissioner of the Summit Housing Authority; former trustee of SAGE Eldercare; former Vice-President of the Tri-City NAACP; member of the Board of Directors and former President of the New Jersey Council of Churches; former member of the Overlook Hospital Chaplaincy Service Board; former Summit Police Department Chaplain; former President of the Summit Interfaith Council; former member of S.H.I.P. (Summit Helping Its People) Homeless Ministry; former member of Morris Habitat for Humanity Board of Directors; former Trustee of the Interweave Center for Holistic Living; and a Rotarian.

Reverend Harrield presently serves as a member of the Mayor's Diversity Forum; Summit Affordable Housing Committee; Atlantic Health Care Multi-Faith Council; Shaping Summit Together (SST); Summit Interfaith Council; Overlook Medical Center Palliative Care Advisory Board; and Summit African American Action Association (S4A). In 2004, he wrote a letter to the Summit Superintendent of Schools requesting that the Summit Middle School be named after Lawton C. Johnson, the organist at Wallace Chapel and the office manager at the middle school for 50 years. The school is now known as the Lawton C. Johnson Summit Middle School.

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