

## **2023-J457**

Senate Resolution No. 457

BY: Senator PARKER

HONORING Earl Whitfield upon the occasion of his designation as recipient of the PASEsetter Award by the Partnership for After School Education on February 28, 2023

WHEREAS, It is the custom of this Legislative Body to recognize that the quality and character of life in the communities across New York State are reflective of the concerned and dedicated efforts of those individuals who would devote themselves to the welfare of the community and its citizenry; and

WHEREAS, Attendant to such concern, and in full accord with its long-standing traditions, this Legislative Body is justly proud to honor Earl Whitfield upon the occasion of his designation as recipient of the PASEsetter Award by the Partnership for After School Education at its 30th Anniversary PASEsetter Awards Benefit on Tuesday, February 28, 2023, at Cipriani, New York, New York; and

WHEREAS, Earl Whitfield is receiving this prestigious award for his role as an afterschool educator whose commitment, energy and creativity has had an indelible impact on the children and youth of New York City; and

WHEREAS, PASE is a child-focused organization that promotes and supports quality afterschool programs, particularly those serving young people from underserved communities; Earl Whitfield truly exemplifies this vital organization's mission of delivering consistent, high-quality programming to youth and increases their capacity to meet the needs of their communities; and

WHEREAS, Born and raised in Queens, New York, Earl Whitfield was inspired by the educators and coaches he met in afterschool programs to be the very best he could be; in 2006, he decided to pay it forward and took a job as a summer camp counselor at the Antioch Baptist Church of Corona; and

WHEREAS, After furthering his musical education at Berklee College of Music, Earl Whitfield returned to youth development, and served as a choir director and vocal coach for young musicians across New York City; and

WHEREAS, In 2012, Earl Whitfield was hired by CAMBA as a theater arts and voice instructor at their East New York Beacon Program; five years later, he was promoted to the title of Program Director, and in this capacity, serves over 1,200 residents of East New York and surrounding communities every year; and

WHEREAS, Earl Whitfield has partnered with the Van Siclen Community School to build a state-of-the-art music studio on site at Beacon 166, obtained an annual grant from ConEdison to put towards enhancing the STEM programming available for participants, and partnered with Ariva Tax Services to provide free tax preparation for community members; and

WHEREAS, In addition, Earl Whitfield has been instrumental in expanding athletic offerings at Beacon 166, exposing kids to swim lessons, kayaking, hiking trips, and dance programming, and partnered with the New Amsterdam Fencing Academy to establish an on-site fencing program for his students; and

WHEREAS, During the COVID-19 pandemic, Earl Whitfield helped organize a virtual mentoring series to keep participants engaged remotely; and

WHEREAS, Earl Whitfield has truly made a difference in the lives of thousands of New Yorkers through his dedicated mentorship, kindness and compassion; many of his former students have entered youth development spaces professionally, following in his footsteps and looking to him for guidance and inspiration; and

WHEREAS, It is the sense of this Legislative Body that when individuals of such noble aims and accomplishments are brought to our attention, they should be celebrated and recognized by all the citizens of the great State of New York; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to honor Earl Whitfield upon the occasion of his designation as recipient of the PASEsetter Award by the Partnership for After School Education; and be it further

RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to Earl Whitfield.