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Contact: Patricia Kemp
(o) 313-872-2202 ext. 209
(c) 313-220-3335
pkemp@bergmuirhead.com

Saunteel Jenkins Announces Bid for Detroit City Council Seat

DETROIT—Saunteel Jenkins announced her candidacy for Detroit City Council today flanked by a coalition of supporters which included two Council members, presidents of two of the city's largest labor unions, a CEO of an international IT firm, and a longtime community activist.

The lifelong Detroiter brings a broad combination of experiences to the race that range from starting up her own business, to working at the street level as a social worker helping some of the city's most underserved people, to serving as chief of staff for the late Council President Maryann Mahaffey.

"I believe Detroit can have a future as bright as our past, if we elect the right leadership," Jenkins said. "I believe that the right leadership must include some new faces on Detroit City Council. If we are going to move Detroit forward, we must elect new leadership for new results. That is what I am offering today: new leadership for new results."

Supporting Jenkins' candidacy at the announcement, held at Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial Park at the intersection of Rosa Parks and West Grand Blvd., were:

- Detroit City Council members Sheila Cockrel and Kwame Kenyatta
- Al Garrett, President of AFSCME Local 25
- David Hecker, President of the American Federation of Teachers Michigan and Executive Vice President of Metropolitan Detroit AFL-CIO
- Strategic Staffing Solutions President & CEO Cynthia J. Pasky; and
- Herman (Hy) Dooha, a longtime community activist and husband of the late Maryann Mahaffey.

As a member of City Council, Jenkins said her priorities will be making schools safe, tackling Detroit's crime crisis, revitalizing neighborhoods, stabilizing city finances and creating and retaining jobs for Detroiters.

"This city cannot afford more of the same tired, self-serving politics," she said. "If we keep electing the same familiar names we'll keep getting the same shameful results. I bring a unique set of credentials to my candidacy that gives me a full understanding and a well rounded perspective on what Detroit needs today."

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Jenkins currently runs the residential substance abuse treatment program at Mariners Inn, a shelter and treatment center in the Cass Corridor for men who are homeless and drug or alcohol addicted.

“Working in the treatment center, I’ve witnessed the struggles the city’s underserved have endured firsthand,” she said. “This is our opportunity to elect Council members who will work together to serve all of Detroit’s residents and address their needs.”

Jenkins also started her own business, Petite Sweets, which caters to gourmet grocers and convenience stores statewide. Running her own business, Jenkins said she knows the challenges businesses face creating and maintaining jobs in Detroit.

Jenkins is a lifelong Detroiter who graduated from Cass Technical High School and earned a bachelor’s and master’s degree in social work from Wayne State University.

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