

**SPEAKERS: FAIRMOUNT HEIGHTS SWITCHING STATION ART WALL PROJECT**

**Mayor Ras J. Baraka** was elected Mayor of the City of Newark in May 2014, becoming Newark's 40th Chief Executive since the city's incorporation in 1836. A native of Newark, whose family has lived in the city for more than 70 years, Mayor Baraka was educated in the Newark Public school system and received a Bachelor of Arts degree in Political Science and History from Howard University in Washington, D.C. and a Master's Degree in Education Supervision from St. Peter's University in Jersey City.

An accomplished legislator and administrator, he has spent more than two decades tackling issues that affect the quality of life for Newark residents, including job creation, public safety, employment, health, economic development and civic engagement. Specific highlights include legislation to acknowledge and address violence as a public health issue, to address complaints on late-night loitering, and to address abandoned properties and blight.

His father, the late Amiri Baraka, was one of the nation's legendary poets and playwrights of the 1950s and 1960s, and author of numerous works of poetry, drama, fiction, and non-fiction. His mother is Amina Baraka, herself a noted writer. Mayor Baraka inherited his artistic excellence and sense of community activism from these artistic and community-committed parents. The father of three daughters, Mayor Baraka is also a published author. His latest work, "Black Girls Learn Love Hard," is dedicated to the life of his late sister, Shani Baraka.

**Deputy Mayor Baye Adofo-Wilson**, an Army veteran and Rutgers Newark graduate, was appointed to oversee and direct the city's department of Economic & Housing Development in 2014 by Mayor Baraka. A Harlem native and resident of Paterson, Adofo-Wilson graduated from Cornell University and earned a J.D. from the University of Pennsylvania. After law school, he returned to Newark and worked at Essex-Newark Legal Services helping to create their Community Economic Development Initiative, a program to provide start-up organizations with free legal services.

Deputy Mayor Adofo-Wilson co-founded and led the city's Lincoln Park Coast Cultural District, a nationally recognized organization dedicated to creating a sustainable cultural district in Newark. He is also the visionary behind the Lincoln Park Music Festival, an annual, multi-genre and intergenerational music event that attracts crowds in excess of 50,000 to the city.

In 2013, Deputy Mayor Adofo-Wilson became a Loeb Fellow at Harvard's Graduate School of Design. The Loeb Fellowship is an internationally renowned fellowship in urban planning, real estate development, architecture, urban design and landscape architecture.

**Councilman Joseph (Joe) McCallum** was born and raised in Newark, NJ. He is a graduate of Belmont-Runyon Grammar School, Clinton Place Junior High School, Malcolm X Shabazz High School, Lincoln Technical School and Essex County College. Kean University and Farleigh Dickinson University.

Mr. McCallum is a veteran of the United States Air Force, where he performed as a Telecommunications Systems Control Specialist. Since being honorably discharged from the Air Force, Mr. McCallum has served his community and country in a variety of ways including: Admissions and Aftercare Coordinator on the in-patient Post Traumatic Stress Disorder Unit (PTSD) and Addictions Therapist for the Veteran's Administration. Between 2005 and 2011, Joe McCallum also returned to Essex County College as an Adjunct Professor, where he taught Introduction to Sociology, and Urban Sociology courses for 6 years.

After 15 years with the Veterans Administration, Joe McCallum has acquired several degrees, including an Associate Degree in Social Science from ECC, a Bachelor of Arts in Sociology from Kean University, and a Masters of Art in Public Administration from Fairleigh Dickinson University. Mr. McCallum has received many academic achievement awards, community service awards, and job-related performance awards in his career. Joe left the VA to take a position with the City of Newark in 2006, where he was assigned to the Newark Health Department. While at the Newark Health Department, Joe performed as the Emergency Preparedness Coordinator, Joe's duties included the coordination, designing, and implementation of emergency preparedness activities. As a member of the Bio-terror Team, Joe McCallum worked to prevent major medical outbreaks, such as H1N1 and the Swine Flu.

In the May 2014 Municipal Election, Mr. McCallum was elected to the Newark Municipal Council representing the West Ward of the City of Newark.

**Vivian Cox Fraser** has served as the President and CEO of the Urban League of Essex County since 2004. The Essex County chapter is one of the oldest and largest affiliates of the National Urban League and will be celebrating 100 years of community development and empowerment in 2017. Fraser has led the organization through a period of growth and revitalization. She has introduced new programs that play a vital role in the organization's mission to support community development and economic empowerment for the people they serve. She also expanded existing programs to serve more residents, including seniors, youth, working parents, teens, and individuals reentering the community. She initiated the Fairmount Strategic Plan which engaged over 1,000 residents in developing a plan to improve the quality of life, education, economic opportunity and safety in the Fairmount neighborhood.

Before joining the Urban League, she held Vice President, Controller and CFO positions for companies including Prudential Insurance Company, First Boston Corporation, and Cigna, among others. She also served as CFO at Associated Black Charities.

**Richard T. Thigpen** was named Vice President – State Governmental Affairs of PSEG Services Corporation, in March 2007. He has been a public affairs consultant since 1999 and was a cofounding partner of 1868 Public Affairs LLC, which provides lobbying, strategic planning, public relations and government relations services to clients in New Jersey, New York and Washington, D.C. Previously, Mr. Thigpen served as an associate at the New York law firm of Thacher Proffitt and Wood in the mortgage-backed securities practice group (1988 to 1990), and was the district director for Congressman Don Payne (NJ-10) (1990 to 1996). Mr. Thigpen was also the executive director of the New Jersey Democratic State Committee (1996 to 1999), where he coordinated two successful statewide campaigns for both national and New Jersey candidates. Mr. Thigpen holds a Doctor of Law degree from Columbia University School of Law in New York and is a graduate of Brown University in Rhode Island.

**Derek M. Di Risio** was named President, PSEG Services Corporation, in July 2014. He is responsible for the coordination and delivery of several centralized services currently residing within PSEG Services Corporation including corporate communications, corporate citizenship, corporate real estate, information technology, procurement, payroll and other transactional services. Mr. Di Risio joined PSE&G in September 1991 and has held a variety of positions, including assignments with the internal auditing, electric business, and corporate planning departments. He was instrumental in reengineering the Enterprise business planning process, and advancing the use of performance metrics and balanced scorecard measures to improve business results. Prior to joining PSE&G he worked for several firms, including Chase Manhattan Bank.