

CITY OF BALTIMORE

STEPHANIE RAWLINGS-BLAKE, Mayor



DEPARTMENT OF RECREATION AND PARKS

ERNEST W. BURKEEN JR., Director  
DR. RALPH W. E. JONES, JR. BUILDING  
3001 East Drive - Druid Hill Park  
Baltimore, Maryland 21217  
410-396-6132

May 5, 2015

Honorable President Bernard Young  
Members of the City Council  
Baltimore City Council  
100 N. Holliday Street  
Baltimore, Maryland 21202

RE: **Council Bill # 15-0531**  
**City Property – Naming the Marble Fountain in Patterson Park to be the**  
**Dr. Levi Watkins, Jr. Memorial Fountain**

Dear President Young:

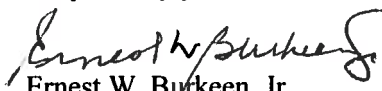
The Department of Recreation and Parks is reporting on City Council Bill # 15-0531. This Bill is for the purpose of naming the marble fountain in Patterson Park, located at the entrance on Patterson Park Avenue at Lombard Street, adjacent to the property known as 27 South Patterson Park Avenue, to be the Dr. Levi Watkins, Jr. Memorial Fountain.

Dr. Levi Watkins, Jr., was the first surgeon to successfully implant an automatic heart defibrillator in a human patient on February 4, 1980, at Johns Hopkins Hospital. As a civil rights pioneer Dr. Watkins was instrumental in making it possible that black students were afforded the opportunity to attend medical schools that had once been off-limits to them through the practice of racial discrimination. His early civil rights activities included participating in the Montgomery, Alabama bus boycott, led by Dr. Martin Luther King for whom Dr. Watkins later worked as a close aide and driver.

Dr. Watkins became the first black student to enter and graduate from the Vanderbilt University School of Medicine. After a surgical internship at Johns Hopkins, he was named the hospital's first black chief resident in cardiac surgery. Dr. Watkins' life of service and distinction deserves honor and recognition.

**Therefore, the Department of Recreation and Parks Supports Council Bill 15-0531.**

Respectfully yours,

  
Ernest W. Burkeen, Jr.  
Director

EWB:VSO

cc: Angela Gibson, Liaison to City Council

