



Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago

Press Release

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Vice President Barbara McGowan, MWRD Board of Commissioners recognize the many contributions of Dr. Conrad Worrill to MWRD



Dr. Conrad Worrill speaks at a 2018 Black History Month event held at the Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago (MWRD). Dr. Worrill was a leader in the fight for racial and social justice and human rights, an unwavering advocate for the importance of education for people of African descent, and a strong proponent of equality, delivering his profound messages to the MWRD time and again.



Dr. Conrad Worrill (left) speaks during a "lunch-and-learn" series at the MWRD celebrating Black History Month for a seminar that brought MWRD employees, students and teachers together to learn about African American History in 2018. Dr. Worrill led two presentations on African American elected officials' rise from local to national politics for Leland Elementary School eighth grade students and teachers.

The Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago (MWRD) is mourning the loss of Dr. Conrad Worrill, a giant in Chicago's African American community. Dr. Worrill made a lasting impact at the MWRD, where every February he served as a master of ceremonies for Black History Month celebrations, lecturing to MWRD employees and students alike, who gained a critical understanding from his astute knowledge of African American history and appreciation.

A civil rights activist, educator, organizer, scholar, writer and talk show host who advocated for African independence, Dr. Worrill devoted more than 50 years to advocating for the rights of people of African descent living throughout the world. He passed away on June 3 at the age of 78.

"Conrad was here in February when we raised the flag for the entire month, and he explained what the colors meant. He was extended family, and we will truly miss him and all that he gave to us," said MWRD Vice President Barbara McGowan, who coordinates the MWRD's Black History Month celebrations each year with the MWRD's Diversity Section and Office of Public Affairs.

Dr. Worrill was a professor at Northeastern Illinois University for more than 40 years. During his tenure, he served as the academic coordinator and as the director of the Jacob H. Carruthers Center for Inner City Studies, which he helped create. He educated people of all ages and races, but he especially emphasized the importance for youth of African descent to educate themselves and develop a *(continued)*

MWRD BOC Commissioners recognize Dr. Conrad Worrill, *cont.*



In February 2020, Dr. Worrill (on the far right) participated in the MWRD's first Pan-African flag raising ceremony to kick off the African American History Makers program held at the MWRD. He joined MWRD commissioners, including Frank Avila (from left), Cam Davis; Vice President Barbara McGowan, President Kari K. Steele, and Kim Du Buclet, to raise the flag and promote African American values and history.



In 2017, Dr. Conrad Worrill served as master of ceremonies for the Chicago City Council Wars program. Alongside MWRD Vice President Barbara McGowan, they brought together many of the late Mayor Harold Washington's 21 aldermen who played a role in the City Council's famed Council Wars.

comprehensive understanding of the history and significance of African people, so they could have perspective on the conditions that exist.

“As long as I have been at the MWRD, Dr. Worrill participated in our Black History Program. He was like a walking history book about any Black experience in Chicago and across the world. He was always ready to step in to guide, advise and/or support me to see to it that we performed our best at the MWRD while serving our constituents across Cook County,” said MWRD President Kari K. Steele. “My thoughts and prayers go out to his family and friends. He will be missed.”

Born in Pasadena, Calif., Dr. Worrill moved to Chicago with his family when he was nine years old. After returning from serving in the United States Army, Dr. Worrill earned a Bachelor of Science degree in Applied Behavioral Science from George Williams

College, a Master of Arts degree in Social Service Administration from the University of Chicago, and a Ph.D. in Curriculum and Instruction from the University of Wisconsin at Madison.

Dr. Worrill was a founding member of the National Black United Front where he served as National Chairman for 24 years. For 30 years he served as a board member of the Black United Fund of Illinois. Beginning in 1983, Dr. Worrill wrote a weekly syndicated column which was published in numerous newspapers throughout the U.S. Locally, he also served as a talk show host on Chicago's WVON radio for 10 years, and he was credited by many as a key figure in the election of Mayor Harold Washington. In addition, Dr. Worrill is widely recognized for his advocacy for Kwanzaa, the successful organization of the Million Man March in 1995, and his organization of the Durban 400 delegation which participated in the United Nations World Conference Against

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Recovering Resources, Transforming Water

Established in 1889, the MWRD (www.mwrld.org) is an award winning, special purpose government agency responsible for wastewater treatment and stormwater management in Cook County, Illinois.