

**RESOLUTION NO. 13-213**

**WHEREAS**, the City Council and the Mayor of the City of Huntsville, Alabama, are apprised that Dr. Paul B. Ruffin is celebrating retirement after many years of outstanding professional service as an award-winning, world renowned scientist and educator. He is being honored with a retirement dinner at the Summit in Huntsville, April 5, 2013; and,

**WHEREAS**, during the past thirty years Dr. Paul Ruffin has been a prominent research physicist for the U. S. Army Aviation and Missile Research, Development, and Engineering Center (AMRDEC) conducting exploratory and advanced research and development in Fiber Optics, Micro Electro-Mechanical Systems (MEMS), and Nanotechnology. In July 2003, Dr. Ruffin was promoted to the highest rank for a research scientist - Senior Research Scientist (ST) - that anyone could achieve in Government service, making him the first African-American to ever attain such status in the Army; and,

**WHEREAS**, a native of Gilbertown, Alabama, Dr. Ruffin attended public schools in Choctaw County. He received the undergraduate degree in physics from Alabama A&M University in 1977. He later became the first African-American to receive advanced degrees in physics from any school of higher learning in the State of Alabama when he received a master's degree in physics in 1982, and a Ph.D. in physics in 1986, from the University of Alabama in Huntsville; and,

**WHEREAS**, his professional career began in industry as an associate member of the technical staff at Dynetics, Inc., in May 1977. He became a Government employee in October 1982, accepting employment with the U. S. Army Missile Command. He professionally progressed from a bench scientist in 1982, to a team leader in 1989, to a supervisory physicist in 1993, to a senior research physicist in 1995, and to his last position as a Senior Research Scientist (ST), which is one of only 40 positions within the entire U. S. Army civilian workforce. Dr. Ruffin was the Army's Senior Research Scientist for Micro-Sensors and Systems; and,

**WHEREAS**, research in fiber optics and MEMS resulted in eight patent/invention awards, seven book chapter publications, and numerous peer-reviewed journal articles. Several of Dr. Ruffin's inventions, such as his patent that solved the 20-year old problem associated with adverse temperature effects on Fiber Optics Gyroscopes (FOGs) performance, have been adopted and used in industry. His latest patent disclosure "Nano Smart Needle for Precision Sensing and Treatment that Promotes Healing in Living Tissue" reveals a noninvasive technique for treating cancer patients. Dr. Ruffin published the advanced technologies for FOGs in a chapter of the book entitled "Fiber Optics Sensors," Marcel Dekker, Inc., 2002. He is the co-editor of a textbook "Fiber Optics Sensors: Second Edition," CRC Press, 2007; and,

**RESOLUTION NO. 13-213**

March 28, 2013

Page 2

**WHEREAS**, being a nationally recognized authority and leader in the field of fiber optics and MEMS technology is evidenced by honors, citations, and prestigious awards received from major national organizations for his accomplishments. He has received the highest honor the Army gives for research and development from the Secretary of the Army - the Army R&D Achievement Award, national acknowledgement as the Black Engineer of the Year: Special Recognition Recipient by the Council of Engineering Deans for Historically Black Universities, the Technologist of the Year Award from the National Society of Black Engineers, the United Negro College Fund Educator Award, Top Ten Army Materiel Command Personnel of the Year Award, the Material Acquisition/Technology Award from the American Defense Preparedness Association, and recognition for a Canadian Patent. Dr. Ruffin recently received the Black Engineer of the Year STEM Minorities in Research Science's (MIRS) Professional Achievement Emerald Award. President Barack Obama bestowed upon Dr. Paul Ruffin, "The Rank of Meritorious Senior Professional for sustained accomplishment in the conduct of programs of the United States Government and noteworthy achievement of quality and efficiency in public service 2010." Dr. Ruffin and other meritorious award recipients from across the nation were honored at the 2010 Presidential Rank Award Ceremony, hosted by the Secretary of the Army at the Pentagon in Washington, D.C.; and,

**WHEREAS**, Dr. Ruffin has published more than 175 technical papers in open literature. He is repeatedly invited to present keynote addresses on his research at national and international symposiums. His scientific contributions and technical achievements have brought him before high-level government officials such as Congressional Representatives/Staffers, Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Army, Generals, Science and Technology Thrust Leaders, as well as technical interactions with scientists and research personnel at the highest levels, domestic and international. He was senior advisor to the Technical Director of AMRDEC and to the Chief Scientist of the Army; and,

**WHEREAS**, Dr. Ruffin has maintained active membership in professional and scientific societies for the past 20 years. He has significantly contributed to the professional and technical communities by his mentoring of high-school and undergraduate students during the Army's summer intern programs, teaching physics and optics courses at Alabama A&M University in his capacity as adjunct professor, and ten years as Education Director for the Huntsville Association of Technical Societies and served on graduate students advisory committees at the University of Alabama in Huntsville and Worcester Polytechnic Institute in Worcester, Massachusetts. Dr. Ruffin has devoted a great deal of time providing assistance to the economically disadvantaged in the community and ministering to the downtrodden and broken-hearted. As a spiritual leader/pastor, he has

**RESOLUTION NO. 13-213**

March 28, 2013

Page 3

been devoted to the total healing for the whole person: body, soul, and spirit. Dr. Ruffin believes in providing spiritual leadership and exercising his gift of teaching while expounding upon spiritual principals in the Bible; and,

**WHEREAS**, he is happily married to his wife of 35 years, Vetrea Slack Ruffin, a professional gospel singer, and they take pride in their two daughters, Lactretia Ruffin Conaway and Angel Ruffin, who are graduates of Alabama A&M. Lactretia's husband, Kellen Conaway, is also an Alabama A&M graduate. Dr. Ruffin and his wife have three grandchildren.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that the City Council and Mayor of the City of Huntsville, Alabama, hereby acknowledge, salute, and express special appreciation for the remarkable career and impact Dr. Paul B. Ruffin has had on the scientific world and education in our Huntsville community. He has touched many lives and hearts, young and old. We wish him a long and healthy retirement with much success in all future endeavors.

**ADOPTED** on this the 28<sup>th</sup> day of March, 2013.

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President of the City Council of the  
City of Huntsville, Alabama

**APPROVED** on this the 28<sup>th</sup> day of March, 2013.

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Mayor of the City of Huntsville, Alabama