

Milwaukee Public Schools

June 15, 2009

School renaming ceremony to honor activist *Twenty-first Street School to be named Gwen T. Jackson* *Early Childhood and Elementary School*

Twenty-first Street School will be renamed on Tuesday, June 16. It will become the Gwen T. Jackson Early Childhood and Elementary School, and will serve children from six weeks of age through Grade 5. The ceremony will be held at 2121 West Hadley Street at 8:30 a.m. MPS Superintendent William G. Andrekopoulos and numerous City of Milwaukee, Milwaukee County and State officials will participate.



The new name is in honor of longtime community volunteer and early childhood education advocate Gwen T. Jackson. She is a retired human resources vice president who participated extensively in American Red Cross leadership at the chapter, regional and national level. As Chair Emeritus for the American Red Cross in Southeastern Wisconsin, she marked 50 years of Red Cross volunteer service in 2007.



Gwen T. Jackson

Early Childhood and Elementary School



- All-day K3-Grade 5
- English As a Second Language
- Before- and after-school child care
- Speech and language therapy
- On-site nurse from Children's Hospital
- Small class sizes
- MPS Head Start Program



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The principles and values that Mrs. Jackson believes in prove her to be the type of leader that students should be proud to emulate. In the late 1950's Jackson was on the Family Life Committee of the Milwaukee Urban League. Childcare was the predominant issue identified and along

with colleague, Edith Finlayson, Gwen began working with the E.B. Phillips Child Care Center.

Jackson began her Red Cross career in 1961, as a volunteer in the Service to Military Families Department of the Greater Milwaukee Chapter of the American Red Cross. By 1988 she had risen to one of the highest volunteer positions in the organization

— National Chair of Volunteers. Her leadership accomplishments during her four years in this national-level position were nothing shy of extraordinary. While serving as the National Chair of Volunteers, Gwen coined the phrase, “Paid staff get a paycheck and volunteer staff get a payback.”

Jackson’s lifelong commitment to civic involvement has earned her numerous awards and well-deserved recognitions. She was honored for her 50 years of volunteer leadership with the establishment of the Gwen T. Jackson Leadership Endowment. Some of her additional awards include: Cynthia Wedel Award, an honor that is presented to a Red Cross volunteer whose outstanding efforts might otherwise go unrecognized. The Gwen T. Jackson Community Service Award was established in 1981 and is presented annually to the United Way volunteer who best exemplifies a spirit of volunteerism and dedication to one’s community and fellow man. In addition, Gwen has been dedicated to the YWCA since 1979 where she has served on the Board of Directors and as a member of the Circle of Women. In 1995 the YWCA named a building in the Y-Villages after her, the “Gwen T. Jackson Senior Building”. “I have had a very fulfilling life and I believe it is expected of me to give back to my community,” Jackson said. “It is so much fun and I grow every day from volunteering.”

MPS is Wisconsin’s largest public school district, serving 85,000 students in 213 schools. District achievement is guided by its *Working Together, Achieving More* strategic plan. For additional information, contact Philip Harris in the MPS Office of Communications and Public Affairs, at (414) 475-8902.

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Office of Communications and Public Affairs

5225 W. Vliet St., P.O. Box 2181 ■ Milwaukee, WI 53201-2181

Phone: (414) 475-8237 ■ FAX: (414) 475-8430 ■ E-mail: 537@mail.milwaukee.k12.wi.us