

## New Leadership Delivering Results for our Community

Latisha Johnson is a proud, lifelong Detroit resident with an unrivaled appreciation and understanding of the community and needs of its residents. She learned the values of hard work, sacrifice and responsibility growing up as the fifth of eight children to parents with a grade school education and blue collar jobs.

A graduate of Detroit Public Schools - Chandler Elementary, Burroughs Middle and Kettering High School, Latisha became the first in her family to receive a college degree. She graduated from the University of Michigan - Dearborn with a degree in finance, after changing her major from Chemical Engineering at the University of Michigan - Ann Arbor.

### Interview:

I am a wife, mother, sister, Finance graduate from the University of Michigan, and dedicated community servant. I'm a native Detroit resident and have lived on the east side since I was eight. I've lived in various communities throughout District 4 including the Gratiot and McClellan area, Rohms and E. Forest, and where I currently live near Cadieux and I-94 in East English Village (EEV). I understand the issues residents throughout the District are facing.

I began my community service in 2007 when I was elected to the Executive Board of East English Village (EEV) Neighborhood Association. For 7 years, my focus was organizing and supporting the block captains and later became holding financial institutions accountable for their properties to minimize blight and prevent our long-time residents from leaving the community because squatters were running them out of their homes.

I went on to start MECCA (MorningSide, EEV, and Cornerstone Village Community Advocates) Development Corporation six and a half years ago to focus on addressing blight throughout the community and creating programs to uplift residents within the community. I recently completed six years of service on the board of the 5th Precinct Police/Community Relations Council and serve as a Wayne Metro Regional Advisory Council member.

In December 2017, I completed a three-year term on the Detroit Board of Zoning Appeals (BZA) where I completed my service as the Vice Chair. BZA is a quasi-judicial leadership role where municipal code appeals are brought forth by residents or businesses to determine what's in the best interest of the community.

In March (2017) I completed a two-year volunteer commitment with the AmeriCorps Urban Safety Program based out of Wayne State University. Our primary focus was canvassing the community to encourage residents to start or get involved with their block club or radio patrol.

I have demonstrated my commitment to the community through the various organizations where I have volunteered and the programs that have been implemented through the nonprofit community development organization that I lead. We have assisted with reducing tax foreclosures, hosted senior and youth programs and implemented several job training programs. And, we are in the process of creating affordable housing in the area.

Recognizing my continuous service to the people of this community, I humbly ask for your support of my campaign. You can rest assured your voice will be heard and considered in decisions being made throughout our city as I work to address issues that matter to YOU!

Over the 14 years I've been a community leader, I've worked on housing sustainability, foreclosure prevention, and organizational financial growth to be able to engage more residents. I've also improved public safety by creating block clubs and making residents aware of crime trends to be proactive and help reduce crime.

Currently, I support neighbors in need by providing, mostly new, quality, household and personal items as a way to show we ALL deserve the best and to provide wrap around services for families.

Growing up in poverty and being a first generation college graduate has helped me realize how impactful access to resources can change a life. As a result, I have developed several skill-building programs where residents can learn skills they can utilize to become financially independent. Thus far, I've created the following programs: upholstery training, a 12-week home improvement workshop, sewing and jewelry-making.

Over 60 residents have benefitted from the programs which has shown me there is a need. I believe it's important to continue and grow programs that residents can easily access.

If you know me, you know I'm results oriented; there are few challenges I back down from. With hard work and perseverance, I address community concerns to help uplift people out of poverty and create stronger communities. Over the past two years, I have put an emphasis on assisting residents build generational wealth through residential property ownership. Whether renting or ready for home ownership, I'm committed to helping others secure quality, affordable housing by creating such housing opportunities. Additionally, I'm supporting the discussion around Community Land Trusts (and seeking legislative support) to be able to create more quality, affordable housing options within our neighborhoods.