



Diverse & Resilient 2439 North Holton Street, Milwaukee, WI 53212 | www.diverseandresilient.org

July 2, 2022

Milwaukee Fire & Police Commission

To Whom it May Concern,

I am writing to recommend that Gerard Washington be selected as a commissioner on the Milwaukee Fire & Police Commission.

I first met Gerard in 2015 when I became the President/CEO of Diverse and Resilient (D&R), an LGBTQ public health organization based in Milwaukee, and Gerard was an active member of the board. Gerard first became involved with D&R several years earlier when acting in his capacity as an Assistant Fire Chief in the Milwaukee Fire Department, Gerard reached out to D&R to help him properly support a transgender fire fighter. That Gerard would do that spoke then, and speaks now of his dedication to support all members of the public, as well as all of the fire and police workforce.

Gerard's personal story of growing up in Milwaukee, the son of a single mom, and a father who was killed by the police, is one of resilience and strength, especially on the part of Gerard's mother, but also as demonstrated by the challenges Gerard grew up with, and the professional success he has had as an adult despite those challenges.

Gerard remains an active member of the D&R board, and as a supportive, Black, cisgender, straight man, Gerard demonstrates all the best qualities of an LGBTQ ally. Gerard is also an important role model for the many young, Black, same gender loving men and boys we work with.

As a resident of Milwaukee who cares deeply about the relationship the police and fire departments have with all of the citizens of this city, I can say with full confidence that Gerard would be an excellent addition to the Commission, and he would serve the Commission and the citizens of Milwaukee well.

Sincerely,

Gerald Coon, PhD
President & CEO