



IN HONOR OF MAMA WASHINGTON

- WHEREAS,** Naomi Gedo Johnson-Diouf, affectionately referred to as Mama Washington, has been a distinguished artist and educator throughout her long career; and
- WHEREAS,** Mama Washington has inspired generations of students and teachers throughout the East Bay with her classes at the Milonga Casquelord Center for the Arts starting in 1987, at Berkeley High School since 1991, at Laney College since 1995; and at Ailey Camp since 2003; and
- WHEREAS,** With Mama Washington retiring from Berkeley High School in the 2019 school year, she leaves behind a legacy of Black excellence: the African American Studies Department celebrates its 50th anniversary under her leadership and the African Haitian Dance program is a thriving centerpiece within the high school; students are empowered to develop into leaders under her guidance and inspiration; and
- WHEREAS,** Over more than four decades, Naomi, along with her husband, Dr. Zachariya Diouf and their award-winning dance company, Diamano Coura, has built a vibrant community in the East Bay, celebrating the beauty, athleticism and culture of West African Dance; presenting annual shows, workshops and conferences; attracting internationally renowned performers and teachers to the area; and
- WHEREAS,** Naomi is an accomplished choreographer; her works have toured throughout West Africa, North America and Europe, and have been set on the Dutch Theater Van Osten in the Netherlands and Belgium, U.C. Berkeley's Drama Department, San Francisco Ballet and the Singapore and South African Ballets, among others; and
- WHEREAS,** Mama Washington has dedicated her life's work to the preservation, education, and appreciation of traditional West African music, dance and theater, enriching the cultural fabric of our city, our community and our world.
- NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that I, Jesse Arreguin,** Mayor of the City of Berkeley, does hereby honor and recognize the accomplishments of this distinguished artist and teacher.

MAMA WASHINGTON



Jesse Arreguin

Jesse Arreguin
Mayor

May 16, 2019