

Brianne K. Nadeau

Councilmember Brianne K. Nadeau

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A CEREMONIAL RESOLUTION

IN THE COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

To recognize and honor Dr. Janelle Goetcheus for her work to advance health equity and accessible healthcare.

WHEREAS, Dr. Janelle Goetcheus dedicated her life to the fight for health equity and accessible healthcare, living her entire life as a champion for individuals experiencing homelessness and underserved populations; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Goetcheus was so moved by the deep need for accessible care that she witnessed during a family trip to D.C. in the 1970s that she dropped everything to lay down roots and build a community of like-minded individuals to serve the District’s unhoused; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Goetcheus founded Columbia Road Health Services, a medical clinic serving persons of low income and also helped start health centers at Community of Hope, Mary’s Center, and S.O.M.E. (So Others Might Eat); and

WHEREAS, recognizing the dire need for a dignified space for persons experiencing homelessness to stay and recuperate from their medical needs, Dr. Goetcheus, with fellow members of the Church of the Saviour community, envisioned Christ House, the first live-in medical respite facility in the nation, which has provided care for over 10,000 patient admissions since 1985; and

30 WHEREAS, Dr. Goetcheus, together with Dr. Jesse Barber, founded the Health Care for
31 the Homeless Project in a small room in a local shelter in 1985 to provide primary health care
32 services to individuals and families that resided in local emergency shelters or on the streets of the
33 District of Columbia; and

34 WHEREAS, Dr. Goetcheus helped to grow the impact of HCHP beyond those
35 experiencing homelessness, as the organization officially changed its name to Unity Healthcare in
36 1997 and care expanded to all District residents, regardless of ability to pay; and

37 WHEREAS, Dr. Goetcheus earned her Bachelor of Science degree from Ball State
38 University in 1961 and her Doctor of Medicine degree from Indiana University School of Medicine
39 in 1965; and

40 WHEREAS, Dr. Goetcheus positively impacted the health of hundreds of thousands of
41 people over the years both in clinic practice and as an essential advocate regularly testifying before
42 legislative committees and sharing testimonies of her work with diverse groups; and

43 WHEREAS, Dr. Goetcheus, even after she retired from administrative work, continued to
44 see patients until she was physically unable because she felt it was the best way for her to continue
45 to contribute to this mission she loved so much; and

46 WHEREAS, Dr. Goetcheus' numerous awards and honors include Physician of the Year
47 given by the American Academy of Family Physicians (1991), induction into the D.C. Women's
48 Hall of Fame (1989), as well as honorary degrees from Trinity Washington University (1990) and
49 Ball State University (1995). In addition, Dr. Goetcheus received the Presidential Medal for
50 Distinguished Service from The Catholic University of America (1987), and National Health Care
51 for the Homeless' Philip W. Brickner National Leadership Award (2017); and

52 WHEREAS, Dr. Goetcheus cherished her family and community deeply, and her legacy
53 will continue to live on through the thousands of lives she touched with her gentle spirit,
54 compassion, and comprehensive care.

55 RESOLVED, BY THE COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, that this
56 resolution may be cited as the “Dr. Janelle Goetcheus Ceremonial Recognition Resolution of
57 2024”.

58 Sec. 2. The Council honors the work of Dr. Janelle Goetcheus as an advocate for health
59 equity.

60 Sec. 3. This Resolution shall take effect immediately upon the first date of publication in
61 the District of Columbia Register.