

**A TRIBUTE IN RECOGNITION OF THE  
ENDURING LEGACY OF RICHARD PAUL THORNELL, ESQ.**

**RESOLUTION OF THE  
FACULTY SENATE OF HOWARD UNIVERSITY**

**May 7, 2020**

**WHEREAS, Richard Paul Thornell, Esq.** left his home in New York City at the age of 15 to matriculate at Fisk University where he graduated, *magna cum laude*, four years later with departmental and Phi Beta Kappa honors, earned a Master of Public Affairs degree from the Woodrow Wilson School of Public and International Affairs from Princeton University in 1958, and received his Juris Doctor degree from Yale Law School in 1971;

**WHEREAS, Richard Paul Thornell, Esq.** was among the first African Americans in the United States Peace Corps, serving as the inaugural director of the Ghana program and subsequently as the head of the Program Division of the Peace Corps' Africa Regional Office, and held other positions with the Agency for International Development and the Department of Justice;

**WHEREAS, Richard Paul Thornell, Esq.** was a member of the bars of the State of New York, the District of Columbia and the Supreme Court, and performed pro bono work as special counsel to the NAACP-Washington Bureau, counsel of the Africare Board of Directors, and chair of the Exchange Programs Committee of the YMCA of the United States;

**WHEREAS, Richard Paul Thornell, Esq.** was a man of strong convictions who imbued his work with a passion for justice and leveling the playing field for the most vulnerable among us;

**WHEREAS, Richard Paul Thornell, Esq.,** motivated by a desire to train the next generations of African American lawyers, joined the faculty of Howard University School of Law in 1976 and was appointed to serve as Vice President and General Counsel in 1981;

**WHEREAS, Richard Paul Thornell, Esq.** returned to his full-time faculty position and became a major champion of faculty rights, serving with Drs. Ron Walters and Marian Secundy on the University Senate Search Committee to identify a successor for President James Cheek;

**WHEREAS, Richard Paul Thornell, Esq.,** as a meticulous and astute scholar, negotiated and achieved tangible results on behalf of faculty, advocating for the University Senate to establish an independent Faculty Senate, and stressed the importance of an independent organization to advocate for faculty rights and shared governance of the University under President Franklyn Jenifer and Board Chair Thaddeus Garrett;

**WHEREAS, Richard Paul Thornell, Esq.** served as Chair of the Constitution Committee for the Faculty Senate and, with Drs. Lorenzo Morris and Peter Sola, drafted the *Constitution for an Independent Faculty Senate* which was approved and signed by the President and the Chairman of the Board of Trustees and, following the establishment of an independent Faculty Senate, as Chair of the Faculty Senate, convened the Faculty Handbook Committee which resulted in the *1993 Faculty Handbook* which was approved by the Board of Trustees and the President;

**WHEREAS, Richard Paul Thornell, Esq.** consistently mentored faculty and cultivated strong leadership in the Faculty Senate, was a relentless advocate for faculty rights until his retirement in 2004, and was affectionately referred to as the “Thomas Jefferson” of the Faculty Senate because of his revolutionary zeal and fierce defense of shared governance;

**WHEREAS, Richard Paul Thornell, Esq.** transitioned on Thursday, April 28, 2020;

**THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED:** The Faculty Senate pays tribute to the legacy of Richard Paul Thornell, Esq. and his pivotal role in the establishment of an independent and strong Faculty Senate. We honor him as a leader, advocate, mentor and a warrior for faculty rights.

Signature:

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