



# City of Orange Township

29 North Day Street  
Orange, New Jersey 07050

## ***News Release***

For Release: June 16, 2009

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### **Orange to celebrate legacy of Former Councilman Ben Jones. Ceremony designating street in his honor to be held Tuesday, June 23, 2009, at Central Elementary School, 33 Cleveland Street.**

Pursuant to a resolution of the Orange City Council, Cleveland Street between White and Main Streets has been designated in honor of former Councilman Ben Jones. At the ceremony on Tuesday, a street sign reading "Benjamin F. Jones Place- In Honorarium" will be unveiled above the existing street sign to recognize and honor Ben Jones for his many years of dedicated service to Orange. The ceremony is sponsored by Mayor Eldridge Hawkins, Jr. in collaboration with the City Council, the Orange Board of Education, Hands, Inc., and Citizens for Responsible Government (CRG)

In 1963, Ben ran for councilman of the newly-created East Ward. He won in a run-off, to become the first African American to be elected to city office in the history of Orange. Ben won citywide election in 1970.

Ben has been called "the most courageous elected official in the history of the City of Orange." Serving from 1963 to 1982, he led the 1968 fight for a new high school; fought for fair hiring practices by the city to ensure equal employment opportunity; fought successfully for a senior citizen's housing development; and revitalized the city recreation program.

In 2005 Ben Jones received the "*Key to the City*" from the City of Orange Township for his years of service with CRG. Recently, Mr. Jones received "the Distinguished Service Award for his work as a Trailblazer, Innovator and Catalyst for Positive Change. Mayor Eldridge Hawkins, Jr. has established, "The Benjamin F. Jones Award" which will be given to "Future Outstanding Individuals".

#### **Statement by Mayor Eldridge Hawkins, Jr.**

"Ben Jones holds a special place in the hearts of Orange residents. We honor him for his pioneering leadership in civil rights, on behalf of quality education, services for seniors, and recreation for our youth. We honor him as well for his work to ensure honest, open and responsible government."

#### **Statement by Council President Lisa Perkins**

"On behalf of the City Council, I want to thank Ben Jones for all that he has accomplished on behalf of Orange. Ben is a towering figure in the history of our city, and the Council is pleased and proud to honor him with this street designation."

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