



The

MAYOR'S MESSAGE

MARCH 2015

Dear Residents and Stakeholders:

Many of you have heard me say this before, but during Women's History Month, it is worth repeating: Beside every good man there is a good, and most likely smarter, woman! Whether she is a wife, mother, aunt, sister, godmother, mentor, teacher or friend, women all across this nation have lifted our country to new heights.

At a time when a female president is no longer an idealistic dream, the City of East Orange is honored to celebrate a legacy where women in government is much more than a progressive notion; it is an established tradition.

In 2015, East Orange is home to three dynamic public servants working on our behalf at the local, county and state levels: Assemblywoman Sheila Oliver, the first African American Speaker of the New Jersey General Assembly; Freeholder Britnee Timberlake, the youngest person to be elected to the Essex County Board of Chosen Freeholders and the only African-American woman currently serving as president of a freeholder board in the entire state, and Third Ward Councilwoman Quilla Talmadge, who has the distinction of being the the first woman to serve as chair of the East Orange City Council, a position she held for a total of 10 years. These women, each of whom broke new ground with their historic achievements, advocate daily to bring social justice, equality, educational and workplace equity, fair housing and economic development to the people and communities they serve.

Within my own administrative cabinet, I am privileged to rely upon the expertise of a talented core group of women who make those day-to-day decisions which positively impact the growth and development of our city. Graced with a predominantly female City Council, East Orange is a model municipal government for inspiring young women who seek to make change through public policy and community impact.

Our Girl Power Mentor Series, coordinated by the Department of Recreation & Cultural Affairs, connects girls with influential women in non-traditional industries and exposes them to college and career opportunities. As the proud father of two daughters, the eldest of whom will be attending college in the fall, I am excited to see the next generation of East Orange women reach their full potential.

Most importantly, I must acknowledge my wife and East Orange native, Bibi Taylor. As a Director of Finance, Bibi is an accomplished woman in her own right. She is often my sounding board and provides me with counsel on issues large and small. We work as a team and it is through her love and support that I am able to fulfill my commitment to make East Orange the best place it can be.

To all of the amazing women in my life and to those women who are making history every day, I salute you!

Mayor Lester E. Taylor III