

## **RESOLUTION NUMBER 8 HONORING FR. LAWRENCE BIONDI, S.J.**

**WHEREAS**, Fr. Lawrence Biondi, S.J. became President of Saint Louis University in 1987, and served the University in this capacity until 2013, making him the University's longest serving President; and

**WHEREAS**, under Fr. Biondi's leadership Saint Louis University underwent significant academic, physical and financial transformations earning national regard as an institution of higher-education and research and as one of the nation's premier Catholic universities; and

**WHEREAS**, Fr. Biondi oversaw the successful completion of three major fundraising campaigns, which together total more than \$600 million, and as President Emeritus he continues to play a major role in the University's fundraising efforts in the U.S. and internationally, and in the University's international student recruitment efforts; and

**WHEREAS**, Fr. Biondi placed new and greater emphasis on the Jesuit mission of service to the community (teaching men and women to be of service to others by advancing education, alleviating poverty and injustice, and caring for those in need) and the result of this effort is observable: one example being; the 2010 opening of Casa de Salud a not for profit health center on the University's campus, which filled the void in access to healthcare for the region's immigrant community and uninsured; and

**WHEREAS**, during his twenty-six-years as president the University's endowment rose from \$93 million to \$1.2 billion; freshman enrollment rose from 660 to 1,618 while the student-to teacher-ratio fell in relation to a 180% increase in faculty members; the University's St. Louis and Madrid, Spain campuses were doubled in size; and the University became the first American university to be officially recognized as a degree granting institution by the Spanish Ministry of Education; and

**WHEREAS**, during Fr. Biondi's tenure the University's campuses underwent significant transformations, including: construction of McDonnell Douglas Hall, the home of Parks College of Engineering and Aviation; the over ten-thousand seat Chaifetz Arena which brought men's basketball back to campus for the first time in sixty-years; a leading-edge research facility, the Edward A. Doisy Research Center; the renovation of Scott Hall, the new home of the University's School of Law located in the midst of downtown St. Louis' legal and business communities and center of City government; conversion of the former West Pine Gym to the 70,000 square foot Center for Global Citizenship; the acquisition of facilities needed to provide a permanent home for the University's Madrid, Spain campus, and the addition of San Ignacio Hall providing the Madrid campus a new library, cafeteria, and fine and performing arts studios; and

**WHEREAS**, Fr. Biondi's transformation of the University's campus provided a much, needed anchor for the development of Grand Center, and his vision for the area, charisma, and leadership attracted private investment to this and other areas surrounding the University's campus; and

**WHEREAS**, Fr. Biondi worked tirelessly with the City of St. Louis and private developers to revive and bring in to use vacant and blighted properties such as The Continental Building which would have not have been renovated but for the University's investment; and

**WHEREAS**, under Fr. Biondi's leadership the University became a founding member and initial investor in the CORTEX Innovation Community initiative; and

**WHEREAS**, Fr. Biondi is the recipient of numerous honors for his contributions to the University, the City of St. Louis and surrounding region, including: Tree of Life Award (Jewish National Fund's highest humanitarian honor, annually presented to an individual or family – 1997); named a St. Louis Citizen of the

Century (St. Louis Post Dispatch – 1999); Leon R. Strauss Urban Pioneer Award (St. Louis Ambassadors - 2001); St. Louis Civic Leadership Award (City of St. Louis - 2001); Mayor John H. Poelker Award (CORO Foundation - 2004), St. Louis Citizen of the Year (Awarded by past recipients, sponsored by St. Louis Post Dispatch – 2005); named a Top Ten Legend (St. Louis Business Journal – 2006); John D. Levy Human Relations Award (American Jewish Committee of St. Louis - 2011); Mayor’s Civic Award (Mayor Francis Slay - 2013); and

**WHEREAS**, Fr. Biondi has served on the boards of directors of many local organizations, including: the St. Louis Art Museum (1997 - 2013); the St. Louis Zoo (1994 - 2003); St. Louis Symphony (1993 - 2013); Missouri Botanical Garden (1987 - 2013); Grand Center, St. Louis (1988 - 2010); CORTEX Innovation Community (founding member 2002 - 2013); Saint Louis University High School (2013 – present); and Saint Louis University Trustee and President Emeritus (2013 – present).

**NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** by the Board of Aldermen of the City of St. Louis that we pause in our deliberations to recognize the many accomplishments of Fr. Lawrence Biondi, S.J. and to commend him for his substantial contributions to the City of St. Louis, and to thank him for his tireless commitment to bettering the City of St. Louis. We further direct the Clerk to spread a copy of this Resolution across the minutes of these proceedings and to prepare a memorial copy to the end that it may be presented to our honoree, Fr. Lawrence Biondi, S.J., at a time and place deemed appropriate by the sponsor.

Introduced this 26<sup>th</sup> day of April, 2019 by:

**Honorable Marlene Davis, Alderman Ward 19**

Adopted this 26<sup>th</sup> day of April, 2019 as attested by

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Terry Kennedy  
Clerk, Board of Aldermen

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Lewis E. Reed  
President, Board of Aldermen