

***Expression of Condolence for
Dr. Michael Gregory Arthurs by Toronto City Council***

Moved by: Councillor Michael Thompson

Seconded by: Mayor Olivia Chow

The Mayor and Members of Toronto City Council are saddened to learn of the passing of musician and educator Dr. Michael Gregory Arthurs on October, 5th, 2023, at the age of 60.

Michael was born on September 12th, 1963, in Toronto. He was an exceptional individual who excelled in multiple areas. He stood out as a triple threat during his time at Northern Secondary High School, showcasing remarkable talents in sports, music, and academics.

In his late teens, Michael pursued his passion for music at Humber College, focusing on jazz arrangement and performance. His dedication led him to earn a doctorate from the University of Texas at Austin, specializing in jazz composition. Under the guidance of renowned artists like Pat LaBarbera, George Coleman, Bill Evans, James Moody, and Joe Lovano, he honed his skills in saxophone and jazz improvisation.

Dr. Arthurs had a notable career as a musician and educator. He held academic positions as an assistant professor of saxophone at St. Francis Xavier University and a lecturer in saxophone techniques at Wilfrid Laurier University. Additionally, he directed musical ensembles such as the Louisville Metro Big Band, the University of Louisville's Jazz Lab II, and Archie Alleyne's The Evolution of Jazz Ensemble. Later, he became the Director of the JAZZ.FM91 Youth Big Band.

Dr. Arthurs was a versatile composer known for his big band compositions in the United States. Arthurs excelled in various music genres like jazz, reggae, R&B, soul, and blues. He was a respected figure in Toronto's music scene, collaborating with groups like Jay Douglas and the All Star or the Hard-Bop Band Kollage. Beyond music, he had a great sense of humor and a love for sports.

His significant contribution lay in mentoring young Black musicians, shaping the JAZZ FM91 Youth Big Band with a deep appreciation for music. Dr. Arthurs will be remembered as a talented musician and educator whose warmth left a lasting impact.

The City Clerk is requested to convey, on behalf of the Members of Toronto City Council, our sincere sympathy to Michael Arthurs' family, and our enduring gratitude for his contributions to his community and our City.

December 13, 2023