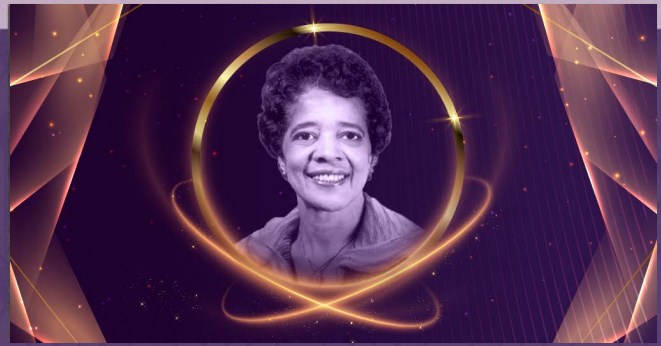


NOMINATION FORM | SUBMISSION DEADLINE: FRIDAY, MARCH 6, 2026

VEL R. PHILLIPS

TRAILBLAZER AWARD

The **Vel R. Phillips Trailblazer Award** is bestowed annually recognizing female city residents who best exemplify Vel R. Phillips' legacy of selfless service and trailblazing work to improve the quality of life for residents in Milwaukee.



VEL R. PHILLIPS TRAILBLAZER AWARD SELECTION COMMITTEE

- ▶ Ald. Milele A. Coggs
- ▶ Keith Bailey
- ▶ Mildred Coby
- ▶ Jasmine Johnson
- ▶ Michael Phillips
- ▶ Peggy Rozga
- ▶ Jada Young

Velvlea Hortense Rodgers Phillips (1923–2018) was a Milwaukee native who became a leader in not only the African-American community but was a trailblazer and role model for all Milwaukeeans, for Wisconsin, and the nation. Ms. Phillips achieved many “firsts” in her lifetime:

- ▶ First African-American woman to graduate from the University of Wisconsin Law School
- ▶ First African-American to be elected to the Milwaukee Common Council
- ▶ First female judge in Milwaukee, and the first African-American judge in Wisconsin
- ▶ First person of color to be elected Secretary of State in Wisconsin
- ▶ First African-American to be elected as a member of the Democratic National Committee.

Whether serving as an elected official or as a private citizen, Ms. Phillips worked tirelessly to better her community with a fearless and pioneering spirit. She will be remembered for her mission to eliminate barriers between disadvantaged people and their goals, clearing the path for educational, occupational, social and political parity.

Please print clearly in black or blue ink

NOMINEE'S NAME: _____

NOMINEE'S ADDRESS: _____

EMAIL: _____ **PHONE:** (_____) _____ - _____

Nominees must be available to be interviewed by selection committee.

Anyone can nominate themselves or others, but nominees must be city residents who are not publicly elected officials.

ORGANIZATION AFFILIATION: _____

YOUR NAME: _____

YOUR ADDRESS: _____

EMAIL: _____ **PHONE:** (_____) _____ - _____

Write a nomination letter to include the following:

- ▶ Please describe the nominee's work in the area of social justice and/or civic accomplishment.
- ▶ Please share example(s) of instances when the nominee has been a defining force in this area.
- ▶ Are there any challenges that the nominee has faced that have been overcome to work in the field of social justice and/or civic accomplishment or acted as an instrument for social justice and/or civic accomplishment?
- ▶ List any related awards or recommendations that the nominee has received.

Please submit a copy of your nomination letter (three pages maximum) by **FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 27, 2026** along with this form, and any supporting materials that would help the committee make its selection. Submissions should be sent to Joanna Urtiz - City Clerk's Office; City Hall, Room 205; Milwaukee WI 53202. Any questions can be directed to Joanna either by phone at **(414) 286-2366** or by email at jpolan@milwaukee.gov.