



GOV LOVE CHATS



Cathy B. Bailey

Executive Director, Greater Cincinnati Water Works

BIOGRAPHY: Cathy Bernardino Bailey is the Executive Director of Greater Cincinnati Water Works for the City of Cincinnati. Ms. Bailey is the first woman and African-American to lead the utility since its formation 200 years ago. She began with the utility in 1992 as a chemist. Cathy later took on the role of Water Quality and Treatment Data Manager. She earned several promotions to other key managerial positions, including Information Technology Help Desk Administrator, Strategic Planning and Performance Measurement Manager, and Project Manager. Cathy was temporarily promoted to the Director of Greater Cincinnati Water Works beginning July 12, 2015. On September 20, 2015, she was permanently appointed as the Executive Director, where she demonstrates unrelenting drive, consistent perseverance, and perpetual optimism -- leading her to the top of her profession.

She holds a Bachelor of Science degree in Chemistry from the University of Cincinnati and has been with GCWW her entire 28-year career.

Cathy annually speaks and participates on panels at the American Water Works Association, the Association of Metropolitan Water Agencies (AMWA), and the Engaging Local Government Leaders conferences, and other water summits sharing knowledge on strategic planning, employee engagement, workforce diversity, and continuous improvement. She is the Policy Committee Chair for AMWA and the Water Research Foundation Treasurer. Cathy is also a board member with the US Water Alliance and with Engaging Local Government Leaders where she enjoys discussing modern day challenges and working with the various teams to bring forward solutions.

She has distinguished herself as a leader throughout her career, focusing on communications, strategic thinking, innovation, outreach, and teamwork to bring forward solutions that positively impact the community. Her local community work and leadership roles were recognized as she was one of 2018 Greater Cincinnati YWCA's Career Women of Achievement, and one of the Cincinnati Venue Magazine's Women of Influence. In 2019, Ms. Bailey was named one of seven African American leaders in Cincinnati that residents should get to know and understand their impact in the region.

Locally, Cathy is a Woman's City Club of Greater Cincinnati Board member, serves on the Chamber of Commerce Leadership Cincinnati Steering Committee, is active with the YWCA, and is a member of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. Outside of work, Cathy enjoys baking, sewing, volunteering, and traveling with family and friends.



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What is your favorite flavor of ice cream?

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It used to be vanilla, but since the pandemic it's been coffee. ☕

What is the best piece of advice you have received in your career?

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Just be yourself and don't try to conform because you're unique. It's exactly what I needed to hear at the right time!

What activities help you alleviate stress?

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Sewing. In 2020, I was able to make 1,500 masks for people in the community who couldn't afford them. 😊



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What is your favorite poem or song?

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“Get Up, Stand Up” by Bob Marley and the Wailers.
I ❤️ reggae music!

What is the best stress reliever at work?

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I get up and walk around and just talk to people. Catch up
and see how they’re doing. It gives me energy! 😊

What motivates you the most?

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Inspiring young women to become leaders. 💪

What are you most proud of at work?

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The GCWW Enhanced Lead Program.