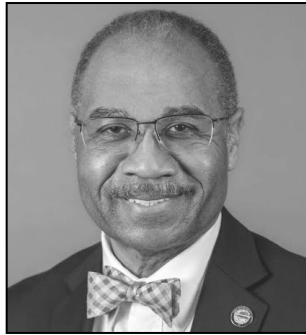


*Summit County Juvenile Court and Judge Linda Tucci Teodosio Observe  
Black History and Women's History Months*

## *The First Family of Akron Politics: Barbara, Vernon, & Emilia Sykes*



*Barbara Sykes*



*Dr. Vernon Sykes*



*Emilia Sykes*

*Public service has been a profession and a passion for the Sykes family of Akron. As a couple, Barbara and Vernon Sykes have devoted their professional lives to seeking substantive change to improve the quality of life for the people they represented, and that devotion has been embraced by their daughter, Emilia.*

*Barbara Sykes is a pioneer. She became the first Black woman elected to Akron City Council in 1983. She was appointed to several high profile committees on Akron City Council and sponsored landmark legislation calling for preferences for Black business owners. In 1999, she was elected as a State Representative. She was the highest ranking Democrat on the Human Services Subcommittee of Finance and Appropriations. She also served on Public Utilities and Energy, Ways and Means Committees and the Commission on Minority Health. She served two years as President of the Black Legislative Caucus. In 2023, Ms. Sykes was elected to the Akron School Board.*

*Dr. Vernon Sykes was appointed to Akron City Council in 1980. It launched a five decades long political career that has seen him serve in the Ohio House of Representative and Ohio Senate. Dr. Sykes has long been a champion for his constituents. He has chaired several key committees in both the House and the Senate. He was the joint sponsor on two constitutional amendments that reformed the redistricting process for Ohio's state legislative and congressional maps that were overwhelmingly approved by Ohio voters and upheld by the United States Supreme Court. Dr. Sykes has received several significant awards, including Public Elected Official of the Year, Legislator of the Year, and The Alumni Honor Award from the University of Akron.*

*Emilia Sykes followed her parents into politics when she was elected to the Ohio House of Representatives, where she served for eight years. It wasn't long before her leadership was recognized as her Democratic colleagues chose her as House Minority Leader. In that capacity, she fostered a reputation as one who could garner bipartisan support on legislation brought to the floor. In 2022, Emilia Sykes became the first Black person elected to represent Ohio's 13th Congressional District. Congresswoman Sykes continues to seek advances for her constituents as she pursues bipartisan support for economic opportunities, affordable health care, and safer communities.*

*There is no doubt the efforts of the Sykes family have left a positive and indelible mark on the community they love.*