



**Ras J. Baraka** is the 40th Mayor of the City of Newark.

A native of Newark, whose family has lived in the City for more than 80 years, Mayor Baraka's progressive approach to governing has won him accolades from grassroots organizations to the White House. With a forward-thinking agenda that reduced crime to its lowest levels in five decades, addressed affordability while maintaining steady growth, lowered unemployment, and returned local control of schools after more than two decades, Baraka has defied expectations since taking office in 2014.

Mayor Baraka's futurist agenda includes the implementation of a groundbreaking partnership called Hire. Buy. Live. Newark, a program that marks the first time that any US city has sought to transform its economy by combining employment, procurement, and residential strategies.

As part of his commitment to strengthen Newark's position in the expanded technology space, the City launched LinkNWK (pronounced Link Newark). This communications network of sidewalk kiosks provides Newark residents and visitors with free, gigabit Wi-Fi, mobile device charging, phone calls to anywhere in the U.S., access to municipal services, maps and directions, and real-time local information on city streets at no cost to taxpayers or users.

Mayor Baraka is also recognized nationally as a thought leader in the space of urban revitalization and his defiance of a hostile Presidential directive targeting the immigrant community with an executive order designating Newark as a sanctuary city solidified his status as one of the country's most progressive elected officials.

Mayor Baraka was educated in the Newark Public Schools. He received a Bachelor of Arts degree in Political Science and History from Howard University in Washington, D.C. and a Master's Degree in Education Supervision from St. Peter's University in Jersey City. His father, the late Amiri Baraka, was a legendary poet and playwright. His mother, Amina Baraka, is herself a renowned poet. The father of three daughters and a son, Mayor Baraka is a published author and is well-regarded in the entertainment industry for his appearance on the Grammy-award winning album, "The Miseducation of Lauryn Hill" in his authentic role as an educator, and for his EP "What We Want."