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Dr. Deforest B. Soaries, Jr. to Keynote the 2022 CEG Business Excellence Awards



The Collective Empowerment Group (CEG) of Metro Cincinnati will present its 2022 Business Excellence Awards Gala on Friday, September 16, 2022, at the Delta Hotel Grand Ballroom at 7 p.m. at 11320 Chester Road, Cincinnati, Ohio 45242. The theme for this year's gala is "Building Business Resilience." It is a continuation of the organization's efforts to build thriving churches and businesses which contribute to a flourishing Metro Cincinnati. The 2022 CEG Business Excellence Awards will present and recognize the Top Ten Businesses of the Year based on annual sales for 2020 and 2021, along with Corporation of the Year, Church of the Year, and the yearly Rev. Damon Lynch, Jr. Lifetime Achievement Community Service Award.

About the Keynote Speaker

The Keynote Speaker for the evening is [Dr. Deforest B. Soaries, Jr.](#) who has served as the Senior Pastor of the First Baptist Church of Lincoln Gardens in Somerset, New Jersey from November 1990 to July 2021. A pioneer of faith-based community development, Dr. Soaries has led First Baptist in the construction of a new \$23 million church complex and the formation of many not-for-profit entities to serve the community surrounding the church. In addition to his pastoral duties Dr. Soaries is a popular speaker at colleges, universities, conferences, and churches around the world.

Dr. Soaries has also held historic and noteworthy government positions. From January 12, 1999, to January 15, 2002, Dr. Soaries served as New Jersey's 30th Secretary of State making him the first African American male to serve as a Constitutional officer of the State. Appointed by former Governor Christine Todd Whitman, he managed one of the premier departments of state government and served as a senior advisor to the governor on issues that transcended traditional departmental lines. Dr Soaries is also the former chairman of the United States Election Assistance Commission. This Commission was established by Congress to implement the "Help America Vote Act" of 2002.

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Dr. Soaries was appointed by President George W. Bush after being confirmed by the United States Senate. He was elected chairman of the Commission on January 5, 2004, at the first meeting of the four member, bi-partisan Commission. In November 2004 this Commission was the first federal agency to oversee a Presidential election. He resigned from the Commission in April 2005.

Dr. Soaries is currently an independent director at the Federal Home Bank of New York, Ocwen Financial Corporation (OCN:NYSE), Independence Realty Trust (IRT:NYSE) and a trustee at RWJ Barnabas Health. He is the author of nine books including "Say Yes to No Debt:12 Steps to Financial Freedom," "Meditations for Financial Freedom" (Volumes 1, 2 &3), and "Say Yes When Life Says No."

Tickets for the Gala are on sale now. Individual tickets are \$100, and tables of 10 are \$1000. For ticket information, visit www.CEGGALA.eventbrite.com or call 513.400.4081.