CEC Legacy Proclamation
James Marlin Patton
March 2004

WHEREAS, Dr. James Marlin Patton had a most distinguished and influential career of more than 40 years in the field of special education, working tirelessly to educate and advocate for children and youth with exceptionalities, particularly in addressing the needs of culturally and linguistically diverse learners as a teacher, teacher educator, the Director of Teacher Education at the Virginia Department of Education, the Associate Dean of Academic Programs at William and Mary College, in numerous consulting positions, and as a mentor, exemplifying leadership in culturally responsive research, social justice, equity, and inclusive school environments;

WHEREAS, Dr. Patton was the Governor of the Division for Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Exceptional Learners (DDEL) to the CEC Board of Governors, a member of the CEC Governance Restructuring Taskforce, and Associate Editor of Exceptional Children, evidencing consistent and exemplary advocacy efforts for equal opportunities for representation of ethnically and culturally diverse CEC members in leadership positions at all levels of The Council and innovative approaches to increase participation of marginalized communities;

WHEREAS, Dr. Patton introduced a resolution to the CEC Board of Directors on disproportionality, resulting in a study by the United States Department of Education;

WHEREAS, Dr. Patton was the Chair of the CEC Multicultural Summit and Co-Chair of the CEC/DDEL International Multicultural Summit, anchoring CEC’s commitment to leading the way on diversity and inclusion;

WHEREAS, Dr. Patton recommended and achieved the renaming of the CEC Committee on Minority Affairs to the Committee on Ethnic and Multicultural Concerns, making the name more accurately reflect the groups represented and the committee’s purpose;

WHEREAS, Dr. Patton’s efforts for intervention and positive change were reflected in the Guidelines for CEC Publications and the Procedures for the CEC Convention Proposal and Review Process, establishing procedures for addressing diversity and equity within CEC publications and convention program offerings;
WHEREAS, Dr. Patton was one of the founders of DDEL and served as the Associate Editor of *Multiple Voices*, the DDEL journal, leveraging the potential of scholarship toward building schools where student disability at the intersections of other marginalized race, ethnicity, and language identity markers is valued and recognized as a source of strength;

WHEREAS, Dr. Patton authored 54 journal articles (two seminal works), book chapters, and monographs, with over 20 of these publications focusing on the disproportional representation of African-American learners in special education with a focus on African-American males, cultural competency development, and the need to support the implementation of culturally responsive curriculum and instruction in preK-12 settings;

WHEREAS, Dr. Patton’s work across the areas of teaching, research, and service demonstrated his commitment to children and youth who were often underserved by public education: children of color impacted by poverty, disabilities, and giftedness;

WHEREAS, Dr. Patton participated in the preparation and implementation of over $5.5 million in grants at the local, state, and federal levels, funding projects in special and gifted education, the preparation of teachers, and the design of educational programming for African American learners to achieve excellence;

WHEREAS, Dr. Patton initiated critical dialogue in the field, within CEC and with accrediting bodies regarding race and overrepresentation and was an advocacy force during the reauthorization of IDEA, resulting in the incorporation of amendments addressing the disproportional overrepresentation of children of color in special education and their underrepresentation in gifted education; and

Now, therefore,

Be it resolved that the Council for Exceptional Children conveys deep appreciation and admiration of Dr. James Marlin Patton’s culturally responsive research, scholarship, mentorship, and groundbreaking work, especially in gifted and multicultural education, leaving a prominent legacy regarding the disproportionate representation of students of color in special education and underrepresentation in gifted education and for his leadership positions within CEC, resulting in many changes regarding diversity responsiveness, equity, and inclusiveness.