

**DATE:** September 17, 2024

**TO:** Land Use and Economic Development Committee of the City Council

**FROM:** Helen Miller, Planner

**CC:** James N. Torri, Planning Director

**SUBJECT:** Honorary Street Name (Louise F. Nichols)

**BACKGROUND**

The applicant, Synathia Harris, has submitted an application for an honorary street name designation for Louise F. Nichols due to her contributions to the community and the local public schools. Ms. Nichols worked within Joliet Public School District 86 for over 30 years, initially as a teacher at Gompers Junior High and finishing her career as principal at Washington Junior High, before her retirement in 1999. According to the petition, she uplifted the school and students by encouraging personal improvement and growth among the students and among Joliet’s youth in general. She was also involved with a number of local organizations that served the community, including Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority Inc., where she was involved with programs that promoted education, financial literacy, and voter education, among other things (see attached letter).

The applicant proposes to designate the section of 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue between Union Street and Mississippi Avenue as “Louise F. Nichols Drive.” This street section is adjacent to Washington Junior High, where Ms. Nichols served as principal for 6 years. Approximately 50% of the adjoining property owners have signed the attached Honorary Street Name Application.

**STAFF RECOMMENDATION**

Based on the information provided, staff recommends that the Land Use and Economic Development Committee recommends approval of the honorary designation of 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue between Union Street and Mississippi Avenue as “Louise F. Nichols Drive.”

4<sup>th</sup> Avenue between Union Street and Mississippi Avenue



**PETITION FOR HONORARY STREET NAME APPLICATION - JOLIET**

**Name of Honoree:** Louise F. Nichols  
(As it would appear on the street sign)

**Proper Street Name:** Louise F. Nichols Drive.

**Intersecting streets at each end of the street segment to be designated:**

4th and Richards St                      4th between Union St and  
Ave    Mississippi Ave

Please check all that apply and give a brief explanation of the applicable criteria. A street can be named for an individual, place or event.

**Individual**

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**Place**

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**Event**

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**Cultural Impact to the City:**

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**Historical impact to the City:**

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     **Humanitarian efforts:**

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**Close association with Joliet:**

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**Geographical relationship of the street to the area of interest of the nominee:**

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     **Responsible for an accomplishment of local, regional, national of international significance:**

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Angel,

Here is the information that I put together for the street dedication. You are welcome to update and or change anything you see fit and thank you for taking charge of this.

Thanks Again,

Kala 😊

**Individual:**

As a person who has worked over 30 years in education, she has helped mold generations become exceptional adults, parents, and leaders.

**Geographical relationship of the street to the area of interest of the nominee:**

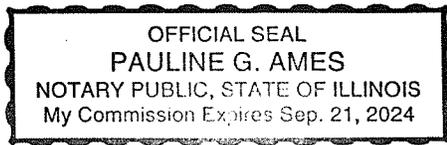
She finished her career at Washington Jr. High School located at the corner of 4<sup>th</sup> and Richards street. This is the place where she left one of her greatest marks. She not only uplifted the school and the students but also the community where she encouraged the kids to be better and to accept nothing but the best.

**Close Association with Joliet:**

Anyone who knew Mrs. Nichols knew that she was Joliet thru and thru. She was not only an Educator, she was a member of several organizations that continually and consistently helped those who were in need and underserved.

I, Synathia Ames, depose and say that the above statements are true and correct to the best of my knowledge and belief. I agree to be present in person or by representation when this petition is heard before the Joliet Land Use & Economic Development Committee.

Signature of Applicant: Synathia Ames Date: 8/22/2024



Subscribed and sworn to before me this 22nd day of August, 2024.  
Pauline G. Ames

Applicant's Address: Calumet Park Phone No.: 815-791-6711  
E-mail Address: harrissynathia@gmail.com

Submit completed form to:

City of Joliet  
Attn: James N. Torri, Director  
Planning Division  
Community Development  
150 W. Jefferson Street  
Joliet, IL 60432  
Phone: (815)724-4050  
Email: zoning@joliet.gov

City of Joliet Web Site: [Joliet.gov](http://Joliet.gov)





Theresa R. Rouse, Ed.D.  
*Superintendent of Schools*

Aracelis C. Popadich  
*Board and Superintendent Secretary*

**Board of School Inspectors**

Elvis L. Madison, Jr., *President*

Jesse M. Smith, *Vice President*

Gwendolyn R. Ulmer

R. Emil Standfield

Matthew J. Pritz

Sandra Aguirre

Delia Ulloa-Jimenez

August 22, 2024

To Whom It May Concern:

Louise Nichols began her educational career with Joliet Public Schools District 86 as a teacher in 1966 at Gompers Junior High. She later was promoted to a Dean/Counselor at the school and stayed in that position for 18 years. Louise was then promoted to Assistant Principal at Hufford Junior High in 1990. In 1993, she became the principal at Washington Junior High and served at the school until her retirement in June of 1999.

Louise was a part of the Joliet Public Schools District 86 family for 33 years. I am pleased to support a recognition in her honor for her commitment to our students and families. Please feel free to contact me at (815) 740-3196 if I can be of further assistance.

Sincerely,

Dr. Theresa R. Rouse  
Superintendent

# **Soror Louise Nichols**

## Street Dedication

Alpha Kappa Alpha's mission is to cultivate and encourage high scholastic and ethical standards, to promote unity and friendship among college women to study and help alleviate problems concerning girls and woman in order to improve their social stature to maintain a progressive interest in college life and to offer service to all mankind and Soror Louise worked diligently to fulfill the goals of the Sorority.

She was a delight to the chapter. She honestly tried to do everything right, She was careful and hard-working. Soror Louise was a member of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority Inc. Kappa Mu Omega Chapter; The local chapter in Joliet, Illinois. She was initiated in this chapter in 1976 then served for the last 47 years. She was actively engaged in the chapter's goals and activities. Even after relocation to another state, she returned for monthly meetings and to participate in chapter activities.

This last year she was unable to travel, but she continued to donate money to pay for sorors, who were not financially able to attend national and regional meetings. She continued to donate money to scholarship and other programs.

She played a role in many of our own programs. However Education was her strong suit. In the area of education, she provided learning experiences

and opportunities that promoted communication skills in reading, writing, speaking and academic achievement in math, science and technology for our youth in the Joliet and surrounding area. She provided nurturing workshops with a focus on the importance of proper physical and emotional health. I.e; exercise, well balanced meals, rest and relaxation, the avoidance of drugs, tobacco use, smoking, alcohol use, and early pregnancy. She further conducted workshops on team building and relationship respect for self and others.

She directed a summer tutoring camp that focused on again writing and speaking for our local youth. She provided forums that taught etiquette manners.

In the area of career development with younger adults she invited professionals to conduct seminars on nontraditional careers. I.e; court stenographers, and curators. She was involved in the development of workshops that address the issues of sexual harassment, gender discrimination and employment assistance. She played a major role in matching undergraduates to graduate with similar professional interest for career mentoring. Soror Nichols was well known in the community. As a respected teacher / principal the students loved her so it was easy to engage the students.

In the area of Economics. She addressed the importance of financial empowerment. She would always remind us members that MLK, Jr. said "Financial freedom is worth fighting for." She enlisted expos for discussion

on money management, credit, personal planning, and retirement. She further used a quote from Dr. MLK Jr. Don't wait for financial change. "Create it".

Financial literacy is one of the Sororities major program targets; the workshops she designed steered participants in the right direction of position financial health. Her monthly workshops enrolled information on investment, savings, life insurance, estate planning.

Black Business. She participated in "Black Dollar Days". She purchased on the days designated but continued her participation, and supported black business. She helped to propel the black owned business to new heights in the Joliet area.

Global impact. She showed a commitment to global impact. Donating generously to Africa. Giving money to feed hundreds of children and women. That included two meals a day and snacks. Donations of clothing, dresses and shoes were donated as a result of her generous donations to her beloved organization and chapter.

Locally she developed and implemented a series of family workshops. These workshops focus on all stages of the Black Family Life (both - golden years.) These seminars focused on parenting skills, male/female relationships, career to retirement.

Most recently she focused on voter education. Plan programs to educate the community and help to inform the community by encouraging others to vote. Voter registration. She hosted a voter registration drive. Voter mobilization. She helped mobilize volunteers to help voters to the polls. She encouraged early voting. Educated the community about absentee ballots and voting absentee.

Soaring to the polls is a chapter focus. Your voice counts and we can make a difference. When we all bote saud Soror Louise,. She led the change in her chapter.

Sorors forty seven years of service did not go unnoticed in the Joliet community. She empowered students to conquer learning challenges, build confidence and unlock their potential. She performed unpaid services for the entire benefit and betterment of the entire community. Her work through the local chapter provided many services to the children, families and seniors that were at a disadvantage.

**RESOLUTION NO. \_\_\_\_\_**

**A RESOLUTION APPROVING AN HONORARY  
STREET NAME DESIGNATION FOR LOUISE F. NICHOLS  
(4<sup>th</sup> Avenue, between Union Street and Mississippi Avenue)**

**WHEREAS**, Louise F. Nichols served in numerous roles within Joliet Public School District 86 for over thirty years during her educational career; and

**WHEREAS**, Louise F. Nichols worked for the betterment of students and youth within Joliet; and

**WHEREAS**, Louise F. Nichols was actively involved in many aspects of community enhancement, such as voter education, youth tutoring and career development, and financial literacy, through her work with the local chapter of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority Inc.; and

**WHEREAS**, approximately 50% of the adjoining property owners have signed the approval for the honorary street name designation to Louise F. Nichols Drive.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF JOLIET, ILLINOIS AS FOLLOWS:**

**SECTION 1:** The honorary designation of 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue between Union Street and Mississippi Avenue to be designated as “Louise F. Nichols Drive” is hereby approved.

**SECTION 2:** This Resolution shall be in full force and effect from and after its passage, approval, and recording, according to law.

**PASSED** this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2024

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**MAYOR**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**CITY CLERK**

**VOTING YES:** \_\_\_\_\_

**VOTING NO:** \_\_\_\_\_

**NOT VOTING:** \_\_\_\_\_