

# City of Philadelphia



Council of the City of Philadelphia  
Office of the Chief Clerk  
Room 402, City Hall  
Philadelphia

(Resolution No. 250135)

## RESOLUTION

Honoring and celebrating Yvonne Newkirk as a pillar of her community for her relentless work to improve the lives and protect the dignity of people who are incarcerated across Pennsylvania, on the occasion of Black History Month.

WHEREAS, Yvonne Newkirk was born here in Philadelphia, the middle child of five children. She has an older sister and brother and a younger sister and brother, and she grew up in Mt. Holly, New Jersey, and Philadelphia. She graduated from high school, trade school at The National school of Health Technology, and community college here in Philadelphia. She worked at the University of Pennsylvania Hospital for 31.5 years, starting phlebotomy before moving to kidney transplants, and prior to that at Hahnemann for 2 years and St. Agnes briefly; and

WHEREAS, She got into her work because of her brother, Edward Ball, who was incarcerated at Dallas Prison for 5-10 years for possession of a firearm. Edward had sent her a notice several years ago of an event for former District Attorney Seth Williams entitled “Get a Heart,” occurring during the resentencing of Anthony Wright; and

WHEREAS, Edward served 8 years of his sentence before dying of COVID in 2020. She had to tell the news to her daughter Stacey, who is incarcerated with a life sentence at SCI Muncy; when her daughter refused to room with a COVID-positive roommate, she was sent to the hole; and

WHEREAS, When her daughter was incarcerated on State Road, she told Yvonne about a program called Books Through Bars, where Yvonne started volunteering. Yvonne got a list of 15 people and would ensure that Books Through Bars sent them books. She became very involved since; and

WHEREAS, Yvonne subsequently got involved with the Pennsylvania Prison Society, and has now been to 17 state prisons and every county prison on State Road. She is a part of the Membership Committee of the Coalition to Abolish Death By Incarceration (CADBI), and sends out quarterly newsletters to incarcerated people updating them on the efforts to change laws and

# City of Philadelphia

*RESOLUTION NO. 250135 continued*

rally support for people behind bars. She is involved with the Human Rights Coalition, which fights for the rights of every person behind bars; and

WHEREAS, Yvonne is a member of Beloved St. John Evangelistic Church, and is a steadfast reader of the bible. She believes that while we may not understand why we have to go through pain, that nothing is given that cannot be withstood, and she has found purpose in living a good life and helping others; and

WHEREAS, The people on the outside who have been supportive of Yvonne and her daughter Stacey, waking up at 2:00 am to travel, are the only way Yvonne has been able to continue this fight. The letters thanking her for writing and visiting keep her going at the age of 70; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, THAT THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA, Honors and celebrates Yvonne Newkirk as a pillar of her community for her relentless work to improve the lives and protect the dignity of people who are incarcerated across Pennsylvania, on the occasion of Black History Month.

FURTHER RESOLVED, That two Engrossed copies of this resolution be presented to Yvonne Newkirk, and to the Coalition to Abolish Death By Incarceration, as an expression of the gratitude and admiration of the Council of the City of Philadelphia.

# City of Philadelphia

*RESOLUTION NO. 250135 continued*

CERTIFICATION: This is a true and correct copy of the original Resolution, Adopted by the Council of the City of Philadelphia on the twentieth day of February, 2025.

Kenyatta Johnson  
PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL

Elizabeth McCollum  
CHIEF CLERK OF THE COUNCIL

Introduced by: Councilmember Brooks

Sponsored by: Councilmembers Brooks, Phillips, Gauthier, Thomas, Landau,  
Young, O'Rourke and Bass