

City of Philadelphia



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

(Resolution No. 230316)

RESOLUTION

Honoring and thanking Gweny Love Owens, on the occasion of Earth Day, for her work on environmental justice and sustainability.

WHEREAS, Gweny Love Owens is a native of the Mantua neighborhood of West Philadelphia. She still calls Mantua home and continues this neighborhood's historic tradition as a community of neighbors helping neighbors; and

WHEREAS, Being in nature has always been Gweny's favorite escape from the concrete jungle. As a child, she participated in a garden club, where she spent hours indulging in the sweetness of wild honeysuckles and chasing butterflies. She still fondly recalls summer days when she would lay on her back and look up at the tall swaying trees, pondering the beauty and splendor that surrounded her and awakened her senses. Gweny's love for gardening and her community is palpable, and is felt in every collaboration, initiative, and conversation in which she is involved; and

WHEREAS, Gweny's passion for gardening continued into adulthood. She established Mantua Worldwide Community, Incorporated to make her community, and others across the city, more healthy, beautiful, and sustainable; and

WHEREAS, Much of Gweny Love's life work has been centered on developing and promoting programming that heals the earth and the community at the same time. This includes urban farming and gardening, honoring nature, community cleanups, conversation, and preservation. Because of her work in these areas, Gweny is frequently referred to as "Farmer Girl" by her neighbors; and

WHEREAS, Last year, the College of Physicians of Philadelphia contracted Gweny to establish, organize, recruit, and host the first annual Legacy 100 Garden Party inside the Benjamin Rush Medicinal Garden. The event was so successful she has been asked to plan the second iteration this May; and

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WHEREAS, Gweny Love has won three PENNCares grants for her garden programming in collaboration with medical students from the University of Pennsylvania. Gweny also partners the School of Public Health at Drexel University and Drexel's Urban Growers to organize monthly community cleanups; and

WHEREAS, Thanks to donations from the Philadelphia Horticultural Society and the College of Physicians, Gweny Love has planted hundreds of tulip bulbs and trees across Mantua, preserving the neighborhood's status as the tulip capital of Philadelphia and one of the most colorful communities each spring; and

WHEREAS, Gweny Love has been an active member of the Mantua Urban Peace Garden for eight years. She has also spearheaded youth garden programs at the Northern Home for Children, Morton McMichael School, the Chester Boys and Girls Club, the Science Leadership Academy, and the James Wright Recreation Center; and mentors countless college students and young people; and

WHEREAS, Gweny Love plans to expand her legendary Clean Green & Serene initiative beyond Mantua and into Powelton Village and Mill Creek, giving even more neighbors the opportunity to beautify their neighborhoods, build community, and connect with nature. Through Clean Green & Serene, she encourages her neighbors to utilize forms of transportation that do not cause pollution, or to carpool. She also teaches residents the correct way to dispose of household trash, as well as how to keep their sidewalk and lots clean; and

WHEREAS, During the startup stage of the Philadelphia Sustainable Business Network, Gweny Love served as an original member and editor under the auspices of the Mother of Sustainability, Judy Wicks, and focused on recognizing the importance of uplifting businesses committed to sustainable practices and a triple bottom line: profit, people, and the planet; and

WHEREAS, Neighbors coming together to clean and green their community creates bonds that improves health and well-being. Cleaning and greening reduce violent crime by 29% in the immediate area and mitigates contamination from carcinogens and microplastics. As the communities Gweny services experience a disproportionate amount of the gun violence, her work is a critical part of the City's comprehensive, place-based, anti-violence strategy. Gweny recognizes the intersection of nature and violence, which is why she partners with Physicians for Social Responsibility to inspire environmental consciousness and safe communities. The Philadelphia region is lucky to have her as a fearless champion and always-eager catalyst of using nature to improve health and safety; and

WHEREAS, Thanks to Gweny Love's ability to demonstrate nature's power to heal and bring people together, young people in Mantua and beyond will be able to carry on the tradition of sustainability and community building. As communities like Mantua experience the brunt of climate change's consequences, Gweny Love has empowered neighbors to mitigate some of the harms and the beauty of their block through gardening; now, therefore, be it

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RESOLVED, THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA hereby honors and thanks Gweny Love Owens, on the occasion of Earth Day, for her work on environmental justice and sustainability.

FURTHER RESOLVED, An Engrossed copy of this resolution be presented to Gweny Love Owens as a token of this body's respect and appreciation.

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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 April, 2023.

Darrell L. Clarke
PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL

Michael A. Decker
CHIEF CLERK OF THE COUNCIL

Introduced by: Councilmember Gauthier

Sponsored by: Councilmembers Gauthier, Brooks, Driscoll, Phillips, Lozada,
Gilmore Richardson and Squilla