

City of Philadelphia



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

(Resolution No. 100270)

RESOLUTION

Honoring the Life and Legacy of Dr. Dorothy I. Height.

WHEREAS, On Tuesday, April 20th, 2010, Dr. Dorothy I. Height, Past President of the National Council of Negro Women, 10th National President of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc., and a founding matriarch of the American civil rights movement departed this life as a true public servant dedicated to the issues of racial justice and gender equality; and

WHEREAS, Born in Richmond, Virginia on March 24, 1912, Dorothy Irene Height was raised in Rankin, Pennsylvania and as the valedictorian of her integrated high school won a national oratorical contest and \$1,000 college scholarship which she used to graduate from New York University in four years with Bachelor's and Master's Degrees in Tutorial Psychology; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Height began her professional career as a caseworker with the New York City Welfare Department but, at the age of twenty-five, she became a civil rights activist working with the Reverends Adam Clayton Powell Sr. and Jr. and joined the National Council of Negro Women and was recruited by Mary McLeod Bethune to work at the Harlem Young Women's Christian Association ("YWCA"); and

WHEREAS, In the 1940s, Dr. Height came to Washington, D.C. as the chief of the Phyllis Wheatley YWCA branch and, in 1944, she joined the national YWCA staff where, for approximately 31 years, she developed leadership training and interracial and ecumenical education programs and from 1947 to 1957 served as the 10th National President of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc.; and

WHEREAS, In 1957, Dr. Height was named President of the National Council of Negro Women, a position she held for 40 years, where she established a national reputation as a graceful and insistent voice for civil and women's rights and was often described as the "glue" that held the family of African American civil rights leaders together and during the height of the civil rights movement, Dr. Height organized

City of Philadelphia

RESOLUTION NO. 100270 continued

“Wednesdays in Mississippi,” which brought together black and white women from the North and South to create a dialogue of racial understanding; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Height was the consummate civil rights advocate and participated in protests in Harlem in the 1930s, lobbied first lady Eleanor Roosevelt on civil rights causes in the 1940s, prodded President Dwight D. Eisenhower to desegregate schools in the 1950s, encouraged Presidents Lyndon B. Johnson and John F. Kennedy to appoint African American women to positions in government in the 1960s, and has counseled various U.S Presidents, members of Congress, and world leaders; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Height worked on a Doctorate Degree at Columbia University and is the recipient of 36 honorary Doctorate degrees from numerous colleges and universities, including Harvard and Princeton, and she served as a visiting professor at the University of Delhi, India and served on numerous committees and in several roles, including but not limited to, a consultant on African affairs to the Secretary of State, the President’s Committee on Employment of the Handicapped, the President’s Committee on the Status of Women, National Advisory Council on Aging, and the advisory council of the White House Initiative on Historically Black Colleges and Universities; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Height received many awards and citations including but not limited to the John F. Kennedy Memorial Award, Hadassah Myrtle Wreath of Achievement, Ministerial Interfaith Association Award, Ladies Home Journal – Woman of the Year, Congressional Black Caucus – Decades of Service, President Ronald Reagan – Citizens Medal, President Franklin Roosevelt – Freedom Medal, Essence Award, Camille Cosby World of Children Award, Caring Institute – Caring Award, NAACP – Springarn Medal, National Women’s Hall of Fame, President Bill Clinton – Presidential Medal of Freedom, and President George W. Bush – Congressional Gold Medal; and

WHEREAS, Upon her passing, President Barack Obama called her “the godmother of the Civil Rights Movement and a hero to so many Americans” where she “devoted her life to those struggling for equality . . . witnessing every march and milestone along the way”; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA,
That we hereby honor the life and legacy of Dr. Dorothy I. Height.

City of Philadelphia

RESOLUTION NO. 100270 continued

City of Philadelphia

RESOLUTION NO. 100270 continued

CERTIFICATION: This is a true and correct copy of the original Resolution, Adopted by the Council of the City of Philadelphia on the twenty-second of April, 2010.

Anna C. Verna
PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL

Michael A. Decker
CHIEF CLERK OF THE COUNCIL

Introduced by: Councilmembers Tasco, Reynolds Brown, Sanchez, Goode and Miller

Sponsored by: Councilmembers Tasco, Reynolds Brown, Sanchez, Goode, Miller, Greenlee, DiCicco, Kenney, Council President Verna, Councilmembers Krajewski, Green, Jones, Kelly, Rizzo, Blackwell, Clarke and O'Neill