

City of Philadelphia



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

(Resolution No. 250309)

RESOLUTION

Declaring April 2025 as National Poetry Month in the City of Philadelphia and recognizing the profound impact of poetry on Philadelphia's cultural, educational, and social landscape.

WHEREAS, National Poetry Month was established by the Academy of American Poets in April 1996 and is celebrated annually in April to encourage individuals of all ages to write, read, and share poetry in an effort to remind us of poetry's significance to our culture; and

WHEREAS, The Academy of American Poets, founded in 1934 is a national, member supported organization that champions American poetry and poets and fosters appreciation for the art form through various initiatives including National Poetry Month, Teach This Poem, Poetry Coalition, American Poets magazine, Poets.org, Poem-a-Day, and numerous poetry awards; and

WHEREAS, Declaring April to be National Poetry Month honors the City of Philadelphia's rich poetic heritage, celebrates contemporary contributions, and acknowledges the transformative work of local poets and organizations. Poetry and poets have had a profound impact on Philadelphia, shaping its cultural identity, activism and artistic movements over the years through artistic and literary innovation; and

WHEREAS, Philadelphia has a storied history of poetic excellence, serving as home and inspiration to many influential poets, including Edgar Allan Poe, Ursula Rucker, Major Jackson, Yolanda Wisher, Sonia Sanchez and Trapeta B. Mayson who have contributed to the City's poetic vibrancy; and

WHEREAS, Sonia Sanchez was instrumental in advancing the Black Arts Movement using poetry as a tool for empowerment/activism. Ursula Rucker blends poetry with spoken word, performance, and music – influencing and collaborating with the City's hip-hop communities. CAConrad is a pioneer of avant-garde approach to contemporary poetry with their Somatic poetry movement; and

WHEREAS, Philadelphia's commitment to poetry is evident through a variety of ongoing institutions and projects, including but not limited to: The Philly Pigeon, the Moonstone Arts

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Center, Healing Verse Germantown: The Streets Are Talking, The Blue Stoop and Philadelphia Poet Laureate Program; and

WHEREAS, The City's dedication to integrating poetry into public life is showcased through public visual art and installations, including features numerous murals created through Mural Arts Philadelphia that incorporate poetic elements including the "A Love Letter For You" series by Steve Powers and "A Celebration of Poetry" by Parris Stancell. Public art installations supported by the Association for Public Art throughout the City honor poets and feature their poetic inscriptions; and

WHEREAS, Healing Verse Germantown: The Streets are Talking is an organization founded by former Poets Laureate Trapeta B. Mayson and Yolanda Wisner who use poetry workshops and public art to address the mental health impacts of gun violence in the Germantown community; and

WHEREAS, Declaring April National Poetry Month in Philadelphia acknowledges the enduring significance of poetry in shaping the City's identity, celebrating the contributions of past and present poets, supporting ongoing initiatives like Healing Verse Germantown, and encourages all residents to engage with the transformative power of poetry; now, therefore, be it.

RESOLVED, BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA, Hereby declares April 2025 as National Poetry Month in the City of Philadelphia and recognizes the profound impact of poetry on Philadelphia's cultural, educational and social landscape.

FURTHER RESOLVED, That an Engrossed copy of this resolution be presented to Yolanda Wisner and Trapeta B. Mayson, two renowned former poet laureates of Philadelphia, as evidence of the sincere sentiments of this legislative body.

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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 third day of April, 2025.

Kenyatta Johnson
PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL

Elizabeth McCollum
CHIEF CLERK OF THE COUNCIL

Introduced by: Councilmember Landau

Sponsored by: Councilmembers Landau, Phillips, Gilmore Richardson,
Gauthier, Brooks, O'Rourke, Driscoll, Squilla and Ahmad