

City of Philadelphia



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

(Resolution No. 240356)

RESOLUTION

Honoring the Founding of Sigma Pi Phi Fraternity, Inc. on the occasion of its 120th Anniversary.

WHEREAS, The Sigma Pi Phi Fraternity was founded in Philadelphia on May 15, 1904, at 508 South 10th Street, the home of Dr. Edwin C.J. Turpin Howard; and

WHEREAS, Sigma Pi Phi, a fraternity of college graduates and professional Black men, was born at the dawn of the 20th century during a time when intellectual and social interaction for men of color in their professional endeavors were closed or limited by virtue of race; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Henry McKee Minton, a pharmacist and later a physician, recognized and foresaw the need for African American men of distinction to interact with one another and become members of a close fraternal union for their mutual benefit and to enhance their underserved communities; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Minton was a pharmacist at Douglas Hospital, Philadelphia's first Black hospital, and later, after receiving his medical degree from Thomas Jefferson College of Medicine, was a co-founder of Mercy Hospital, the second Black hospital in Philadelphia; and

WHEREAS, These two medical institutions were beacons of hope that attracted Black professionals to Philadelphia for generations; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Minton (1870-1946) convened the first Boulé meeting of Sigma Pi Phi Fraternity with Dr. Edwin C.J. Turpin Howard (1846-1912), the first African American graduate of Harvard Medical School, who practiced medicine and hosted the meeting in his home; Dr. Algernon B. Jackson (1878-1942), Chief Surgeon at Mercy Hospital; and Dr. Richard J. Warrick (1880-1957), a dentist and fellow Mercy co-founder; and

WHEREAS, Two weeks later, they would be joined by Dr. Eugene T. Hinson (1873-1960), a graduate of the Medical School of the University of Pennsylvania who had joined the staff of Douglas Hospital, and Dr. Robert J. Abele (1875-1929), a graduate of Hahnemann Medical College and co-founder of Mercy Hospital; and

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WHEREAS, All six founders lived in a strictly segregated place and time, and they were further united by their dedication to providing quality healthcare to the African American community in Philadelphia; and

WHEREAS, Sigma Pi Phi, Alpha Boulé has been a source of strength, intellectual activism, and social engagement for Philadelphians of distinction in a variety of professions, including, for example: the Honorable Raymond Pace Alexander, City Councilman, Judge and civic leader; Dr. Bernard Watson, educator, civic leader and foundation president; Robert W. Bogle, newspaper publisher; the Honorable James Giles, Judge; the Honorable Leon W. Tucker, Judge; Dr. Maurice C. Clifford, physician and healthcare administrator; Dr. Edward S. Cooper, physician; Osagie Imasogie, Esq., business leader; the Honorable Rev. Dr. W. Wilson Goode, Sr., Mayor; the Honorable A. Leon Higginbotham, Jr., Judge, educator and scholar; Dr. Walter T. Lomax, physician, healthcare provider and business leader; Dr. Horace Mann Bond, President of Lincoln University; Gregory Deavens, corporate CEO; H. Patrick Swygert, President of Howard University; Dr. Melvin Chisum, physician; Dr. Bernard E. Anderson, economist; Rev. Dr. Alyn Waller, Pastor; the Honorable William H. Gray III, Congressman; and Dr. Patrick M. Oates, the 120th Anniversary Sire of the founding member boulé, Alpha; and

WHEREAS, Today, Sigma Pi Phi is a fraternity with over 150 member boulés, or chapters, throughout the United States, the Bahamas and London, that since its founding has consistently served as a beacon and a refuge for distinguished Black men like the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., Dr. W.E.B. DuBois, attorney Vernon Jordan, Dr. Benjamin E. Mays, the Honorable Ronald Brown, Attorney General Eric Holder, tennis great Arthur Ashe, Congressman John Lewis, and Ambassador Andrew Young; and

WHEREAS, Sigma Pi Phi has created and endowed an eponymous foundation that, among other things, provides significant scholarships to African American youth across the United States; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA, That we hereby honor the founding of Sigma Pi Phi Fraternity, Inc. on the occasion of its 120th Anniversary.

FURTHER RESOLVED, That an Engrossed copy of this Resolution be presented to representatives of Sigma Pi Phi Fraternity, Alpha Boulé, 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 twenty-fifth day of April, 2024.

Kenyatta Johnson
PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL

Elizabeth McCollum
INTERIM CHIEF CLERK OF THE COUNCIL

Introduced by: Councilmember Ahmad

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