

City of Philadelphia



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

(Resolution No. 110095)

RESOLUTION

Recognizing and honoring The Philadelphia OIC for its dedication to the elimination of poverty, unemployment and illiteracy to insuring a meaningful and productive quality of life for youth, adults and families within the Philadelphia community.

WHEREAS, OIC was founded in 1964 by the late Reverend Leon H. Sullivan as a response to the civil unrest in the "sixties" and the related lack of education and job opportunities, particularly for minorities; and

WHEREAS, With local companies refusing to open their doors to job applicants, Reverend Sullivan instituted a "selected patronage" campaign and for one full year, 400 ministers instructed their congregations not to buy certain products. When these same companies realized the economic impact this was having, they reconsidered their positions; and

WHEREAS, OIC opened its first training facility at 19th & Oxford Streets in North Central Philadelphia. From the modest beginning in an abandoned jailhouse, Reverend Sullivan and Reverend Thomas Ritter with a cadre of volunteers and staff over time opened local training sites in West Philadelphia, Germantown and the Fairmount section of the City; and

WHEREAS, This major initiative generated attention in Washington and President Lyndon Johnson visited Philadelphia and his impressions led to the beginning of federal funding for job training. This "movement" gained national attention giving rise to interest groups across the country in urban and rural areas, all seeking to replicate the OIC model; and

WHEREAS, At its apex, OIC had 100 affiliates, all operating under the philosophical banner of, "***Helping People Help Themselves***". This expansion led to the formation of OICs of America, the parent organization. Since its inception in 1964, OIC has served 3 million people world-wide and over 80,000 in Philadelphia alone; and

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WHEREAS, Reverend Sullivan believed that the most important civil rights was "economic civil rights" and rather than focus exclusively on equal accommodations as in the right to sit at the same lunch counter in a restaurant, why not aspire to OWN the restaurant. This focus led to the "10/36" plan- asking individuals in the community to invest \$10 per month for 36 months and this capitalized the building of Progress Plaza, one of the first black-owned shopping centers in the country. Over time this led to ownership and management of Progress Plaza in West Philadelphia, senior citizens homes, "Our Markets", an auto repair shop and other business ventures. Job Training and business ownership became the hallmark of OIC; and

WHEREAS, Reverend Sullivan over time positioned himself to be even more effective by joining the Board of General Motors and directing opportunities for minorities in management and dealer ownerships. He also created national corporate advisory committees to support his ongoing focus on JOBS and related corporate funding support. His development of corporate, community and political relationships, including Presidents of the United States led to funding but more importantly to him was opening the doors of opportunity for minorities across a broad spectrum of profit and non-profit arenas; and

WHEREAS, Reverend Sullivan in his later years turned his attention and energy to ending Apartheid, the oppressive political system in South Africa. This led to the "Sullivan Corporate Principles", a commitment by US corporations to stop doing business and that the financial impact would force the South African government to radically change. This "change" ultimately helped lead to the dismantling of Apartheid and the release of Nelson Mandela from jail after 27 years; and

WHEREAS, The close relationship between Mandela and Sullivan led to the replication of OICs in South Africa and over time the replication of OICs in Poland, Great Britain and the Caribbean. Moreover, the work in Africa led to the bi-annual Sullivan Summits, a gathering of African-Americans and African Heads of State to formulate mutually beneficial social, political and business relationships; and

WHEREAS, Reverend Sullivan began his historic journey in North Central Philadelphia and created a national network of education and training affiliates; the creation of businesses; opened the doors of opportunity for many formerly denied access; His legacy is being preserved and advanced through OIC of America headed by Reverend Sullivan's son, Howard: The International Foundation for Education and Self Help (IFESH) in Phoenix, Arizona, led by Julie, his oldest daughter: and the Sullivan Foundation, led by Hope Sullivan Masters, Reverend Sullivan's youngest daughter. Grace Sullivan continues as the matriarch of the Sullivan family and remains the inspiration for the work of OIC following the passing of Reverend Sullivan in 2001; now therefore be it

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RESOLVED, BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA, That The Philadelphia OIC be recognized and honored for its dedication to the elimination of poverty, unemployment and illiteracy to insuring a meaningful and productive quality of life for youth, adults and families within the Philadelphia community.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That an Engrossed copy of this resolution be presented to The Philadelphia OIC in recognition of the sincere appreciation 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 seventeenth of February, 2011.

Anna C. Verna
PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL

Michael A. Decker
CHIEF CLERK OF THE COUNCIL

Introduced by: Councilmember Clarke

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