

City of Philadelphia



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

(Resolution No. 241092)

RESOLUTION

Honoring the life and legacy of Robert Schwartz, the co-founder and former executive director of the Juvenile Law Center, and recognizing his lifelong dedication to juvenile justice and youth rights on a national and international level.

WHEREAS, Robert Schwartz was born on September 1st, 1949 to parents Nathan and Rose Schwartz in the Bronx, New York; and

WHEREAS, He earned his bachelor's degree from Haverford College in 1971 and a law degree from Temple University School of Law in 1975; and

WHEREAS, Bob lived in Mount Airy before moving to Center City in 2016. He enjoyed opera and the orchestra, went to Broadway shows often, and traveled to London for its theaters and culture many times. He was a devoted Phillies fan, world traveler, and had an immense personal collection of signed books and first editions; and

WHEREAS, Bob joined Marsha Levick and others to co-found the Juvenile Law Center in 1975, which is regarded as the country's oldest nonprofit public interest law firm for children, served as its executive director from 1982 to 2015; and

WHEREAS, Throughout his career spanning over four decades, Bob advocated for the rights of children and worked to address complex problems affecting children, including those surrounding foster care, parental rights, probation, and juvenile incarceration; and

WHEREAS, His advocacy and legal successes include eliminating the death penalty for juveniles, exposing the "kids for cash" judicial scandal in northeastern Pennsylvania, representing dependent and delinquent children in Pennsylvania juvenile and appellate courts, bringing class-action litigation over institutional conditions and probation functions; testifying in Congress before House and Senate committees; and speaking in over 30 states on matters related to children and the law; and

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WHEREAS, Bob served as chair of the American Bar Association's Commission on Youth at Risk and the Juvenile Justice Committee of the American Bar Association's Criminal Justice Section. He held the Phyllis W. Beck Chair in Law at Temple's Beasley School of Law in 2018 and 2019 and became visiting scholar there in 2019. He wrote dozens of scholarly papers and chapters that were printed by the American Bar Association, Fordham Law Review, Family Court Review, Stoneleigh Foundation, and other groups; and

WHEREAS, Bob received many awards and served on boards and committees throughout his career. He received the Mark Hardin Award, the Andrew Hamilton Award, Reginald Heber Smith Award, Livingston Hall Award, the Stephen M. Cahn Award, and the Haverford Award for service to humanity. He worked on the Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency from 1996 to 1999. He chaired the American Bar Association's Commission on Youth at Risk and served on boards and committees for the Philadelphia Youth Network, Human Rights Watch, and other child advocacy groups; and

WHEREAS, Bob Schwartz passed away on Tuesday, October 8th at the age of 77. He was an advisor, teacher, mentor, generous friend, and a devoted leader who was able to transform the field of youth rights through strategic partnerships, innovative advocacy, public discourse, and scholarship; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, THAT THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA, Hereby honors the life and legacy of Robert Schwartz, the co-founder and former executive director of the Juvenile Law Center, and recognizing his lifelong dedication to juvenile justice and youth rights on a national and international level.

FURTHER RESOLVED, That an Engrossed copy of this resolution be presented to the family of Robert Schwartz, 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-first day of November, 2024.

Kenyatta Johnson
PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL

Elizabeth McCollum
INTERIM CHIEF CLERK OF THE COUNCIL

Introduced by: Councilmember Landau

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