



City of Philadelphia

City Council
Chief Clerk's Office
402 City Hall
Philadelphia, PA 19107

RESOLUTION NO. 250587

Introduced May 29, 2025

Councilmember Young

RESOLUTION

Also naming Jefferson Street between Broad Street and 13th Street as “Donald ‘Ducky’ Birts Way.”

WHEREAS, Donald “Ducky” Birts was born in Camden, New Jersey, raised alongside his four siblings by the guiding force of his life, his late mother Frankie Mae Birts; and

WHEREAS, Birts attended Camden High School, where he excelled at basketball, football, baseball and gymnastics. Birts later ended up serving as an assistant coach and later as a coach at his alma mater; and

WHEREAS, He became the mainstay of his family at an early age, helping his mother make ends meet by selling newspapers and subsequently obtaining a job at the Garden State Race Track in Cherry Hill, New Jersey as a shoe shine boy; and

WHEREAS, He continued to work multiple jobs in his life, he was employed at the New York Shipyard, working on the “Kitty Hawk.” He was later employed at Walmart Tailors, first working as a stock boy and, at intervals, moving up to salesman, to manager and eventually to buyer; and

WHEREAS, It was through this job that he realized his “dream,” to own a business. He was able to make this dream a reality in 1964, when he opened a haberdashery called “Ducky’s Dashery” at 1119 Haddon Avenue in Camden; and

WHEREAS, In 1968, he relocated to Philadelphia, Pennsylvania where he met the Reverend Dr. Leon Howard Sullivan, the Pastor of Zion Baptist Church; and

WHEREAS, Reverend Dr. Leon Howard Sullivan became a helping hand in his quest to establish a “Ducky’s Dashery” in North Philadelphia. The place was at Progress Plaza, the first Black-owned shopping center in America; and

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WHEREAS, Although this task was met with many obstacles, he persevered with resilience and kept going, never giving up. He was able to meet people on all levels regardless of their race or ethnic origin, as he was a charismatic personality with a passion for helping others; and

WHEREAS, Beyond being a business man he was also an active member of his community, as an active member of Zion Baptist Church under the pastorate of The Revered Dr. Daly Barnes, Jr., he found time to align himself with several organizations, such as: the James W. Bell-Allen Lodge No. 97 Prince Hall Affiliation Masons Grand Lodge of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania with the Most Worshipful Grand Master, Earl C. Abrams; Executive Committee Member of the Philadelphia Branch NAACP under the presidency of Mr. J. Whyatt Mondesire; Circulation Manager of the Philadelphia Sunday Sun Newspaper; Member of the Philadelphia Club of Frontiers International; Member of the Police Advisory Board of the 14th District in Philadelphia; Member of the Board of Directors of Progress Investment Associated and Member of the Board of Directors of Zion Non-Profit Charitable Trust; and

WHEREAS, He was an active member of the political scene, serving as a committee person of the 50th Ward, second division. With the Honorable Marian B. Tasco as Ward Leader, he served on the Executive Committee. With his wide experience in politics, he later served as Special Assistant to U.S. Congressman Robert A. Brady of the First Congressional District; and

WHEREAS, He also coached with the Charles Baker League and a Trustee of the Sonny Hill League. Ducky was the Project Director of the Wade Wilson Football classic of Cheyney University from 1982 until 1997. During that time, more than 200 distinguished students received scholarships; and

WHEREAS, Ducky was inducted into the Hall of Fame by the Al Carino Basketball Club of South Jersey in February 1995. During Unity Week of the same year, in Philadelphia, he became the recipient of the WDAS AM/FM Award for “preserving and perpetuating our cultural heritage.” On October 16, 1999, he received a most prestigious award from Laborers Local 332, “The Sammie Award” under the leadership of Samuel Staten, Sr. ; and

WHEREAS, These are just a few of his many accolades. He has earned over 140 awards and citations, each one rightly awarded for his endless compassion; and

WHEREAS, He is the father of two sons. Mark, a resident of Camden, is a graduate of the Philadelphia Instituted of Arts and is self-employed as a songwriter, set designer, choreographer and vocal artist. Davis, the younger son, matriculated on an athletic scholarship at Eastern University and at Florida Memorial College, where he pursued studies in Sales, Advertising, and Marketing. Ducky is the proud grandfather of five; Daveisha, Ashley, Jade, David, Jr. and Tyler.; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA, That Jefferson Street between Broad Street and 13th Street shall also be named as “Donald ‘Ducky’ Birts Way.”

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FURTHER RESOLVED, That an Engrossed copy of this Resolution be presented to Donald “Ducky” Birts as evidence of the true and sincere admiration and respect of this legislative body.