

# City of Philadelphia



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

(Resolution No. 260180)

## RESOLUTION

Celebrating Cecelia Thompson, Delores Brown-Waters, Yvonne Hughes, IcyLee Lavern Basketbill, and Black women fighting for Disability Justice and accessibility for across Philadelphia, on the occasion of Women's History Month.

WHEREAS, As a recent member serving on the Philadelphia School Board, Cecelia Thompson has been a steadfast and courageous advocate for young people with disabilities, consistently leading efforts to secure equitable funding, meaningful support, and systemic reforms within public schools; and through her leadership, critical gaps in services and resources have been identified and addressed, resulting in improved educational access, stronger outcomes, and greater opportunities for students with disabilities across Philadelphia; and she has tirelessly uplifted and amplified the voices of the disability community, championing accessibility, inclusion, and dignity in schools and throughout the city; and, as a loving and dedicated mother to her adult son living with autism who is a graduate from the School District of Philadelphia and serves as her inspiration to continue advocating for students with disabilities in Philadelphia: In addition to her service on the School Board, she continues her advocacy as a dedicated Commissioner on the Mayor's Commission for People with Disabilities and serves on the Governor appointed Special Education Advisory Panel for the Pennsylvania; and

WHEREAS, Delores Brown-Waters has been a steadfast and courageous advocate for accessibility and disability justice in the City of Philadelphia, dedicating years of service to ensuring that individuals with disabilities are treated with dignity, respect, and equity; and as a devoted mother and tireless champion for her daughter, Ms. Brown-Waters has fought persistently to secure the educational, social, and community-based support systems necessary for her child to thrive, transforming personal advocacy into public action that benefits countless families across the City; and she has consistently demanded that schools, public spaces, and government institutions move beyond minimum compliance to embrace true accessibility, from ensuring physical accommodations for wheelchair users to advocating for the creation of safe sensory spaces that provide calm and supportive environments for individuals experiencing sensory overload; and through her leadership, lived experience, and unwavering voice, Ms. Brown-Waters has helped reshape conversations around disability rights insisting that accessibility be recognized not as a privilege, but as a fundamental civil and human right; and

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she has served as a vital bridge between grassroots advocates and government leaders, connecting community needs to policy solutions and fostering transformational change that strengthens equity, inclusion, and justice throughout Philadelphia; and Delores Brown-Waters' advocacy embodies resilience, compassion, and the enduring belief that every person deserves full access to opportunity, participation, and belonging within our City; and

WHEREAS, Yvonne Hughes began losing her vision at just 26 years old while raising five-year-old twins, facing a life-altering diagnosis with courage, resilience, and unwavering determination; and rather than allowing vision loss to define her limitations, Ms. Hughes transformed personal adversity into purposeful advocacy, dedicating more than four decades to championing the rights, dignity, and inclusion of individuals within the disability community; and over the course of 40 years, she has been a relentless voice for accessibility and equity, working to remove barriers that prevent people with disabilities from fully participating in civic, educational, and economic life; and her service extends beyond advocacy into direct community impact, as she has helped individuals and families secure shelter, supported recovery efforts, and ensured access to food and essential resources for those facing hardship, demonstrating a deep and abiding commitment to uplifting the most vulnerable members of her community; and Ms. Hughes has also advanced educational opportunity, promoting inclusive practices and improved access so that students with disabilities can thrive and achieve their fullest potential; and today, she continues to shape public policy as a trusted and respected adviser to City and State officials on matters of accessibility, equity, and disability justice; and in her service as a Commissioner on the Mayor's Commission for People with Disabilities, she brings lived experience, wisdom, and steadfast leadership to ensure that accessibility remains a central and non-negotiable priority in government decision-making; and Yvonne Hughes' life and legacy stand as a testament to the power of resilience transformed into advocacy, and to the enduring impact of leadership rooted in service, justice, and love for community; and

WHEREAS, Icylee Lavern Basketbill is a dedicated organizer and advocate who has worked tirelessly to strengthen services, supports, and community connections for young people and families affected by autism, drawing from both lived experience as a parent and professional expertise; and inspired by her daughter's diagnosis, she transformed personal advocacy into public service, working to bridge policy, research, and community needs to ensure families are informed, supported, and empowered; and as a Family and Community Liaison with the Policy and Analytics Center at the A.J. Drexel Autism Institute and a member of the Institute's Leadership Council, she elevates family voices in shaping research priorities, outreach strategies, and public policy solutions across Pennsylvania; and through outreach, education, workshops, and collaborative community initiatives, Ms. Basketbill continues to expand access to resources, highlight gaps in autism services, and strengthen networks of support for caregivers and individuals impacted by autism; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, THAT THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA, Hereby celebrates Cecelia Thompson, Delores Brown-Waters, Yvonne Hughes, Icylee Lavern Basketbill, and Black women fighting for disability justice and accessibility for across Philadelphia, on the occasion of Black History Month.

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*RESOLUTION NO. 260180 continued*

FURTHER RESOLVED, That four Engrossed copies of this Resolution be presented to Cecelia Thompson, Delores Brown-Waters, Yvonne Hughes, and Icylee Lavern Basketbill as evidence of the admiration and respect of this Council.

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*RESOLUTION NO. 260180 continued*

CERTIFICATION: This is a true and correct copy of the original Resolution, Adopted by the Council of the City of Philadelphia on the fifth day of March, 2026.

Kenyatta Johnson  
PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL

Elizabeth McCollum  
CHIEF CLERK OF THE COUNCIL

Introduced by: Councilmember Brooks

Sponsored by: Council President Johnson, Councilmembers Brooks, Phillips, Gilmore Richardson, Landau, Lozada, O'Rourke, Driscoll, Squilla and Bass