

City of Philadelphia



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

(Resolution No. 090250)

RESOLUTION

Congratulating Dominic M. Cermele for his enormous contributions and lifetime of service to Girard College and to the City of Philadelphia.

WHEREAS, Dominic M. Cermele will retire in June after serving for the past six years as the 15th president of Girard College, one of the world's first residential schools for children from single-parent families with limited financial resources; and

WHEREAS, In choosing to head the school in which he was educated and came of age, he capped a distinguished career of public service as a Philadelphia city official and elected judge in Philadelphia traffic court; and

WHEREAS, During the weekend of May 15-18, he and his classmates will celebrate the 50th anniversary of their graduation from Girard College High School; and

WHEREAS, Cermele was born in Philadelphia on October 27, 1941, the middle child and only son of Pasquale and Rita Cermele; and

WHEREAS, Two years after his father's death, Cermele entered Girard College as a student on September 13, 1948, graduating in June 1959; and

WHEREAS, After attending Girard College, Drexel University and Cheyney State University, Cermele has spent his life and career in the city of his birth. Starting as first deputy chief clerk, he was elected to two consecutive terms as traffic court judge beginning in 1981; and

WHEREAS, In 1989, Cermele resigned his judicial commission and joined the administration of Mayor W. Wilson Goode as Deputy Finance Director, assigned to develop a new city department to handle the resolution of disputed parking tickets in a non-judicial, civil process; and

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WHEREAS, When Mayor Edward G. Rendell combined the Bureau of Administrative Adjudication and the Tax Review Board in 1995, he appointed Cermele as executive director of the newly-created Office of Administrative Review; and

WHEREAS, In 1992, Cermele was appointed to the Board of Directors of City Trusts and in 1996 became a founding member and chairman of the Girard College Board of Managers, a group of distinguished civic, business, and education leaders who help guide the college's academic program; and

WHEREAS, Cermele resigned his lifelong appointment to the Board of Directors of City Trusts and the Board of Managers when he was named president of Girard College; and

WHEREAS, His experiences as a student at Girard while it was still an all-boys' orphanage have informed his passion and decision-making as the school's president; and

WHEREAS, He has presided over the growth of the school's enrollment from 590 boys and girls in grades 1 through 12 in 2003 to 751 in 2007-2008; and

WHEREAS, During his tenure, Girard has become a center for year-round use of its facilities by children at the school and from the community-at-large. More than 1,000 children participate in the summer day camp programs. In 2007, Girard College hosted Girls Rock Philly – a first in the City of Philadelphia; and

WHEREAS, His civic experience as a board member of CATCH influenced him to expand Girard's behavioral health component, establishing the department of counseling and family services in January 2008; and

WHEREAS, After the sudden death of his older daughter in October 2008, he and his wife Barbara created the Donna Cermele Cacia Memorial Fund, to benefit the department's programs and special services; and

WHEREAS, Besides raising more than \$2.5 million for Girard by spearheading its annual Gala fundraiser and other special events, Cermele has led efforts to modernize Girard's aging physical plant and superstructure. The roof of Founder's Hall, its National Historic Landmark, was completely replaced in 2007. The \$1.4-million project was financed by alumni and donors, a state Keystone grant and the second-largest Save America's Treasures grant in Pennsylvania; and

WHEREAS, The artist-in-residence program has been greatly expanded, with two resident dance troupes in 2007 and 2008, and a theater performance group in 2009; and

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WHEREAS, In 1998, he endowed the Pat and Rita Cermele Distinguished Service Award, a fund now valued at \$40,000. The award, with attendant monetary gift, is given annually to an outstanding instructional or residential faculty member of the boarding school; and

WHEREAS, Cermele has been active as a civic leader, particularly at Girard both as a member and former president of the Girard College Alumni Association. In addition to current membership on a number of governmental boards and authorities, he is active in community and civic organizations in both South Philadelphia and in the neighborhoods adjacent to Girard College in North Philadelphia; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA, That Council does hereby congratulate Dominic M. Cermele for his enormous contributions and lifetime of service to Girard College and to the City of Philadelphia.

FURTHER RESOLVED, That the City Council of Philadelphia does further commend Dominic M. Cermele for exemplifying the highest ideals of civic duty, service to the less fortunate, and dedication to the common good, -- proving himself a true son of Stephen Girard, who said, "My deeds must be my life."

FURTHER RESOLVED, That an Engrossed copy of this resolution be presented to Dominic M. Cermele as evidence of the sincere sentiments and recognition 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-sixth of March, 2009.

Anna C. Verna
PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL

Patricia Rafferty
CHIEF CLERK OF THE COUNCIL

Introduced by: Councilmember Kenney, Council President Verna,
Councilmembers DiCicco, Clarke, Reynolds Brown, Jones, and
Tasco

Sponsored by: Councilmember Kenney, Council President Verna,
Councilmembers DiCicco Clarke, Reynolds Brown, Jones,
Tasco, Greenlee, Goode, Blackwell, Krajewski, Miller and Kelly