

Legislation Text

File #: 230691, **Version:** 0

Honoring and congratulating the Champions of the Week Akeiff Staples and Brent Johnstone, of FathersRead365, for their service and dedication to our local communities by expanding literacy and access to quality books for young people.

WHEREAS, Staples and Johnstone met in 1997 while playing football together at Temple University in North Philadelphia. While playing football in college they bonded over their passion for volunteer work. After almost two decades of serving their community as social workers and youth advocates, the two started reading to children at day care centers and schools to promote the importance of literacy; and

WHEREAS, Staples and Johnstone decided to start their non-profit organization, FathersRead365, in 2017 “in response to an overwhelming need to increase reading skills for children ages 0-6 in Philadelphia neighborhoods,” and it quickly became their full-time job; and

WHEREAS, Through FathersRead365, Staples and Johnstone teach the importance of books and literacy to the youth here in Philadelphia. The pair have donated over 170,000 books and counting with the goal of helping young people start and build personal home book collections; and

WHEREAS, Staples and Johnstone play an important role as African American men in an education system where Black men represent less than 2 percent of the United States’ educators. Representation is crucial within the school system to provide students with well-rounded and diverse learning experiences; and

WHEREAS, Staples and Johnstone recruited young men from the local community to participate in their literacy initiative, and have not only increased the presence of positive male role models in Philadelphia schools but have also played a crucial role in breaking down educational barriers and providing valuable opportunities for young men and women in the city of Philadelphia; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA, That we hereby honor and congratulate the Champions of the Week Akeiff Staples and Brent Johnstone, of FathersRead365, on their service to our local communities by expanding literacy and access to quality books.

FURTHER RESOLVED, That an engrossed copy be presented to Akeiff Staples and Brent Johnstone of FathersRead365, further evidencing the sincere admiration and respect of this legislative body.