

Legislation Text

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Also naming the 4000 block of Baring Street at the intersection of North Preston Street “Yolanda Laney-Basketball Way” to honor Yolanda Laney, Esq. for her trailblazing in women’s basketball and contribution to the next generation of women players.

WHEREAS, Laney grew up in West Powelton playing basketball at Canaan Baptist Church league where her mother, Betty Laney, coached her at 12 years old; and

WHEREAS, Laney went All-American playing basketball at University City High School, under its much-celebrated coach, Lurline Jones; and

WHEREAS, Under coach C. Vivian Stringer, Laney went on to lead Cheyney University Lady Wolves in a 20-game winning streak to the first ever Women’s NCAA Tournament in 1982, making Cheyney the first and only HBCU to make it to the Final Four; and

WHEREAS, Laney played professional basketball in Europe before continuing her studies at Temple Law School, and eventually becoming an attorney and working in Atlantic City for over 30 years, ultimately serving as Chief Public Defender; and

WHEREAS, Her love for the game still strong as ever, Laney served as Head Coach and Basketball Skills Instructor for Youth Empowerment Coalition for nearly 20 years; and

WHEREAS, Dawn Staley could be seen wearing Laney’s Cheyney #44 jersey during a South Carolina Gamecocks second-round game in March Madness 2023, sparking a long overdue conversation about the historic 1982 team; and

WHEREAS, The Lady Wolves were finally recognized by the Naismith Basketball Hall of Fame as” Trailblazer of the Game” in April 2024 over 40 years after making history; and

WHEREAS, In an atmosphere where women’s basketball is finally getting some of the attention it deserves, Coach Yolanda Laney, Esq. is a true trailblazer, inspiring and coaching yet another generation of women basketball players, including her daughter, Betnijah Laney, who plays for the WNBA New York Liberty; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA, That the 4000 block of Baring Street at the intersection of North Preston Street also be named “Yolanda Laney-Basketball Way” to honor Yolanda Laney, Esq. for her trailblazing in women’s basketball and contribution to the next generation of women players.

FURTHER RESOLVED, That an Engrossed copy of this resolution be presented to Yolanda Laney, Esq., in recognition of this occasion, further evidencing the sincere admiration and respect of this legislative body.