

## Legislation Text

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Applauding and honoring the efforts of the Garden State Underwater Recovery Unit, a non-profit organization of volunteer underwater rescue divers for its commitment to community service and for its courageous and valiant efforts in the search and recovery of Shane Montgomery who accidentally drowned.

WHEREAS, The Garden State Underwater Recovery Unit (GSURU) was originally formed in 1958 by five scuba divers from the area of Milford-Phillipsburg New Jersey. GSURU professionally incorporated as a nonprofit organization two years later in 1960; and

WHEREAS, GSURU was established by members who held a strong desire to serve the community in a positive through the passion for scuba diving, which was a relatively new sport in 1958; and

WHEREAS, Until the 1960s, the recovery of drowned victims was accomplished by dragging the river bottom with large grappling hooks. Steven Hardick, former GSURU Captain and a son to one of the founding members, realized that "there had to be a better way" to recover the bodies of those who had drowned; and

WHEREAS, With a commitment to service, 5 scuba divers decided to put their diving skills and equipment to work by forming a group of volunteers dedicated to diving area rivers and waterways at any time or place to search and rescue drowned victims so that their bodies could be returned to their families in a more humane manner and for a proper burial; and

WHEREAS, GSURU's mission is to recover the remains of drowned victims along the Delaware River. At the time GSURU launched, there were no guidelines or professional methods for such work; thus, GSURU began to develop a set of general rules and guidelines for performing the job safely and efficiently; and

WHEREAS, GSURU currently has 12 active divers and numerous support staff. Its mission has expanded to include the recovery of criminal evidence, light salvage work, under water inspections and public education in water safety. GSURU does not receive financial support from state of local government agencies and relies solely on donations; and

WHEREAS, On January 3, 2015 GSURU effectively ended the search for Shane Montgomery, a 21 year old West Chester University student and native of Roxborough who disappeared on Thanksgiving Day 2014 by recovering his drowned body and returning it to his family for a proper burial; now, therefore, be it

**RESOLVED, BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA,** That it hereby honors and recognizes the outstanding efforts of the Garden State Underwater Recovery Unit for more than 50 years of courageous service and commitment to the community.

**FURTHER RESOLVED,** That an Engrossed copy of this resolution be presented to the Garden State Underwater Recovery Unit as evidence of the sincere respect and appreciation of this legislative body.