

Legislation Text

File #: 150205, **Version:** 0

Recognizing and congratulating Drexel University Senior Christopher Gray for serving as an exemplary role model of entrepreneurship, and on the business success of his software application Scholly, designed to improve access to scholarship support for aspiring college students in Philadelphia and beyond.

WHEREAS, According to National Association for College Admission Counseling (NACAC), high school graduation peaked to 3.43 million students in 2010, declining slightly through 2014-15, but is expected to rise again to over 3.4 million by 2017; and

WHEREAS, Almost 21 million students enrolled in degree-granting postsecondary institutions in 2011, and the US Department of Education expects that the total number of college students will increase to 24 million through 2021; and

WHEREAS, According to NACAC, only 54 percent of high school graduates from the lowest income quintile enrolled in college in 2011, while African American and Hispanic heritage students made up almost 35 percent of the college aged-population, they represented on about 29 percent of post-secondary education enrollees; and

WHEREAS, College funding concerns are a reality for most college bound students and their families, while some academic funding is based upon academic performance or outstanding athletic achievements, many scholarship, grant, and loan programs have an income based component and are critical to making college more accessible to low income students who could not otherwise afford to attend college; and

WHEREAS, Matching the unique characteristics, strengths and financial need of individual students to available scholarship and financial aid programs can be complex and overwhelming, some on-line and published sources offer free information to students on financial aid sources, many national scholarship databases are licensed only to institutions, while other scholarship search software programs are costly; and

WHEREAS, Although Christopher Gray was the child of a teen-age mother, he did not let his circumstances define him, demonstrating an entrepreneur spirit at age 13, starting his own video-game delivery service; and

WHEREAS, Still in high school, Gray expended a great deal of time and effort finding and applying to college scholarship programs, and by graduation, Gray had been awarded \$1.3 million in college scholarships; and

WHEREAS, Gray is a Gates Millennium Scholar, a Horatio Alger National Scholar and a Coca Cola Scholar, amongst others; and

WHEREAS, Determined to help other students find scholarship money, as a finance and entrepreneurship major at Drexel University, Gray joined with two Drexel computer-science majors to help create Scholly, a scholarship search program that launched in 2013; and

WHEREAS, Scholly has received national attention by publications including Forbes, and USA Today, in addition, Scholly was chosen as one of Inc. Magazine's 2014 Top College Start-ups; and

WHEREAS, Gray recently appeared on the television program "Shark Tank" where he successfully pitched his business to obtain funding to expand his application. Since his television appearance, Scholly: Scholarship Search, by Scholly, Inc., is now a top-seller on iTunes as a 99 cent download and is available for iPhone and Android devices and the web; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA, That Council does hereby recognize and congratulate Drexel University Senior Christopher Gray for serving as an exemplary role model of entrepreneurship, and on the business success of his software application Scholly, designed to improve access to scholarship support for

aspiring college students in Philadelphia and beyond.

FURTHER RESOLVED, That an Engrossed copy of this resolution be presented to Christopher Gray as evidence of the sincere sentiments of this legislative body.