

Legislation Text

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Honoring and recognizing Joan C. Mazzotti for her exceptional leadership and dedication over the last 16 years as the Executive Director of Philadelphia Futures.

WHEREAS, On September 13, 2016, The Board of Directors of Philadelphia Futures announced that Joan C. Mazzotti will step down as Executive Director after 16 years of extraordinary service; and

WHEREAS, Ms. Mazzotti, a Long Island native with a bachelor's degree in political science from Rider University and a law degree from Villanova University, was a corporate lawyer for Aramark for more than 20 years, before she joined Philadelphia Futures as its third leader in the history of the organization; and

WHEREAS, Philadelphia Futures is a nonprofit organization that provides Philadelphia's low-income, first-generation-to-college students with the tools, resources and opportunities necessary for admission to and success in college; and

WHEREAS, Philadelphia Futures provides comprehensive, long-term, direct services and resources to students including academic enrichment, college guidance, one-to-one mentoring, career readiness and financial incentives; and

WHEREAS, As a result of the dedication and unwavering passion Ms. Mazzotti brought to her job, the work sometimes got personal. Ms. Mazzotti and her husband, Michael Kelly, a retired lawyer, mentored and became stand-in parents to a Philadelphia Futures student originally from Haiti who had lost his parents years earlier, and who went on to graduate from Haverford College; and

WHEREAS, "Joan Mazzotti's exceptional leadership over 16 years has shaped an organization that deeply understands and serves the needs of first-generation-to-college students," said Laura Williamson, Chair of the Board of Philadelphia Futures. "Joan's agility in transforming a vision to action with measurable results is evident in every part of the organization today from the depth and reach of the program to the loyalty and generosity of our donor base."; and

WHEREAS, Ms. Mazzotti's leadership of Philadelphia Futures is recognized not only in Philadelphia but around the country. Under her leadership, Philadelphia Futures has become a model of college retention and success for low-income, first-generation-to-college students; and

WHEREAS, In addition to launching new programs and initiatives including College Connection and Outreach Futures; and the organization's groundbreaking partnerships with colleges and universities which have leveraged over \$30 million in institutional financial aid for Philadelphia Futures' students, in 2011 Ms. Mazzotti led the successful merger of Philadelphia Futures with White-Williams Scholars; and

WHEREAS, In 2013, under Ms. Mazzotti's leadership, Philadelphia Futures received an unprecedented \$1 million gift which allowed it to increase the organization's reach; and

WHEREAS, Over Ms. Mazzotti's tenure, Philadelphia Futures' budget has more than doubled to \$3.3 million; its net assets have increased by more than 800% and most importantly, its six-year college graduation rate has risen from fifty to fifty-nine percent and over 500 Philadelphia Futures' students have received their college degrees; and

WHEREAS, Ms. Mazzotti said, "The year just ended was very strong; it was a triple if not a home run. We have an enormously talented and effective staff; Philadelphia Futures is financially sound; and our students and programs are thriving. As we enter the fifth year of our current Strategic Plan, we soon will need to embark on a new planning process; accordingly, it is time for me to pass the mantle to the person who will be implementing the blueprint for the organization's future."; and

WHEREAS, "I have had the best job in Philadelphia and I have loved every minute of it," said Mazzotti. "It is going to be very hard to walk away from my work with my colleagues, the students and their parents, our donors, volunteers, partners and friends."; and

WHEREAS, David O'Connor, Philadelphia Futures board member added, "This has been more than a job to Joan, it has been her mission, one that has included her entire family. While this work is never fully accomplished, for many past, present and future Philadelphia students, the work that Joan has led has been life changing."; and

WHEREAS, Although her work life may be ending, Ms. Mazzotti and her husband intend to continue volunteering for and contributing to nonprofit organizations that advocate for those in need; now, therefore, be it:

RESOLVED, THAT THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA, Hereby honors and recognizes Joan C. Mazzotti for her exceptional leadership and dedication over the last 16 years as the Executive Director of Philadelphia Futures.