

Legislation Text

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Honoring Mt. Airy Learning Tree on the 35th Anniversary of its founding.

WHEREAS, Barbara Bloom, the catalyst behind Mt. Airy Learning Tree and current member of its Advisory Board, had a lifelong dream of creating an affordable community education program that would bring a diverse group of residents together to learn from and get to know one another; and

WHEREAS, In 1980, Ms. Bloom approached both East and West Mt. Airy Neighbors, explained to them the conceptual basis for the program - neighbors teaching neighbors in community settings - and requested their co-sponsorship, which they agreed to provide; and

WHEREAS, The resulting program was named Mt. Airy Learning Tree, inspired by Gordon Parks' book *The Learning Tree*, which contains the phrase "Everything you need to know, you can learn under this tree"; and

WHEREAS, The learning tree was an apt metaphor for the early organizers' goals, and a fitting tribute to the talented people of Mt. Airy and the broader Northwest Philadelphia community from which Mt. Airy Learning Tree's first instructors and students were drawn; and

WHEREAS, Mt. Airy Learning Tree's first course catalogue, distributed in February of 1981, was a hand-assembled, single-sheet booklet offering 17 classes, which attracted 125 registrants; and

WHEREAS, Today, Mt. Airy Learning Tree offers more than 250 classes in each of its triannual terms, which together attract more than 5,000 students from 114 zip codes, and its professionally-designed catalogue is sent to a mailing list of 75,000 homes; and

WHEREAS, Mt. Airy Learning Tree's growth and continued success would not be possible without the tens of thousands of teachers, students, board members, staff, and others who share a passion for lifelong learning; a desire to share ideas, information and skills; and a belief in community-oriented exchange; and

WHEREAS, To participate in Mt. Airy Learning Tree's programs in any capacity is to meet people you might not otherwise meet, strengthen ties with your neighbors, engage in areas of common interest and passion, have fun, and ultimately better yourself and your community; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA, That Council does honor Mt. Airy Learning Tree on the 35th Anniversary of its founding.

RESOLVED FURTHER, That an Engrossed copy of this resolution be presented to Mt. Airy Learning Tree, evidencing the sincere admiration and respect of this legislative body.