File #: 180754, **Version:** 0

Honoring, recognizing, and celebrating Girard College for the 50th Anniversary of its desegregation.

WHEREAS, Girard College was founded and funded by Stephen Girard to house and educate the underserved, but was limited to "poor white male orphans", per Girard's will, and remained so, despite challenges, well into the 20th Century; and

WHEREAS, Legal challenges were begun by African-American lawyer and then 5th District City Council Member Raymond Pace Alexander in the 1950's. As a legal advisor on the famous *Brown v. The Board of Education,* Alexander likely anticipated a favorable Supreme Court ruling in that case, which would bode well for his campaign against Girard College's racial ban; and

WHEREAS, After making its way through the Courts, without hearing oral arguments, the U.S. Supreme Court unanimously reversed the ruling by the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania upholding the Board of City Trust's decision to deny admission to two African-American boys, citing the guidelines codified in 'Stephen Girards <http://northerncity.library.temple.edu/exhibits/show/civil-rights-in-a-northern-cit/people-and-places/girard--stephen> will. However, in an effort to circumvent the integration of Girard College following the Supreme Court's ruling, the 'Orphans Court <http://northerncity.library.temple.edu/exhibits/show/civil-rights-in-a-northern-cit/people-and-places/orphans--court> removed the Board of City Trusts as trustee of 'Stephen Girards <http://northerncity.library.temple.edu/exhibits/show/civil-rights-in-a-northern-cit/people-and-places/girard--stephen> estate and appointed 13 new trustees for Girard College, effectively making the school a private institution; and

WHEREAS, In 1965, Cecil B. Moore <http://northerncity.library.temple.edu/exhibits/show/civil-rights-in-a-northern-cit/people-and-places/moore--cecil-b->, Esq. saw his election as President of the local NAACP as a mandate for direct action on civil rights and a militant desegregation program that included Girard College <http://northerncity.library.temple.edu/exhibits/show/civil-rights-in-a-northern-cit/people-and-places/girard-college>. Unnerved by the race riots that had consumed North Philadelphia the previous summer, Moore promised to "rededicate Philadelphia's civil rights campaigns to improving the condition of African-Americans" and hoped to use the Girard College campaign as an outlet for the energy and frustrations of the black community; and

WHEREAS, Cecil B. Moore, Esq. led seven months of protest with a group teens and young adults known as the Freedom Fighters, around Girard College's walls, which attracted national media attention and participation from outside civil rights figures such as Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., CORE's James Farmer, National NAACP President Roy Wilkins; and

WHEREAS, Ultimately through legal challenges filed by Cecil B. Moore, the Federal courts ruled that African American students seeking admission to Girard College were denied equal protection under the 14th Amendment and concluded that they cannot be denied admission to Girard because of their race. The Third Circuit Court of Appeals unanimously upheld the ruling and the U.S. Supreme Court refused to hear an appeal of the Third Circuit Court ruling, thus paving way for the integration of Girard College; and

WHEREAS, Brave young men Theodore Hicks, William Dade, Carl Riley, and Owen Gowans III, personally took on the challenges of desegregating Girard College as its first students of color, and did so with considerable tenacity, strength and grace. A special exhibit is on view in Founder's Hall for the remainder of the 2018-2019 school year commemorating the history; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA, That we hereby honor, recognize and celebrate Girard College on its 50 years of desegregation.

FURTHER RESOLVED, That an Engrossed copy of this resolution be presented to Girard College and those who fought tirelessly to desegregate the school.