

Legislation Text

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Honoring and celebrating Philadelphia's Living Legends: Lynette Brown-Sow, Dr. Constance Clayton, Gregorio Pac Cojulun, Dr. Naomi Johnson-Booker, and the Honorable Frederica A. Massiah-Jackson, who are leaders in Philadelphia in their respective fields of behavioral health, education, art, music and the justice system, as part of the commemoration of Black History Month.

WHEREAS, Lynette Brown-Sow is a well-known leader in the education and behavioral health communities in Philadelphia. In her role as the Vice President of Marketing and Government Relations with the Community College of Philadelphia, Ms. Brown-Sow worked diligently at both local and national levels to ensure education for all. She worked with the American Association of Community Colleges, as well as the White House, to support tuition-free programs at community colleges and maintenance of funding for Federal Pell Grants. Ms. Brown-Sow also served as the Chair of the Board of Directors for The Consortium, a behavioral healthcare organization that pioneered the strategy of balancing the input of community leaders and medical experts to expand access to patient-centered behavioral healthcare models into individual neighborhoods. After 22 years with Community College of Philadelphia, Ms. Brown-Sow returned to her path of entrepreneurship as manager of L.M. Brown Management Group, a consultant firm she founded in 1980 that provides a range of professional services; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Constance Clayton has been recognized on numerous occasions for her contributions to Philadelphia's education system. She began her career in 1955 as an elementary school teacher with the School District of Philadelphia at the former William H. Harrison School. In 1973, she became the first Director and then Associate Superintendent of the Early Childhood Program for the District. In 1982, she was the first African American person to serve as the Superintendent of the School District of Philadelphia. Her work as Superintendent was characterized by her reputation for tackling the District's most difficult budgetary crises without cutting student services, and for partnering with businesses to procure resources and center the community around education. Dr. Clayton has been awarded numerous honors for her service to the education system, including becoming the first African American woman to have a professorship named for her at an Ivy League institution when the University of Pennsylvania established the Constance E. Clayton Professorship in Urban Education in 1992; and

WHEREAS, Gregorio Pac Cojulun has served his community for over 30 years, first as a block captain for the 5000 block of Osage Avenue, and then as the President of the Friends of Malcolm X Park organization. As the President of the organization since 1997, Mr. Cojulun spearheaded the transformation of Malcolm X Park, formerly Black Oak Park. Mr. Cojulun has worked tirelessly to make the park a point of pride for the community through initiatives like the Annual Jazz Heritage Series, where the park hosts free concerts featuring local jazz artists on evenings throughout the Summer, as well as the bi-annual Love Your Park Day. In 2011, he was awarded the annual Governor's Award for Outstanding Citizen in Crime Prevention for his stewardship of the park. Mr. Cojulun continues to serve as a community anchor in West Philadelphia, as well as the city at-large; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Naomi Johnson-Booker is the Founder and Chief Executive Officer of the Global Leadership Academy Charter School and has worked for more than 40 years in the field of public education. Dr. Johnson-

Booker started her career in education as a teacher with the School District of Philadelphia. She then went on to become a principal and an area superintendent, before retiring from the District in 2004. Dr. Johnson-Booker went on to become the Regional Vice President of the Keystone Alliance for Public Charter Schools, where she served until she formed the Global Leadership Academy in 2007. Dr. Johnson-Booker has received numerous awards and honors for her work in education, including an honor by the White House Initiative for Education Excellence in 2014, as well as the Philadelphia Martin Luther King, Jr. Association for Nonviolence Salute to Greatness Education Award in 2015; and

WHEREAS, The Honorable Frederica A. Massiah-Jackson is a remarkable and accomplished jurist who has spent her career serving the people of Philadelphia in numerous ways. Judge Massiah-Jackson obtained her Juris Doctorate degree from the University of Pennsylvania at only 23-years-old and went on to clerk for Justice Robert N.C. Nix on the Pennsylvania Supreme Court from 1974 until 1976. In 1983, she was elected to the Philadelphia Court of Common Pleas after working for 7 years at the Philadelphia firm Blank Rome. From 2001 to 2006, she sat as the President Judge of the Court of Common Pleas. In addition to her judicial service, Judge Massiah-Jackson has also served as an educator, teaching legal studies and business law at the Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania; now, therefore be it,

RESOLVED, BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA, That it hereby honors and celebrates Philadelphia's Living Legends: Lynette Brown-Sow, Dr. Constance Clayton, Gregorio Pac Cojulun, Dr. Naomi Johnson-Booker, and the Honorable Frederica A. Massiah-Jackson, who are leaders in Philadelphia in their respective fields of behavioral health, education, art, music and the justice system, as part of the commemoration of Black History Month.

FURTHER RESOLVED, That an engrossed copy of this resolution be presented to these Living Legends as further evidence of the sincere respect and admiration of this legislative body.