City Council
Chief Clerk's Office
402 City Hall
Philadelphia, PA 19107

Legislation Text

File #: 210123, **Version:** 0

Honoring Dr. Ala Stanford and the Black Doctors COVID-19 Consortium for their contribution to health and equity during the COVID-19 pandemic.

WHEREAS, Dr. Ala Stanford and the Black Doctors COVID-19 Consortium's mobile testing and vaccination clinics are trailblazers in community organization and equity during this public health crisis due to their barrier-free access to testing and vaccination in the hardest-hit communities; and

WHEREAS, A board certified pediatric surgeon, Dr. Stanford grew up in North Philadelphia knowing she wanted to be a doctor. She chose surgery as her specialty, defying expectations placed upon her. During medical school, she transcended the pressure to become a primary care physician, which is often less revered and lucrative than positions in leading hospitals and academic centers; and

WHEREAS, When the pandemic arrived in Philadelphia in early 2020, Dr. Stanford did not wait for someone else to reach communities in need. She recognized that African Americans were disproportionately affected by the virus. In Philadelphia, African Americans made up over half of cases. In fact, people living in majority Black counties were infected at three times the rate and dying at almost six times the rate of people living in majority white counties. This was due in part to pre-existing conditions, the high number of African Americans working essential jobs, and the history and institutional racism of African Americans being treated unfairly by the medical community, which impacted their access to testing. Initial testing sites required a medical appointment and to arrive in a car. Despite having taken multiple buses to reach testing sites, many African Americans were being turned away because they arrived on foot and/or lacked medical insurance; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Stanford used her own funds to purchase a first round of personal protective equipment and test kits and made house calls in a rented van. Next, she brought services directly to the hardest hit neighborhoods, utilizing churches, recreation centers, and school parking lots, including Miller Memorial Baptist Church in North Philadelphia, Enon Tabernacle Baptist Church in East Mount Airy, Pinn Memorial Baptist Church in West Philadelphia, and Mastery Charter Schools. The Black Doctors COVID-19 Consortium (BDCC) was born; and

WHEREAS, During BDCC's first 30 sessions, the group tested 6,000 people. Their work has endured and evolved as the pandemic continues to challenge Philadelphia. BDCC is now also providing COVID-19 vaccinations through their equitable community-based approach; and

WHEREAS, BDCC has overcome several challenges throughout the pandemic. For one, they have successfully operated on a shoestring budget, relying on donations to their Go Fund Me campaign. In the early summer, the City Council of Philadelphia successfully advocated for BDCC to get $1.3 million. Most recently, BDCC is working to maintain and build community trust and address vaccine hesitancy in the fallout of the Philly Fighting COVID scandal; and

WHEREAS, BDCC, an initiative of It Takes Philly, a 501c3 nonprofit organization, has expanded both its testing and vaccination efforts, regardless of whether or not they are fully reimbursed for their services. To date,

powered by Legistar™

they have tested over 24,000 people and vaccinated over 6,000, the majority of whom are African American. BDCC is the opposite of profit-driven. Instead, they are driven by their mission to educate and advocate for African Americans to reduce the incidence of disease and death from COVID-19; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA, That it hereby honors Dr. Ala Stanford and the Black Doctors COVID-19 Consortium for their contribution to health and equity during the COVID-19 pandemic.

FURTHER RESOLVED, That an Engrossed copy of this resolution be presented to Dr. Ala Stanford and BDCC as evidence of the sincere admiration of this legislative body.