



City of Philadelphia

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

Legislation Text

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Honoring the life and legacy of John Izzard, Jr., one of the first Black members of Philadelphia's rowing community and the first Black captain of the Undine Barge Club.

WHEREAS, John Izzard, Jr. was raised in North Philadelphia, pursued his undergraduate education at Cheyney University of Pennsylvania, and earned a master's degree from Pennsylvania State University; and

WHEREAS, In order to help young Philadelphia residents succeed, Izzard worked as the physical education director of the YMCA of Greater Philadelphia, a probation/parole officer for the City of Philadelphia, a youth counselor for the Philadelphia Youth Development Center of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, and as an educator for Philadelphia public schools; and

WHEREAS, Izzard participated in a wide range of athletic activities, including skiing, canoeing, SCUBA diving, windsurfing, sailing, cycling, swimming, track & field, martial arts, and paddle boarding; and

WHEREAS, In 1973, Izzard, having never rowed before, joined the Undine Barge Club after losing a bet that he could not stay afloat in a racing single boat; and

WHEREAS, After persevering against racism from other rowing clubs, Izzard was elected a full voting member of Undine in 1978; and

WHEREAS, Izzard was appointed Captain of Undine in 2007, becoming the first Black person to hold the position in any of the clubs of the Schuylkill Navy; and

WHEREAS, In 2013, the prestigious John Izzard Athleticism, Service & Achievement Award was created and is presented to student rowers who epitomize Izzard's qualities of athleticism, scholarship, and service; and

WHEREAS, Izzard died on September 9, 2022. He is survived by his wife and fellow rower of thirty-three years, Parthenia Izzard; and

WHEREAS, John Izzard, Jr. was a selfless community advocate, dedicated athlete, and relentless trailblazer whose legacy should be honored and commemorated; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA, That it hereby recognizes the life and legacy of John Izzard Jr., one of the first Black members of Philadelphia's rowing community and the first Black captain of the Undine Barge Club.

FURTHER RESOLVED, That an Engrossed copy of this resolution be presented to John Izzard Jr.'s wife, Parthenia Izzard, as evidence of the sincere respect and admiration of this legislative body.