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Renaming the Paschalville Library to the "Hardy Williams Library of Paschalville" in honor of Pennsylvania State Senator Hardy Williams, a distinguished politician and trailblazer for the African American community.

WHEREAS, Hardy Williams was born April 14, 1931, in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. He graduated from West Philadelphia High School and attended Cheyney State Training School, currently known as Cheyney University, before earning a Bachelor of Arts from Pennsylvania State University in 1952; and

WHEREAS, In 1949, Williams became the first African American to earn a varsity letter in basketball at Penn State, and he graduated in the top 20 of his class. He later matriculated at the University of Pennsylvania, where he earned his law degree; and

WHEREAS, Williams served his country honorably as a First Lieutenant in the United States Army from 1952 to 1954 during the Korean War, receiving the National Defense Service Medal, the Korean Service Medal, and the United Nations Service Ribbon; and

WHEREAS, Upon his return, Williams practiced law in Philadelphia and served as the Assistant City Solicitor for the City of Philadelphia from 1962 to 1968. In 1971 he made history as one of the first African Americans to run for Mayor of Philadelphia. Though not elected, his campaign laid the groundwork for the eventual election of Mayor Wilson Goode in 1984; and

WHEREAS, Undeterred by his mayoral loss, Williams continued his work in public service. He was elected to the Pennsylvania House of Representatives, serving from 1971 to 1974 and again from 1977 to 1982. As a legislator, he was a staunch advocate for racial equality, sponsoring numerous bills, including Act 288, which granted the same rights and benefits to all children regardless of marital status of the parents. He also co-founded the Pennsylvania Legislative Black Caucus; and

WHEREAS, In 1982, Williams was elected to the Pennsylvania State Senate as an Independent Democrat representing the 8th Senatorial District, which includes parts of West, South, and Southwest Philadelphia. During his tenure, he championed causes such as public education, social justice, and public assistance programs. He served as the minority chair of the Senate Public Health and Welfare Committee, chaired a taskforce on violence, and was appointed to both the Pennsylvania Commission on Sentencing and Pennsylvania Historical Museum Commission; and

WHEREAS, Senator Hardy Williams dedicated his life to public service and the advancement of African American communities. He passed away January 7, 2010; and

WHEREAS, Renaming the Paschalville Library as the Hardy Williams Library of Paschalville stands as a lasting tribute to his legacy, and reflects this legislative body's deep appreciation for his contributions to the City of Philadelphia; now therefore,

THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA HEREBY ORDAINS:

SECTION 1. The Paschalville Library is hereby renamed and dedicated as the

“Hardy Williams Library of Paschalville”

SECTION 2. This Ordinance shall take effect immediately.

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