

RESOLUTION

Honoring the life and legacy of esteemed Philadelphia entrepreneur and restaurateur, KeVen Parker.

WHEREAS, On Thursday, January 14, 2021, the City of Philadelphia lost a wonderful friend and a beloved mentor with the passing of KeVen Parker at the age of 57; and

WHEREAS, KeVen Parker was born and raised in West Philadelphia. He and his sister, Lynette Saunders, were raised by their mother, Joyce “Tootsie” Parker; and

WHEREAS, After graduating from Drexel University, KeVen worked in the Community Affairs Department for Comcast in the mid-1990s. During this time, KeVen also served as the Chairman of the Men’s Day Program at First African Baptist Church in South Philadelphia. In this role, KeVen hosted a successful breakfast event that catapulted him into entrepreneurship and a successful career in the restaurant business; and

WHEREAS, KeVen founded the Simply Delicious Catering company in 1996. Shortly thereafter, KeVen began running the food operation at Café 3801 in the University City section of West Philadelphia. In 2000, KeVen and his mother opened Ms. Tootsie’s Soul Food Café, one of his most successful ventures; and

WHEREAS, KeVen was known by all who knew him as a hardworking, dedicated, self-made businessman and one of Philadelphia’s great contemporary personalities. His business acumen was an inspiration to his peers and other entrepreneurs across the city and nation. KeVen’s style of leadership was very hands-on, as he would often clean and wait on tables alongside his staff; and

WHEREAS, KeVen was a pillar in his community and he committed his life to giving back to his community and making them proud. Through his Spread the Love campaign, KeVen donated groceries and meals to families in need. He also mentored and employed young men and women as he helped them get on the path to success. KeVen’s friends and family recall that he would take chances on young people when no one else would. KeVen’s self-named company, KPC’s community outreach program, the Youth Adult Division, gave many young men and women a start in their respective professions; and

WHEREAS, KeVen left a positive impact on many, as evident by the outpouring of grief and sadness throughout Philadelphia following his passing. KeVen's lifetime of giving and service to his community will be greatly missed; and

WHEREAS, KeVen is survived by his sister, three nephews, and an aunt, Laura Garfield. KeVen was loved by many, including his family, friends, employees, colleagues, and those who were directly or indirectly impacted by his generous and charitable endeavors; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA, That it hereby honors the life and legacy of esteemed Philadelphia entrepreneur and restaurateur, KeVen Parker.

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

Introduced By:
Curtis Jones, Jr.
Councilmember – 4th District
January 28, 2021

Co-sponsored By:
Darrell L. Clarke
Jamie Gauthier
Cindy Bass
Katherine Gilmore Richardson
Cherelle Parker
Derek Green
Allan Domb
Helen Gym
Mark Squilla
Kenyatta Johnson