

**ENROLLED ORIGINAL**

A CEREMONIAL RESOLUTION

24-48

IN THE COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

May 4, 2021

To recognize the history and the importance of DC Black Gay and Lesbian Pride, also known as DC Black Pride, to celebrate the efforts of the Center for Black Equity, and to welcome visitors from the greater Washington region, across the country, and around the world to the virtual festivities.

WHEREAS, DC Black Pride is an annual event to increase awareness of and showcase pride in the diversity of the LGBTQIA+ populations in the African American community, and to support organizations that focus on health disparities, education, youth, and families;

WHEREAS, from 1975 until 1990, the Club House was a premiere community gathering space for the African-American lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender community of Washington, DC and was notable for its annual Memorial Day weekend celebration, called the Children's Hour;

WHEREAS, Wilmore Cook, Theodore Kirkland, and Ernest Hopkins envisioned creating an event that would continue the tradition of the Children's Hour as well as raise much-needed funds for the HIV/AIDS organizations that served the African American community after the clubhouse closed its doors in 1990;

WHEREAS, with the Children's Hour as inspiration, the inaugural DC Black Pride was held on May 25, 1991 in cooperation with the DC Coalition of Black Lesbians and Gay Men and the Inner-City AIDS Network on the grounds of Banneker Field;

WHEREAS, as DC Black Pride grew in popularity and in programmatic offerings, organizers created a board of directors, created a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization, and officially established the Black Lesbian & Gay Pride Day, Inc.;

WHEREAS, since the birth of DC Black Pride, 40 other Black Pride celebrations now take place throughout the world and on four continents, with many using DC Black Pride as a model;

WHEREAS, during the 1998 festival, Black Lesbian & Gay Pride Day, Inc., and organizers of Black Prides from New York City, Detroit, Atlanta and several other cities formed the International Federation of Black Prides;

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WHEREAS, the International Federation of Black Prides later became the Center for Black Equity, and today the organization has more that 30 members and serves as the principal body through which organizers find support, raise funds, and share best practices;

WHEREAS, DC Black Pride is led by an Executive Board, which includes President Earl D. Fowlkes, Jr., Deputy Director Kenya Hutton, Operations Director C. Hawkins, Volunteer and Vending Director Genise Chamber-Woods, Special Advisor to the President/CEO Dr. José Miguel Román, and Media Advisor Anaré Holmes, all of whom plan and execute this annual event;

WHEREAS, May 22, 2021 through May 25, 2021, marks the 30<sup>th</sup> annual DC Black Pride celebration;

WHEREAS, the theme for this year’s celebration is “12 Months of Black Pride”;

WHEREAS, for more than 30 years, DC Black Pride has been an opportunity for the Black LGBTQIA+ community to gather and celebrate being both African American and members of LGBTQIA+ communities;

WHEREAS, DC Black Pride is the oldest and one of the largest Black Pride events in the world, drawing thousands of residents and visitors from around the globe;

WHEREAS, due to the ongoing COVID-19 global pandemic, the Center for Black Equity is forgoing in-person events in lieu of monthly virtual engagement experiences throughout the year, such as community conversations and panel discussions;

WHEREAS, DC Black Pride remains one of the world’s preeminent Black Pride celebrations, drawing more than 40,000 people to the nation's capital from across the United States, Canada, the Caribbean, South Africa, Great Britain, France, Germany, and the Netherlands and will carry that tradition this year and into the future;

RESOLVED, BY THE COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, that this resolution be cited as the “DC Black Gay and Lesbian Pride Recognition Resolution of 2021”.

Sec. 2. The Council of the District of Columbia recognizes and honors the hard work of everyone involved in organizing the 30<sup>th</sup> annual DC Black Gay and Lesbian Pride celebration.

Sec. 3. This resolution shall take effect immediately.