

ENROLLED ORIGINAL

A CEREMONIAL RESOLUTION

23-287

COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

September 22, 2020

To posthumously celebrate the life and legacy of former Georgetown University Basketball Coach and longtime Ward 4 resident John R. Thompson, Jr.

WHEREAS, John R. Thompson, Jr. was born on September 2, 1941 in Washington, D.C.;

WHEREAS, John R. Thompson, Jr. attended Archbishop Carroll High School in the Brookland neighborhood of Northeast Washington, D.C. and graduated in 1960;

WHEREAS, while at Archbishop Carroll High School, John R. Thompson, Jr. excelled at basketball, leading the Lions to 3 straight city championships;

WHEREAS, John R. Thompson, Jr. averaged a Washington Catholic Athletic Conference best 21 points per game and led Archbishop Carroll High School to a perfect 24-0 record during his senior year;

WHEREAS, John R. Thompson, Jr. earned a scholarship to play basketball at Providence College, where he played for the Friars for 4 years;

WHEREAS, John R. Thompson, Jr. was a member of the 1963 Providence College basketball team that won the National Invitational Tournament (NIT) as well as the 1964 Providence College basketball team which became the first Providence College basketball team to make it to the National College Athletic Association (NCAA) tournament;

WHEREAS, during his senior year in 1964, John R. Thompson, Jr. received an honorable mention from the Associated Press for its All-American team and also became Providence College's all-time leader in points, points-per-game, and field goal percentage;

WHEREAS, John R. Thompson, Jr. was drafted in the third round of the 1964 National Basketball Association (NBA) draft by the Boston Celtics;

WHEREAS, John R. Thompson, Jr. played in the NBA for 2 years, both with the Boston Celtics, where he backed up legendary center Bill Russell and won 2 NBA championships, before retiring in 1966;

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WHEREAS, upon retirement, John R. Thompson, Jr. became the head coach of St. Anthony High School's basketball team in Washington D.C.;

WHEREAS, John R. Thompson, Jr. served as St. Anthony's head coach from 1966 to 1972, amassing a record of 122-28;

WHEREAS, in 1972, John R. Thompson, Jr. was hired to become the head coach for Georgetown University's men's basketball team;

WHEREAS, John R. Thompson, Jr. led the Georgetown Hoyas to the NCAA tournament in only his third season as head coach, marking only the second appearance in the university's history, and the first since 1943;

WHEREAS, John R. Thompson, Jr. led the Georgetown Hoyas to the NCAA Tournament Championship Game for the second time in 3 years in 1984, where he led the Hoyas to an 84-75 win over Houston University, making John R. Thompson, Jr. the first African-American coach to ever win the NCAA basketball championship, a historic feat;

WHEREAS, during his 27 seasons as head coach of Georgetown University's basketball team, John R. Thompson, Jr. led the Hoyas to a 596-239 record, 20 NCAA tournament appearances, 4 NIT appearances, 3 NCAA tournament Final-Four appearances, and one NCAA National Championship;

WHEREAS, John R. Thompson Jr. was affectionately known as "Big John" and would often be seen on the sidelines coaching with his signature towel draped over his right shoulder;

WHEREAS, John R. Thompson, Jr. was selected to coach the United States of America's Olympic basketball team in 1988, leading the USA to a bronze medal;

WHEREAS, on October 1, 1999, John R. Thompson, Jr. was inducted into the Naismith Memorial Basketball Hall of Fame for his contributions to the game of basketball;

WHEREAS, John R. Thompson Jr. served on the Board of Directors for NIKE, Inc. for almost 30 years, where he was largely known for his "servant leadership" around the NIKE brand;

WHEREAS, following his retirement from coaching, John R. Thompson, Jr. remained in Washington, D.C. and continued to be an active member of the basketball community, providing color commentary for NBA basketball games with Turner Network Television and hosting *The John Thompson Show* on ESPN radio until February 2012;

WHEREAS, in 2013, John R. Thompson, Jr. donated over \$42,500 to the Boys and Girls Club's Butler-Wyatt Clubhouse in Washington, D.C., citing the impact that the facility had on

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multiple generations of his family and Washingtonians alike, yet another example of the impact that he had on the District and his willingness to give back;

WHEREAS, John R. Thompson, Jr. was a trailblazer in basketball, where he was the first African-American to coach the United States Olympic team, first African-American to win an NCAA College Basketball Championship, and led the way on numerous social issues such as walking off the court in protest of an NCAA rule prohibiting student-athletes from receiving scholarship money if their SAT score was too low; and

WHEREAS, John R. Thompson, Jr. spent the majority of his life as a District resident and was a long-time resident of the Crestwood neighborhood in Ward 4.

RESOLVED, BY THE COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, That this resolution may be cited as the “John R. Thompson, Jr. Posthumous Recognition Resolution of 2020”.

Sec. 2. The Council of the District of Columbia joins in posthumously celebrating the remarkable life of John R. Thompson, Jr. and remembering him for the tremendous impact that he had on the District of Columbia and its residents.

Sec. 3. This resolution shall take effect immediately upon the first date of publication in the District of Columbia Register.