



# CITY OF PHILADELPHIA CITY COUNCIL

BLONDELL REYNOLDS BROWN  
Room 580 City Hall  
Philadelphia, PA 19107  
(215) 686-3438 or 3439  
Fax No. (215) 686-1926

COUNCILWOMAN-AT-LARGE

COMMITTEES  
Chairwoman  
Parks, Recreation & Cultural Affairs

Member  
Committee of the Whole  
Commerce & Economic Development  
Education  
Ethics  
Licenses & Inspections  
Public Health & Human Services  
Public Property & Public Works  
Public Safety

\* PRESS RELEASE \*

Contact: Tonya Diggs  
(215) 236-3098

## CITY COUNCIL DECLARES THIS WEEKEND AS "GENERATION NEXT WEEKEND" IN PHILADELPHIA, SPOTLIGHTING THE CITY'S YOUTH

***A Resolution introduced by Councilwoman Blondell Reynolds Brown Gives "Generation Next" their First Official Weekend in the City. A Citywide Youth March on Saturday to "Promote the Positive" will be the Weekend's Highlight.***

**March 22, 2004...Philadelphia...**Councilwoman Blondell Reynolds Brown formally announced at a City Hall press conference today, that City Council has officially declared this weekend, March 26-28 as "Generation Next Weekend" in Philadelphia, placing the spotlight on the city's youth. A unanimously passed council resolution recently introduced by Reynolds Brown, gives Philadelphia's youth or "Generation Next" their first official weekend in the city.

The special weekend is a result of a partnership between Reynolds Brown and the Coalition of African American Organizations to involve, engage and elevate Philadelphia's youth where issues of economic development; health and wellness; and voter education and registration are concerned. The coalition, the largest group of urban organizations in the region – its membership includes the likes of Men United for a Better Philadelphia, the Black Clergy, the NAACP and the African American Chamber of Commerce – has planned a host of activity to make the weekend a success, all of which Reynolds Brown urges residents to come out and support.

"Members of council have voted unanimously to place the spotlight on our youth in an unprecedented way by dedicating a weekend to them," said Reynolds Brown. "I encourage all Philadelphians to make this weekend a success by coming out in large numbers to the weekend's activities to show our young people that they have the support and encouragement they deserve."

- more -

## **Generation Next Weekend**

### **Page 2 of 2**

The weekend's highlight will be a citywide youth march on Saturday at Noon. Hundreds of high school students from all corners of the city will converge on City Hall in four directions – north, south, east and west – to promote, acknowledge and thank a selected Fortune 500 company that has made a significant investment in their future. The march kicks off the “promote the positive” campaign, an effort by the coalition to teach economic awareness to the city's youth while encouraging more corporate investments in their future.

“During major buying seasons, we will coordinate massive youth marches to provide a venue for young people from every corner of this city to demonstrate to corporate America that when you support us, we'll support you,” said coalition spokesperson Joel Avery. Each youth march will highlight one Fortune 500 company that has invested in “generation next” in a “meaningful and major way,” Avery said, beginning with the Microsoft Corporation on Saturday.

“We selected Microsoft as the first company to highlight during our promote the positive campaign because of their expressed commitment to build the first ‘paperless’ high school in the nation,” said Avery. The school is scheduled to open in Philadelphia in September 2005. “Companies that make investments of this caliber will be the companies we promote,” Avery said. “The corporations we highlight can't buy this type of publicity and the corporations we don't highlight will soon get the message that this type of publicity is not for sale and that it can only be attained by doing the right thing, which means investing in our youth.”

Avery said the coalition will look to the African American Chamber of Commerce, a key member organization, to aide in the selection process of the Fortune 500 companies throughout the campaign. He said the first march on Saturday will conclude with special performances from high school and community steppers, drill teams and marching bands.

Other events planned for “Generation Next Weekend” are:

#### **Friday, March 26 – “Party with a Purpose”**

Adults are asked to come out and “party with a purpose” at an oldies cabaret fundraiser – featuring classic soul hits – organized to raise money for the youth benefits package created for high school students who volunteer to serve as delegates on the “Generation Next” Youth Council. The fundraiser will take place at the Legendary Blue Horizon, 1314 North Broad Street, from 9:00 p.m. to 2:00 a.m. Tickets are \$20 and more at the door. To purchase a ticket, adults should call (215) 235-7024.

#### **Sunday, March 28 – VIP Reception**

Elected officials and civic leaders will gather at the African American Museum in Philadelphia, 7<sup>th</sup> and Arch Streets, for a VIP reception to culminate “Generation Next Weekend.” The reception, from 2:00 to 4:00 p.m., will feature performances by youth choirs and community-based youth groups across the city.

**###**