



# Board of Commissioners of Cook County

118 North Clark Street  
Chicago, IL

## Legislation Text

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**File #:** 15-1178, **Version:** 1

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### **PROPOSED RESOLUTION**

#### **A RESOLUTION COMMEMORATING THE EXTRAORDINARY LIFE, ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND MEMORY OF EVANSTON TOWNSHIP HIGH SCHOOL COACH MICHAEL WYNN AND FOUNDER OF THE JUSTIN WYNN FOUNDATION**

**WHEREAS**, Michael Wynn, a dedicated and inspirational coach and community leader passed away on December 10, 2014. In addition to being a much-loved coach, teacher and Dean, Michael Wynn will always be remembered for founding the Justin Wynn Foundation which has, for decades impacted countless students and improved the lives of innumerable families in the region. Michael Wynn left behind family, countless friends and a community profoundly enriched for having known him; and

**WHEREAS**, Michael Wynn transformed the worst moment of his life, the accidental death of his fourth-grade son, Justin, in 1987 into a powerful service to the community with the development of the Justin Wynn Fund, a nonprofit that celebrates, honors and guides youth leaders of Evanston; and

**WHEREAS**, each spring, the Justin Wynn Fund selects two fourth graders from each of Evanston-Skokie School District 65's twelve elementary schools. The students attend a celebration banquet; each of the fourth grade honorees may then choose to participate in the Justin Wynn Leadership Academy which continues until they graduate from high school. The students meet monthly to plan and carry out a variety of service projects, for example, they raise money for charity, volunteer at soup kitchens, visit with seniors at a local retirement community and help annual food drives. Michael Wynn and his wife Marcia, started the nonprofit with the sole purpose of instilling in young people the virtues they felt their young son embodied - citizenship, leadership and sportsmanship; and

**WHEREAS**, the Justin Wynn Leadership Academy is a collaborative leadership and community improvement program which partners with many organizations around Cook County, including: A Just Harvest Soup Kitchen, Family Focus, Hilda's Place, The Chicago Lighthouse, Albany Care, Evanston Animal Shelter, and King Home. The Academy brings together Evanston's young people who have the potential to be tomorrow's leaders. Through a process of leadership development and participation in community service, their potential is transformed and mobilized to inspire the world; and

**WHEREAS**, twenty six years after tragedy struck the family of Michael Wynn the Justin Wynn Foundation continues to thrive and is now an even greater force of good in the community; and

**WHEREAS**, born and raised in Evanston, Michael Wynn was the youngest of six children. An outstanding athlete, he lettered in football, basketball and track at Evanston Township, where he was the state champion in discus and earned a scholarship to play football at the University of Nebraska; and

**WHEREAS**, Michael Wynn played defensive end for the University of Nebraska, three of those years as a starter. His outstanding athletic performance there brought him to the attention of the National Football League where he was drafted in the eighth round of the 1970 NFL draft by the Oakland Raiders. He ended his NFL playing career with the New England Patriots; and

**WHEREAS**, when injuries derailed Michael Wynn's NFL career he took his exceptional talents and used them to inspire

the next generation of athletes. Mr. Wynn was a member of the football coaching staff at Northwestern University, Purdue University, University of Minnesota and the University of Missouri; and

**WHEREAS** in 1985, Michael Wynn returned to Evanston Township High School where he served as teacher, football and wrestling coach, coordinator for student services, Earn & Learn coordinator and Dean of Students until his retirement in 2003; and

**WHEREAS**, Michael Wynn was predeceased by his wife, Marcia and will be sorely missed by his three daughters, Laura and Riian and Kelli Wynn-Smith; two sisters, Rosalie Watson and Anna Leatherwood; three brothers, Karl Muhammad, Zenus and Melvin; and five grandchildren; and

**WHEREAS**, Michael Wynn also leaves behind numerous students, friends, neighbors and many others whose lives were touched not only by the Justin Wynn Foundation but by Michael Wynn's inspiration, his coaching and sense of humor; and

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, by the Board of Commissioners of Cook County that the Board on behalf of the nearly the 5.2 million residents of Cook County commemorates the extraordinary life of Michael Wynn and herewith expresses its sincere gratitude for the invaluable contributions he has made to the Citizens of Cook County, Illinois; and does hereby offer its deepest condolences and most heartfelt sympathy to the students, coworkers, family, and many friends of Michael Wynn and joins them in sorrow at the loss of this well-loved Dean, father, teacher, coach and community leader;

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that this text be spread upon the official proceedings of this Honorable Body and a suitable copy of same be tendered to the family of Michael Wynn, that his memory may be so honored.