



Board of Commissioners of Cook County

118 North Clark Street
Chicago, IL

Legislation Text

File #: 20-0808, **Version:** 1

PROPOSED RESOLUTION

HONORING MICHAEL TROUT FOR HIS LEADERSHIP COMMITMENT AND DEDICATION TO THE NORTH LAWDALE COMMUNITY

WHEREAS, Michael Trout is first and foremost a husband of 28 years to his wife Karen, a father of five (four sons and a daughter) and a grandfather of 7 and counting; and

WHEREAS, Michael Trout sought to live a life where his love of God and his love for his wonderful neighbors in the North Lawndale community is the action most reflected in his life. In 1992, Mike and Karen move to the neighborhood to partner with local schools and churches. In 1996, Mike and a group of twelve boys started their own community-based organization called the Young Men's Educational Network, or YMEN as its known in Lawndale. Mike Trout, as founder, became YMEN's Executive Director; and

WHEREAS, YMEN continues to steadily grow since its inception in Michael Trout 's apartment over the past 24 years. YMEN now serves 300 youth each year by partnering with five local schools and by offering after school and weekend programs six days a week; and

WHEREAS, YMEN's main goal is indigenous leadership and its commitment to its student leaders does not end until the young person graduates college and hopefully returns to North Lawndale to re-invest in the next generation; and

WHEREAS, YMEN's commitment to growing community leaders also includes a college debt forgiveness program, a home ownership program, and affordable housing through this college and career residences; and

WHEREAS, Younger students at YMEN achieved a 90% high school graduation rate, with more than half of their students receiving a 3.0 or better GPA. Researchers at the University of Illinois at Chicago concluded YMEN is one of the most innovative and effective youth organizations in the city, if not the country. One of the keys to YMEN's success is its student voice, which shapes the day to day programs and Significant Board Decisions; and

WHEREAS; Mike Trout continues to faithfully lead YMEN helping it secure more than \$10million in additional external resources back to North Lawndale. Several of these resources helped YMEN create five lots for urban gardening, an outdoor sports court, and a club house which served more than 500 youth and their mentors; and

WHEREAS, Michael Trout enjoys his calling to help youth leave the community and connect to a much larger world through hands on learning and service projects. YMEN conducts annual trips ranging from to work with the Lakota Sioux in South Dakota to helping build two schools in Uganda Africa, YMEN students travel the world helping other communities; and

WHEREAS, Michael Trout says, "Students who develop a love for learning and an appreciation of diverse cultures will make better and more collaborative leaders. This next generation is being equipped to build better bridges with others in the world";and

WHEREAS, Michael Trout is also an aspiring rapper earning the nickname, White Chocolate, from his students. Michael Trout confesses you will not find him on an album any time soon;

WHEREAS, Michael Trout loves Chicago, the Cubs, food, his neighborhood of North Lawndale where he has lived his whole adult life, his children, and the people of his community; and

WHEREAS, above all, Michael Trout loves God and is grateful every day he can wake up and live out his calling; and

WHEREAS, Cook County Government acknowledges Michael Trout for transforming lives through community engagement.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that Toni Preckwinkle President of the Cook County Board of Commissioners as well as the Board of Commissioners along with the 5.3 million residents of Cook County do hereby recognized Mr. Michael Trout and his invaluable, leadership, dedication and commitment to the residents of North Lawndale and herewith express our sincere gratitude for your service to the community.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this resolution is forwarded to Mr. Michael Trout and copy be placed upon the official record of the honorable body recognizing this auspicious occasion.