



Metropolitan Nashville and Davidson County, TN

Legislation Text

File #: RS2021-1274, **Version:** 1

A resolution recognizing the 90th anniversary of Nashville Children's Theatre.

WHEREAS, Nashville Children's Theatre was founded in 1931 by members of the Junior League of Nashville, including some of Nashville's most dedicated philanthropists, and with the assistance of various other local theatre groups; and

WHEREAS, the theatre opened with an enormously successful production of "Aladdin and His Wonderful Lamp", featuring 27 volunteer actresses; and

WHEREAS, the organization was entirely led and operated by a corps of local volunteers for its first 29 years, and continued to utilize volunteers in most key operational positions for another 25 years; and

WHEREAS, unlike other non-commercial children's theatres of its time, Nashville Children's Theatre was the only organization to raise money solely for the purpose of continuing to produce more theatre, and sustained itself from the very beginning on ticket sales and donations; and

WHEREAS, Nashville Children's Theatre is the oldest surviving performing arts company in Nashville and the oldest professional children's theatre in the country; and

WHEREAS, for many years the theatre performed in numerous landmarks around the city including the Belcourt Theatre and Vanderbilt University; and

WHEREAS, in the late 1950s, Ann Stahlman Hill led a group of like-minded community members and successfully petitioned city officials to fund a permanent home for the theatre; and

WHEREAS, in 1959, Nashville's Board of Park Commissioners approved a quarter-million dollars on a home for the Nashville Children's Theatre beside the Children's Museum, making it the first children's theatre in the country to be built with public funds; and

WHEREAS, in 1960, Nashville Children's Theatre opened the doors to its permanent home behind Howard School off 2nd Avenue South where it continues to exist today; and

WHEREAS, the theatre has always been closely allied with local schools, and when Metro Schools began bussing students across town as part of desegregation efforts, Nashville Children's Theatre radically changed their business model to accommodate students with transportation conflicts, ensuring that no student would have to miss out on artistic opportunities; and

WHEREAS, that reinvention led to more ambitious programming, the hiring of professional actors for productions, and expansion of the Theatre Academy; and

WHEREAS, over the decades, many established celebrities participated as actors or supported the theatre, and numerous future artists performed with the theatre as youths before going on to greatness; and

WHEREAS, Nashville Children's Theatre has been nationally recognized and achieved many "firsts" including being the first Theatre for Young Audiences to perform in Washington D.C.'s Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, being awarded the Sara Spencer Award for Excellence in Children's Theatre by the American Theatre Association, and was the first to be awarded a grant by the Tennessee Department of Economic and

Community to do a theatre tour to underdeveloped areas of the state; and

WHEREAS, the theatre's mission is to nurture the next generation of global citizens by providing transformational theatrical experiences that reflect the evolving community, instill profound empathy, and foster personal discovery; and

WHEREAS, it is fitting and proper that the Metropolitan Council celebrates the 90th anniversary of Nashville Children's Theatre and recognizes their work to be an accessible and inclusive organization which empowers young people through cultural literacy and creative exploration.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE METROPOLITAN GOVERNMENT OF NASHVILLE AND DAVIDSON COUNTY:

Section 1. The Metropolitan Council hereby goes on record as recognizing the 90th anniversary of Nashville Children's Theatre.

Section 2. This Resolution shall take effect from and after its adoption, the welfare of The Metropolitan Government of Nashville and Davidson County requiring it.