

Proclamation



Jane Castor, Mayor

WHEREAS, founded in 1953 by J. Clifford MacDonald with the support of parents of children with disabilities and community groups, the **MacDonald Training Center** (MTC) was one of the nation's first pre-school programs designed for children with developmental disabilities in a one-room schoolhouse in the Drew Park neighborhood of Tampa, Florida; and

WHEREAS, MacDonald Training Center expanded the following year to include a nursery and kindergarten, and for his vision, advocacy, dedication, and efforts on behalf of people with disabilities, Mr. MacDonald received the *Presidential Medal of Freedom* and served as Chair of the National Committee for Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment; and

WHEREAS, with the Founder's guiding principles, MacDonald Training Center continues to seek a more equitable and inclusive life for children, and it has grown over the past seven decades to become a nationally recognized institution, among the first in the United States to develop supported employment and living services as an alternative to workshops and group homes, and was the first organization of its kind in Florida to close its own group homes to move forward with its vision of being a leader and innovator in service to people with disabilities, serving all ages including youth eagerly anticipating their first job to seniors desiring to age in place with dignity; and

WHEREAS, a private nonprofit organization with a mission of *Empowering People with Disabilities to Lead the Lives They Choose*, MTC transforms the lives of people with all disabilities through innovations in vocational training, employment services, residential supports, and life enrichment opportunities, and its programs are customized to meet the needs and learning styles of individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities, Autism Spectrum disorder, and those who are deaf and hard of hearing; and

WHEREAS, understanding that every person is unique, and all seek a sense of belonging, connection, and purpose, MacDonald Training Center educates, elevates, employs and connects people with disabilities to their community and works towards a day when every person has an equal opportunity to imagine and achieve his or her full potential, and the organization advocates for full inclusion for people with disabilities and is dedicated to continuously improving the quality of the vocational, employment, and residential services that they have been providing to people with developmental disabilities in the Tampa Bay area for the past seventy years; and

WHEREAS, the City of Tampa is pleased to congratulate the MacDonald Training Center on their special **70th Anniversary** and wishes to express appreciation for the vast contributions the organization and its leaders have made in our city on behalf of people with disabilities and in bringing awareness to the community of the vital importance of inclusiveness and the fostering of self-empowerment for all individuals.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Jane Castor, by virtue of the authority vested in me as Mayor of the city of Tampa, Florida, do hereby proclaim Thursday, February 16, 2023, as

“MACDONALD TRAINING CENTER 70th ANNIVERSARY DAY”

in the city of Tampa, Florida, and urge all citizens to join me in congratulating MacDonald Training Center on this 70th Anniversary milestone, and in thanking the many individuals and organizations that have contributed to its success in fulfilling the mission of encouraging people with developmental disabilities to lead the lives they choose.

Dated in Tampa, Florida, this 16th day of February, 2023.



Mayor

