



Text File

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Committee: City Council

Status: Adopted

WHEREAS, Pittsburgh's identity as a welcoming destination for refugees and immigrants is notable, and a small but steadily growing population of families from Latin America is making our region their home, particularly in the South Pittsburgh neighborhoods of Beechview and Brookline; and

WHEREAS, the **Sisters of St. Joseph of Baden**, in their commitment to providing help to the communities in which they live and worship, have announced the opening of **Casa San Jose**, a community center for Latino residents of the City, which will operate in the neighborhood of Brookline, located within St. Mark's Lutheran Church at 933 Brookline Boulevard, and will be managed by **Sister Janice Vanderneck**; and

WHEREAS, **Sister Janice** has devoted decades of her life to helping the Latino community: as a young student she studied Spanish and picked up fluency in Portuguese while working as a missionary in Brazil, and more recently studied intensive Spanish at a language school in Cuernavaca, Mexico; and

WHEREAS, **Sister Janice** served at the Latino center at St. Regis Parish in South Oakland, home to the only Spanish-language Mass in Pittsburgh, for five years, and has devoted her service to the community through translating documents, interpreting for those who speak little English, and providing guidance for many who are in need of important social services; and

WHEREAS, with the collaboration of local organizations like the Jewish Family & Children's Services, the Greater Pittsburgh Literacy Council, and the Latino Family Center, **Casa San Jose** plans to be able to help Spanish-speaking Pittsburghers connect with valuable resources like English classes and various forms of tangible assistance, fostering a crucial sense of safety and community; and

WHEREAS, Beechview and Brookline are neighborhoods with strong immigrant histories, home to families who can trace their lines to places like Italy or Lebanon, and **Casa San Jose** marks the next chapter in this story, assisting newcomers adjust to their homes, learn the skills they need to flourish, and then give back--by becoming involved in their neighborhoods and schools, opening businesses, or serving as community leaders themselves, hand in hand with long-standing neighbors and new friends; and

WHEREAS, with a mission to provide a welcoming and dynamic community center, **Casa San Jose** will open its doors for all to see on Friday, September 13, 2013--on the eve of Hispanic Heritage Month--and, in so doing, will add to Brookline Boulevard's vibrancy and South Pittsburgh's distinction as a family-oriented, livable community for all people, in addition to providing very real assistance to hundreds of our newest Pittsburghers.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the City of Pittsburgh does hereby commend **Sister Janice Vanderneck of the Sisters of St. Joseph** and all of the devoted volunteers who give and have given of their time, energy, and resources to make **Casa San Jose** a reality; and

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THEREFORE BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Council of the City of Pittsburgh does hereby declare September 13, 2013 to be **Sister Janice Vanderneck and Casa San Jose Day** in the City of Pittsburgh.