

## **RESOLUTION CELEBRATING THE LIFE OF RODOLFO “RUDY” LOZANO**

**WHEREAS**, Rodolfo “Rudy” Lozano, labor activist and community organizer, was tragically assassinated in his home forty years ago, at the age of 31; and

**WHEREAS**, The Chicago City Council has been informed of the anniversary of Rudy’s death by the Honorable Michael D. Rodriguez, Alderperson of the 22nd Ward; and

**WHEREAS**, Born in 1951 in Harlingen, Texas, Rudy was one of six children born to Guadalupe and Anita Lozano, who moved their family to Pilsen shortly after Rudy was born; and

**WHEREAS**, His formative years in Pilsen instilled in Rudy a deep sense of activism and dedication to the betterment of working people, especially joining his father on picket lines during metalworker strikes; and

**WHEREAS**, Inspired by his father and the civil rights movement, in 1970, Rudy helped organize Black and Latino students to stage a series of walkouts over substandard and overcrowded facilities, the lack of representation in the curriculum, and the lack of bilingual education at Carter Henry Harrison Technical High School (now Maria Saucedo Scholastic Academy/ Telpochcalli Elementary School); and

**WHEREAS**, These walkouts inspired students around the City, and over the next decade, over 35,000 students would join in walkouts as part of a fight to end discrimination in the Chicago Public School system, ultimately leading to the Board of Education building a new high school to serve Pilsen – Benito Juarez Community Academy; and

**WHEREAS**, After high school, Rudy attended University of Illinois Chicago as part of the first wave of Mexican American students, where he would continue to lead struggles for a multicultural curriculum and increased student diversity, culminating in the creation of the Latin American Recruitment and Educational Services Program (LARES); and

**WHEREAS**, During this time, Rudy met the love of his life, Guadalupe (Lupe); the two were married on December 8, 1973, and the couple were blessed with three sons: Rudy Jr., Jose, and David; and

**WHEREAS**, After his time in college, Rudy continued his activism, becoming an integral part of the *Centro de Acción Social Autónoma - Hermandad General de Trabajadores* [Center for Autonomous Social Action - General Brotherhood of Workers] (CASA), and becoming the youngest Midwest Director of the International Ladies Garment Workers Union; and

**WHEREAS**, In these roles, Rudy continued to focus on advocating for immigrant workers; in the late 1970’s Rudy began organizing and supporting over 100 of Pilsen’s noncitizen residents working at the Midwest’s largest tortilla factory in the face of strong opposition, including when management tried to hinder the unionization drive by calling Immigration and Naturalization Services on their own workers; and

**WHEREAS**, Rudy became involved in electoral politics, first through the Near West Side Independent Political Organization, where he registered Latino voters and prioritized creating unity between Latino, Black and White community members, before running for a seat on City Council in the 22nd Ward in 1983 while serving as a trusted advisor to Harold Washington’s campaign for Mayor; and

**WHEREAS**, The 1983 election was hotly contested, and, although he fell 17 votes short of forcing a runoff, Rudy played a key role in forging the strategic coalition between the Latino, Black, and White communities that propelled Mayor Washington to victory and formed the building blocks of the 22nd Ward Independent Political Organization; and

**WHEREAS**, Shortly after the 1983 election, Rudy's life was tragically cut short when he was assassinated in his home on June 8, 1983; he was 31; and

**WHEREAS**, Rudy's murder stunned the City, with thousands of mourners attending his funeral, including the recently elected Mayor Washington, who paid tribute to Rudy by noting that "if the coalition of Chicago which came with my election is due to anyone, it is due to Rudy Lozano" who was "a man driven by a search for unity among people"; and

**WHEREAS**, Although Rudy's murder devastated many and left a tremendous void in the community, the memory of his activism, dedication, passion, and vision of unity inspired generations of activists and organizers, including the campaign manager from his 1983 election – now-Congressman Jesus "Chuy" Garcia, who would go on to win election as 22nd Ward Committeeman in 1984, and as 22nd Ward Alderman in a 1986 special election following a successful legal challenge to the City's ward map; and

**WHEREAS**, Rudy's vision survives to this day, carried forward by his compañeros, fellow allies of the movement, and devoted family members, including his widow Lupe, children, grandchildren, and siblings; and

**WHEREAS**, Rudy's legacy can also be seen in the institutions that now bear his name and continue to inspire new generations, including the Rudy Lozano Library, a branch of the Chicago Public Library in Pilsen, and the Rodolfo Lozano Bilingual and International Center, a magnet elementary school on the City's Near North Side; and

**WHEREAS**, Throughout his life, Rudy was on a mission to empower and uplift the voices of all workers, to organize the unorganized, to protect and advocate for immigrant families, and to strategically forge coalitions among Latino, Black, other historically underrepresented community groups, and their progressive allies; and

**WHEREAS**, The lessons Rudy taught us during his too-short time with us transcend generations, reminding us what is possible when we build solidarity among working-class people regardless of race, creed, gender, or origin in the name of justice, equity, love, compassion, and unity; now, therefore

**BE IT RESOLVED**, That we, the Mayor and members of the City Council of the City of Chicago, gathered here this twenty-first day of June, 2023, do hereby honor the life and contributions of Rodolfo "Rudy" Lozano and his legacy that continues to teach us how to build a City that is just and fair for all; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, That a suitable copy of this resolution be tendered to the family and friends of Rudy Lozano so that his memory may be honored and ever cherished.



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MICHAEL D. RODRIGUEZ  
Alderman, 22nd Ward

