



Allegheny County Council

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Legislation Text

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Proclamation honoring Dr. Jonathan Pruitt, a behavioral ecologist at the University of Pittsburgh and Dr. Kathryn Whitehead, assistant professor of chemical engineering at Carnegie Mellon University, for being recognized as two of the “Brilliant 10” for 2015 by *Popular Science*.

WHEREAS, every year, *Popular Science Magazine* honors the 10 brightest young minds in science, engineering or mathematics in the United States, and for 2015, two of the “**Brilliant 10**” hail from Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, including **Dr. Jonathan N. Pruitt**, a behavioral ecologist at the University of Pittsburgh, and **Dr. Kathryn Whitehead**, assistant professor of chemical engineering at Carnegie Mellon University; and

WHEREAS, **Dr. Pruitt** was recognized for his research of the social lives of colony-building spiders. His findings provide the first evidence that individuals in the wild sometimes sacrifice their own genetic survival for the sake of the group. Evolutionary models suggested that such group selection must be occurring, but Dr. Pruitt is the first scientist to find solid proof that group selection matters. His research has implications far beyond a single species and will improve our understanding of how societies work; and

WHEREAS, **Dr. Pruitt** earned his doctorate degree in ecology and evolutionary biology with a focus on animal behavior from the University of Tennessee and was a postdoctoral fellow at the University of California. He joined the University of Pittsburgh as an assistant professor in the Department of Biological Sciences in 2011; and

WHEREAS, **Dr. Whitehead** was recognized for designing nanoparticles that treat disease by delivering therapeutic drugs to specific areas in the body. She tested nearly 5,000 nanoparticles and developed a model to identify the best targeted nanoparticles. Her research has the potential of revolutionizing how doctors treat such diseases as cancer, diabetes and hereditary disorders. Her team is now using nanoparticles to engineer therapies for illnesses such as inflammatory bowel disease, chronic wounds and non-Hodgkin lymphoma; and

WHEREAS, **Dr. Kathryn Whitehead** earned her doctorate degree in chemical engineering and was a postdoctoral fellow at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. She joined Carnegie Mellon University as an assistant professor of chemical engineering in 2012;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that Allegheny County Council does hereby congratulate **Dr. Jonathan N. Pruitt** and **Dr. Kathryn Whitehead** for being named as two of the “**Brilliant 10**” for 2015 by *Popular Science Magazine*, and we thank each of you for your outstanding scientific contributions to our society.