



Proclamation

EXPRESSING APPRECIATION FOR ROY CLAY, SR.

WHEREAS, the definition of a leader is someone who creates space for others to excel and shine; Roy Clay, Sr. exemplifies this quality and has been nicknamed the “godfather of Silicon Valley” as he created opportunities for others while he climbed; and

WHEREAS, after attending segregated public schools in Missouri, Roy received a degree in mathematics from St. Louis University as one of the first Black American graduates of a previously all-white university in a former slave state; he pursued engineering, first in Missouri then in California; and

WHEREAS, Roy’s early work in California involved creating a radiation tracking system to study the aftermath of a nuclear explosion, and later when he joined Hewlett-Packard (HP) in 1965, he became a founding member of the Computer Division where he led the team that developed HP’s first minicomputer as he held the belief that computers would get smaller, faster, and less expensive; and

WHEREAS, Roy practiced innovation in computer engineering as well as workplace culture as he created the flexible work schedule culture at HP and recruited talent from top universities including Historically Black Colleges and Universities; he became the first African American Executive at HP; and

WHEREAS, upon leaving HP, Roy continued to influence the future of Silicon Valley by partnering with venture capital firms to help identify companies to support such as Intel and Compaq; Roy also started his own electrical safety test equipment manufacturing company, ROD-L Electronics, which at the time was one of a few technology companies founded by an African American and one of the most diverse companies, realizing that the diverse perspectives gave his company a competitive edge; and

WHEREAS, Roy was the first African American to be elected to the Palo Alto City Council in 1973 and later, the first to serve as the Vice Mayor. He also served on the Board of the Olympic Club in San Francisco where he became the first African American man to join the club in 1987; and

WHEREAS, Roy was inducted into the Silicon Valley Engineering Council Hall of Fame in 2003 where he shared his hopes and dreams for a more inclusive future as he knew he created a trail for other people of color in a place where there was previously no path at all.

NOW, THEREFORE I, Greer Stone, Mayor of the City of Palo Alto, on behalf of the entire City Council, do hereby express my respect and appreciation to Roy Clay, Sr. for his leadership, vision, perseverance, and dedication to advancing this community, the region, and the world.

Presented: December 9, 2024

Greer Stone
Mayor