

Sydney McLaughlin
August 28, 2021
Mayor Jason F. Cilento

Good morning. We are gathered here in Columbia Park to honor Dunellen's own Sydney McLaughlin. Sydney's achievements are well known to all of us, and I will leave it to others to describe in detail her many triumphs.

But first, I would like to state unequivocally, that we all owe Sydney a tremendous debt of gratitude.

Today, Sydney's family, friends and neighbors join in communal celebration of her Gold Medal wins and world record breaking achievements in the 2020 Tokyo Olympics. Her victories are her own, and those of her teammates, coaches, and family who stayed with her and by her side all these years of seemingly endless training. The entire world witnessed the results and as Sydney has so graciously given glory to God, we are blessed that she shares that gift, along with her wisdom, with us all.

But Sydney's successes are also Dunellen's to appreciate, to admire, and truly to marvel at. What she has accomplished seems too many of us beyond comprehension, being so outside the boundaries and limits of what all of us here can even dream of realizing.

Yet, what Sydney has done resonates with each and every one of us. Whether we are young girls and boys inspired by her example to persevere in athletics or school; whether we are athletes motivated to run that extra lap or add another ten pounds to the bar-bell; whether we are young adults sending out our resumes, defying the odds to get that perfect first job; or whether we are established in our careers and families and simply take pleasure in another's success, these and all the other thousands of unique personal stories ~~unite~~ connect us in uniting around Sydney.

So, on a personal level, we all are grateful to Sydney. But we are also grateful on a civic, on a public, on a community level.

I vividly remember watching Sydney's runs in the qualifying heats and then the 400-meter hurdles final. Before the races, the camera

traversed from athlete to athlete, and when it got to Sydney, it held steady and the caption read: “Sydney McLaughlin, Dunellen, N.J.”

Everyone burst into excited applause and cheers. It’s moments like that, like today, which make us all proud to be a part of this great community and even prouder that this is Sydney McLaughlin’s hometown.

And for this moment, which I will cherish in memory forever, I and all who live in Dunellen are truly grateful to Sydney McLaughlin. So thank you Sydney, for being here with us today, as we celebrate you and your great accomplishments. Even more so, thank you for being a role model to so many during these polarized times, you are an inspiration and we look forward to seeing what God has in store for you in this life’s journey. Always know that here in our Miracle Mile, you will always be welcomed back home and you will always have our respect.

Welcome home, Sydney!