

2013-J4350

LEGISLATIVE RESOLUTION commemorating the 30th Anniversary of the Willie Hutch Jones Educational and Sports Program on March 23, 2014

WHEREAS, It is the sense of this Legislative Body to recognize that the quality and character of life in the communities across New York State are reflective of the concerned and dedicated efforts of those organizations and individuals who would devote themselves to the welfare of the community and its citizenry; and

WHEREAS, Attendant to such concern, and in full accord with its long-standing traditions, this Legislative Body is justly proud to commemorate the 30th Anniversary of the Willie Hutch Jones Educational and Sports Program, which was celebrated at its First Annual "Roast" Fundraising Event on Sunday, March 23, 2014, at Templeton Landing, Buffalo, New York; and

WHEREAS, The Willie Hutch Jones Educational and Sports Program (WHJSC) began in 1984, after Buffalo native, Willie "Hutch" Jones, completed his professional NBA career with the Los Angeles Lakers; while continuing to play basketball in the European Pro League, he became instilled with a strong desire to give back to his hometown; and

WHEREAS, A graduate of Vanderbilt University with a background in Physical Education, Willie Jones started his own youth training program in Buffalo, New York, to provide disadvantaged youth with better opportunities through special instruction and strong positive influences; with the help of close friends LeRoi Johnson and Bernard Mitchell, he turned his vision into reality by creating the Willie Hutch Jones Educational and Sports Program; and

WHEREAS, WHJSC set out to enhance the lives of young men and women of all racial and economic backgrounds in the City of Buffalo, particularly those from low income families; using basketball and other sports activ-

ities, it soon attracted large numbers of young people to its clinics;
and

WHEREAS, Once trust and relationships were built, WHJSC and its members began to uplift the youth of the community through educational programs to teach career building skills, discourage juvenile delinquency and encourage high achievement; its valuable services have always been offered free of charge and its founders vow that this will always continue; and

WHEREAS, This esteemed year-round program offers numerous sports clinics in the summer, including Basketball, Crew, Golf, Tennis, Volleyball and more; during the school year, it admirably offers a nationally recognized math and science program, a competitive chess club and foreign language instruction; furthermore, children are also able to express themselves in the performance arts, participating in dance, music and acting instruction; and

WHEREAS, WHJSC fully embodies its motto, "Lifting as We Climb" effectively carrying out its mission to provide instruction in skill development, academic enrichment, finance management, youth leadership and lifetime social skills; the program's staff and volunteers, who are all certified educators in their specific areas of expertise, mentor and guide students to reach their full potential; and

WHEREAS, WHJSC has helped over 10,000 young men and women since its inception and is a true cornerstone of its community; it stands ready to continue its important mission providing opportunities and enriching the lives of young people for many years to come; and

WHEREAS, It is the sense of this Legislative Body that those who enhance the well-being and vitality of their community and have shown a long and sustained commitment to excellence certainly have earned the recognition and applause of all the citizens of this great Empire State;

now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to

commemorate the 30th Anniversary of the Willie Hutch Jones Educational and Sports Program; and be it further

RESOLVED, That copies of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to the Willie Hutch Jones Educational and Sports Program, and to its founder, Willie "Hutch" Jones.