

## 2013-K1179

LEGISLATIVE RESOLUTION mourning the death of Matthew E. Guokas, distinguished citizen and devoted member of his community

WHEREAS, It is the custom of this Legislative Body to pay tribute to citizens of the State of New York whose lifework and civic endeavor served to enhance the quality of life in their communities and the great State of New York; and

WHEREAS, Matthew E. Guokas of Nineveh, New York, died on Friday, March 28, 2014, at the age of 71; and

WHEREAS, He honorably served his country as a member of the United States Army; and

WHEREAS, Matthew E. Guokas distinguished himself in his profession and by his sincere dedication and substantial contribution to the welfare of his community; and

WHEREAS, Matthew E. Guokas first came to the Broome-Tioga ARC in 1974 when he accepted the position of Workshop Manager; within a year and a half, he left the agency to become the Executive Director and the first employee of the Otsego ARC where he built the association from the ground up; and

WHEREAS, In 1980, he returned to Binghamton when he was appointed as the Executive Director of Broome-Tioga ARC, which at that time, consisted of a workshop program at the Front Street facility, three community residences and a summer camp for handicapped children; and

WHEREAS, The agency grew exponentially under Matthew E. Goukas' leadership and dedication to the mission and goals of the organization; he was responsible for the establishment of new day, residential and family support services; in addition to program expansion, he guided the agency through building construction, expansion and renovation; and

WHEREAS, Matthew E. Guokas brought the agency into the age of technol-

ogy, including computerization of agency forms, records and documentation; he continued to advocate for increased technology to include databases, updated systems and customized software; and

WHEREAS, A long-standing member of the New York State Rehabilitation Association and the NY-SARC Executive Directors Association, he worked tirelessly with other agency representatives as well as local and state government leaders to advance the acceptance of individuals with disabilities in the community and to significantly improve the quality of life for individuals and their families; and

WHEREAS, After 25 years of distinguished service, Matthew E. Guokas retired as Executive Director of Broome-Tioga ARC, now known as ACHIEVE; and

WHEREAS, After living in Binghamton, New York, Matthew and his wife, Trish, moved to Perch Pond Road, Nineveh, where he was surrounded by the outdoors and loved spending time with family and friends; and

WHEREAS, Matthew E. Guokas enjoyed camping, fishing, hunting, and entertaining all his guests with kindness, laughter, and unconditional love; and

WHEREAS, Predeceased by his parents, John and Mary Guokas, and a brother, David Guokas, Matthew E. Guokas is survived by his wife, Trish; his children, Michael (Connie) Guokas, Jeff Guokas, Buddy (Jennifer) Dunaway, Scott (Holly) Dunaway, and Natalie (Scott) (Dunaway) Billo; 11 grandchildren, Derek, Shane, Stacey, McKenzie, Chasity, Aylisia, Cassidy, Scott, Alexander, Nadia and Leah; one brother, John Guokas; three sisters, Theresa (Bob) Boyce, MaryAnn (Bob) Skiba, Christine Bullock; and several nieces and nephews, as well as his best friend and "brother," Raymond Lewandowski; and

WHEREAS, Armed with a humanistic spirit and imbued with a sense of compassion, Matthew E. Guokas leaves behind a legacy which will long endure the passage of time and will remain as a comforting memory to all he served and befriended; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to mourn the death of Matthew E. Guokas, distinguished citizen and devoted member of his community; and be it further

RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to the family of Matthew E. Guokas.