

2013-J5642

LEGISLATIVE RESOLUTION honoring Grace Rutagengwa upon the occasion of her designation as recipient of the Distinguished Service Award by Fulton-Montgomery Community College

WHEREAS, It is the sense of this Legislative Body to act, in accord with its long-standing traditions, honoring the youth of today, and leaders of tomorrow, whose character and achievements best exemplify the ideals and values cherished by this great State and Nation; and

WHEREAS, Attendant to such concern, and in full accord with its long-standing traditions, this Legislative Body is justly proud to honor Grace Rutagengwa upon the occasion of her designation as recipient of the Distinguished Service Award by Fulton-Montgomery Community College; and

WHEREAS, Grace Rutagengwa is receiving this esteemed honor for her volunteerism as a student ambassador, welcoming new students to the Johnstown campus and conducting campus tours, and for sharing her survivor's story at local high schools, churches and at the United Nations; and

WHEREAS, Grace Rutagengwa earned her associate degree at Fulton-Montgomery Community College this year, marking yet another big step along an extraordinary journey for a survivor who endured the unspeakable horrors of the genocide in Rwanda in which her parents and three siblings were killed; and

WHEREAS, Grace Rutagengwa, 22 years old, maintained a 3.0 GPA with English being her fifth language; she proudly accepted her diploma from Robin DeVito, a mother of two who became her guardian and surrogate mother several years ago and who raised her as her own; and

WHEREAS, Friends dubbed Rutagengwa "Amazing Grace" after learning of the atrocities she endured; Grace was the youngest of four children

raised on her family's prosperous farm in Ntyazo in southern Rwanda; and
WHEREAS, Her parents were well-educated members of the minority
Tutsis; they employed farmhands who were Hutus, the majority ethnic
group; in the spring of 1994, ethnic tensions boiled over and ended in
Africa's worst genocide in modern times; and

WHEREAS, Grace Rutagengwa met Robin DeVito, who took her into her home
in Duanesburg, and in 2011, she graduated from Duanesburg High School
with a Regents diploma and scholastic awards; and

WHEREAS, Grace Rutagengwa was the subject of a 2011 TIMES UNION
profile; Robin DeVito and Grace moved in 2012 to an apartment in Amster-
dam, New York; and

WHEREAS, An example of incredible perseverance, Grace Rutagengwa truly
worked hard; currently, she works at St. Mary's Hospital in Amsterdam as
a patient assistant in the radiology department and plans to continue
her education at FMCC studying radiology with a goal of becoming a
radiology technician; and

WHEREAS, It is the sense of this Legislative Body that when individ-
uals of such noble aims and accomplishments are brought to our atten-
tion, they should be celebrated and recognized by all the citizens of
this great Empire State; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to
honor Grace Rutagengwa upon the occasion of her designation as recipient
of the Distinguished Service Award by Fulton-Montgomery Community
College, and best wishes for a future of purposeful success and well-be-
ing; and be it further

RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be tran-
smitted to Grace Rutagengwa.