

## 2013-J5890

LEGISLATIVE RESOLUTION commemorating the 40th Anniversary of Dutchess Outreach of Poughkeepsie, New York

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 40th Anniversary of Dutchess Outreach of Poughkeepsie, New York; and

WHEREAS, The mission of Dutchess Outreach is simple, but not easy; each day an array of people come together to provide support for the needy in the community; this vital organization strives to meet the basic needs of low-income people when no other resources are available to them and to assist them in becoming self-sufficient; and

WHEREAS, Dutchess Outreach promotes community awareness of hunger and other social problems and urges improvement in the response to human needs; and

WHEREAS, In addition, Dutchess Outreach acts as an advocate through the referral and follow-up process for needy individuals/families and finds appropriate resources which enable people to meet their basic needs on a long-term basis; it also acts as an advocate by promoting community awareness of social problems and generating support for improvement of the system's response to human needs; and

WHEREAS, In 1974, in Poughkeepsie, the Trinity United Methodist Church (Trinity UMC) Neighborhood and Discovery Program began to respond to the need for emergency services and to advocate for those with limited

means; space and volunteers were provided by Trinity Church, initial funding came from the Methodist New York Conference, and Mary Keeley was a part-time staff member; and

WHEREAS, Two years later, the program became a Satellite of the Model Cities Citizen's Center and Marist College provided Mary Keeley with a student assistant; and

WHEREAS, As the need for information, referrals, direct service and follow-up increased, a second full-time staff member was funded by Poughkeepsie Community Development funds; the same year, the Emergency Food Pantry opened to provide a three-day supply of nourishing food; and

WHEREAS, In 1978, the Children's Clothes Closet was launched at Trinity UMC, later moving to First Congregational Church before settling, under the auspices of Dutchess Outreach, at the Family Partnership Center in 1998; and

WHEREAS, In 1982, the Lunch Box opened in the basement of St. Paul's Episcopal Church, Poughkeepsie providing a mid-day meal five days a week, later expanding to include Sunday lunch; and

WHEREAS, Approximately a decade later, the Annual Coat Drive and Give-away was launched, collecting and distributing as many as 6,000 coats annually at locations around Dutchess County; and

WHEREAS, In 1994, Dutchess Outreach became the sponsoring agency to Acts of Kindness, a community initiative to provide basic necessities, appliances, and bedding for people in transitional housing situations, and one year later, Dutchess Outreach was awarded a contract to provide home delivered meals to people homebound with AIDS; the name GIFTS, an acronym for Giving Individuals Food for The Soul was conceived a few months later by the recipients; and

WHEREAS, In 1998-1999, with the addition of public, private and foundation support, Dutchess Outreach expanded its emergency financial assistance component for those in need, particularly with prescription costs; in 1998, the emergency assistance, food pantry, closet programs

and administrative offices of Dutchess Outreach moved to the Family Partnership Center, followed by the Lunch Box the next year; and WHEREAS, In collaboration with the Mental Health Association, the Lunch Box expanded its use to be a cold weather weekend emergency day shelter for homeless people when the Partnership Center closes early; it also began offering meals for the Teen Resources Activity Program, an after school program of the City of Poughkeepsie School District; and WHEREAS, In 2008, the Lunch Box began providing evening meals at the end of each month, in collaboration with various faith communities, and professional, business and volunteer groups from around Dutchess County; and

WHEREAS, In addition, the Lunch Box began preparing meals for the Real Skills youth program, an additional program from the City of Poughkeepsie School District which offers after school programs for students from elementary age through high school; and

WHEREAS, It is the sense of this Legislative Body that when organizations of such noble aims and accomplishments are brought to our attention, 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 commemorate the 40th Anniversary of Dutchess Outreach of Poughkeepsie, New York; and be it further

RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to Dutchess Outreach of Poughkeepsie, New York.