

2015-J985

LEGISLATIVE RESOLUTION congratulating Damon Villnave upon the occasion of being named a Distinguished Finalist in the 20th Annual Prudential Spirit of Community Awards program

WHEREAS, It is the sense of this Legislative Body to acknowledge those outstanding students within our communities whose volunteerism serves as inspiration to their friends, family and peers; and

WHEREAS, It is also the sense of this Legislative Body to commend and pay tribute to the youth of today, the leaders of tomorrow, whose character and achievements exemplify the ideals and values cherished by this Empire State; and

WHEREAS, Attendant to such concern, and in full accord with its long-standing traditions, this Legislative Body is justly proud to congratulate Damon Villnave of Clay, New York, upon the occasion of being named a Distinguished Finalist in the 20th Annual Prudential Spirit of Community Awards program; and

WHEREAS, The Prudential Spirit of Community Awards, created in 1995 by Prudential Financial in partnership with the National Association of Secondary School Principals, are designed to emphasize the importance of service to others, and to encourage all young Americans to contribute to the well-being of their communities; and

WHEREAS, The prestigious Prudential Spirit of Community Awards program recognizes young people across the United States for their exemplary volunteer activities and commitment to community; more than 100,000 volunteers have been honored at the local, state and national level since the program's beginning; and

WHEREAS, Damon Villnave was named a top youth volunteer in New York State for 2015, in the 20th Annual Prudential Spirit of Community Awards, based on his strong commitment to service, personal initiative

and growth, and community impact; and

WHEREAS, Now a sixth-grader at Gillette Road Middle School, Damon Villnave was just seven years old when he decided to directly help those in need, after seeing a local news story about the growing homeless population in Central New York; and

WHEREAS, In 2010, Damon Villnave launched his "DJ's Gift of Warmth" blanket drive, and in the first year alone, his drive collected more than 280 blankets; Damon started up collection events at his school and at his church, and he used social and mass media tools to promote his charitable mission; and

WHEREAS, To date, Damon Villnave has collected more than 2,500 blankets and \$2,000 to support the Syracuse Rescue Mission; his annual "DJ's Gift of Warmth" blanket drive has been so successful that the Syracuse Rescue Mission has been able to donate some of the excess blankets to other branches throughout the State; and

WHEREAS, In 2014, Damon Villnave also received the Youth Service America Award for his outstanding volunteer efforts; and

WHEREAS, The success of the State of New York, the strength of our communities, and the vitality of American society depend, in great measure, upon the dedication of young people like Damon Villnave, who use their considerable talents and resources to serve others; and

WHEREAS, This Legislative Body is moved to honor Damon Villnave, commending him for his outstanding record of volunteer service, peer leadership, and community service, recognizing the value of his labors and the promise of his future; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to recognize and to congratulate the founder of "DJ's Gift of Warmth," Damon Villnave of Clay, New York, upon the occasion of being named a

Distinguished Finalist in the 20th Annual Prudential Spirit of Community Awards program; and be it further

RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be tran-

mitted to Damon Villnave.