

2017-J2946

Senate Resolution No. 2946

BY: Senator DEFRANCISCO

CELEBRATING the 30th Anniversary of Hillside
Work-Scholarship Connection

WHEREAS, It is the sense of this Legislative Body to recognize and honor those esteemed organizations within our midst whose work and civic endeavors have enhanced the quality of life in their communities and the great State of New York; and

WHEREAS, The character of life in Central New York has been ably served and uniquely enriched for the past 30 years through the dedication and benevolent concern of Hillside Work-Scholarship Connection; and

WHEREAS, Attendant to such concern, and in full accord with its long-standing traditions, this Legislative Body is justly proud to celebrate the 30th Anniversary of Hillside Work-Scholarship Connection; and

WHEREAS, Hillside Work-Scholarship Connection is a nationally-recognized youth development program that helps at-risk youth stay in school and graduate from high school with the skills and confidence necessary to enter college or the workforce; and

WHEREAS, Hillside Work-Scholarship Connection was created in 1987,

by Wegmans Food Markets; the program identifies students in grades 7-12 in the Buffalo City School District, Rochester City School District, Syracuse City School District, and Prince George's County Public Schools in Maryland, who are capable of success but are in danger of dropping out of schools due to a variety of factors, including low socioeconomic status and low standardized test scores; and

WHEREAS, Hillside Work-Scholarship Connection pairs these at-risk students with a professional Youth Advocate through graduation and up until two years after high school; these school-based Youth Advocates serve as mentors and role models, working with a caseload of 30 students at a time to address their individual needs and the challenges that may impede their success; and

WHEREAS, Applying a case management approach, Youth Advocates with Hillside Work-Scholarship Connection are on call 24 hours a day, seven days a week, and partner with the students, their parents and guardians, and other adults to benefit the student; Youth Advocates help to create an Individual Graduation Plan with targeted goals to support high school graduation, job placement, career planning, college advancement, and other personal goals; and

WHEREAS, In addition to long-term mentoring from Youth Advocates, Hillside Work-Scholarship Connection provides other services, including weekly after-school enrichment activities, summer enrichment programs, youth employment training, placement through the organization's Jobs Institute, workplace mentoring at partner worksites, as well as supplemental education services including supper programming, tutoring, and access to other support services; and

WHEREAS, After-school and weekend enrichment activities include

career exploration, job-readiness, social and life skills, sports, arts, recreation, and visits to college campuses; and

WHEREAS, The enrichment curriculum uses the Teen Outreach Program (TOP), a school-based pregnancy, school suspensions, class failure, and dropouts prevention program that has demonstrated positive impacts over several decades in more than 400 schools nationwide; a key component of the program requires students to complete 20 hours of community service each year, in order to help them understand and appreciate their role in shaping the future; and

WHEREAS, Hillside Work-Scholarship Connection prepares its students for entry into the workforce through its Jobs Institute and Youth Employment Training Academy (YETA), a 25-hour training module that helps youth develop interviewing and entry-level job skills; and

WHEREAS, In the mid-1990s, Hillside Work-Scholarship Connection became an affiliate of the Hillside Family of Agencies; Wegmans continues as a key partner and philanthropic funder of Hillside Work-Scholarship Connection; and

WHEREAS, Hillside Work-Scholarship Connection has existed in the City of Syracuse for a decade, and has helped Syracuse students overcome barriers to earning their high school diploma; the Syracuse program graduated 217 students in 2017, and celebrated this accomplishment at a ceremony on Thursday, May 11, 2017, at the Landmark Theatre in Syracuse; and

WHEREAS, Hillside Work-Scholarship Connection, in every capacity in which it has served, has left a permanent mark on the Central New York community; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to celebrate the 30th Anniversary of Hillside Work-Scholarship Connection; and be it further

RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be presented to Wayne O'Connor, Executive Director of Hillside Work-Scholarship Connection Syracuse.