

2017-J4181

Senate Resolution No. 4181

BY: Senator KENNEDY

COMMENDING Sister Marcella Marie Garus upon the occasion of her retirement after 40 years of distinguished service as President of Villa Maria College

WHEREAS, It is the practice of this Legislative Body to take note of and publicly acknowledge individuals of remarkable integrity and character whose endeavors have enhanced the quality of education in this great State; and

WHEREAS, Attendant to such concern, and in full accord with its long-standing traditions, this Legislative Body is justly proud to commend Sister Marcella Marie Garus upon the occasion of her retirement after 40 years of distinguished service as President of Villa Maria College; and

WHEREAS, Sister Marcella Marie Garus entered religious life as a Felician Sister in 1961; while studying at the University of Detroit in 1968, her provincial minister requested her to serve as the business administrator at Villa Maria College; and

WHEREAS, After serving in that capacity for ten years, Sister Marcella Marie Garus became Villa Maria College's third president in 1978; and

WHEREAS, For the past 40 years, Sister Marcella Marie Garus has committed herself to helping students from all backgrounds achieve a college education; and

WHEREAS, During her illustrious tenure, Villa Maria College moved from a two-year college to a four-year bachelor's degree-granting institution and created a name for itself in the fields of animation, fashion design and merchandising, music, and interior design; and

WHEREAS, Under the able leadership of Sister Marcella Marie Garus, Villa Maria College also added six associate degree programs and 14 bachelor's programs; furthermore, enrollment has grown by 30%, with 490 full-time students and 106 part time students recorded this year; and

WHEREAS, Sister Marcella Marie Garus was instrumental in expanding curriculum to newer fields such as occupational therapy, digital filmmaking, and digital media and communication; she also paved the way for physical changes to the campus, including updates to the campus library, a new art gallery, residence halls, new athletic facilities, and most recently, a partnership with Catholic Health to add a health care program for elderly individuals; and

WHEREAS, This extraordinary woman has been the proud recipient of numerous awards and accolades including: the Bishop's Medal for Catholic Education, the Governor's Award for Excellence in Education Award, New York State Senate Women of Distinction Award, the Commission on Independent Colleges and Universities Higher Education Leadership Award,

the Cheektowaga Chamber of Commerce Appreciation Award, and the Am-Pol Eagle Citizen of the Year Award; and

WHEREAS, The result of many individual efforts, the excellence and

success of Villa Maria College is due in large part to the efforts of Sister Marcella Marie Garus; and

WHEREAS, As a long-serving President of Villa Maria College, Sister Marcella Marie Garus has created and fostered opportunities for her students, faculty and staff, ensuring pathways for their educational success as well as their personal and professional growth; and

WHEREAS, Sister Marcella Marie Garus has clearly had an enduring impact on the students of Villa Maria College, as well as on the community-at-large, and accordingly merits recognition and applause for her impressive dedication to others; and

WHEREAS, It is the sense of this Legislative Body to commend the efforts of those individuals who work to support our proud traditions of institutions of higher education by providing their skills and talents to our colleges; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to commend Sister Marcella Marie Garus upon the occasion of her retirement after 40 years of distinguished service as President of Villa Maria College; and be it further

RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to Sister Marcella Marie Garus.