

2017-K1286

Assembly Resolution No. 1286

BY: M. of A. Bronson

COMMENDING the Rochester Institute of Technology (RIT) upon the occasion of celebrating the 50th Anniversary of its Henrietta, New York campus

WHEREAS, It is the sense of this Legislative Body to recognize and commend those institutions of true purpose and high achievement whose exemplary programs and accomplishments clearly demonstrate an enduring pursuit of excellence in higher education for the youth of this noble Empire State; and

WHEREAS, This Legislative Body is justly proud to commend Rochester Institute of Technology (RIT) upon the occasion of celebrating the 50th Anniversary of its Henrietta, New York campus to be celebrated with a myriad of events including NTID's 50th Anniversary Reunion, Re-dedication of the Henrietta Campus, a Walking Tour of Downtown Campus, and the Brick City Homecoming and Family Weekend; and

WHEREAS, From its beginnings, RIT has been deeply connected to the educational and practical training needs of citizenry and industry; the university's roots go back to 1829, when the city's founder established the Rochester Athenaeum, a literary society that offered public lectures and debates and attracted such luminaries as Ralph Waldo Emerson and Oliver Wendell Holmes; and

WHEREAS, In 1891, the Athenaeum merged with the Mechanics Institute, which had been created and funded by local business and community leaders to provide technical training to meet local industry's growing demand for skilled workers; the merged institution combined cultural education and practical technical training; and

WHEREAS, In 1912, cooperative education was added to the programmatic mix and the core foundation was in place for Rochester Institute of Technology, as it has been named since 1944; and

WHEREAS, In 1968, the RIT was relocated from downtown Rochester, New York, to Henrietta; and

WHEREAS, After World War II, RIT experienced a large influx of student enrollees; the number of students doubled between 1950 and 1960, and projections indicated more of the same in the foreseeable future; existing facilities were strained, and in some cases, inadequate; and

WHEREAS, The RIT Board and President Mark Ellingson agreed that growth was positive and integral to the institution's mission to serve the community, and subsequently, began to look for a site outside the city which would provide the required room for growth far into the future; the current site in Henrietta was a top choice; and

WHEREAS, In early 1961, RIT received a gift of \$ 3.27 million from Grace Watson, who had attended classes; the Trustees decided to use the donation, the largest in RIT's history, toward the purchase of the land in Henrietta; and

WHEREAS, On November 22, 1961, the Trustees announced that RIT was going to move from the current downtown location to a new site in Henrietta; then President Ellingson called the move "the most

significant single act in the 132-year history of the Institute"; and

WHEREAS, An editorial in the Reporter noted: "The action that the board has so courageously taken is unparalleled in its significance to RIT and the community it serves, and will be applauded by untold generations of students"; and

WHEREAS, The morning after the announcement, the Student Association presented a check for \$10,000 to President Ellingson to start a building fund, morning classes were canceled, and students drove in a motorcade to the new campus site in Henrietta; and

WHEREAS, Today, RIT is one of the world's leading innovative institutions, a vibrant, connected community that is home to diverse, ambitious, creative students, and faculty from around the world; as of fall 2017, RIT expected to enroll nearly 19,000 students who represent all 50 states and 100 nations; and

WHEREAS, Nearly 3,200 students from diverse racial and ethnic backgrounds are enrolled on the main campus along with approximately 2,700 international students; an additional 1,760 students are enrolled at RIT's international locations in Croatia, Kosovo, United Arab Emirates, and China; and

WHEREAS, Through the National Technical Institute for the Deaf (NTID), one of nine academic units on campus, RIT has achieved international prominence as a leader in preparing deaf and hard-of-hearing students for successful careers in professional and technical fields; and

WHEREAS, NTID was created by federal law in 1965, under President Johnson and located at RIT in 1966; the university provides unparalleled

access and support services for the more than 1,200 deaf and hard-of-hearing students who live, study, and work with hearing students on the RIT campus; and

WHEREAS, RIT is well known for its commitment to undergraduate students and, increasingly, for offering a broad range of innovative graduate programs that combine the theoretical with practical applications and align with demonstrated needs in the marketplace; and

WHEREAS, RIT offers numerous degrees within its nine colleges: College of Applied Science and Technology, B. Thomas Golisano College of Computing and Information Sciences, Kate Gleason College of Engineering, College of Imaging Arts and Sciences, College of Science, E. Philip Saunders College of Business, National Technical Institute for the Deaf, College of Liberal Arts, and College of Health Sciences and Technology; other degree-granting academic units include the School of Individualized Study and the Golisano Institute for Sustainability; and

WHEREAS, Through the years, RIT has steadily grown its doctoral programs, and in 2016, the Carnegie Classification of Institutions of Higher Education reclassified the university from "Masters - Comprehensive" to "Doctoral University - Moderate Research Activity"; in May 2017, RIT awarded 32 doctoral degrees in eight Ph.D. programs; and

WHEREAS, Under the visionary guidance of President Dr. David C. Munson Jr., RIT stands proud and prominent, always looking to the future and the needs of those it serves; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to commend the Rochester Institute of Technology (RIT) upon the occasion of celebrating the 50th Anniversary of its Henrietta, New York campus,

noting the propriety of its goals, the constancy of its commitment and the significance of its accomplishments in preparing the youth of today and leaders of tomorrow; and be it further

RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to Dr. David C. Munson Jr., President, Rochester Institute of Technology (RIT).