

2019-J38

Senate Resolution No. 38

BY: Senator BRESLIN

HONORING Valerie Rapson, PhD upon the occasion of her designation as recipient of the 2018 Emerging Leader Award by Girls Incorporated of the Greater Capital Region on September 26, 2018

WHEREAS, It is the custom of this Legislative Body to publicly recognize those extraordinary individuals who have made contributions to the success and progress of society in the course of their life's work; and

WHEREAS, Attendant to such concern, and in full accord with its long-standing traditions, this Legislative Body is justly proud to commend Valerie Rapson, PhD upon the occasion of her designation as recipient of the 2018 Emerging Leader Award by Girls Incorporated of the Greater Capital Region to be observed at its 4th Annual Awards Celebration on Wednesday, September 26, 2018, at Wolfert's Roost Country Club in Albany, New York; and

WHEREAS, The Emerging Leader Award recognizes individuals under the age of 35 or who have been with their employer for less than 10 years, who are rising stars in the Capital Region and blazing a trail of their own in personal or professional advancement; Valerie Rapson is one such individual; and

WHEREAS, Through free after-school and mentoring programs, Girls Inc. of the Greater Capital Region strives to inspire girls grades Kindergarten through 12 to be strong, smart, and bold by focusing on the development of the whole girl by teaching her to value herself, take risks, and discover and develop her inherent strengths; and

WHEREAS, The combination of long-lasting mentoring relationships, a pro-girl environment, and research-based programming equips girls to navigate gender, economic, and social barriers, and grow up healthy, educated, and independent; and

WHEREAS, Valerie Rapson's interest in astronomy began when she was a young child; she watched endless "Star Trek" episodes with her father and hoped to one day better understand how the universe works; and

WHEREAS, During her undergraduate career at the University of Rochester, Valerie Rapson had the opportunity to teach a summer physics course for young women, and this is where her passion for science education and outreach blossomed; and

WHEREAS, Valerie Rapson went on to earn her PhD in Astrophysical Sciences and Technology at the Rochester Institute of Technology; her dissertation focused on the chemical composition and structure of planet-forming disks around nearby young stars; and

WHEREAS, During graduate school, Valerie Rapson spent much of her free time educating the public about astronomy; she taught at various summer camps, visited senior living communities, and presented star shows at the Strasenburgh Planetarium; and

WHEREAS, From 2014-2015, Valerie Rapson served as President of the

Rochester Academy of Sciences Astronomy Section, a large organization of amateur astronomers who love to share their passion for astronomy with the world; and

WHEREAS, In 2014, Valerie Rapson was inducted into the American Astronomical Society's Astronomy Ambassadors program recognizing her extensive participation in astronomy outreach; and

WHEREAS, A role model and mentor for other young women pursuing the sciences, Valerie Rapson currently serves as Outreach Astronomer for the Dudley Observatory at miSci where she develops and teaches astronomy curricula to the young and young-at-heart; and

WHEREAS, When Valerie Rapson is not at the telescope or in the classroom, you can find her at home baking sweet treats, or at the local county fair watching the tractor pull or demolition derby; and

WHEREAS, It is the sense of this Legislative Body that those who enhance the quality of life in their community and have shown a long and sustained commitment to the maintenance of high standards in their profession, certainly have earned the recognition and applause of all the citizens of this great Empire State; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to commend Valerie Rapson, PhD upon the occasion of her designation as recipient of the Emerging Leader Award by Girls Incorporated of the Greater Capital Region; and be it further

RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to Valerie Rapson, PhD.