

2019-J211

Senate Resolution No. 211

BY: Senator BRESLIN

COMMEMORATING the 50th Anniversary of Literacy
Volunteers of Rensselaer County to be celebrated on
October 5, 2018

WHEREAS, It is the custom of this Legislative Body to honor those
illustrious institutions of the State of New York whose purposeful
endeavors serve to enhance the quality of life in their communities; and

WHEREAS, Attendant to such concern, and in full accord with its
long-standing traditions, this Legislative Body is justly proud to
commemorate the 50th Anniversary of Literacy Volunteers of Rensselaer
County to be celebrated at the Hilton Garden Inn, Troy, New York, on
October 5, 2018; Journalist and Writer John Gray will be the Emcee for
this auspicious event; and

WHEREAS, For 47 years, Literacy Volunteers of Rensselaer County has
helped to build a more literate society by providing free, confidential
tutoring to adults and out-of-school teens in reading, writing, and
English for speakers of other languages (ESOL); and

WHEREAS, Founded in 1968 under the sponsorship of Church Women
United, the office at the First United Presbyterian Church in Troy
opened in 1977; the program began with basic literacy students and later
included ESOL students; and

WHEREAS, Following the model created by Ruth Colvin and Literacy Volunteers of America, Literacy Volunteers of Rensselaer County recruits and trains volunteers to be tutors; it also serves more than 200 learners annually, with programs including one-to-one tutoring and small group instruction in reading and writing, ESOL, math, financial literacy, computer literacy, workplace literacy, citizenship preparation and reading mentors for kids in elementary school; and

WHEREAS, Under the leadership of President Caitlin Stein-Miner, the professional staff supports more than 100 volunteer tutors, as well as a corps of tutor trainers, event planners, and board members who successfully run the programs; funding is provided by State and Federal agencies as well as corporate sponsors, granting organizations and foundations, and individual donors; and

WHEREAS, The many services provided by Literacy Volunteers of Rensselaer County include: One-to-One and Small Group Tutoring: this helps individuals learn to read, to write, and to speak English, and to improve their math skills; tutoring is free and confidential, and students and tutors work together for an average of two hours per week to meet students' goals; Tutor Training Workshops prepare new volunteers to tutor adults using an interactive, learner-centered, whole language approach; and the Workplace Literacy program provides on-site instruction for English language learners working at local businesses; and

WHEREAS, In addition, English Literacy Civics classes meet for 25 weeks from October through May for a total of 150 hours of instruction

to English Language learners in Albany and Troy; the Sewing and English Class gives women a chance to learn valuable employment skills while practicing their English every Saturday at the former McManus Center on

Herrick Street; the Citizenship Preparation classes at the Rensselaer Public Library give students the information and skills they need to pass the Naturalization Test and interview; and a Financial Literacy program is offered as part of the YWCA's "Ready to Work" trainings at the Troy YWCA; and

WHEREAS, Furthermore, the Make the Most of Your Money program serves women participating in these trainings; Everybody Wins! gives elementary school children a chance to spend time reading with positive reading role models; Reading mentors from area businesses and the community meet weekly with elementary children in elementary schools in Troy and Albany; Telephone Conversation Partners helps English language learners practice English on the phone with a friendly volunteer for 30 minutes each week; learners converse with volunteers on the telephone to strengthen their speaking and listening comprehension skills; and Tutoring at the Rensselaer County Jail gives incarcerated men a chance to get reading and math help from volunteer tutors while enrolled in Questar III classes at the jail; and

WHEREAS, It is the sense of this Legislative Body that when the noble aims and accomplishments of organizations such as Literacy Volunteers of Rensselaer County are brought to our attention it is appropriate to publicly proclaim and commend them, their staff, and their dedicated volunteers; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to commemorate the 50th Anniversary of Literacy Volunteers of Rensselaer County; and be it further

RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to Caitlin Stein-Miner, President, Literacy Volunteers of Rensselaer County.

