

LEGISLATIVE RESOLUTION commending the Queens College Committee for Disabled Students and the CUNY Coalition for Students with Disabilities upon the occasion of hosting their 10th Annual ADA BBQ, on July 25, 2013

WHEREAS, It is the sense of this Legislative Body to recognize that the quality and character of life in the communities across New York State are reflective of the concerned and dedicated efforts of those organizations and individuals who would devote themselves to the welfare of the community and its citizenry; and

WHEREAS, Attendant to such concern, and in full accord with its long-standing traditions, this Legislative Body is justly proud to commend the Queens College Committee for Disabled Students and the CUNY Coalition for Students with Disabilities upon the occasion of hosting their 10th Annual ADA BBQ on Thursday, July 25, 2013; and

WHEREAS, The Queens College Committee for Disabled Students' (CDS) 10th Annual ADA BBQ will bring together more than 200 members of the Queens College community for a day of food, fun, and awareness as they celebrate the 23rd birthday of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, which guarantees equal access and opportunity to Americans with disabilities in all aspects of American life; and

WHEREAS, The representative organization of the college's more than 500 students with disabilities, CDS was established in 1972 to fully integrate students with disabilities into the academic, social, and cultural life of Queens College and its larger community; and

WHEREAS, Among its many offerings, CDS provides a peer tutoring program which funds Queens College students to support the academic success of students with disabilities, and organizes a host of student-centered social and cultural events focused upon raising awareness of issues of importance to students with disabilities; it is also the home of the Passantino Empowerment Center, through which students train to be more effective self- and systems-advocates; and

WHEREAS, The CUNY Coalition for Students with Disabilities (CCSD) is the representative organization of CUNY's more than 9,000 students with disabilities; the organization advocates for equal access and opportunity for students with disabilities at CUNY and beyond; and

WHEREAS, CCSD emerged out of the first cross-campus gathering of CUNY students with disabilities organized by Mary Ellen & Donald Passantino in August 1989 at the CUNY Graduate Center in Manhattan; and

WHEREAS, CCSD's many achievements include: effectively advocating for increased funding levels in the CUNY budget for students with disabilities in 1993; championing changes that would make the state financial aid program accessible to students with disabilities in 1997; and leading the effort to save the CUNY LEADS program, a highly successful career readiness initiative for CUNY students with disabilities; and

WHEREAS, Before the Americans with Disabilities Act was signed into law on July 26, 1990, more than 54 million Americans living with disabilities faced overwhelming barriers to employment, transportation, public accommodations, public services and equal rights under the law; and

WHEREAS, Such obstacles to the freedom and full participation in society of people with disabilities imposed staggering economic and social costs on American society, and undermined not only this great Nation's efforts to educate, rehabilitate, and employ individuals with disabilities, but also America's bedrock principles of fairness and justice; and

WHEREAS, The Americans with Disabilities Act ensures that no individual may be discriminated against on the basis of disability with regard to the full and equal enjoyment of the goods, services, facilities, and

usage of any place of public accommodation, including lodging, recre-

ation, transportation, education and dining establishments; and

WHEREAS, Dedicated organizations such as the Queens College Committee for Disabled Students and the CUNY Coalition for Students with Disabilities serve an invaluable function in our society, giving voice to the needs of one of the most vulnerable populations in this society and ensuring that students with disabilities have full access to the best that public higher education in New York State has to offer; and

WHEREAS, It is the sense of this Legislative Body that those who enhance the well-being and vitality of their community and have shown a long and sustained commitment to excellence 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 the Queens College Committee for Disabled Students and the CUNY Coalition for Students with Disabilities upon the occasion of hosting their 10th Annual ADA BBQ; and be it further

RESOLVED, That copies of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to the Queens College Committee for Disabled Students and the CUNY Coalition for Students with Disabilities.