

LEGISLATIVE RESOLUTION honoring Kent Knappenberger upon the occasion of his designation as recipient of the inaugural GRAMMY Music Educator Award

WHEREAS, It is the sense of this Legislative Body to honor those individuals whose character and achievements best exemplify the ideals and values cherished by the great State of New York; and

WHEREAS, Attendant to such concern, and in full accord with its long-standing traditions, this Legislative Body is justly proud to honor Kent Knappenberger upon the occasion of his designation as recipient of the inaugural GRAMMY Music Educator Award; and

WHEREAS, This auspicious occasion was celebrated at the 56th Annual GRAMMY Awards Ceremony in Los Angeles, California, on January 26, 2014; the award was presented to Kent Knappenberger as part of the Special Merit Awards Ceremony and Nomination Reception held before the GRAMMY awards on January 25, 2014; and

WHEREAS, Kent Knappenberger, his wife Nannette and daughters, Lucy, Esther, and Amanda, walked the red carpet at Los Angeles' Wilshire Ebell Theatre along with music legends including Ringo Starr, Kris Kristofferson, and the Isley Brothers; he delivered a heart-warming acceptance speech about the importance of music and fine arts education for children sharing that "music helps us construct who we are; it makes us become more fully human"; and

WHEREAS, The Music Educator Award was established to recognize current educators - teaching kindergarten through college, in both public and private schools - who have made a significant and lasting contribution to the field of music education, and who demonstrate a commitment to the broader cause of maintaining music education in the schools; the award was open to any current music teacher in the United States; the teachers could be nominated by anyone, both inside and outside the education system; more than 30,000 teacher nominations from all 50 states were accepted; and

WHEREAS, Kent Knappenberger or Mr. "K", as he is known to his students, is currently a music teacher for sixth through twelfth grade, and choir director at Westfield Academy and Central School where he has taught for 25 years; he is also the director of the singing groups Apemen, Firecrackers, and Westwinds, and directs the Drama Club, McClurg Street String Band, various school musicals, and a steel pan group; and

WHEREAS, Kent Knappenberger holds a bachelor's degree from the State University of New York at Fredonia and a master's degree in music education, harp performance, and literature from Eastman School of Music; he is also a member of the National Education Association; and

WHEREAS, There is no one more humble and deserving of such a significant accomplishment, and it is an honor the GRAMMY foundation recognized an outstanding teacher from a small school in Upstate New York; Westfield Academy and Central School has an enrollment of roughly 300 students; and

WHEREAS, Along with the GRAMMY award, this devoted educator received an honorarium, which he plans to use for instruments, sheet music, equipment, and even some musical experiences for the school district that otherwise would be unattainable; and

WHEREAS, Kent Knappenberger and his wife, Nannette are the proud parents of nine children, eight of whom were adopted from Brazil, where Kent served as a volunteer music teacher at the Ana Gonzaga Methodist Institute in Rio de Janeiro; and

WHEREAS, Kent Knappenberger epitomizes the passion for music and love of teaching that characterizes thousands of music educators who make a difference in the lives of the children and youth of our country every

day; his genuine love for what he does, and the mutual respect and admiration between him and his students, are evident in his teaching; and

WHEREAS, There are many remarkable stories in the world of education, but few are as impressive as that of Kent Knappenberger, who serves as an inspiration to us all; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to congratulate Kent Knappenberger upon the occasion of his designation as recipient of the first-ever GRAMMY Music Educator Award; and be it further

RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to Kent Knappenberger.