

BY: Senator DEFRANCISCO

COMMEMORATING the 20th Anniversary of Syracuse City Ballet, Inc.

WHEREAS, The arts, in whatever form, are central to human expression; they are truly a universal language and their contribution to the development of friendship and understanding among all peoples cannot be underestimated; and

WHEREAS, It is the sense of this Legislative Body to recognize and commend those artistic organizations which have brought outstanding entertainment and cultural enrichment to the citizens of 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 commemorate the 20th Anniversary of Syracuse City Ballet, Inc.; the company kicked off its 20th Anniversary 2016-2017 Season with "An Intimate Evening with Syracuse City Ballet," a show that combines classical ballet and modern dance, at the Syracuse OnCenter Bevard Studio on September 22, 2016; and

WHEREAS, Syracuse City Ballet has and will continue the celebration of its 20th Anniversary season with **The Nutcracker** at the OnCenter Crouse Hinds Theater on December 3, 2016, and will cap off the season with **Snow White**, at Crouse Hinds Theater on March 10 and 12, 2017; and

WHEREAS, Syracuse City Ballet is the only professional ballet company serving the Central New York community, creating family-oriented entertainment while offering opportunities for local professional, pre-professional, and student dancers to perform classical and premiere works with national and international guest artists; and

WHEREAS, Since 1996, Syracuse City Ballet has staged live-action entertainment, trained professional dancers, and enriched the community through various youth outreach efforts; and

WHEREAS, Syracuse City Ballet was founded by Associate Director Harriet Casey and Artistic Director Kathleen Rathbun, who has extensive experience in dance, and trained with the Syracuse Ballet Theater before moving to New York City to attend Juilliard on a scholarship; and

WHEREAS, Upon graduating, Kathleen Rathbun danced for Princeton Ballet Society of New Jersey, and then subsequently moved home to Syracuse; and

WHEREAS, Upon her return, Kathleen Rathbun discovered that the Syracuse Ballet Theater she once trained with was no longer in existence, so she taught classical ballet at Syracuse University and formerly served as the Director at the Metropolitan School of the Arts; and

WHEREAS, As a teacher, Kathleen Rathbun has in-depth experience developing young dancers' technique, strength, and artistry; when the Metropolitan School of the Arts closed, Kathleen was eager to bring ballet and dance back to Syracuse, so she decided to open her own school to continue sharing her knowledge and passion with young men and women; and

WHEREAS, In 1990, Kathleen Rathbun founded Ballet & Dance of Upstate New York; after a few years of successfully establishing her school, she felt it was important to provide her students the opportunity to perform in major classical ballets alongside professional, world-renowned dancers; and

WHEREAS, In 1996, Syracuse City Ballet, originally named Upstate NY Ballet, was co-founded by Executive Director Kathleen Rathbun and Associate Director Harriet Casey; the company premiered with a performance of **Snow White**; and

WHEREAS, Twenty years later, Kathleen Rathbun and Harriet Casey continue to inspire youth, professionals, and audiences through their productions of major ballets, their participation in dozens of charity events, and their collaboration with major arts organizations; and

WHEREAS, Over the years, Syracuse City Ballet has developed an impressive repertoire, including **The Nutcracker, Swan Lake, Peter Pan, Aladdin, Sleeping Beauty, Dracula, Cinderella, Romeo and Juliet**, and a number of other ballets which have performed to capacity houses and four-star reviews; and

WHEREAS, In addition, Syracuse City Ballet has presented choreography in multiple performances such as: the Armory Square Candlelight Series, Syracuse Opera's **La Traviata**, Syracuse Shakespeare Festival, Vision of Sounds Series, Regina F. Goldenberg Cultural Series, CNY Mode Fashion Show, CRAVE Arts Festival, and Syracuse Fringe Festival to name a few; and

WHEREAS, Syracuse City Ballet's growth from a small grass-roots venture to a ranking professional ballet has secured a dance presence in Central New York; and

WHEREAS, A vibrant arts community encourages collaboration, instills local pride, draws people together, and is essential to a community's vitality; over the past 20 years, Syracuse City Ballet has contributed to the richness of Central New York's cultural palette; and

WHEREAS, It is the sense of this Legislative Body that when artistic societies of such noble aims and accomplishments are brought to our attention, they should be recognized by all the citizens of this great Empire State; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to commemorate the 20th Anniversary of Syracuse City Ballet, Inc.; and be it further

RESOLVED, That copies of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to Executive and Artistic Director Kathleen Rathbun, Associate Director Harriet Casey, and Syracuse City Ballet staff and Board of Directors.