

**BY:** Senator KENNEDY

**COMMENDING** Aspire of WNY upon the occasion of celebrating its 70th Anniversary

**WHEREAS,** It is the custom of this Legislative Body that the quality and character of life in this great Empire State is greatly enriched by the faithful and diligent work of those organizations which serve to meet the special needs 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 Aspire of WNY upon the occasion of celebrating its 70th Anniversary; and

**WHEREAS,** For the past seven decades, Aspire of WNY has provided a full range of services to both children and adults with developmental disorders; and

**WHEREAS,** After her child was diagnosed with Cerebral Palsy in 1945, Mary Moss mobilized friends, family and other parents of children with cerebral palsy to form the Cerebral Palsy Association of Western New York on September 19, 1947; and

**WHEREAS,** Working together, the Cerebral Palsy Association and the Junior League began reviewing the effects of cerebral palsy; after a year and a half of study, the organizations had made significant progress in educating the community about the congenital disorder and its treatment methods, while also lobbying for state legislation; and

**WHEREAS,** The organizations also realized there was no place in the community for young adults with cerebral palsy to gather; subsequently, a one of a kind Young Adult Cerebral Palsy Center was founded and served as a model to be copied by the entire world; and

**WHEREAS,** The agency grew to include not only the recreation program, but also administrative offices, a preschool and a research library; in 1952, preschool services were expanded when children ages three to seven became eligible for enrollment; and

**WHEREAS,** Through the years, the Cerebral Palsy Association's scope expanded dramatically and people with any and all developmental disabilities came to take advantage of the innovative and comprehensive programs and services; and

**WHEREAS,** By 2003, less than 35 percent of those served had cerebral palsy; the remaining individuals included those with mental retardation, epilepsy, traumatic brain injury and other neurological conditions; in light of this, the agency felt a new name that more fully represented the spirit of the organization should be developed, and on March 14, 2003, the agency became known as Aspire of Western New York; and

**WHEREAS,** In September of 2014, Aspire of WNY proudly opened its fully renovated and expanded Center for Learning campus; the school featured state of the art technology, 100% accessibility, 21st century environmental controls and new specialty spaces including a Cafetorium, Life Skills classroom and walking track; and

**WHEREAS,** Today, one of Aspire's most renowned programs is their Individual Residential Alternatives (IRAs), which provides living opportunities for people with development disabilities with 24/7 assistance in over 43 group homes; and

**WHEREAS,** For the last 70 years, Aspire of WNY has been driven by the core belief that children and adults with developmental disabilities have the right to realize their full potential and live as independently as possible; and

**WHEREAS,** This vital organization's total commitment to the development of innovative, individualized programs, continual integration of the developmentally disabled within the community and to providing full-service solutions to the populations it serves, makes Aspire the leading agency of its kind and a true asset to the Western New York community; and

**WHEREAS,** It is the sense of this Legislative Body that those organizations which unselfishly devote their energy, talent and thoughtful care on behalf of improving the quality and dignity of life in the community, are worthy and due full praise and recognition for their noble and dedicated efforts; now, therefore, be it

**RESOLVED,** That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to commend Aspire of WNY upon the occasion of celebrating its 70th Anniversary, recognizing the significance of its exemplary accomplishments in providing personalized services and programs of support for those with developmental disorders; and be it further

**RESOLVED,** That a copy of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to Aspire of WNY.