

BY: M. of A. Fahy

COMMEMORATING the 175th Anniversary of the
University at Albany

WHEREAS, It is the sense of this Legislative Body to acknowledge significant milestones and celebrate events of historical significance which have a lasting impact within and beyond the communities of the Empire State; and

WHEREAS, Attendant to such concern, and fully in accord with its long-standing traditions, it is the intent of this Legislative Body to commemorate the 175th Anniversary of the University at Albany to be celebrated on May 7, 2019, recognizing its commitment to helping generations of students in their pursuit of academic excellence and empowering them through their education to make a difference in their communities; and

WHEREAS, UAlbany began as the New York State Normal School in 1844; on December 18, 1844, 29 young men and women reported for opening classes at a former railway building located at 115-121 State Street in Albany; and

WHEREAS, The Normal School moved to a new building at Lodge and Howard Streets in 1849 where it resided until 1885 and enrollment soared to 300 students by 1881; and

WHEREAS, During the 19th Century, the New York State Normal School educated thousands, provided teachers and administrators for schools, fostered new personae and life styles among students, and provided opportunities for social and economic mobility for people from limited circumstances; and

WHEREAS, Between 1890 and 1906, the school underwent a transformation from a two-year teacher training school to a four-year liberal arts college for teachers, granting its first bachelor's degree in 1893; and

WHEREAS, The new curriculum required students to pursue academic subjects deemed essential to becoming a virtuous, knowledgeable, and articulate person; during this era, students emulated the best practices at other colleges, which had student newspapers, Greek societies, and athletic teams; in 1890, the school changed its name to the New York Normal College; and

WHEREAS, After 1906, the school rapidly grew in stature; the burning of the Willett Street Building on January 8, 1906, necessitated the college to temporarily locate in a number of nearby buildings, including Trinity Methodist Church, as the State constructed a new campus on Western Avenue, which it occupied in 1909; and

WHEREAS, The new Campus, now referred to as Downtown Campus, boasted

greatly improved facilities -- three buildings named Science, Administration, and Auditorium (renamed Husted, Draper, and Hawley in 1927); and

WHEREAS, For the first time, academic departments were created; in 1914, the school became the New York State College for Teachers featuring an advanced curriculum consisting of 80% academic work and 20% professional teaching studies; and

WHEREAS, From the 1920s through the 1950s, the New York State College for Teachers provided the feel of a small liberal arts college that also provided the opportunity to become certified to teach.; and

WHEREAS, During the 1950s, College President Evan R. Collins laid the groundwork for the transition to a University when he successfully guided through the plans for a Ph.D. program in education; and

WHEREAS, In the early 1960s, the University at Albany began to transform into a university, and the school moved away from teacher education as its sole organizing purpose; and

WHEREAS, In 1962, as part of SUNY's expansion plan, the school was designated a doctoral-degree granting "University Center" and in September of that year, the University at Albany enrolled its first class of undergraduate students in liberal arts programs that did not include any required study in teacher education; and

WHEREAS, The new university adopted the model of a broad-based public research institution, charged with providing a liberal arts education for large numbers of undergraduates; and

WHEREAS, Student enrollment increased from 3,800 in 1963 to more than 13,000 in 1970; a new campus, the modern complex designed by Edward Durrell Stone that is now the Uptown Campus, was built and formally dedicated in 1969; and

WHEREAS, In the mid-1970s, leaders sought to focus the University's strategic mission by emphasizing the institution's comparative advantage in public policy; this approach built on the University's location in New York's capital city and strong faculty and academic programs in the professions and public affairs, particularly in those areas of critical state need; and

WHEREAS, By 1989, external research and training support increased to more than three times what it was at the beginning of the decade; it had become a critical and integral element of the campus' financial plan; and

WHEREAS, The University at Albany's evolution into a major research university continued during the 1990s, initially under the leadership of H. Patrick Swygert, 15th president, and then, under the leadership of Karen R. Hitchcock, 16th president; and

WHEREAS, In 1996, a third campus, the East Campus, renamed in 2016

the Health Sciences Campus, was added 12 miles east of the Uptown Campus, in Rensselaer County, when the university acquired former Sterling-Winthrop laboratories and converted them into labs, classrooms, and a business incubator concentrating on advances in biotechnology and other health-related disciplines; and

WHEREAS, In the spring of 2005, the university created a College of Computing and Information, with faculty on both the Uptown and Downtown campuses; and

WHEREAS, In the fall of 2015, the college was replaced and its programs incorporated into a totally new college, the College of Engineering and Applied Sciences (CEAS); at the same time, the university unveiled another new college, the College of Emergency Preparedness, Homeland Security and Cybersecurity; and

WHEREAS, On June 21, 2017, Dr. Havidan Rodriguez, founding provost of the University of Texas Rio Grande Valley and former interim president of the University of Texas-Pan American, was named the 20th president of the university, a position he assumed in September of 2017; Dr. Rodriguez became the first Hispanic/Latino president of any of the four-year SUNY campuses; and

WHEREAS, Today, the University at Albany is a major public research university where students and faculty collaborate to conduct life-enhancing research and scholarship in a wide range of disciplines; and

WHEREAS, With nationally respected programs, top-ranked professors, and a strategic location, UAlbany offers a world-class education to nearly 18,000 students at the graduate and undergraduate levels, and prepares them for a world of opportunities; and

WHEREAS, In addition to its highly regarded academic programs, The University at Albany is also proud of its thriving athletics programs, competing at the NCAA Division I level; and

WHEREAS, The University at Albany will continue to grow and evolve and carry on its mission to educate and transform lives for another 175 years and beyond, and continue to equip students to become individuals of influence and agents of change in their communities; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to commemorate the 175th Anniversary of The University at Albany; and be it further

RESOLVED, That copies of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to Dr. Havidan Rodriguez, President, University at Albany.