

BY: Senator MAYER

COMMEMORATING the 75th Anniversary of Westchester
Community College

WHEREAS, New York State's commitment to education is unparalleled; its history and stature are secured by the superlative caliber of its educational professionals and the students they inspire; and

WHEREAS, It is the sense of this Legislative Body to recognize and commend those institutions of true purpose and high achievement whose exemplary programs and accomplishments clearly demonstrate an enduring pursuit of excellence in higher education for the young adults of this noble 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 75th Anniversary of Westchester Community College, to be celebrated with a myriad of events throughout the year, including opportunities to engage in inclusive reflections on its history and honoring the resilience, contributions, and experiences of those who paved the way; and

WHEREAS, Established in 1946, Westchester Community College provides accessible, high quality and affordable education to meet the needs of its diverse community; this vital institution is committed to student success, academic excellence, workforce development, economic development and lifelong learning; and

WHEREAS, Serving as Westchester Community College's first President, Dr. Philip C. Martin introduced the first Associate of Arts degree, Liberal Arts/Humanities, in 1961, and was responsible for the original construction of the classroom building, student center, technology building, library, and gym; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Joseph Hankin served as the second President of Westchester Community College from 1971 until 2013, during which time he was instrumental in the expansion of the college with four extension centers located in Yonkers, Ossining, Peekskill and Mount Vernon; and

WHEREAS, Furthermore, he introduced evening programs in local high schools, and oversaw the construction of the Administration Building, renovation of the Library, and construction of Westchester County's first LEED-certified building, the Gateway Center; and

WHEREAS, Under the visionary guidance of its current President Dr. Belinda S. Miles, Westchester Community College has increased diversity and inclusion through expanded opportunities into new communities, resulting in the campus being federally recognized as a Hispanic Serving Institution; and

WHEREAS, Additionally, she committed the college to improve

graduation rates through new and innovative programs including Achieving the Dream and Viking Success, and successfully guided the college through the COVID-19 outbreak by transitioning all campus operations to a remote format as well as securing essential support for students in need; and

WHEREAS, For 75 years, Westchester Community College has instilled in its students a quest for learning, a toolset for success, and a capacity to think critically about and meaningfully contribute to the world they inhabit; and

WHEREAS, Today, Westchester Community College is one of the leading community colleges in the percentage of students who begin their academic journey from the bottom fifth of the income quintiles but end up in the top fifth later in life; and

WHEREAS, Steeped in a proud and distinguished history, Westchester Community College may look back with pride upon its humble beginnings, find just satisfaction in its purposeful growth and hold true of purpose in its dedication to serving the educational needs of its students; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to commemorate the 75th Anniversary of Westchester Community College, noting the propriety of its goals, the constancy of its commitment and the significance of its accomplishments; and be it further

RESOLVED, That copies of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to Dr. Belinda S. Miles, President, Westchester Community College.