

Assembly Resolution No. 325

BY: M. of A. Santabarbara

MOURNING the death of Walter Simpkins,
transformative leader, distinguished citizen and
pillar of his community

WHEREAS, It is with profound sorrow and deep regret that this Legislative Body records the passing of Walter Simpkins, a distinguished leader, advocate, and community servant who dedicated his life to improving the lives of others, particularly fathers and families in the Capital Region; and

WHEREAS, Walter Simpkins of Schenectady, New York, died on Wednesday, March 19, 2025, at the age of 75; and

WHEREAS, Walter Simpkins was the Executive Director of Community Fathers Inc., a nonprofit grassroots organization he founded in 2009, which provided vital services to fathers and families throughout the region; and

WHEREAS, Walter Simpkins was a graduate of the City College of New York and earned a master's degree in Africana Studies from SUNY Albany, demonstrating his unwavering commitment to education and lifelong learning; and

WHEREAS, Walter Simpkins was a certified Fatherhood and Healthy Relationship practitioner, a New York State Domestic Violence Counselor, and a Bridges Out of Poverty facilitator, certifications that reflected his passion for improving the well-being of families and individuals; and

WHEREAS, Walter Simpkins served as an admissions recruiter and academic advisor at Schenectady County Community College for several years, contributing to the educational advancement of many students, and spent over 30 years in the human services field, impacting countless lives through his leadership and expertise; and

WHEREAS, Deeply involved in the Schenectady community, Walter Simpkins served on numerous boards of community-based organizations and made a lasting difference in the lives of those in need; and

WHEREAS, In addition to his work with Community Fathers Inc., Walter Simpkins founded the African American Burial Ground Restoration Project at Vale Cemetery in Schenectady, NY, a project that brought awareness to the history of African Americans and was designated as a site on the National Underground Railroad Trail; and

WHEREAS, Walter Simpkins received numerous accolades throughout his life, including the County of Schenectady Human Rights Commission's Individual Achievement Award, a New York State Assembly Citation for Community Contributions, and most recently, the Community Hero Award presented by The Schenectady Foundation, all of which serve as a

testament to his tireless dedication to his community and his impactful legacy; and

WHEREAS, Walter Simpkins was a true vessel of hope and change, tirelessly working to bridge gaps, elevate voices, and empower families--especially fathers--by changing perceptions and restoring hope in the family dynamic; and

WHEREAS, Walter Simpkins' leadership and inspiring presence have touched the lives of many in the Capital Region, and his work in the community will continue to serve as an example of compassion, integrity, and service for generations to come; and

WHEREAS, Walter Simpkins' boundless generosity and kindness will live on through the cherished memories of his family; his immeasurable contributions to the community and steadfast dedication to strengthening families, one father at a time, will forever stand as a guiding light of love, hope, and inspiration to the countless lives he touched; and

WHEREAS, Armed with a humanistic spirit and imbued with a sense of compassion, Walter Simpkins leaves behind a legacy which will long endure the passage of time and will remain as a comforting memory to all who were privileged to have known and loved such an amazing man; he will be deeply missed and truly merits the grateful tribute of this Legislative Body; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to mourn the death of Walter Simpkins, and to express its deepest condolences to his family, friends, and the countless individuals whose lives were positively impacted by his work; and be it further

RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to the family of Walter Simpkins.