

2009-J218

LEGISLATIVE RESOLUTION congratulating Gene Ventriglia upon the occasion of his retirement after many years of distinguished service and success as women's soccer coach at the U.S. Military Academy

WHEREAS, It is incumbent upon the people of the State of New York to recognize those individuals within our midst who have contributed greatly to the quality of our lives by providing exceptional leadership and a commitment to excellence; and

WHEREAS, Excellence and success in competitive sports at the collegiate level can be achieved only through strenuous practice, team play and team spirit, nurtured by dedicated and outstanding coaching and strategic planning; and

WHEREAS, Athletic competition enhances the moral and physical development of the young people of this State, preparing them for the future by instilling in them the value of teamwork, encouraging a standard of healthy living, imparting a desire for success and developing a sense of fair play and competition; and

WHEREAS, Gene Ventriglia is the only head coach in the history of the United States Military Academy's women's soccer program; he took over the program as a club team in 1985 and raised it to varsity status a year later; and

WHEREAS, Coach Gene Ventriglia's Army women's soccer teams went on to win 262 matches in 24 seasons; in 2008, he capped his coaching career with the Black Knights with Army's second Patriot League playoff title, featuring an overtime victory over rival Navy, and their first-ever visit to the NCAA Division I tournament; and

WHEREAS, Speaking no English, Gene Ventriglia arrived in Poughkeepsie, New York, from his native Italy in 1960 at the age of 15; while attending high school he supported his family by working in a pastry shop until his graduation; and

WHEREAS, Discovering the Kingston Sport Club where he played soccer, the sport he loved, Gene Ventriglia was recruited to play for the first SUNY New Paltz soccer team; at New Paltz, he was named All-American three times while leading his team to the 1965 NCAA College Division

Atlantic Coast championship; and

WHEREAS, After becoming a naturalized citizen, Gene Ventriglia played for the United States in the 1967 Pan American games in Winnipeg; he scored a goal in the U.S. win over Cuba during the height of the cold war, and afterwards played professional soccer in New York City; and WHEREAS, Gene Ventriglia became a foreign language instructor in the Newburgh school system before moving on to New Paltz High School in 1968, where he started the boys' soccer program; during his tenure as coach, the school won the only two league championships in its history; and

WHEREAS, Taking over the boys' soccer program at Highland in 1982, Gene Ventriglia led the team to one of the most successful three-year records in Section 9 history, producing two sectional titles and a State Class C championship in its undefeated 1984 season; and

WHEREAS, In 1985, Gene Ventriglia became a part time coach for the West Point Women's Soccer club team; the sport was elevated to varsity status the next year, and by 1991 the program advanced to Division I and he became its full time coach; and

WHEREAS, For 24 seasons under Gene Ventriglia's inspired leadership, the West Point Women's Soccer team was a pre-eminent success; it won four regular-season titles, two playoff crowns, and participated in four postseason tournaments; he was named the Patriot League Coach of the

Year six times, and ranks 16th in career wins among active Division I coaches; and

WHEREAS, Coach Gene Ventriglia has done a superb job throughout his career in guiding, molding and inspiring the U.S. Military Academy's Women's Soccer team members toward their goals; and

WHEREAS, Throughout the entire period of his outstanding coaching career, a period of constructive involvement, Gene Ventriglia has stood constant in dignity, good grace and humor, and has earned the respect and admiration of his players, opponents, colleagues, family and friends; and

WHEREAS, With him throughout his distinguished coaching career has been his devoted wife, Donna; they are the proud parents of three children and have five grandchildren; and

WHEREAS, Gene Ventriglia intends to continue to coach soccer by helping the SUNY New Paltz men's team as a volunteer; and

WHEREAS, Sports competition instills the values of teamwork, pride and accomplishment, and Coach Gene Ventriglia has clearly made a contribution to the spirit of excellence which is a tradition of this great Empire State; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to honor Coach Gene Ventriglia upon the occasion of his retirement after many years of distinguished service and success as women's soccer coach at the U.S. Military Academy; and be it further

RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to Coach Gene Ventriglia.