

2011-K582

LEGISLATIVE RESOLUTION commending STEP, Saratoga Therapeutic Equestrian Program, upon the occasion of celebrating its 25th Anniversary

WHEREAS, Organizations which serve the interests of the people of this Empire State merit the commendation of this Legislative Body; and

WHEREAS, This Legislative Body is justly proud to commend STEP, Saratoga Therapeutic Equestrian Program, upon the occasion of celebrating its 25th Anniversary to be celebrated at its home stable in Glenville, New York, on Sunday, June 5, 2011; and

WHEREAS, Established in 1986, the Saratoga Therapeutic Equestrian Program (STEP) is a charitable not-for-profit 501(c)(3) organization, registered in New York State, that is dedicated to helping special needs individuals achieve a maximum degree of freedom, independence, and mobility through tested and innovative methods of equine assisted therapy and medical rehabilitation; STEP's therapists, instructors, and dedicated core of volunteers collaborate to provide equine assisted therapies and activities; and

WHEREAS, Under the luminous direction of its Executive Director, Karen "Kay" White, STEP serves individuals with physical, cognitive and/or emotional disabilities; children and adults with disabilities such as Asperger's Syndrome, Down's Syndrome, spina bifida, cerebral palsy, mental retardation, multiple sclerosis and sensory integrative dysfunction benefit from equine assisted therapy; and

WHEREAS, For some, equine assisted therapy is a first opportunity to experience the control and freedom of physical movement, thereby improving muscle tone, balance, posture, coordination, and motor development; through interaction with the horse, instructor, and volunteers, students also grow both mentally and emotionally; and

WHEREAS, Volunteers are truly the backbone and foundation of STEP, assisting as side walkers and leaders in therapy sessions, helping with barn chores, wish list tasks, and providing support for fundraising activities; STEP volunteers give selflessly of their time, talents and expertise, and possess experience in physical therapy, occupational therapy, speech and language pathology, psychotherapy and animal husbandry;

dry; and

WHEREAS, STEP fully trains volunteers who desire to work with the horses and/or in equine assisted therapy sessions, and provides educational seminars throughout the year; and

WHEREAS, STEP's nine therapy horses are truly measured resources, their experience, compassion and unending patience provide learners with the opportunity to realize freedom and mobility; each animal is evaluated as to how its specific characteristics match students' needs; horses, like people, are individuals, and students' abilities are challenged by adjusting to the feel of a different horse from time to time; and

WHEREAS, Students do not always fit neatly into one category or another, which is why Kay White developed STEP UP, its exclusive program in which physical and occupational therapists work in conjunction with a riding instructor to bridge the gap between Hippotherapy and Therapeutic riding; the goal is for the student to progress along the continuum; first as a passive participant, in which the horse influences the rider, and eventually as an active participant, in which the rider influences the horse; and

WHEREAS, It is the sense of this Legislative Body that when organizations of such enduring courage and accomplishment are brought to our attention, it is appropriate to publicly proclaim and commend those organizations for the edification and emulation of others; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to commend STEP, Saratoga Therapeutic Equestrian Program, upon the occasion of celebrating its 25th Anniversary; and be it further

RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to STEP, Saratoga Therapeutic Equestrian Program.