

## 2013-J485

LEGISLATIVE RESOLUTION commending the Town of Babylon, New York, upon the occasion of hosting its 25th Annual Black History Month Program and paying tribute to this year's honorees

WHEREAS, It is the sense of this Legislative Body to recognize important events which remind us of the rich and diverse heritage of our great State and Nation; and

WHEREAS, Attendant to such concern, and in full accord with its long-standing traditions, this Legislative Body is justly proud to commend the Town of Babylon, New York, upon the occasion of hosting its 25th Annual Black History Month Program and to pay tribute to this year's honorees on Saturday, February 23, 2013; and

WHEREAS, On this most auspicious occasion, the Town of Babylon will honor many outstanding individuals and organizations that have greatly contributed to the betterment of the community which they so ably serve; and

WHEREAS, Edward Bates, recipient of Babylon's Community Service Award, is a renowned self-taught artist with natural born talent and national acclaim; after serving in the Navy for two years, this African American artist made his home in Brooklyn and became an illustrator for women's wear; he developed his interests in oils on canvas and has since created countless masterpieces which boldly capture the heart of the black culture; and

WHEREAS, Recipient of Babylon's Education Award, Claude Byer entered Tuskegee Institute and graduated with a bachelor's degree in Chemistry Education; he was commissioned as a 2nd Lieutenant in the United States Air Force, achieving the rank of Captain; in 1969, he began working for the Amityville School District and from 1969-2001, taught every course and level of mathematics for grades 7-9; he also coached the Varsity Girls Basketball Team, never missing a game or scrimmage during his tenure; and

WHEREAS, Recipient of Babylon's Economics Award, Rickey Hill is the successful owner of Rickey Realty, Babylon's number one realtor for over 30 years; he has played a substantial role in helping to construct and

maintain the financial foundation of numerous community based civic organizations that are dedicated to improving the quality of life for community residents; and

WHEREAS, North Amityville Head Start Program, recipient of Babylon's Unity Award, is a not-for-profit organization that helps at-risk children and families in Suffolk County; every year, they provide critical education, disabilities, health, nutrition, mental health, family partnership and parent involvement services to over 2,000 children and help thousands of Long Islanders learn how to raise healthy, happy families; and

WHEREAS, Recipient of Babylon's Economics Award, John David Parker is the third generation contractor of his family's firm, D. Parker and Sons, Inc., which was established by his grandfather in 1911; John enjoys a long record of accomplishment in civic, community, religious, and political affairs that span over 50 years, and has received numerous awards for his many involvements; and

WHEREAS, The Scholarship Committee of Wyandanch, recipient of Babylon's Special Recognition Award, has maintained the tradition of recognizing the five top ranking high school seniors since its establishment in 1986; the scholarships awarded at the end of the year are based on academics, extracurricular activities and community service; in the past 28 years, the Committee has provided monetary incentives for more than 190 students in the Wyandanch community; and

WHEREAS, Joe Turner, recipient of Babylon's Community Service Award, started working for the Amityville Record in 1989 as a photojournalist, covering all types of stories and scenes; he was the first black individual to hold that position; since then, he has had photographs appear on numerous front pages and has made substantial contributions in his role as a photojournalist; he has also been the recipient of numerous accolades for his magnanimous contribution to his community; and

WHEREAS, Recipient of Babylon's Unity Award, the Venettes Cultural Workshop was founded by Mary Suarez Baird in 1967; after moving to Long Island, she decided that she would use dance as her tool to inspire youth to achieve their best; with 13 students, she began to teach dance classes in her home; today, the Venettes continue to perform and travel throughout the United States and the students are recipients of many national dance awards and accolades; and

WHEREAS, It is the sense of this Legislative Body that when individuals and organizations of such noble aims and accomplishments are brought to our attention, they should be celebrated and recognized by all the citizens of this great Empire State; now, therefore, be it  
RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to commend the Town of Babylon, New York, upon the occasion of hosting its 25th Annual Black History Month Program and to pay tribute to this year's honorees, and be it further  
RESOLVED, That copies of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to the Town of Babylon and the aforementioned honorees.