

2015-J2437

LEGISLATIVE RESOLUTION commending West Side and Blackrock-Riverside Neighborhood Housing Services for 35 years of outstanding service to the community

WHEREAS, It is the sense of this Legislative Body to recognize that the quality and character of life in the communities across New York State are reflective of the concerned and dedicated efforts of those organizations and individuals who would devote themselves to the welfare of the community and its citizenry; and

WHEREAS, Attendant to such concern, and in full accord with its long-standing traditions, this Legislative Body is justly proud to commend West Side and Blackrock-Riverside Neighborhood Housing Services for 35 years of outstanding service to the community to be celebrated at a dinner on Wednesday, June 10, 2015, at Acqua Restaurant, Buffalo, New York; and

WHEREAS, West Side and Blackrock-Riverside Neighborhood Housing Services (NHS) is a private, not-for-profit corporation dedicated to preserving and revitalizing Buffalo's neighborhoods by providing safe, affordable and sustainable housing opportunities for all; and

WHEREAS, This dynamic organization is a full-cycle lending agency with programs carrying customers through the entire process of buying and owning a home, from financial capability and homebuyer education, to closing cost assistance, to post-purchase education, home improvement loans and foreclosure prevention counseling; and

WHEREAS, By focusing on successful home ownership, these vital programs build and protect assets in low-income neighborhoods, making them stronger by encouraging investment and improving confidence; and

WHEREAS, In 1980, both West Side NHS and Black Rock-Riverside NHS were established; in 2008, the agencies signed a memorandum of understanding

to share staff and services, combining and expanding their service areas to all neighborhoods west of Main Street in the city of Buffalo; and

WHEREAS, West Side NHS is a NeighborWorks Chartered Member and HUD Approved Housing Counseling Agency; in 2015, West Side NHS was rated Exemplary by NeighborWorks America, and subsequently, is a designated NeighborWorks Green Organization; and

WHEREAS, NeighborWorks America provides this designation to Chartered Members that meet criteria designed to assess the best practices used by an organization in creating and promoting healthy and sustainable homes and communities; and

WHEREAS, As a designated NeighborWorks Green Organization, West Side and Blackrock-Riverside NHS infuses green principles throughout their operations, programs and services; and

WHEREAS, West Side NHS runs from Porter Avenue on the south to Buffalo State College and the Scajaquada Expressway on the North, and from Elmwood Avenue west to Lake Erie; and

WHEREAS, The West Side of Buffalo is one of the most diverse neighborhoods in the city, 29% of households speak a language other than English; the West Side and Black Rock neighborhoods are seeing a dramatic rise in refugee immigration, especially in Burmese, Somali, Sudanese and Karen communities; and

WHEREAS, Black Rock is a historic neighborhood north of the West Side, centering on Hertel Avenue and Niagara Street along the Black Rock Canal; this area played an important role in the War of 1812, and was officially incorporated into the City of Buffalo in 1853; like the West Side, it is home to an increasingly diverse population and a wide variety of historic architectural styles; and

WHEREAS, It is the sense of this Legislative Body that when 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 West Side and Blackrock-Riverside Neighborhood Housing Services for 35 years of outstanding service to the community; and be it further RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to West Side and Blackrock-Riverside Neighborhood Housing Services.