

## 2019-J1310

Senate Resolution No. 1310

BY: Senator BRESLIN

HONORING Richard Reyes-Gavilan upon the occasion of his designation as recipient of the Excellence in Public Service Award by the University at Albany Alumni Association

WHEREAS, It is the sense of this Legislative Body that those who enhance the quality of life in their community and have shown a long and sustained commitment to the maintenance of high standards in their profession, certainly have earned the recognition and applause of all the citizens of this great Empire State; and

WHEREAS, Attendant to such concern, and in full accord with its long-standing traditions, this Legislative Body is justly proud to honor Richard Reyes-Gavilan upon the occasion of his designation as recipient of the Excellence in Public Service Award by the University at Albany Alumni Association to be celebrated with a Gala on May 4, 2019, at Wolfert's Roost, Albany, New York; and

WHEREAS, This auspicious award recognizes alumni for outstanding contributions to local, state or national communities generally, but not exclusively, through opportunities in appointed or elected office or public service nonprofit organizations; and

WHEREAS, Growing up in Queens, New York, Richard Reyes-Gavilan spent Saturday mornings at the borough's main library branch; while in his 20s, he sold rare books at a sidewalk stand on St. Mark's Place in the East Village; and

WHEREAS, Today, Richard Reyes-Gavilan's lifelong love of literature

and passion for making it accessible to all fuels his work as the Executive Director of D.C. Public Library; and

WHEREAS, Richard Reyes-Gavilan earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in English from the University at Albany (UAlbany) in 1991, and a master's degree in library and information science from the University of Texas at Austin in 1995; and

WHEREAS, Upon the completion of his studies, Richard Reyes-Gavilan returned to New York City, where he served as a Librarian for New York Public Library (NYPL); during this time, he quickly recognized the collection of Spanish books was lacking in a city with a prominent Spanish-speaking population; and

WHEREAS, While working at branches in the South Bronx, Richard Reyes-Gavilan developed and cultivated its Spanish language collection to better reflect the population's needs and interests; he was then named head of NYPL's Humanities collection in 2004; and

WHEREAS, In 2008, Richard Reyes-Gavilan was recruited by Brooklyn Public Library to serve as Central Library Director, and later, Chief Librarian; in this capacity, he led the Open Libraries Initiative which resulted in significantly expanded service hours across the borough; the

project was recognized as a "Top Operational Innovation" by the Urban Libraries Council in 2012; and

WHEREAS, Furthermore, he secured \$3.25 million in funding and oversaw the construction of the Shelby White and Leon Levy Information Commons, a space where Brooklyn residents can access technology, media and learning opportunities; and

WHEREAS, Richard Reyes-Gavilan was named Executive Director of DC Public Library (DCPL) in 2014; his "Know Your Neighborhood" initiative, the library's first strategic plan in more than 12 years, stresses a commitment to customizing collections and services for the unique needs of each community; and

WHEREAS, Richard Reyes-Gavilan is currently overseeing the largest public construction project in the city, the renovation and expansion of the Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial Library, DC's central library; and

WHEREAS, In addition to DCPL's main branch, Richard Reyes-Gavilan has overseen rejuvenation among 20-some other branches across the district, including the complete rebuilding of the Cleveland Park Library, the busiest branch in the system; and

WHEREAS, Richard Reyes-Gavilan also created a small library with robust services in the DC Central Detention Facility, the Books from Birth program which provides free books to participants from birth through age five, and the GoDigital campaign which brings digital resources and web-based learning to underprivileged communities; and

WHEREAS, Richard Reyes-Gavilan has worked tirelessly to modernize the DC Public Library system and bring it to the forefront of American libraries; under his able leadership, the libraries have become much-used community spaces with programs which truly cater to residents of all ages; and

WHEREAS, It is the custom of this Legislative Body that when individuals 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 honor Richard Reyes-Gavilan upon the occasion of his designation as recipient of the Excellence in Public Service Award by the University at Albany Alumni Association; and be it further

RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to Richard Reyes-Gavilan.