

2021-J1562

Senate Resolution No. 1562

BY: Senator GRIFFO

COMMEMORATING the 75th Anniversary of Mohawk
Valley Community College

WHEREAS, It is the sense of this Legislative Body to recognize and commend those institutions of true purpose and high achievement whose exemplary programs and accomplishments clearly demonstrate an enduring pursuit of excellence in higher education for the youth of this noble Empire State; and

WHEREAS, Attendant to such concern, and in full accord with its long-standing traditions, this Legislative Body is justly proud to commemorate the 75th Anniversary of Mohawk Valley Community College (MVCC); and

WHEREAS, In 1946, Mohawk Valley Community College (MVCC) was established to provide technical training to New York State residents, especially veterans returning from World War II; it went on to become New York State's first community college, the largest college between Syracuse and Albany, New York, and the region's primary provider of college education and non-credit training; and

WHEREAS, MVCC was founded as the New York State Institute of Applied Arts & Sciences in Utica, New York, which was located in the Country Day School, then located on Genesee Street in New Hartford, New York; and

WHEREAS, Under the leadership of Director Paul B. Richardson, the Institute initially specialized in retail business management and had a reported enrollment of 53 students on opening day which was October 14, 1946; more than two-thirds of the first students were veterans and tuition was free for New York residents; and

WHEREAS, In its early days, MVCC adapted its programs to fit the needs of area industries, allowing students to have a significant and immediate impact on the area; the textile program gave students the ability to aid in solving some problems plaguing factories in the Northeast, and when they started shutting down and electrical/metal-working companies began to move in, MVCC changed its curricula to adapt; and

WHEREAS, With this curriculum, MVCC was able to train students to perform in a variety of manufacturing activities from drafting and design to quality control, and develop the manual skills needed in such industries; in 1948, a second location was opened in the former Utica Steam Cotton Mill and housed programs in mechanical, electrical, and textile technology; and

WHEREAS, Two years later, the Institute became a part of the State University System and the name was changed to the State University of Applied Arts & Sciences at Utica; and

WHEREAS, In 1952, New York State developed the community college plan under which the institutes could remain open only if a local sponsor took responsibility for them and they were converted to community colleges; and

WHEREAS, In 1953, the Institute became Mohawk Valley Technical

Institute, a community college sponsored by Oneida County, and Albert Payne was appointed as the Institute's first chief administrator with the title of President; and

WHEREAS, Over the next decade, the number and variety of instructional programs continued to grow, including several in non-technical areas; in 1963, the Institute was renamed Mohawk Valley Community College to reflect this shift in emphasis; and

WHEREAS, The main campus on Sherman Drive opened in 1960, and was designed by famed architect Edward Durell Stone; initial construction included the academic building, physical education building and college center, all of which have been extensively renovated and expanded over the years; and

WHEREAS, In 1966, MVCC built its first four residence halls, making it the first New York community college with on-campus housing, and added a fifth in 2005; in 1969, Payne Hall was added, a science and technology building in 1989, and the Information Technology/Performing Arts/Conference Center in 2001; and

WHEREAS, At the request of the Air Force, the college began instruction at Griffiss Air Force Base in Rome, New York, in the early 1950s; some classes were held on base and others at Staley Junior High School; the present Rome branch campus opened in 1974, in a portion of the former Oneida County Hospital on Floyd Avenue, and the Plumley Complex was added to the Rome campus in 1991; and

WHEREAS, By 1978, MVCC was generating more than \$34 million in business volume annually in Oneida County, and providing the equivalent of 2,249 full-time jobs; and

WHEREAS, In 2006, MVCC's Airframe and Powerplant Technology certificate program began in the Griffiss Business and Technology Park in Rome, and is the only community college-based aviation maintenance program in New York and one of only a few one-year programs in the country; and

WHEREAS, In 2011, the 112,000-square-foot Robert R. Jorgensen, Athletic/Events Center, named in honor of the school's long-time Athletic Director and Professor Emeritus, was opened on the Utica campus and features a 6,000-square-foot fitness center, a field house with the capacity to host 3,000 people, and many other amenities including three basketball/volleyball/tennis courts and an indoor tenth-of-a-mile track; and

WHEREAS, In 2017, a \$30 million renovation to the Rome campus was completed in collaboration with Oneida County and New York State; and

WHEREAS, From 2009-2012, MVCC enrollment grew 25 percent, and 2014 enrollment is 5,277 FTEs (full-time equivalent students); the average age of the students is 25.6, 21 percent are minority students, and 76 percent live in Oneida County; and

WHEREAS, Today, MVCC is served by 142 full-time and 260 part-time faculty members, and the full-time staff totals 303, with an additional 170 part-time staff; and

WHEREAS, Each year, MVCC's campuses host more than 150 community events, ranging from committee meetings to the Boilermaker Expo, which draws more than 35,000 people to the Utica campus; faculty, staff, and students also participate in a variety of events, including the Alex Kogut Run/Walk, Making Strides Against Breast Cancer Walk, AHA Heart Run/Walk, Veteran's Center Food Drive, and many others; and

WHEREAS, Under the luminous leadership of President Randall J. VanWagoner, MVCC plans to further align itself with the progressive changes in the City of Utica and surrounding areas, including the arterial project, the City of Utica Master Plan, the launch of the Utica Comets and the nanotechnology boom focused around SUNY Polytechnic Institute and Griffiss Air Base; and

WHEREAS, The College's proud tradition of technical and trade education has positioned it perfectly for the growth in demand for science, technology, engineering and math degrees, and partnerships with other colleges in the state are becoming even stronger, allowing students to more easily transfer to four-year institutions; and

WHEREAS, Steeped in a proud and distinguished history, MVCC may look back with pride upon its humble beginnings, find just satisfaction in its purposeful growth and hold true of purpose in its commitment to serving the educational needs of its students; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to commemorate the 75th Anniversary of Mohawk Valley Community College; and be it further

RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to Randall J. VanWagoner, President, Mohawk Valley Community College.