

No. R-132. House concurrent resolution congratulating the DREAM Program, Inc. on its 10th anniversary.

(H.C.R.99)

Offered by: Representatives Bissonnette of Winooski and Atkins of Winooski

Whereas, in 1999, a dedicated group of Dartmouth College students established a mentoring program for youngsters residing in the Templeton Court housing project in White River Junction, and

Whereas, in 2001, the organization was incorporated as a Vermont nonprofit corporation known as the DREAM (Directing through Recreation, Education, Adventure, and Mentoring) Program, whose mission is to improve the life prospects of some of Vermont's most at-risk youth, and

Whereas, DREAM continues the original Dartmouth students' practice of pairing college students with children residing in low income housing projects to enable the children to develop strong relationships with adult role models, their families, and other children and adults in their community, and

Whereas, the organization employs a unique and innovative approach to mentoring low income youngsters that has proven far more successful than more traditional individual mentoring models, and

Whereas, 375 student mentors from Bennington College, Castleton State College, Champlain College, Dartmouth College, Green Mountain College, Middlebury College, Norwich University, Saint Michael's College, and the University of Vermont volunteer in a number of communities including Barre,

Bennington, Burlington, Middlebury, Milton, Poultney, Rutland, White River Junction, Windsor, and Winooski and mentor 266 children, and

Whereas, DREAM has recently extended its geographic range to include low income housing projects in Roxbury and Cambridge, Massachusetts, with student mentors from Harvard, Northeastern, and Boston Universities, and

Whereas, during the summer months, DREAM operates a residential camp for 120 children at a 50-acre site in rural Fletcher and, as a designated AmeriCorps state program, annually hosts 20 to 40 volunteers, and

Whereas, DREAM has brought new optimism to the participating children, and the college student mentors derive great satisfaction from their volunteer efforts, now therefore be it

Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives:

That the General Assembly congratulates the DREAM Program, Inc. on its 10th anniversary, and be it further

Resolved: That the Secretary of State be directed to send a copy of this resolution to DREAM Program, Inc. Executive Director Mike Loner in Winooski.