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SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 34

Offered January 26, 2016

*Celebrating the life of Ann L. Dearsley-Vernon.*

Patron—Lewis

WHEREAS, Ann L. Dearsley-Vernon of Norfolk, an artist and educator who was an important participant in the Greensboro sit-in in North Carolina during the Civil Rights movement, died on December 13, 2015; and

WHEREAS, in 1960, while a graduate student at the Woman's College at the University of North Carolina, Ann Dearsley-Vernon and two friends gave up their seats at the Woolworth lunch counter in Greensboro to several African American students who were not being served, helping initiate the Greensboro sit-in; and

WHEREAS, the students, who became known as the Greensboro Four, would go on to win a crucial victory in the struggle for Civil Rights when Woolworth stores desegregated lunch counters after public outcry over the incident; Ann Dearsley-Vernon remained committed to social justice throughout her life and went on to support several organizations dedicated to diversity; and

WHEREAS, Ann Dearsley-Vernon relocated to Norfolk in 1973 and became the first education director of the Chrysler Museum of Art, where she worked for nearly 30 years; she was a fixture in Norfolk Public Schools and strove to support and motivate aspiring artists; and

WHEREAS, in 2011, Ann Dearsley-Vernon volunteered for a clinical trial of a left ventricular assist device at Sentara Heart Hospital; the device connects the heart to an external power source and is often used for patients awaiting a heart transplant; and

WHEREAS, Ann Dearsley-Vernon participated in a destination therapy trial and lived with the left ventricular assist device for the rest of her life; she inspired doctors, fellow patients, and the community by completing a series of paintings on her experience, two of which hang at Sentara Heart Hospital, called My Mechanical Heart; and

WHEREAS, Ann Dearsley-Vernon will be fondly remembered and greatly missed by her daughters, Dearsley, Cory, Betony, and Joett, and their families and numerous other family members and friends; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That the Senate of Virginia hereby note with great sadness the loss of Ann L. Dearsley-Vernon, an educator and a supporter of the fine arts, who championed social justice throughout her life; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the Senate prepare a copy of this resolution for presentation to the family of Ann L. Dearsley-Vernon as an expression of the Senate of Virginia's respect for her memory.

INTRODUCED

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