

2021 SESSION

ENROLLED

HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 259

Commending the Ryan Bartel Foundation.

Agreed to by the House of Delegates, February 8, 2021

WHEREAS, the Ryan Bartel Foundation, a nonprofit organization in Waterford that strives to prevent youth suicide by empowering young people, families, and community organizations through education, hope, and lifesaving support, has been a vital mental health resource during the COVID-19 pandemic; and

WHEREAS, the Ryan Bartel Foundation was established by Suzie and Ben Bartel after their oldest son, Ryan, died by suicide at the age of 17, with a mission to ensure that other families did not experience a similar tragedy; and

WHEREAS, the Ryan Bartel Foundation facilitates connections between young people and trusted adults and encourages young people to seek help for themselves and others; the organization works to break the stigma surrounding mental health and suicide and create a culture of acceptance; and

WHEREAS, by using evidence-based programs to build resiliency for coping with life challenges and providing community-focused activities, the Ryan Bartel Foundation fosters a sense of purpose, belonging, and hope among participants; and

WHEREAS, the Ryan Bartel Foundation uses a wide range of programs to engage with young people, including We're All Human peer groups, the We're All Human Walk, and the We're All Human Color Run, all named for one of Ryan Bartel's favorite sayings; and

WHEREAS, to address the increase in anxiety, stress, and depression experienced by teenagers during the COVID-19 pandemic, the Ryan Bartel Foundation developed its FORTitude Teen Workshop series in partnership with adolescent psychologist Dr. Cam Caswell and mindfulness educator Ofosu Jones-Quartey; and

WHEREAS, the Ryan Bartel Foundation implemented its FORTitude Teen Workshops through online sessions themed "I am Enough," "I am Powerful," and "I am Valuable," encouraging young people to cultivate mindfulness and a positive sense of self and to practice healthy life skills and habits; and

WHEREAS, the Ryan Bartel Foundation's Acceptance of Others Awards recognize strength of character, acts of kindness, and service to others and has awarded thousands of dollars in scholarships to high school seniors who were nominated by their peers for their good deeds; and

WHEREAS, the Ryan Bartel Foundation has fulfilled its mission through the hard work of its professional staff members and volunteers, the leadership of its board of directors, and many generous donations from individuals, local organizations, and corporate partners; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, That the Ryan Bartel Foundation hereby be commended for providing vital support to young people and their families both before and during the COVID-19 pandemic; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the House of Delegates prepare a copy of this resolution for presentation to the Ryan Bartel Foundation as an expression of the House of Delegates' admiration for its contributions to young people and families in the Loudoun County community.

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