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STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2016

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SENATE RESOLUTION

HONORING AND CELEBRATING THE SPECIAL OLYMPICS OF RHODE ISLAND AND  
COX RI UNIFIED ATHLETES OF THE YEAR, JORDAN VAZQUEZ AND MICHAEL  
ROSSI, AND RECOGNIZING THEM, THEIR FAMILIES, FRIENDS, COACHES, AND  
NUMEROUS CRANSTON PUBLIC SCHOOL OFFICIALS ON JANUARY 26, 2016, AT THE  
RHODE ISLAND STATE HOUSE

Introduced By: Senators Lombardi, Gallo, Miller, Paiva Weed, and Felag

Date Introduced: January 26, 2016

Referred To: Recommended for Immediate Consideration

1           WHEREAS, The Unified Program brings together athletes with and without intellectual  
2 disabilities to form a partnership and to train and compete together in athletics at their high  
3 schools. This unique program enriches the lives of those without disabilities as much as it does  
4 for those with a disability; and

5           WHEREAS, Each year Special Olympics of Rhode Island and COX RI join together to  
6 host a special awards celebration to honor these wonderful athletes. In 2015, Jordan Vazquez and  
7 Michael Rossi of Cranston High School West were honored as the Unified Athletes of the Year.  
8 Jordan has autism and has grown from having no interest in extracurricular activities as a  
9 freshman to an outgoing and popular student who regularly makes morning announcements, has  
10 given a speech to a packed gymnasium, and excels at both volleyball and basketball. Michael  
11 became interested in Unified Sports while watching the Unified athletes practice as he waited for  
12 varsity practice to begin. He began by helping them run drills and has gone on to become the  
13 Unified Basketball Manager and has forged a great friendship with Jordan; now, therefore be it

14           RESOLVED, That this Senate of the State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations  
15 hereby honors Jordan Vazquez and Michael Rossi for winning the 2015 Unified Athlete of the  
16 Year Award and wishing them continued success in the future. We also recognize the many  
17 people who have contributed so much towards the success of this program and the achievements  
18 of Jordan Vazquez and Michael Rossi including Jordan's parents, Lisa and Jose Vazquez, Jordan's

1 sister, Emily Vazquez, Jordan's Grandmother, Maryann King, Jordan's Aunt, Sandra Cabral,  
2 Michael's parents, Anne Marie and Michael Rossi, Dennis DeJesus, CEO Special Olympics  
3 Rhode Island, Chris Hopkins, Special Olympics of Rhode Island Director of Programs, Jeannine  
4 Nota Masse, Superintendent of Cranston Schools, Michelle Simpson, Cranston Schools Executive  
5 Director of Pupil Personnel Services, Sandi Matoian Heard, Cranston Schools Special Education  
6 Administrator, Tom Barbieri, Cranston High School West Principal, David Schiappa, Cranston  
7 High School West Assistant Principal for Special & Related Services, Matt Reis, Cranston High  
8 School West Unified Coach, Julie Bannon, Cranston High School West Unified Coach, and Kelly  
9 Starliper Morris, Cranston Schools Project SEARCH Special Education Teacher; and be it further  
10 RESOLVED, That the Secretary of State be and hereby is authorized and directed to  
11 transmit duly certified copies of this resolution to Jordan Vazquez, Michael Rossi, and Tom  
12 Barbieri, Cranston High School West Principal.

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