

2022 SESSION

ENROLLED

HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 21

Commending Mike Benzel.

Agreed to by the House of Delegates, February 14, 2022

WHEREAS, Mike Benzel, the head coach of the Kellam High School wrestling team in Virginia Beach, will be inducted into the Virginia Chapter of the National Wrestling Hall of Fame in 2022; and

WHEREAS, as part of the induction honors, Mike Benzel will be presented the Lifetime Service to Wrestling award by the Virginia Chapter of the National Wrestling Hall of Fame at an event on April 9, 2022; and

WHEREAS, Mike Benzel began wrestling in 1971 and four years later, after training under one of the most successful coaches in Hampton Roads, became a Virginia High School League (VHSL) state champion while wrestling at Norview High School in Norfolk; and

WHEREAS, Mike Benzel continued his wrestling career at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, where he became an Atlantic Coast Conference champion and earned a bachelor's degree in biology in 1979; and

WHEREAS, Mike Benzel started his involvement with Kellam High School that same year as an assistant wrestling coach; four years later, he left to coach football and wrestling at Princess Anne High School in Virginia Beach, then he returned nine years later to Kellam High School as a chemistry teacher and head wrestling coach; and

WHEREAS, Mike Benzel began the Kellam Mat Rats Wrestling Club in 1996 with the goal to train young athletes in the techniques and philosophies of successful wrestling, producing many of the top elementary, middle, and high school wrestlers in the area; and

WHEREAS, Mike Benzel's Kellam Mat Rats Wrestling Club has won a number of citywide honors while putting forth many individual champions, several of whom have gone on to wrestle in college; and

WHEREAS, Mike Benzel has coached more than 100 district, regional, and state individual champions and has led his teams to district and regional titles; his wrestlers consistently place high in VHSL state tournaments as he has become one of the most admired and respected coaches in the Commonwealth; and

WHEREAS, recognized as the 2003 Virginia Beach Public Schools Coach of the Year, Mike Benzel has coached many youth league sports, including youth football, and has always gone the extra mile to support his players and their families, even carrying some of his players home when their parents forgot to pick them up; and

WHEREAS, Mike Benzel's ties to Virginia Beach Public Schools and its sporting community run deep as his wife is a gymnastics coach at Kellam High School and his four sons, Ryan, Reid, Ross, and Reese, are all presently students and wrestlers at schools in the division; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, That Mike Benzel hereby be commended for his induction to the Virginia Chapter of the National Wrestling Hall of Fame; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the House of Delegates prepare a copy of this resolution for presentation to Mike Benzel as an expression of the House of Delegates' admiration for his contributions to the Commonwealth.

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