

Fulop donating council salary to school that helps women

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By KEN THORBOURNE

JOURNAL STAFF WRITER

Downtown Jersey City Councilman Steve Fulop talks a lot about giving back to the community, and now he's putting his money where his mouth is.

The freshman councilman announced yesterday that he's donating his roughly \$23,000 City Council annual salary to the Kenmare High School, an alternative high school that gives women a chance to earn a high school diploma.

The Kenmare High School is one of several programs run by the York Street Project, a nonprofit operated by the Sisters of St. Joseph of Peace to help women who've fallen on hard times.

"My goal is to do this every year," said Fulop, a CitiGroup employee. "One of the goals is to bring awareness to the great things they do."

Sister Joan Repka, the high school's principal, was ecstatic.

"We are grateful that Councilman Fulop has chosen to make a difference in the lives of our women," Repka said. "His generosity will enable us to continue offer the counseling and job and life skills training our women need."

Fulop credits his aide, Tracy LaBad, with introducing him to the work of the York Street Project.

Three years ago, LaBad fell into bankruptcy when she had to undergo medical treatment without medical insurance.

A year ago, LaBad went to live at St. Mary's Residence, a housing development run by York Street Project for single women.

"There's a reason you're at a point in your life and I am grateful to have a place like St. Mary's that is safe, affordable, clean and has good food," she said. "And living a block from the waterfront isn't bad."