

OPENING OF THE POLISH CENTER
OF DISCOVERY AND LEARNING
AT ELMS COLLEGE IN CHICOPEE,
MASSACHUSETTS

HON. RICHARD E. NEAL

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 23, 2000

Mr. NEAL of Massachusetts. Mr. Speaker, it is my honor today to take a few minutes to recognize a significant event in my district that will both recognize and honor the impact the Polish American culture has made upon western Massachusetts.

On Saturday, June 3rd, the Elms College in Chicopee, Massachusetts will open a new Polish Center of Discovery and Learning. This new center will address a need in the community that is not currently being met by other area academic research centers and cultural associations. The Polish Center will provide support materials for local schools and educational institutions to encourage and assist people in western Massachusetts and from throughout New England to learn about and discover Poland.

The Polish Center will develop a permanent exhibit of historical and cultural materials which will be housed in an inviting community meeting space. The mission of the center will be to offer a variety of workshops, exhibits, concerts, conferences, films, plays and lectures. All of this will be done in an effort to make known the achievements of Americans of Polish descent and others whose relationships with the ethnic Polish culture has contributed to the economy, the arts and the sciences in New England.

The resources at the Polish Center of Discovery and Learning will include a library collection of English language materials for undergraduate students and the general public on topics of Polish history and culture. The Center will also include a database of historical and statistical information with a concentration on Poles in the United States. Historical and cultural artifacts, as well as support materials and bibliographies will be available.

What is most special about the Center, however, is that it will draw upon the collective experiences of people of Polish origin who live within the western Massachusetts area. Programming will be available for adults, children and college students, and traditional Polish customs and traditions will be passed down through the generations.

Mr. Speaker, I am honored to represent such an interesting and unique Center dedicated to learning and sharing the Polish American culture that thrives in my area. I look forward to working closely with the directors of this Center, and to participating in the many exciting programs and events that are to come in the future.

Congratulations to Elms College for establishing the Polish Center of Discovery and Learning.

COLORADO STATE
REPRESENTATIVE, DEBBIE ALLEN

HON. SCOTT McINNIS

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 23, 2000

Mr. McINNIS. Mr. Speaker, I wanted to take this moment to recognize the career of one of Colorado's leading ladies, State Representative Debbie Allen. In doing so, I would like to honor this individual who, for so many years, has exemplified the notion of public service and civic duty. It is clear that Representative Allen's dynamic leadership will be greatly missed and difficult to replace.

Elected to the State House in 1992, a seat she would hold until present. Representative Allen rose quickly to positions of great importance within the House. Debbie served as the chairman of the Education Committee. Some of her key issues have been crime, law enforcement and educational reform. Debbie is also a Republican activist, serving as the President of the Aurora Republican forum.

Representative Allen also received many honors. She received the Top Metro Legislator award, Friend of Agriculture award, CU Alumni Legislative Award, and the Junior League Champion for Small Children Award. Debbie also received the 5 year award for a 4-H leather instructor.

2000 marked the end of Representative Allen's tenure in the State House of Representatives. Her career embodied the citizen-legislator ideal and was a model that every official in elected office should seek to emulate. The citizens of Colorado owe Representative Allen a debt of gratitude and I wish her well.

HONORING WOMEN WHO HAVE
SERVED, FOUGHT AND DIED FOR
FREEDOM

HON. LANE EVANS

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 23, 2000

Mr. EVANS. Mr. Speaker, from our nation's beginning to the present, women have answered the call to duty without hesitation. Like their male counterparts, they put their lives, their goals, and their dreams on hold to serve their nation.

Women's participation in the military dates back as early as the Revolutionary War when in June of 1778 at Monmouth Courthouse a woman came to the aid of General George Washington and his weary troops. Moving across the battlefield binding wounds and dispensing water, this woman, who became known as "Molly Pitcher", noticed that one of the gun positions had ceased firing. She quickly put down her water pitcher, took over the gun position and fired her cannon. She stayed at her station until relieved by artillerymen. Historians recorded her deeds and actions and while her true identity is not known, "Molly Pitcher" is representative of the women who served with the Continental Army in our country's fight for independence.

During World War I women served as nurses in the armed forces. By the end of the

war, 34,000 women had served in the Army and Navy Nurse Corps, the Marines, and the Coast Guard. These women served with honor not only on American soil, but overseas as well. Three Army nurses received the Distinguished Service Cross, a combat medal second only to the Medal of Honor. Twenty-three received the Distinguished Service Medal, the highest non-combat award. Many received foreign medals and some 38 women made the ultimate sacrifice for their nation and were buried overseas in U.S. cemeteries.

World War II ushered in a new era of service for women in the military. In 1942 laws were passed establishing the Women's Army Auxiliary Corps, the Navy Women's Reserve, the Marine Corps Women's Reserve, and the Coast Guard Women's Reserve. With the signing of the Integration Act of 1948, women were given permanent, legal status as enlisted personnel. By the end of the war, roughly 350,000 had served in the armed forces in virtually every occupation outside of direct combat. These women all had two things in common—they had all volunteered and they had a desire to serve their nation.

The record of women's service to the Armed Forces does not stop with these early wars. Some 265,000 women served during the Vietnam Era and approximately 35,000 women served during the Persian Gulf War. There can be little doubt that these brave women performed a valuable role in service to our nation. Historical documents are full of testimonials attesting to the excellence of women's service, disciplined character and overall positive effects on the armed services. The brave women who served and continue to serve this nation deserve our respect and gratitude.

None of us who have served in our country's armed forces will ever doubt the importance of the service of women in the military. Accounting for an increasing percentage of those in uniform today, women now hold positions of leadership and achievement few would have predicted, even as recently as World War II.

Today a special observance will be held to honor the women who have served in the Armed Forces. Fittingly, this observance will be held at the Women in Military Service for America Memorial. This will be the third annual observance, honoring women who have served admirably in our armed services, some whom have made the ultimate sacrifice so that Americans may enjoy the liberty and freedom we too often take for granted.

Dedicated on October 18, 1997, the Women's Memorial is an inspiring monument that honors and illustrates America's service-women throughout history. Sited at the ceremonial entrance to Arlington National Cemetery, it is the nation's only major national memorial honoring women who have served in uniform in and between our Nation's wars.

I join with many of my colleagues today in saluting the women who have proudly and honorably served in our Nation's military. The debt which we owe them is great and it is most appropriate to pause today to pay them tribute for their individual and collective contributions to our Nation.