

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

RECOGNIZING THE ACHIEVEMENTS OF VANDY D. LAWSON

HON. HENRY CUELLAR

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 27, 2005

Mr. CUELLAR. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Vandy D. Lawson for her dedication to teaching the students at the Comal Leadership Institute in the Comal Independent School District.

Vandy D. Lawson received her bachelor's degree in math from the University of Northern Colorado in Greeley and her master's in statistics from Colorado State University in Fort Collins. Currently she is teaching students grades ninth through twelfth in the subject of math. Through her extraordinary teaching methods she is able to reach students and appeal to their interest like none other—this is what distinguishes her as a great teacher.

The unique teaching style of Mrs. Lawson is one that the teachers of our Nation should regard as an example of how they can reach students in a more effective way. It is said that Mrs. Lawson "looks at what she does every day as a being on a treasure hunt, uncovering great treasures and bringing them back to life." The students she teaches all benefit from Mrs. Lawson's continuous drive to reach each and every student to make sure they all receive as much assistance as possible.

The math and sciences are two essential fields of study that students around the Nation need exposure to America's teachers like Mrs. Lawson, play the most vital role in ensuring students get taught the necessary skills to become tomorrow's leaders. I am honored to have this opportunity to distinguish Vandy D. Lawson for her dedication to the perseverance of knowledge in our community.

TRIBUTE TO UNITED COMMUNITY CENTER IN CELEBRATION OF ITS 35TH ANNIVERSARY

HON. GWEN MOORE

OF WISCONSIN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 27, 2005

Ms. MOORE of Wisconsin. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the achievements of an outstanding community center in my district. This week the United Community Center celebrates its 35th Anniversary.

Since 1970, the UCC has endeavored to provide services and cultural opportunities to members of the Hispanic community in Milwaukee. Founded as a youth center, the UCC has grown into one of the premier social service agencies in our city, with an impressive array of programs designed to serve the needs of Hispanic families and communities.

The UCC attempts to create new opportunities for Hispanic families to move out of poverty and join the ranks of the middle class.

Confronting the challenges of poverty requires a multi-faceted approach, a fact that is not lost on the leaders and members of this organization.

The UCC attends to the educational needs of the community, serving hundreds of students in its pre-kindergarten, grade school and middle school programs. Recognizing the importance of physical health, the Center offers prevention and health awareness services designed to reduce smoking, drug abuse, and teen pregnancy. The UCC understands that communities are sustained, in part, by culture, and as a result, regularly exhibits the works of prominent Hispanic artists and stages musical and dance performances. Young people in the community benefit from classes and workshops in theater arts, ceramics, dance and music. The UCC helps us care for our elders, providing assistance with transportation and affordable housing, while also maintaining adult day care for senior citizens.

The UCC understands that caring for families and individuals requires caring for the environment and stabilizing the neighborhood. Through its neighborhood development initiative, the UCC helps build the wealth and desirability of the community by helping families repair their homes, plant trees, and landscape open areas.

Through all of these activities, the UCC also serves as an ambassador for Hispanic people, reaching out to other communities in Milwaukee to develop understanding and acceptance of Hispanic culture.

By offering a unique array of services and programs, the UCC has established itself as a vital center of Hispanic culture in my district. On the occasion of this 35th Anniversary, I salute the leaders of the UCC, its current and former volunteers, and it members, for these impressive achievements.

90TH COMMEMORATION OF THE ARMENIAN GENOCIDE

SPEECH OF

HON. JOHN SHIMKUS

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 26, 2005

Mr. SHIMKUS. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize the anniversary of the Armenian Genocide and to place in the RECORD a portion of an opinion article written by Lee Enokian.

ARMENIAN GENOCIDE VICTIMS ARE NOT FORGOTTEN

(By Lee Enokian)

Today is the 90th anniversary of the Armenian Genocide. Between 1915 and 1923, more than 1.5 million Armenians were murdered or forcibly exiled because they were the wrong religion and ethnicity. The world community memorializes the anniversary annually as Armenian Martyrs Day.

Thousands of Armenians were offered their lives in exchange for their conversion to Islam. They refused and died as a result. Their steadfast faithfulness to the Christian

faith is not surprising. Armenia was the first Christian nation and remains the only Christian nation in the Middle East.

Various Turkish people invaded southwest Asia during the Middle Ages and carved an empire for themselves from lands occupied by the indigenous Semitic and Indo-European inhabitants.

Turkish nationalism grew relentlessly during the following centuries. In the years preceding World War I, they actively sought to Turkify the Ottoman Empire and strengthen their rule by eliminating fractious ethnic minorities.

The western two-thirds of Anatolia was once inhabited by Greeks and other Indo-European peoples. It is now primarily occupied by Turks.

The eastern third of modern Turkey was once Armenian with an Assyrian minority, but is now populated by Turks and Kurds.

Modern Armenia survived only because it was the single province controlled, and protected, by the Russian Empire. The rest of the territory within its historical borders is almost wholly devoid of ethnic Armenians.

The organized depopulation of Christians and non-Turks from Anatolia by the Ottoman Empire is one of the worst incidents of racism and religious intolerance documented in the world.

The Genocide was master-minded by the ultra-nationalist "Young Turk" government of Ottoman Turkey. Mehmet Talaat Pasha was the Minister of the Interior and architect of the Armenian Genocide. He was rewarded by being elevated to the position of Grand Vizier in 1917. Pasha fled to Germany as his empire collapsed in 1918. He was convicted of capital crimes, including massacring the Armenians. The post-war Ottoman government sentenced him to death in absentia.

Just-minded federal, state and local governments throughout the world continue to acknowledge the Armenian Genocide.

Illinois is no different. Gov. Rod Blagojevich has continued the practice of his predecessors by remembering the plight of the Armenian people. Part of his annual proclamation reads: "The Armenian community, as well as the global community, remembers the Armenian Genocide, which occurred 90 years ago; and during this tragic historical period between the years of 1915 and 1923, Armenians were forced to witness the genocide of their loved ones, and the loss of their ancestral homelands; and this extermination and forced relocation of over 1.5 million Armenians by the Ottoman Turks is recognized every year."

Sadly, the modern state of Turkey denies the Genocide ever occurred. It restricts the ability of ethnic Armenians, Kurds and Assyrians to enter and travel within the country. In fact, Turkey has done its best to remove every trace of the Armenian people from their ancestral homeland. These efforts still don't change history.

Blagojevich concluded his proclamation with the fact that we must remember hateful events like the Genocide to help prevent their future institution.

"Both recognition and education concerning past atrocities such as the Armenian Genocide is crucial in the prevention of future crimes against humanity."

Evil wins when good men turn a blind eye.

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.

IN RECOGNITION OF JOSEPH W. NIGRO, JR.

HON. STEPHEN F. LYNCH

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 27, 2005

Mr. LYNCH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of a man whose professional life has been dedicated to improving the lives of working men and women in Massachusetts and across our nation.

Mr. Speaker, it is my duty to inform the Membership of the House that my dear friend, Joseph W. Nigro, Jr. is retiring from the post of General Agent of the Boston Metropolitan Building Trades Council in Boston, Massachusetts.

Mr. Speaker, Joe Nigro is a remarkable leader with a long and illustrious career in the American Labor Movement. Joe Nigro was initiated into the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers, Local 103 on November 21, 1960 and from the beginning he has been a shining example of dedicated service to his union, his community and his family and for these reasons is entirely worthy of Congressional recognition as well as the appreciation of this nation. Joe's personal integrity, hard work and determination illustrate the best characteristics of those who serve the working men and women of this country.

Over the last 18 years in his position as General Agent of the Boston Metropolitan Building Trades Council, Joe Nigro has made enormous contributions to the men and women of the building trades, not just in Massachusetts but across the country. Under Joe Nigro's leadership, the United States Supreme Court confirmed the legal right to use Project Labor Agreements on public projects creating job opportunities for union construction workers across the nation.

As a member of the Massachusetts State Legislature and Chair of its Commerce and Labor Committee, I witnessed Joe's passionate advocacy on behalf of working families. From securing benefits for workers who had lost their jobs, to training the next generation of America's workers, Joe has worked to ensure that the views and interests of working people are at the forefront of our state and national policy.

Mr. Speaker, Joe Nigro has also been a man committed to his community and has dedicated many hours and much energy to various charities including the South Boston Neighborhood House, the Muscular Dystrophy Association, the Boys and Girls Club of Boston, as well as the Fiske Family Inn Foundation.

On a personal note, I believe that one of Joe's greatest accomplishments has been little recognized over the years: that is, his remarkable ability to maintain "labor peace" among the building trades during times of enormous challenge within the labor movement. As the former President of the Ironworkers Union in Boston, I can assure you that this was a monumental task.

Mr. Speaker, it is my distinct honor to take the floor of the House today to join with Joe's wonderful family, friends, and brothers and sisters in the Labor Movement to thank him for his service and congratulate him on his much-deserved retirement. I hope my colleagues will join me in celebrating Joe Nigro's distinguished career and all his future endeavors.

RECOGNIZING HARLINGEN HIGH SCHOOL FOR THE 2005 INSPIRATION AWARD

HON. RUBÉN HINOJOSA

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 27, 2005

Mr. HINOJOSA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating Harlingen High School for being selected for one of the 2005 College Board Inspiration Awards. Harlingen High School is one of three exemplary high schools in the nation being honored for their steadfast commitment to fostering student success in some of America's most poverty-stricken communities.

Each school receives a prize of \$25,000 to use in furthering its academic goals. The Inspiration Awards recognize outstanding work in improving the academic environment and helping economically disadvantaged students achieve the promise of higher education. I would like to congratulate the superintendent, Dr. Linda Wade, the principal, Richard Renaud, the teachers, students, and entire school community for this prestigious award.

Harlingen High School is truly an inspiration for all of us who value education and academic excellence for all students. For the Hispanic community, it reaffirms our core faith in our own potential. Over 87 percent of the students at Harlingen High School are Hispanic, and many of them are bilingual. Their motto is "in relentless pursuit of student success." Harlingen High School stands firm on three major commitments it has made to the community. These are: To create a positive learning environment for all students; responsibly develop and maintain student-centered educational programs; and a commitment to making graduation the beginning of successful participation as positive and progressive citizens.

Harlingen High School has succeeded in the face of many challenges. More than half of its students participate in the free and reduced price lunch program and over 90 percent of the Hispanic students are considered to be "at risk." A number of the students are the children of migrant and seasonal farm workers, and many of these young people work in the fields themselves.

Supporting teachers, building strong community partnerships, and fostering family engagement have been the foundation for Harlingen High School's success in achieving a 75 percent college-going rate. Harlingen counselors have also made sure that students and families know where they can find the resources to help finance college. In addition to helping Harlingen families with the federal student aid process, school counselors guided Harlingen students to over \$2 million in scholarship money.

Harlingen High School has expanded access to AP courses for all of its students, and for Hispanic students, in particular. Hispanic students comprised 80 percent of the 298 students in grades 9–12 who took at least one Advanced Placement (AP) Program® examination. To prepare students for AP courses and college, Harlingen starts in 8th grade with a pre-AP Program. They couple this with an extensive Parent Involvement Program that conducts outreach meetings at different neighborhood community centers to impress upon parents the importance of helping teens prepare for college.

This is what is possible when we invest in excellence in the Hispanic community. I urge my colleagues to join me in saluting Harlingen High School for its achievement and applauding the College Board for sponsoring the Inspiration Awards. May each year be more competitive than the last.

10TH ANNIVERSARY OF SERVICE LEARNING PROGRAM AT TVI

HON. TOM UDALL

OF NEW MEXICO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 27, 2005

Mr. UDALL of New Mexico. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the 10th anniversary of the Service Learning Program at TVI Community College in my home state of New Mexico. Service Learning is a collaboration of academic instruction, civic engagement and work experience that complements traditional college curriculum. Classroom learning is supplemented with relevant community service followed by self-assessment through group reflection. The concept of Service Learning is not new; the innovation is in promoting it as an essential part of the higher learning experience.

Dr. Rudy Garcia started the TVI Service Learning program in 1995 with 30 local non-profit agencies and 45 students. Ten years later, over 8,000 students have participated in nearly 42,000 hours of education-based community service. Funded by grants, this initiative has achieved program sustainability by building agency partnerships to deliver unique and relevant learning experiences for students while meeting community needs. The TVI Service Learning program fosters an ethic of civic engagement, best illustrated by the 35% of students who stay on as agency volunteers after completing the required hours for their program.

Service Learning at TVI is more than just volunteerism; students translate what they have learned in the classroom into hands-on experiences that develop skills for future employment. The non-profit community agencies are mentors to the Service Learners and partners to the educators who strive to increase academic success and student retention. Local employers also benefit, as Service Learning helps build a stronger, more experienced labor pool; a college degree combined with related work experience is the key to success in today's job market.

Dr. Garcia's Service Learning program has won numerous awards, including the Community Engagement Collaboration Award and the National Bellwether Award for Best Community College Instruction Program. The Campus Compact has designated TVI a Training College for institutions interested in Service Learning, Civic Responsibility and Community Partnerships. TVI and Dr. Garcia were also selected by the Pew Partnership for Civic Change to provide their Leadership Training program.

Mr. Speaker, I have had many Service Learners in my district offices, and as a public servant I welcome every opportunity to mentor these students in community service and civic responsibility. I endeavor to provide relevant work experience, while recognizing the tremendous contribution of our Service Learning