

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