

of confidence in women's personal and professional lives.

The impact of cultivating confidence in the individual lives of women across America cannot be understated. Self-confidence, coupled with self-respect, are vitally important characteristics that empower women and help them to become successful in all areas of their lives.

When women are confident, society benefits. Our Nation's history has been shaped by women whose strong will, determination, and self-confidence has allowed them to break down barriers, speak their minds, and stand up for their beliefs.

I hope my colleagues will join me in celebrating National Women's Confidence Day on the first Tuesday in April. This momentous day will serve as a reminder for women to believe in themselves and remain confident every day; an opportunity for women to get involved in helping other women live more fulfilling lives and; a fitting tribute to women who contribute through education, self-empowerment, mentoring, and volunteer work to helping others gain confidence and self-esteem.

Again, I wish to express my deep appreciation to the YWCA USA, Queen Latifah, and others who support cultivating women's confidence. I invite everyone to join me in celebrating the positive impact confidence has on women's personal and professional lives this Spring, on National Women's Confidence Day.

TRIBUTE TO THE 150TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE MICHIGAN DENTAL ASSOCIATION

HON. BART STUPAK

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 28, 2006

Mr. STUPAK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor an organization in Michigan that single-handedly brought dentistry from a journeyman's trade, as it was called, to a respected profession. The Michigan Dental Association, MDA, will celebrate 150 years of being the foundation for the education of dentists and professional development of their health care specialty on March 1 of this year. The MDA is the oldest continuous State dental society in the United States.

What began as 14 dentists venturing to Detroit on horseback through the harsh Michigan winter on January 8, 1856, would far surpass their dream of creating an association of dentists to elevate the significance of their medical profession. The MDA first pursued their dream by promoting education and professional standards by requiring all members to be graduates of dental school. Finding it difficult to demand such a requirement without a dental school in the State, they worked with the Michigan Legislature to appropriate funds to start a dental school at the University of Michigan.

In the MDA's endless quest to raise the reputation of the dental profession, they began working in 1867 toward legislation that would require dentists practicing in the State of Michigan to register with a State board of dentistry, weeding out those practicing unauthorized methods. In 1883, Governor Josiah W. Begole signed the first dental practice act to enact such requirements.

Membership of the MDA grew at rapid rates during the late 1800's and early 1900's due to annual meetings, the inclusion of local dental groups in the state and the publication of a monthly Journal, still in circulation today.

In the 1930's during the Great Depression, the dental industry was hit hard along with the entire economy. However, the MDA made a strong recovery by helping recruit dentists for military service as well as finding ways to ensure local communities had dental service. Throughout the 1940's and on into the 60's the MDA took up a number of causes including the promotion of community water fluoridation and promoting employer-paid dental coverage and third party plans, which eventually led to expanded dental coverage in Michigan.

The 1980's served as an opportunity to continue the MDA's pursuit of higher professional standards for their profession. A campaign began in 1984 to advocate the importance of dental care and to urge the public to visit their dentist every 6 months, a now widely accepted practice. The MDA worked to mandate continuing dental education for licensed dental professionals, further accomplishing their goal to promote education in the profession.

Mr. Speaker, the Michigan Dental Association has represented the profession of dentistry and the professionals it serves exceptionally well with foresight and vision over the last 150 years. They have successfully taught America that the importance of good oral health is key to overall health. With over 75 percent of Michigan dentists as members, the MDA continues to focus on their message of "Dental Care is Primary Care" and work with the State of Michigan to "promote professional ethics, dental coverage to the uninsured and disadvantaged, and to monitor in the disciplinary process." With those values in mind, I ask the United States House of Representatives to join me in congratulating the Michigan Dental Association and its 5,801 members—2005, on their sesquicentennial celebration of raising the standards of the profession of dentistry in Michigan and the United States. I wish them all the best in the future toward another successful 150 years.

TRIBUTE TO ALEX IZYKOWSKI

HON. DALE E. KILDEE

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 28, 2006

Mr. KILDEE. Mr. Speaker, I ask the House of Representatives to join me today in honoring Alex Izykowski of Bay City, Michigan. Alex is a member of the Men's 5,000 Meter Short Track Relay Team that won the Bronze Medal at the 2006 Winter Olympics in Turin, Italy on February 25th.

Alex, nicknamed "Izy," started speed skating at the age of eleven after watching the 1994 Winter Olympics from Lillehammer, Norway. His first foray onto the ice was on borrowed skates. Determined to succeed and one day become an Olympian he continued to practice and entered his first competition in 1995. One year later he placed fifth at the junior nationals. Always striving to do better, he set three state juvenile outdoor records in 1997 and in 2001, Alex was named to the U.S. Junior Short Track team at the U.S. Championship held in Walpole, Massachu-

setts. Competing with the team in Italy that year, Alex won the 1,000 meter race.

The following year he became the Junior American record holder in the 1,500 meter and 3,000 meter competitions in Calgary. As a member of the U.S. Junior World Cup team Izy won a Silver Medal as a participant on the relay team in 2003. Two years later he won a Bronze Medal in Beijing as a member of the U.S. World Championships Relay Team. After finishing second overall in the lap time trials at the Marquette Training Center, Alex was given a slot on the U.S. Olympic Team fulfilling his 1994 dream to become an Olympian.

He competed twice in the 2006 Olympics, first in the Men's 1,500 meter race and the second time in the Men's Relay. As an integral part of the relay team, Alex was able to pull the team from fourth place to third place during one of his laps around the track. Along with fellow teammates, J.P. Kepka, Rusty Smith, and Apolo Anton Ohno, Alex was able to maintain momentum during the fast paced relay and win the Bronze Medal with a time of 6:47.990.

A 2002 graduate of Bay City Western High School, Alex credits his entire family as his strongest influence and support. Many of his relatives were able to travel to Turin to watch him compete. In tribute to his parents, Alan and JoAnn Izykowski, Alex presented the bouquet given to him during the medal ceremony to his mother. He remarked, "Just showing some respect."

Mr. Speaker, I ask the House of Representatives to rise to their feet and join me, the Bay City community, and the State of Michigan in welcoming home a tremendous athlete, an inspirational role model, and a fierce competitor, Alex Izykowski. Please join me in applauding his achievements as he takes his place in the history of our Nation.

RECOGNIZING THE NATION'S EYE BANKS DURING NATIONAL EYE DONOR MONTH

HON. CHARLIE NORWOOD

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 28, 2006

Mr. NORWOOD. Mr. Speaker, it is my honor today to bring attention to the fact that March 2006 is National Eye Donor Month. As a Member of the Energy and Commerce Committee's Subcommittee on Health and a recipient of organ donation myself, I am firmly committed to promoting organ, eye, and tissue donation.

I have been blessed with the same gift thousands of transplant recipients have received: the gift of life. Sometimes that gift comes in the form of a longer life. Other times, in the case of cornea transplant recipients for example, the gift is one of enhanced life, or the simple ability to continue every day activities. The recipient is allowed the opportunity to enjoy one of the things so many of us take for granted—a chance to see the world around us. Few of us know personally the challenges associated with lost vision, but the fact that our Nation's eye banks exist and have helped so many Americans is a testament to their good work. As our Nation's seniors live longer and vision issues confront the baby boom generation in record numbers, the challenge will grow