

Women constitute about half of the students in our higher education system about half of the overall workforce, but they comprise only slightly more than 12 percent of the science and engineering workforce. African Americans hold only 4.4 percent of science and engineering jobs, Hispanics just 3.4 percent. We can, and must, do better, and the Race to the Top application guidelines are a step in the right direction.

Over \$4 billion is available for competitive grants in the Race to the Top program. This is an unprecedented level of discretionary funding for the Department of Education, and States nationwide will be pulling out all the stops to earn their share of the pie. Many States working months ago to put the correct conditions in place to apply for funds.

Moreover, the "Educate to Innovate" campaign was recently launched by President Obama. This campaign is a nationwide effort of private companies, universities, foundations, nonprofits, and science and engineering societies—working with the Federal Government—to improve student performance in STEM subjects. As part of this effort, business leaders and nonprofits will be joining forces to identify and replicate successful STEM programs across the country. For example, Time Warner Cable and the Coalition of Science After School are creating an online directory of STEM afterschool programs. Other STEM organizations will be teaming up with local volunteers to host National Lab Days, and President Obama announced an annual science fair at the White House. This type of public-private collaboration is just the kind of action we need to bolster STEM education.

I sincerely hope the competitive preference for STEM education in the Race to the Top application, coupled with the "Educate to Innovate" campaign, will spur the kind of investment and attention in STEM education that I believe all of our students deserve. Our country is counting on these future scientists and engineers.

#### TRIBUTE TO MAJOR LAMONT ATKINS

Mr. AKAKA. Mr. President, I wish today to recognize MAJ Lamont Atkins of the U.S. Air Force, who has been my military legislative fellow for the past year.

Lamont is a proud alumnus of the University of Alabama, where he earned a bachelor of science in management information systems, and an avid fan of Alabama's Crimson Tide football team. He also holds a masters of arts in computer resources and Information Management from Webster University. With over 11 years in the military, Major Atkins brought a wealth of knowledge and experience to my office. He has excelled in every previous assignment and has received numerous commendations, including several Officer of the Year awards.

While Major Atkins' primary duty was to assist my military legislative assistant on defense and veterans' issues, he also made significant contributions in other areas, including banking, judiciary, health, and education issues. Major Atkins prepared for Senate Army Caucus meetings, researched banking issues, and wrote memos on a variety of topics. Lamont performed beyond expectations. His flexibility and willingness to go the extra mile greatly benefited our office.

During Lamont's tenure, we transitioned from one military legislative assistant to another. Lamont's assistance was crucial to ensuring a smooth transition, and was key in bringing the new military legislative assistant up to speed on my initiatives.

Major Atkins was stationed at Hickam Air Force Base prior to his assignment at the Pentagon. The opportunity of experiencing firsthand the unique needs of the constituents of Hawaii was instrumental to Lamont's success on our staff, and Lamont displayed the aloha spirit daily.

I also extend my sincere aloha to Lamont's wife Karonica and their children, Lamont Junior and Kendall, whom my staff and I have also had the pleasure of getting to know during Lamont's time in my office. I extend my heartfelt aloha and utmost appreciation to Major Atkins for his service to the great State of Hawaii, to the Senate, and to our Nation. My staff and I will miss him dearly. I wish Lamont and his 'ohana the very best in their future.

#### ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

##### RECOGNIZING MILL CREEK ELEMENTARY

• Mr. BOND. Mr. President, on behalf of my fellow Missourians, I extend my warmest congratulations to Mill Creek Elementary School in Columbia, MO.

Mill Creek Elementary is celebrating 20 years of dedication to educating its students. When Mill Creek opened in 1989, it served 486 students. Now, the school is home to 90 faculty and staff members and 760 students.

Mill Creek Elementary has educated and advanced thousands of students over the years. The faculty and staff have helped students to develop the knowledge and skills that will serve them throughout their lives so they may contribute to their communities one day.

At Mill Creek, students pledge to be respectful of themselves and others, responsible for their own learning and behavior, and resourceful problem-solvers. These standards are known as the 3 R's: respect, responsibility, and resourcefulness. Mill Creek hopes to instill these standards within its students so they will use them not just at school but also in their homes and their communities.

Public education is strengthened when schools have the support of the

local community. KMIZ-17, Rolling Hills Veterinary, Columbia Insurance Group and Boulevard Bank have all stepped forward to be involved at Mill Creek through the Partners in Education program. These businesses provide time and support to students through mentoring, hands-on lessons and even a school weather station.

Strong parental involvement also leads to school success. Mill Creek benefits tremendously from the countless PTA and volunteer hours donated by family members and community leaders each year.

Mill Creek Elementary has been committed for over 20 years to providing a high quality education to its students and preparing them to be leaders in their community. Parents, students, teachers and staff can all be proud of their accomplishments.

Congratulations to the Cougars!•

##### RECOGNIZING THE BRIDGEVILLE VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT

• Mr. CARPER. Mr. President, today I offer my congratulations to Chief Jack Cannon and President Allen Parsons and the entire company as the Bridgeville Volunteer Fire Department celebrates 100 years of service. The success of the fire company is a tribute to the many dedicated men and women who not only have served in the Bridgeville Fire Company, but have served the entire Bridgeville community in any number of ways, as well.

Since 1909, the members of the Bridgeville Volunteer Fire Company have protected the property and residents of this historic community. The fire company has reached many milestones throughout the years, including equipment upgrades, the formation of the Ladies Auxiliary, and moves to larger stations to accommodate growth and expansion. As it currently stands at 60 volunteer members and 2 professional emergency medical technicians, the Bridgeville Volunteer Fire Company represents a standard of excellence, answering over 300 fire calls and 800 ambulance calls annually, night and day in all kinds of weather.

Delaware's firefighters are dedicated and caring professionals who willingly put themselves at risk to protect the lives and property of their neighbors. We are all sincerely grateful for their continuing service. The hard work and dedication of these devoted volunteers is an inspiration to all. Moreover, the Bridgeville Volunteer Fire Company has crafted a tradition of superior and selfless service.

I again congratulate the members on this momentous anniversary and look forward to hearing of their continued success for another hundred years and beyond.•

##### MESSAGES FROM THE PRESIDENT

Messages from the President of the United States were communicated to the Senate by Mrs. Neiman, one of his secretaries.