

building from the GSA. Under this agreement, the Galveston Historical Foundation took responsibility for performing renovations on the U.S. Custom House. In 2008, the house was inundated with six feet of flood waters from Hurricane Ike. Fortunately, the Galveston Historical Foundation has been able to complete restoration of the first floor of the Custom House earlier this year.

Madam Speaker, by owning as opposed to leasing, the Galveston Historical Foundation will be able to improve this historical structure for future generations of Texans. It is difficult to think of a more appropriate owner for the U.S. Custom House than the Galveston Historical Foundation. Founded in 1954, the Galveston Historical Foundation is one of the Nation's largest local preservation organizations. Over the last 56 years, this foundation has expanded its mission to encompass community redevelopment, public education, historic preservation advocacy, maritime preservation and stewardship of historic properties. Today, the Galveston Historical Foundation has over 2,000 members representing individuals, families, and businesses across Texas, the U.S., and around the world.

The Galveston Historical Foundation's accomplishments include the redevelopment of The Strand; the rescue and restoration of the 1877 iron barque the ELISSA; the revitalization of historic residential neighborhoods and creation of historic districts; and the conception of signature events including Dickens on The Strand and the Galveston Historic Homes Tour.

The Galveston Historical Foundation has received numerous awards and honors. For example, they have twice received the National Trust for Historic Preservation's prestigious Honor Award. In 1991, the Galveston Historical Foundation was the first recipient of the Governor's Award for Excellence in Historic Preservation, and in 1995, received the National Trust's first ever award for organizational excellence. The American Institute of Architects has presented the foundation a Citation of Honor for its ongoing contribution to urban design and the quality of life in Galveston. In addition, the Association for Preservation Technology International honored the Galveston Historical Foundation with a Presidential Citation in 2004.

In conclusion, Madam Speaker, I once again congratulate the Galveston Historical Foundation for acquiring the U.S. Custom House, and I extend my thanks to the Galveston Historical Foundation for all they do to preserve Galveston's rich heritage.

CONGRESSIONAL RECOGNITION
FOR JOSEPH BLAIR

HON. GABRIELLE GIFFORDS

OF ARIZONA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 15, 2010

Ms. GIFFORDS. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize Joseph Blair, who is celebrating 10 years of unselfish service and dedication to hundreds of youth through his Arizona Basketball Academy.

For young people in my community, these camps are unique because they are provided at no cost to participants and are conducted by a former University of Arizona Wildcat bas-

ketball player who went on to play the game professionally.

Joseph Blair started his program by traveling to various Boys & Girls Club locations, sharing basketball and life skills. The sessions evolved and have been consolidated so they now also benefit teens from Tucson Parks & Recreation and the Tucson Urban League, among others.

The growth of Mr. Blair's altruistic donations of time, influence and funding are paralleled by his athletic endeavors. His global career as an international ambassador of basketball and good will was launched at the University of Arizona, where he was the 6-foot-10-inch "big man." As a Wildcat, he led the team to appearances at Madison Square Garden, the Great Alaskan Shoot-Out and the Maui Classic as well as games in Australia and in the 1994 NCAA Final Four.

Mr. Blair was picked in the second round of the 1996 NBA draft, but opted to pursue a career in Europe, playing in France, Greece, Turkey, Russia and as a member of the famed Harlem Globetrotters. Most of his international career was in Italy where Mr. Blair played in the mountains of Biella, the seashores of Pesaro and in the city of Milan. Mr. Blair is fluently bilingual and loved the rich culture of his adopted home.

While abroad, Mr. Blair earned numerous accolades and was named the Most Valuable Player of the Euroleague in 2003.

His understanding of how basketball can have a positive influence on young people has gone far beyond his own experiences on the court. His empathy for youth started during these years when Mr. Blair conducted basketball clinics in Greece and created a basketball academy in Italy.

Mr. Blair now is retired from basketball, but his philanthropic contributions continue. In addition to teaching athletic and life skills at his basketball academy, he is deeply involved with the Ronald McDonald House in Tucson where he and his staff provide and serve dinners for patients' families during the academy's week of camp.

At the end of his camp, Mr. Blair visits young patients in the pediatric unit of University Medical Center in Tucson, bringing smiles to them through gifts and an exhibition of his basketball skills.

Mr. Blair has worked and travelled in many other countries but has remained true to his roots. He is a living testimony of how to give back to one's community, not only as a big man, but as a man with a big heart.

I am proud to recognize Joseph Blair on the 10th anniversary of his Arizona Basketball Academy and I join with a grateful community to commend him for his valuable contributions to the young people of Tucson and Southern Arizona. Thank you Joseph for being such a great role model and for all that you do to help our youth develop their athletic and leadership skills.

INTRODUCING LEGISLATION FOR
THE DISPLAY OF STATE AND
TERRITORY FLAGS AT THE
WASHINGTON MONUMENT

HON. ENI F.H. FALEOMVAEGA

OF AMERICAN SAMOA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 15, 2010

Mr. FALEOMVAEGA. Madam Speaker, I rise today to introduce legislation to ensure that the flags of the several States, the District of Columbia, and the Territories of the United States encircle the Washington Monument.

Standing at 555 feet and 5 $\frac{1}{8}$ inches tall, the Washington Monument is the most prominent structure in the nation's capital and is the world's tallest stone structure and the world's tallest obelisk. Completed in 1884, it memorializes the first President of the United States, President George Washington, who led our country to independence and helped shaped the role of the presidency and the course of our democracy in its early days. It was most fitting then that Congress in 1833 established the Washington National Monument Society to create a monument in honor of the Father of our Country.

Today, the Washington Monument serves as a reminder of the greatness of this Nation, as an object of pride to the American people and of admiration to all who see it.

The legislation I am proposing directs the U.S. National Park Service through the Secretary of Interior, to ensure that the flags of the 50 States, the District of Columbia, and the Territories of the United States encircle the Washington Monument. As an object of pride to the American people, I think it is most fitting that the flags of all States, DC and U.S. Territories are flown at the Washington Monument.

Yesterday, we celebrated our national Flag Day by commemorating the adoption of the national flag of the United States as proclaimed by President Woodrow Wilson on June 14, 1916. As such, a public display of State and Territory flags at the Washington Monument will be an opportunity for each State and Territory to share its own uniqueness through its icons and figures representing the traditions, values, and local histories that collectively have made the United States.

Flags have always been a part of our history and traditions. This legislation will ensure that every American will be part of one of our great national treasures.

WORLD OCEAN DAY

SPEECH OF

HON. BETTY McCOLLUM

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 9, 2010

Ms. McCOLLUM. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H. Res. 1330, recognizing June 8 as World Ocean Day. This is only the second year that World Ocean Day has been officially recognized. Unfortunately, now is a tragically appropriate time for all of us to recognize and honor our nation's oceans.

The ongoing British Petroleum oil spill makes all of us realize how much our lives and the fate of our planet are intertwined with