

Craftsmen's Guild was born as an after-school art program in a donated row house on Buena Vista Street. It was not an overnight success, but Bill never gave up. When young people in the neighborhood weren't immediately taken with ceramics, Bill redoubled his efforts, hitting the streets to reach out to as many people as possible and bring them to his center. People noticed Bill's efforts and the popularity of the Guild grew. As more people came to the center, the center needed more clay, more wheels, and Bill needed to secure more funding.

Along the way, an interesting phenomenon occurred. Teachers began noticing that their students who regularly went to the Guild were doing better academically and behaving better in school. Without intending to, Bill had stumbled across a simple, yet empowering, philosophy—environment shapes people's lives. By providing a safe space for the Manchester youth, and by introducing them to the beauty of the arts, Bill was simultaneously inspiring a large-scale change in his community.

Despite starting as a probationary student, Bill graduated from Pitt cum laude with a BA in History in 1970. Bill continued to work with the Manchester Craftsmen's Guild and a few years after graduation, he became director of the Bidwell Training Center, a school whose mission was to provide education in the building trades disadvantaged and dislocated workers. When Bill assumed his role as head of Bidwell, what he discovered was a dilapidated warehouse in a seedy parking lot and a \$300,000 back tax bill from the IRS. But Bill saw its potential and didn't give up. Bill began to transform Bidwell into a forward-thinking school that offered its students a real chance to dramatically improve their lives. He realized that the changing job market required less focus on construction trades and redirected Bidwell's focus to the hightech and medical industries. He also forged important partnerships with corporations like IBM, Heinz) and Bayer to design curriculums that would train the workers that employers needed. While he worked to improve the staff and the quality of the education, the nature of Bidwell's funding meant that Bill could not address what he saw as one of the institutions central flaws: The building. With funding for social projects harder to come by in the 1980s, Bill was forced to lay-off nearly one-third of his staff just to make payroll. But despite the set-back, in his own eyes, Bill's vision was clearer than ever. Bill realized that what he needed to make Bidwell succeed was a center of which students, faculty, and neighbors could be proud.

To achieve his dream, Bill contacted legendary Pittsburgh architect Tasso Kastelas, a student of Frank Lloyd Wright, to design a world class center in one of the worst neighborhoods in Pittsburgh. For \$10,000, Bill commissioned the architect to build a model of

what would later become the home of the Manchester Bidwell Corporation, as the combined programs of the Manchester Craftsmen's Guild and the Bidwell Training Center would come to be known. Bill had a vision for his building and the conviction that the future of his cause lay in its construction. Just as he had done before, Bill took it upon himself to turn his dream into a reality and spearheaded a \$6.5 million capital campaign. Model in hand, he implored the Pittsburgh corporate community to help fund his dream. When the city's corporate donors, who had supported him previously, told him that Manchester didn't need such a spectacular center, he told them in no uncertain terms that it did. When he was told he needed matching funds to obtain his corporate pledges, he turned to the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania for additional support.

In 1986 the new 62,000 square foot arts and career training center opened. Originally the center consisted of studios as well as classrooms, workshops, gallery spaces, and a 350-seat auditorium. Over the years the building has expanded as Bill's vision expanded. In 1987 the jazz hall, which has seen performances from the likes of Dizzy Gillespie and Nancy Wilson, was added and in 2003 the 40,000 square foot state-of-the-art greenhouse opened. The center currently provides training in fields as varied as gourmet food preparation, chemical, office, and medical technologies, and education arts programming in ceramics, design arts, digital arts, and photography.

Bill's center and his students success stories are a testament to the power of social entrepreneurship. What began as a mission to provide an escape from the ghetto has produced unparalleled results in educational empowerment and community growth. Manchester Craftsmen's Guild "Youth in Arts" is a program that strives to educate and inspire urban young people through the arts. Ninety-three of the high school students who participate in the Manchester Craftsmen's Guild "Youth in Arts" program graduate from high school, a noticeable improvement over the national graduation rate of 75.5 percent. The Bidwell Training Center has changed lives by providing market-driven career training to disadvantaged adults in transition. Its training programs continue to place skilled technicians in middle-class jobs at companies such as Bayer, Mylan Labs, and Heinz. MCG Jazz, Manchester-Bidwell's record label, has been nominated for seven Grammy awards and has brought four home to Pittsburgh. The orchids grown in the facility's greenhouse have won Best in Show at a Western Pennsylvania orchid fair and are even available for purchase at Whole Foods. And while they are learning medical coding or how to center clay, each student is fed a gourmet lunch prepared by culinary students in the center's top-of-the-line kitchen.

Realizing the opportunity to strengthen other communities and effect change on an even larger scale by using the Manchester Bidwell model of community and educational development as a template, Bill helped found the National Center for Arts and Technology to replicate the Manchester Bidwell education model across the nation. NCAT collaborates with local nonprofits and businesses to assess their community's needs and then works together with the community to design a fitting center for arts and technology. Bill's Pittsburgh model has been replicated in San Francisco, Cincinnati, Cleveland, New Haven, Connecticut and Grand Rapids, MI. He gained some powerful backers including Jeff Skoll, founder of eBay and the Skoll Foundation. The Skoll Foundation was one of Bill's earlier investors; it recognized the potential of his programs to drive large scale positive social change by using entrepreneurial discipline and methods. With the Skoll Foundation's help, Bill clarified his sales pitch—that he could help solve problems faced in communities, had a strategic business plan showing the benefits of working together, and offering people meaning and hope through transforming experiences.

Bill has said that "environment determines behavior" and he has created a remarkable environment where men and women living in poverty are treated with dignity and respect. Knowing firsthand that poverty creates self-defeating assumptions and restrictive labels but does not define a person's potential, Bill has dedicated his life to changing the lives of others by offering them hope, meaning, and belief in the power of their own creative possibilities. Bill's methods might be unconventional, but his results are success stories of epic proportions. And so in the Senate today we express our gratitude to Bill for never giving up on the poor kids or his vision. His passion and his belief in the abilities of each and every individual that walks through his doors has touched lives far beyond Manchester and, thanks to his tireless efforts, truly has the potential to reach around the world.

I thank Bill Strickland for his contribution to the City of Pittsburgh, the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, and our Nation.

Mr. President, I yield the floor and note the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Morning business is closed.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

NOMINATION OF ROBERT E. BACHARACH TO BE UNITED STATES CIRCUIT JUDGE FOR THE TENTH CIRCUIT

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will proceed to executive session to consider the following nomination, which the clerk will report.

The assistant bill clerk read the nomination of Robert E. Bacharach, of Oklahoma, to be United States Circuit Judge for the Tenth Circuit.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, there will be 30 minutes of debate equally divided and controlled in the usual form.

The Senator from Vermont.

Mr. LEAHY. This week, the country is facing indiscriminate across-the-board cuts from sequestration if Congress does not come to an agreement. The automatic cuts that will otherwise occur are in the tens of billions of dollars at a time when our economy is finally recovering but remains fragile. Among those who will have to endure these cuts are the overburdened Federal courts that are already suffering from longstanding vacancies that number almost 90. Budgetary cuts will mean more difficulty for the American people to get speedy justice from our Federal justice system.

According to the sequestration report released by the Office of Management and Budget, the sequestration would lead to a \$555 million reduction for our Federal courts. Despite their higher caseloads and the needs of the American people, the courts' funding will be capped at a level last utilized 6 years ago. This could result in elimination of nearly one third of the courts' staff, as many as 6,300 employees, or month-long furloughs system wide. The sequester will result in cuts that will force courts to hear fewer cases and hear them more slowly. Court proceedings will be delayed. Some 30,000 civil cases have already been pending for more than 3 years and this will only exacerbate the problems of delay. Sequestration cuts could even result in the suspension of civil jury trials in some courts. And consider that if probation and pretrial services offices are affected, that can mean that defendants in pretrial release and those convicted but not in prison may not be properly supervised.

Sequestration is bad for the courts, bad for the economy and bad for the American people.

Today, after an unprecedented filibuster, Senate Republicans will finally allow a vote on the nomination of Robert Bacharach to the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Tenth Circuit. Judge Bacharach should be a consensus nominee. He received the ABA Standing Committee on the Federal Judiciary's highest possible rating of well qualified. He was reported by the Judiciary Committee by voice vote last year and,

again, this year. Despite his experience, qualifications and bipartisan support, he was filibustered by Senate Republicans since July last year.

The filibuster of his nomination, which was supported by the Oklahoma Senators who had previously supported the nomination and who will likely reverse themselves again and support confirmation today, was the ne plus ultra of an unprecedented campaign of obstruction Senate Republicans have waged against President Obama's judicial nominees. That obstruction has spread to executive nominees, as well, including the nomination of Chuck Hagel, a recent Republican Senator from Nebraska whose nomination to serve as Secretary of Defense was filibustered earlier this month.

Judge Bacharach is the kind of nominee who every Senator should support. Over his 13-year career as a U.S. Magistrate Judge in the Western District of Oklahoma, he has handled nearly 3,000 civil and criminal matters, presided over 400 judicial settlement conferences, and issued more than 1,600 reports and recommendations. As an attorney in private practice, he tried 10 cases to verdict, argued two cases before the Tenth Circuit Court of Appeals, and briefed scores of other cases to the Tenth Circuit and the Oklahoma Supreme Court.

Judge Bacharach's judicial colleagues in the Western District of Oklahoma stand strongly behind his nomination. Vicki Miles-LaGrange, Chief Judge of the U.S. District Court for the Western District of Oklahoma, has said of Judge Bacharach:

He is an outstanding jurist and my colleagues and I enthusiastically and wholeheartedly recommend him for the Tenth Circuit position. . . . We knew that we were lucky to have Bob as a Magistrate Judge, and he's been remarkable in this position for over 12 years. He is an absolutely great Magistrate Judge. His research and writing are excellent, his temperament is superb, his preparation is top-notch, and he is a wonderful colleague to all of the judges and in general to the entire court family. . . . All of the other judges and I—Republicans and Democrats alike—enthusiastically and wholeheartedly recommend Judge Bob Bacharach for the Tenth Circuit position. All of us believe very strongly that Judge Bacharach would be a superb choice for the position.

Throughout the careful and deliberate process in which Judge Bacharach has been thoroughly vetted, considered, and voted on by the Judiciary Committee, I have not heard a single negative word about him. There is no Senator who opposed his nomination on the merits. He was praised extensively by his home State Senators. Senator INHOFE has said of him:

I believe Judge Bacharach would continue the strong service Oklahomans have provided the Tenth Circuit. Throughout his career and education, he's distinguished himself. In 2007, the Oklahoma City Journal Record profiled Judge Bacharach as an example of leadership in law, where he simply stated that as a future goal he intends to improve. Always working to improve has de-

fined Judge Bacharach. . . . [H]is colleagues have characterized his service as remarkable, demonstrating superb judicial temperament, and a real asset to the Western District court family and legal community.

Senator COBURN said:

Judge Bacharach is well qualified for this position and has received widespread praise and hearty recommendations from Oklahomans, including members of academia and fellow members of the bar. . . . I believe that Judge Bacharach will uphold the highest standards and reflect the best in our American judicial tradition by coming to the bench as a well-regarded member of the community. At a time when our country seems as divided as ever, it is important that citizens respect members of the judiciary and are confident they will faithfully and impartially apply the law. . . . I believe Judge Bacharach would be an excellent addition to the Tenth Circuit.

Unfortunately, along with 42 other Senate Republicans, Senator INHOFE and Senator COBURN filibustered Judge Bacharach since last July. The people of Oklahoma, Colorado, Kansas, New Mexico, Utah and Wyoming have been needlessly denied his service as a Tenth Circuit judge for 7 months. Republican Senators in Oklahoma, Kansas, Utah and Wyoming could have prevented the filibuster but went along with the obstruction that served no good purpose and established another damaging precedent: Judge Bacharach is the first circuit court nominee to be filibustered who had received bipartisan support before the Judiciary Committee. Senator COBURN was quoted last year admitting: "There's no reason why he shouldn't be confirmed." There was none other than the obstruction of Senate Republicans.

Their partisan obstruction was wrong, and it is damaging to our Nation's courts and the American people. The nonpartisan Congressional Research Service has reported that the median time circuit nominees have had to wait before a Senate vote has skyrocketed from 18 days for President Bush's nominees to 132 days for President Obama's. This is the result of Republicans' partisan obstruction.

This obstruction has contributed to the damagingly high level of judicial vacancies that has persisted for over 4 years. Persistent vacancies force fewer judges to take on growing caseloads, and make it harder for Americans to have access to speedy justice. While Senate Republicans delayed and obstructed, the number of judicial vacancies remained historically high and it has become more difficult for our courts to provide speedy, quality justice for the American people. There are today 89 judicial vacancies across the country. By way of contrast, that is more than double the number of vacancies that existed at this point in the Bush administration. The circuit and district judges that we have been able to confirm over the last four years fall more than 30 short of the total for President Bush's first term.

Over the last 4 years, Senate Republicans have chosen to depart dramatically from Senate traditions in their