

and my staff. It was a pleasure to have her as part of our team. I know she will have continued success with all of her future endeavors. I wish her all my best on her next journey.●

#### RECOGNIZING MICKALA SCHMIDT

● Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, I would like to take the opportunity to express my appreciation to Mickala Schmidt for her hard work as an intern in my Casper, WY, office. I recognize her efforts and contributions to my office as well as to the State of Wyoming.

Mickala is a native of Casper, WY where she graduated from Natrona County High School. She attends Casper College where she is pursuing a degree in international studies and education. She has demonstrated a strong work ethic, which has made her an invaluable asset to our office. The quality of her work is reflected in her great efforts over the last several months.

I thank Mickala for the dedication she has shown while working for me and my staff. It was a pleasure to have her as part of our team. I know she will have continued success with all of her future endeavors. I wish her all my best on her next journey.●

#### RECOGNIZING EMILY SMITHSON

● Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, I would like to take the opportunity to express my appreciation to Emily Smithson for her hard work as an intern in my Washington, DC, office. I recognize her efforts and contributions to my office as well as to the State of Wyoming.

Emily is from San Marcos, CA. She is a recent graduate of Brigham Young University-Hawaii, where she earned a degree in political science and history. She has demonstrated a strong work ethic, which has made her an invaluable asset to our office. The quality of her work is reflected in her great efforts during her time in my office.

I thank Emily for the dedication she has shown while working for me and my staff. It was a pleasure to have her as part of our team. I know she will have continued success with all of her future endeavors. I wish her all my best on her next journey.●

#### RECOGNIZING MATTHEW SPENNY

● Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, I would like to take the opportunity to express my appreciation to Matthew Spenny for his hard work as an intern in my Washington, DC, office. I recognize his efforts and contributions to my office as well as to the State of Wyoming.

Matthew is from Laramie, WY, and is a graduate of the University of Wyoming, where he earned a degree in communication and journalism. He has demonstrated a strong work ethic, which has made him an invaluable

asset to our office. The quality of his work is reflected in his great efforts over the last several months.

I thank Matthew for the dedication he has shown while working for me and my staff. It was a pleasure to have him as part of our team. I know he will have continued success with all of his future endeavors. I wish him all my best on his next journey.●

#### HARDIN COUNTY, IOWA

● Mr. HARKIN. Mr. President, the strength of my State of Iowa lies in its vibrant local communities, where citizens come together to foster economic development, make smart investments to expand opportunity, and take the initiative to improve the health and well-being of residents. Over the decades, I have witnessed the growth and revitalization of so many communities across my State. And it has been deeply gratifying to see how my work in Congress has supported these local efforts.

I have always believed in accountability for public officials, and this, my final year in the Senate, is an appropriate time to give an accounting of my work across four decades representing Iowa in Congress. I take pride in accomplishments that have been national in scope—for instance, passing the Americans with Disabilities Act and spearheading successful Farm Bills. But I take a very special pride in projects that have made a big difference in local communities across my State.

Today, I would like to give an accounting of my work with leaders and residents of Hardin County to build a legacy of a stronger local economy, better schools and educational opportunities, and a healthier, safer community.

Between 2001 and 2013, the creative leadership in your community has worked with me to secure funding in Hardin County worth over \$2.3 million and successfully acquired financial assistance from programs I have fought hard to support, which have provided more than \$10 million to the local economy.

Of course my favorite memory of working together has to be our shared commitment to school construction, renovation, and fire safety through the Harkin grant program. Working together with state and local communities, this funding has ensured Iowa students are learning in schools that are safe, and modern. I look forward to learning about the renovations made possible in Hardin County.

Among the highlights:

Investing in Iowa's economic development through targeted community projects: In Northern Iowa, we have worked together to grow the economy by making targeted investments in important economic development projects including improved roads and bridges, modernized sewer and water systems, and better housing options for resi-

dents of Hardin County. In many cases, I have secured Federal funding that has leveraged local investments and served as a catalyst for a whole ripple effect of positive, creative changes. For example, working with mayors, city council members, and local economic development officials in Hardin County, I have fought for funding for the Iowa National Guard Readiness Center in Iowa Falls worth \$2 million, helping to create jobs and expand economic opportunities.

School grants: Every child in Iowa deserves to be educated in a classroom that is safe, accessible, and modern. That's why, for the past decade and a half, I have secured funding for the innovative Iowa Demonstration Construction Grant Program—better known among educators in Iowa as Harkin grants for public schools construction and renovation. Across 15 years, Harkin grants worth more than \$132 million have helped school districts to fund a range of renovation and repair efforts—everything from updating fire safety systems to building new schools. In many cases, these Federal dollars have served as the needed incentive to leverage local public and private dollars, so it often has a tremendous multiplier effect within a school district. Over the years, Hardin County has received \$396,191 in Harkin grants. Similarly, schools in Hardin County have received funds that I designated for Iowa Star Schools for technology totaling \$73,350.

Agricultural and rural development: Because I grew up in a small town in rural Iowa, I have always been a loyal friend and fierce advocate for family farmers and rural communities. I have been a member of the House or Senate Agriculture Committee for 40 years—including more than 10 years as chairman of the Senate Agriculture Committee. Across the decades, I have championed farm policies for Iowans that include effective farm income protection and commodity programs; strong, progressive conservation assistance for agricultural producers; renewable energy opportunities; and robust economic development in our rural communities. Since 1991, through various programs authorized through the farm bill, Hardin County has received more than \$6.6 million from a variety of farm bill programs.

Keeping Iowa communities safe: I also firmly believe that our first responders need to be appropriately trained and equipped, able to respond to both local emergencies and to statewide challenges such as—for instance, the methamphetamine epidemic. Since 2001, Hardin County's fire departments have received over \$1.3 million for firefighter safety and operations equipment.

Disability Rights: Growing up, I loved and admired my brother Frank, who was deaf. But I was deeply disturbed by the discrimination and obstacles he faced every day. That is why I have always been a passionate advocate for full equality for people with