

Faleomavaega said. "In response to Mr. Neria's request, my office immediately called the U.S. Department of Education (USDOE), learned that ASCC's grant would not be funded, and informed Mr. Neria of the USDOE's decision."

"Upon learning of the USDOE's decision, Mr. Neria provided my office with additional information and requested my assistance in defending and obtaining funding for ASCC's proposal. In a letter dated June 24, 2003, Mr. Neria stated that he had been informed by his colleagues in Washington not to write, call, email or make any requests. Given the seriousness of the situation and my desire to help American Samoa's students, I wrote a letter dated July 10, 2003 to Larry Oxendine, USDOE Director of the Federal TRIO programs which includes Upward Bound. I also faxed Dr. Adele Satele-Galeai, President of ASCC, and Mr. Neria a copy of my letter."

"In my letter, I informed the USDOE that American Samoa has a dire need for the services the Upward Bound Program provides. I agreed with Mr. Neria's position that American Samoa's socio-economic status, educational disparity, and unique geographical location warranted a second review of ASCC's application. I also stated that I believed American Samoa would be credited additional points upon further review of the Needs Section and I expressed my appreciation for Mr. Oxendine's reconsideration of ASCC's application," Congressman Faleomavaega said.

"As a follow-up to my letter to Mr. Oxendine, my office continued its discussions with the USDOE. During these discussions, the USDOE informed my office that more than 1,218 Upward Bound applications were submitted and only 792 were funded. USDOE also informed me that only proposals with a score of 99.00 or greater were funded and ASCC's proposal had received a score of 98.33. ASCC's proposal had also been read and scored by three non-federal readers, as required by federal law."

"Although I was informed in July that the review process could not be reopened, additional funds became available about three weeks ago at which time the USDOE reviewed the remaining proposals that had not been funded. Of the applications remaining, 17 had higher scores than ASCC's application and all 17 received funding. An additional 17 applications had scores equal to ASCC's application but the USDOE only had money to fund one of the 17. Mr. Oxendine chose to fund ASCC's application based on the fact that we are an underserved area."

"In a letter dated October 8, 2003, Mr. Oxendine stated that my letter and the information received from my staff and President Satele-Galeai was very helpful in making the decision to fund ASCC out of the group of 17 applications with the next highest score. He also said that he was pleased to inform me that ASCC's program would be funded at \$220,000 for the 2003-2004 project period and, subject to future appropriations, USDOE would be making funding available at this level for three additional years."

"Mr. Oxendine also apologized for the delay in informing my office of his decision. In fact, he said he announced his decision at a national TRIO conference in San Diego on Monday September 29, 2003 and he was unaware that my office had not yet been informed."

"Again, I apologize for the confusion," Mr. Oxendine said in his letter, "'but I am sure you will agree that the final outcome of our mutual efforts was highly successful.' Like Mr. Oxendine, I do agree that our efforts were highly successful and I want to especially thank Mr. Neria and Dr. Satele-Galeai for working closely with my office to favor-

ably resolve this issue. "I also want to thank Chairman Boehner of the House Committee on Education and the Workforce for releasing a statement saying that 'Congressman Faleomavaega worked hard to restore ASCC's Upward Bound funding, and I cannot take credit for his actions.' I appreciate the Chairman's willingness to step forward and set the record straight about this matter," Congressman Faleomavaega said.

"Chairman Boehner is a friend of mine and he should be commended for letting the people of American Samoa know that he did not restore ASCC's Upward Bound funding. In fact, the Chairman knew nothing about our Upward Bound funding until he read a fabricated story published in the Samoa News on October 1, 2003 which made claims that he worked with Mrs. Amata Radewagen to resolve this issue."

"Again, I thank Chairman Boehner for letting our people know the truth. Neither Congresswoman Deborah Pryce nor the House Republican Conference brought this matter to Chairman Boehner's attention. Furthermore, the USDOE informed my office that it received no letters from Congresswoman Deborah Pryce or the House Republican Conference regarding ASCC's Upward Bound Program funding. Other than the calls my office made, the USDOE received only one phone call in late July from a caller identifying herself as working for the House Republican Conference. Mr. Oxendine spoke to this caller only once and never heard from the caller again until after September 29, 2003. After September 29, 2003, USDOE received one more call from this same caller saying she had heard through the grapevine that an announcement had been made in San Diego and she wanted to verify the accuracy of this report."

"While I would be more than happy to credit anyone who helped to restore ASCC's funding, I am pleased that the USDOE and Chairman Boehner have cleared up the confusion surrounding ASCC's Upward Bound Program. At this time, I want to thank the USDOE and Mr. Oxendine for supporting and funding the Upward Bound grant proposal submitted by ASCC. After working with Dr. Satele-Galeai and Mr. Neria for the past several months, I also want to thank them for their hard work."

"Most of all, I want to wish our students the very best. Upward Bound is an important college preparatory program and I am hopeful that our students will take advantage of the opportunities this program provides. As always, I am also hopeful that our young people will pursue their four year college degrees and return to American Samoa to live and serve," the Congressman concluded.

IN HONOR OF ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT

HON. KERRY L. BENTIVOLIO

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, December 1, 2014

Mr. BENTIVOLIO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate McKenzie Hayes, Sarah Bridges, Anvitha Paruchuri, Jacob Haffey, Ruby Araj, Dania Baraka, Dalya Hazim, Ashi Arora, Jessica Kassis, and Reneh Araj, the officers and new inductees of Phi Theta Kappa, Omicron Iota Chapter, at Schoolcraft College. Phi Theta Kappa is the largest academic honor society for two-year colleges and becoming an official member of this organization is one of the highest recognitions that a stu-

dent can receive at a two-year college. Congratulations to them on their accomplishment.

OUR UNCONSCIONABLE NATIONAL DEBT

HON. MIKE COFFMAN

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, December 1, 2014

Mr. COFFMAN. Mr. Speaker, on January 20, 2009, the day President Obama took office, the national debt was \$10,626,877,048,913.08.

Today, it is \$17,963,753,617,957.26. We've added \$7,336,876,569,044.18 to our debt in 5 years. This is over \$7.3 trillion in debt our nation, our economy, and our children could have avoided with a balanced budget amendment.

EMILY ROBINSON

HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, December 1, 2014

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and applaud Emily Robinson for her countless contributions to Jefferson County.

As the market president for FirstBank, Emily has helped to cultivate and mentor a team of young professionals, supporting their goals and efforts to assist them in achieving a successful future. Inspired by her self-employed parents, she found her passion and career in banking by providing support and financial resources to help business owners become successful. Her passion for helping business owners at FirstBank led her to climb the corporate ladder from trainee to market president. Emily's leadership and drive even helped benefit the bank's growth during the economic collapse of 2008. Since then, FirstBank's Lakewood and Golden locations have seen a 50 percent increase in deposits, making it one of the most successful FirstBanks in Colorado.

Emily is also dedicated to enhancing the management-training program at FirstBank, having experienced first-hand the progressive programs FirstBank offers its employees. She has served on many boards throughout her career including Seniors' Resource Center, Clinic Campesina Family Health Services and The West Chamber. She has been on the Board for Community First Foundation since 2010, the inaugural year of Colorado Gives Day, which is a 24-hour online giving initiative aimed at increasing philanthropy in the state. Due to Emily's involvement, the program has raised \$58.1 million for state nonprofits. She also sits on the board for The Jefferson Foundation and Arvada Economic Development. Emily was appointed by Governor Hickenlooper to serve on the State of Colorado Banking Board in 2011.

I extend my deepest congratulations to Emily for her dedication, passion, and drive. She is an incredible example for all women in the workplace and in the community.