

students. Many of her current fifth grade students were also in her third grade class. About 16 of these students were a year or two behind their grade level but have now caught up, with Stephanie being credited for this accomplishment.

Stephanie has worked at Garden City Elementary School for 3 years and was a Teach for America recruit. She taught reading and writing to the entire fourth grade and pushed students to a 48 percent passing rate, a 15 percentage point increase in 1 year.

I extend my sincere gratitude and appreciation to Stephanie for her work and wish her continued success in the years to come.●

TRIBUTE TO SHANNON ELLISON

● Mr. RUBIO. Mr. President, today I honor Shannon Ellison, the Dixie County Teacher of the Year from Dixie County High School in Cross City, FL.

Shannon's colleagues attest that of the many excellent teachers in her district, she stands above the rest due to her commitment to excellence and passion for helping every student develop a love for learning. She designed a rigorous curriculum to equip her students with the necessary skills for success in college and the workplace.

She is passionate about helping her students reach their academic potential by maintaining relationships with her students, their parents, and her community by inspiring trust and confidence in both her instructional skills and leadership abilities.

Shannon's teaching skills as an advanced placement teacher helped her school earn national recognition from the College Board. She has attended the advanced placement summer institutions for the past 5 years, qualifying her ability to teach AP world history, AP psychology, and AP art history.

Shannon earned her bachelors of arts degree in history from the University of Florida in 1993 and her master of arts/education in arts and academic interdisciplinary education from Southeastern University in 2011. She has been a teacher at Dixie County High School since 1994, having served as social studies department chair, Beta Club State sponsor, and grade level department chair.

I am pleased to learn of the hard work and dedication Shannon has for her students. I express my best wishes to her on her continued success in the years to come.●

TRIBUTE TO TRACY HALL

● Mr. RUBIO. Mr. President, I honor Tracy Hall, the Taylor County Teacher of the Year from Taylor County Elementary School in Perry, FL.

Tracy's inspiration for her students and enthusiasm for teaching led to this important recognition. Her students recognize that she goes above and beyond her required duties to be the best teacher for them. She focuses on put-

ting her students first and believes their emotions are as important as their schoolwork. She teaches them to believe in themselves and their ability to achieve. She is especially proud that two former students were inducted into the National Honor Society after they previously had difficulty learning and adapting while in third grade. They are now extraordinary students.

Tracy has been a teacher for 21 years. She graduated from Florida State University with honors in 1997 and currently teaches third grade reading at Taylor County Elementary School. She has also taught at the primary and elementary levels with the Florida Virtual Academy.

I express my sincere appreciation and gratitude to Tracy for her hard work and extend my best wishes for her continued success in the years to come.●

TRIBUTE TO SUSAN McNULTY

● Mr. RUBIO. Mr. President, today I recognize Susan McNulty, the Pasco County Teacher of the Year from J.W. Mitchell High School in New Port Richey, FL.

As a journalism teacher, Susan's students state she deserved this award not just for what she does in the classroom, but because she helps her students before, during, and afterschool. Susan is a caring teacher and is always available to lend a hand when they need it the most. She is viewed as a person to confide in, with her students knowing instantly that they could depend on her.

I extend my best wishes to Susan for her perseverance as a dedicated teacher for her students. I look forward to hearing of her continued success in the years ahead.●

TRIBUTE TO TRISHA PUMPHREY

● Mr. RUBIO. Mr. President, today I recognize Trisha Pumphrey, the Jackson County Teacher of the Year from Cottondale Elementary School in Cottondale, FL.

Trisha was awarded Teacher of the Year for her passion to education and commitment to making sure her students feel important. She believes this helps enhance their educational performance.

Trisha prides herself on her teaching practices and designs lesson plans that make sure her students are learning in a way that is suitable to their needs, and was able to bring her class to grade level for reading comprehension. She also looks for ways to help students that are not in her class by helping other teachers locate resources and install new technology to improve the overall culture and performance of her school.

Trisha is a first grade teacher at Cottondale Elementary, where she began teaching in 2016. She has been a teacher for 20 years, previously teaching at Grand Ridge Elementary School and Kate Smith Elementary School.

She earned a bachelor of science degree in Early Childhood Education from Troy State University.

I express my sincere thanks and appreciation to Trisha for all of the great work she has done for her students and congratulate her for winning this award.●

TRIBUTE TO DR. LINDA L.M. BENNETT

● Mr. YOUNG. Mr. President, today I wish to thank Dr. Linda L.M. Bennett for her remarkable career as president of the University of Southern Indiana, USI. Dr. Bennett started with the university in 2003 and became its third president on July 1, 2009. She will be retiring on June 30, 2018, after 15 years of dedicated service.

Dr. Bennett truly exemplifies the university's vision, "shaping the future through learning and innovation," and her work hasn't gone unheeded. Under her leadership, the University of Southern Indiana established its first two strategic plans, raising the academic standards, community engagement, and faculty development.

Throughout her career, President Bennett has served with the American Association of Colleges and Universities, Indiana Campus Compact Board, the NCAA Division II Great Lakes Valley Conference Council of Presidents, and the Coalition of Urban and Metropolitan Universities Executive Committee. During her tenure as president, USI implemented its first doctoral program, doctor of nursing practice, and expanded its engineering and MBA programs.

In addition to her time as president, Dr. Bennett has contributed to a wide variety of local organizations, including the Southwest Indiana Chamber of Commerce, Leadership Evansville, the Diversity Lecture Series, the Indiana University School of Medicine Advisory Board of Directors, the Red Cross, the Evansville Philharmonic Orchestra, United Way, Mesker Park Zoo Planning Committee, Holly's House, Joshua Academy, the Wellborn Baptist Foundation, the Mayor's Education Roundtable, the Economic Development Coalition of Southwest Indiana, and the Rotary Club of Evansville. Over the past few years, Dr. Bennett has received several awards, including the 2015 Rotary Civic Award, the Boy Scouts of America Buffalo Trace Council Distinguished Citizen Award, 2017, the Indiana Commission for Women Torchbearer Award, 2017, and the Girl Scouts of Southwest Indiana Women of Distinction award in 2018.

Although Dr. Bennett's retirement marks the end of a chapter, it also presents the opportunity for an exciting new beginning. I congratulate her on all of her achievements as USI's president and look forward to her further contributions to the Hoosier community.●