

only currency that truly matters: love, work ethic, and profound strength of character.

One of my favorite stories about Chris is, when he was a child, he filled bags with dirt for his father, Paul, to use for blasting holes at the mine. His father paid him a penny per bag. It was once the front porch caved in that his father realized he had been getting the dirt from beneath it. Chris said that was how he learned the importance of infrastructure.

He never lost touch with the days he would come home from a shift in the mines as a young man of only 15, his face caked in coal dust. In fact, he kept his first hard hat, battered from years of hard labor, in a place of honor at his home in Beckley. From this foundation, he built an opportunity empire. From the early days of Pioneer Fuel to when Chris founded Foresight Energy, much of the success he gained was returned to the men and women who keep the lights on. He treated his workforce as family, knowing very well what it was like to be in their shoes, and so he invested in the safest, most innovative, and efficient tools and methods.

His coal enterprises took him from Appalachia to Illinois to Canada. He offered cash incentives to his miners, installed advanced and safe mining equipment, and was ahead of his time in anticipating the market for coal. Chris believed it was not enough to be innovative, you need a little luck. At Foresight, his four mine complexes were the most productive underground operations in the Nation. He bought docks on the Mississippi River and built rail spurs to haul coal onto ships bound for India, Europe, and Asia.

Chris understood opponents of burning coal while defending coal and his role in supplying the world with it. He believed that people deserved the cheapest energy they could get. He had a curious mind, was eager to learn about everything, and never stopped learning. As committed as he was to coal energy, for his Big Grand Cay property, he installed solar panels and batteries. Where renewable energy sources made sense, he was eager to embrace them.

There is no greater accomplishment in the world than to be in a position to give back to the community you love, that made you who you are. That is what made Chris the wonderful, inspiring, and generous person he was. Through the Cline Family Foundation, founded in 2009, Chris made a profound impact on Marshal University and West Virginia University. His legacy will remain forever in the hearts of all who had the privilege of knowing him, and he will be remembered through the countless lives he benefited with his generosity to our academic institutions. Chris believed with all his heart that West Virginians are the most hard-working, ethical people in our Nation, and he wanted to ensure they had every opportunity to utilize their skills

with the best possible resources to build their lives from the ground up, just as he did. His mission was for each of his accomplishments to pave the way for others to go even further than he did.

Chris was generous with his philanthropy publicly through the Cline Family Foundation, but most importantly, he was generous and compassionate privately, almost daily. The foundation focuses on donations throughout West Virginia in recognition of the community's contribution to his success. It offers scholarships and grants, endows universities, and financially supports charitable organizations that make life better for children and older youth. Chris once said that everyone in West Virginia contributed to his success, and he was determined to repay the favor. He certainly did, and our statewide community is better for it.

Among other donations, the Cline Family Foundation supported Place of Hope, a foster care and adoption organization; Peacehaven Community Farm, a home for disabled adults; orphanages in West Virginia and Haiti; Save the Children; humanitarian aid organizations in Tanzania; churches; and the Raleigh County YMCA, among other organizations, and many needy individuals over the years. He also supported the Benjamin School from which his daughter Kameron graduated in 2015. Few people beyond the recipients know details of Mr. Cline's many and constant personal acts of private charity.

Sharing his adventures with his four children and his lifelong friends was his absolute favorite way to spend his time. He would take crowds of friends and family to the Super Bowl, the Big East Tournament, countless other sporting events, and on his frequent world travels. Chris was an adventure junkie, always looking forward to the next time he could drive a fast car or ride a four-wheeler through the West Virginia hills.

I can't speak enough to what a good-hearted, wonderful person he truly was. I always thought of him as a man for all seasons. No matter the circumstances, he kept a cool head and a warm demeanor, always able to discern the most honorable path forward. It was an honor to call him my friend, and I miss him dearly.

I join all West Virginians in extending my deepest condolences to his children, Candice and her husband James, Christopher, and Alex, for the loss of their loving father and their sister, Kameron. I also extend my condolences to Chris's brothers Greg and Kenneth. It is my hope the entire Cline family is able to find peace, strength, and support in one another.●

TRIBUTE TO MEREDITH BENSON

● Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, today I recognize Meredith Benson, an intern in my Washington, DC, office, for all of

the hard work she has done for me, my staff, and the State of South Dakota over the past several weeks.

Meredith is a graduate of Lincoln High School in Sioux Falls, SD. Currently, she is attending Creighton University in Omaha, NE, where she is double majoring in chemistry and Spanish. She is a hard worker who has been dedicated to getting the most out of her internship experience.

I extend my sincere thanks and appreciation to Meredith for all of the fine work she has done and wish her continued success in the years to come.●

TRIBUTE TO AUDREY COPE

● Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, today I recognize Audrey Cope, an intern in my Washington, DC, office, for all of the hard work she has done for me, my staff, and the State of South Dakota over the past several weeks.

Audrey is a graduate of St. Thomas More High School in Rapid City, SD. Currently, she is attending Augustana University in Sioux Falls, SD, where she is double majoring in government and international affairs and French and minoring in political philosophy. She is a hard worker who has been dedicated to getting the most out of her internship experience.

I extend my sincere thanks and appreciation to Audrey for all of the fine work she has done and wish her continued success in the years to come.●

TRIBUTE TO RYDER FUHRMAN

● Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, today I recognize Ryder Fuhrman, an intern in my Aberdeen, SD, office, for all of the hard work he has done for me, my staff, and the State of South Dakota over the past several weeks.

Ryder is a graduate of Warner High School in Warner, SD. Currently, he is attending Northern State University in Aberdeen, where he is majoring in political science and minoring in economics and legal studies. He is a hard worker who has been dedicated to getting the most out of his internship experience.

I extend my sincere thanks and appreciation to Ryder for all of the fine work he has done and wish him continued success in the years to come.●

TRIBUTE TO KIERA LEDDY

● Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, today I recognize Kiera Leddy, an intern in my Washington, DC, office, for all of the hard work she has done for me, my staff, and the State of South Dakota over the past several weeks.

Kiera is a recent graduate of Oklahoma State University in Stillwater, OK, having earned a degree in agricultural communications. This fall, Kiera plans to attend Drake University Law School in Des Moines, IA. She is a hard worker who has been dedicated to getting the most out of her internship experience.