

are required to conduct a comprehensive audit of the national program to aid Congress in its determination of whether to continue the program in the long term.

Finally, the bill requires more frequent and standardized inventories of forest lands through an existing Forest Service program called Forest Inventory and Analysis. This provision will assist private, Federal, and other public land managers in planning and management decisions through the availability of the best and more current scientific data.

I look forward to receiving thoughtful and constructive comment on this bill as it moves through the committee process. I am confident that, with a bipartisan effort in the Agriculture Committee and the cooperation of the administration, we will produce a finished plan of action for improving and protecting our country's forest resources both in the short term and for generations to come

TRIBUTE TO SOUTHWEST
MISSOURI STATE UNIVERSITY

HON. ROY BLUNT

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 23, 1997

Mr. BLUNT. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise today to recognize an institution in southwest Missouri for promoting and laying the foundation upon which character is built. The institution I speak of is Southwest Missouri State University [SMSU] where I had the privilege to earn my master's in history. The award is the "Templeton Foundation Honor Roll for Character Building Colleges." Some 135 institutions were selected out of 2,208 eligible universities and colleges. More impressive is that of the 6 percent of universities that were privileged to receive this award, only eight were public institutions and SMSU was the only public institution in Missouri to receive this award.

In 1995, SMSU began a statewide mission in public affairs that focuses on developing traits within students that help them to become responsible citizens. That is why it is no surprise that SMSU would meet the standards needed to be recognized as a character building institution. Those standards considered as determinants of the award are the extent to which students are inspired to develop and strengthen their moral reasoning skills, the encouragement of spiritual growth and moral values, community building experiences, a drug-free lifestyle and whether the institution conducts critical assessments of its character-building programs and activities.

SMSU begins to establish each of these values when students start their first year through forums where nationally known role models emphasize personal responsibility and character. Freshmen also attend a mandatory class that focuses on responsible citizenship in a learning community. This class teaches that drug and alcohol abuse will not be tolerated but also demonstrates alternatives that encourage physical, social, and spiritual well-being. Frequent roundtable discussions focus on incorporating principle values that help a learning institution like SMSU flourish. More than 20 religious organizations on campus are very active and play an influential role in student life. The city of Springfield has benefited

from the community involvement of SMSU where just last year students, faculty, and staff contributed more than 69,500 hours of community service. SMSU students also are responsible for coordinating the nationwide "Into the Streets" program for the city of Springfield. SMSU surveys alumni and faculty to assess the civic involvement and also studies other universities to learn their assessment techniques.

While I know that students, faculty, and staff of SMSU will celebrate this award, the community of Springfield and every parent whose child is attending SMSU should as well. Employees can know that when they hire someone with a degree from SMSU they can trust them to be faithful employees of character and good citizenship. Parents can be confident that when they send their children to SMSU they will learn not only book knowledge but also the values needed to produce good character.

Finally may I add that we remember the words of Herbert Spencer when he said "Education has for its object the formation of character." Thank you SMSU for making that your object as well.

TRIBUTE TO "ORQUESTA ARAGÓN"

HON. JOSÉ E. SERRANO

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 23, 1997

Mr. SERRANO. Mr. Speaker, I would like to submit the following tribute for publication in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD. It was presented on September 13, 1997, at a special event in my South Bronx congressional district.

Mr. Speaker, I rise to pay tribute to one of the most famous orchestras of Cuban music of all times—the "Orquesta Aragón," from Cuba. "Orquesta Aragón" will perform on September 13 at a special event at Hostos Community College in my South Bronx congressional district.

Thousands of people are expected to attend and enjoy the music of this world famous orchestra. At this event, Andy Montañez, one of Cuba's most talented composers and singers, will join the orchestra. The success of this event is a symbol of the close relationship that exists between the people of that Caribbean Island, the South Bronx community and beyond.

"Orquesta Aragón" was founded in 1939 by bass player Orestes Aragón. In 1945, violin player Rafael Lay became the director of the orchestra at the age of 19. During the 1940's and 1950's, it became the best orchestra of "son", "mambo", "danzón", and "cha-cha-chá" in Cuba.

As a publication in Cuba simply described it: "Charanga bands were divided into two groups; in one was Aragón and, in the other, were all the rest."

That was the time when all radio stations in Havana carried Aragón music. This fact, and the signing of a recording contract with RCA-Victor, assured the orchestra tremendous international success.

The orchestra went on tour and gained the hearts of fans in Europe, the Far East and the Americas. It has performed on famous stages worldwide, including the Tchaikovsky Conservatory in Moscow and the Lincoln Center's Avery Fisher Hall.

One of the compositions created by Richard Egües, "El Bodeguero", was soon recorded by Nat King Cole and other famous musicians.

With the passing away of Rafael Lay, the orchestra's baton was passed on to Richard Egües, and most recently to Lay's son, Rafael Lay, Jr.

Throughout its 58 years of playing great Afro-Cuban music, "Orquesta Aragón" has recorded over 700 tunes and recorded dozens of LP's and CD's. It has also received numerous honors, including the Egrem's Grand Prize for breaking record sales with its golden anniversary recording, "50 Años de Oro."

The orchestra continues to be acclaimed internationally. In 1992, it enjoyed great success at the Carnival in Barranquilla, Colombia.

Mr. Speaker, it is with great pleasure that I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing the exceptional talent of the "Orquesta Aragón" and in wishing its members continued success.

HONORING THE HEROIC ACTS OF
KIRK FISTICK

HON. STENY H. HOYER

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 23, 1997

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the heroic acts of a young man from my district. Kirk Fistick set aside his own fears of disease and infection to save another life. What sets this courageous act apart is that it took place in Russia. By crossing both language and cultural barriers with this remarkable act, Kirk became an Ambassador for the United States. Kirk's heroic acts led the Boy Scouts of America to award him the Honor Medal, an honor only given to 36 people in 1993.

Kirk was one of 40 students selected by the National Freedom Support Act Scholarship to represent our country as a foreign exchange student in Russia. One day during his stay in Russia, he came across a man on the side of the road who had stopped breathing. Kirk risked his own life to perform CPR three times before the ambulance arrived and was able to keep him alive until he could receive medical care. Kirk reminds us all, Russian and American, that the Good Samaritan still exists today.

Kirk Fistick is the son of Robert and Patricia Fistick who reside in Charlotte Hall, MD. Kirk has an exceptional list of accomplishments. In addition to recently being awarded the Honor Medal, Kirk is an Eagle Scout and was awarded a National Certificate of Merit by the Boy Scouts of America for his help at the site of an automobile accident.

Kirk's life has not been all fun and games. He had to endure a 2-year bout with Lyme disease which he contracted during the summer of 1993. At times during these 2 years he was so critically ill he could not walk or sit up straight and required hospitalization or home care, but Kirk is a fighter. Throughout his illness, he managed to achieve honor roll status and played ice hockey as part of his physical therapy.

Mr. Speaker and colleagues, please join with me in honoring this outstanding young man for his many accomplishments and congratulate him on being awarded the Honor Medal.