

HONORING BELLAIRE HIGH
SCHOOL'S MERIT SCHOLAR
SEMIFINALISTS

HON. KEN BENTSEN

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, October 21, 1998

Mr. BENTSEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor the 45 National Merit Scholarship Semifinalists at Bellaire High School in Bellaire, Texas. This is the most of any school in Texas and more than all but seven in the Nation.

Every year, the National Merit Scholarship Corporation awards approximately 7,000 scholarships worth \$28 million for undergraduate study. Becoming a National Merit Semifinalist is an extraordinary accomplishment. Some 1.2 million high school juniors enter the competition by taking the Preliminary Scholastic Aptitude (PSAT)/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test. To become a semifinalist, a student must score high enough on the PSAT to be in the top one percent of all scores in Texas.

Next, the students will compete to become National Merit Finalists. If selected after a rigorous application process, these students will be eligible for one of 2,400 National Merit Scholarships, worth \$2,000. The Merit Scholar winners will be announced next spring.

Having more National Merit Scholar semifinalists than every public and private school in Texas underscores that Bellaire High School is a premiere institution of learning, where students work hard and take pride in their accomplishments. The teachers, school administration, parents, and community are doing an extraordinary job preparing these young men and women to take their place in the world. This is what is possible when teachers demand excellence and parents and students place a high value on academic excellence. Bellaire High reflects a level of academic success that is becoming Houston Independent School District's trademark.

Mr. Speaker, I congratulate the National Merit Scholar semifinalists at Bellaire High School: Ramsey Ashour, Averille Asprec, Jason Barnard, Adam Block, Patrick Bloom, Andrew Cheung, Jonathan Chung, Lindsay Derman, Kevin Elias, Dan Feng, Brian Foo, Christina Fu, Emily Gray, Michael Hollington, Jane Hu, Ana Islam, Risha Israni, Irwin Law, Dennis Lee, Amy Len, Nicholas Lindsay, Michael Lipnick, Simon Lu, Amir Marouni, Maria McKeenan, Uzochukwu Odili, Jeremy Rahe, Suzanne Sacher, Brett Solomon, Gregory Stoll, Angel Sun, Harriet Sun, Karla Sussman, Andrew Swaffar, Erin Tavagac, Margie Teng, Millie Thomas, David Tsai, Stanley Tsao, Irene Tung, Craig Wellington, Beverly Wind, Diana Yang, Ethan Yeh, and Chendi Zhang.

Additionally, I would like to congratulate another National Merit Scholar semifinalist, Jennifer Guest of Westbury High School, which is also in the 25th Congressional District.

TRIBUTE TO REVEREND RUBEN
DARIO COLÓN

HON. JOSÉ E. SERRANO

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, October 21, 1998

Mr. SERRANO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Rev. Ruben Dario Colón, one of

the longest serving members of Community Board #4 in the Bronx, who will be retiring from the Board this month after years of service.

Born in Puerto Rico, Rev. Colón attended the University of Puerto Rico and the Theological Seminary of Puerto Rico and, in 1947 he married Ms. Ramonita Orabona, with whom he had a son and a daughter.

In the United States, he obtained a bachelor's degree from Adelphi University. He also holds a Master of Divinity from the Lutheran Theological Seminary and a Master of Social Work from Fordham University.

Rev. Colón was ordained in 1950. He has served at Evangelical Lutheran Church of the Resurrection since 1959 and became its Pastor in 1968. His ministry is faithfully committed to bringing spiritual enlightenment to the community. In addition, he serves as the highest ranking Hispanic Chaplain of the New York City Police Department and also serves as Chaplain at the Bronx Veterans Administration Hospital.

As a psychiatric social worker, Rev. Colón has provided psychiatric therapy for adults and families at many institutions, including Covenant House and the Bronx Psychiatric Center. He was organizer and President of the New York City Puerto Rican Community Children's Hospital. He is a member of the Board of the Morrisania Diagnostic and Treatment Center of the New York City Health and Hospitals Corporation.

The professional, religious and civic organizations to which Rev. Colón belongs, like the honors and awards he has been given are almost beyond counting. Among the many honors bestowed upon him, Rev. Colón is the first Puerto Rican to receive the Silver Medal of the Academic Society of Arts, Science and Literature of France.

Reverend Colón has lived to help those who have needed him. His long and fruitful career as a pastor, counselor, chaplain and community activist has touched thousands of individuals in our community. Reverend Colón has been an outstanding leader and a great role model, not only to the organizations he has served so well but also to the Hispanic community and other religious organizations.

As it is written in Hebrews 6:10 "for God is not unjust; he will not forget your work and the love you have shown him as you have helped his people and continue to help them." The community, too, recognizes him and is honoring him.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing Rev. Ruben Dario Colón for his remarkable career serving the community and bringing hope to the many individuals he has touched. While he is leaving Community Board #4, I am confident that Reverend Colón, a wise and talented leader will, continue serving our community.

TRIBUTE TO STANLEY G. TATE—
MAKING HIGHER EDUCATION
POSSIBLE FOR HUNDREDS OF
THOUSANDS OF FLORIDA'S CHILDREN

HON. CARRIE P. MEEK

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, October 21, 1998

Mrs. MEEK of Florida. Mr. Speaker, in 1987, with my strong support, the Florida Legislature

created the Florida Prepaid Postsecondary Education Expense Program to allow families to prepay college tuition and housing expenses for their children at a lower rate than the projected costs at the time of enrollment.

Florida was only the second state to try such an innovative program. Today it is a runaway success, thanks largely to the Chairman of the Board of the Florida Prepaid Postsecondary Education Expense Program, Stanley G. Tate, whose brilliant leadership and personal commitment have made Florida's prepaid college tuition program the most successful in the nation.

Stanley Tate deserves the congratulations and thanks of every Floridian, and I join with our community in saluting him. The Miami Herald recently profiled Mr. Tate in a page-one article, which I would like to share with my colleagues.

[From the Miami Herald, Oct. 18, 1998]

COLLEGE CRUSADER—DEVELOPER PAVES ROAD
TO EDUCATION

(By Jack Wheat)

Florida's prepaid college tuition program kicks off its second decade on Monday as the most successful plan of its kind in America, allowing Floridians to pay for a child's future college tuition at today's cheaper rates.

The Florida Prepaid College Program is considered such a good deal that more than 375,000 children, from birth to high school age, were signed up in the first 10 years.

In hindsight, that kind of popularity seems a foregone conclusion. After all, it's possible to buy a contract that will allow a fourth-grader to attend a state university in 2007 for slightly less than what this year's undergraduates pay.

But the program's success is a civic Cinderella story, in which a real-life godfather came in the rescue:

Meet Stanley G. Tate, a millionaire Miami developer whose iron will and deep pockets made a winner out of a little-known program that looked like it was going nowhere when contracts first went on sale in 1988.

"There were a lot of people who were saying it would never fly," said Tallahassee lawyer Philip Blank, general counsel for the program. "But when Stanley was appointed to the board, he took it to mean he needed to do what he would do with his own private business."

Florida was the second state to try a prepaid tuition program. The first, Michigan, was struggling through a troubled start-up. Although the Florida legislature approved the program overwhelmingly in 1987, its staff was instructed to watch its progress closely for signs of trouble.

Tate knew it was sound because he helped design the plan from ground up.

In 1986, Gov. Bob Graham asked him to work with the legislative staff to develop a program like one just started in Michigan. Tate and the staff learned from Michigan's glitches and put together a program of guaranteed prepayment of future university and community college tuition.

The next year, Gov. Bob Martinez appointed Tate to the prepaid college plan board, and he became its first—and so far, only—chairman.

STATEWIDE CAMPAIGN

In 1988, with initial sales significantly lower than he had predicted, Tate feared that the program would die the unceremonious death of new products that are labeled duds.

So he put his business and personal life on hold and started barnstorming. "I went all over the state, from Pensacola on down," Tate said.