

ZACHARY FISHER TRIBUTE

• Mr. CLELAND. Mr. President, I come before my colleagues today to pay tribute to a great American and dear friend, Mr. Zachary Fisher. Zach led an extraordinary life that included service to his fellow man and to our country. He was a major philanthropic benefactor for the men and women of the United States Armed Forces. His generosity was shared with numerous non-profit organizations and foundations including causes such as Alzheimer's Disease, military retiree housing, and educational benefits for our men and women in uniform.

When the United States entered World War II in 1941, Zach was ineligible to serve in the armed forces due to a serious knee injury sustained in a construction accident. "I could have cried," he said, recalling the day he was told he did not pass the Marine Corps physical. "I wanted to go defend my country."

Nevertheless, determined to do his part, he aided the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers in building coastal fortifications at home. Following the war, Zach, along with his brothers, earned an international reputation as a leader in the construction industry. Zach spent the rest of his life doing good deeds for his country, turning the wealth he earned as a developer into good will for the men and women of the armed services.

In 1978, Zach founded the Intrepid Museum Foundation to save the historic and battle-scarred aircraft carrier *Intrepid*. Through his efforts the vessel became the home of the Intrepid Sea Air Space Museum, which opened in New York City in 1982. Zach went on to contribute more than \$25 million for the establishment and operation of the Museum, a tribute to the thousands of military men and women who have served and continue to serve our country.

In addition to founding the Intrepid Museum, Zach and his wife Elizabeth also formed the Fisher Armed Services Foundation to provide contributions to families who survive the death of a loved one in the armed service. Since then, the Foundation has supported hundreds of families of military personnel.

The Foundation also provides scholarship funds to active duty and former service members as well as their families. Since 1987, hundreds of students have received significant scholarships to further their education. In 1990, the Fishers began the Fisher House Program, dedicating more than \$15 million to the construction of housing for families of hospitalized military personnel. The houses are designed to provide all the comforts of home and allow families to support one another through their difficult times.

The Presidential Medal of Freedom Award, the highest honor that can be awarded a United States citizen, was presented to Zachary Fisher by President Clinton in 1998. Fisher was awarded the Medal for his steadfast and generous support of the U.S. military. His

support of the military was also recognized this year as legislation, which I had the honor of sponsoring in the Senate designating Zachary Fisher as an honorary veteran of the United States Armed Forces. Zach was only the second person ever to receive such a designation. In addition, Zach was also awarded the Congressional Medal of Freedom.

Sadly, Zach lost his long battle with cancer on June 4, 1999. Zach was truly the friend of the everyday soldier. He will be dearly missed and remembered for his selfless devotion to United States service members and their families. Zachary Fisher was a great man who leaves behind a legacy that will continue to better the lives of American men and women for years to come. •

GEORGIA BOARD OF REGENTS

• Mr. CLELAND. Mr. President, I rise before you today to recognize the outstanding achievements and hard work of the Georgia Board of Regents. This dedicated group of men and women has committed itself to improving higher education in the state of Georgia and I am proud of their accomplishments. As John F. Kennedy said, "Our progress as a nation can be no swifter than our progress in education."

Over the past five years, the Regents have developed a commitment to bring the Georgia higher education system into the new millennium through strategic planning and sweeping vision. In October of 1994, just as Dr. Stephen Porch was officially inaugurated as the University System's ninth Chancellor, the Board adopted the first step of a new program, "Access to Academic Excellence for the New Millennium." The Board called for Georgia's public colleges and universities to be recognized for first-rate education, leading edge research and committed public service. The Board's new statement took into account input from various student groups, University and Regent presidents, and leaders in the education community.

Later that same year, the Regents adopted a new set of guiding principles to serve as the foundation for future policy making and modified the affiliated graduate degree structure. This cleared the way for institutions throughout the state to offer graduate programs autonomously, collectively, or under shared authority.

In March of 1995, Chancellor Porch introduced another new policy direction to address the need for "co-reform" of public education in the state. This reform was an effort to recognize that all sectors of education are fundamentally linked and that improvement in one sector requires a comprehensive effort of all sectors. Governor Miller's support of this initiative became a critical element in its success and he appointed a statewide Council to implement the directive.

Throughout 1995, the Board of Regents continued to see successes in its effort to improve the delivery of edu-

cation throughout Georgia. In June, the Board introduced a new admissions policy with the goal of breaking the cycle of low admissions expectations and inadequate college preparation. The new admissions policy aimed to make such changes in two ways: fostering more effective preparation of students before they are accepted for admission; and broadening the admissions evaluation process to look beyond single quantitative measures such as standardized test scores.

In 1996, the Board approved the framework for a new core curriculum, just eight months after the first meeting of the Advisory Committee meeting. The committee was charged with redesigning the original core curriculum—a redesign that focused on a multidisciplinary effort that maximizes the resources of a particular institution.

All of these efforts came together in December of 1997 when the Board gave final approval on the University System's new admissions policy. This approval included policy on admissions for students without a high school diploma and outlines specific courses that fulfill the College Preparatory Curriculum requirements.

In August of 1998, Chancellor Porch began a tour of all 34 System institutions. He travelled to update faculty, staff, students and elected officials as well as local communities on the progress the University System had made over the past four years, and the work that remains to be done to create a more educated Georgia.

By this fall, the members of the Georgia Board of Regents saw the fruits of their labor. SAT scores of students entering the University System were up, and a survey of state business leaders showed their satisfaction with the quality of the University had increased from two years prior. Plans to increase access to technology were drafted, and an effort to be even more responsive to the educational, economic and fiscal needs of the state was committed. As Ben Franklin once said, "An investment in knowledge always pays the best interest." How true that is.

I once heard Marian Wright Edelman of the Children's Defense Fund say that "service is the rent each of us pays for living." I want to thank the men and women of the Georgia Board of Regents for their service and dedication to the higher educational system in the great state of Georgia. We will all benefit from your efforts.

At this point, I would ask to include in the RECORD the names and hometowns of the distinguished Georgians who have served on the state's Board of Regents from January 1993 to the present.

The material follows:

Thomas F. Allgood, Sr. of Augusta; Shannon L. Amos of Columbus; John Henry Anderson, Jr. of Hawkinsville; David H. (Hal) Averitt of Statesboro; Juanita Powell Baranco of Lithonia; James E. Brown of Dalton; Kenneth W. Cannestra of Atlanta;