

Franklin Middle School in Yakima, Washington have benefitted greatly from the dedication and hard work of their principal, Mr. Rick Otto. He has been credited by his colleagues for turning the school around with his new ideas, helping disadvantaged students, and creating a positive atmosphere. I applaud Principal Otto's work to bring about such important changes and improvements in his school and am proud to present Principal Otto with my next "Innovation in Education" Award.

Principal Otto has a distinguished record of service at Franklin Middle School. For many years, he taught technology classes before working as an assistant principal. In 1993, he became the principal and realized that in order to improve Franklin Middle School, the community would have to become more involved. Throughout his tenure, Principal Otto has built a strong relationship with parents, community leaders and residents of the surrounding neighborhoods. The work of Principal Otto and the community has made a tremendous impact resulting in a renewed sense of discipline and higher expectations in student performance.

One of the challenges taken on by Principal Otto was improving the academic achievement of its high-concentration of non-English speaking families as well as helping students traditionally described as disadvantaged. Under Mr. Otto's leadership, Franklin created an "At-Risk" program which targets the children who are having trouble in school, gives them more attention in the classroom, and monitors their improvement. In the past five years, 69 percent of the students participating in the "At-Risk" program have improved in all areas of their education. The "At-Risk" program has also vastly improved the morale of students and staff across the Franklin campus.

I have heard many words of praise from members of the Franklin Middle School community who regard him as a model educator and admire his steadfast dedication to his students. Their words speak more highly of Principal Otto than I, as a United States Senator, ever could.

Clearly, Principal Otto is a leader in the field of education who recognizes the challenges that exist in his school and works each day to meet those challenges and make his students better learners. I applaud Principal Otto and know that the past, present and future children attending Franklin Middle School will be better students because of him.●

RESIGNATION OF LARRY WILKER, KENNEDY CENTER PRESIDENT

● Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. President, a few days ago, the president of the Kennedy Center, Lawrence J. Wilker, announced that he will resign his position at the Center at the end of this year. He plans to launch a new Internet entertain-

ment company, and I know that he will bring the same ability, energy, and enthusiasm to that initiative as he brought to the Kennedy Center.

Larry Wilker has been a superb president for the Kennedy Center over the past decade. He has made outstanding improvements in the Center's facilities and its programming. He has led the Center effectively during a time of significant growth and expansion. One of his most impressive achievements has been the creation of the Millennium Stage, which offers free performances every afternoon at the Center.

I know that Larry Wilker will continue to be a leader in the national performing arts community and an enduring part of the Kennedy Center, and I wish him well in his important and pioneering new undertaking.

Today's Washington Post contains an excellent editorial praising Larry and his many contributions to the Kennedy Center and the arts in the nation. I ask that the editorial may be printed in the RECORD.

The article follows:

[From the Washington Post, April 11, 2000]

A KENNEDY CENTER DEPARTURE

Lawrence Wilker, president of the Kennedy Center since 1991, is taking off for the dot-com world, leaving an institution more vital and deeper in talent than before his arrival. Former chairman James Wolfensohn, who hired Mr. Wilker, did much to set the direction of the center toward showcasing national and regional arts, livelier relations with the local scene and a strong focus on arts education. Under Mr. Wilker and center chairman James Johnson those changes deepened and took institutional hold. Signs of this emphasis range from the hugely popular free "Millennium State" events daily at 6 p.m. in the Grand Foyer—catering, as often as not, to a jeans-and-sweaters crowd—to the splashy black-tie gala that marked the unveiling of a refurbished Concert Hall in 1997.

Outreach doesn't accomplish much if the quality isn't there to back it up. That lesson also has reverberated in the Wilker era with the arrival of recognized names such as the Washington Opera's Placido Domingo and the National Symphony Orchestra's Leonard Slatkin. Mr. Wilker's own background in theater production bolstered Kennedy Center sponsorship of the Fund for New American Plays, which distributes as much as \$25,000 (gleaned mostly from corporate sources) for production of promising works by young playwrights all over the nation—some of which end up in Washington, some not.

Mr. Wilker says his Internet venture will make arts and entertainment more widely available. His Kennedy Center tenure has been, in large measure, an exercise in that same mission, and one that has achieved success—despite being waged not on the Net but in the clunkier coin of bricks, mortar and federal budget battles.●

THE AMERICAN LUNG ASSOCIATION OF MICHIGAN-GENESEE VALLEY REGION HONORS DR. PETER LEVINE

● Mr. ABRAHAM. Mr. President, I rise today to recognize Dr. Peter Levine, who on April 13, 2000, will be honored by the American Lung Association of Michigan-Genesee Valley Region as its Individual Health Advocate of the

Year. Each year, the organization recognizes one individual whose efforts have greatly contributed to supporting the health, education and overall well-being of the Genesee Valley community.

Since 1986, Dr. Levine has served as the Executive Director of the Genesee County Medical Society in Flint, Michigan, which represents over 600 physicians. As Executive Director, Dr. Levine oversees the day-to-day operations of the Medical Society, ranging from the responsibilities of its financial, policy and staffing actions, to its lobbying activities, educational programming and media relations. He also serves as the Executive Director of the Society's three subsidiaries: the Medical Society Foundation, a 501C-3 educational and social policy charitable foundation; the Physicians Programs, Inc.; and the Emergency Medical Centre of Flint, an urgent care center designed to provide a low cost alternative care site for the community at large. The Emergency Medical Centre provides care for approximately 18,000 visitors per year.

Prior to 1986, Dr. Levine served as Program Director for the Greater Flint Area Hospital Assembly. In this capacity, Dr. Levine directed a six-hospital cooperative venture enabling these hospitals to provide better cancer care services to their patients. He developed and implemented strategies for cooperation in research, education, bioethics, resource coordination, standards of care, fiscal strategies, communication with hospital staffs, promotion of member hospitals outside of the region, innovative programming, cancer screening, and computerized tumor registry and data system. He staffed a multi-hospital joint venture to implement Magnetic Resonance Imagery technology in the Flint area, and served as the Executive Director of Community Hospice, Inc., a multi-hospice association designed to foster hospice growth in the region.

Dr. Levine is also a founding board member and volunteer for the Genesee County Free Medical Clinic, and a charter member of the Michigan Hospice Organization Board of Directors. He serves on the Medicare Advisory Board for the Ninth Congressional District of Michigan, sits on the Board of Directors of Health Education Systems, Inc., and is a Consultant to Michigan State Medical Society Committees on Bioethics, on Membership Recruitment and Retention, and on Medical Economics. He is also the State Medical Society's Liaison with Blue Cross/Blue Shield, and a member of its task force on professional liability.

Mr. President, I applaud Dr. Levine for his outstanding work for not only Genesee County, but the State of Michigan. His efforts have contributed to a higher standard of medical care throughout the state. On behalf of the entire United States Senate, I congratulate Dr. Levine on being named