

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating NCFJE on the occasion of its 60th Anniversary, and wish it continued success and many great mitzvah's in the future.

HONORING LOS ALAMOS
NATIONAL BANK

HON. TOM UDALL

OF NEW MEXICO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 7, 2000

Mr. UDALL of New Mexico. Mr. Speaker, last month Los Alamos National Bank was presented the prominent Baldrige Award. This superior bank deserves congressional recognition as well.

I share an extreme sense of pride in knowing that one of New Mexico's own, and a business in my Third Congressional District, has received this highly coveted and prestigious recognition. What makes this award so special is that it represents excellence in every aspect. Quality improvement is an evolutionary process, and those businesses and organizations that commit themselves to this endeavor are investing not only in themselves, but in those they serve. Los Alamos National Bank by virtue of your involvement in quality New Mexico, deserve to be applauded for seeking out the knowledge and training to raise the bar for your customers, your clients, my constituents and our community.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to submit for the RECORD this article for the New Mexican recognizing the Los Alamos National Bank. I would also urge all my colleagues to congratulate the fine employees of this establishment.

LOS ALAMOS BANK WINS PRESTIGIOUS
NATIONAL AWARD

(By Bob Quick)

A very unbanklike cheer resounded in Los Alamos National Bank this week when employees learned the bank was one of four winners nationwide of the prestigious 2000 Malcom Baldrige National Quality Award.

The bank, which has 167 employees and assets of \$660 million, won in the small-business category. LANB has offices in Los Alamos, White Rock and Santa Fe.

It was the first time a bank has won the award, according to a statement from the U.S. Commerce Department. The department and the White House officially released information about the award Tuesday.

"I heard there was a loud cheer throughout the building" when news of the award reached employees, said Steve Wells, president of LANB. "We were extremely happy for our people and for our community and for New Mexico. We know we have high standards to live up to now. We have to make sure we're worthy of our crown."

"The Malcom Baldrige National Quality Award recognizes organizations that play a major role in energizing our nation's economy, competitiveness and quality of life," President Bill Clinton said in a statement from the White House. "If we are going to keep our economy growing and our country moving forward, we need as a nation to follow the example of Baldrige winners."

Congress established the Malcom Baldrige National Quality Award, named after a former secretary of commerce, in 1987 to enhance the competitiveness of U.S. businesses by promoting quality awareness, according to the statement.

Since 1988, only 41 organizations have received the award. The National Institute of Standards manages the program.

The award is given to businesses that have shown achievements and improvements in the areas of leadership, strategic planning, customer and market focus, information and analysis, human-resource focus, process-management and business results, the Commerce Department statement said.

"We would have felt great if we had lost the Baldrige award," Wells said. "It's like making it to the Super Bowl in our opinion."

The bank won the award for a number of quality and business-performance achievements, according to the statement from the White House.

One of them was domination of its market area. The bank since 1998 filed 80 percent of all mortgage loans in Los Alamos County and 9 percent of such loans in Santa Fe County. The bank opened its Santa Fe branch in mid-1999 and already has \$115 million in assets, Wells said.

And in a survey, 80 percent of the bank's customers said they were "very satisfied" with the service they received, the statement said.

During the Cerro Grande fire that ravaged Los Alamos earlier this year, destroying hundreds of homes, the bank moved its entire operation overnight to its Santa Fe branch.

As a result, services was not interrupted.

Following the fire, the bank offered zero-percent interest to anyone in the community affected by the fire.

It also eliminated overdraft charges and late fees, the statement said.

Wells said the bank was particularly proud of its efficiency ratio, which is a proportion the bank uses to measure employee productivity.

A lower number is better. LANB's efficiency ratio is 49 percent, while the best of its competitors have ratios above 60 percent, the statement said.

"One of the ways we will survive as an independent community bank is our ability to compete with the supranational and supranational banks," Wells said. "We've got to be able to compete with the Wal-Marts of the world."

The bank's efficiency ratio, he continued, "is a tremendous accomplishment by our people, our systems and our technology. There's no productivity without hard work."

Other achievements of the bank included high employee satisfaction and low employee turnover, thanks in part to a stock-ownership plan and an employee profit-sharing plan.

LANB in 1999 received Quality New Mexico's highest award, the Zia Award. In 1997 and 1998, the bank received the organization's Roadrunner Award.

Quality New Mexico "is the one that encouraged us to stretch ourselves to see how we would come out against the best in the country," Wells said.

The three other Baldrige Award winners were Dana Corp.-Spicer Driveshaft Division in Toledo, Ohio (manufacturing); Karlee Co. Inc., Garland, Texas (manufacturing); and Operations Management International Greenwood Village, Colo. (service).

HONORING ROBERT W. GROSS

HON. ZOE LOFGREN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 7, 2000

Ms. LOFGREN. Mr. Speaker, today I offer my sincere congratulations to Robert W. Gross, Ph.D., E.W.E., on his retirement from the Board of Directors of the Santa Clara Val-

ley Water District. For sixteen years, Bob Gross has provided distinguished service to the Santa Clara Valley Water District and the residents of Santa Clara County. His hard-work and commitment to the job helped to produce numerous successes for the District and the County. I am honored to have been able to work with him over the years. He will, indeed, be missed.

Bob began his public service as an advisor to the United States Army Corps of Engineers, San Francisco Division. Working in the flood control division for ten years, Bob tackled a myriad of flood control issues that face the Bay-Delta region, garnering a reputation for thoroughness and energetic diligence. In addition to his service in the Corps of Engineers, Bob also served a community advisor to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, helping to establish the San Francisco Bay National Wildlife Refuge which consists of more than 25,000 acres of protected waters and wildlife habitat. Bob also served as an advisor to the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation on the important Central Valley Project.

Building on these experiences Bob brought his knowledge and skills to Santa Clara, where he ran for, and won, five elections to the Santa Clara Valley Water District's Board of Directors. Representing District 3—a district that encompasses one fifth of the entire population of Santa Clara County and Silicon Valley—Bob worked hard to meet the water supply and flood protection needs of the County's residents. As a member of the Board of Directors, Bob was responsible for helping shape the direction that the District has taken with respect to water policy over the past sixteen years. He was directly involved in many notable and important actions and issues, including the following: MTBE contamination, groundwater recharge, wastewater recycling, and CALFED. Bob served as the District's representative to the South Bay Recycling Project where he worked closely with the City of San Jose and the Bureau of Reclamation, and he also served as the District's representative to the City of San Jose on nonpoint wetland mitigation issues.

During his tenure, Bob provided valuable service by reviewing and analyzing state water laws and regulations. As the District representative to the WaterReuse Association of California, Bob served as the Board's liaison and represented the interests of the District. Bob also represented the WaterReuse Association in a number of capacities, including most notably as the State Chairperson for the Potable Committee and a member of the Education Subcommittee. As a member of the Potable Subcommittee, he participated in the preparation of a news media presentation on the safe use of potable water and helped write a public information recycling brochure as a member of the Education Subcommittee. In addition, through his work with the Education Subcommittee, Bob worked closely with the California Department of Fish and Game to create an aquatic and environmental education program for disadvantaged youth. He also represented the WaterReuse Association at numerous conferences and seminars and served as a co-chair for a technical symposium on planned surface water augmentation using advanced treated recycled water and health standards. In 1995, in light of this work and for his outstanding service to the WaterReuse Association, he was awarded a certificate of recognition for personal contributions.