

job training, job placement, education, academic tutorial, youth achievement and business development programs, serving more than 112,000 people annually. Countless individuals credit John and the Los Angeles Urban League for helping them turn their lives around for the better, start businesses, and complete their education.

John Mack has an innate ability to forge partnerships with elected officials, corporate leaders, local clergy, and community residents. His ability to build bridges has made him a highly respected advocate for equal opportunities in education, law enforcement and economic empowerment and has garnered him many awards. His coalition-building skills also proved useful during his youth, as he was an early leader of the civil rights movement with Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr.

I invite my colleagues to join me and the thousands of people touched by his work in commending John W. Mack for his great leadership and tireless advocacy throughout his lifetime. Naming an elementary school after a man who devoted so much of his life to bettering our Nation will remind all who walk through its halls about the importance of community service. ●

#### IN CELEBRATION OF BLUE RIBBON SCHOOLS AWARDS

● Mr. CARPER. Mr. President, today I wish to celebrate the selection of Booker T. Washington Elementary School as a No Child Left Behind-Blue Ribbon Schools Award recipient. This prestigious honor is awarded to exemplary schools that meet one of two criteria. The nominated school must have at least 40 percent of a nominated school's student population come from disadvantaged backgrounds, and each segment—including Whites, Blacks, Hispanics, low-income and special education students must show scholastic improvement, or the school must score in the top 10 percent on State achievement tests. This is a well deserved honor for Booker T. Washington Elementary School, attesting to years of tireless commitment that this school, as well as the First State, brings to educating our youth.

Booker T. Washington Elementary School is located in historic Dover, DE, the State's Capital. The school was founded in 1919 to serve approximately 240 African-American children from two schools in the downtown Dover area. Today, the school serves approximately 350 students. Booker T. Washington's student body is now comprised of 56 percent African American, 2 percent Asian American, 8 percent Hispanic, and 34 percent Caucasian students. Twenty-three percent of the students are identified as special needs students. Approximately 9 percent of the students have limited English proficiency. Forty-four percent of the students qualify as low income. The school's small size and culturally rich student and staff population enhance

the educational and social-emotional growth of the children and affords the school the opportunity to personalize the learning experience for the children.

The mission of Booker T. Washington is to offer the best educational program possible in order to develop the mind and character of each child. To accomplish this mission, the school has established a firm foundation in the core subject areas. Led by Principal Marcia Johnson, they have established high expectations for all children and communicate these expectations daily in the staffs' work with them. Booker T. Washington provides an environment that celebrates and promotes understanding of self and others, and expects that everyone will behave in a manner that represents the standards that have been set for the school community. Booker T. Washington has established close working relationships with the parents and the community and depends on their support to help the school meet its goals.

Booker T. Washington's primary program nurtures the continuing growth of children's knowledge and understanding of themselves and their world. The remarkable growth of all children over the past 5 years is evident in the decreases in the achievement gaps between all subgroups of children served in the school. Not only is this school meeting yearly targets for all subgroups set by the State and capital school district, but they are also moving more children into higher achievement levels. The growth that children have made is also a direct result of staff members' use of data to make instructional decisions and their willingness to change their instructional practices by participating in professional development activities based on best practices. Collaborative decision-making and the participation of parents and the community in the decisionmaking process have added to Booker T. Washington's success.

The faculty and staff view themselves as a work in progress. They understand how far they have come over the past 5 years to change the community's perception of their school and to provide instructional activities that will move children toward the goals the district, State, and No Child Left Behind legislation have set for them as learners. Five years ago, there were vast differences in student achievement in the areas of reading, writing, and mathematics. Today, although some discrepancies remain, the gap has narrowed significantly and continues to close. The school's selection as a national blue ribbon school is a testament to their hard work and dedication.

Delaware is a small State, but we are building a growing record of achievement in public school education. Helping lead the way are the students at Booker T. Washington Elementary School, along with their teachers and parents. Collectively, they are truly an

inspiration to other schools and communities in Delaware and throughout our Nation.

Today we also celebrate the selection of Long Neck Elementary School as a No Child Left Behind-Blue Ribbon Schools Award recipient. This prestigious honor is awarded to exemplary schools that meet one of two criteria. The nominated school must have at least 40 percent of a nominated school's student population come from disadvantaged backgrounds, and each segment—including Whites, Blacks, Hispanics, low-income and special education students—must show scholastic improvement, or the school must score in the top 10 percent on State achievement tests. This is a well deserved honor for Long Neck Elementary School, attesting to years of tireless commitment that this school, as well as the First State, brings to educating our youth. It is also the fourth elementary school from the Indian River School District to receive this national recognition, a remarkable accomplishment for any school district.

It is not surprising that such an award is bestowed upon a school committed to the philosophy that all students can achieve academic success. The teachers and staff at Long Neck Elementary, led by Principal Charlyne Hopkins, are steadfast in their schoolwide goal that all students are expected to meet Delaware's academic standards. Furthermore, Long Neck Elementary is dedicated to encouraging students to not only meet these standards but to exceed them regardless of their limitations.

Long Neck Elementary School is located in the rural town of Millsboro, DE. The school is composed of a large percentage of students from low socioeconomic backgrounds. Over half of the school's 522 students receive free or reduced-price lunches. Long Neck Elementary houses a diverse population of students from prekindergarten to the fifth grade. The racially diverse student body includes students from all ethnic backgrounds, including African American, Hispanic, and American Indian. In addition, Long Neck Elementary has an academically diverse student population. The school offers an EXCEL program for high achieving students as well as an intensive learning center and other special education services for struggling learners. It is by combining the efforts of the entire school family that the needs of students at Long Neck Elementary are met and exceeded.

At Long Neck Elementary, the school family consists of parents, teachers, support staff and community members, all working together collaboratively for the benefit and growth of its students. An active and continually growing parent teacher organization there works to enable parents to support their school and their children. In addition, parents and community members partner with the school through its Creative Mentoring program, classroom volunteer opportunities, an

“adopt a class” program, and a weekly career corner on the Long Neck Elementary School’s televised news program. Lastly, the school improvement committee, which consists of staff, parents, and community members, identifies and allocates resources to enhance achievement for all students.

At Long Neck Elementary, students are not only challenged academically. They are also expected to demonstrate model behavior. Good citizenship is reinforced through a character education program where students are honored monthly with certificates and medals for demonstrating the six pillars of good character which promotes making positive choices and becoming a productive member of society.

No school could achieve the gains and progress Long Neck Elementary has met without having a staff that believes every child can learn and who are committed to providing students opportunities to reach their fullest potential. Long Neck Elementary has implemented professional learning communities where teachers work closely together, both within and across grade levels, to promote learning. All members of the staff assist students in improving their academic performances, increasing the likelihood that they will find success through their school years and go on to become productive and active members of society. This is done through after school programs, differentiated instruction, and extra support programs. In addition, instructional staff members participate in numerous learning-focused professional development activities, which enable them to provide students with instructional strategies that are sound and research-based.

Tirelessness of staff and parents at Long Neck Elementary have made possible real progress in closing that school’s achievement gap. Along with the National Blue Ribbon Schools Award, the school also earned “Superior” rating from the State of Delaware in 2003, 2004, and 2005. Long Neck Elementary School is a school that demonstrates that all students can learn. The school’s selection as a national blue ribbon school is a testament to their hard work and dedication.

Delaware is a small State, but we are building a growing record of achievement in public school education. Helping lead the way are the students at Long Neck Elementary School, along with their teachers and parents. Collectively, they are truly an inspiration to other schools and communities in Delaware and throughout our Nation.●

#### TRIBUTE TO JACK GHERTY OF LAND O’LAKES

● Mr. COLEMAN. Mr. President, it is my pleasure to recognize an individual who has made a significant positive difference in U.S. agriculture, agribusiness, rural communities and cooperative enterprise.

That individual is Land O’Lakes’ President and Chief Executive Officer Jack Gherty, retiring after a 35-year career with the cooperative and 16 years as its President and CEO.

During his tenure as CEO, Land O’Lakes was transformed from a regional to a national farmer-owned business and membership organization—giving producers a powerful presence in the marketplace and, from my experience, an equally powerful and positive voice in the policy arena.

Jack Gherty’s role in Land O’Lakes’ transformation comes as no surprise, for agriculture, rural communities and cooperatives have always been close to his heart.

Gherty grew up on his family’s western Wisconsin dairy and livestock farm, in a close-knit rural community, where the local cooperative was at the center of agribusiness activity.

He learned the importance of diligence and teamwork. He learned to value family, community and the land. And, he learned the important role farmer-owned businesses can play in helping preserve the integrity of family-based agriculture and rural communities.

Jack carried these lessons with him when he left the farm in the mid-1960s and earned business and law degrees from the University of Wisconsin. They were also part of his work in the late 1960s as a VISTA volunteer on the tough, poverty-stricken south side of Chicago.

In 1970, Jack joined the Land O’Lakes law department. Over the next several years, he held a number of executive positions within the cooperative. In 1989, the board selected him to serve as Land O’Lakes’ President and CEO.

In this leadership role, Gherty continued to be driven by a strong set of personal values. He combined this with the belief that the most critical role a CEO must play is defining organizational culture, and he immediately began working with the board and his leadership team to set the foundation for Land O’Lakes’ future—the organization’s vision, mission and values.

Over the past 16 years, Gherty’s vision, mission and values have served Land O’Lakes and its members well. Not only has Land O’Lakes built business success while remaining true to its cooperative principles, the company has gained a reputation for uncompromising standards of ethics and integrity and has established a strong record of corporate social responsibility.

As a Minnesotan, I am proud to count Land O’Lakes as a Minnesota-based company. I am proud of its ethics. I admire its contributions to the success of family-based agriculture and producer-owned agribusiness. I share its rural and family values. I applaud its commitment to community.

I am equally proud of Jack Gherty’s record as its leader and of the values that have shaped his career—and, in turn, the Land O’Lakes of today.

A few years ago, Jack Gherty traveled here to Washington D.C. to speak at the 35th Anniversary celebration for VISTA. At that time he said, “The most successful and satisfied people are not those who are out to make an impression, but rather those who are out to make a difference.”

Jack Gherty has made an impression by making a difference, and I am pleased to share his achievements with you today.●

#### AMMON, IDAHO

● Mr. CRAPO. Mr. President, this month, the city of Ammon, ID celebrates a very special birthday: it turned 100 on October 10. A century ago, this thriving town of over 10,000 people was covered with sagebrush that was so tall and thick, as one historian put it “one could ride for miles on horseback without being seen.” Today, the vestiges of those stalwart Mormon settlers can still be seen in this community that champions family, faith and hard work.

The steady growth and measured additions of elements that make a city a city: church, school, electricity, railroad, well, park and public works reflect the wisdom of a well-organized, solid community of citizens. I have lived close to Ammon my entire life; it is a fine community and a great place for families. Those Idahoans who call it home can be proud of their fine city and its 100 years of prosperity.●

#### BURLINGTON, A CORNERSTONE FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

● Mr. HARKIN. Mr. President, one of the greatest challenges we face—not just in Iowa but all across America—is preserving the character and vitality of our towns. This is about economics, but it is also about our culture and identity. After all, you won’t find the heart and soul of Iowa at Wal-Mart or Home Depot out in the strip malls. No, the heart and soul of Iowa is in our family farms, and on Main Street in communities all across my State. That is why we need to be as generous as possible—and creative as possible—in keeping our downtowns not just alive but thriving.

As a member of the Senate Appropriations Committee, I am involved in funding many hundreds of programs every year. But the Main Street Iowa program—providing challenge grants to revitalize downtown buildings across my State—is in a class by itself. It is smart. It is effective. And it touches communities and people in very concrete ways.

For example, the town of Burlington, IA, is making an effort to improve the aesthetics and function of its downtown area. So many of our rural communities are fading away, but with the assistance of Federal funding through a Main Street grant, Burlington is revitalizing its downtown. Downtown Burlington has been waiting for a grocery