

partner in an investment banking firm before assuming the reins at the Yonkers Raceway.

Mr. Rooney's leadership in the racing industry has been well-documented. He is one of the owners of a stud farm in County Kildare in Ireland, and he serves as a director of the United States Trotting Association. He is the business manager of the family-owned Shamrock Farm in Maryland, one of the oldest horse breeding farms in the Terrapin State.

Mr. Rooney is also a devoted family man. He and his wife June are proud parents of 5 children and are devoted to their 17 grandchildren as well as 1 great-grandchild.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that my distinguished colleagues join me in honoring Mr. Timothy Rooney, the grand marshal of New York's 2006 St. Patrick's Day Parade, the largest parade held in our Nation's greatest metropolis.

**AERAS GLOBAL TB VACCINE
FOUNDATION'S RESEARCH FA-
CILITY IN ROCKVILLE, MD**

HON. CHRIS VAN HOLLEN

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 16, 2006

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. Speaker, we are marking a milestone in the global fight against one of the world's most deadly diseases—tuberculosis.

In Rockville, MD, the Aeras Global TB Vaccine Foundation opened a new research and production facility to meet the world's need for an advanced tuberculosis vaccine. The Aeras Foundation is currently testing multiple TB vaccine candidates. The facility will be capable of producing 150 million doses of vaccine per year. It will use the most advanced medical research and manufacturing technologies and will serve as Aeras's headquarters as well as its research and production center.

The world badly needs a new TB vaccine. More than 1.75 million people die from this disease every year. It is second only to AIDS as the world's deadliest infectious disease. The World Health Organization estimates that there are 8.8 million new cases of TB every year. TB is also the leading cause of death among people diagnosed with AIDS, accounting for about 13 percent of AIDS deaths worldwide.

The current TB vaccine, known as BCG, is nearly 100 years old and was developed in the early 20th century. One of the most widely used children's vaccines in the world, BCG is largely ineffective against TB in adults, who comprise the majority of TB cases.

A new vaccine is the best hope for controlling TB, because vaccination is the only medical intervention that has eliminated an infectious disease. This was the case with smallpox, and today, global polio vaccinations efforts are bringing closer the day when this human disease will be eliminated.

A better TB vaccine may be in reach within the next decade. At least four candidate vaccines have entered human trials recently, and others are in the development pipeline.

I am pleased that the Aeras Foundation has decided to make its home in the community I represent in the U.S. Congress. The Aeras Foundation was founded in 1997 for the purpose of developing new concepts and tools to control the global TB epidemic. Today, it is the

only non-profit organization in the world working through public-private partnerships with the sole focus of developing new vaccines against TB and ensuring their production and availability to all who need them.

In 2004, the Aeras Foundation received a grant of \$82.9 million from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation for new TB vaccine development. It has also received funding support from the U.S. Center for Disease Control and Prevention and the Government of Denmark.

Dr. Jerald C. Sadoff, president and CEO of the Aeras Foundation, has devoted more than three decades to developing vaccines for dozens of diseases, including malaria and chicken pox, and is one of the world's leading experts in this field. He and his team of researchers and scientists are dedicated to saving the lives of millions of people in some of the poorest places in the world from the scourge of this disease. But TB is not just a disease characteristic of the developing world; there are an estimated 8 cases per 100,000 people in Europe and 5 cases per 100,000 people here in the United States.

This month we will celebrate World Tuberculosis Day, a day to heighten awareness of and rededicate ourselves to the search for a TB vaccine. That goal is closer to reality thanks to the tireless work of the skilled and talented men and women of the Aeras Foundation at their new facility in Rockville, MD. I wish them the greatest success in their important and noble mission.

**TRIBUTE FOR THE EFFORTS OF
OPERATION MISSISSIPPI CHRIST-
MAS**

HON. STENY H. HOYER

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 16, 2006

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, Hurricane Katrina crashed into the heart of the Gulf Coast on the morning of August 29, 2005, forever altering the landscape of New Orleans and the surrounding cities and towns, as well as the lives of those who called the region their home. It has taken the hands and efforts of many Americans of goodwill to help alleviate the hardships faced during this trying time.

Rebuilding the post-Katrina Gulf Coast has not been, and will not be, easy. Yet in the midst of one of the country's greatest natural disasters, countless selfless individuals have worked to create a sense of normalcy for those who lost everything in Hurricane Katrina.

Operation Mississippi Christmas was one such organized effort working out of St. Mary's County, Maryland, in my Congressional District. The members of Operation Mississippi Christmas volunteered their time and efforts in order to give the children of D'Iberville, Mississippi a much-deserved and enjoyable Christmas season. It is a privilege to be able to recognize the faith and determination of these men and women, as well as their dedication to such a worthwhile project.

Members of the St. Mary's Hurricane Relief Fund kicked off their efforts with a gift drive spanning the entirety of St. Mary's County. The generosity of the residents of St. Mary's County was uplifting; all but eight of more than a thousand boxes passed out for adoption of the younger children of D'Iberville were re-

turned with gifts. This feat can only be attributed to the great sense of humanity shared by the residents of St. Mary's.

The original plan for transporting the gifts was to organize a C-130 air transport mission, but this plan was abandoned for lack of certainty of plane availability and impending inclement weather. Undaunted, the volunteers were able to obtain two tractor trailers generously donated by the Bailey family and the defense systems company BAE at the last minute, which allowed them to transfer even more supplies to D'Iberville than the original airlift would have.

The organizers of Operation Mississippi Christmas laid out plans for a December 12 delivery of the goods and stuck to this plan with such tenacity that there was never any doubt of their success. On December 10, the loaded tractor trailers set out for Mississippi, while a team of eight St. Mary's Hurricane Relief volunteers flew commercially to Jackson and then drove the remaining 170 miles to D'Iberville.

The volunteers then presented the gifts to local children during a celebration in the D'Iberville Elementary School gymnasium that included food and a special appearance from Santa. The younger children received the presents donated by St. Mary's County residents and the upper middle and high school students received gift cards.

In addition to gifts for the town's children, the St. Mary's volunteers were also able to donate supplies sorely needed by the city of D'Iberville, including school supplies, first aid kits, computer systems, and medical supplies.

Mr. Speaker, it is wonderful that the efforts of so few were able to bring such joy to so many, and these efforts would not have been possible without the hard work and dedication to public service exhibited by the St. Mary's Hurricane Relief Fund. Today I honor the amazing fortitude of these individuals and would like to thank them for their contribution towards bringing a much-needed sense of hope back to the Gulf Coast.

TRIBUTE TO JIM HINGA

HON. JOHN T. SALAZAR

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 16, 2006

Mr. SALAZAR. Mr. Speaker, I stand before you today to pay tribute to Jim Hinga, a beloved father of three and renowned lawyer, who passed away on March 5. It was a privilege to know Jim and I offer my deepest condolences to his family and friends.

Jim was born and raised in Indiana. He received his B.A. from Notre Dame in 1971 where he was known by many as "Muncie Milkman" of the Notre Dame basketball team. His achievements on the team led to his induction into the Indiana Basketball Hall of Fame as a member of the Silver Anniversary Basketball Team. After earning a law degree from the University of Mississippi, Jim served as a litigator and widely respected mediator in Denver, Colorado for the next 25 years. Jim was often sought out for his talent, intellect, and expertise.

But Jim is remembered first and foremost as a compassionate friend and dedicated family man. He never missed a chance to attend one