

for its exceptional contributions to education in Minnesota.●

EVELETH-GILBERT PUBLIC SCHOOLS, ELEVETH AND GILBERT, MINNESOTA

● Mr. DAYTON. Mr. President, I rise today to honor the Eveleth-Gilbert Public Schools, in Eveleth, MN, and Gilbert, MN, which recently earned an Award for Excellence in Education for its exceptional and innovative achievements in educating children.

The Eveleth-Gilbert Public School District is truly a model of educational success. About 10 years ago, the district initiated an accelerated reader program to teach literacy skills and an appreciation for reading at all grade levels. Originally, this unique reading program was established for the District's 10th-grade students and is now used in grades 2 through 12.

The accelerated reader program takes a fun and exciting approach to promoting reading, both at school and at home. The students read books and take a 10-question, computer-assisted assessment to score their comprehension, earning accelerated reader points for every assessment they pass. The students love to track their own progress, and teachers often involve the class in setting goals for accruing accelerated reader points. Students receive instant feedback and gain increased motivation to read more books. As students test themselves on more books, the accelerated reader system enables close monitoring of general levels or reading performance and other diagnostic information.

The success of the accelerated reader program is reflected in the students' scores on the reading portion of the Minnesota Comprehensive Assessment tests. Over the past 2 years, Franklin Elementary and Nelle Shean Elementary, the district's two elementary schools, and Eveleth-Gilbert Senior High School, earned four- and five-star status from the Minnesota Department of Education for their test scores in reading.

Much of the credit for the success of the Eveleth-Gilbert Public Schools belongs to the superintendent, Mike Lang; the building principals, Deborah Hildie, Jan Mesich, and Lyn Bol; and all the district's dedicated teachers. The students and staff at the Eveleth-Gilbert Public Schools understand that, in order to be successful, a district must go beyond achieving academic success; it must also provide a nurturing environment where students can develop the knowledge, skills, and attitudes for success throughout life. All of the faculty, staff, and students at Eveleth-Gilbert Public Schools should be very proud of their accomplishments.

I congratulate the Eveleth-Gilbert Public Schools in Eveleth and Gilbert for winning the Award for Excellence in Education and for exceptional contributions to education in Minnesota.●

DENFELD HIGH SCHOOL, DULUTH, MINNESOTA

● Mr. DAYTON. Mr. President, I rise today to honor Denfeld High School, in Duluth, MN, which recently earned an Award for Excellence in Education for its exceptional and innovative achievements in educating children.

Denfeld High School is truly a model of educational success. The teachers at Denfeld are noted for their outstanding teaching abilities and their strong emphasis on ethics and individualized instruction. Teachers challenge their students with consistently high expectations and also help students, according to their individual needs, to master difficult subject matter.

A unique part of school life revolves around lunchtime. Once a week, Denfeld students participate in integration learning lunches, to which an integration specialist brings foods from different cultures for students to enjoy while they discuss other cultural traditions and the benefits of a diverse society.

With respect to the arts, Denfeld High School focuses significant attention on its music programs. The school is extremely proud of its classic, acoustically pure auditorium, which accommodates an audience of 1,800. Denfeld's orchestra, band, and choir programs help foster the musical talents of all students.

Much of the credit for Denfeld High School's success belongs to its principal, Ed Crawford, and his dedicated teachers. The students and staff at Denfeld High School understand that, in order to be successful, a school must go beyond achieving academic success; it must also provide a nurturing environment where students can develop the knowledge, skills, and attitudes for success throughout life. All of the faculty, staff, and students at Denfeld High School should be very proud of their accomplishments.

I congratulate Denfeld High School in Duluth for winning the Award for Excellence in Education and for its exceptional contributions to education in Minnesota.●

VIRGINIA PUBLIC SCHOOLS, VIRGINIA, MINNESOTA

● Mr. DAYTON. Mr. President, I rise today to honor the Virginia Public Schools, in Virginia, MN, which recently earned an Award for Excellence in Education for exceptional and innovative achievements in educating children.

The Virginia Public School District is truly a model of educational success. The district has superbly nurtured students' progress in academics and in the performing arts. Its educators are very proud of their students' accomplishments and believe that the school system provides young people with the highest quality of education in a wonderful learning environment.

Nestled in the center of Minnesota's Iron Range, the Virginia Public School

District has endured the ups and downs of a difficult economic climate and declining school enrollments, while continuing to produce extraordinary student successes, academically and artistically.

In 2004-2005, 100 percent of the seniors at Virginia Public Schools passed the Basic Standards Tests in reading, writing, and mathematics. Students at Virginia Secondary School are qualified to enrol in many challenging, upper-level courses, including honors British literature, advanced placement biology, physics, and Spanish 3, honors American literature, accounting, economics, history, and medical careers.

Much of Virginia's success has been attributed to a caring, well-seasoned staff of veteran teachers. Nearly 80 percent of Virginia's faculty have 10 or more years of teaching experience. Moreover, 54 percent of Virginia's teachers hold master's degrees.

In addition to strong academic programs, Virginia is justly proud of its extraordinary music programs. The band, orchestra, and choir students are second to none in the region and well known throughout Minnesota. The orchestra program, which is the only string program remaining on the Iron Range, is one of only a handful existing outside of the Twin Cities metropolitan area.

The Virginia vocal music program has a strong tradition of excellence, reaching back decades. Virginia's A Cappella Choir, the school's premier choir, has consistently won superior ratings at the State music contest.

The Virginia band program is led by the award-winning Virginia Marching Blues, who have traveled across the United States and Canada, winning numerous awards and splendidly representing Virginia and the State of Minnesota. The jazz band and the concert band also consistently win superior ratings at the State music contest, achieving this distinction virtually every year for three decades.

Much of the credit for the Virginia School District's success belongs to its superintendent, Phil Johnson; the dedicated principals, Michael Krebsbach, Willie Spelts, and Craig Konietzko; and all the district's teachers. The students and staff at the Virginia Public Schools understand that, in order to be successful, a school must go beyond achieving academic success; it must also provide a nurturing environment where students can develop the knowledge, skills, and attitudes for a lifetime of success. All of the faculty, staff, and students at the Virginia Public School District should be very proud of their accomplishments.

I congratulate the Virginia Public Schools in Virginia for winning the Award for Excellence in Education and for exceptional contributions to education in Minnesota.●

TRIBUTE TO DR. KENT WYATT

● Mr. COCHRAN. Mr. President, I am pleased to commend Dr. Kent Wyatt of

Cleveland, MS, for his distinguished service as president of Delta Council this year. Delta Council is an economic development organization representing the business, professional, and agricultural leadership of the 18 delta and part-delta counties of Northwest Mississippi. Delta Council was organized in 1935 to focus on the challenges which face the economy and society of the region.

Kent Wyatt distinguished himself as the president of Delta State University from 1975 to 1999, and during his years as the president of this proud, regional university, the school experienced unprecedented growth. Since retirement from Delta State University, Dr. Wyatt has provided careful and responsive civic leadership to the Mississippi Delta region. Through his work with Delta Council, he has been a strong advocate and effective leader in advancing adult literacy, for reversing critical teacher shortages in the primary and secondary school system, in increasing access to improved health care, and for sustaining progress in highway developments which are so important to the delta region.

Dr. Kent Wyatt has been a leader in his community and in the field of higher education. He and his wife Janice have committed their entire life toward improving the quality of life for others in this special delta region of our country.

I congratulate Dr. Kent Wyatt for his contributions to the delta region and for his effective leadership of Delta Council. I look forward to his future contributions.●

RECOGNIZING THE 100TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE CITY OF COALINGA

● Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, I rise to recognize the 100th anniversary of the city of Coalinga, one of the few California cities that was founded as a mining boomtown and survived.

The city originally known as "Coaling" was a sleepy coal mining town until oil was prospected in the region as early as 1865 by Southerners displaced by the Civil War. However, aside from being used to control dust on the roads and as a pitch for roofing, there was limited use for petroleum in those days. Limited uses, coupled with transportation challenges, caused early interest in oil to die down considerably. In 1891, the Southern Pacific Railroad purchased the 160-acre Melville Curtiss homestead and laid out the town site that became Coalinga. Local folklore attributes the desire for better musical effect for the addition of the final "a" and the eventual adoption of the town name, Coalinga. By the time the city was incorporated on April 3, 1906, the interest in oil had risen again.

In 1909, the Silver Tip well broke loose in the greatest gusher recorded in California at that time; spraying 36,000 barrels of oil in a 72-hour period. The emergence of Coalinga as an oil boom-

town caused enough excitement that the Los Angeles Stock Exchange was shut down for a day so that the financiers of California could go witness and experience the boom for themselves. At its peak, the Silver Tip well produced 10,000 barrels of oil a day.

Coalinga's thriving oil fields of that time were to produce personalities and companies that were to become the giants of the industry. R.C. Baker, the founder of Baker Oil Tools, first honed his trade in Coalinga. Republic Oil Field Supply can also trace its beginnings to the city. The formula for world famous A&W root beer was first concocted in downtown Coalinga. Perhaps most famously, Coalinga's oilfield workers fought and won the industry's first 8-hour workday.

On May 2, 1983, a 6.7 magnitude earthquake altered the face of Coalinga. All the brick buildings constructed during the 1900s boom toppled or they had to be demolished. A large slice of the character and charm of Old Coalinga was lost. However, the town's residents demonstrated remarkable unity and determination in putting forth the hard work to make sure that Coalinga continues to grow in spite of the earthquake. Today, the former boomtown with the old brick buildings that was left reeling after the 1983 earthquake is a thriving city that is primed for even greater residential and business growth in the future.

For the past century, the city of Coalinga has served as a testament to the importance of community, optimism, and cooperation. As the residents of Coalinga work together with great pride to make their city a better place to call home, I congratulate them on their centennial anniversary and wish them another 100 years of good fortune and success.●

IN MEMORIAM TO JUDGE DELBERT E. WONG

● Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, I take this opportunity to honor the life of Delbert Wong, the first Chinese-American judge in the continental United States. Judge Wong passed away on March 10, 2006, at the age of 85.

Delbert Wong was born in Hanford, CA, on May 17, 1920, and was raised a short distance away in Bakersfield. After obtaining an associate of arts degree from Bakersfield College, he transferred to the University of California, Berkeley, where he received an undergraduate degree in business.

After he left U.C. Berkeley, Delbert joined the Army Air Corps during World War II and became one of 18 B-17 Flying Fortress navigators that graduated in his class at Mather Field in Sacramento. During his service with the military, he was 1 of only 3 navigators who completed their 30 bombing missions. For his bravery and dedication, 1LT Delbert Wong was awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross, as well as four Air Medals, for his wartime service.

Following the war, Delbert was faced with a tough choice: should he join his family's grocery business or enter law school? He chose law school, and in 1949 became the first Chinese American graduate of Stanford University's School of Law. After his graduation, Delbert continued to break new ground. He was the first Asian American to be appointed Deputy Legislative Counsel serving the California State Legislature, and the first Asian American to be appointed a deputy state attorney general.

During his tenure as a deputy State attorney general, Delbert was appointed by then-Governor Pat Brown to the Los Angeles County Municipal Court bench in 1959, making him the first Chinese American named to the bench in the continental United States. Two years later, Judge Wong was elevated to the superior court, where he served for over 20 years.

Throughout his career, Judge Wong was an exemplary jurist who dedicated his life to public service. Even after he retired from the bench in 1986, he continued to be deeply involved in his community.

Among his many accomplishments, Judge Wong researched and reported on racial issues within the Los Angeles Airport Police Bureau at the request of the Los Angeles Department of Airports; was appointed by then-mayor of Los Angeles Tom Bradley to serve on a panel tasked with drafting an ethics policy for the city of Los Angeles; and was appointed chair of the Asian Pacific American Focus Program of the National Conference of Christians and Jews, to combat the rise in violence against Asian Americans.

Together with his wife Dolores, Judge Wong was also an ardent supporter of the Chinese American community, making significant contributions to the Asian Pacific American Legal Center, the Chinatown Service Center, and the Asian Pacific American Friends of the Center Theater Group.

Judge Wong was a trailblazer for Asian Americans in the field of law. His dedication to justice and equality was evident in everything that he did. His many years of service—for the city of Los Angeles, for the State of California and for the Nation will not be forgotten.

Judge Wong is survived by his wife Dolores; his children Kent, Shelley, Duane, and Marshall; and his three grandchildren. I extend my deepest sympathies to his family.

Whether he was fighting for our country or fighting for integrity and equality under the law, Judge Delbert Wong was undeterred in his efforts to make America a better place to live. He will be missed by all who knew him. We take comfort in knowing that future generations will benefit from his passion and dedication to justice.●

MESSAGES FROM THE HOUSE

At 2:56 p.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by