

He has established a Center for Health & Learning in partnership with Piedmont Healthcare in Atlanta. And with the increasing shortages of pharmacists, nurses, and educators nationwide, Dr. Godsey has worked to ensure that Mercer addresses these critical needs through undergraduate and graduate programs.

In the early 1980s, Middle Georgia's economic engine, Robins Air Force Base, struggled to find enough engineers, endangering its continuing operations. So the base commander turned to Dr. Godsey for a solution. In 1985, Mercer opened the school of engineering on the Macon campus and the Mercer Engineering Research Center in Warner Robins. More than 62 percent of Mercer engineering graduates work in Georgia, and the university is the No. 1 provider of engineers to Robins Air Force Base. The Mercer Engineering Research Center that the university established in Warner Robins has exceeded more than \$189 million in contract revenue in research.

Dr. Godsey happened to be in my office today, and he advised me that he has now secured the full funding for a new engineering building to be located on the Mercer campus in Macon. It is a building we have helped contribute to at the Federal level. He has also gotten State funding. But the overwhelming amount of money needed to construct this facility was contributed by private individuals around our State and around the country.

It has been a privilege to work with Dr. Godsey over the years, and we have worked to secure funding for a program that is vital to Warner Robins Air Logistics Center, the Critical Personnel Development Program. The centerpiece of this educational partnership between Robins and Mercer's Macon campus is to provide a state-of-the-art facility for academic training and laboratory research in support of the Logistics Center's mission requirements. In addition, it will create regional economic development opportunities, and we all know how critical that is. I am pleased, as I said, that Mercer University has now secured this vital funding and is finalizing this project. As this project becomes a true reality, we will all be able to recall Dr. Godsey's hard work on this effort.

There is no question, Kirby Godsey has been a strong advocate for his community. Under his leadership, the Mercer Center for Community Development, which promotes stronger community ties by working to socially and economically revitalize neighborhoods around the school, received the Jimmy and Rosalyn Carter Campus-Community Partnership Award in 2002.

He has served as chairman of New Town Macon since its beginning in 1996 and has worked hard to revitalize the downtown area in Macon, Georgia. Incidentally, my Middle Georgia Senate office is located there, and I can say without question, the revitalization efforts have been incredible. In 2003, Dr.

Godsey was named the Citizen of the Year by the Greater Macon Chamber of Commerce and presented him with its highest honor, the prestigious Meritorious Service Award.

He has also been recognized for influencing the quality of education across the Southeast as a leader with the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools. In 2002, the Council for the Advancement and Support of Education recognized him as the Southeast's CEO of the year. It is also fitting that in 2006, the Georgia Legislature honored him at the State capitol for his many accomplishments during his 27-year presidency.

Kirby Godsey is an inspirational leader whose dedication to Mercer University has enabled great advancements in our community, our State, and our Nation. He is a good friend and a true hero to the State of Georgia. I ask the Members of the Senate to join me in paying tribute to this great Georgian, this great American, and a great friend of this Member of the Senate—Kirby Godsey.

MORNING BUSINESS

TRIBUTE TO FORMER CONGRESSMAN SONNY MONTGOMERY

Mr. HAGEL. Mr. President, I rise this afternoon to pay tribute to a former friend and colleague, one who contributed mightily to this great Nation over many years. Yesterday, in Meridian, MS, the former chairman of the House Veterans' Committee, Congressman Sonny Montgomery, was laid to rest. Two of our colleagues in this body, Senators COCHRAN and LOTT, were in attendance and spoke at Chairman Montgomery's funeral. Senators COCHRAN and LOTT were very close to Congressman Montgomery. They were Members in the House together for many years.

I had the privilege of knowing Sonny Montgomery for over 35 years. He was one of those unique public servants whom all who knew him, liked him, respected him.

He contributed to this country every day. He was a Democrat from Mississippi. He was proud of that fact. He never ran from it. He knew who he was, and he believed in things. But he always brought a sense of purpose, he brought a sense of importance, he brought a sense of bipartisanship, dignity, tolerance, and respect to the body and the institution he served.

At a time in American politics when we are lacking those graces, we look to people such as Sonny Montgomery and recall the impact he had on the Congress of the United States, how he brought people together. He formed a consensus of purpose. There were differences—there should be differences—but he was anchored with the belief first in his country, second in his responsibilities as a Member of Congress, and third in his party. He always rep-

resented his district, his State, and his country with great dignity.

Sonny Montgomery was a World War II veteran and a Korean war veteran. He became an Army National Guard general and served as chairman of the House Committee on Veterans' Affairs for 13 years.

There are many personal stories about Sonny Montgomery. One that is legend in Washington is his close, almost brotherly, relationship with the first President Bush. The first President Bush was elected to Congress on the same day Sonny Montgomery was elected—a Republican from Texas, a Democrat from Mississippi—in 1966. They became very close friends. As a matter of fact, Barbara Bush spoke yesterday at Sonny Montgomery's funeral.

That is but one example of the affection and respect that all who knew Sonny Montgomery had for him. Here is a man who led legislation that increased veterans eligibility for home loans, veterans life insurance, increased medical coverage for veterans, and he was the sponsor of a law that made the Veterans' Administration the 14th Cabinet department of our Government in 1988.

I had the privilege of serving with President Reagan as President Reagan's first Deputy Administrator of the Veterans' Administration, so I worked closely with Sonny Montgomery.

On a personal note, I met my wife Lilibet in 1982 when she was working for Sonny Montgomery. Lilibet is from Meridian, MS. That is where Sonny Montgomery was born 86 years ago. That is how Lilibet got a job on Capitol Hill, and that is how I met her.

It is those kinds of personal stories that are by the hundreds, people who somehow Sonny Montgomery was close to and had some responsibility for connecting. His reach was long, and it is appropriate that not only we recognize him but remember him and thank him, but again, as I said earlier, at a time when our country is divided in a very dangerous way—and that is reflected to a great extent in the Congress of the United States—there are those to whom we can reach back to inspire us to greater heights, to expect more from ourselves, and do more for our country, if we would take the Sonny Montgomery model of service to his country and service to those he had the privilege of leading.

I appreciate very much the opportunity to make these remarks about a dear friend, one we will all miss, especially those who had the opportunity to serve with him in some capacity over his glorious 30 years in the Congress of the United States.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

CELEBRATING THE TENTH ANNIVERSARY OF TOYOTA MOTOR MANUFACTURING, INDIANA

Mr. LUGAR. Mr. President, I am pleased to rise today to celebrate the