

Columbia. He got a contract selling Cessna airplanes, and when he sold the 50,000th plane Cessna manufactured, his fledgling company got a lot of attention in the trade publications. This launched his business to new heights.

From the early days of his business, Jim realized there was a need for support of private airplane owners in Columbia. He had to pay to keep his stock of Cessnas at Owens Field, and he had to transport them to Aiken to be serviced. So in 1964, Jim moved Midlands Aviation onsite at Owens Field. He used a trailer as his office and installed fuel tanks nearby. Later he was able to purchase the building that once housed the South Carolina Aeronautics Commission.

For 44 years, Jim provided fuel, parts and service at Owens Field, a contract that he sold in October 2006. He has also managed the county-owned airport since 1961, and continues to do so earning a salary of \$1 per month. One could say that Owens Field is Jim Hamilton's life. However, there is so much more to Jim Hamilton.

In 1974, he started the Jamil Flying Fezzes, which provides free flights for handicapped or burned children to specialty hospitals. He mentors fourth graders through the Rotary Club, helps the Salvation Army recruit bell ringers at Christmas, and for the last 10 years he has driven ladies in a local retirement home on weekly shopping trips. He has also been a member of the South Carolina Board for Mental Retardation and the Babcock Center Board.

Jim has served 3 4-year terms on the South Carolina Aeronautics Commission, and served as its Chairman twice. He has served 2 terms as President of the South Carolina Aviation Trades Association. He was elected Governor and Key man of the Columbia Hangar "Quiet Birdmen." And he has dedicated much of his spare time to educating young people about the adventures of flying.

Jim has been married to his second wife, Patricia, since 1966, and between them they have 5 children. Jimmie Jr., his oldest son and a talented airplane mechanic, tragically drowned in 2000. Despite the difficulties and tragedies in his personal life, Jim has always put others needs ahead of his own.

Madam Speaker, I ask you to join me today in recognizing the extraordinary contributions of Jim Hamilton. He is an outstanding businessman and community leader, who has overcome many challenges in his life and still put others first. He says that flying taught him honor and dedication, and there are many people today who thank Jim Hamilton for passing those qualities along to them.

TRIBUTE TO THE MEMBERS OF
PREUSS SCHOOL UCSD ROBOTICS
TEAM

HON. SUSAN A. DAVIS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, January 29, 2007

Mrs. DAVIS of California, Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor the members of the Preuss School UCSD robotics team. Team 812, known as the Midnight Mechanics, have competed in the FIRST Robotics Competition—an annual robot design and construction

contest that draws over 20,000 participants from all over the world—for the past 5 years.

For 2 years in a row, Team 812 has won the Regional Chairman's Awards for the Southern California Region. During the 2003–2004 competition, the Midnight Mechanics won the National Engineering Inspiration Award.

But Team 812's accomplishments do not end outside the engineering lab or the construction shop. The team has initiated the FIRST BUDDY program to mentor disadvantaged students in math and science and established the FIRST STEPS program to reach out to inner-city high school students and share with them their zeal for science.

Team 812 has also brought their passion into the classrooms and corridors of 10 other high schools in the San Diego area and has helped them field robotics teams of their own. Together the Midnight Mechanics and these 10 newer teams have formed the Team San Diego FIRST Robotics Coalition, a coordinating organization to build new partnerships in the community and recruit more high schools to field robotics teams.

I am proud to report that through the hard work of the Midnight Mechanics and the Team San Diego FIRST Robotics Coalition, the City of San Diego will be hosting its inaugural FIRST Regional Competition this coming March.

At a time when our country's young people are falling farther and farther behind those of other industrialized nations in math and science, I want to commend the members of Team 812, for their dedication to their craft, for their excellence in their efforts, and for their ability to instill a love of science in fellow young people. Not only are the Midnight Mechanics first-rate competitors, they are also true servants of the community. We need more role models like these to inspire our younger children.

Finally, I want to recognize Paul Tran, the dedicated young man who first brought Team 812 to my attention. Paul wrote the following to me in a letter:

We need your help to assist us in instituting FIRST Robotics in every high school in San Diego, in California, and essentially, the United States . . . We need your help to bring FIRST to the attention of the U.S. House of Representatives and Senate.

Madam Speaker, dear colleagues, I hope you will help me fulfill Paul's request and spread the word about this wonderful program to all corners of our country.

MOROCCO: A MODEL OF MUSLIM-
JEWISH TIES

HON. GARY L. ACKERMAN

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, January 29, 2007

Mr. ACKERMAN. Madam Speaker, I respectfully request that Serge Berdugo's recent op-ed, "Morocco: A Model of Muslim-Jewish Ties", as published in the January 9 issue of The Christian Science Monitor, be entered into the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD. Mr. Berdugo, the president of Morocco's Jewish Community Council, outlines the history of Muslim-Jewish relations in Morocco, where Jews and Muslims have peacefully lived as neighbors for hun-

dreds of years. I commend this work to all who want a lasting peace between Jews and Muslims across the world, and everyone who wishes to see the State of Israel and its neighbors coexisting harmoniously.

CASABLANCA, MOROCCO.—As the flames of anti-Semitism continue to be fanned across much of the Islamic world, there is a risk that today's youth will grow up believing that Arabs and Jews were simply not meant to coexist, let alone thrive together.

That idea conflicts with history—and is a falsehood today. My country, Morocco, illustrates the viability and vitality of a Jewish community—my community—in an Arab country. It's a model of harmony other Muslim nations should follow.

The Jewish people have been a presence in Africa's Maghreb region for more than 2,000 years. North African Jews and Muslims traveled north and thrived together in southern Europe for more than 700 years. In 1492, when we refused to convert to Christianity, we were expelled—together—from Spain. And together we successfully sought refuge in Morocco, which accepted us into its society and institutions.

Morocco's leaders have always made the well-being of the Jewish people a top priority. During World War II, when the Vichy government of occupied France announced that it had prepared 200,000 yellow stars for the Jews of Morocco, King Mohammed V replied that he would need 50 more for him and his family. He refused to make any distinction between his citizens.

The importance of a nation's leader setting the tone for recognition, respect, and treatment of minority faiths cannot be overstated. Today, King Mohammed VI has declared his religious, historical, and constitutional obligation to protect the rights, liberties, and sacred values of the Jews in Morocco.

This commitment dramatically affected Morocco's reaction at moments of great challenge. After May 16, 2003—the Moroccan 9/11, when five terrorist bombs exploded, three directed at Jewish targets—King Mohammed VI expressed condolences at a Jewish Center, condemning the criminal acts and reaffirming his determination to protect Jews and all Moroccan citizens.

In doing so, he defined the attack as one upon all Moroccan society, awakening the national conscience and strengthening the bonds between us. Moroccans of all faiths responded with candlelight vigils at bombing sites and demonstrations attended by nearly 1 million participants.

Many Moroccan Jews have emigrated to Israel and elsewhere, but the attachments to our homeland are unique. "Morocco never loses a Jewish citizen—we gain an ambassador," Mohammed VI's predecessor, King Hassan II, once said. Today, there are 1 million such "ambassadors" all over the world and 600,000 in Israel alone.

We Jews who call Morocco home have a vibrant community that includes 30 functioning synagogues and three school networks, which many influential Muslim families choose for their own children. Moroccan Jews serve as counselors to the king, ministers, colonels, members of parliament, judges, and ambassadors. On Jewish holy days, Muslim authorities, out of respect, attend our services.

With help from the Moroccan government, we started a foundation to preserve Jewish historical sites. And we support research on our community—including 30 doctoral dissertations presently under way by Muslim candidates.

Are we an isolated society? Hardly: Moroccans young and old have access to as wide an array of media and ideological diversity as