

RECOGNIZING JOHNNY'S
SELECTED SEEDS

• Ms. SNOWE. Mr. President, today I recognize an extraordinary business from my home State of Maine, Johnny's Selected Seeds. A mail-order seed producer and seller from Kennebec County, Johnny's Selected Seeds recently garnered the U.S. Small Business Administration's Entrepreneurial Success Award. But what is most gratifying about the recognition for Johnny's is that the company won the award on the district, regional, and national levels.

Chairman Rob Johnston, Jr. founded Johnny's Selected Seeds in 1973 at the age of 22. With only \$500 in his savings account, but with a deep appreciation for and knowledge of agriculture, Mr. Johnston began his venture in the attic of a farmhouse before finally settling in Albion, ME, in 1975. As Johnny's grew, so did demand for its product, largely due to the firm's easy-to-use and straightforward catalog with detailed descriptions of available seeds and handy growing information, as well as the company's production of various vintage heirloom seeds. Johnny's moved its headquarters to Winslow, ME in 2002 and later opened a catalog store in the same town. The employee-owned company continues to maintain its property in Albion as a working farm and research facility while offering seed enthusiasts and curious visitors self-guided farm tours throughout the summer months.

Johnny's employees take seriously their pledge to provide their customers with tools, seeds, plants, and supplies of the utmost quality. The company's minimum germination standards are well above those required by law, and Johnny's goes to great lengths to ensure that commercial varieties are free of certain viruses and diseases. Johnny's also offers various organic seeds, and since 1999, has adhered to the principles of the Safe Seed Pledge, signaling that the company does not "... knowingly buy or sell genetically engineered seeds or plants." Additionally, in an effort to stay on the cutting edge, Johnny's takes great pride in the research it does to maintain its innovative reputation. In particular, the firm focuses on developing new seed varieties, as well as leading the way in quality control.

Johnny's Selected Seeds has truly made a name for itself through its outstanding achievements and reliable service. But the company has also maintained a loyal customer base because of the basics. Johnny's vends a wide array of seeds, tools, and supplies to both home gardeners and small commercial growers. Offering a vast selection of vegetable seeds, from artichokes to watermelons, Johnny's also sells fruit seeds, herb seeds, and an impressive collection of flower seeds. Continually updating its stock, Johnny's adds new seeds to its list each year, and 2008 is no exception. Some of the dozens of new products available range

from colorful spring flowers to different corns, cantaloupes, and greens. And for convenience, home growers can order a small packet of 25 seeds, and larger growers can often request up to 10,000 or 25,000 seeds, depending on the product.

A truly entrepreneurial business, Johnny's Selected Seeds constantly seeks new ways to grow, improve, and impress. It has, without a doubt, earned its latest accolades handily. To succeed as superlatively as Johnny's does speaks volumes about the resolve and passion of Mr. Johnston, but it is also a testament to the hard work and dedication of the company's over 80 full-time and 50 seasonal employees. I congratulate Johnny's Selected Seeds for earning the U.S. Small Business Administration's Entrepreneurial Success Award at all levels and for the example it sets for small businesses everywhere.●

TRIBUTE TO DR. SHEA PENLAND

• Mr. VITTER. Mr. President, I wish to acknowledge Dr. Shea Penland, one of the leading experts on coastal restoration, for his dedicated service to Louisiana. I would like to take some time to make a few remarks on his accomplishments.

Dr. Penland passed away suddenly at the age of 54 on Tuesday, March 25, 2008. He was a respected professor in the Department of Earth and Environmental Sciences at the University of New Orleans and the director of the Pontchartrain Institute of Environmental Science. His investigations included the coastal regions of the Gulf of Mexico, Alaska, the Great Lakes, the U.S. Atlantic and Pacific coasts, and the North Sea. Dr. Penland had been an advocate for coastal protection and restoration in Louisiana and spoke passionately about how coastal wetlands and barrier islands functioned as natural storm surge barriers during hurricanes and tropical storms.

Several years ago I sponsored and passed a bill to bring together a number of individuals and entities to coordinate efforts to clean up Lake Pontchartrain and promote the restoration of the Lake Pontchartrain Basin. Dr. Penland took a leadership role in this effort by helping to bring the university community together to prioritize and coordinate their research activities. The program has been very successful over the last several years, and Dr. Penland deserves a great deal of credit for helping to achieve that success.

Dr. Penland's passing is a great loss to the State of Louisiana, and Wendy and I send our thoughts and prayers out to his family, friends, and coworkers. I am positive that Dr. Penland's work will continue to benefit Louisiana and coastal regions throughout the United States for years to come.

Thus, today, I am proud to honor a fellow Louisianan, Dr. Shea Penland, and thank him for his dedicated and

tireless service to our State and country.●

RETIREMENT OF BRIGADIER
GENERAL ROBERT CREAR

• Mr. VITTER. Mr. President, I wish to acknowledge the retirement of BG Robert Crear from his distinguished career in the Army Corps of Engineers. I would like to take some time to make a few remarks on his accomplishments and contributions to Louisiana and the United States.

In 1975 he graduated from Jackson State University, where he received a bachelor's degree in mathematics and a Regular Army commission as a second lieutenant in the Corps of Engineers. He holds a master's degree in national resource strategy from the Industrial College of the Armed Forces and has held various other command and staff positions in the United States and overseas, including Commander for the Corps' Southwest Division and Chief of Staff for the U.S. Corps' Headquarters here in Washington, DC. During Operations Enduring Freedom and Iraqi Freedom, General Crear served as commander, Task Force Restore Iraqi Oil, which safely and effectively helped to ensure the economic recovery of Iraq.

In June of 2004, General Crear assumed command of the Mississippi Valley Division. As MVD commander, he is responsible for a \$1 billion civil works program. He also played a vital role in managing the Corps' water resources program in the Mississippi River Valley. As a member of the Environment and Public Works Committee, which has jurisdiction over the Mississippi River Commission, I helped approve General Crear's nomination as President and Commissioner of MRC. After the devastation of Hurricane Katrina, General Crear created Task Force Hope, a program dedicated to the restoration and rebuilding efforts in New Orleans and southeast Louisiana. It is among the largest disaster recovery operations in the history of the Corps of Engineers.

I am honored to have worked closely with General Crear. His devotion to the rebuilding and recovery efforts of the gulf coast region is a testament to his leadership and commitment. Louisiana and the gulf coast are forever grateful for his dedication and tireless effort.

Again, I would like to congratulate him on his retirement and exemplary service to our state and the country. I hope he enjoys his well deserved retirement and wish him well in all his future endeavors.●

BRINGING TEAM USA SUCCESS

• Mr. VITTER. Mr. President, I wish to acknowledge Tara Bounds and Phyllis Mitchell, a mother-daughter team that fought adversity and brought home a Gold and Bronze Medal from the 2007 World Games Special Olympics in Shanghai, China. I would like to take a few moments to discuss their tireless efforts to bring Team USA success.