

and, except for some vaccines, few treatments for viral infections exist to date.

With regard to infectious diseases, a major goal of the IIDC is to discover, characterize and validate novel virulence factors and toxins from infectious agents, working closely with our bioinformatics group who annotate (attempt to assign function based on the DNA sequence) the rapidly expanding number of pathogen genome sequences. These combined studies facilitate the discovery of novel but conserved pathways that may be validated as targets for broad-spectrum antibiotics. Complementary strategies will be developed to produce drug-like compounds for further development, including High-Throughput Screening (HTS), 'in silico' screening, and the development and application of NMR-based fragment approaches (the Institute hosts "The San Diego Chemical Library Screening Center", one of 5 such centers nationwide). The IIDC will continue its well-funded studies of the most likely agents of bioterrorism, including anthrax (*Bacillus anthracis*), smallpox (*Variola virus*), and plague (*Yersinia pestis*); but it will also expand its focus to the study of emerging diseases such as SARS, West Nile and Dengue Viruses, as well as preparing countermeasures to treat a possible influenza pandemic—should avian flu strain H5N1 gain the ability to transmit directly from person to person.

A major new focus of the IIDC will be to understand and exploit host responses to infection. Human cells provide the never-ending backdrop in a contest between host-defense molecules and pathogen virulence factors that seek to subvert the host's innate and adaptive immune responses. Identifying the players and mechanisms of the natural host responses, many of which are common to a broad range of infections, may provide novel (host-targeted) leads for broad-spectrum therapeutics, the exciting possibility of naturally boosting innate immunity, as well as the discovery of novel adjuvants for vaccine design. Vaccine technology has developed little in the past 50 years. A high priority will therefore be the development of novel vaccine methodologies which employ robust single-chain antigen-adjuvant combinations that facilitate rapid production and modification in the face of engineered or mutant pathogens.

The IIDC is well positioned in that it already has much of the infrastructure in place to generate novel therapeutic leads; shortly, with the opening of our new facility in Orlando, FL we will have the additional capability of developing these leads through medicinal chemistry and pharmacology to phase I trials, the latter in collaboration with our clinical partners in Florida.

Additional funding made possible through this process to the IIDC will enable the expansion of our Center into a number of critical areas. Priorities include recruitment of new faculty members and their programs working in the fields of innate immunity, microbiology, and medicinal chemistry. Recruitment into these currently underrepresented areas within our Center will complement our existing expertise and further expedite the development of novel therapeutics.

Leveraged Funds—Based on the Burnham Institute for Medical Research's past successful record of leveraging seed funds, we estimate that \$3 million for additional scientists through this request will result in \$30 million in

additional grant funding for the next 10 years at the BIMR.

Current/Future/Matching Funding—Private philanthropy for the San Diego, CA area has contributed to the current research work ongoing at Burnham's IIDC. Since BIMR scientists started focusing on the important area of research, the IIDC has secured nearly \$40,000,000 in competitive federal grants from a number of sources including the DoD and the NIAID. BIMR researchers and their research are very well respected throughout these federal agencies. Researchers in the IIDC will continue to seek federal grants through the traditional competitive process this year through funding opportunities available from the DoD and the NIAID.

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PAYING TRIBUTE TO CONGRESSIONAL MEDAL OF MERIT STUDENTS

**HON. MIKE ROGERS**

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, May 22, 2008*

Mr. ROGERS of Michigan. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor the accomplishments of 39 distinguished high school students from Michigan's Eighth District. I was proud to award the Congressional Medal of Merit to these students during a ceremony at Michigan's State Capitol on May 9, 2008.

These graduating seniors were nominated by their schools for the prestigious Congressional Medal of Merit. To be nominated, each student demonstrated exemplary citizenship and academic excellence throughout their high school careers.

These young men and women have demonstrated an outstanding sense of service to their peers, education and community. Honoring their achievements with the Congressional Medal of Merit is a privilege and I congratulate each of them along with their parents, family, teachers and community. Together, this group of students represents the best and brightest America has to offer: Amber Barber, Tyler Bengel, Kristin Boozer, Michael Brendel, Sarah Bush, Chris Case, Kaitlyn Charette, Christina Clarke, Bethany Davis, Nathan Feldpausch, Preston Frazier, Mariah Frey, Brittney Fuller, Kristy Gould, Effrem Grettenberger, Carolyn Hamilton, Robert Hindy, Jessica Holberg, Priya Karve, Jason Klepal, Kristin Kotarba, Audrey Kramer, Kiley Kyser, Kavina Marshall, Alexandra McGregor, Victoria Miller, Christine Norton, Guillermo Peralta, Ariana Pierce, Jacob Price, McKenzie Rowley, Thomas Sanday, Eric Stants, Marco Tori, Jacquelyn Verley, Christie Wilkins, Brennan Woell, Lo-Hua Yuan, Mitchell Zajac.

Therefore, Madam Speaker, I ask our colleagues to join me in honoring these exceptional students. May they know that this Nation is greatly appreciative of their service and dedication, and wishes them the best in all their future endeavors.

HONORING CONGRESSIONAL CERTIFICATE OF MERIT RECIPIENT SYDNEY MOORE

**HON. JOHN R. CARTER**

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, May 22, 2008*

Mr. CARTER. Madam Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to recognize the successes and achievements of Sydney Moore, who has received the Congressional Certificate of Merit award at Westwood High School in Austin, Texas. Sydney has shown exceptional leadership qualities through her involvement in numerous activities which makes her a great candidate for this award.

Sydney is a wholesome, bright, and energetic young woman. She has shown strong leadership abilities at home, in clubs, and in sports. She has earned the trust of her peers by being elected to a variety of positions on and off of the field, including Student Council and Miracle League.

I congratulate Sydney Moore for her achievements in school and in her community and am proud to represent such talented and dedicated people in the 31st District of Texas.

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HEROES EARNINGS ASSISTANCE AND RELIEF TAX ACT OF 2008

SPEECH OF

**HON. BETTY McCOLLUM**

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, May 20, 2008*

Ms. McCOLLUM of Minnesota. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of H.R. 6081, the Heroes Earnings Assistance and Relief Tax (HEART) Act and to commend Speaker PELOSI and Chairman RANGEL for their perseverance in getting this important bill to the President's desk.

H.R. 6081 includes vital tax provisions that help military families facing significant financial hardships due to extended deployments. According to a Department of Defense survey, 55 percent of married National Guardsmen and Reservists suffer a loss of income when they are called to active duty. The Heart Act helps to fix this problem by providing a tax credit of up to \$4,000 for small businesses that continue to pay National Guard and Reserve employees when they are called to serve.

This important bill makes permanent several IRS provisions that relieve economic hardships as a result of military service including the Earned Income Tax Credit for families of soldiers in combat. H.R. 6081 also allows more military families to be eligible for the economic stimulus rebates and makes it easier for veterans to become homeowners through low-interest loans.

The Heart Act is fully offset and will not increase our national debt. It pays for these tax breaks by closing an offshore loophole that allows government contractors, who receive millions or billions in taxpayers' dollars, to set up companies in foreign countries to avoid paying Social Security and Medicare taxes. For example, defense contractor KBR, has reportedly avoided paying over \$100 million in Social Security and Medicare taxes by creating

shell companies in the Cayman Islands. H.R. 6081 also stops tax benefits for Americans who renounce their citizenship in order to avoid paying U.S. taxes.

The men and women of the armed forces who serve this country with honor during times of war should be assured that their families will not suffer financially from being deployed. I urge my colleagues to support this important bill.

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HONORING THE LIFE OF ELAINE  
BUNDESEN

**HON. LYNN C. WOOLSEY**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, May 22, 2008*

Ms. WOOLSEY. Madam Speaker, it is with great sadness that I rise today to recognize the passing of one of our notable local residents and a good friend, Elaine Bundesen. Elaine died last month at the age of 85 of complications from Parkinson's disease.

Originally from Washington State, Elaine grew up in Seattle and attended the University of Washington. After she graduated in 1945 with a degree in English, she headed for San Francisco, where she met and married Jim Bloom, a Navy pilot from my hometown of Petaluma.

After the war—World War II—Elaine lived in Guam with her husband as one of the first Navy dependents to be stationed there. Later, the couple moved to Petaluma, where Elaine was introduced to small-town life. Petaluma being the egg capital of the Nation, Elaine eventually got a job at Bundesen Bros. Hatchery, where she met her second husband, Paul Bundesen. Sadly, their life together ended when Paul was killed in a plane crash in 1967.

Elaine returned to school, and in 1974 received her master's degree in counseling at Sonoma State University in Rohnert Park. She worked for more than 25 years in the university's office of admissions and records. During this time, she helped form the public lecture series "Pandora's Box" with a small group of women whose activities started the women's studies program at Sonoma State.

Elaine is survived by her three stepchildren, Margaret, David and Laura, and many nieces and nephews.

Madam Speaker, Elaine was a wonderful woman and a good friend who influenced many lives. She was a mentor to me and will be greatly missed.

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TRIBUTE TO AZERBAIJANIS

**HON. EDOLPHUS TOWNS**

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, May 22, 2008*

Mr. TOWNS. Madam Speaker, I rise as a member of the House Azerbaijan Caucus, to honor Azerbaijanis around the world, as they prepare to celebrate Republic Day on May 28. Republic Day commemorates Azerbaijan's declaration of its independence from the Russian Empire in 1918, becoming the first democratic secular republic in the Eastern hemisphere. Despite its short existence, 1918–

1920, the Democratic Republic of Azerbaijan had achieved considerable success in state building and creation of educational foundations for future generations. The Democratic Republic of Azerbaijan granted suffrage to women shortly after its creation, ahead of most Western democracies.

Despite all of its successes, the Democratic Republic of Azerbaijan was not in a position to withstand the occupational forces of the then newly formed Soviet Russia. Consequently, Azerbaijan had temporarily lost its independence in 1920 and later was included into the U.S.S.R.

In 1990, Azerbaijan regained its independence from the U.S.S.R., ending 70 years of Soviet rule. Meantime, Azerbaijanis will never forget the tragic events of January 1990, forever known to all Azerbaijanis as Black January, as the Soviet army crushed peaceful demonstrations in the streets of the capital Baku. On August 30, 1991, Azerbaijan's Parliament adopted the Declaration on the Restoration of Independence of the Republic of Azerbaijan, and on October 18, 1991, the independence was approved by the Constitution.

Since its independence, the Republic of Azerbaijan has been an invaluable ally and is among the first nations, who offered unconditional support to the United States in the War Against Terror, providing its airspace and the use of its airports for Operation Enduring Freedom in Afghanistan. Today, Azerbaijani troops continue to serve with distinction in Afghanistan and in Iraq.

Azerbaijan is also a founding member of GUAM—Organization for Democracy and Economic Development, which includes Georgia, Ukraine, Azerbaijan and Moldova. Azerbaijan is a leading nation in regional economic cooperation through development of various international projects. Azerbaijan is also one of the key players in European energy security matters.

Madam Speaker and dear colleagues, please join me in thanking the people of Azerbaijan for their sincere friendship towards our country, and congratulate Azerbaijanis around the world on the 90th anniversary of Republic Day.

I also would like to thank and congratulate my Azerbaijani-American constituents, lead by Naimi and Naila Amiraliyev, for their tireless efforts in developing and strengthening the friendship and understanding between our nations.

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ASIAN PACIFIC AMERICAN  
HERITAGE MONTH

SPEECH OF

**HON. JOHN B. LARSON**

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, May 19, 2008*

Mr. LARSON of Connecticut. Mr. Speaker, yesterday the House passed H. Res. 1153—Celebrating Asian Pacific American Heritage Month. I honor this important month of May which marks the 30th anniversary of the passage of a joint Congressional Resolution designating the first 10 days in May to celebrate Asian American Heritage. Congress later voted to expand the commemoration to a month-long celebration to truly honor the im-

pact that Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders have in this great Nation.

Let us join the rest of the country in celebrating this year's theme of "Building Today for Tomorrow." As legislators we must constantly remember that the decisions we make now greatly impact our future. That is why I am proud to say this Democratic Congress has passed legislation to raise the minimum wage, to make college more affordable, to fund nutrition programs, to protect families facing foreclosure, and to lower prices at the pump. We will continue to fight for the needs of Asian American and Pacific Islander communities by creating legislation to address this country's growing economic and energy needs.

Mr. Speaker, this year during Asian Pacific American Heritage Month, I urge my colleagues to recognize beyond the month of May the continued struggles that Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders face—the health disparities, language barriers, stereotypes, and discrimination they attempt to overcome on a daily basis. I urge us to remember their unyielding contributions to our Nation and honor those who have sacrificed their lives and families to bravely fight for our country. Above all, I urge us to work together to make choices that will move our Nation forward to a better tomorrow.

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SUPPORT FOR NATIONAL DRUG  
COURT MONTH

**HON. C.A. DUTCH RUPPERSBERGER**

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, May 22, 2008*

Mr. RUPPERSBERGER. Madam Speaker, I rise today in support and recognition of May as National Drug Court Month.

Since the first drug court was created in 1989 drug courts have been a legitimate alternative to incarceration for nonviolent, drug-addicted offenders.

By combining judicial supervision, comprehensive substance abuse and mental health treatment, random and frequent drug testing, incentives and sanctions, clinical case management and life skills services drug courts provide substance abusing offenders with the much-needed chance at long-term recovery and productive lifestyles.

My home State of Maryland is a leader in the drug court movement. The Drug Treatment Court Commission was established in 2003 by Chief Judge Robert M. Bell of the Maryland Court of Appeals. The Commission has supported the development of 40 drug courts throughout the State so that Maryland can effectively respond to the thousands of individuals arrested in Maryland who are dependent on drugs and/or alcohol.

Drug courts work. According to an April 2008 evaluation of the Harford County District Court Adult Drug Court program participants were significantly less likely to be re-arrested than offenders who were eligible for the program but did not participate. In Harford County and throughout the State drug courts are making a difference. During May, National Drug Court Month, I am proud to share that 30 graduations are being held across the State.

Drug courts play an important role in breaking the cycle of addiction and crime and will