

21 percent. In addition, he established a Web/call-in center which handled 21,412 beneficiary requests for 47,213 prescription conversions as of November 2008, which amounts to an estimated cost avoidance of \$3.2 million to date. Major General Granger also oversaw the establishment of the voluntary agreement for retail rebates, which has resulted in a pharmaceutical industry rebate of \$28 million since the beginning of 2007. Further, he established electronic claims processing which has already saved \$1.6 million in administrative fees in addition to \$105 million in overhead savings.

A native of West Memphis, AR, MG Elder Granger has played an active role in veterans' medical services since the beginning of his career. He represents the great progress that has and will continue to occur within the military health system. He is a mentor to his staff, a leader in his field, and a soldier ready for any mission.

I am honored to recognize his service.●

TRIBUTE TO HAROLD "BUDDY" BROWN

● Ms. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, today the people of Interior Alaska—our Native people and the entire Fairbanks community—mourn the loss of one of the most promising Native leaders of this generation.

Harold "Buddy" Brown died yesterday of cancer at the age of 39. Buddy is survived by his wife Patti and two children, Xavier, age 7, and Alana, age 3.

Throughout Indian Country we are witnessing the generational shift in leadership to young people who have mastered the challenge of living in two worlds. They have completed college, gone on to obtain graduate and professional degrees, and returned to serve their people. One foot in the traditional world of their Native communities, the other in the modern worlds of business, finance, management and law.

Within the Alaska Native community, Buddy Brown stood at the vanguard of this generational shift. After graduating from the University of New Mexico Law School in 1997, he immediately went to work for the Tanana Chiefs Conference, the consortium of 42 tribes in Interior Alaska. He was hired on as associate counsel.

Five years later, Buddy was elected President of the Tanana Chiefs Conference. In this role he led a region which encompasses about 235,000 square miles, an area equal to about 37 percent of the State of Alaska and just slightly smaller than the state of Texas. In 2006, Buddy retired from this position to heal and to spend time with his family.

The Tanana Chiefs region is known throughout the State of Alaska for producing leaders of statewide and national repute—Bridge builders who have a particular talent for engaging the broader community to support the

causes and concerns of our Native people.

The late Morris Thompson, who tragically died in the 2000 crash of Alaska Airlines Flight 261, is the best known Native leader to come from this region, beloved throughout the State for his talent in building bridges.

Morris Thompson was Buddy Brown's mentor and friend, and I am told that he expected Buddy Brown would grow to become a leader whose accomplishments would exceed Morris's own. Buddy was widely regarded in Alaska as the best and brightest of this new generation. He reached great heights in a few short years, but I am saddened that Alaska will never realize the true potential of this truly extraordinary individual.

There is little I can say to console our grieving community today but I do have a few words for Xavier and Alana and the Native youth of Interior Alaska. Buddy Brown appreciated that youth is no impediment to leadership, that the energy and new ideas of the youth are desperately needed to keep our Native institutions thriving. Buddy devoted his life to preparing to undertake this leadership role.

Take inspiration from Buddy's life and become the leader that each of you has the potential to be. I want to help you to achieve this goal for yourself, for your people, and for all of Alaska.●

REMEMBERING MORRIS O'QUIN

● Mr. PRYOR. Mr. President, today I honor the life and work of Morris O'Quin of Harrison, AR. Morris passed away unexpectedly on April 19, 2009, due to a sudden respiratory illness. I know the thoughts of many Arkansans and others around the country are with the O'Quin family, especially his wife of 21 years, Dana, and their children, Marrick and Morgan.

Morris devoted his life to public service and Arkansas agriculture. He most recently served as a Farm Service Agency—FSA—county director in Boone County, AR. In this capacity, he also served as a national board member for the National Association of Farm Service Agency State and County Office Employees—NASCOE—where he advocated on behalf of other employees and volunteers who served similar roles as public servants in the agricultural sector in Arkansas and throughout the country. He has been a lifelong advocate for agriculture.

Since coming to the Senate in 2003, I have had the benefit of getting to know Morris well during his frequent trips to Washington to meet with other leaders of the Farm Service Agency, advancing the mission and purpose of the Agency. He was an ambassador for the State of Arkansas and a tireless advocate for the FSA, its mission, and its employees. He understood Arkansas agriculture and the importance of the Agency in supporting continued production of agricultural products. His duty to the Farm Service Agency and

the promotion of its mission were his passions.

I vividly remember working closely with Morris in 2005 to ensure that the Department of Agriculture did not irresponsibly move to reduce the essential services that the Farm Service Agency provides to farmers and ranchers through the county office structure. He explained to me that the county offices provide essential services to the farmer through face-to-face interactions and that shutting down multiple county offices without making needed technology upgrades and providing technical assistance for this transition would cause significant harm to our nation's farmers and ranchers.

His advocacy for FSA workers and the farm community in Arkansas along with his leadership within NASCOE helped me pass a critical amendment to 2006 Agriculture appropriations bill to prevent FSA county office closures and further consolidations. This amendment prevented the administration from closing over 700 county offices nationwide and ensured that the critical services provided by these offices would continue until the USDA developed technology upgrades needed to make such a transition, and until the USDA clearly explained the needs and benefits for making such drastic reforms. This was a tremendous accomplishment that would not have been possible without Morris's focus and leadership.

Morris understood that without the hard work and sacrifice of local FSA employees, many family farms would not have the resources necessary to make a living and provide America a safe and affordable food supply that we all too often take for granted. This understanding was behind his drive to convince me and other lawmakers of the importance of stopping the USDA initiative to diminish the role of FSA offices and employees.

Morris's most recent accomplishment revealed his care for the community. After the devastating Arkansas ice storms that hit in January of this year, Morris spent hours working to deliver essential FSA services to neighbors, farmers, and ranchers in Boone County and other parts of northern Arkansas. The 2009 ice storm caused extreme damage to northern Arkansas, and Morris stepped up to provide much needed assistance. Under much pressure, he was doing a tremendous job of providing Environmental Conservation Program funds to help get impacted farmers back on their feet and producing again. This is just one other example of his exemplary work in his capacity as a public servant.

While I will remember Morris for his work as a county director and a NASCOE advocate, I will remember him most for his kind and calm demeanor, his concern for the well-being of those around him, his tireless work on behalf of those who depended on him, and his character and integrity in all of his endeavors. He was a relatively quiet person, not a personality