

The Colorado GEAR UP model focuses on college and career exploration, exposure, and experience. Students participate in monthly college knowledge workshops. They visit college campuses. They learn about different kinds of degrees and different kinds of financial aid that might be available to them. Juniors and seniors use the GEAR UP online college portfolio as a navigation tool to help them with their college selection process, the admissions process, and financial aid. In 2008 and 2009, more than 80 percent of Colorado GEAR UP students understood the financial aid options, compared to 30 percent of their peers.

Colorado GEAR UP has partnered with community colleges and 4-year institutions to offer concurrent enrollment courses as early as the second semester of their sophomore year in high school. This allows students to take courses for actual college credit while they're still in high school. Not only are Colorado GEAR UP students taking advantage of college coursework, they're succeeding. This past fall, 80 percent in the GEAR UP junior cohort completed at least one college course, and 77 percent received at least a C or better in a college course while they were in high school.

As a result of their participation, Colorado GEAR UP students will enter college with a significant amount of college credit, and some may even earn an associate's degree. As students go onto college campuses, GEAR UP partners with the institutions to continue to track progress and make sure that the students have the support services they need to succeed at college.

I want to share with you what some students say about Colorado GEAR UP. "GEAR UP is an opportunity to achieve an education. It just makes a person realize about the real world. GEAR UP is there to make it a little easier," said a tenth-grader from Pueblo East High School. A tenth-grader from North Ridge High School said, "GEAR UP means opportunity to me. It means a chance to go to college and succeed in my life."

Moving forward, Colorado GEAR UP plans to expand to serve even more students across Colorado. This program's performance clearly demonstrates that students can be successful in early college initiatives, can succeed at a 4-year university, given the proper guidance and support and opportunities. Early college experience can even save money by preventing students from dropping out of high school. That's why I applaud Colorado GEAR UP as a national model for innovation and effectiveness in expanding college access for low-income students and first-generation college goers, and I strongly support its continued expansion and success.

#### CONGRATULATING EVAN LYSACEK

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentle-

woman from Illinois (Mrs. BIGGERT) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mrs. BIGGERT. Madam Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Evan Lysacek, the 2009 Men's World Figure Skating Champion and the 2010 Olympic gold medalist. What a feat. Evan started figure skating as a young boy in Naperville, Illinois, a town located in my district. He attended Neuqua Valley High School, where he was on the honor roll and earned many other academic achievement awards while still maintaining a very intense training schedule for figure skating. His discipline and focus certainly paid off. Evan won several titles and championships at the junior level before making his senior international debut at the age of 19. Evan has competed and medaled in several United States Figuring Skating Championships, World Figure Skating Championships, and the 2006 Winter Olympics before his thrilling gold medal win at the 2010 Winter Olympics in Vancouver. But he is more than an accomplished figure skater. Word has it that Evan finds time in his grueling schedule to support a variety of charities, including the Ronald McDonald House Charities, the Make-a-Wish Foundation, and the Special Olympics.

I am proud to say that Evan Lysacek and his family call the 13th District of Illinois their home, and I would like to extend to him my congratulations and wish him the best as he takes on his next challenge—"Dancing with the Stars"—which premiered this week.

#### RESPECT THE INSTITUTION

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON LEE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. JACKSON LEE from Texas. It's always a historic pleasure to be able to sign legislation that can change millions of lives. It is a rare opportunity for Members of Congress, no matter how long they may serve, to be able to serve the people and then to be able to grant the people privileges that they would not have had but for the acts of this Congress. So I stand here today very proud of the fact that just a few hours ago, the President of the United States, the Vice President of the United States, the Democratic leadership and Members, signed legislation that would provide opportunities for 32 million Americans. Polling over the last 24 hours have characterized Americans as enthusiastic, uplifted, and happy. Quite contrary to some of the unfortunate drama that played out over the last 3 or 4 days as we were debating on the floor of the House.

Today, in Roll Call, a local Hill paper, the headline reads, "House decorum is fraying." It cites a comment about House Democratic leaders may have lost control of this body. I beg to differ with them. They are wrong. This institution is sacred and the House Democratic leadership maintains that

sacredness. But, tragically, those who differed with us took to tactics that I believe calls for an apology by the Republican leadership—the actions of Members on the balcony that were beyond the pale; holding up posters that denigrated House leadership on the balcony of the United States House of Representatives; signs that were inappropriate.

Certainly, I have no control, and welcome the First Amendment rights of anybody, including the protestors. Interestingly enough, more than a hundred thousand had gathered on Sunday for immigration reform. Polite, orderly, respectful, and getting their point across. But lo and behold, there were some who decided to disrespect this institution. And I'm offended. Yes, there can be cheers. There can be boos. We do that. It is the order of the day. But to call out words that are offensive to our fellow Members is unacceptable.

I rise today calling on our leadership to ask for an apology from the minority and to have a review and an investigation—that's a too harsh word—but a review of the actions of those who decided to hold signs and I believe disrespect the institution.

So we're not losing control of this body. Individuals may have acted inappropriately. But I will assure you that the debate that was carried on by Democrats were on the issues, albeit you may have agreed or disagreed. It was respectful. And we won the vote. Thank God, we won it on behalf of the American people. But they are my friends on both sides of the aisle. I claim them. But the point is that this kind of behavior is unacceptable and offensive. We must learn that there are some things more important than our individual opportunity to express ourselves as Members of Congress outside of this body. It is the institution and the respect that it's held over the years for the institution that is known as the most powerful lawmaking body in the world. We are owed, then, the duty and responsibility of acting like we have the respect for this body. If no one else does, we need to have it.

Madam Speaker, the behavior was unacceptable. The behavior was without description and without comparison. And I'm offended by the insults to the Democratic leadership. They've got tough skins. But it's not Democratic leadership. It is the Speaker, the Majority Leader. It is the majority whip, the majority chairperson of the Democratic Caucus. It is the vice chairperson and a variety of leaders. Not one did I see on a balcony holding up any untoward message that would have offended the minority.

The time comes now when we'll take back this House in a way that all of us can respect this institution. I'm grateful that we had the courage to do what was right for the American people.