

threatens the lives and property of our citizens across the country, few know that a hard-working, unsung hero is directing the National Severe Storms Laboratory in Norman, OK, to provide advanced weather forecasting on these threats. Our friend and colleague, Dr. Jeff Kimpel, Director of the NSSL, is retiring after 13 years of Federal service as the Director of the National Severe Storms Laboratory in Norman, OK. He will be sorely missed.

As my colleagues in the Senate know, the NSSL is best known for developing Doppler weather radar technology that led to the establishment of the national NEXRAD network consisting of more than 150 radar systems. During Dr. Kimpel's watch, NSSL performed the scientific and technological research that upgraded the NEXRADs from proprietary to open systems, added superresolution capability and designed dual-polarization upgrades. Dual-polarization will significantly increase the accuracy of rainfall estimates, delineate rain from snow, and provide an estimate of hail size. Since its installation, the NEXRAD program has reduced tornado-related deaths by 45 percent and personal injuries by 40 percent.

Under Dr. Kimpel's leadership, NSSL established strong programs in short-term cloud-resolving, numerical forecast models that are designed to yield estimates of hazardous weather events including tornadoes, windstorms, lightning, hail, and heavy precipitation. He championed radar-based rainfall analyses for flash flood and river forecasting. He was instrumental in establishing support for new facilities for NSSL that led to the eventual construction of the magnificent National Weather Center building shared with the National Weather Service and the University of Oklahoma Meteorology Program. He supported NSSL scientists and equipment to participate in 17 national and international field studies including the high profile Verification of the Origin of Tornadoes Experiment.

While Dr. Kimpel served as Director, NSSL scientists published over 600 archival, refereed journal articles, obtained 3 patents, and participated in 4 Cooperative Research and Development Agreements with private companies. NSSL employees achieved many honors and recognitions during his tenure including a NSSL affiliate being elected to the National Academy of Sciences, a senior researcher being elected to the National Academy of Engineering, and two junior colleagues being invited to the White House as winners of the Presidential Early Career Award for Scientists and Engineers.

Dr. Kimpel's legacy at NSSL will be his establishment of far-reaching research programs designed to vastly improve weather and water warnings and forecasts. He worked tirelessly to launch the Multifunction Phased Array Radar initiative as a possible eventual replacement for NEXRAD. He worked

with the NWS Storm Prediction Center and the Norman Weather Forecast Office to establish the Hazardous Weather Testbed to accelerate the transition of new science into operational warning and forecasting decision processes. He worked with others to support the Warn-on-Forecast initiative that envisions a time when severe weather warnings will be issued using numerical guidance in addition to the present method of detecting precursors or the event itself. Dr. Kimpel expanded NSSL's radar-based flash flood forecasting and water management programs into coastal areas where inundation from land-falling tropical storms and hurricanes is possible.

Prior to becoming the Director of NSSL, Dr. Kimpel served in the U.S. Air Force, including a tour in Vietnam for which he was awarded the Bronze Star. He earned his graduate degrees at the University of Wisconsin before joining the meteorology faculty at the University of Oklahoma. He achieved the rank of full professor and held a number of administrative positions including dean of the College of Geosciences and provost and senior vice president of the Norman Campus. He was named a Fellow of the American Meteorological Society, is a certified, consulting meteorologist, and was elected president of the AMS in 2000. He chaired both the National Science Foundation's Advisory Committee for Atmospheric Sciences and the Board of Trustees of the University Corporation for the Atmospheric Sciences. Dr. Kimpel plans on remaining in Norman and spending more time with his five children and two grandchildren.

Is there an unsung hero protecting Americans? Yes—that hero to all of us is Dr. Jeff Kimpel. We wish him well in his future pursuits, and all of us continue to support those research and day-to-day operations he has championed at the NSSL in severe weather detection, research, and forecasting. ●

TRIBUTE TO BOBBY SOUTHARD

● Mrs. LINCOLN. Mr. President, today I recognize Police Chief Bobby Southard of Hot Springs, AR. After a 22-year law enforcement career, Chief Southard will retire at the end of June.

Hired as a police officer in 1988, Chief Southard has enjoyed a successful career, serving as sergeant, lieutenant, captain, acting chief of police, and in February 2007 was selected as chief of the 129-person department.

Along with all Arkansans, I recognize the courage, bravery, and dedication of our Arkansas law enforcement, who risk their lives each day to keep our citizens safe. I thank these public servants for their service and sacrifice. ●

TRIBUTE TO DR. FAUST ALVAREZ

● Mr. TESTER. Mr. President, today I announce to the Senate that after 24 years as chief of staff for the VA Montana Health Care System, Dr. Faust M.

Alvarez, MD, has decided to retire. Dr. Alvarez was appointed chief of staff in August 1986 and continued in that position until April 30, 2010. He began his career as a staff physician at Fort Harrison Medical Center in 1984. Prior to joining the VA system he was engaged in private practice in the city of Helena for 12 years. During this time he founded and directed the first Montana hemodialysis unit and renal program at St. Peter's Hospital.

When Dr. Alvarez became the chief of staff at the VA, he sought to provide Montana's veterans with a high quality standard of care, and to provide easier access to medical services. These were challenging goals given that the VA Montana Health Care System has only one hospital and Montana is the fourth largest State geographically. Furthermore Montana has the second largest per capita veteran populations in the country. Through hard work and dedication, he and his staff have achieved these goals and have made the VA Montana Health Care System what it is today.

In 1988 Dr. Alvarez began expanding services for veterans by creating satellite clinics. The first clinics were opened in Anaconda and Kalispell. Today the VA Montana Health Care System has a presence in every major city in the state through 12 satellite outpatient facilities. Three of these facilities have telemedicine access and more are to be activated.

Through Dr. Alvarez's leadership and the hard working personnel of VA Montana, the VA Montana Medical System has been recognized on numerous occasions for its quality medical services. In 2005 the VA Montana was selected as the Nation's VA hospital of the year. Dr. Alvarez believes that Montana's veterans should expect and receive the highest quality medical care and services, and he has strived to ensure this expectation is met. By hiring board certified medical personnel, acquiring new state of the art equipment and incorporating current medical trends into the provision of healthcare services at VA Montana, Dr. Alvarez, and his staff, have made the VA Montana Health Care System the facility of choice for veterans across the State.

I thank Dr. Alvarez for his dedicated years of service. We are all proud of his accomplishments at VA Montana and the positive affect that the VA has had across the State during his tenure. I appreciate his initiative and hard work to continually improve medical services for Montana's veterans and to ensure our veterans receive appropriate care. I am certain that those who come after will maintain the same level of commitment and leadership.

Dr. Alvarez is a fellow of the American College of Physicians, an honorary designation recognizing scholarly and professional achievements in internal medicine. Dr. Alvarez was appointed by various Governors of the State of Montana to the State Board of Medical Examiners where he served for a total of 18 years.