

MILITARY ACADEMY
NOMINATIONS FOR 2012

HON. RODNEY P. FRELINGHUYSEN

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, February 3, 2012

Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN. Mr. Speaker, every year, more high school seniors from the 11th Congressional District trade in varsity jackets for navy pea coats, Air Force flight suits, and Army brass buckles than most other districts in the country. But this is nothing new—our area has repeatedly sent an above average portion of its sons and daughters to the nation's military academies for decades.

This fact should not come as a surprise. The educational excellence of area schools is well known and has long been a magnet for families looking for the best environment in which to raise their children. Our graduates are skilled not only in mathematics, science, and social studies, but also have solid backgrounds in sports, debate teams, and other extracurricular activities. This diverse upbringing makes military academy recruiters sit up and take note—indeed, many recruiters know our towns and schools by name.

Since the 1830's, Members of Congress have enjoyed meeting, talking with, and nominating these superb young people to our military academies. But how did this process evolve? In 1843, when West Point was the sole academy, Congress ratified the nominating process and became directly involved in the makeup of our military's leadership. This was not an act of an imperial Congress bent on controlling every aspect of Government. Rather, the procedure still used today was, and is, a further check and balance in our democracy. It was originally designed to weaken and divide political coloration in the officer corps, provide geographical balance to our armed services, and to make the officer corps more resilient to unfettered nepotism and handicapped European armies.

In 1854, Representative Gerritt Smith of New York added a new component to the academy nomination process—the academy review board. This was the first time a Member of Congress appointed prominent citizens from his district to screen applicants and assist with the serious duty of nominating candidates for academy admission. Today, I am honored to continue this wise tradition in my service to the 11th Congressional District.

The Academy Review Board is composed of six local citizens who have shown exemplary service to New Jersey, to their communities, and to the continued excellence of education in our area. Many are veterans. Though from diverse backgrounds and professions, they all share a common dedication that the best qualified and motivated graduates attend our academies. And, as true for most volunteer panels, their service goes largely unnoticed.

I would like to take a moment to recognize these men and women and thank them publicly for participating in this important panel. Being on the board requires hard work and an objective mind. Members have the responsibility of interviewing upwards of 50 outstanding high school seniors every year in the academy review process.

The nomination process follows a general timetable. High school seniors mail personal information directly to the Military Academy,

the Naval Academy, the Air Force Academy, and the Merchant Marine Academy once they become interested in attending. Information includes academic achievement, college entry test scores, and other activities. At this time, they also inform my office of their desire to be nominated.

The academies then assess the applicants, rank them based on the data supplied, and return files to my office with their notations. In late November, our Academy Review Board interviews all of the applicants over the course of 2 days. They assess a student's qualifications and analyze character, desire to serve, and other talents that may be hidden on paper.

This year the board interviewed over 50 applicants. Nominations included 9 to the Naval Academy, 10 to the Military Academy, 5 to the Merchant Marine Academy and 8 to the Air Force Academy—the Coast Guard Academy does not use the Congressional nomination process. The recommendations are then forwarded to the academies by January 31, where recruiters reviewed files and notified applicants and my office of their final decision on admission.

As these highly motivated and talented young men and women go through the academy nominating process, never let us forget the sacrifice they are preparing to make: to defend our country and protect our citizens. This holds especially true at a time when our nation is fighting the war against terrorism. Whether it is in Afghanistan or other hot spots around the world, no doubt we are constantly reminded that wars are fought by the young. And, while our military missions are both important and dangerous, it is reassuring to know that we continue to put America's best and brightest in command.

ACADEMY NOMINEES FOR 2012, 11TH DISTRICT
CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT
AIR FORCE ACADEMY

Page Femia, Kinnelon, Villa Walsh Academy

Christian Longhi, Succasunna, Seton Hall Prep

Mathieu Gacydos, Randolph, Randolph H.S.

Brian Mascioni, Mendham, Gill St. Bernard's School

Ryan Swift, Whippany, Morristown H.S.

Brandon Sharp, Whippany, Seton Hall Prep

MERCHANT MARINE ACADEMY

Alexander Rodgers, Lake Hopatcong, Jefferson H.S.

Bansi Patel, Livingston, Livingston H.S.

MILITARY ACADEMY

Gregory Horne, Denville, Morris Knolls H.S.

Michael Lami, Madison, Madison H.S./MAPS

Amos Lee, Bridgewater-Raritan, Bridgewater-Raritan H.S.

Timothy Lynch, Mendham, Pope John XIII H.S.

Jared Love, Florham Park, Episcopal H.S./MAPS

James Morsch, Morristown, West Morris Mendham H.S.

Thomas Rapp, Mendham, West Morris Mendham H.S.

Jonathan Richards, Mountain Lakes, Mountain Lakes H.S.

Ryan Richards, Basking Ridge, Ridge H.S.

Joshua Thomlinson, Flanders, Pope John XIII H.S.

NAVAL ACADEMY

Gianluca Borrelli, Dover, Dover H.S.
James Burke III, Chatham, Chatham H.S.

Roger Castle, Bridgewater, Bridgewater-Raritan H.S.

Matthew Dilonno, Mountain Lakes, Mountain Lakes H.S.

Troy Dundas, Sparta, Norwich University/Blair Academy

Shane Gregoire, Kinnelon, Kinnelon H.S.

Aaron Hanko, Montville, Trinity Christian School

Chad Heal, Hackettstown, Delbarton School

Caitlyn Hughes, Randolph, Randolph HS/Stevens Institute

Gregory Keiser, East Hanover, Delbarton School

Joshua King, Short Hills, Pingry School

Kevin Lenahan, Flanders, Pope John XIII H.S.

Anthony Malatesta, Chatham, Chatham H.S.

Thomas Mahala, Far Hills, Seton Hall Prep/Seton Hall University

Keegan McCoy, Basking Ridge, Ridge H.S.

James McManus, Mendham, West Morris Mendham H.S.

Thomas Morreale, Short Hills, Millburn H.S.

Steven Reidel, Boonton, Mountain Lakes H.S.

Conrad Womelsdorf, Caldwell, James Caldwell H.S.

Jinghong Yuan, Parsippany, Parsippany H.S.

TRIBUTE TO THE LIFE OF KAYA
TUNCER

HON. JOE BACA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, February 3, 2012

Mr. BACA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to ask Congress to pay tribute to a committed community advocate, Kaya Tuncer. Kaya, an experienced Turkish-American entrepreneur and philanthropist from California, passed away on January 7, 2012, at the age of seventy-four.

Kaya was born and raised in Turkey, moving to the United States at age 19 with only 80 dollars in his pocket. He put himself through college, first at Santa Ana College, then gaining a degree in civil engineering from University of California Berkeley and an MBA from University of Southern California. Kaya's strong determination to succeed in the United States paid off. Kaya continued to live in the Los Angeles area for 49 years.

Kaya began his successful business career as founder and chairman of the ESBAS Company, which was responsible for developing and operating the largest industrial park in Turkey, called the Aegean Free Zone. Kaya was a strong supporter of Turkish-American relations and devoted his life to creating a cultural understanding between peoples from both nations.

His success as a businessman propelled him to give back to his home country of Turkey by inaugurating Space Camp Turkey in June of 2000. Kaya also created a foundation called Global Friendship through Space Education. Kaya's generosity allowed 150 students and teachers to attend National Space Camp Week each year. Since Kaya began the foundation, over 5,300 students from 27 countries have been awarded scholarships. Kaya's foundation shows his dedication to improving the lives young adults by expanding their experience and understanding of science.

Today, the Global Friendship through Education foundation has developed a yearlong