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[Aug. 5, 2014]

FOUNDING PRESIDENT/CEO OF BSCTC  
ANNOUNCES RETIREMENT

After 14 years, Dr. George D. Edwards, founding president and CEO of Big Sandy Community and Technical College (BSCTC), will step down as college president and CEO on January 5, 2015. He will work on a special assignment through June 30, 2015.

"This is a bittersweet day for our family," said Dr. Edwards. "I have had the honor of working with a dedicated board of directors, foundation board, a great leadership team, and a group of passionate faculty and staff who are committed to our mission. Together, we have made great strides in providing the people of the Big Sandy region a comprehensive community and technical college that is devoted to student success, access and transfer."

Dr. Michael B. McCall, founding president of the Kentucky Community and Technical College System (KCTCS), issued the following statement on Dr. Edwards' retirement: "Dr. Edwards' outstanding leadership during the past 14 years has enabled BSCTC to provide the local community with educational programs in high-wage, high-demand fields, designed to enhance the eastern Kentucky economy. We are currently working with Dr. Edwards to ensure a seamless transition plan is in place as we move forward in our mission to provide Kentuckians with a quality postsecondary education that is both accessible and affordable."

Dr. Edwards and his wife, Dr. Joyce Edwards, plan to relocate to Verona, Va. upon his retirement.

"This will allow us to be within two hours of all of our children and grandchildren," he said. "Family is very important to Joyce and me, and we look forward to spending time with them, traveling and volunteering in the community."

Dr. Edwards became the third president of Prestonsburg Community College and the founding president of the Big Sandy Community and Technical College in November 2000, shortly after the passage of House Bill 1 which created KCTCS. Under his leadership, Prestonsburg Community College and Mayo Technical College together formed Big Sandy Community and Technical College in 2003.

Student success has been the cornerstone of Dr. Edwards' administration. Since 2008, the college has increased credentials awarded to students by 140 percent and graduates earning associate degrees by 64 percent.

Dr. Edwards has overseen more than \$23 million in building projects during his tenure. BSCTC opened the Student Center in 2002 and the Postsecondary Education Building and East Kentucky Science Center and Planetarium in 2004. The Mayo campus benefitted from a more than \$7.5-million renovation in 2002. Additionally, more than \$4 million have been spent on infrastructure upgrades in the areas of technology and sustainability.

Dr. Edwards' strong and compassionate leadership has led to many accomplishments, including: the creation of the Floyd County and Johnson County Early College Academies; a highly responsive Workforce Solutions program; the creation of the Big Sandy Singers, Big Sandy Idol and Fine Arts department; the Honors Scholarship program; leadership development for employees; and the continued growth of the Big Sandy College Educational Foundation, Inc.

"I'm most proud of the students we've helped," said Dr. Edwards. "It's rewarding to be in a position and represent an institution that has unwavering commitment to students. It's also been rewarding to watch our employees grow and develop over the years. I hope that my efforts have made a difference."

Karen Sellers, chair of the BSCTC board of directors, said Dr. Edwards transformed an already well respected community college into a remarkable place to work and study.

"As a result of his strategic leadership, BSCTC has seen significant growth in student enrollment, faculty achievement and campus improvements," she said. "Dr. Edwards has done a terrific job of reaching out to the business community, fundraising and recruiting talented students, faculty and staff. Every step of the way, he has reminded this community of the vital importance of Big Sandy Community and Technical College."

Charles "Rusty" Justice, vice chair of the BSCTC board of directors, said: "I would like to thank Dr. Edwards for his leadership of this wonderful institution over the last 14 years. Under his guidance he has overseen growth and progress in all facets of the organization. I would also like to thank him for his friendship. He is a man of intelligence and character and I have benefited from that relationship."

Bobby McCool, chief institutional officer, said Dr. Edwards' leadership has elevated the importance of postsecondary education in economic development.

"Big Sandy Community and Technical College has brokered the dialogue of conversation on the role of our college in workforce development," he said.

Dr. Nancy B. Johnson, provost at BSCTC, said Dr. Edwards' leadership and commitment to students and communities served by the college has been phenomenal.

"The many successful programs initiated—increased scholarship access; the improvement of facilities; the access to technology and its infusion into the learning process; the responsiveness to workforce needs; and the continual encouragement and support to faculty and staff through professional development opportunities—all provide evidence of this leadership and commitment. Working as a member of his team at Big Sandy has truly been a gift for me."

## HONORING OUR ARMED FORCES

LIEUTENANT GENERAL PETER M. VANGJEL

Mr. INHOFE. Mr. President, today I wish to pay tribute to a distinguished public servant and officer in the U.S. Army, LTG Peter M. Vangjel. General Vangjel served as the 64th Army inspector general and retires on February 1, 2015, after more than 37 years of selfless service to our Nation. Throughout his professional life, General Vangjel personified the Army values of duty, honor, and selfless service in leadership roles around the world and here at home. Many of us on Capitol Hill know General Vangjel by these qualities and have enjoyed the opportunity to work with him on a wide variety of Army issues and programs. It is my privilege to recognize his many significant contributions.

General Vangjel is a native of New Hampshire and graduated from the University of New Hampshire in 1977. He served in a variety of command and staff assignments and has led our sol-

diers in both peace and war, in combat and humanitarian missions, in the United States, Europe, Asia, and the Middle East. He has proven himself as a stellar leader demonstrating unselfish devotion to the Nation, our leaders, soldiers and their families.

For the final 3 years of his noteworthy career, General Vangjel served as the Army inspector general, providing independent and unbiased advice to the Secretary and Chief of Staff of the Army. His advice, assistance, and detailed oversight of timely, high-visibility inspections and investigations proved critical for an adaptive Army in transition. He personally led multiple efforts to promote readiness, resource stewardship and accountability of equipment, funds, personnel and leader behavior.

As he has throughout his career, General Vangjel embraced his charter to conduct outreach to our Army's leaders, soldiers, families, and the public at every opportunity, stressing the importance of resource management and creativity. Nowhere was this more evident than during his 2-year assignment to the Middle East, where he supervised efforts that provided nearly \$8 billion dollars in cost avoidance and streamlined contracting and logistic support efforts as our troops surged in to Afghanistan and retrograded from Iraq. His vision, passion, and energy kept key military and civilian leaders aware of emerging trends enabling them to correct problems and anticipate future challenges.

General Vangjel led his team in conducting many significant inspections enabling our Army to address critical issues, revise policies, and improve processes. His special inspections of Arlington National Cemetery restored effective oversight and reinstilled public confidence in the effort to honor our fallen heroes at a place sacred to all Americans. Likewise, his team's work to help our suffering soldiers receive more efficient behavioral health treatment within the Integrated Disability Evaluation System brought to light new information about process issues and the need for better coordination and support from Veterans Affairs. In addition, during his tenure, the Army inspector general performed vital compliance oversight inspections for some of our Nation's most sensitive activities, including nuclear and chemical research and development centers, intelligence oversight, and information assurance operations.

LTG Peter M. Vangjel has consistently provided superb leadership, advice, and sound professional judgment on numerous critical issues of enduring importance to the Army and our Nation. On behalf of Congress and the United States of America, I thank General Vangjel, his wife Joanne, and his entire family for their commitment and contributions to our Army and the Nation, and I congratulate them both on an exceptional career of selfless service.

## RECOGNIZING NANCY J. COX

Mr. HARKIN. I would like to recognize the outstanding career of a dedicated civil servant, Iowan Dr. Nancy Cox, who will retire in November 2014 after 37 years of distinguished Federal service at the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Dr. Cox started working on influenza at CDC in 1976. Thirty-seven years and 278 publications later, she has transformed the surveillance and science of influenza viruses and vaccines. Her scientific work has been critical, given the tremendous global burden of human seasonal influenza—1 billion cases, 3 to 5 million severe illnesses, and 300,000 to 500,000 deaths each year. In addition, avian or swine influenza viruses can adapt to human-to-human transmission, leading to global and devastating pandemics with disruption in commerce and tragic numbers of illnesses and deaths. The breadth and depth of influenza's impact is vast, underscoring Dr. Cox's vital contribution from her science and service.

Dr. Cox began her senior leadership duties years ago directing a small branch of 40 to 50 staff. Today she oversees more than 320 staff, and the Influenza Division she directs has broad responsibilities as the U.S. Government, USG, lead for influenza prevention and control, and as one of five World Health Organization Collaborating Centers for the Surveillance, Epidemiology and Control of Influenza. Dr. Cox recognized that influenza prevention and control requires a broad, multifaceted surveillance effort. Through her scientific leadership, direction, and publication of scientific findings, CDC established surveillance for various aspects of influenza illness to improve the understanding of influenza impact and to provide ongoing influenza surveillance data throughout the season to inform clinical management and to monitor effectiveness of influenza prevention efforts.

During her 37 years at CDC, Dr. Cox has served as mentor, educator, supervisor, and supporter to hundreds of individuals: undergraduates, medical and PhD students, postdoctoral fellows, laboratory and epidemiology staff members, journalists, and visiting researchers. As Director of the WHO Collaborating Center for the Surveillance, Epidemiology and Control of Influenza at CDC, Dr. Cox has worked closely with public health laboratory officials from Russia, Vietnam, and China, leading to transforming their capabilities in influenza virology and surveillance. Her oversight of influenza laboratories at CDC has set the standards for measuring immune response in infected and vaccinated people and also has led CDC to be the global reference center for antiviral resistance and for measuring transmission of influenza viruses in animal models. Her leadership at WHO has also led to significant changes in the methods, reporting, interpretation, and policy development for selecting candidate vaccine viruses for use in an-

nual vaccine production. Dr. Cox has been able to see where the field of influenza prevention and control needs to go to address emerging problems, and the successes of her scientific intuition and persistence are present in many places around the globe.

Dr. Cox has been recognized by virologists, public health officials, leaders in State and Federal governments, international leaders, academics, and others. She is the recipient of 10 National Center for Infectious Disease recognition awards, 7 Nakano Awards, 4 Shepard Awards, Lancet Paper of the Year, Time Magazine's The Time 100: People Who Shape Our World, Service to America Award, CDC's Lifetime Achievement Award, and the USG-wide award for Federal Employee of the Year. She has served as a reviewer for numerous scientific journals and research grant efforts. She is frequently invited by editors of Science, New England Journal of Medicine, and other journals to write editorials and opinion pieces. She has been chair of many scientific panels and symposia and has served on various scientific committees for international conferences and global influenza policy development workgroups. Even more important than her past contribution is the solid footing of CDC's Influenza Division for the future that she leaves as her legacy.

Dr. Cox is an Iowa native—born in Emmetsburg—and attended Iowa State University, ISU, where she got a BS in bacteriology in 1970. She is a life member of the ISU alumni association. In addition to her Iowa State degree, she has a doctorate in virology from the University of Cambridge and was a postdoctoral fellow at both the University of Maryland, Baltimore County, and at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

## REMEMBERING PERRY RENN

Mr. DONNELLY. Mr. President, today I wish to recognize and honor the extraordinary service and ultimate sacrifice of Indianapolis, IN Metropolitan Police Officer Perry Renn. Dedicated, loyal, and above all compassionate to those in need, Officer Renn served with the Indianapolis Metropolitan Police Department, IMPD, for 21 years.

On Saturday, July 5, 2014, Officer Renn responded to a report of shots fired on the northeast side of Indianapolis, the district where he was a patrolman throughout his career with IMPD. When Officer Renn arrived, he joined another IMPD officer already on the scene, and they approached a group of individuals standing in a nearby alley. As they approached the group, one of the individuals brandished a gun and began shooting at the officers. Despite the fact that he was wearing a protective vest, Officer Renn was struck by the gunfire. After additional officers arrived and detained the shooter, Officer Renn was transported to Eskenazi Hospital in critical condition. Sadly,

despite the best efforts of his fellow officers, EMTs, and medical personnel, Officer Renn, 51, succumbed to his wounds.

A native of Indianapolis, IN and raised in Phoenix, AZ, Officer Renn joined the U.S. Army after graduating from high school. For the majority of his 10-year enlistment, Perry was stationed in Fort Bragg, NC with the 82nd Airborne Division as a paratrooper and jumpmaster, completing more than 100 jumps. He achieved the rank of staff sergeant and was awarded achievement and commendation medals during his tenure. Perry was stationed in Korea for 2 tours, spent 18 months in New York City as a recruiter, and served in Operation Urgent Fury, the military conflict in Grenada in 1983.

Officer Renn was awarded two Medals of Bravery during his career with IMPD, in the years 1999 and 2003. Prior to becoming a police officer, he worked at the Marion County Sheriff Communications Department as a dispatcher and control operator. In 2011, Officer Renn received a letter of commendation for his efforts to assist individuals after a stage collapse at the Indiana State Fair injured 58 and killed 9 people. Always seeking to help those in need, Officer Renn chose to serve in a district on the northeast side of Indianapolis because he knew it was an area of the city where many citizens would need help.

Officer Renn is survived and deeply missed by his wife of 25 years, Lynn Sappenfield-Renn; mother Phyllis Renn; father David Renn (Tina); sister Sherri Jones (Michael); five nieces; two nephews; four great nieces; four great nephews; numerous aunts, uncles and cousins; the Indianapolis Metropolitan Police Department family; and his beloved pets.

Officer Renn loved his work, and he gave his life to serve and protect the citizens of Indianapolis. Although he would have never thought of himself as a hero, Officer Renn demonstrated his character daily by conducting himself with courage, bravery, compassion, honor, and integrity. Thus, he was a true American hero—in his everyday life as a police officer, husband, and community member—and in his final call to duty. Let us always remember and emulate the shining example this stalwart, modest yet brave man set for us, and honor him for his selfless commitment to serving his fellow citizens. May God welcome him home and give comfort to his family and friends.

REMEMBERING MASTER  
SERGEANT JOSEPH B. SMRT

Mr. DONNELLY. Mr. President, today I also wish to recognize and honor the extraordinary service of U.S. Army MSG Joe Smrt. Dedicated, loyal, and above all compassionate to those in need, Mr. Smrt was drafted into the Army in 1942 and served throughout World War II.

On September 23, 2014, Joe passed away at the age of 98. A native of North