whose creativity and imagination inspire others and improve the world around them.

On a personal level, he is a caring and loving father of David, who works with his father on the cattle ranch and is his pride and joy. Dave Wood is a gentleman who cares about his Country, his work and most importantly the friendships of life. Every day he tries to make a difference. It is with great pride and honor that I join Mr. Wood’s family, friends and colleagues in commending his hard work and applaud his recognition as the recipient of the E. Floyd Forbes Award. Mr. Wood’s passion and commitment made him one of the most deserving recipients of this award and a true pillar of this industry.

HONORING AXEL CARL HANSEN, M.D., DHL

HON. DONNA M. CHRISTENSEN
OF THE VIRGIN ISLANDS
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Wednesday, February 15, 2006

Mrs. CHRISTENSEN. Mr. Speaker, to be young, gifted, and Black during the first quarter of the 20th century presented unique and overwhelming challenges that not many African Americans could transcend. Among those who did was the distinguished physician, Dr. Axel Carl Hansen.

He has been a recognized researcher, scholar and expert in the field of ophthalmology for over 50 years. The combination of his unique commitment to human egalitarianism and equal educational opportunities for African Americans interested in ophthalmology has been a perennial beacon of light for African Americans interested in ophthalmology for over 50 years. The combination of his unique commitment to human egalitarianism and equal educational opportunities for African Americans interested in ophthalmology has been a perennial beacon of light to those entering and those within the profession.

Dr. Hansen was born in my district, on St. Thomas, U.S. Virgin Islands, on March 4, 1919, and received his elementary education in the private schools of the island. His college-preparatory training was obtained at the Charlotte Amalie High School in St. Thomas, from where he graduated in June 1937. His leadership and scholastic skill were evident early in life. In his senior year in high school, he was president of his class, editor of the school’s weekly newspaper, The Reflector, and editor of his class yearbook, The Last Carib. A member of the Quill and Scroll Journalist Society, he received the national society’s “honorable mention” for a news article he wrote and published in The Reflector and won first prize from the Virgin Islands Daily News for an essay, “Nature’s Masterpiece,” which appeared in the initial issue of The Virgin Islands Magazine. He was one of two members of his graduating class to receive the honor society’s Forum Award for outstanding accomplishments.

In the fall of 1937, Axel Hansen left the Virgin Islands to attend Fisk University in Nashville, Tennessee, where he graduated with a baccalaureate degree. He received his M.D. degree from Meharry Medical College in Nashville in March 1944 and pursued intern and 1 year residency at Homer G. Phillips Hospital in St. Louis in ophthalmology and otolaryngology.

Dr. Hansen, following that post-graduate training, was recruited by Dr. Charles Drew, the famous African American pioneer of blood storage, to return to St. Croix, Virgin Islands to establish a career in medical care. As a municipal physician and general practitioner there, one of his responsibilities was the medical care of patients with leprosy. He modernized the treatment of that disease in the Virgin Islands by substituting the new sulfone drugs for the long used, but less effective, chaulmoogra oil.

Returning to the United States in 1946 to further his training in diseases and surgery of the eyes, ears, nose, and throat, Dr. Hansen spent 2 years at Meharry Medical College’s George W. Hubbard Hospital. The year 1946–1949 was devoted to advanced training in the specialty at Provident Hospital in Chicago and the University of Chicago. Upon completion of his training he returned to Meharry Medical College as a full time instructor and he began a private practice.

Later, during a 3-year sojourn in the Virgin Islands, he served one year as president of the medical staff at the Knud-Hansen Memorial Hospital, and was the founder and first secretary of the U.S. Virgin Islands Medical Society.

In 1960, Dr. Hansen was appointed Associate Professor of Ophthalmology and Otolaryngology at Meharry Medical College and rose to the rank of Professor and head of the Department of Ophthalmology. He also served as medical director of the College’s Hubbard Hospital for 6 years.

In 1968, he reported the first two cases of Norrie’s Disease—a rare eye disease—in the United States and has published several medical articles on that and other subjects.

His creativity has not been limited to medicine. Dr. Hansen also published a self-illustrated book of original poems, and a book, From These Shores, which consists of biographical profiles of influential individuals from the Danish West Indies.

The physician became the first African-American ophthalmologist to be certified by the American Board of Ophthalmology in the State of Tennessee. He is a Diplomate of that Board, a Fellow of the American Academy of Ophthalmology, a Fellow of the American College of Surgeons and a Fellow of the American Association for the Advancement of Science. He is also a member of Alpha Omega Alpha Honor Medical Society and Phi Beta Kappa Honor Society. Among his many citations are the honorary degree of Doctor of Humane Letters and the Distinguished Alumnus Award from Fisk University.

In 1987, he was the commencement speaker at his alma mater, Charlotte Amalie High School, from which he had graduated 50 years earlier. Dr. Hansen retired from Meharry in 1985 as a Distinguished Service Professor Emeritus. In 1996, the American Academy of Ophthalmology awarded him the Academy’s Outstanding Humanitarian Award, the second African American to receive that honor.

Today, Dr. Hansen is retired and living in Nashville, Tennessee.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that the Members of the U.S. House of Representatives join me in honoring this esteemed physician, educator, author and humanitarian.