

these who raise our aspirations, motivate our youth, and provide us with powerful national role models of integrity and spirit. We thank you for your commitment and honor your achievements.

# IN RECOGNITION OF THE SHEPARD ACCELERATED SCHOOL

## HON. RICHARD A. GEPHARDT

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, June 17, 1997*

Mr. GEPHARDT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to salute Shepard Accelerated School in my district for being named a national Blue Ribbon School recipient.

The Blue Ribbon Schools Program identifies and gives national recognition to a diverse group of public and private schools that are unusually effective in meeting local, State, and national goals and in educating all of their students. The program seeks to promote school improvement nationwide through the collaborative self-evaluation required of local school communities that participate. In addition, recognized schools serve as models for other schools and communities seeking to provide high quality education for all their students.

Shepard Accelerated School was one of only 264 schools across the United States recognized as a Blue Ribbon School. Now, you might think that sounds like a lot of schools. But think about this—there are about 76,000 public and private elementary and middle schools in America. That means that one out of every 288 elementary and middle schools in the entire United States has been named a Blue Ribbon School for 1997. And I'm pleased that Shepard Accelerated School right here in St. Louis, MO, is one of those schools.

To qualify for this award, I know Shepard went through rigorous reviews by some of the Nation's leading educators. The school impressed everybody and they deserve the highest praise for that. The innovative programs and supportive community Shepard has established truly demonstrate the importance of a positive learning environment.

Shepard Accelerated School has a shared purpose among faculty, students, and parents to improve the education of the 600 children who attend. I am proud of Shepard for being named a national Blue Ribbon School recipient. Ms. Savannah Young, all the teachers, and especially the students should be saluted for their dedication to high standards and excellence in teaching and learning.

Congratulations Shepard Accelerated School.

# TRIBUTE TO MARGARET S. BENEDIKT

## HON. E. CLAY SHAW, JR.

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, June 17, 1997*

Mr. SHAW. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to convey the sad message of the death of a great American, Margaret S. Benedikt.

Widowed in the 1950's with a dependent child, Peggy Benedikt submersed herself learning all there was to investment and con-

struction. Her daughter remembers awaking late at night to find her mother reading and was amazed at her mother's extraordinary ability to retain what she read. Peggy moved to south Florida in the 1960's and established what would become a very successful construction and development company. Knowledgeable in all areas of the construction business, she felt equally at home donning a hard hat on the building site or dressed for presentations in the sales office.

As her successes grew, Peggy Benedikt was generous with both her time and her money in supporting a wide variety of organizations in her adopted hometown, Fort Lauderdale, FL. She touched many in the community through her efforts with such diverse groups as Kids in Distress, the Opera Guild, the Humane Society, the American Cancer Association, and the Freedoms Foundation.

Margaret S. Benedikt loved Republican politics but she stands as a symbol for Democrats and Republicans alike. Through her actions, she taught all of us that we should stand tight for what we believe in. If there are politics in heaven, Peggy is already in the thick of it.

Margaret S. Benedikt was a great lady and a good friend. Peggy, we love you. We'll miss you.

# TRIBUTE TO SPECIAL GRADUATES OF NEW YORK'S 12TH CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

## HON. NYDIA M. VELÁZQUEZ

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, June 17, 1997*

Ms. VELÁZQUEZ. Mr. Speaker, with great pride I would like to congratulate some special graduates of the 12th Congressional District of New York. I am certain that this day marks the culmination of much hard work and many valiant efforts for these students; work and effort which have led and will lead them to continued success. They have overcome the obstacles of overcrowded and dilapidated classrooms, antiquated and insufficient instructional materials, the all too frequent distractions of random violence and pervasive drug activity, and, for some, having to adapt to a new language and new customs. But these students have persevered despite the odds. Their success is a tribute not only to their own strength, but also to the supportive parents and teachers who have encouraged them to achieve.

These students have learned that education is priceless. They know that education will provide them with the tools and opportunities to be successful in any endeavor they pursue. In many respects, this is the most important lesson they will carry with them for the rest of their lives.

In closing, I would like to say that youth in America must be encouraged to stay on course and complete their educations so they can pave the way for a better future. Let us not forget that their future is the future of this Nation. These successful graduates of the 12th Congressional District take the charge to lead our Nation very seriously as their commitment to their education has demonstrated. Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues in the U.S. House of Representatives to join me in congratulating the following graduates who have triumphed despite adversity and who have achieved outstanding academic standing.

Congratulations to the 1997 graduates of the 12th Congressional District:

Sherley Medina, John Denton and Geimy Colon—El Puente Academy for Peace and Justice High School.

Evelyn Reynoso and Carlos Segura—Eastern District High School.

Naisha Arthur and Ragon Atkhas—Bushwick High School.

Dawn Stokes and Alberto Sanchez—East New York High School.

Jetaime Toliver and Shykia Bell—Maxwell High School.

Dory Garcia and Kaleena Torres—Intermediate School 291.

Christina Rodriguez and Bartosz Bernatowicz—Charles O. Dewey Middle School.

Nina Soto—Middle School 88.

Delaila Catalino and Edwin Carrion—Public School 86.

# LAVAR FOSTER AND SHALIEK RIVERA: COMMUNITY HEROES

## HON. EDOLPHUS TOWNS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, June 17, 1997*

Mr. TOWNS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commend two incredibly brave youth, Lavar Foster and Shalie Rivera, for their heroic efforts.

On May 5, 1997, these P.S. 346 sixth graders rescued a senior citizen from an attacker. Not only did they save her life, but their detailed descriptions ultimately led to the criminal's capture. What makes their accomplishments so remarkable is that they did not let their young age or small size prevent them from extending a helping hand to a fellow citizen. For their fearless efforts, they were also named "New Yorkers of the Week" by New York 1 News.

Lavar and Shalie are shining beacons of hope for the future of our community. Citizens such as these are few and far between. They are truly role models for Brooklyn and the entire Nation.

Mr. Speaker, it is with great pride that I ask my colleagues to join me in saluting Lavar Foster and Shalie Rivera for their outstanding contributions to the Brooklyn community.

# TRIBUTE TO STEPHEN AND IRIS GAINES

## HON. BRAD SHERMAN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, June 17, 1997*

Mr. SHERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Stephen and Iris Gaines for their contributions to the Chabad of the Conejo Adult Education Program. In the spirit of Jewish unity, the Chabad of the Conejo recognizes the Gaines family for their time and dedication.

Stephen and Irish were inspired by their children to not only join an adult education program but promote adult education throughout our community. After sending Brandon and Ryan to Chabad, the Gaines' realized that Chabad would also be useful in their own lives.

The Gaines were so inspired by their own personal growth, and desired to contribute more to Chabad, they helped to establish the Gaines Family Adult Educational Institute. This institute in conjunction with Chabad's goals truly builds bridges toward Jewish unity. The institute has served thousands of people providing quality Jewish education, particularly helping those in spiritual need. Without the Gaines' help many members of our community would go unfulfilled.

The Gaines extraordinary vision for the future has made them a grand success in their philanthropic world. They leave a legacy for their children and other members of our community to follow.

It is an honor to join the family and friends of Stephen and Iris in recognizing them for their great work in our community.

#### WESTHILL GIRLS SOCCER TEAM WINS NYS CLASS B CHAMPIONSHIP

#### HON. JAMES T. WALSH

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, June 17, 1997*

Mr. WALSH. Mr. Speaker, I ask today that my colleagues join me in recognizing the 1996-97 New York State Lady's Varsity Class B Soccer Champions from Westhill High School in Syracuse, NY.

This is the same team, though some new players have come on board, for whom I asked recognition last year when they won the New York State Class C Championship.

At a school where both academics and athletics are points of intense pride, the girls soccer program at Westhill has been particularly exceptional. This year, goalie Wallis Patulski saved 147 goals while Courtney Spencer, Megan Rogers, and Alissa Hoover scored 32, 30 and 24 goals respectively in a 24-0-1 overall season record on the way to the class B State championship title. Coach Ann Riva's assistant this year was Amy Ehlinger.

Coach Riva has tasted victory before. Under her, the last 2 years' teams have won the class C State championship title.

In addition to those named above, team members include: Jessica Adydan, Gabby Gaspe, Julie Guinn, Lindsay Lazarski, Karen Guinn, Sharon Gates, Jess Vossseteig, Sara Murphy, Jen Conway, Julie Carpenter, Michelle Mahaney, Sheida Tabaie, Shannan Card, and Jen Kirsch. Kirsir Donovan was brought up from JV's for the sectionals and the state championship tournament.

As a parent of Westhill student athletes, I know most of the students who play a sport at Westhill. They have demonstrated not only individual skills and team cohesiveness—but also a collective strength which draws from the entire Westhill community: parents, faculty, staff.

From all of us, congratulations to the team for an impressive accomplishment.

#### HONORING DANISE CANTLON OF ELLIOT ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

#### HON. DEBBIE STABENOW

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, June 17, 1997*

Ms. STABENOW Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the citizens of Michigan's Eighth Congressional District, I am pleased to honor Danise Joan Cantlon, a math teacher from Elliott Elementary School in Holt, MI, on the occasion of her receipt of the 1996 Presidential Award in Mathematics and Science Training.

The Presidential Awards for Excellence in Mathematics and Science Training are designed to recognize and reward outstanding teachers in the area of science and math. In addition to the national recognition, Danise will receive a National Science Federation grant of \$7,500 to be used under her direction.

Teachers such as Ms. Cantlon are role models to our students. Through the receipt of this prestigious award, I hope the students of Elliot Elementary will be even more encouraged and stimulated to excel in math and science. Most importantly, this award should be an inspiration to many young girls in mid-Michigan. Research conducted by the American Association of University Women recently concluded that, in many of our schools, there remains a gender gap in science course enrollment, advanced math courses, and scientific and technological careers. By recognizing successful women in the field of math and science, we also inspire and encourage girls to pursue interests and careers in these areas.

I applaud the work Danise Cantlon has done at Elliot Elementary School. We are very lucky to have her teaching our children.

#### TRIBUTE TO SANDRA EPPS

#### HON. DALE E. KILDEE

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, June 17, 1997*

Mr. KILDEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to an outstanding educator and a dear friend, Sandra Epps. Mrs. Epps will be honored by her peers at her retirement dinner on Friday, June 20, in Flint, MI.

Sandra Epps is retiring after 33 years of service to the children of Flint. She has worked tirelessly as an educator in the Flint Community Schools during this time. A graduate of the Flint school system, Sandra returned to her community after completing her studies at Eastern Michigan University.

Specializing in elementary education, Sandra started teaching in 1964. Sandra's exemplary teaching style quickly earned accolades from her supervisors. In 1973 she was promoted to the position of assistant principal at Pierson Community School. She served in this capacity during the 1973-74 school year. During the 1974-75 school year she held the same post at Merrill Community School. In 1975 Sandra was elevated to the position of principal at Dewey Community School. In addition to serving as principal of Dewey, Sandra also spent several years as principal of Martin Luther King Community School and Potter Multicultural Global School. Sandra's commitment to her students reached far beyond the

administrator's chair. She understood that problems in the classroom were often closely linked to problems outside the classroom. She took the time over the years to listen to and help her students. Over and over again her students returned the favor. She is an unsung hero in the field of education.

Despite the pressures of raising a family, Sandra has devoted a large part of her life to many community organizations. She is the president of the Flint Human Relations Commission, the coordinator of the Victorious Christian Women Inc., and the vice president of the Flint Neighborhood Improvement and Preservation project. These are just a few of the community activities Sandra is dedicated too. The complete list is extensive.

Sandra Epps is an outstanding educator and an outstanding person. I have known Sandra for many, many, years. Along with her husband John, her children Mark, Randy, and Trayce, Sandra has encouraged and supported me over the years. I very much treasure our friendship. I ask the House of Representatives to rise with me today to honor a truly great educator, Sandra Epps.

#### IN HONOR OF MARY STRASSMEYER

#### HON. DENNIS J. KUCINICH

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, June 17, 1997*

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor Mary Strassmeyer as she retires from journalism after 39 years of reporting on the social scene in Cleveland, OH.

After studying history and English at Notre Dame College Mary went on to do graduate work in history at the University of Toledo. In 1983, she graduated from Cleveland Marshall College of Law and passed the bar the same year. Mary held a variety of jobs after graduation, but began her career in journalism in earnest when she quit a Federal job, took a pay cut and joined the editorial staff at the Cleveland News where she stayed for 4 years covering women's news, education and the PTA.

She was hired by the Plain Dealer in 1960 to serve as women's features writer and later became beauty editor and assistant travel editor. In 1965, Mary was named society editor, where she really started to shake things up. She could make or break an event, or even someone's career, simply by what she wrote in her column. She has covered everything from fashion and food to movies and, even though she will not divulge them, knows all the secrets behind the secrets on the business and social scene in Cleveland.

After 4 years as society editor, Mary organized a group of reporters called the Society of American Social Scribes [SASS]. The group's members later elected her president. In the same year, she was listed in Status Magazine as one of the best big-city society editors in the Nation.

In her retirement, Mary plans to devote more time to putting her law degree to use, working at Gerry's International Travel Agency, in which she is a shareholder, and of course, more writing. Mr. Speaker, let us recognize the achievements of Mary Strassmeyer, just as her colleagues and friends will on June 23, 1997. Her weekly witty writings will be missed at the Plain Dealer.