

HONORING JAMES BOLAND OF WEST HAVEN AND ALL OTHER ALL-AMERICORPS AWARD WINNERS ON THE FIFTH ANNIVERSARY OF AMERICORPS

HON. ROSA L. DeLAURO

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, October 20, 1999

Ms. DeLAURO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize a special anniversary for this country. Five years ago, President Clinton and a bipartisan majority in Congress created the AmeriCorps program. Since then, more than 150,000 men and women have devoted 1 or 2 years of their lives to getting things done for America—making our people safer, and healthier.

AmeriCorps is a bold and innovative approach to building the American community through national service. In exchange for their service, AmeriCorps members receive expanded educational opportunities. In the end, Mr. Speaker, it is our nation that wins.

America has benefited from this service in a wide variety of ways. AmeriCorps members have helped to build or refurbish 11,000 homes for low-income people. They are tutoring children in some of our toughest neighborhoods—more than 2 million at-risk kids have benefited from these efforts. They have contributed to the unprecedented decline in crime rates nationwide by working with law enforcement to establish 40,000 safety patrols. And AmeriCorps members in the National Civilian Community Corps (NCCC) have gone to the sites of some of our Nation's worst natural disasters to provide assistance. There is an NCCC team on the ground today in North Carolina helping the victims of Hurricane Floyd.

As part of the AmeriCorps' fifth anniversary celebrating, 21 exceptional AmeriCorps members have been selected to receive the first annual All-AmeriCorps awards to honor exemplary community service. Awards were made in the following categories: Getting Things Done; Strengthening Communities; Common Ground; and Leadership.

One of the Getting Things Done award recipients is from West Haven, CT, in my district. His name is James Boland. Ten years ago, James was a homeless Vietnam veteran. Today, he is getting things done as a AmeriCorps member at the Veterans Administration's Connecticut Community Care Center—the very facility that took him in off the streets and saved his life 10 years ago.

The Community Care Center, or CCC for short, provides veterans struggling with mental illness, substance abuse, or homelessness with a continuation of community-based rehabilitation services. James is an important part of that care. He developed and oversees the CCC's mentoring and buddy programs, and he established and leads the monthly family dinners. He also conducts skills building group sessions for veterans in the CCC's day program. On top of all that, James works 20 hours a week as the property manager for four houses for homeless and mentally ill veterans—he is also the resident manager of one of the homes.

The CCC changed James's life. He has gone from living on the streets to being close to finishing his bachelor's degree from Charter

Oak State College. AmeriCorps will make it possible for him to continue this path of success. He plans to use his education award to go to graduate school.

Mr. Speaker, James Boland is proof positive of the value and success of the AmeriCorps program, not only for the opportunities it has given James, but for the care and compassion James has given to homeless vets. His is not an isolated story. Twenty other AmeriCorps members are being honored today. Let me briefly describe them and the categories of their awards:

GETTING THINGS DONE

Christine Packer was an AmeriCorps VISTA member and VISTA leader in Idaho. She helped start a statewide immunization effort that successfully boosted Idaho's immunization rate for 2-year-olds from 50 percent to more than 70 percent.

The highlight of Traci Chevaux's AmeriCorps service in Colorado was the creation of Smoke Free Sheridan. Traci brought together the local school district, school-based clinics, higher education institutions, faith based groups, the health department, community-based organizations, physicians and local residents to develop a program that would prevent and reduce the prevalence of smoking among school-aged children and their families in the town of Sheridan.

Lin Min Kong is an attorney who worked in South Central Los Angeles with low-income Thai immigrants and helped them turn a run-down old hotel into affordable housing with community space for social services, after-school programs, and computer skills development classes for children and families.

Toni Sage organized a tutoring and mentoring program at Parkview Elementary School in Salt Lake City. Alarmed by drug activity that was taking place two blocks away from the school, Toni worked together with her students, students from the University of Utah, and local community organizations, to turn the area into an urban green space.

STRENGTHENING COMMUNITIES

Jack Bridges did his AmeriCorps service in Americus, GA, his hometown. He built houses for low-income people for Habitat for Humanity and started a reading and tutoring program for the Habitat homeowners' children.

Scott Finn spent 2 years as an AmeriCorps member in Big Ugly Creek, WV. In his first year, he worked with community residents to turn an abandoned school into a community center, and in his second year, Scott helped start APPALREAD, a childhood literacy program. During APPALREAD's first year, 82 percent of the children served improved their reading scores.

Tera Oglesby served with the Seattle Police Department's Crime Survivor Services Unit. Together with another AmeriCorps member, Tera developed the first Victim Support Team for the Seattle Police Department.

Anna Severens served as an AmeriCorps member with the classroom-on-wheels, a free mobile pre-school program operating out of a converted school bus. Her work in raising money for the program and expanding client referrals resulted in doubling the capacity of the program.

Byrnadett Frerker has done 2 years of AmeriCorps service. She spent her first year establishing Literacy Avengers, a computer literacy program for middle school students. The students then taught computer skills to their

parents. She spent her second year fighting fires and doing hurricane relief work as part of the St. Louis Safety Corps.

COMMON GROUND

Christy Hicks established and supervised a conflict resolution program for middle school students in Pontiac, Michigan training students as peer mediators. She then worked to expand the program to elementary school students.

Mark Payne is an AmeriCorps member who served in his hometown on the south side of Chicago with City Year and Public allies. Mark helped develop a mentoring program that recruited young African-American males as volunteers and role models for youth in the community.

During Jamie Lee Manning's 2 years with AmeriCorps, she distinguished herself as a leader and team builder who organized a 3-day service project to honor and celebrate Dr. Martin Luther King. The project involved parents and children from the diverse San Jose, CA community.

Trampas Stucker was a high school athlete who was paralyzed in a motorcycle accident. That did not stop him from graduating with his class the following year and joining AmeriCorps as a reading and math tutor for economically disadvantaged kids in his hometown of Tonasket, Washington. He also worked with "The New Kids on the Block," a traveling puppet show that taught kids about acceptance and celebration of diversity in race, gender, cultures, and physical disabilities.

During her first term of AmeriCorps service, Graciela Noriega and a diverse team of AmeriCorps members were assigned to do parks and recreation activities with young people in Orlando, FL. When the community did not accept the group at first, Graciela created "Culture Shock" a program that brought a diverse group of guest speakers to the community to participate in activities with local youth, sharing their culture through food, music, dance, arts, crafts, and dialog.

LEADERSHIP

Kyoko Henson joined AmeriCorps as a way to give back to the Pittsburgh, PA, community for the support it gave her as a single mother who escaped an abusive relationship. During her AmeriCorps service, Kyoko organized outreach projects to address community health needs, spearheaded clothing drives, served as a reading tutor and educator about community services and created a summer youth program.

Kelton Young did his AmeriCorps service in Fort Worth, TX, as a TRUCE specialist, working with young people in gangs, or who were at risk of joining gangs, to make positive decisions about their lives. Kelton helped to develop 18 TRUCE sites, each serving more than 200 participants.

Mason Jenkins was an AmeriCorps member and team leader for YouthBuild in New Bedford, MA. In addition to his work with YouthBuild, Mason joined the steering committee of a group formed to address teen pregnancy. He also helped establish Young People United, a youth group that successfully put on a citywide conference called "The City is Mine", to bring young people together to discuss the issues that are most important to them.

Maria del Mar Bosch did her AmeriCorps service in Puerto Rico, where she helped to

set up training opportunities for America Reads tutors working with Head Start students and after-school programs for children in poverty.

Jason Lapeituu wanted to provide a safe and stable place for young people to feel accepted and to develop their hopes, dreams and goals for the future. As an AmeriCorps member, he made that happen in Pine Island, MN. He knew that in order for young people to be comfortable in the youth center of his dreams, they had to be a part of creating it. Working with local youth, Jason found a site, planned community events that raised start up funds and helped to renovate a laundromat into the Pine Island Union of Youth, Inc.

From the age of 15, Arthur White lived on his own, having grown up in poverty in an abusive home. After high school, he joined AmeriCorps and began serving with an environmental education program working with elementary aged students. With a dream of one day running his own environmental education center, Arthur was instrumental in the reactivation of the Nature Center at Bear Brook State Park in New Hampshire to provide park visitors with an opportunity to learn about the park environment.

Mr. Speaker, I know my colleagues in the House join me in honoring the contributions of these terrific people and the benefits AmeriCorps service has had for the country.

HONORING ROBERT GILLETTE

HON. KEN BENTSEN

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, October 20, 1999

Mr. BENTSEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor Robert Gillette for his outstanding contribution to the community and his twelve years of public service as Commissioner of the Port of Houston Authority, an organization representing 26 cities in Harris County.

Mr. Gillette retired this year, but his contributions to Harris County and the Port of Houston Authority will surely endure. From the day he was sworn in as a Commissioner of the Port of Houston, Mr. Gillette pledged to join his fellow commissioners in making the Port more competitive in difficult times for the maritime industry. Truly a man of his word, Mr. Gillette made good on that promise. For 6 terms without pay, he faithfully conducted his duties awarding contracts, acquiring property, setting port tariffs and directing operations with a keen eye toward keeping the Port of Houston viable and thriving.

It was under Mr. Gillette's tenure as Commissioner that the project to deepen and widen the Houston Ship Channel was undertaken. Marking the largest expansion of the Ship Channel in decades, Mr. Gillette and his fellow commissioners were able to bring together the environmental and business communities to get the job done.

Mr. Gillette graduated cum laude from the South Texas School of Law in 1941. He also served his country as an Army Air Corps aviation cadet. Before establishing a law practice, Gillette was assigned to the Judge Advocate Section at Kelly Field in San Antonio, Texas.

He left the service in 1946 as a first lieutenant and moved to Baytown to begin law practice with Reid, Strickland and Gillette. It was a

partnership that spanned 41 years, with Mr. Gillette serving as managing partner for 30 years.

In addition to his law practice, he was president of Bay Title Company and a director of Citizens Bank and Trust Company of Baytown for 25 years. Robert Gillette's professional affiliations include the Texas State Bar Association; Houston Bar Association; Baytown Bar Association and the Texas Bar Foundation.

As a testament to the expertise that Mr. Gillette brought to bear in both his business and public dealings, in the late 1980s, U.S. Attorney General Edwin Meese appointed Gillette to the People to People Citizens Ambassador Program.

Mr. Gillette also has an extensive record of community involvement. He was a member of the Board of Managers of City-County Hospital and has served as board member and president of the Baytown Area Water Authority since 1973. He and his wife, Suzzane, have three grown children.

Mr. Speaker, I congratulate my friend on his retirement and commend him on a job well done. As Port Commissioner, knowing that the fortunes of the Port influences the total employment picture of Harris County, Bob Gillette always strove to keep the Port a first-rate facility. We owe him a debt of gratitude for the work he has done addressing the concerns of our Port community, and thus the needs of all of Harris County.

CONGRATULATING PASCACK VALLEY HOSPITAL ON ITS 40TH ANNIVERSARY

HON. MARGE ROUKEMA

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, October 20, 1999

Mrs. ROUKEMA. Mr. Speaker, I rise to congratulate Pascack Valley Hospital on the 40th anniversary of its founding. Located in Westwood, Pascack Valley is one of the finest medical institutions in the State of New Jersey. Its story is one of a local community in desperate need of a hospital ready accessible to everyone and the people who worked through two wars and nearly two decades to achieve that goal.

Pascack Valley Hospital had its beginnings in May 1941 when Westwood resident Louise Bohlin was shocked that a Hillsdale friend died after waiting three weeks for admission to the nearest existing Bergen County hospital because of a shortage of beds. Mrs. Bohlin vowed that the Pascack Valley would have a hospital of its own and organized local physicians, mayors and concerned citizens into the Pascack Valley Hospital Association. The association held its first meeting November 27, 1941. Unfortunately, that meeting came only 10 days before the bombing of Pearl Harbor, and plans for a hospital were put on hold for the duration of World War II.

The end of World War II brought an influx of returning veterans and expanding families, and intensified interest in the need for a community hospital. The Pascack Valley Hospital Association was reorganized in 1946 but the Korean War intervened it was not until June 1 1959—18 years after the idea was born—that the single-story, 86-bed hospital opened its doors and welcomed its first patients. The

hospital has grown tremendously since then. Today, it is a full-service, 291-bed hospital providing a wide range of the most advanced, technically sophisticated health care services available anywhere. The PVH medical team consists of nearly 450 physicians, 1,000 nurses and other health professionals and 1,000 dedicated volunteers. Pascack Valley Hospital serves 16,000 inpatients and 70,000 outpatients a year, yet maintains its strong dedication to personalized care—making each individual feel he or she is the most important patient in the hospital.

As part of Well Care Group Inc., Pascack Valley Hospital itself is supplemented by an outpatient dialysis center, a community health care center, a hospice, a preventative medicine institute, a reproductive assistance center, a psychiatric institute and an MRI facility, among other services. In addition, it is affiliated with Westchester Medical Center, Hackensack University Medical Center and New York Medical College, further enhancing the expertise and facilities available to benefit PVH patients.

I would like to take this occasion to enlist the Congress in giving special thanks and recognition to some of the extraordinary individuals who will be honored at the hospital's 40th anniversary celebration this weekend. Perhaps most prominent is philanthropist Lillian Booth, whose generosity has helped fund an oncology center and a dialysis center bearing her name—along with two ambulances and a specialized ultrasound scanner—during her 20-year involvement with the hospital. In addition, Bernice Alexander, widow of the late Dr. Stewart Alexander, one of PVH's best-known physicians, will be honored for her many contributions. Mrs. Alexander served as a lieutenant colonel and director of nursing in the Mediterranean Theater during World War II and was decorated for her wartime work in epidemiology. President of the Women's National Republican Club in the 1950s, she was a prime organizer of Project Hope, raising funds for medical supplies for crippled nations after the war. Also being honored is Richard Galgano, whose position as hospital janitor might make him seem an unlikely honoree. Mr. Galgano, however, is the only employee of the hospital who has been with PVH throughout its entire 40-year history. His long employment is a testimony to loyalty and he is well known to generations of patients, doctors, nurses and staff.

Also being honored are six physicians affiliated with PVH from the beginning and still on the active staff: Dr. Joan Barrett, Robert Boyer, Frank Ferraro, Theodore Goldberg, Anthony Salerno and Arnold Sobel.

Recognition must also go to all board members and PVH President Louis Ycre, whose extraordinary leadership skills and compassionate concern for the well being of the patients set the standard for the entire staff.

A local hospital is one of the most basic protections for health and safety a community can be expected to offer, as vital as police and fire departments, clean drinking water, good roads and good schools. Those of us who remember what life was like for the injured or ill before Pascack Valley Hospital was founded don't have to imagine what life would be like without it. Pascack Valley Hospital has made a tremendous difference in our community.