

it was Dee Rowe '47 who seemed to capture the essence of Tom Blackburn: "I will always be grateful to Tom for distinguished service to Worcester Academy. He is an outstanding educator and a man of great honor and integrity."

As part of the celebration, a banner was hoisted commemorating Blackburn's coaching record at the Academy. It is a lofty record indeed. In addition to being the basketball coach with the most wins in the Academy's history (he has been at the helm for 395 of the 895 wins Worcester Academy has posted since 1917), coach Blackburn's team have also made impressive showings in the New England Class A Tournament Championships. Twenty-four of his twenty-six squads qualified for post-season play with eleven reaching the finals and seven earning championships. That's one championship team for every three-and-a-half years of coaching.

Tom Blackburn has also nurtured some great players over his quarter-century career. Former Boston Celtic player and current Indiana Pacers Assistant Coach Rick Carlisle '79, ex-LA Clipper Jeff Cross '80 and University of Maryland Center Obinna Ekezie '95 [as of fall '99, now of the NBA's Vancouver Grizzlies] come immediately to mind.

Morgan "Mo" Cassara '93, Tom's successor as basketball coach, commented, "My post-graduate year at WA was the greatest experience of my life athletically. Tom's discipline and style of coaching inspired me to become a coach too."

In 1995 Tom Blackburn was inducted into the Academy's Hall of Fame, evidence of his long-term impact and positive influence on its students and on the Academy as a whole.

Headmaster Dexter Morse reflected that, "Tom has been more than just a head coach and athletic director. He has been a wonderful representative of our school both in the Worcester community and in the greater independent school arena. He will always be known for his strong character, his dedication to teaching and his love for his family and his school. He is without question an inspiration to us all."

TRIBUTE TO RETIRED NATIONAL
WEATHER SERVICE CENTRAL
REGION DIRECTOR RICHARD P.
AUGULIS

HON. KAREN MCCARTHY

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, November 16, 1999

Ms. MCCARTHY of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Richard P. Augulis on the occasion of his retirement as Director of the National Weather Service Central Region headquartered in my Congressional District.

A 35-year employee of the National Weather Service, part of the Department of Commerce's National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, Mr. Augulis has always held public safety as the first priority in his career, whether as a forecaster or as an office and regional manager. He recently retired after 12 years as Director of the 14-state Central Region and is currently enjoying his retirement in Las Vegas, where he relocated to be near his family.

Mr. Augulis joined the National Weather Service in August 1961 as a Weather Bureau Student Trainee at WBAS Midway Airport in

Chicago while attending St. Louis University. He earned his Bachelor of Science in Meteorology in 1963 and added a Masters Degree in 1967. His distinguished career included a variety of forecasting and management positions with the National Weather Service in Salt Lake City, Utah; to Anchorage and Fairbanks, Alaska; Garden City, New York; and finally, to Kansas City.

As meteorologist in charge of the new Fairbanks Weather Forecast Office beginning in 1974, Mr. Augulis presided over a staff that operated service programs during the exciting and challenging times of the Trans-Alaska Pipeline construction.

Mr. Augulis' leadership was invaluable to employees during the mid 1970s transition from teletype machines to computers as the Automation of Field Operations (AFOS) communications network was implemented by the National Weather Service.

Mr. Augulis' last decade with the National Weather Service included the largest modernization and reorganization ever undertaken by the agency. He helped guide his Region through the introduction and implementation of state-of-the-art Doppler radar, computer-enhanced weather modeling and forecasting, and restructuring from more than 300 offices of varying sizes and capabilities to an efficient network of 123 Twenty-First Century Weather Forecast Offices across the United States.

Mr. Augulis served proudly as an employee and a manager of the National Weather Service. He is a distinguished executive branch employee whose accomplishments reflect credit on himself, the National Weather Service, and the United States of America.

Mr. Speaker, on this occasion, please join with me, his family, friends, and colleagues as we honor Richard P. Augulis on his retirement from the National Weather Service and on his outstanding contributions to our region.

A TRIBUTE TO AN AMERICAN
VETERAN—MR. JESSE CONTRERAS

HON. ROBERT A. UNDERWOOD

OF GUAM

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, November 16, 1999

Mr. UNDERWOOD. Mr. Speaker, last week on the last Veterans Day of this century, President Clinton recalled the honor, duty and sacrifice of those soldiers, sailors and airmen who did not make it back home to America. He articulated a point that is worth quoting, for it poignantly captures a notion that is often not realized.

President Clinton's impassioned address stated that:

[T]he young men and women who have died in defense of our country gave up not only the life they were living, but also the life they would have lived—their chance to be parents; their chance to grow old with their grandchildren. Too often when we speak of sacrifice, we speak in generalities about the larger sweep of history, and the sum total of our nation's experience. But it is very important to remember that every single veteran's life we honor today was just that—a life—just like yours and mine. A life with family and friends, and love and hopes and dreams, and ups and downs; a life that should have been able to play its full course.

Taking the President's words to heart and remembering our fallen heroes, I would like to

describe the life of a very special man who bravely fought for this nation, was wounded in combat, survived the ardors of war, and came home to live a long life as a husband, a father, and a grandfather.

Private, First Class (PFC) Jesse Contreras, a California native, was drafted into the United States Army as an infantryman during the Second World War. As a Mexican-American during the 1940s, he may not have been completely accepted by his country and may have been seen by some as a second-class citizen. Jesse Contreras held no grudges, however, and when his country called upon him to defend the very freedoms and rights that may not have been fully extended to him or his family, Jesse did not hesitate. After basic training, PFC Contreras was bound for Europe as part of the 104th Timberwolf Infantry Division, 413th Infantry Brigade, 3rd Battalion, Company "I", under the brilliant command of Major General Terry de la Mesa Allen, himself an Hispanic-American.

The Timberwolves entered the war in the Autumn of 1944 and had quickly become legendary for the ferocious fighting that took place and because the men quickly proved themselves as agile combatants against the deeply entrenched and veteran units of the German Wehrmacht in France. The Division was engaged in sustained combat for approximately 195 days across Northern France towards the German frontier. The Allies were methodically driving the German forces from France. It would be only a matter of time before the Allies would be fighting on German soil on the way to Berlin. As the vice closed in on Germany, Hitler and the German General Staff planned for one last offensive against the Allies.

The strong German offensive, launched the morning of December 16, 1944 became known as the "Ardennes Offensive" or "Battle of the Bulge" and the 104th was directed to prepare an all-out defense of its sector. This delayed the planned crossing of the Roer river until 3:30 a.m., February 23, 1945 when the major offensive action to reach Cologne was begun. The Rhine was reached on March 7, 1945 whereupon Time Magazine reported, "The Germans fought for the Roer River, between Aachen and Cologne, as if it were the Meuse, the Marne, and the Somme of the last war all rolled into one." It was in this final German offensive that PFC Contreras's story comes to light.

The 104th Division had been engaged in fierce combat from the Roer River to the Rhine in an attempt to repulse the German onslaught. During one particularly fierce fire fight, PFC Contreras was wounded from a German grenade. The wound was not too serious to prevent PFC Contreras from continuing to fight but he quickly found that Company "I" had become overrun by the Germans. Captured, he and his fellow Timberwolves found themselves face to face with the treacherous Nazi soldiers.

The head German officer ordered that all the Americans line up. The Nazi officer, who spoke English but with a thick German accent, went down the line of his American prisoners one by one to demand information from them. With submachine guns pointed at the men of Company "I", the German officer who held a lead pipe in hand began barking orders and interrogating his captors.

PFC Contreras as a Mexican-American spoke both English and Spanish but since

Spanish was his first language, he had trouble understanding the commands of the German officer. Believing that PFC Contreras was making fun of him or just being recalcitrant, the German officer struck him in the skull with the lead pipe, knocking him out. Before PFC Contreras and his fellow P.O.W.'s were moved to a German Camp, they were liberated by an advancing column of G.I.'s pushing back the Germans.

PFC Contreras was then transferred to a military hospital in England and eventually sent to recover in Ft. Houston, Texas. It was during his recovery that Germany had surrendered. PFC Contreras was soon discharged in September 1945 where upon he became Jesse Contreras, a civilian once again. For his wounds sustained through action with the enemy, PFC Contreras won the Purple Heart medal.

After the war, Jesse Contreras returned home to his wife and began raising his family. In 1998 Jesse passed away having lived a long and fruitful life full of stories, a beautiful wife and a big family that included 6 children, 16 grandchildren and 31 great-grandchildren. Jesse's legacy of service was passed along to subsequent generations of the Contreras family. His son Alfred Contreras became a U.S. Marine during the Vietnam War. And currently two of Jesse's grandchildren are in the Marine Corps while one other grandchild is about to become a Marine.

The life of this remarkable man was meaningful to me because as a little boy, he and his family lived across the street from us when my own family lived for a time, in Norwalk, California. His wife, Mary, and their family became especially close to us and they have always been helpful to us. In many ways I was a member of their family as well.

Jesse Contreras would entertain us for hours with many stories of his exploits during World War II. While he did not win the Congressional Medal of Honor he served his country selflessly and with honor like so many millions of other veterans. He was an average 24-year-old who was asked to do incredible things in the face of enemy fire and even risk his life for his country. It is all the more remarkable when you consider that like most men of his generation he was simply doing what was expected of him. In the years after the war, he remained in close contact with those survivors of Company "I" and attended many reunions of the 104th Timberwolves Association with his wife Mary.

Jesse was the typical veteran of World War II in that he fought for his country and asked little in return. He became a great family man whose influence extended to his neighbors like me. It was because of his experience as a wounded veteran struggling to keep a family afloat that helped make him strong of character and a role model for me. His sacrifice was part of a proud tradition of Mexican-Americans who fought with valor and patriotism during all of America's wars.

Mr. Speaker, this was one story about one life, among millions from that greatest of generations. It was a story about a regular family man who as a result of simply doing his duty shed his blood for his country. It was a story about a man who faced the incredible horrors of armed conflict and came home to raise a wonderful family. The United States was built by people like Jesse Contreras and is in many ways the land of the free because it is the home of the brave.

Mr. Speaker, I want to thank Mr. Contreras for his service to his country and for the kindness he showed me as a little boy. I want to also thank his wife Mary and her children who continue to be an inspiration for me for the strength and love of family that they continue to share to this very day. The world is a safer place because of the likes of Jesse Contreras and the millions of other American veterans. It was an honor to have known him and to have learned from him. May God bless his family and God bless the United States of America. Thank you.

TRIBUTE TO CARLOS BELTRÁN

HON. JOSÉ E. SERRANO

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, November 16, 1999

Mr. SERRANO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Mr. Carlos Beltrán, an outstanding Puerto Rican athlete and a very successful baseball player. On November 10, 1999, Carlos was selected as the 1999 American League Rookie of the Year by the Baseball Writers Association of America. Carlos previously was honored as the league's top rookie by Baseball America, the Sporting News, and Baseball Digest.

Born in Manati, P.R., Carlos turned in Rookie of the Year numbers, hitting at a .293 clip with 112 runs scored, 22 home runs and 108 RBIs. He became the first American League rookie to collect 100 RBIs in a season since Mark McGwire in 1987 (118) and the first big league rookie with 100 RBIs since Los Angeles' Mike Piazza in 1993 (112).

Mr. Speaker, Carlos was the Royals' 2nd-round pick in the 1995 June Free Agent Draft. He has never played a game at the Triple-A level, as he made the jump from Double-A Wichita to Kansas City in September of last season. The 22-year-old was second in the American League with 663 at-bats, tied for third with 16 outfield assists and was seventh with 194 hits. He led A.L. rookies in runs, hits, home runs, RBIs, multi-hit games (54), total bases (301), stolen bases (27) and on-base percentage (.337).

Carlos Beltrán established numerous Royals rookie records in 1999, as he produced one of the best all-around seasons of any player in club history with 22 homers, 27 stolen bases, 108 RBIs, 112 runs and 16 outfield assists.

Through his dedication, discipline, and success in baseball, Mr. Beltrán serves as a role model for millions of youngsters in the United States and Puerto Rico who dream of succeeding, like him, in the world of baseball.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating Mr. Carlos Beltrán for his contributions and dedication to baseball, as well as for serving as a role model for the youth of Puerto Rico and the U.S.A.

AFRICAN-AMERICAN INITIATIVE FOR MALE HEALTH IMPROVEMENT

HON. CAROLYN C. KILPATRICK

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, November 16, 1999

Ms. KILPATRICK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to call attention to a tragic health care crisis

that currently exists among African-American men in my state of Michigan, as well as across the nation, with regard to undiagnosed and undertreated chronic disease. Research has established that African-Americans exhibit a greater prevalence of chronic diseases than the general population—including diabetes, hypertension, eye disease and stroke. And African-American men often suffer disproportionately.

For example, diabetes is the leading cause of morbidity and mortality in African-American men. Persons affected by diabetes suffer higher rates (often double) of serious preventable complications, including blindness, lower extremity amputation and end-stage renal disease. Poorly controlled diabetes is also a "gateway" condition in that it leads to cardiovascular disease (including hypertension), accounting for more than two-thirds of diabetes-related deaths. These unnecessary deaths are due to underlying atherosclerotic cardiovascular disease and result in heart attacks.

Uncontrolled diabetes progressively leads to deterioration in health status, poorer quality of life, and ultimately, premature mortality. It is increasingly clear that serious measures must be implemented in the short-term to address the chronic disease health crisis affecting African-American men in Michigan and to turn these troubling statistics around for the longer term.

Scientific studies show that these complications are preventable, and measures to implement prevention plans must be taken now. As the Federal Government evaluates the investment it should make in this particularly important area of minority and community health, I would strongly encourage cultivating partnerships with integrated health systems in the private sector who have years of substantive experience in designing highly effective community-based health programs.

I have recently become aware of the successful efforts of the Henry Ford Health System in Detroit, MI, to address the crisis through the establishment of the African-American Initiative for Male Health Improvement (AIM-HI). AIM-HI is reaching out with screening and assistance for people who suffer prevalent chronic diseases. AIM-HI provides test results, patient education and participant referrals, monitoring appointment compliance and providing assistance with finding treatment for underinsured participants who test positive. The locus of AIM-HI program services is in the Metropolitan Detroit area, where 75 percent of the Michigan target population resides. In order to reach the largest number of people in the African-American male population, AIM-HI provides program services throughout the community at churches, community centers, senior centers, parks, barber shops, union halls, and fraternal organization halls.

In addition to screening, educational, and treatment access services, AIM-HI is also developing a tool to evaluate the quality of health care delivered to African-American men with diabetes and other chronic diseases. This "report card" assesses health care quality and effectiveness across a set of performance indicators that have been developed jointly by a panel of experts and community representatives. This initiative, sponsored by the Henry Ford Health System, is now in an embryonic stage and has had to confine itself to a narrow target population and program scope due to limited resources. Yet, it is resoundingly clear