

She has served as a role model for her family and fellow community members. She is described as a "woman of strong moral values, great strength, integrity and dignity."

Mrs. Ruth C. Gist has five children all of whom I have had the privilege to interact with professionally and socially. She has five grandchildren, and five great-grandchildren. In addition, she has served as a surrogate parent to numerous other children in her church and local community all of whom she tries to serve by precept and example.

Because of her selfless devotion and tireless community service, Mrs. Gist's, church family, and the citizens of Union County have deemed it appropriate to recognize her for her years of unselfish service.

Mr. Speaker, I ask you and my colleagues to join me in congratulating Mrs. Gist on this momentous day, Mrs. Ruth C. Gist Day, in Union County, South Carolina. I wish her good luck and Godspeed.

ON INTRODUCTION OF BILL THAT PAYS TRIBUTE TO STEVEN PINIAHA

HON. MARGE ROUKEMA

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 20, 2002

Mrs. ROUKEMA. Mr. Speaker, I rise to introduce a bill that pays tribute to an especially brave man from New Jersey, Private First Class Steven Piniha. This bill would authorize the President to award Private Piniha, the Congressional Medal of Honor, for his gallantry in action near Pirkenbrunn, Germany, on April 25, 1945. For his courageous and selfless actions on the battlefield, this man is truly a great American patriot.

In response to the call of duty, Private Piniha was unable to dislodge a force of enemy riflemen from their dug-in positions on a hillside with tank fire. Private Piniha dismounted his tank and boldly stormed the hill. Although twice thrown to the ground by concussion grenades he continued forward until he was mere yards from the enemy and then forced the surrender of twelve of the enemy. Private Piniha's fearless courage, dauntless initiative and devotion to duty reflect credit on himself and are in keeping with the highest military traditions.

After leaving the service, Mr. Piniha, spent a quarter of a century coaching little league baseball and football. He is married and has eight grownup children. He is currently retired.

Although the American colonists were victorious in the revolutionary war 219 years ago, the American pursuit of liberty did not end there. Throughout the past 2 centuries, young Americans like Private Piniha have fought to preserve our country's values both inside and outside its borders. In this struggle, one of our most valuable resources has been our soldiers and their dedication to upholding American ideals.

This July 4th, when we celebrate the birth of our beloved nation and all it means to us, we must acknowledge the brave and selfless actions of dedicated American soldiers like Private Piniha. Through his courageous military service, Private Piniha has done his part to ensure that America may celebrate its independence year after year.

I urge support for this bill that honors Private Piniha's contribution to American military history. Thanks to brave soldiers like Private Piniha, we retain our freedom and we protect democracy around the world. I ask all my colleagues to join me in commending Private Piniha's sacrifice for our nation.

HONORING ERNEST R. GRECCO

HON. BENJAMIN L. CARDIN

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 20, 2002

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Ernest R. Grecco, an extraordinary leader and community activist who serves as President of the Metropolitan Baltimore Council AFL-CIO Unions. Mr. Grecco is recognized for his commitment to "the right of all working people to join unions" and his ongoing work in serving the Baltimore area.

Mr. Grecco's distinguished involvement with the labor movement has flourished since his initial engagement while working for Calvert Distilleries. Ernest Grecco's perseverance and open mindedness have allowed him to rise through the ranks of AFL-CIO Unions leadership. First serving as the COPE Director of the Metropolitan Baltimore Council AFL-CIO Unions in 1976, he became the director of the Maryland State and District of Columbia branch of this organization in 1983. Then in 1987, as a result of his genuine dedication to bettering the lives of people, Mr. Grecco advanced to his current role as the President of Metropolitan Baltimore division of this organization.

Since then, Ernest Grecco has maintained his commitment in providing services to working people. His support for the Community Service division of the Metropolitan Baltimore Council AFL-CIO Unions has strengthened projects in areas of education, job placement and community action.

However, his message of hard work, dedication and justice is not confined to the labor movement. Ernest Grecco is extensively involved in all facets of the community. Not only is he the Secretary of the United Way Board of Directors, but Mr. Grecco also serves as a member of the Private Industry Council, the Governor's Work Force Investment Board and the Empower Baltimore Committee, among countless other distinguished organizations.

Through all his public service, Mr. Grecco has distinguished himself in the state of Maryland. He proclaimed that "Labor is alive and well in Maryland" and works hard each day to improve the lives of workers.

In July, Mr. Grecco will be celebrating his 60th birthday with family and friends. I urge my colleagues to join me in honoring Mr. Ernest R. Grecco for his service to the AFL-CIO Unions and devotion to the people of Maryland.

CONGRATULATING THE WILLIAMS SISTERS

HON. MAXINE WATERS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 20, 2002

Ms. WATERS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the Williams sisters on their mag-

nificent play during the 2002 French Open. The two sisters, Venus and Serena, met recently in the finals of the French Open and provided an exciting game for us to watch. In the end, Serena defeated her big sister in straight sets, 7-5, 6-3 to become champion. It was a great match and I look forward to watching them compete in the future. I would not be surprised to see them competing against each other in other finals over the next few years.

Recently, Venus was ranked number one in the world by the Women's Tennis Association. And Serena was ranked number two. It is the first time sisters have ever held the top two spots in the world. It is quite an accomplishment.

Venus and Serena have dominated the tennis scene since they arrived in 1994 and 1997, respectively. Together, they have won over 27 tournaments and six grand slam titles. When Venus won the 2000 Wimbledon championship, she became the first female black champion since 1958 when Althea Gibson won the title. In the same year, she teamed up with her sister to win the doubles championship. Venus went on to win Wimbledon last year and is the top ranked woman this year. She also won the Olympic gold medal for singles and doubles in the Sydney Games. To win the Olympic doubles gold medal, she paired up with Serena. The two sisters overwhelmed the competition with power and hard work, winning the gold medal match 6-1, 6-1. With that victory, Venus became the first woman, since 1924, to win the gold in singles and doubles competition.

Serena is also quite accomplished. She has fifteen career wins under her belt. As I mentioned, she won her second Grand Slam title at the French Open this year, her first coming at the 1999 U.S. Open. When she won that title, Serena became the lowest seed to win the women's title in the Open era. She is ranked number two at Wimbledon this year.

So it appears that most expect the sisters to reach the Wimbledon finals this year. If it does happen, it would be the third all-Williams Grand Slam final in 10 months. And their seventh championship in the past 12 Grand Slam singles events.

In closing, I wish Venus and Serena the best of luck at Wimbledon and offer my sincere congratulations to them for their remarkable achievements.

TRIBUTE TO BROOKLAND BAPTIST CHURCH

HON. JAMES E. CLYBURN

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 20, 2002

Mr. CLYBURN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Brookland Baptist Church, of West Columbia, South Carolina, on the occasion of their Centennial year.

This Sunday, June 23, 2002, will be Brookland Baptist Church's Men's Day Celebration during which they will celebrate 100 years of Christian service. Although this church—as many others—is made of bricks and mortar, to its community it symbolizes the body of Christ. In times of need, Brookland Baptist has been, and continues to be, a place of comfort and support. In times of joy, it has

been and is a gathering place for families and friends to join in celebration. Every day, and in every way this church has been a place of sanctity and worship. Brookland Baptist's entire church family is to be commended for its commitment and service.

Brookland Baptist Church not only has demonstrated great love and loyalty to its community, but also has shown its resilience and strength over the years. This prominent church in West Columbia started out with modest roots. In the 1800's, Brookland Baptist Church held its first meetings in the home of Mrs. Francis Millage. But from this modest beginning, the members—with faith in their hearts—were able to construct Brookland's first church edifice in Triangle City, West Columbia, in 1902. Since that time the church moved twice in order to have space for its growing congregation. Today the Church has a 2,200 seat sanctuary, and will break ground next year on a new Family Life Center. The church currently has 4,500 members in their congregation.

Mr. Speaker, I ask you and my colleagues to join me in recognizing Brookland Baptist Church for its dedication and commitment, endless faith and devotion, and the love and contributions it has shown to the community of West Columbia. Congratulations on this latest milestone in its rich history. May God continue to bless the good works of this great Church and smile upon each of its outstanding members.

A TRIBUTE TO ADAM N. HASKINS

HON. EDOLPHUS TOWNS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 20, 2002

Mr. TOWNS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of Adam N. Haskins and his commitment to service.

From an early age, Adam focused on education, personal growth, spirituality, and serving his community. After receiving his high school diploma from Brooklyn College Academy, he will pursue a Computer Science degree at Central Connecticut State University.

Mr. Haskins has always been very involved in extra-curricular activities at school. He was a member of the Leadership Team, participated in a walk-a-thon for the March of Dimes, the Toys for Tots drive and many school fundraising drives. Adam has also received many awards including the National Commemorative Certificate in the Arts from the United States Achievement Academy. The New York Metropolitan Museum of Art honored him with the Saint Gauden's medal for visual arts.

Adam's mother, Peggy, inspired him to get involved in his community. He was a valuable intern in my Brooklyn district office. During his internship, he was involved in many community projects including the Toy Gun Exchange, the community Christmas Tree lighting, town hall meetings, and health forums. He was also closely involved with Congressman Towns' Youth Initiative.

Mr. Speaker, Adam N. Haskins is a fine young man who has an outstanding record of achievement in his school and in his community. I urge all of my colleagues to join me in honoring this remarkable person.

NATIONAL SERVICE DAY

HON. JOHN B. LARSON

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 20, 2002

Mr. LARSON of Connecticut. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of National Service Day, celebrated every year on June 20, but more important to Americans this year than ever before.

Following the events of September 11, I, like many Americans, felt the need to respond not only with my checkbook but also with my actions. Indeed, many of us felt a yearning to find meaning in those tragic events by actively participating in our nation's healing process; and we came together in a way that many of us had not seen in generations.

Long before that horrifying day, President John F. Kennedy captured what so many of us felt in the wake of our national disaster. He pointed to the need Americans have always had to participate in spreading America's values of freedom, justice and opportunity around the world. "We have, in this country," he said, "an immense reservoir of men and women anxious to sacrifice their energies and time and toil to the cause of world peace and human progress . . . knowing that he or she is sharing in the great common task of bringing to man that decent way of life which is the foundation of freedom and a condition of peace." Americans since September 11 have indeed responded to that calling and contributed their share in our nation's, and the world's, rejuvenation.

Yet they have learned what many Americans have known all along: that service benefits not only the recipient of the deed, but the giver as well, in ways far less tangible, but perhaps even more meaningful. Service has always been an answer to man's quest for purpose and meaning in life, elevating him, bringing him closer to people from different backgrounds and teaching him that the world can be improved even through the small acts of individuals. Thus, when President John F. Kennedy asked Americans not to be dependent on our country, but rather to do for our country, we understood what he meant because we knew the value of national service. Our appreciation of its enriching nature ensured our overwhelming response to his call.

AmeriCorps is perhaps the most celebrated example of the drive Americans have always had to lend a hand to those in need. Since it was initiated by President Clinton in 1993, more than 250,000 men and women have served in AmeriCorps, providing needed assistance to millions of Americans, particularly in tutoring programs. The Corporation for Public Management, an independent evaluator, found that students tutored by AmeriCorps members completed their homework 67 percent more often, and 75 percent of those students improved the quality of their homework as well. In my district, in the last year alone, AmeriCorps provided in-school and after-school tutoring to 250 children in five elementary schools in order to improve children's language arts performance. The Corps members in my district also tutored 300 disadvantaged students and parents at homework centers and engaged youth in service-learning projects. AmeriCorps, however, is just one of many organizations in my district that I look to as inspiring examples of community service.

The Connecticut Commission on National and Community Service is another shining example, dedicated to incorporating volunteerism into a positive personal experience to strengthen communities. Based in Hartford, the Commission envisions a Connecticut in which every citizen embraces the ethic of community service. Through a multitude of service opportunities, individuals will understand the social needs of their communities and will embark on fulfilling their most American of wishes—to help others. By recognizing this opportunity to serve, barriers that have hindered a sense of community will be lifted, and citizens across age, ethnic, racial, and economic strata will come together around a common good.

It is therefore incumbent on us here in Congress to do all we can to encourage service in this time when so many Americans are yearning for ways to do their share and find scraps of meaning in the rubble of September 11. Now, more than ever, we can expose young people to the uplifting value of serving their community and their nation.

Therefore, I join supporters of national service across the country by calling on my colleagues and on President Bush to expand American's national service programs, such as AmeriCorps. Congressmen FORD and OSBORNE introduced the "Call to Service Act" which seeks to quintuple AmeriCorps service openings to 250,000, expand senior service, create a "citizen soldier" for short term military enlistments, and increase the involvement of college work study participants in community service. We must act to pass that legislation and its companion in the Senate in order to ensure that the opportunity to participate in service be available to all Americans. Similarly, the Senate Armed Services Committee has reported legislation creating a citizen soldier option. We must take up these pieces of legislation and move forward so that national service can become not just a special chance for a few but a way of life for all Americans.

At a time when Americans from all walks of life are asking what they can do to help make our nation safer, stronger and better, national service offers an answer that points us towards a higher politics of individual and national purpose.

CONGRATULATING THE BOROUGH OF OAKLAND ON ITS ANNIVERSARY

HON. MARGE ROUKEMA

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 20, 2002

Mrs. ROUKEMA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the Borough of Oakland on the occasion of its 100th anniversary. Oakland, New Jersey is a valley community nestled in the foothills of the Ramapo Mountains. It has become community known for its dedication to its people, programs, and the preservation of its history and natural resources. The warmth and intimacy of this small town make Oakland a true treasure in an industrial region. This weekend, the Borough of Oakland will begin their town-wide celebration of its 100th anniversary with a gala celebration, starting with a family picnic and concluding with a wonderful fireworks display at dusk. I am proud to recognize this wonderful event and community in Northern New Jersey.