

For the past 47 years, Reverend Ralph E. Brower has been a tireless advocate on behalf of his community and congregation, ensuring that no one in the community is left behind. A true leader, Rev. Brower has served for the past 27 years as president of the Interdenominational Ministerial Alliance, and the past 25 years as chaplain for Hudson County. He has served in several city administrations, and is currently the president of the United Black interdenominational Clergy (VBIC) of New Jersey, the state's largest African-American clergy organization.

His selfless actions have not gone unnoticed, and he has been honored by New Jersey's Urban League, the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People of New Jersey, and the New Jersey State Federation of Colored Women's Clubs.

The fourth of six children, Rev. Brower was born and raised in North Carolina, but decided to make New Jersey his home. He is a graduate of the Laurinburg Institute and Kettle College of North Carolina, attended Florida State Christian College in Fort Lauderdale, Florida, earned his Bachelor of Arts degree from Jersey City State College, and his Doctorate of Sacred Theology from the Baltimore Bible College.

Rev. Brown is married to Alberta Hazel Brower, and they are the proud parents of three children: two sons, Ralph, Jr. and Ronald, and one daughter, Denise.

Today, I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring Reverend Ralph E. Brower for close to 50 years of service as a leader and senior pastor to the Jersey City community. Let us all join together and take this opportunity to honor an exceptional man, setting an outstanding example for our community. Thank you Rev. Brower for all that you do.

CONGRATULATING J.S. WEST FAMILY AS 2002 AGRICULTURAL HALL OF FAME INDUCTEE

HON. GEORGE RADANOVICH

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, November 22, 2002

Mr. RADANOVICH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the J.S. West family for receiving the 2002 Agricultural Hall of Fame Inductee Award at the Stanislaus County Ag Foundation's Agricultural Hall of Fame Ceremony in Modesto, California on December 5, 2002. This notable group of Stanislaus County Legends of Agriculture honors individuals and families who have worked to make agriculture the county's number one industry.

The Agricultural Hall of Fame members sacrifice and labor to produce crops from poultry and livestock to fruits and vegetables. These members and their families have made a mark on the Central Valley's local agricultural industry and community, as well as influenced the state, nation, and the world.

In 1909, J.S. West and Company began with the purchase of the Merced Milling building and a lease of land from the Southern Pacific Railroad in Modesto, California. James West worked with farmers on yearly contracts and sold sacked grain to brokers and customers. As the business grew, the family diversified into coal, wood, and fertilizers. After a fire destroyed the feed mill in the 1950's, a

modern feed mill was built to supply feed to the poultry and cattle industry. This resulted in a full line of retail stores that are now carrying their supplies. The J.S. West family expanded upon their enterprise by making ice, selling fuel oil, operating an automobile service station and tire shop, and they recently closed a furniture store which they had operated since 1950.

The family also developed an egg contracting business in the 1950's, and today its members are still heavily involved in the poultry and egg industry at both state and national levels. The West family packs eggs for over sixty labels and frozen liquid eggs in their Hilmar processing plant. From feed to eggs and ice to propane, the West family continues to make a difference in the agricultural industry worldwide.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the J.S. West family for earning the 2002 Agricultural Hall of Fame Inductee Award. I urge my colleagues to join me in wishing the J.S. West family many years of continued success.

HONORING THE YALE-NEW HAVEN TEACHERS INSTITUTE ON THEIR 25TH ANNIVERSARY

HON. ROSA L. DeLAURO

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, November 22, 2002

Ms. DELAURO. Mr. Speaker, it is with great pleasure that I rise today to join the New Haven and Yale University communities in celebrating the 25th anniversary of the Yale-New Haven Teachers Institute—a unique and highly successful partnership between the New Haven Public School System and Yale University.

I have often spoke about the importance of education and the vital role it plays in our communities—especially for our urban youth. Today, it is more important than ever for our nation's teachers to have access to the skills and resources they need to prepare our children for the future. That is the mission of the Yale-New Haven Teachers Institute. For a quarter of a century, the Institute has been providing area educators with the opportunity to strengthen themselves professionally through annual seminars in the humanities and sciences. In addition, the Institute works with program participants to bring the curriculum and lessons of the seminars to the classroom. The teachers who have participated in this program have demonstrated a unique commitment to our young people. These are educators who are truly dedicated to ensuring that our children—our future—have the talented and creative teachers they need and deserve.

Just four years ago, the Institute forged ahead with a new goal. With just over one million dollars in grant funding, the Institute set out to replicate its program in four other cities across the country. This venture has been a success and has proven that the partnerships that are fostered between local public schools and universities can and will enrich the lives of our young people. New Haven has certainly benefited from this tremendous organization which has not only touched the lives of so many teachers, but countless numbers of our children. The Institute has earned a distin-

guished reputation and has been recognized at every level of government as a model for all communities.

For all that they have given to the families and children of New Haven and for all of their good work across the country, I am proud to stand today to extend my sincere congratulations to the Yale-New Haven Teachers Institute as they celebrate their 25th Anniversary.

THANKING MY CONGRESSIONAL STAFF

HON. GEORGE W. GEKAS

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, November 22, 2002

Mr. GEKAS. Mr. Speaker, the end of a congressional career brings about many emotions. Over the last twenty years I have happily spent representing the fine people of the 17th Congressional District of Pennsylvania I have had the pleasure of working with thousands of constituents, local, state and federal officials, and many former and current distinguished members of the U.S. House of Representatives and the U.S. Senate. To all of them I say, thanks for working with me towards a better America.

And, of course, every Member of Congress works with many, many competent staff, from the staff in their own personal offices to the Committee and Subcommittee staff and the leadership and floor staff. It has often been said that without staff where would this institution be? And I concur with that statement, for without the many fine staff with whom I have had good fortune to work, I and other Members of Congress of the United States would be far worse off. While I cannot mention all the fine staff who have worked with me over the years, let me at least mention the current personal and subcommittee staffers who have endeavored to achieve our common goals and to whom I give my hearty thanks and wish them well in their future careers.

In my Harrisburg district office, Arlene Eckels, my long-time personal secretary who has worked for me since the early days in the Pennsylvania State Senate and to whom I wish a happy and much deserved retirement; Tom Templeton, my hardworking district director, who so ably kept my entire district staff working smoothly; Suzanne Stoll, and old friend and superb caseworker; Paul Giannaris, whose ability to handle INS problems has made him invaluable; and Tim Vollrath, a recently returned former employee whose military and veterans help has been superb. In our Lebanon Office, Reg Nyman has been the voice of Lebanon for these many years, and his excellent knowledge and service will be missed. And in our Elizabethtown office, Susan Melendez has kept out Lancaster County constituents well served by her kind and efficient manner. Over the last twenty years my district office staff has handled hundreds of thousands of phone calls and constituent casework requests. A superb record by a superb staff.

My Washington office staff have proven themselves time and time again, regularly going beyond the call of duty. (The tally of my hundreds of legislative measures, nearly 30 Public Laws, thousands of office meetings and countless committee and other initiatives over

the years speaks truth to that assertion.) First, on my personal staff, Patrick Sheehan, my Counsel and Legislative Director, has been a dynamic and intelligent thinker and leader, who offered sage advice on immigration, military and veterans affairs; Greg Helman, my Senior Legislative Counsel kept pace with my many Judiciary and legislative demands, especially bankruptcy reform and appropriations (as I would expect from a Palmyra, PA native); Becky Smith, my office manager and health legislative assistant, kept my schedule and personal affairs humming along smoothly and ably managed my most favorite of projects, the Congressional Biomedical Research Caucus of which I was founder and Co-Chairman; David Greineder, who did a multitude of duties as my talented systems manager, legislative correspondent and Legislative Assistant covering education and labor issues; Bill Tighe, another LC and Legislative Assistant whose insights into the Agriculture and Natural Resources needs of Pennsylvania and the district were more than invaluable, they were accurate; Mike Shields, my recent press secretary extraordinaire, who did an excellent job under difficult situations; and, of course, Allan Cagnoli, my long time Chief of Staff from Hershey, PA, a superb leader of the office and jack-of-all-trades who kept the office running and productive no matter what the crisis.

My Judiciary Subcommittee on Immigration, Border Security and Claims, of which I was Chairman, was ably staffed by George Fishman, Lora Ries, Art Arthur, Cynthia Blackston and Emily Sanders, as well as Brian Zimmer of the full Committee staff. They handled the extremely important legislation necessitated by the new domestic and international threats we now face. Their assistance to me during the challenges of this year is impossible to measure. The House of Representatives has much to look forward to with their continued work.

And last but not least, is the Subcommittee on Commercial and Administrative Law, of which I was a member this last Congress but on which I served as Chairman from 1994–2000. On this subcommittee we dealt with the hundreds of regulator reform issues developed by the Republican Majority through the Contract With America and following initiatives. My major Bankruptcy Reform measure began with me in this subcommittee; Administrative Law Judges; Legal Services Reform; the Federal Agency Compliance Act; The Regulatory Fair Warning Act; Executive Orders; Internet Tax reform; the Federal Arbitration Act; Interstate Compacts; the Independent Counsel Act; and many, many other topics. While bankruptcy reform took center stage, there was no end to the amount of topics and work my staff and I pursued. For this I thank them, the current and former staffers of the subcommittee, for all their exceptional work: Chief Counsel Ray Smietanka, who has worked with me as my chief committee counsel since I came to the 98th Congress in 1983; Susan-Jensen Conklin, whose superb work on bankruptcy reform got us where we are today; Rob Tracci, formerly of the Subcommittee, was an invaluable source of assistance; and all the other members of the CAL staff who have helped this Member of Congress over the many productive years. I thank them all for their work to the Nation and me.

To all I have mentioned, and those who I have regrettably not, please accept my sincere

thanks for making my tenure in the United States House of Representatives a productive and pleasant one. Any current Member of Congress or Committee would be well served by the high-quality staff with whom it has been my pleasure to work over these many years.

HONORING JOHN KORREY

HON. BOB SCHAFFER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, November 22, 2002

Mr. SCHAFFER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor John Korrey of Iliiff, CO, who recently received the 2002 World Champion Livestock Auctioneer title.

John is an extraordinary auctioneer, a skill that is highly admired in eastern Colorado. His talent helps ranchers earn top dollar for their stock. In fact, John has received other top accolades for his talent, including the Greater Midwest Champion Livestock Auctioneer in 2002 and International Champion Livestock Auctioneer in 1998. John is only one of four individuals globally to hold these three titles.

John Korrey is a native of Iliiff, CO. Raised as a family farmer and rancher, John now runs Korrey Auctions, his own business, and is partner in Premier Livestock Exchange. At home, John enjoys farming with his wife Janna and his daughters Heidi and Lacey.

Mr. Speaker, I congratulate John Korrey and ask the House of Representatives to join me in wishing him success as World Champion Livestock Auctioneer.

HONORING THE RETIREMENT OF MR. AL AKERS

HON. TOM DAVIS

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, November 22, 2002

Mr. TOM DAVIS of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to honor Mr. Al Akers upon his retirement as President of the Occoquan Watershed Coalition on December 1, 2002.

Mr. Akers' resume and accomplishments speak for themselves. He holds masters degrees in both business administration and international relations, and he is a graduate of the Advanced Management Programs at the Claremont Graduate School and the University of Southern California. After retiring from the U.S. Army as a major general, Mr. Akers helped launch two companies and was the executive director of a non-profit organization.

Not only does Mr. Akers have an impeccable career on paper, he has had a great and tangible impact on his community. In 1993, he served as chairman of the Superintendent's Community Advisory Counsel for Fairfax County Public Schools. Then, in 1995, he was selected as Lord Fairfax for the Springfield District, and also became a member of the Task Force on Fairfax County Resources and Expenditures. Mr. Akers served as a member of the Lorton Task Force from 1995–1997 and as vice chairman of the Springfield District Council. In addition to serving as vice chairman of this council, Mr. Akers was, and remains a member.

Perhaps one of his most significant contributions has been his work with the Occoquan Watershed Coalition, an all-volunteer organization committed to the protection of "The Downzoned Occoquan Watershed" and drinking water it provides. Mr. Akers served as vice president of the Occoquan Watershed Coalition from 1994–1999, in addition to serving as the coalition's representative to the Fairfax County Federation of Citizen's Association since 1995.

It is his tenure as President of the Occoquan Watershed Coalition we recognize today.

Mr. Speaker, in closing, it is with great pleasure that I extend a wholehearted thank you to Mr. Al Akers. His contributions to Virginia and his community have been great. Virginia is proud to have such a distinguished citizen in its professional and social community. I call upon my colleagues to join me in applauding him for all that he has done.

LEBANESE INDEPENDENCE DAY

HON. ELIOT L. ENGEL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, November 22, 2002

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commemorate, but not celebrate Lebanon's Independence Day. Fifty-nine years ago, Lebanon gained its independence from France. Yet, today, Lebanon is no longer a sovereign and independent country. With 25,000 Syrian troops occupying Lebanon, it remains firmly in the grip of Damascus, without the ability to conduct its own affairs without first seeking the approval of the Assad regime.

More than 2 years ago, Israel completely withdrew its armed forces from southern Lebanon. This withdrawal was certified by the United Nations. The time is long past due for Syria to leave, as well, and for the Lebanese to run Lebanon.

As the author of the Syria Accountability Act, I thank the 172 members of the U.S. House of Representatives and the 45 members of the Senate who joined as cosponsors of our legislation. We have together shined a bright light on the injustice of the continuing Syrian occupation of Lebanon and have only added to the growing campaign to liberate Lebanon.

So, on this 59th anniversary of Lebanese independence, I stand with the Lebanese people who seek freedom and democracy for their beautiful country and peace for the entire region. It is my hope that some time soon, Lebanese Independence Day will not only be a commemoration, but will once again be a celebration.

HONORING PATTI REILLY

HON. GEORGE RADANOVICH

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, November 22, 2002

Mr. RADANOVICH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of Patti Reilly upon her retirement as Mariposa County District I Supervisor. Patti Reilly has shown her dedication to the citizens of Mariposa and District I through years of active involvement and leadership.