

ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF BARBARA WILLIAMS-SKINNER

HON. ELEANOR HOLMES NORTON

OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 15, 2002

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, I rise to acknowledge, with praise and admiration, Dr. Barbara Williams-Skinner, president of the Skinner Leadership Institute (SLI). Dr. Williams-Skinner has just earned her Doctor of Divinity degree at Howard University while continuing to make generous contributions to the residents of the District of Columbia and to our country. Dr. Skinner was a very effective former executive director of the Congressional Black Caucus, and continues to play an important role in coordinating the Caucus Foundation's Prayer Breakfast, which annually brings together more than 3000 African American leaders in government, business, and entertainment from across the country.

Most recently, under Barbara Skinner's leadership, SLI has helped to prepare hundreds of District youth to become leaders by emphasizing to teenagers the importance of equipping themselves with tools necessary to make important contributions in a new global community. She chairs the Community Equity Empowerment Partnership and Urban Leadership Academy, a program designed to mobilize young citizens to rebuild urban communities through a comprehensive educational-based leadership development initiative. This training program assists youngsters in maximizing their career potential by offering them long-term employment and economic opportunities. Since Fall 2000, the Urban Leadership Academy has trained approximately 500 youth from grades 9 through 12 at Ballou and Anacostia High Schools in the District of Columbia. SLI has also provided financial and technical support to four learning centers throughout the District, serving over 250 students.

Barbara Williams-Skinner's service to the youth of the District of Columbia builds upon the vision she shared with her late husband, Tom Skinner, a renowned evangelist and champion in the struggle against racism, who dedicated his life to promoting morality and understanding among young people. Just as Tom Skinner attempted to bridge the gap between black and white faith communities, Barbara Williams-Skinner continues their joint legacy, finding new and innovative ways to minister to a diverse array of cultures.

Most notable among Dr. Skinner's other significant contributions to the District is her service to Howard University. Dr. Skinner has been intimately involved with the campus ministry at Howard, helping students organize prayer groups and community service activities. She continues to encourage Howard University students to volunteer as mentors to young people in the city's poorest wards. After years of such efforts at Howard, it is most appropriate that she has recently received her Doctorate of Ministry degree from its School of Divinity last Sunday.

Mr. Speaker, I ask the House to join me in honoring Dr. Barbara Williams-Skinner, whose dedication and energy continue to make a significant impact on the youth of the District of Columbia and on our Nation.

TEACHERS OF SELMA OLINDER ELEMENTARY SCHOOL HONORED FOR THEIR DEDICATION AND COMMITMENT TO ACHIEVING ACADEMIC SUCCESS FOR ALL

HON. ZOE LOFGREN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 15, 2002

Ms. LOFGREN. Mr. Speaker, I rise during National Teacher Appreciation Week to honor the teachers at Selma Olinder Elementary School for their outstanding and tireless efforts to raise academic achievement levels for all students at the school.

Selma Olinder Elementary School is a K-5, inner-city school in downtown San Jose, California with 67% of its student population being English-language learners, meaning that their primary language at home is something other than English. Also, 77% of the student population is identified statistically as "disadvantaged" and qualifies for the federal free lunch program.

From 1999 through 2001, as a result of the diligence of the teachers and their commitment to the "Success For All" reading program, the number of students reading at or above grade level increased by over 14% and within this same period, the Academic Performance Index was raised by more than 25%.

I am proud and grateful to the teachers for their enthusiasm, and for reminding us all that one person can truly make a difference in the lives of many.

I would especially like to recognize Laurel Browning, who has shown admirable dedication to her students at Selma Olinder Elementary School.

IN RECOGNITION OF THE
FERNBANK ELEMENTARY
SCHOOL CHESS TEAM: 2002 NATIONAL CHESS CHAMPIONS

HON. CYNTHIA A. MCKINNEY

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 15, 2002

Ms. MCKINNEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to the exceptional performance of the Fernbank Elementary School Chess Team, who on Sunday, April 28, won the U.S. Chess Federation's National Championship for grades kindergarten through fifth in Portland, Oregon.

The Fernbank Chess Team captured the title after successfully defending their state title and then defeating nearly 100 teams from 37 states during national competition.

I offer special congratulations to Coach Lew Martin and team members Jackson Miller, Aluda Saliashvili, Pikria Saliashvili, Quinn Shallenberger, Cal Shallenberger, Justin Warren and Brennan Zito.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to highlight the tenacity and excellence displayed by this team as well as the success of this alternative after-school program in stimulating intellectual curiosity and inciting a wave of community pride.

PASTOR H.J. COOK

HON. MARK STEVEN KIRK

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 15, 2002

Mr. KIRK. Mr. Speaker, it is with a heavy heart that I come to the floor today to look back upon the life of Pastor H.J. Cook of Waukegan, IL. For 42 years, Pastor Cook served the Gideon Missionary Baptist Church in Waukegan. He was a remarkably committed spiritual leader. In our lives, we rarely meet men so totally devoted to their community, so keenly in touch with their congregations and so passionately inspired in the service of their faith. Pastor Cook was such a man. On Wednesday, May 8, 2002, Pastor Cook died at the age of 75.

H. Judea Cook was born in Varner, Arkansas, on November 5, 1926 to General and Gerilla Cook. He met and married Osa Lee Jones on March 7, 1948. In 1949, Reverend Cook accepted his call to the ministry-serving the Morning View Baptist Church in McCrory, Arkansas for 10 years.

Pastor Cook attended Arkansas Baptist College in Little Rock, the Jackson Theological Seminary in Orlando, FL, and the Mariet Business College in Oakland, CA. During the course of his study, he earned a Bachelor of Science degree in Theology, a Master's of Theology, and is an Honorary Doctor of Divinity and an Honorary Doctor of Letters.

On October 9, 1959, Reverend Cook came to Waukegan as the Pastor for Gideon Missionary Baptist Church. Through four decades of service, he has steadily increased the membership of his congregation and demonstrated outstanding financial leadership. In 1961, Reverend Cook was pastor to little more than 90 people who worshiped in a small concrete building in Indiana. Today, the Gideon parsonage is home to a \$1 Million renovation project. The church has moved to Ridgeland Avenue and has added a Christian Education extension, a new library, offices, and sanctuary.

Since 1988, the church has established the Christian Education School for leadership training, and the Baptist for Nurture program. Gideon is home to a departmental church school, a mission ministry, a bus and tape ministry, and an evangelistic program. Still, in spite of all the changes to the physical foundation at Gideon, Pastor Cook has remained faithful to the spiritual mission of the church and is remembered as a centerpiece of Waukegan's own community fabric.

Pastor Cook will be laid to rest this afternoon in North Chicago. He is survived by his devoted wife of 52 years, Sister Osa Cook, by his five daughters and by one son. He is grandfather to thirty-seven children and great-grandfather to twenty-two more. Pastor Cook leaves behind an entire community of friends and family and untold numbers who were touched by his smile, his warmth, and his generosity.

It has been my privilege to serve Pastor Cook and to see his faith and love in action. He will be missed.