

take this opportunity to learn more about the culture and important contributions Hispanics have made and continue to make to the United States.

It is fitting that what originally started out as Hispanic Heritage Week in September of 1968 has been lengthened to a month-long celebration of the culture and contributions of Hispanics to the American experience. This is in large part a reflection of the growing prominence of Hispanics in all sectors of American society. As a U.S. Senator, though, I am especially interested and encouraged by the growing role Hispanics are playing in our Nation's government.

Hispanics have a long history of service to the United States as elected officials. The first Hispanic to serve in the Congress was Delegate Joseph Marion Hernandez of the Territory of Florida in 1822. The first Hispanic elected from a State was Romualdo Pacheco of California, who won his race by one vote in 1876. Dennis Chavez of New Mexico became the first Hispanic Senator after being elected in 1936.

In recent years, Hispanic women have also successfully been elected to the Congress. In 1988, ILEANA ROS-LEHTINEN became both the first Cuban-American and first Hispanic woman elected to serve in the House of Representatives. Four years later, she was joined in the House by LYDIA VELÁSQUEZ, the first Puerto Rican woman, and LUCILLE ROYBAL-ALLARD, the first Mexican-American woman. I am pleased that the number of Hispanics now serving in the House of Representatives has more than doubled in the years from 1984 to 2000, from 9 to 21, and I look forward to working with Hispanic colleagues in the Senate as well.

Government is not the only area where Hispanics are breaking new ground. Hispanics are enriching all aspects of our Nation's cultural and economic life. Hispanic entrepreneurs, who open up small businesses at a higher rate than that of the general population, fuel our economy and create jobs. Hispanic writers, such as Isabel Allende, are not only enriching our literature, but are also redefining the American experience through their novels, such as *Portrait of Sepia* and *Daughter of Fortune*. Hispanic labor leaders, following in the footsteps of Cesar Chavez, continue to fight for livable wages and safe working conditions. Roberto Clemente, an athlete and humanitarian, who died while delivering much-needed relief supplies to Central America, was the first Hispanic elected to the Baseball Hall of Fame following a stellar career with the Pittsburgh Pirates. Hispanics have also served honorably in every military engagement since the Revolutionary War—38 have earned the military's highest decoration for their bravery, the Medal of Honor. Louis Caldera, the eldest son of Mexican immigrants, followed in this tradition of military service and became the first Hispanic Secretary of the Army from 1998–2001.

As we celebrate Hispanic Heritage Month, let us take the time to learn more about these and other Hispanic leaders. But let us also take a moment to recognize the many hardworking Hispanic members of our own communities as well. Let us welcome them when they are new arrivals and ensure that our diversity remains one of our greatest strengths. Their contributions serve to enrich our common culture and we are all the better for it. The truest testimony of our greatness as a nation is the enduring power of the American Dream and the sacrifices people everywhere are willing to make to attain it.●

CENTENNIAL CELEBRATION FOR INTERNATIONAL BROTHERHOOD OF ELECTRICAL WORKERS LOCAL 309

● Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I rise today to celebrate the centennial of the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers Local 309 in Collinsville, IL. On September 11, 1902, eleven electrical workers from my hometown of East St. Louis, IL committed to support a united labor effort by forming their own local chapter. Despite the dangers in developing the electrical industry, the group continued its work and advanced to become highly trained and skilled journeymen.

The group has grown from its eleven original members to 1,100 and has helped shape the Metro-east and surrounding areas of southern Illinois. Local 309 has been a leader in the electrical industry, with advancements in training, organizing, market recovery, and member services. Its apprentice program has been registered in the United States Department of Labor Bureau of Apprenticeship and has been producing skilled and experienced workers for the past 100 years. It continues to show its commitment to the education of its members in this, its centennial year.

Through their expertise and solidarity, today's members of Local 309 continue the legacy of their founders by uniting the electrical workers of southern Illinois under the common goals of fairness, justice, and leadership in their field.

Congratulations to the members of Local 309 on their centennial celebration. Best wishes for the next 100 years.●

NATIONAL KIDS VOTING WEEK

● Mr. MCCAIN. Mr. President, I wish to take this opportunity to recognize Kids Voting USA and its efforts to educate our children about civic participation, democracy, and the electoral process. Kids Voting USA is an organization that began in my State, but now reaches nearly five million students nationwide.

What began as a fishing trip to Costa Rica by three Arizona businessmen has blossomed into an organization that in-

volves 9,000 schools, 200,000 teachers, 80,000 volunteers, and countless sponsors and donors. With 38 States and more than 140 communities across the Nation participating, Kids Voting USA teaches students from kindergarten through high school about the importance of civic participation and their rights and responsibilities as citizens. Through an acclaimed, interactive core of service-based curricula, young people gain the knowledge, skills, and motivation for democratic living.

Combined with a civics education, students participate in local and national elections in communities across the country. Kids Voting USA enables students to visit official polls on election day, accompanied by a parent or guardian, to cast a ballot that replicates the official ballot. During the last national election, more than 1.5 million students voted as part of the Kids Voting USA program. In last year's local elections students actively participated in over 114 cities, counties, and school districts.

This year, National Kids Voting Week is September 11–17, and will coincide with the inauguration of National Civic Participation Week. It will be a week that highlights programs and activities that lead to greater participation in elections and the political process. As we reflect on the events of the last year, National Kids Voting Week will celebrate the vibrant and important Kids Voting program by focusing on the hopes and dreams of young citizens. I would like to recognize Kids Voting USA and all it has done to promote the future of democracy by engaging families, schools, and communities in the election process.●

MERCK MECTIZAN DONATION PROGRAM

● Mr. CORZINE. Mr. President, I rise today to recognize the 15th anniversary of one of the largest and most successful public/private partnerships in health care in the developing world, the Merck MECTIZAN Donation Program. Today, this program provides hope to millions, and I am proud to pay tribute to Merck & Co., a leading New Jersey corporation, for its work on this critical issue.

On October 21, 1987, Merck & Co., Inc. announced plans to donate MECTIZAN, ivermectin, a medicine Merck discovered to combat river blindness, for as long as it might be needed, wherever needed. Onchocerciasis, "river blindness", is a leading cause of blindness in the developing world. It is a debilitating and disfiguring disease, affecting millions in sub-Saharan Africa, parts of Central and South America and Yemen in the Middle East. The disease, which has infected 18 million people and has left an estimated one million people visually impaired or blind, is caused by parasitic worms that infiltrate, multiply, and spread throughout the human body.

In the global fight against infectious diseases, the lack of public health infrastructure contributes to widespread and needless suffering even when valuable drug treatments are available for use. When Merck made the decision to donate MECTIZAN to treat river blindness, the company understood that while providing the drug for free was necessary, it was not sufficient. They also understood that it was critical to create a reliable, effective distribution system that would ensure MECTIZAN reached the affected millions for as long as necessary.

The lack of public health care infrastructure was a tremendous challenge even though MECTIZAN is an easy to administer oral medication that requires only a single annual dose. To that end, a multisector coalition involving Merck, the World Health Organization; the World Bank; UNICEF; the Carter Center; Ministries of Health of endemic countries; more than thirty non-governmental development organizations, and local community health workers was created. The Merck MECTIZAN Donation Program is now considered by many to be the most important model for public/private partnerships for addressing health care issues in the developing world.

The success and sustainability of the Merck MECTIZAN Donation Program over the past 15 years demonstrates the power and possibilities in strong and creative public/private partnerships to help address the enormous public health challenges facing developing countries today. As a result of the MECTIZAN Donation Program, more than 30 million people are now receiving treatment for river blindness annually. Since the program's inception, Merck has donated more than 700 million MECTIZAN tablets. Access to MECTIZAN has spared millions of children and their families from the risk of infection and the fear of going blind due to river blindness.

Building on the success of the program's fight against river blindness, Merck expanded the program in 1998 to include the donations of MECTIZAN for the prevention of lymphatic filariasis, more commonly known as elephantiasis, in African countries where river blindness and lymphatic filariasis co-exist. It is estimated that 300 million people in Africa are at risk of this disease.

On this, the 15th anniversary of the Merck MECTIZAN Donation Program, I offer praise and gratitude to the many partners who have made life better for millions of people in the developing world.●

TRIBUTE TO ALAN KRANOWITZ

● Mr. DODD. Mr. President, today I pay tribute to a great friend and outstanding public servant, Alan Kranowitz, who passed away on June 3, 2002, following a long battle with cancer. Alan's loss continues to reverberate throughout the Washington D.C.

area, a testament to the enormous impact he had and the plethora of lasting friendships he made during his 25 years of service as a top advisor to Congressmen and Presidents.

Alan was born and raised in New Britain, CT, and educated at Yale. He first came to Washington in 1965 to serve as executive assistant, and later as chief of staff to my father, Senator THOMAS DODD. By the time Alan left my father's office in 1971, he was one of my father's most valued and trusted aides.

But Alan did not only add knowledge and outstanding political instincts to my father's office. Alan's wit, good nature, and personal appeal made him beloved beyond measure by everyone who was fortunate enough to have known him, or to have worked with him, in my father's Senate office, and beyond.

After 1971, Alan moved easily between top congressional staff positions and key policy positions in the Nixon, Ford, and Reagan administrations. Starting off as Senate liaison for the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development under President Nixon, Alan soon became the chief lobbyist for the Office of Management and Budget in the Nixon and Ford Administrations.

In the mid-1980s, Alan joined the Reagan White House as a chief legislative advisor and liaison, where his encyclopedic knowledge of policy and his personal ability to bridge differences between Democrats and Republicans made him a key player in shaping the legislative agenda of President Reagan's second term.

Ken Duberstein, President Reagan's Chief of Staff, told *The Washington Post* and *The New York Times* that Alan was an invaluable part of Reagan's legislative team; that the White House "relied heavily on [Alan] in determining what was possible and doable" because Alan always offered "absolutely unbiased, straightforward advice."

Aside from working in the White House, in the 1980s, Alan also served as chief of staff to former Representative Tom Loeffler of Texas, and as a senior advisor to House Republican leader Bob Michel.

In 1989, Ronald Reagan appointed Alan as an original council member of the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington.

For the past 12 years, Alan served as a senior vice president of the National Association of Wholesalers-Distributors.

I believe that Alan is best remembered in Washington as someone who brought integrity wherever he went, and excelled at whatever he did. In a town where one's political and institutional affiliations often define their career options, Alan moved easily from the Senate to the House, from Congress to the White House, and from Democratic to Republican positions.

That's because it was Alan the man, not Alan the Democrat, or Alan the

Republican, who lit up a room, who brought charm and grace along with him wherever he went, and who touched the hearts of everyone with whom he came in contact.

Alan's was a life cut short, and he will be sorely missed. To Carol, his wife of 35 years, and to his sons, Jeremy and David, and everyone else in Alan's family, I offer my most heartfelt condolences for your loss.

But I came to the floor of the Senate today not simply to mourn a loss, I came to the floor to celebrate a life. The life of Alan Kranowitz was truly a life well-lived. He touched so many and every one of us he touched is a better person because of it.●

VANESSA SHORT BULL IS MISS SOUTH DAKOTA

● Mr. JOHNSON. Mr. President, today I publicly commend Vanessa Short Bull, a resident of Rapid City, South Dakota, on her selection to represent South Dakota in the Miss America Pageant in Atlantic City, NJ.

Vanessa Short Bull's extraordinary dedication to educational excellence, efforts to increase political awareness, prodigious ballet talent, and years of dedicated practice helped her win the title of Miss South Dakota. Vanessa will now be traveling to Atlantic City to compete against other highly talented women from across our nation for the title of Miss America 2002.

Vanessa obtains the honor of being the first American Indian to be crowned Miss South Dakota. She was born on the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation, and currently resides in Rapid City. She is an enrolled member of the Oglala Sioux Tribe, and a direct descendant of several great Lakota leaders. Thomas and Darlene Short Bull are Vanessa's proud parents, and they deserve special recognition for their roles in helping Vanessa obtain this prestigious honor.

"Political Awareness and Participation" is the center of Vanessa's platform. She believes it is important for Americans, especially young people and minorities, to become more involved in the democratic process. She has been actively helping her cause by registering voters and encouraging them to get out and vote. Vanessa will perform the classical ballet piece "The Dying Swan" for the talent portion of the competition. She has danced for more than 15 years and has studied at the School of Cleveland Ballet, Ballet West Conservatory, and the University of Utah.

The Miss America Organization has maintained a tradition of empowering American women to achieve their personal and professional goals, while providing a forum for them to express their opinions, talents, and intelligence. Vanessa exemplifies this tradition, and provides an excellent example for other gifted young women to emulate. All of South Dakota is proud to have her represent our great state.