

Eric Horner, Brandon Pugh, Brian Shewmaker, and Matt Whitney. Three members of the CMSU team made the NCAA-Division II All-Tournament Team: Zach Norman, Danny Guidry, and Danny Powers.

Mr. Speaker, this outstanding team has played a wonderful season of baseball and has made the people of Missouri proud. I know that the Members of the House will join me in congratulating them on their NCAA-Division II Baseball Championship.

CALLING ON JAPAN TO APOLOGIZE TO WOMEN FORCED INTO SEXUAL SLAVERY DURING AND PRIOR TO WORLD WAR II

HON. LANE EVANS

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, June 23, 2003

Mr. EVANS. Mr. Speaker, today I introduce a resolution calling on Japan to issue an apology to the women and girls forced into sexual slavery during and prior to World War II.

During the war and the colonial occupation of South East Asia, Japan forced over 200,000 young women and girls, known euphemistically as "comfort women" by the Japanese, into military brothels. This sexual enslavement of mostly Korean and Chinese women was officially commissioned and orchestrated by the Government of Japan. Women throughout Southeast Asia were recruited by force, coercion, or deception, transported across national borders, and kept at the mercy of the Japanese military in sub-human conditions. They endured such horrific crimes as gang rape, forced abortions, sexual violence, and human trafficking.

However, the horror of this experience did not end with the cessation of hostilities. Many comfort women were killed by Japanese soldiers after Japan surrendered. In addition, some of these women had no family or homes to return to, and found themselves abandoned in hostile lands where they were viewed as collaborators. The few remaining survivors live daily with the painful memories of their enslavement, and many still suffer serious health effects as a result of violent physical and sexual abuse and sexually transmitted diseases contracted during their ordeal.

While the facts of these crimes are incontrovertible, Japan has not officially acknowledged guilt or assisted the victims. Japan has paid \$1.3 billion in war reparations, yet none of it has gone to the victims of sexual enslavement and not one person has been tried for their crimes. Japan waited over 44 years to even acknowledge the use of comfort women and then only issued a very ambiguous apology. Japanese textbooks rarely mention this enslavement and extreme nationalists still deny Japan's involvement. A private fund set up to compensate comfort women is, according to the United Nations Special Rapporteur's reports, a complete denial of legal responsibility.

There are only a handful of these victims still alive. For too long, these women have had to live in silence and shame. My resolution calls for Japan to issue a clear and unambiguous apology, render state compensation to the victims, and provide historical accountability for these horrific crimes. The sexual en-

slavement of hundreds of thousands of women should not disappear into history without a full apology and compensation.

RECOGNITION OF MR. YASHVANT PATEL AND MATRI, INC.

HON. FRANK PALLONE, JR.

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, June 23, 2003

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to laud the accomplishments of Mr. Yashvant Patel, and the organization he created, Matri, Inc. Mr. Patel and Matri, Inc. have created a unique and important forum where Gujarati youth can uphold their traditional values while searching for a life partner using more modern methods. This forum has been the starting ground for many happy couples, and has provided a much-needed service to America's young Gujarati people.

Mr. Patel founded Matri, Inc. in 1995 with a specific vision of a forum where Gujarati youths could uphold their traditional values while searching for a life partner. The first Matri was hosted by Anand Pragati Mandal in Kearny, NJ, and it had less than 100 attendees. In the last nine years the event has grown drastically and become a professional non-profit organization, providing annual conventions with over 300 participants.

Matri serves an important role in the unique Gujarati youth culture. Although it is a matrimonial forum, it does not force ideas of marriage but instead encourages networking and meeting with people who share similar ideas and principles, who may become lifelong friends or even marriage partners in the future. It is their belief that similarities in dharma, poshaak and khorak (religion, dress and food) are necessary to create a successful marriage. Matri allows Gujarati parents to fulfill their duty to pave the way for their children and give them a prosperous and happy life by honoring Gujarati traditions.

Matri is actually the Sanskrit term for friendship, which is a key element in any successful marriage. Since the participants are allowed to meet without the pressure of parents, the event gives them the opportunity to meet other people and develop relationships. Matri estimates that approximately 15 percent of all participants meet with success each year.

Once again, Mr. Speaker, I would like to congratulate Mr. Patel and his organization for the fine and important work they have done over the past eight years. His organization is doing an enormously important service to an important group of our nation's citizens, and we thank him for it.

ON THE RETIREMENT OF CDC OFFICIAL FRANCIE DE PESYTER

HON. W.J. "BILLY" TAUZIN

OF LOUISIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, June 23, 2003

Mr. TAUZIN. Mr. Speaker, it is with great sadness and great appreciation that I rise today to commemorate the retirement of someone who has been a treasure to the United States Congress for the last 28 years.

Ms. Francie de Peyster will be retiring from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) on June 30, 2003, after many years of distinguished leadership and of tireless dedication to improving our Nation's public health.

Ms. de Peyster's prestigious career in public service began right here in the House of Representatives for what is now my committee, the Energy and Commerce Committee. She worked for more than five years for Representative Tim Lee Carter on the staff of the Committee on Interstate and Foreign Commerce. Following her tenure in the House, Ms. de Peyster went to work for the CDC in its Washington office in 1980. Ms. de Peyster became Deputy Director of the CDC/Washington office in 1984. In June 2001, she received the Secretary of Health and Human Services' Award for Distinguished Service. And just last year, she worked closely with my Committee as we drafted and passed into law one of the most important public health and national security initiatives in recent history—the Public Health Security and Bioterrorism Preparedness and Response Act of 2002.

Ms. de Peyster's professionalism, civility, experience, and dedication will be greatly missed by her friends and colleagues in the Senate and the House, and we will remain eternally grateful for her outstanding contributions to this Nation. I know all my colleagues would want to join me in expressing our sincerest thanks and wishes of happiness to Francie as she enters retirement.

HONORING FUTURE FOOTBALL GREAT RYAN HOAG

HON. CHRISTOPHER COX

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, June 23, 2003

Mr. COX. Mr. Speaker, for the past 28 years, the Orange County community has given out its "Irrelevant Week" award to the last player selected in the National Football League draft—an award premised on the "simple act of doing something nice for someone for no reason."

This year's award, Irrelevant Week XXVIII, honors Ryan Hoag, a wide receiver from Gustavus Adolphus College in St. Peter, MI, who was selected 262nd in the NFL draft by the Oakland Raiders. Ryan, who checks in at 6 feet 2 inches tall and 200 pounds, caught 56 passes in the 2002 season, racking up 808 yards and 10 touchdowns. This rock-solid performance earned Ryan his second straight first-team selection to the all-Minnesota Intercollegiate Athletic Conference team—and apparently also caught the eye of scouts for the Oakland Raiders, who hope that he can make a significant contribution to their team's future success. In addition to his football skills, Ryan is clearly a tremendous all-around athlete: he was a soccer and tennis star in high school, and he also competes on his college track team, where he recently placed third in the NCAA Division III national championships for the 100-meter race, with a cheetah-fast 10.51-second dash. And when his football playing days are over, Ryan says that he hopes to follow his true passion, teaching, by becoming a kindergarten teacher.

While Ryan will surely have a lot of hard work ahead of him if he is to earn his way

onto the Oakland Raiders roster, long odds do not dampen the enthusiasm of Orange County community leaders like Paul Salata, who puts Irrelevant Week together. That is because we recognize that fame is fleeting, that humility is a virtue, and that even the last round NFL draft pick is a significantly better athlete than any member of Congress.

Today, I ask my colleagues to join with me in congratulating Ryan Hoag and everyone else who is involved in the Irrelevant Week celebration. In some ways, this celebration has outgrown its name, for I cannot think of anything more relevant to our spirit of community and our common humanity than doing nice things for other people. On behalf of the U.S. Congress and the people of Orange County whom it is my privilege to represent, congratulations to everyone associated with Irrelevant Week XXVIII, for being more relevant than you care to admit.

TRIBUTE HONORING 2003 LEGRAND
SMITH SCHOLARSHIP FINALISTS

HON. NICK SMITH

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, June 23, 2003

Mr. SMITH of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, It is a sincere pleasure to recognize the finalists of the 2003 LeGrand Smith Congressional Scholarship Program: Ashley Herlein of Spring Arbor, Michigan; Kristen Przybylski of Clinton, Michigan; Brian Jones of Battle Creek, Michigan; and Evelyn Levine of Albion, Michigan. This special honor is an appropriate tribute to the academic accomplishment, demonstration of leadership and responsibility, and commitment to social involvement displayed by these remarkable young adults. We all have reason to celebrate their success, for it is in their promising and capable hands that our future rests.

The finalists of the LeGrand Smith Congressional Scholarship Program are being honored for showing that same generosity of spirit, depth of intelligence, and capacity for human service that distinguished the late LeGrand Smith of Somerset, Michigan. They are young men and women of character, ambition, and initiative, who have already learned well the value of hard work, discipline, and commitment.

These exceptional students have consistently displayed their dedication, intelligence, and concern throughout their high school experience. They stand out among their peers due to their many achievements and the disciplined manner in which they meet challenges. While they have already accomplished a great deal, these young people possess unlimited potential, for they have learned the keys to success in any endeavor.

As a Member of Congress of the United States of America, I am proud to join their many admirers in extending our highest praise and congratulations to the finalist of the 2003 LeGrand Smith Congressional Scholarship program.

INTRODUCTION OF DC PARENTAL
CHOICE INITIATIVE ACT OF 2003

HON. TOM DAVIS

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, June 23, 2003

Mr. TOM DAVIS of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to introduce legislation, along with Education and Workforce Committee Chairman JOHN BOEHNER, that would provide relief to some of the long-standing challenges facing students in the District of Columbia public school system. The "DC Parental Choice Initiative Act of 2003," H.R. 2556, would authorize the appropriation of \$15 million in new Federal funding to the District of Columbia to provide individual students up to \$7,500 in scholarship money to be used at private schools of their own choosing in the District of Columbia.

One thing is clear: too many kids in our Nation's capital are not getting the education they need and fully deserve. Lower-income families concerned about the quality and safety of their children in District of Columbia public schools should not have to resign to sending their children to under-performing schools where students are not adequately motivated to perform.

At the same time, a school should not take for granted that it will automatically enroll every child that lives within a given radius of the school. Instead, that school should be striving everyday to ensure that it provides a learning environment that will attract new students and parents.

Over the past decade, Congress has spent considerable time and resources working with the District to reform its education system. Enacted laws, such as the "District of Columbia School Reform Act of 1995" and the "D.C. College Access Act of 1999," have provided an impetus to level the playing field and brighten the future for D.C. students.

However, the ability of D.C. schools to meet key performance goals has long been plagued by financial mismanagement as well as a host of other problems. Despite concerted efforts by local officials to improve the public school system, little evidence of progress in improving academic performance is available.

Poor academic achievement scores are unsettling to say the least: Only 6 percent of 4th graders in the District tested "proficient" or higher in math.

Standardized test scores remain stagnant for D.C. public schools: the average D.C. SAT score is 799 while the national average is 1020.

The National Assessment of Educational Process just released a "Reading 2000" Report Card: the District's school children were ranked as the worst readers in the country.

The disparity is too glaring to ignore. The drop out rate is about 40 percent. The current condition of schools is unacceptable.

I have traditionally opposed Federal dollars going to private schools because I think Federal dollars ought to be targeted to public schools. But, for the District, I think we have to ask this question: Wouldn't more choices funded by Federal dollars provide a needed alternative for low-income children attending low-performing schools?

As the United States Representative representing a district neighboring the District of

Columbia, I have worked with the District on a number of initiatives to improve the standard of living in the District of Columbia, and along with it, the standard of living of the entire capital region. That is why I cannot ignore the grave challenges facing the District of Columbia public school system and that is why I am introducing the "DC Parental Choice Incentive Act of 2003."

The goal of school choice in the District of Columbia is to be an addition, not a subtraction. We all want the District's education system to improve, and this is at the very least a short-term effort to do something about it.

The bill I am introducing today, along with Chairman BOEHNER, would expand educational opportunities to D.C. students in under-performing elementary and secondary schools. The D.C. Choice Program would be established through a competitive process administered by the U.S. Department of Education to ensure that the public or private entity administering the initiative would be dedicated and capable of carrying out a top-notch program.

The D.C. Choice Program would provide scholarships of up to \$7,500 to eligible students to cover the cost of tuition, fees, and transportation expenses, if any. The scholarship would be considered assistance to the students and not the schools. In order to ensure accountability, an evaluation would be conducted that would consider the impact and academic achievement attained by the program.

This legislation is the result of considerable negotiation and consultation with city officials, the Administration and the key committees of jurisdiction in Congress. And for the first time ever, the Mayor of the District of Columbia has come to the conclusion that ". . . if done effectively, this program would provide even more choices for primarily low income families who currently do not have the same freedom of choice enjoyed by their affluent counterparts."

I look forward to working with my colleagues on this important legislation.

HONORING THE DISTINGUISHED
SERVICE OF LT. COL. STEVE GAY

HON. BART GORDON

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, June 23, 2003

Mr. GORDON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the outstanding service of Lt. Col. Steve Gay, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Nashville district engineer and commander. His command at the Nashville district is coming to an end next month, as he will retire from the Corps.

Colonel Gay has been a tremendous asset to the Corps and its Nashville district, which covers parts of seven states and more than 59,000 square miles of the basins of the Cumberland and the Tennessee rivers. He is an invaluable leader who has performed his duties with great distinction and honor.

Colonel Gay's leadership at the Corps' Nashville district has helped make the region a better place to live through excellent management of water resources. Projects enhancing and protecting those resources have made Middle Tennessee a desirable location for