

COMMEMORATING FEBRUARY 2004
ALUM OF THE MONTH: MS.
OMUGO JULIET WASSWA-
MUGAMBWA

HON. JAMES L. OBERSTAR

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 11, 2004

Mr. OBERSTAR. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Ms. Omugo Juliet Wasswa-Mugambwa, recipient of the College of St. Scholastica's Alum of the Month for February 2004.

St. Scholastica is a private undergraduate college founded in 1912 by a group of pioneering Benedictine Sisters who offered college courses, then, to six young women. Today, St. Scholastica educates more than 2,800 men and women annually and has awarded degrees to more than 13,000 alumni. The college offers the city of Duluth a world-class educational facility, while simultaneously enhancing the cultural and intellectual life not only of the city but also all of northwestern Minnesota.

Ms. Wasswa-Mugambwa arrived in Duluth, Minnesota, in the dead of winter in 1990 from her home country of Uganda. Ms. Wasswa-Mugambwa made a remarkable transition between continents, cultures, and degrees Celsius with patience and grace. I was privileged to witness these qualities for myself when Juliet served as an intern in my Washington D.C. office. Her intellectual curiosity and desire to experience the inner-workings of the legislative branch left an indelible memory on my staff and me.

Ms. Wasswa-Mugambwa received the Leadership Award for the class of 1994, one of the highest honors for a student at the College of St. Scholastica. Following her graduation that year, she pursued a post-graduate degree in International Economic Development at the University of Denver, earning a Master's Degree in 1996. Ms. Wasswa-Mugambwa continues to sharpen her focus on the issues of international development as an associate program officer with the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs.

As a UN associate program officer, she prepares substantive reports for the UN Secretary General on development cooperation issues for consideration by the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council. Her intense focus, nimble intellect, and industrious work ethic are hallmarks of her service at the UN, ensuring that her reports provide the basis for coherent and effective policy guidance to the operation activities of the United Nations family of organizations.

In addition to her professional accomplishments, Ms. Wasswa-Mugambwa is very proud of her family. She met her husband Joel, a member of the Toro Royal family in Uganda, in 1995; the couple have been blessed with two young children: Prince Oyo-Nyabongo and Princess Batebe.

I most heartily commend Juliet on her continued professional and personal success and express my great respect for her as she accepts the award for February Alum of the Month from the College of St. Scholastica.

IN RECOGNITION OF MR. LUCIANO
"LOU" MARTINEZ

HON. E. CLAY SHAW, JR.

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 11, 2004

Mr. SHAW. Mr. Speaker, last December the Palm Beach County Hispanic and Latino community lost one of its most beloved and outstanding leaders. Luciano Martinez, or "Lou" as we knew him, dedicated his life to helping others and founded the Hispanic Human Resources Council, helping thousands of individuals climb the ladder of success over many years in our local area.

Lou had the biggest heart and the most fertile mind finding unique ways to bring much needed services to the fast growing Hispanic and Latino population in Palm Beach County. Without his tireless work, Head Start would not be available to launch children into a better education, mothers would not have quality day care to permit them to work and provide for their children, many low income families would have never experienced the joys of purchasing their first home, and a host of immigrants would be unable to adjust to a new and different lifestyle. Because of Lou all of the above did happen.

Most important to Lou was the desire that while new arrivals adapted to a new culture; traditional Hispanic and Latino values and customs honed over thousands of years remained the centerpiece of family life. This desire to encourage individual identity, instilled pride in their common heritage to form a foundation for future generations to build upon, never forgetting the past.

Mr. Speaker, Lou was born in Havana, Cuba, raised in Florida and arrived in Palm Beach County fresh with a degree from Florida International University. His leadership skills were quickly recognized, and after many years of helping the less fortunate, Lou in 1977 founded the Hispanic Human Resources Council and served as its Executive Director for more than 26 years.

His talent led others to call upon him to serve on a multitude of community leadership positions; Board of Directors of JFK Hospital, the American Red Cross, and The Forum Club. In helping children, he served on the Pre-K Early Intervention Committee, Child Advocacy Board of Palm Beach County, and the Governor's Conference on Children and Youth. The Su Casa Housing Program helping to establish home ownership is a model program that is copied elsewhere.

There was so much more to the life of Luciano Martinez, he touched the lives of so many people, making life a little easier and less stressful. The smiling caring face of Lou was ever present, always ready to go the extra mile on behalf of his neighbors. His legacy is most apparent in the laughing happy children of Palm Beach County who continue to be under the care of the Hispanic Human Resources Council. The classrooms and playrooms in the West Palm Beach centers are filled with the memories of thousands of children who have passed through those doors, the hundreds who are there today, and the many more who will enter in future years. I am confident the spirit of Luciano will always be looking out for them from afar.

Mr. Speaker, Vaya Con Dios Luciano Martinez. Well done, mission accomplished.

RECOGNIZING THE CIVIL RIGHTS
ACHIEVEMENT AWARD GIVEN TO
STEPHANIE COWART

HON. LOUISE McINTOSH SLAUGHTER

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 11, 2004

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor the achievements of Stephanie Cowart who recently receive the "Civil Rights Achievement" award chosen by the National Conference for Community and Justice. The award honors a member of the Niagara Falls community who exemplifies the works, beliefs and dreams that Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. shared with the world.

Ms. Cowart, who serves as the executive director of the Niagara Falls Housing Authority, is one of the African American Women Community Builders of Western New York. She is indicative of the vibrant and caring Niagara Falls community that I am proud to represent in Congress. As a native of Niagara Falls, her decision to remain in the area not only to complete her education, but also to commit to improving the community through her work and by raising a family is impressive. Ms. Cowart is truly a Niagara Falls jewel.

In addition to her contribution to the community through running the Niagara Falls Housing Authority, she serves the area in her "free time" as an active member of the Mount Zion Missionary Baptist Church, and numerous other organizations. This award is not the first that Ms. Cowart has received. She is the recipient of numerous citations, including the Niagara County Black Achiever's Candle in the Dark Award, the Niagara Improvement Association Civic Award, the Niagara University Fellowship Award, the Niagara Falls Housing Authority Award of Excellence, the Business First's prestigious Forty Under 40 award, the Niagara County's Woman of the Year Award, and the Heroes of Public Housing Award.

Stephanie is truly an example to the entire country, not just my district. I am proud to bring her achievements to the attention of my colleagues.

TRIBUTE TO MR. ROBERT A.
PERREAULT

HON. CHRISTOPHER H. SMITH

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 11, 2004

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I rise to pay tribute to Mr. Robert A. Perreault, who retired on January 2, 2004, after more than 30 years of service in the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA).

A veteran of the United States Navy, Bob Perreault began his VA career as a Medical Administrative Assistant in 1974 at the VA Outpatient Clinic in St. Petersburg, Florida. Bob rapidly progressed in his career, in VA field activities at a managerial and executive level, and in a number of key executive positions in VA Central Office. Among his notable assignments, he served in Washington as Director of the Medical Administration Service; Executive Assistant to VA's Chief Medical Director [now Under Secretary for Health]; and Director of Health Care Reform during the

Clinton Administration. Mr. Perreault also served as Chief Executive Officer in Medical Centers in Newton, Connecticut; Philadelphia, Pennsylvania; Atlanta, Georgia and Charleston, South Carolina. While in Atlanta and Charleston, he served in a dual role as VA's service line executive for primary care for a network of VA providers throughout Georgia, Alabama and South Carolina. Throughout his distinguished VA career, Bob Perreault eagerly and enthusiastically assumed challenges and provided leadership to VA programs, with his eye always fixed squarely on the health care needs of veterans.

In May 2002, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs appointed Mr. Perreault Chief Business Officer of the Veterans Health Administration (VHA). He was recruited to this key role because of his wealth of experience in field facilities and Central Office. In this new role, he brought invigorated leadership to VHA business functions to include improved eligibility determinations, significantly higher first- and third-party collections activities and improved patient administration policy. Mr. Perreault coordinated VHA's implementation of the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA), aided the establishment of the new "VA Advantage" Medicare coordination program, improved management of the fee-basis and contract care programs, and provided more focused direction to VA's CHAMPVA program, among a myriad of activities within his jurisdiction or persuasion.

Mr. Perreault twice was awarded the Presidential Meritorious Rank Award for career senior executives, and received numerous other national recognitions and performance awards during his career. Employing his vast institutional knowledge and business acumen, Robert Perreault has proven time and again he is a true and loyal friend to America's veterans.

On behalf of the Committee on Veterans' Affairs, I want to thank Robert Perreault for his steadfast and intrepid service to the Nation's veterans and the Department of Veterans Affairs.

IN RECOGNITION OF DEERFIELD BEACH FOUNDERS' DAYS

HON. E. CLAY SHAW, JR.

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 11, 2004

Mr. SHAW. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of the great city of Deerfield Beach, in Florida's 22nd Congressional District. All Floridians can be proud of the rich history and cultural contributions Broward County's northernmost city has made over the past 77 years.

Today, visitors from around the world travel to Deerfield Beach for some of the most pristine beaches in the state of Florida. In fact, the City was awarded the Blue Wave award as a premier tourist destination in the year 2000. When travelers visit our fine city, they will find not only exceptional beaches and natural beauty, they can also enjoy any one of our four sites on the National Register of Historic Places: the 1920 Old School House, the 1923 James D. and Alice Butler House (now the Butler House Museum), the 1926 Deerfield School (now Deerfield Beach Elementary School), and the 1926 Seaboard Coastline Railway Station (now the Tri-Rail Station).

Deerfield Beach also has beautiful, well-maintained parks, boat ramps, tennis courts, and playgrounds.

For all of these reasons and more, many people chose to call Deerfield Beach home. The city has grown to almost 65,000 residents who make their living in one of the more than 5,000 businesses ranging from small "mom & pop" retailers, to major nationwide corporations.

The city has indeed seen phenomenal growth and prosperity mark the last few years and as such, I would like to extend my congratulations and support to The Honorable Albert Capellini, Mayor of Deerfield Beach. Mr. Speaker, may everyone who participates in the 57th Annual Founders' Days Festival of Deerfield Beach enjoy all this wonderful city by the sea has to offer.

INTRODUCTION OF THE BADGE AND UNIFORM SECURITY TRUSTWORTHINESS [BUST] ACT

HON. LOUISE McINTOSH SLAUGHTER

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 11, 2004

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, six months ago tomorrow, a man with a fake FBI vest and fake badge killed a man and wounded another. Today, I am introducing the Badge and Uniform Security Trustworthiness Act of 2003 in honor of the victims—Raymond L. Batzel and Joseph B. Doud.

On August 12, 2003, a man carrying a sawed-off shotgun, wearing a wig and bulletproof vest with the printed initials "FBI", and carrying what looked like a law enforcement badge walked into the Xerox employee credit union and killed one man and shot another. This man posing as a federal law enforcement officer turned a robbery into a murder. FBI officials believe that the vest and the badge were fakes. Six months later, the killer has still not been caught. Would this have happened if the murder did not have access to a fake badge and bulletproof vest?

Mr. Speaker, this bill will expand the current federal criminal ban on fake police badges to include police uniforms and other insignia. Right now it is legal for people to buy, sell, or own fake FBI insignia or badges used by Customs officials at our borders. As never before, Americans are facing the possibility of terrorism and violence within our borders. We are increasingly relying on our local, state, and federal law officials to keep the public safe. However, we must be able to depend on them without worrying that the "officer" is an impersonator. Law enforcement needs for us to trust them without hesitation, but the trust cannot be complete unless we take steps to stop the flow of fake public safety officer uniforms.

Unfortunately, the threat goes beyond the terrifying reality of this case in which a man in a fake FBI bulletproof vest tried to rob a bank. The threat reaches out to land border crossings, airports, and seaports. Officers with the Bureau of Customs and Border Security and the Bureau of Immigration and Customs Enforcement work to keep terrorists from entering or staying in the country and to prevent the dangerous materials and weapons used by terrorists from entering the country. We cannot afford to have a man with fake creden-

tials standing on the Peace Bridge at the US-Canadian border, allowing terrorists or their weapons to enter the United States. By prohibiting the buying, selling, and use of false safety officer badges and other insignia, we are not only increasing domestic security, but also honoring the lives of Raymond L. Batzel and Joseph B. Doud. We must learn from the terrible events of August 12, 2003, and keep law enforcement insignia out of the hands of other would-be criminals or terrorists. Otherwise we are vulnerable to potential menace from within our borders and outside of our borders.

TRIBUTE TO MR. MICHAEL
SLACHTA, JR.

HON. CHRISTOPHER H. SMITH

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 11, 2004

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Mr. Michael Slachta, Jr., Assistant Inspector General for Auditing, who retired on January 2, 2004, after 36 years of Federal service—32 of which were served at the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA).

Mike's distinguished career began with service in the U.S. Navy from May 1966 to February 1970, including a one-year tour as a corpsman with the Third Marines in the Republic of Vietnam. As a result of his outstanding service, Mike was awarded the Bronze Star with Combat V, Purple Heart, Combat Action Ribbon, Meritorious Unit Citation, and Vietnam Service Medal with Fleet Marine Force Combat Insignia.

Mike attended the University of Pittsburgh on the Vietnam-era GI Bill and graduated with a bachelor's degree in biology. In 1971, he joined VA as an adjudicator at the Regional Office in Detroit, Michigan. In 1974, Mike moved to Washington, DC and joined the Internal Audit Service to work on the development of the Inspector General Act.

In 1978, Mike transferred to Hyattsville, Maryland to serve as Director of the Eastern Field Office of Audit. In 1980, he returned to the District of Columbia to serve as Acting Assistant Inspector General for Auditing. In 1982, he was appointed Deputy Assistant Inspector General for Regional Audits, and in 1983 he was appointed Deputy Assistant Inspector General for Headquarters Audits. In 1991, Mr. Slachta was named Deputy Assistant Inspector General for Auditing.

On March 12, 2000, Mike was appointed Assistant Inspector General for Auditing, the position he held until his retirement. In this capacity, he directed 166 auditors and support staff located at eight Inspector General offices across the country. In the last decade, under Mike's direction, the Office of Audit recommended actions that had potential cost efficiencies of over \$7 billion, which greatly improved VA program effectiveness and quality of services to beneficiaries.

A testament to the significant contributions and commitment of Mike Slachta are his many awards and recognitions. In 1991 and 2000, Mike received the Senior Executive Service Presidential Rank Award of Meritorious Executive. In 2001, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs appointed him to the VA Claims Processing Task Force, where he served with distinction.