

Nobel Prize by almost 75 years. In its very early years, honors were given to scientists and engineers whose products and inventions best improved life in our young nation.

Today, the Institute bestows the Franklin Medals, named for America's first great scientist and founding father, Benjamin Franklin, to an international group of scientists, engineers, and business leaders, whose achievements, innovations, and discoveries have improved the human condition and solved mysteries of our world. Some are honored for careers which have inspired thousands; others, for one incredible breakthrough upon which whole industries or entirely new fields of thought have been founded. Additionally, since 1990 the Institute has awarded the Bower Awards for Business Leadership and Science Achievement, which carries with it one of the largest cash prizes in the world. This year, the Bower Awards are awarded to one scientist and one business leader who have distinguished themselves in the field of brain research.

A list of previous Franklin Institute award winners is a roll call of brilliance for the 19th, 20th, and 21st centuries. Over 2,000 individuals have been honored by the Institute over the past 180 years, including luminaries like Alexander Graham Bell, Thomas Alva Edison, Orville and Wilbur Wright, Madame and Pierre Curie, Albert Einstein, Frank Lloyd Wright, Louis Kahn, Stephen Hawking, David Packard and Jane Goodall.

Tomorrow, at the Franklin Institute Awards Ceremony, seven special people will join these esteemed ranks, in fields ranging from computational complexity to magnetic resonance imaging. Their cumulative work has had an enormous impact on humankind—from the display technology in our cell phones and PDA's to revolutionary materials used in space flight; from non-invasive treatment and diagnosis of disease and injury to a better understanding of lifegiving processes like photosynthesis; from enabling parents to see their child months before birth, to enabling businesses to solve extremely complex problems quickly and efficiently, to the fundamental, groundbreaking experiments that displayed the genetic basis of behavior.

I am honored to invite this Congress and the nation to join me in congratulating:

2004 Bower Award and Prize for Achievement in Science in the Field of Brain Research, Seymour Benzer, Ph.D.—For pioneering discoveries that both founded and greatly advanced the field of neurogenetics, thereby transforming the understanding of the brain.

2004 Bower Award for Business Leadership in the Field of Brain Research, Raymond V. Damadian, M.D.—For his development of magnetic resonance imaging used in clinical applications, which has transformed the diagnosis and treatment of disease.

2004 Benjamin Franklin Medal in Chemistry, Harry B. Gray, Ph.D.—For his pioneering contributions in the field of electron transfer in metalloproteins.

2004 Benjamin Franklin Medal in Computer and Cognitive Science, Richard M. Karp, Ph.D.—For his contributions to the understanding of computational complexity.

2004 Benjamin Franklin Medal in Electrical Engineering, Robert E. Newnham, Ph.D.—For his invention of multiphase piezoelectric transducers and their spatial architecture, which revolutionized the field of acoustic imaging.

2004 Benjamin Franklin Medal in Mechanical Engineering, Roger Bacon, Ph.D.—For his fundamental research on the production of graphite whiskers and the determination of their microstructure and properties, for his pioneering development efforts in the production of the world's first continuously processed carbon fibers and the world's first high modulus, high strength carbon fibers using rayon precursors, and for his contributions to the development of carbon fibers from alternative starting materials.

2004 Benjamin Franklin Medal in Physics, Robert B. Meyer, Ph.D.—For his creative synthesis of theory and experiment demonstrate that tilted, layered liquid crystal phases of chiral molecules are ferroelectric, thus launching both fundamental scientific advancement in the field of soft condensed matter physics and the development of liquid crystal displays that meet the demands of current technology.

The Commonwealth of Pennsylvania is delighted to honor and welcome these amazing scientists and to host this fantastic celebration of their work. Moreover, Pennsylvania is proud of its most visited and most beloved museum, The Franklin Institute, for its distinguished record of recognizing genius and innovation.

PAYING TRIBUTE TO JOHN HUEBINGER, JR.

HON. SCOTT McINNIS

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 28, 2004

Mr. McINNIS. Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity and pay tribute to John Huebinger, Jr. of Glenwood Springs, Colorado, for his great efforts to better his community. John is an extraordinary businessman and community leader, and as one of the founders of Vail, has shaped the landscape of communities around Vail, Aspen and Snowmass through his many construction projects.

John, a native of Marion, Texas, came to Colorado in 1962 to work on the Vail Village Inn, and later moved to Snowmass in 1964 when he formed the Aspen Construction Company. His extraordinary achievements in the construction industry early in his career gained him entrance into the Young Presidents organization, an exclusive group of international business leaders. When the construction industry began to falter, John quickly adjusted and began Harbinger Real Estate, which he ran until his retirement in 1998.

In addition to helping construct his community, John participates in numerous civic organizations. He has been a member of the Aspen Elks and Eagles Lodges, served as president of the Aspen Fire Protection District, and volunteered with the Boy Scouts.

Mr. Speaker, I am honored to pay tribute to the service and achievements of John Huebinger, Jr. before this body of Congress and this nation. His vision and determination have shaped several communities in the Vail, Aspen, and Snowmass areas, and I sincerely thank him for his service. I wish him the best in his future endeavors.

HONORING PETTY OFFICER 3RD CLASS NATHAN BRUCKENTHAL

HON. PETER DEUTSCH

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 28, 2004

Mr. DEUTSCH. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to honor the life of Petty Officer 3rd Class Nathan Bruckenthal of Dania Beach, Florida. I praise Petty Officer Bruckenthal's commitment to his community and our nation. It brings me great sadness to report that Petty Officer Bruckenthal was killed recently in the bombing of a U.S. Navy vessel in Persian Gulf waters, and I wish to offer my deepest sympathy to his family, his friends, and his admirers—of which there are many.

Born in Long Island, New York, Nathan Bruckenthal later moved to Dania Beach, Florida. As the son of a police chief and the stepson of an Army veteran, Petty Officer Bruckenthal leaves behind a family legacy of public service. He himself was contemplating joining a Florida police department upon his return from Iraq.

Petty Officer Bruckenthal joined the Coast Guard after graduating from high school. His service in Florida included nine months as a member of the Tactical Law Enforcement Team, searching vessels for illegal activity, before being deployed to the Persian Gulf. Law Enforcement Detachments from the Tactical Law Enforcement Team South, based at the Miami Coast Guard Station in Opa-Locka, have been deploying overseas since the launch of Operation Iraqi Freedom. Petty Officer Bruckenthal is the first guardsman to die in combat since the Vietnam War.

Petty Officer Bruckenthal is survived by his mother, Laurie Bullock, his father, Northport Police Chief Ric Bruckenthal, his brothers Matthew and Michael, and his wife Patricia, who is pregnant with their first child. Throughout his six years in the Coast Guard and two tours in Iraq, Nathan Bruckenthal served our nation with dignity and distinction. Mr. Speaker, today we celebrate Nathan Bruckenthal's life, which serves as a wonderful example to all who follow in his footsteps.

OBSERVING THE ARMENIAN GENOCIDE

HON. RUSH D. HOLT

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 28, 2004

Mr. HOLT. Mr. Speaker, April 24, 2004 marked the 89th anniversary of one of the most harrowing events in modern day history—the beginning of the Armenian Genocide. The Armenian community is too familiar with the details of this tragedy. They know well the accounts of Armenian leaders, writers and professionals in Constantinople that were rounded up, deported and killed; the accounts of men, women and children were driven into the desert between Terabulus and Derzor to die of starvation, disease and exposure; and the accounts of families that were burned alive in wooden houses or chained together and drowned in Lake Van.

Unfortunately, few outside of the Armenian community know of the Armenian Genocide—

one of the most awful events in modern history. Many are not aware that Ottoman officials expelled millions of Armenians from the homelands they had inhabited for over 2,500 years. They are not aware that Ottoman officials attempted to exterminate the Armenian race and the precedent this event set for the genocides that followed. It is distressing that horrors of this magnitude have largely been forgotten.

Even more disturbing are the governments, institutions, scholars, and individuals who deny the enormity of these crimes against humanity. It is inconceivable that individuals and governments continue to ignore the substantial evidence—including numerous survivor accounts, photodocumentaries, and official documents in the archives of the United States, Britain, France, Austria, and the Vatican—that prove these atrocities took place. It is also frustrating that some rationalize these crimes or refuse to recognize this premeditated ethnic cleansing as genocide.

The international community must deal honestly with this senseless genocide. World leaders must rise above indifference and the political considerations that they have covered behind. They must unequivocally acknowledge the murders of one and a half million Armenians that began in 1915 for what it is—genocide. They must use their position to reveal the truth and bring attention to this tragedy that has been overlooked and brushed aside for too long.

We all want to forget these horrific tragedies in our history and bury them in the past. However, understanding the immeasurable wrongs the Armenian people endured—and the mass scale on which they occurred—is vital to grasping the impact these events continue to have on the stability of the region. It is only through the painful process of acknowledging and discussing these horrific events that we can prevent similar iniquity in the future.

We owe full recognition and acceptance of these crimes to the one and half million victims of the Armenian Genocide. Anything less is an insult to their memory.

PAYING TRIBUTE TO LUCY RICKMAN

HON. SCOTT MCINNIS

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 28, 2004

Mr. MCINNIS. Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate and thank Lucy Rickman, an extraordinary woman from my district. Lucy will soon be retiring as the director of The Haven, an assisted living center in Hayden, Colorado, where she has worked since its inception in 1992. She has dedicated an extraordinary amount of time, effort, and care into the project, and it is my privilege to recognize her career here today.

Seeing the need for an assisted living center in Hayden, Lucy became heavily involved in The Havens planning and design. After thirty-four years of teaching English and Social Studies to seventh and eighth graders, Lucy became director of The Haven in 2000. Lucy saw to it that the facility grew and became a success, and worked to obtain grants for the center totaling \$115,000. A firm believer in grassroots community involvement, she has

implemented events such as senior visit lunch Fridays, holiday light tours, and socials in the town park.

Mr. Speaker, Lucy has been a vital part of The Haven's formation and operation since its beginning, and it is my pleasure to recognize her today before this body of Congress and this nation. Her hard work and dedication are largely responsible for The Haven's existence and success. Thanks for your service Lucy, and I wish you all the best in your future endeavors.

DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS NURSE RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION ACT

HON. ROB SIMMONS

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 28, 2004

Mr. SIMMONS. Mr. Speaker, today I am introducing legislation that would authorize several new and innovative initiatives to attract and retain nursing personnel in the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA).

Since 1996, the number of patients treated annually by VA has risen by 70 percent. During this same period of growing demand for VA health care services, the number of nursing program graduates nationwide began to fall, along with the number of registered nurses employed in nursing. The latest U.S. Health Resources and Services Administration report projects that the shortage of nurses this year will reach about 138,322 nationally, and will rise to about 808,416 in 2020.

Today, about 7.6 million veterans are enrolled in VA health care and in 2010 it is estimated that this number will grow to approximately 8.4 million. VA cannot meet the future health care burden for caregivers without an adequate supply of nurses in its 1,300 facilities. VA's nurse vacancy and turnover rates have greatly increased since 1998. Unless we create incentives and opportunities for experienced caregivers to choose VA as a professional career, our nation's veterans will suffer.

First, my legislation would authorize a new initiative to improve VA's program for recruiting nurses through the use of outside recruitment, advertising, and communication agencies, and the use of interactive and online technologies. The federal government's recruitment process is not responsive to the market conditions for recruitment of nursing personnel. In order to address the human capital challenges in the VA, the Department needs better tools and strategies to plan, attract, assess, hire and manage its recruitment process for nurses. This pilot program would test whether such tools can fit VA's needs.

The VA health care system has over 200,000 employees, ranking it among the top 25 largest employers as defined in the Hoover's Handbook of American Business. The VA health care system has more employees than, for example, Blue Cross and Blue Shield, the Kaiser Foundation Health Plan and Manor Care, Inc., and is the largest employer of registered nurses in this country. In the private sector, human resources professionals have developed and are successfully using internet-based recruitment tools, but VA's use of such tools is extremely limited. Forrester Research, an independent technology re-

search company that provides advice about technology's impact on business, recently reported that 100% of Fortune 500 companies are now using online recruiting. It is in the best interest of VA to capitalize on this best practice of private industry. I believe that streamlining the recruitment process to offer nursing employment opportunities in an appealing and contemporary format will attract talented nurses to fill Department vacancies.

The bill would enhance VA's ability to provide nurses flexible work schedules by authorizing three different options for alternative tours of duty to accommodate the personal needs of nurses to have more control over their schedules. Nurses are the front line providers of care and their continued dedication and support makes patients' lives better and doctors' jobs easier. According to an American Organization of Nurse Executives survey, a major cause of dissatisfaction in the nursing workforce is inflexible work schedules. Offering more family friendly schedules is critical to keeping experienced nurses employed in the VA.

My bill would also clarify that the Department's policy for nurse recruitment should focus on the registered nurse's clinical competencies and direct patient care performance. If a nurse has presented or accomplished the required elements for VA employment, the lack of a specific educational degree should not be a factor in VA's hiring decision. Recent testimony before the National Commission on VA Nursing, established in Public Law 107-135, called attention to a concern that VA's policies under its nurse qualification standards discourage some nurses with associate degrees in nursing from seeking employment in VA because they are not judged for their experience and expertise, but are disqualified because they do not possess a baccalaureate degree in nursing.

The American Association of Community Colleges reports that 62 percent of employed staff nurses, including 45 percent in nurse clinician positions, 42 percent in clinical nurse specialist positions, 52 percent in head nurse positions and 65 percent in nurse supervisor positions received their nursing educational preparation through associate degree or diploma nursing programs.

Regardless of educational preparation, all nursing graduates must pass rigorous licensing examinations administered by state governments. Once licensed, they perform the identical scope of nursing practice under state law. A recent review of test data by the National Council of State Boards of Nursing indicates that the pass rates of nurses trained with associate and baccalaureate degrees are virtually identical. However, notwithstanding their years of bedside nursing or clinical proficiency, VA will not hire nurses above the entry Nurse Level I position unless they have baccalaureate degrees. VA is losing the opportunity to bring experienced, qualified nurses into its system because of this policy.

Finally, the bill would make technical corrections and incorporate blind rehabilitation specialists in the list of certain positions that the VA is permitted to hire through use of the direct appointment authority provided in title 38, United States Code. The use of this so-called "hybrid Title 38" authority enhances VA's ability to hire clinical staff in a timely fashion to maintain the necessary level of highly-trained staff.