

While attending Oregon College of Education, OCE, now known as Western Oregon State University, Mr. Azule worked as a family liaison with an American Indian youth program funded by the Indian Education Act. As a family liaison, he tutored and counseled hundreds of American Indian youth, providing career guidance and helping them to explore their career opportunities. Upon graduation from OCE, Mr. Azule joined the Northwest Regional Educational Lab and worked on their Indian Reading Language Development Program. This program has been invaluable in helping American Indian youth keep their indigenous languages alive.

Mr. Azule next established the Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde's extremely successful Education Department. With his invaluable assistance, the Department now includes Head Start, Youth Education, Higher Education, and Vocational training programs which has served to help the lives of hundreds of tribal members. The Grand Ronde Education Department has become a model of success across the county—much to the tireless efforts of Mr. Azule.

After almost 10 years with the Grand Ronde Tribes, Mr. Azule joined the Salem-Keizer public school system in 1999. Active in community outreach programs, he has helped disadvantaged children continue their education despite facing social and economical hardships at Washington Elementary, Keizer Elementary, and Miller Elementary School. Most recently, he has taken a behavioral health position at the new West Salem High school.

Mr. Azule is a true champion for Oregon's children, and I know he will continue to play a vital role in educating and making a difference in the lives of children in our State. His tireless spirit serves as an inspiration to us all. Today, I am proud to honor Dean Azule as an education hero for our great State of Oregon.●

HONORING OUR ARMED FORCES

STAFF SERGEANT KENNETH HENDRICKSON

● Mr. JOHNSON. Mr. President, I am saddened to report the passing of SSG Kenneth Hendrickson of Bismarck, ND. Kenneth was killed on January 24, 2004, while serving in Operation Iraqi Freedom.

Kenneth, who was called up for active duty last spring, was scheduled to leave Iraq in March. He was one of two North Dakota Army National Guardsmen killed by a roadside bomb while traveling near Fallujah. Kenneth was a member of the Bismarck-based 957th Multi-Role Bridge Company and a 15-year veteran of the National Guard.

Kenneth, a computer technician for Bismarck public schools, was married just 4 days before being deployed. Born in Fargo, Kenneth lived with his family in Bismarck. His father Lyle Hendrickson lives in Rapid City, SD and is a Pennington County commis-

sioner. Kenneth is described by family members as a free spirit who loved children and knew how to have fun. Even while in Iraq, his number one concern was his family back home.

Kenneth and his fellow National Guard members are playing a vital role in Iraq. These brave men and women have taken time away from their family, friends, and jobs to serve their country thousands of miles from home. Kenneth and many other National Guard members have given the ultimate sacrifice in defense of freedom. Our country owes them a tremendous debt of gratitude for their service.

The lives of countless people were enormously enhanced by Kenneth's goodwill and service. He inspired all those who knew him. Our Nation is a far better place because of his life. The best way to honor him is to emulate his commitment to our country.

I express my sympathies to the family of Kenneth Hendrickson. I know he will always be missed, but his service to our Nation will never be forgotten.●

TRIBUTE TO HUMAN RESOURCES COMMAND—ST. LOUIS

● Mr. BOND. Mr. President, I wish to pay special tribute to the U.S. Army's Human Resources Command—St. Louis, formerly known as the Army Personnel Command, AR-PERSCOMD. On October 2, 2003, ARPERSCOM was deactivated and merged with the U.S. Army's Total Army Personnel Command to form the Army's Human Resources Command, headquartered in Alexandria, VA. Although its name has changed, the organization's proud legacy of selfless service to Army Reserve Soldiers, veterans, and their family members continues.

The mission of Human Resources Command—St. Louis, HRC—St. Louis, is to ensure the full spectrum of human resources programs, services and systems are executed to support the readiness and well-being of Army personnel worldwide. HRC—St. Louis and its predecessor organizations have a long and distinguished history of service to the Nation. Located in the Charles F. Prevedel Building at the Federal Records Complex in suburban St. Louis, the command was officially activated on October 1, 1998, with the mission of providing the highest quality life cycle management and services resulting in a trained and ready force in support of the National Military Strategy. Formed provisionally on October 16, 1997, AP-PERSCOM replaced the former U.S. Army Reserve, USAR, Personnel Center on ARPERCEN.

HRC—St. Louis traces its lineage back to 1919, when the Demobilized Records Division was established in Washington, D.C., as an activity under the Adjutant General's Office. Its mission was to store and maintain the records of soldiers demobilized after World War I. After a number of moves, the division came to St. Louis in 1945. First located at the Federal facility at

4300 Goodfellow Blvd., the division moved to its present location on 9700 Page Avenue—1 Reserve Way—in 1956. Through the years, the organization underwent a number of name and mission changes, including the establishment of the Reserve Components Personnel and Administration Center or RCPAC in 1971, and ARPERCEN's establishment as a field operating agency under the Chief, Army Reserve in 1984. In 1994, a U.S. Army council of colonels convened and determined that USAR personnel management, service and policy functions should be streamlined and consolidated under one command: AR-PERSCON.

Serving as the single focal point for the supporting Army Reserve Personnel life cycle management in peacetime, mobilization, and demobilization environments, HRC—St. Louis provides efficient and seamless human resource support to Army Reserve Soldiers who are Troop Program Unit, TPU, members, drilling Reserve unit members; Individual Mobilization Augmentees, IMA; Individual Ready Reservists, IRR; and Active Guard Reserve, AGR soldiers, reservists on extended full-time active duty. The command supports almost 329,000 Ready Reserve Soldiers, approximately 212,000 in the Selected Reserve—TPU, IMA, and AGR, and over 115,000 IRR Soldiers.

HRC—St. Louis is a highly innovative organization; maximizing the talents of its combined military and civilian work force over 1,100 members. It serves as a leader within the Department of Defense in maximizing use of advanced technology providing personalized, e-care—electronic—to customers. Its award-winning HRC—St. Louis, formerly 2xCitizen, website, with its numerous applications, informs Reserve soldiers and the public on Army personnel matters. In 2002, alone, there were over 28 million visits—logins—to the website. Soldiers can access and update their records online at any time via the Internet through their own individual self-service web portal—a significant innovation and major evolution in soldier personnel service support. No longer do Reserve soldiers have to wait extended periods for hardcopy documents or microfiche copies to arrive through the mail to review their records or prepare for promotion boards. In providing responsive, real time e-care for soldiers, HRC—St. Louis contributes significantly toward the Army's readiness to engage in support of the implementation of the National Military Strategy on behalf of the Nation's security objectives.

The command's merger with the Total Army's PERSCOM, and incorporation as part of the new U.S. Army's Human Resources Command, is part of an overall Army transformation effort to streamline and enhance integration of all personnel functions—making them more efficient and responsive in meeting a wide range of missions—while enhancing personnel service for the soldier.

This proclamation recognizes and salutes all those who currently serve as members of Human Resources Command—St. Louis—soldiers and civilians alike—and all who have gone before them who have made countless contributions to the United States of America. As the Army's Human Resources transformation continues, the soldiers and civilians of HRC—St. Louis will continue to make many more significant contributions to the soldiers and our Nation as a part of the U.S. Army's Human Resources Command.●

HONORING THE MEMORY OF WILLIAM L. PIERCE

● Mr. CRAIG. Mr. President, as cochair of the Congressional Coalition on Adoption, I rise today to remember the recently passed William L. Pierce, a man who dedicated his life to helping children. As founder and president of the National Council on Adoption, William Pierce was a leading adoption advocate who worked tirelessly to help formulate and promote several major adoption policies over the last 25 years. To name a few:

The Infant Adoption Awareness Act created the Infant Adoption Training Program, which trains health and pregnancy counselors in presenting adoption as an option for unplanned pregnancies; the Multi-Ethnic Placement Act of 1994 reduced obstacles to many adoptions; the Adoption and Safe Families Act of 1997 promoted adoptions out of foster care by removing barriers to adoption and creating incentives for States to place more foster children with adoptive families; and the Economic Growth and Tax Relief Reconciliation Act of 2001 included provisions to permanently extend and expand the tax credit for adoption expenses and the employer-based adoption assistance program.

William Pierce's consistent advocacy of pro-child adoption policies helped improve the lives of countless children, birthparents, and families. He was an outstanding husband, father, grandfather, citizen, advocate, and leader. I remember him today.●

TRIBUTE TO THE UNIVERSITY OF KENTUCKY VARSITY CHEER- LEADERS

● Mr. BUNNING. Mr. President, I pay tribute in the Senate to University of Kentucky Varsity Cheerleaders. The squad was named the national champions in the Universal Cheerleaders Association-sponsored competition earlier this year.

The Wildcats coed varsity cheerleading squad was awarded their 13th national title in Division I-A. This is their 9th championship in the last 10 years. It wouldn't be wrong to say that they are the most successful team in the history of this competition, and I and so many others are so proud of them.

The Commonwealth of Kentucky should be very proud of this squad, and

I know they are. Their example of hard work and determination should be followed by all in the Commonwealth.

Congratulations to the members of the varsity squads for their success. But also, I want to congratulate their coach, Jomo Thompson, along with their peers, faculty, administrators, and parents for their support and sacrifices they've made to help the Wildcats meet their cheerleading achievements and dreams. Keep up the good work.●

TRIBUTE TO THE MOREHEAD STATE UNIVERSITY VARSITY CHEERLEADERS

● Mr. BUNNING. Mr. President, I pay tribute to the Morehead State University Varsity Cheerleaders. The squad was named the national champions in the Universal Cheerleaders Association-sponsored competition earlier this year.

The Morehead State University coed varsity cheerleading squad was awarded their 14th national title in Division I. Along with winning the overall title, Morehead State University received second place in the all-girl squad.

The citizens of Morehead, KY, are proud to have Morehead State University cheerleading champs living and learning in their community. Their example of hard work and determination should be followed by all in the Commonwealth.

I congratulate the members of the varsity squad for their success. But also, I want to congratulate their coach, Myron Doan, along with their peers, faculty, administrators, and parents for their support and sacrifices they've made to help them meet those achievements and dreams.●

TRIBUTE TO LINDA KURZ

● Mr. BOND. Mr. President, Sieglinde Kurz received her bachelor of arts degree from Fontbonne College, St. Louis, MO, in 1961 and her masters degree in Health Care Management from Northwestern University, Evanston, IL, in 1976.

Linda Kurz started her career with the Department of Veterans Affairs in November 1965 as a Research Chemist in Renal Hypertension Research at the St. Louis VA Medical Center.

Linda Kurz, during her government career, was the Administrative Assistant to the Associate Director, Hines, IL; Associate Director, VA Medical Center, Tomah, WI; Associate Deputy Regional Director, Northeastern Region, Albany, NY; Associate Director, VA Medical Center, Marion, IL; Director, Construction Project Coordination and Budget, VA Headquarters, Washington, DC; Director, VA Medical Center, Marion, IL. She left the Marion VAMC to accept the position of Director at the St. Louis VAMC.

Linda Kurz served as director of the St. Louis VA for 5 years and 8 months from May 1998 thru January 2004, one

of the largest and most complex VA facilities in the Nation.

Linda Kurz provided leadership for this dual division hospital, providing care for in excess of 36,000 veterans annually, within a primary service area of metropolitan St. Louis, including 9 counties in Missouri and 14 counties in West Central Illinois and lead a care team of 1,900 full time employee equivalents.

Linda's life time achievements include: A leader in the health care management field, mentor for VHA Health Care Management Trainees, Executive Career Field Director Trainees and achieved the status of Diplomat in the American College of Healthcare Executives.

Linda Kurz, was listed as one of the Top Female Directors in Missouri Hospital Association Newsletter, Summer 2003 Edition and in Who's Who Among Top Executives in 1998-1999 and Linda Kurz, during her tenure as Director, St. Louis VA Medical Center was recognized in 1999, with the Vice-Presidential "Hammer and Scissors" award for her efforts in piloting the first Department of Veterans Affairs Canteen Integration.

During her tenure at the St. Louis VA, Linda has worked tirelessly to improve access to care for veterans and opened three health clinics; she supported her employees by providing educational opportunities for mid-level managers through programs such as mini-MBA and she promoted an open policy, communicating with staff at all levels by establishing employee and supervisory forums.

Linda Kurz will retire January 31, 2004, after 37 years of government service, having devoted countless hours and years to the welfare of the American Veterans.●

LOCAL LAW ENFORCEMENT ACT OF 2003

● Mr. SMITH. Mr. President, I rise today to speak about the need for hate crimes legislation. On May 1, 2003, Senator KENNEDY and I introduced the Local Law Enforcement Enhancement Act, a bill that would add new categories to current hate crimes law, sending a signal that violence of any kind is unacceptable in our society.

I would like to describe a terrible crime that occurred in Leawood, KS. Gary Raynal, an openly gay man, was found dead under an apartment deck after being tortured and severely beaten. Raynal had been sexually tortured with a metal rod, his ears had been burned and his throat showed signs of strangulation.

I believe that Government's first duty is to defend its citizens, to defend them against the harms that come out of hate. The Local Law Enforcement Enhancement Act is a symbol that can become substance. I believe that by passing this legislation and changing current law, we can change hearts and minds as well.●