

McAllen Junior League, and the St. John's Day School.

Rita has a particular concern for improving the lives of young people and has been involved with anti-drug campaigns and with improving educational opportunities for local children. She has also been an advocate for seniors and can often be found at local nursing homes visiting residents.

Rita Roney has truly exemplified the highest level of community service and is an outstanding role model for young people. I join the Girl Scouts in congratulating her on being the recipient of this year's award.

HONORING THE LIFE OF JOHNNIE
COCHRAN, JR., ESQUIRE

HON. ELIJAH E. CUMMINGS

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 27, 2005

Mr. CUMMINGS. Mr. Speaker, "You are empowered to do justice. You are empowered to ensure that this great system of ours works. Listen for a moment, will you, please."—Johnnie Cochran, Closing Statement, O.J. Simpson Trial.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Johnnie Cochran, Jr, who died of a brain tumor on March 29, 2005. The New York Times called him "fierce," "flamboyant," and "electrifying." Johnnie certainly was fierce, flamboyant and electrifying. He was also nuanced, principled, and persuasive—a giant in the legal profession.

Mr. Speaker, throughout his life, Johnnie Cochran believed wholeheartedly in the power and promise of the American judicial system. He was born in a charity hospital in Shreveport, Louisiana. His great grandparents had been slaves, his grandparents were sharecroppers, and his father was a pipefitter. When he was still a child, the Cochran family moved to California in search of opportunity and a better life. It was from California that the 11-year-old Johnnie watched Thurgood Marshall prosecute Brown vs. the Board of Education. Inspired by the trial, Johnnie, at only 11 years old, decided he wanted to be a lawyer. As he said in an NPR interview toward the end of his life, "After Brown vs. Board came along, I knew I wanted to use the law to change society for the better."

Mr. Speaker, throughout his life, Johnnie Cochran was on the frontlines where race, politics and the law intersected. There are some detractors who mistakenly believed Johnnie fostered race divisions, but, in truth, he spent his life as an integrator. He was one of two dozen black students to desegregate Los Angeles High School in the 1950s. As a young lawyer, he served as an inspiration to many African Americans who watched him, a lone black face amidst a sea of white lawyers, as he crusaded against corruption and racism in law enforcement. When the riots broke out after a verdict was reached in the Rodney King trial, Cochran represented Reginald Denny, a white truck driver who had been attacked by a mob, arguing that his civil rights had been violated.

But, Mr. Speaker, Johnnie made a career out of defending African Americans—from the O.J.s to what he called the "No Js," cases in which the "chances for getting paid are actu-

ally pretty slim." High profile trials made Johnnie Cochran a celebrity, but it was the victories for justice that made him proud. In 1978, Johnnie Cochran traded in his \$300,000 salary for a \$49,000 job as an Assistant District Attorney in Los Angeles County because he wanted to effect change from inside the system. His most cherished triumph was the vindication of Elmer "Geronimo" Pratt, a former Black Panther who served 25 years in prison for murder before being exonerated. In 1997, when the judge read the verdict that set Pratt free, Johnnie said, "It doesn't get any better than this."

Mr. Speaker, Johnnie Cochran was a courtroom wizard with a practical sensibility and a lyrical lilt. He was a champion of racial justice, with just a touch of the razzle dazzle. We will miss him.

If I may, I would like to close the way I began. Let Johnnie Cochran's words serve as a reminder to us today and everyday. "You are empowered to do justice. You are empowered to ensure that this great system of ours works. Listen for a moment, will you, please."

A TRIBUTE TO BROOKLYN
COLLEGE

HON. EDOLPHUS TOWNS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 27, 2005

Mr. TOWNS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the seventy-fifth anniversary of "Brooklyn College of the City University of New York, who I am proud to represent in the House of Representatives. Concurrently, the Council of the City of New York is scheduled to adopt a resolution congratulating Brooklyn College and its President, Dr. Christoph M. Kimmich, on their anniversary and outstanding efforts on behalf of the Brooklyn community.

Mr. Speaker, Brooklyn College was founded on May 15, 1930, upon the merger of the Brooklyn branches of Hunter College and City College as the first coeducational public college in New York City. At its inception it was a modest institution that has developed tremendously and flourished marvelously.

Brooklyn College provides superb education in the arts and sciences and has served the community by graduating, over the past seventy-five years, more than 140,000 ethnically and culturally diverse students, reflecting New York City's rich sociological fabric. Brooklyn College has been recognized nationally for its outstanding faculty, rigorous academic standards, innovative curriculum, and beautiful campus, and was recently ranked third among America's Best Value Colleges by the Princeton Review.

Mr. Speaker, Brooklyn College will be holding many special events throughout the year in celebration of this anniversary, including a birthday party on May 10, 2005, on the College Quadrangle.

Mr. Speaker, I believe it is incumbent upon this body to recognize the activities celebrating the seventy-fifth anniversary of Brooklyn College and its ongoing dedication to providing excellence in education. I encourage my colleagues to join the residents of Brooklyn in honoring Brooklyn College and its many alumni, students, faculty, and staff upon this very momentous occasion.

HONORING ARABELLA MARTINEZ

HON. FORTNEY PETE STARK

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 27, 2005

Mr. STARK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Arabella Martinez, a remarkable individual who is retiring after many years of exemplary service and dedicated community involvement in Oakland, California. On May 11, 2005, the community will celebrate Ms. Martinez "The legacy of a Living Legend" at a dinner in her honor.

Arabella Martinez has extensive experience in a wide range of activities affecting the role of minorities and women in the economy and larger society. Her experience in social work, community action programs, and community development led to her conviction that economic development, evolving from strong, community-directed institutions, was the most effective path toward economic self-sufficiency and empowerment. President Jimmy Carter recognized Ms. Martinez's talent and experience and appointed her Secretary for Human Development Services in the Department of Health Education and Welfare. She became the first Hispanic woman to hold this position.

Ms. Martinez was one of the founders and the first Executive Director of the Spanish Speaking Unity Council. After a fifteen-year absence, she returned to the Unity Council in December 1989, to rescue it from near bankruptcy. The Spanish Speaking Unity Council is now one of the largest and most successful community development corporations in the nation. Besides founding the Unity Council, Ms. Martinez helped build the Women's Initiative for Self Employment as a Board member and consultant. She raised over \$800,000 for the Oakland YWCA's capital campaign to save its historically significant Julia Morgan building.

Over the past ten years, Ms. Martinez has successfully worked to revitalize the Fruitvale district, an inner-city neighborhood in Oakland, California. The revitalization includes major real estate development projects, community building activities, and a range of community and family asset development programs. Ms. Martinez's major responsibility has been the successful development of a \$100 million mixed use, transit-oriented development around the Fruitvale BART station. The Transit Village includes 245,000 square feet of community facilities, child development and senior centers, a community clinic, a library, technology center, retail space housing and podium parking in two multi-level complexes, bisected by a pedestrian plaza.

The Fruitvale Transit Village has transformed the community and its residents. It provides social services as well as community empowerment for individuals and businesses to thrive.

Arabella Martinez is truly a living legend who continues to work tirelessly for the benefit of others. I join the community in expressing heartfelt appreciation for her noteworthy contributions. She leaves a legacy of talent and commitment that is hard to match.

HONORING THE CONSULAR CORPS
ASSOCIATION OF PHILADELPHIA

HON. ROBERT A. BRADY

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 27, 2005

Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor the Consular Corps Association of Philadelphia.

In celebration of 43 years of promoting international understanding, I extend congratulations to the first Consular Corps in the United States, the Consular Corps Association of Philadelphia.

With the founding of the Corps, now one of the largest diplomatic associations in the nation, a model was created that allows us to reach beyond geographic boundaries to strengthen international relations.

Thirty seven countries are represented in the Philadelphia Association and as a result there are increased opportunities for business, educational and diplomatic partnerships.

The Consular Corps Association of Philadelphia has also provided humanitarian aid. Its members aided relief efforts for Asian and African victims of the tsunami disaster and survivors of civil war.

On the educational front, the organization has developed innovative cultural exchange programs, including partnerships with the World Affairs Council, the International Visitors' Council and the Bodine High School for International Affairs. As a result of these outreach programs many area young people now see themselves as world citizens with a greater appreciation for cultural and racial diversity.

The Consular Corps of Philadelphia helps us understand that by reaching beyond our geographic boundaries there is hope that we can learn to share more fairly in the world's bounty.

WALL STREET JOURNAL EUROPE
ARTICLE

HON. PHIL ENGLISH

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 27, 2005

Mr. ENGLISH of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, at a time when reform is being encouraged from both inside and outside the Arab and Muslim worlds, Morocco has been quietly getting the job done. The April 12th edition of The Wall Street Journal Europe contains an insightful and balanced article on the progress that has been made—as well as the continuing challenges—in Morocco. Reform is a long and oftentimes difficult process, but both the government and the people of Morocco have made a decision about where their future lies. I commend this article to the attention of my colleagues.

[From the Wall Street Journal Europe, Apr. 12, 2005]

MAGHREBIAN NIGHTS

(By Brian M. Carney)

CASABLANCA, MOROCCO.—There really is a Rick's Cafe in Casablanca. It was opened a year ago by an American expatriate named Kathy Kriger, who decided to stay on after a stint here as a trade attache for the U.S. Commerce Department.

Ali Kettani, the man sitting across from me at Rick's, is also a returnee. Although born and raised in Morocco, he'd spent the best part of the last 15 years in Paris and New York as a banker. "Before the previous king died," Mr. Kettani says, "I would have sworn that I would never have come back to Morocco." But here he is, moving back and forth between the U.S. and Morocco to raise American money for a planned \$35 million Moroccan private-equity fund, which he says is the first of its kind.

Mr. Kettani's renewed enthusiasm for his country is not unusual in this, the country that claims to be America's oldest ally. (Morocco signed a friendship treaty with the U.S. in 1787 that has been in force ever since.) In February, a bilateral free-trade agreement went into effect between the U.S. and Morocco, lowering 95 percent of tariffs between the two countries to zero and phasing out the rest over the next several years. A so-called "association agreement" with the EU is likewise gradually lowering trade barriers between Europe and Morocco. Businessmen in the country hope to capitalize on this privileged access to the two largest economies in the world by trading with both.

"The future of Morocco," said Ali Belhaj, a businessman and opposition politician, "is in services, logistics, tourism and agriculture." Agriculture is already a substantial chunk of the Moroccan economy, but in the future Mr. Belhaj sees Morocco selling more and more farm products to the U.S. and Europe, thanks to its privileged trade status and low costs. As for services, he offers an example. "The biggest dental-implant company in Paris is Moroccan. You go to the dentist in Paris, he takes a mold of your teeth and ships it to Casablanca, where the implants are made and shipped back to Paris. We can turn around dental implants in 48 hours." For Mr. Belhaj, proximity and good relations with the West are the foundations of Morocco's economic future.

Morocco is a potential bridge between the West and the Arab world in more than just economic ways. At a time when U.S. President George W. Bush's Greater Middle East project is viewed by many in both Europe and the Arab world as a "neoconservative" pipe dream, Morocco stands out as a country furiously trying to show that Arab ways and a Western, modernizing orientation are not incompatible.

Morocco is a nigh-absolute monarchy, but one whose king has been steadily if gradually ceding power to an elected Parliament. The elections in 2002 are generally viewed, both within Morocco and among Western NGOs such as Freedom House, as the first free and fair ones in the country's 1,300-year history. And this year, the Parliament is expected to pass and the king is expected to ratify a law strengthening the role of parties in the country's politics. For Ali Belhaj, a businessman who is trying to found a center-right party dubbed Alliance of Liberties, it is a vital step toward democracy. "We have 26 parties that get nearly all of their funding from the state," Mr. Belhaj says. "The annual budget for the parties? \$1 million. How can you build a democracy like that?" Even so, he allows that he sees "the beginnings of democracy in Morocco," and would like to see the Parliament strengthened.

But in terms of civil rights and freedom of the press, the country has made some real strides, enshrining habeas corpus and the presumption of innocence in law in the last few years. The Parliament is working on a bill to decriminalize libel, meaning disgruntled politicians would no longer be able to lock up journalists for writing things the ruling class would rather not see in print.

In Rabat, the country's capital, I spoke to Ahmed Abbadi, the director of Islamic af-

fairs in the Ministry of Religion, about the role of religion in a modernizing Morocco. Last year, Morocco passed a reform of its so-called Family Law. The new law grants women equal status in the family, with equal rights to divorce their husbands, an equal say in family governance and the right to marry without the consent of a male relative.

There were Islamist elements who had opposed some of these reforms on religious grounds; I asked Mr. Abbadi what the government's response had been on a religious level. "We are concerned with finalities," he said. "When you are concerned with finalities, you do not get bogged down with the literal words." He continued: "There is a saying in Islam: 'Wherever is the interest of the whole, there is sharia.'" So bearing in mind the interest of the whole, he said, "We must determine how to implement the general principles of sharia law in a way that is appropriate to our time." In short, the Ministry of Religion determined that the Family Law, giving women broadly equal rights in the family context, was consonant with Morocco's official interpretation of Islam. It's a dose of historical relativism that's badly needed in much of the Arab world.

What about Abu Musab al-Zarqawi's claims ahead of the Iraqi elections that democracy was unIslamic? "He does not have the skills, the knowledge or the class to talk about democracy," was Mr. Abbadi's response, delivered with just a touch of condescension. And, speaking of Saudi Arabia's fundamentalist brand of Islam, he observed: "When you have a simple society," you wind up with a "simple, superficial" interpretation of Islam—"like the 'Bedouin Islam' in Saudi Arabia."

All of which sounded pretty encouraging. So, did Mr. Abbadi see Morocco's flavor of Islam as a model for the rest of the Arab world—a modern, forward-looking alternative to Wahhabist fundamentalism? He didn't want to go that far, but in the end he allowed, "We believe—humbly—that Morocco could be a model" for others, although they had no inclination to actively export their interpretation.

Morocco is democratizing, liberalizing and modernizing on several fronts. Is it a model for the Arab world? I repeated the question to Bob Holley, a former American diplomat who is now consulting for the Moroccan government in Washington, and who facilitated a number of my meetings in Morocco. "It's a great sales pitch—Morocco as model for the greater Middle East," Mr. Holley noted. But in the end, given its historical, cultural and ethnic particularities, "I think Morocco's utility as a model is limited," he admitted.

Mr. Holley may be right, and in any case Morocco's progress is far from perfect or uniform. After the May 16, 2003, suicide bombings in Casablanca, the police rounded up some 2,000 people, a reaction that for some in Morocco harkened back to the bad old days when the government was empowered to imprison anyone it deemed a threat to the public order. (That law, known in the country as Art. 35, has been repealed.)

But model Arab democracy or not, Morocco is nevertheless showing what is possible within an Arab monarchy that looks west and north, rather than only east or inward. Back at Rick's Cafe, our table-mate, Dr. Bouthayna Iraqi-Houssaini, who owns a medical-supply company here in Casablanca, offers her own appraisal. "Not everything is good, but it is all changing. People believe life is getting better," she said. And that's not a bad beginning.