

Western Prelacy of the Armenian Apostolic Church of America to commemorate the 90th Anniversary of the Armenian Genocide and the 1600th Anniversary of the creation of the Armenian alphabet.

I am honored to recognize this milestone visit to California by a distinguished Armenian and world leader. I wish both the Catholicos and the Armenian community in California a renewed sense of purpose and inspiration from this visit.

ALPHA KAPPA ALPHA SORORITY, INC.

Mrs. CLINTON. Mr. President, I am proud to pay tribute to Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Incorporated, America's first Greek-letter organization established by black college women.

On Thursday, September 22, 2005, I had the pleasure of spending time with nearly one hundred members of this remarkable organization, including Representative Sheila Jackson Lee and AKA's International President, Linda White. I have long been aware of the rich history and tremendous contributions made to our Nation by Alpha Kappa Alpha and the other eight Black Greek Letter Organizations and I was particularly delighted to participate in AKA's event entitled "The Spirit, Let's Share it and Connect," which focused on the many ways in which AKA contributes to our communities.

In 1908, Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority was founded at Howard University in Washington, DC, by Ethel Hedgeman Lyle, who envisioned AKA as a source of social and intellectual enrichment for its members. Over the past century, AKA has evolved into a nationwide organization of college-trained women working to improve the socioeconomic conditions in their cities, States and countries throughout the world.

Alpha Kappa Alpha's achievements are the result of volunteer service that captures the organization's core values. Each year, a National Program theme is constructed around one of AKA's five "targets": Education, the Black Family, Health, Economics and the Arts. This year's target is Education, with the Signature Program of the administration being "The Ivy Reading AKAdemy," a reading initiative focused on early learning and mastery of basic reading skills by the end of third grade. All AKA chapters are required to implement an after school reading initiative for students in kindergarten through third grade. Across the United States there are nine such federally funded demonstration sites in low-performing, economically deprived, innercity schools.

AKA has made several significant contributions to the black community and to American society over all over the past century. These efforts have included a wide range of issues, including among them election reform and health care and education initiatives. For example, in 1983 AKA launched a

massive registration drive designed to increase black voter registration by 25 percent by the November 1984 elections. In 1999, AKA was awarded a \$50,000 grant from the United States Department of Transportation to promote increased seatbelt use and vehicle passenger safety in the minority community. That same year, AKA established a funded partnership with the United States Department of Health and Human Services to promote women's health. Just 4 years ago, AKA raised over \$25,000 for sickle cell anemia. In 2002, AKA built and dedicated nine AKAdemies in South Africa and contributed \$25,000 to the National Council of Negro Women's Mortgage Liquidation Fund.

In addition to advancing these services, AKA maintains a focus on improving the quality of life for its members. AKA cultivates and encourages high scholastic and ethical standards; promotes unity and friendship among college women; alleviates problems facing girls and women; maintains a progressive interest in college life and serves over 170,000 women in the United States, the Caribbean, Europe, and Africa. Its distinguished alumni include national civic leaders such as astronaut Mae Jamison, author Toni Morrison, poet Maya Angelou, Coretta Scott King, Rosa Parks, and the late Judge Constance Baker Motley. I was deeply saddened to learn of the death of Judge Constance Baker Motley earlier this week. A champion of civil rights and a giant of the legal profession, she will be remembered for her lasting contributions to American jurisprudence and to our larger society. I am certain that the women of AKA join me in mourning her passing, grateful and heartened by the fact that the civil rights movement existed in large part because of the efforts of their friend in sisterhood.

I am privileged and proud to have a special bond with the remarkable women of Alpha Kappa Alpha, Incorporated and am honored to share with my colleagues the many reasons we should all admire and thank the members of this organization for their long-lasting and unwavering commitment to improving the lives of so many.

40TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE NATIONAL FOUNDATION FOR THE ARTS AND HUMANITIES

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. President, 40 years ago today, President Lyndon Johnson signed landmark legislation into law creating the Foundation on the Arts and Humanities. I was privileged to be one of the cosponsors of this measure, which created the National Endowment for the Arts and the National Endowment for the Humanities and bring a new nationwide focus to the creative community across America in the fields of literature and history, the visual arts, and the performing arts.

Throughout these four decades, the Endowments have provided impressive

leadership in enhancing the cultural life of the Nation. The budget for the two agencies is relatively small, but they have distributed Federal grants to a wide range of deserving educational and cultural organizations in communities in all parts of the country.

The best of our cultural heritage has broad appeal to peoples everywhere. The scholarship, the history, and the arts of America are admired around the world. Each generation of scholars and artists has much to share with the rest of the world, and with the generations to come as well. The important role of the Endowments is to support the museums, the galleries, and the theaters in our communities, and assist them in presenting these artistic achievements so that audiences, students and scholars can study them, and learn from them.

Down through the ages, the arts have inspired generations after generations with their beauty, tolerance and understanding. They enable individuals to reach beyond their own experience and know something of other peoples and other cultures. In this shrinking world, it is even more important to respect our neighbors, and build cultural bridges to reach out to one another in our shared world. The arts and humanities offer indispensable opportunities to achieve this important goal.

The Endowments help disseminate the creative work being done at the local level. In Massachusetts, we are privileged to have an extraordinary range of cultural institutions that document the story of our Commonwealth from its earliest days to the present. We are very proud of the cultural landmarks that tell of our history, so that future generations too will understand the challenges that faced the Pilgrim settlers in Plymouth, the struggle for independence that began in Boston Harbor and at Concord Bridge, the harrowing era of one stop on the Underground Railroad, the rugged life in the fishing community of New Bedford, and the early years of the China trade.

So, too, in every other State in our Nation, the story is told of discovery, development and achievement, the continuing story of the American journey.

The important task of the Endowments is to honor and preserve this legacy. Over the past four decades, they have compiled an impressive record of vital support for both the arts and humanities. The Arts Endowment has funded major arts exhibitions, dance tours by large national companies, and performances by smaller regional companies. The Humanities Endowment has provided vital research and educational support in colleges and universities across the country. It has supported a national effort to preserve important documents, brittle books and important artifacts. Its public programs have underwritten brilliant documentaries on topics ranging from the story of the Civil War to the story of baseball.

These two great Endowments have amply fulfilled the early hope that

they could improve the quality of the arts and humanities and expand their reach, and we in Congress are very proud of all they have accomplished.

There have been times of controversy and criticism as well, but the Endowments have clearly earned the bipartisan respect and support that they now enjoy. The arts and humanities are an essential part in the life of the Nation and in all of our lives, and the Endowment's mission is to ensure that they always will be.

I commend the current chairmen of the Humanities Endowment and the Arts Endowment, Bruce Cole and Dana Gioia. They follow in impressive footsteps of their illustrious predecessors, through Republican and Democratic administrations alike. We are grateful for all that they and their outstanding staff members do each day to fulfill their important mission.

It is gratifying on this 40th anniversary of the creation of the National Foundation on the Arts and Humanities to recognize their superb record of achievement, and I congratulate all those who have done so much to make it so.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

MASSACHUSETTS BEST COMMUNITY WINNERS

● Mr. KERRY. Mr. President, I am honored to recognize three outstanding Massachusetts communities, each of which has been chosen by America's Promise as one of the "100 Best Communities for Young People" in this Nation. The communities of Barnstable County, Brockton, and Cambridge, have demonstrated outstanding civic leadership for our children. Community leaders, businesses, teachers and Government officials work together in these communities to give their children both the tools and the opportunities they need to succeed. I am very proud that such exemplary communities can be found in my home State.

Barnstable has an impressive record of civic involvement. Not only are community leaders active in the lives of their youth, but they encourage their children to participate in community activities. Over 40 percent of the households in Barnstable have young people participating in community service, and this is, in large part, a reflection of the extensive programs in area high schools such as Junior State of America, Mentoring, Peer Leaders, and National Honor Society. In the Barnstable middle school communities, initiatives such as Schools for Success, which works with underachieving youth in the Barnstable Middle School to improve academic achievement and social skills, have evolved and flourished. The community involvement extends outside of the school systems as well with organizations such as Children's Cove, a program run by the Barnstable County district attorney's

office, the State department of social service, and Cape Cod Health Care, together with other community partners to assist children who have experienced sexual abuse.

In Brockton, successful community organizations work tirelessly to provide their children with every opportunity to learn, grow, and remain both physically and mentally healthy. The Brockton After Dark program organizes several different activities each weeknight at seven locations across the city, including basketball games, open swim time, tennis, soccer, performing arts, and open mike nights. By keeping vulnerable youth off the streets, the program contributed to a significant drop in crime. The Target Outreach initiative directs at-risk youth to positive alternatives offered by the Boys & Girls Clubs by recruiting children to club activities as a diversion to gang activities. In its first 2 years, the program far surpassed its enrollment goal. In 2004-2005, 179 members of the Brockton High School Key Club, a partner in Brockton's Promise, completed 3,800 hours of community service in Brockton. Together, the mayor, the district attorney and the chief of police have organized successful Kids Road Races, youth field trips to the local Brockton Rox baseball game, and much more.

The city of Cambridge has also illustrated its dedication to improving the quality of life for its youth and their families. In 1997, Cambridge introduced the Agenda for Children, which consisted of more than 50 meetings with over 600 community members to bring the city's health, human services, schools, police, and library departments together with nonprofit providers and the Cambridge Community Foundation to help improve the quality of life for its youth. In addition, the Neighborhood Service Project provides youth with an opportunity to work with their peers targeting a variety of issues from teen pregnancy to multiculturalism. The Cambridge Prevention Coalition, partnering with other organizations, has developed a Peer Leadership Program which creates teen leaders mobilized around substance abuse issues. All in all, Cambridge has over 150 programs within the city limits attending to the needs and services of youth and their families.

What I have given here is just a small sampling of the incredible programs occurring in the Commonwealth. I applaud these three cities on their recognition by America's Promise; encourage them to continue their great work and I hope other communities will follow their example.●

IN REMEMBRANCE OF MILDRED LIGHT ALDRIDGE

● Mr. LEVIN. Mr. President, I would like to take this opportunity to pay tribute to Mildred Light Aldridge, an educator and administrator for many

years and the wife of the late Reverend Dr. Avery Aldridge, who passed away at the age of 77 on September 22, 2005. She was an important member of the Flint community, and she will be sorely missed by many.

Mildred Light Aldridge was born in 1928 in Earle, AR. She received her bachelor's of art degree in elementary education from the University of Michigan-Flint and her master's degree in guidance and counseling from Eastern Michigan University. She taught on the elementary school level and worked as a guidance counselor in several middle schools before serving as principal of the Doyle Ryder Community School until her retirement in 1986. After retirement, she remained active by founding and serving as the director of the Eagle's Nest Child Care and Development Center. She also served for the past 23 years as an instructor of the adult ladies fellowship class at Foss Avenue Baptist Church.

Mildred Light Aldridge participated in various civic and community organizations, including the Flint Chapters of the NAACP and the Urban League, the Visually Impaired Center of Flint, and on the advisory board of the Mott Community College Foundation. She was also affiliated with the National Association of Elementary School Principals and the Flint Congress of School Administrators. In addition, Dr. Aldridge held honorary doctorate degrees from Arkansas Baptist College and Selma University.

Dr. Aldridge is mourned by many in the Flint community and is survived by her two children, Derrick Aldridge and Karen Aldridge-Eason, and by her 10 grandchildren. This is, indeed, a great loss to all who knew her, and I know my colleagues will join me in paying tribute to the life of Mildred L. Aldridge.●

TRIBUTE TO JOHN DEERING AND HIS "TESTAMENT" SCULPTURE

● Mr. PRYOR. Mr. President, nearly half a century ago, Arkansas experienced one of its darkest moments. As nine African-American students fought to integrate Central High School, they were accosted by students, threatened by parents and forsaken by local leaders. It took an intervention by President Dwight Eisenhower to bring desegregation to this public school.

But in the 48 years since this event my State has seen brighter days, most recently on August 30, 2005, when I was proud to be present for the unveiling of "Testament," a sculpture of the Little Rock Nine depicting the nine brave students on their journey to claim an equal education.

"Testament" is a tribute by John Deering, one of Little Rock's own, to those students and the courage they demonstrated that day. The life-sized sculpture depicts the nine students as they were in 1957: Equally brave, scared, determined. It is the largest bronze statue in Arkansas and the first