

His first news broadcast, he joked, was when he returned from the fire and delivered the details to his neighbors at Mount Eden and Townsend Aves., in the Bronx.

Decades later, his audience is bigger, of course.

"I do it for the adrenaline and a love for what I do," he said. "I could not think about doing anything else. No two days are alike."

Scott's a stickler for details. Indeed, he's been keeping track of every story he's done for years. He figures he's told more than 4,600 stories in 25 years. "Sure, some are clunkers," he said. "I'll never turn down an assignment."

Scott says he's been on the front line of history. He's covered Space Shuttle launches, interviewed world leaders and spent Christmas last year with soldiers in Iraq. "I'm a story teller," he said. "Every day I tell a story that runs from a minute-and-a-half to three minutes."

One story that has stuck with him for years concerns Stephanie Collado, a young girl from Brooklyn who needed a heart transplant. He followed her story from her mother's pleas for help, to the operation and the years after. He still talks to Collado from time to time.

"It was human," he said. "It was a human story about a little girl in need. Adults would not have handled it as courageously as she did."

The key to survival is being a good writer, and being sensitive, Scott said. That's advice he gives all young journalists, including his daughter Jill Scott, a reporter for New York 1 News.

"I'm most proud of the fact that she did it on her own," Scott said. "She made her own opportunities and she got noticed. It makes me so proud."

And no, even though many of those who started out in the business when Scott did have thrown in the towel, he has no intention of stepping aside anytime soon.

"I just feel blessed," he said. "I am a kid from the Bronx and I'm continuing to fulfill my dream."

#### TRIBUTE TO JEFFREY SEBASTIAN

##### HON. MELISSA A. HART

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, February 8, 2006*

Ms. HART. Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate the recipient of the 2005 Milken Family Foundation National Educator Award, Jeffrey Sebastian.

The Milken National Educator Award is the largest teacher recognition program in the U.S., and honors K-12 teachers, principals, and specialists across America with \$25,000 individual awards. Milken Educators are recommended by a blue ribbon committee of education and policy leaders appointed by each state's department of education. The final selections are made in the fall by the Milken Family Foundation.

Jeffrey Sebastian, a teacher at Quaker Valley High School in Leetsdale, Pennsylvania, was one of the recipients. Having received this award, Jeffrey will participate in the annual Milken National Education Conference this spring in Washington, DC.

I ask my colleagues in the United States House of Representatives to join me in honoring Jeffrey Sebastian for all of his hard work in education. It is an honor to represent the Fourth Congressional District of Pennsylvania

and a pleasure to salute such a dedicated individual like Jeffrey.

#### IN HONOR AND REMEMBRANCE OF GEMMA SZABO

##### HON. DENNIS J. KUCINICH

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, February 8, 2006*

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor and remembrance of my dear friend, Gemma Szabo of North Olmsted, Ohio—loving mother, grandmother, great-grandmother, dedicated community volunteer and activist, and dear friend and mentor to many.

Family, faith and community were central to her life. A united team, Mrs. Szabo and her beloved late husband, Charles J. Sr., raised their five children: Charles Jr., Gary, Johanna, Tim and Peter, and were a consistent source of strength for them, for their grandchildren and for their great-grandchildren. For many years, Mrs. Szabo worked as a school crossing guard. Aside from her family and work, Mrs. Szabo's energy, generous heart and willingness to make a difference led her to volunteer her time and talents throughout her community. Spiritual and devout, Mrs. Szabo was a long-time member and leader within her parish, St. Richard Catholic Church, where she was an active member of the Ladies Guild.

Mrs. Szabo's endless energy, sharp mind and quick wit easily drew others to her. A staunch Democrat, Mrs. Szabo was a life-long member of the North Olmsted Democratic Club and was a Ward Leader for several years. She had the unique ability to inspire and motivate others, recruiting numerous friends and neighbors to become involved in the election process. Mrs. Szabo forged indelible bonds with civic and political leaders that extended from North Olmsted City Hall to Cleveland City Hall.

Mr. Speaker and Colleagues, please join me in honor and remembrance of Gemma Szabo. Her unwavering commitment to her family, friends and to her community framed her life and served to make a difference within the lives of countless individuals, including my own life, and Gemma Szabo will be remembered always.

#### IN RECOGNITION OF STEPHEN J. WHITE

##### HON. MIKE ROGERS

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, February 8, 2006*

Mr. ROGERS of Alabama. Mr. Speaker, Sergeant First Class Stephen J. White, 39, of Talladega, Alabama, died on January 5, 2006, in Iraq. Sergeant First Class White was assigned to the Third Battalion, 16th Field Artillery, Second Brigade Combat Team of the Fourth Infantry Division based in Fort Hood, Texas. According to initial reports, Sergeant White died when an improvised explosive device detonated near his convoy. His survivors include his wife and seven children.

White was a devoted husband, father, and member of the community, Mr. Speaker. Honorable service to our nation characterized his

long career in the Army, which spanned 20 years and four previous tours of duty.

Words cannot express the sense of sadness we have for his family, and for the gratitude our country feels for his service. This Nation will forever hold him closely in our hearts, and remember his sacrifice and that of his family as a remembrance of his bravery and willingness to serve.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker, for the House's remembrance on this mournful day.

#### CONGRATULATIONS TO THE CITY OF DENTON PARKS AND RECREATION DEPARTMENT

##### HON. MICHAEL C. BURGESS

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, February 8, 2006*

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the City of Denton Parks and Recreation Department on their receipt of National Recreation and Park Association's 2006 "Excellence in Aquatics" award in the Class IV population category.

To receive this honor, agencies must prove a commitment to excellence in aquatics facilities and programming for the community. The programming must be comprehensive with an emphasis on aquatic recreation as a lifelong choice for personal and family recreation. The agency must also have a professional training program that assures the highest quality staffing, plus outreach programs outside its own facilities. Professional staff is also required to show involvement in aquatics activities at the local, State, regional, or national levels over the last 5 years. Facilities and programs must also be fully accessible for people with disabilities.

The award will be presented during the National Aquatic Conference at the Association's annual conference held at the Austin Convention Center in Austin, Texas on March 3, 2006.

I am honored to represent a city that truly cares for providing for its citizens the best in quality recreational activities. It is a mark of a caring community. I extend my sincere congratulations to Mayor Euline Brock and the City of Denton Parks and Recreation Department for their service to the community by maintaining a level of excellence worthy of such an award.

#### THE NEW MARKETS TAX CREDIT

##### HON. RON LEWIS

OF KENTUCKY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, February 8, 2006*

Mr. LEWIS of Kentucky. Mr. Speaker, I commend my colleagues to an article entitled, "Luring Business Developers Into Low-Income Areas" that appeared in the New York Times on Wednesday, January 25, 2006.

The article details how the New Markets Tax Credit is transforming low-income urban and rural communities across the United States. The New Markets Tax Credit works by providing investors with a tax credit worth thirty-nine cents over seven years for every dollar in private capital they invest in economically distressed communities.

These investments flow to the low-income areas through intermediaries called Community Development Entities or CDEs. The CDEs are extremely knowledgeable about the communities they serve. They also are very experienced in providing the types of patient, flexible capital which conventional lenders and investors are unable to provide directly in that market.

The empowerment of CDEs is just one example of what sets the New Markets Tax Credit program apart from other anti-poverty initiatives. It also makes sense from a business standpoint since it helps to manage the risk to investors, many of whom had never before invested in a low income community.

In Kentucky, the Credit is being utilized to finance economic development projects, invest in new and expanding businesses, provide community services including health care and child care, and create new jobs. Since the first allocations were awarded in March 2003, seven Community Development Entities in Kentucky have been awarded a total of \$153 million.

These investments are supporting a wide range of projects in Kentucky, particularly in rural areas where the need is so great. Community Ventures Corporation, a CDE based in Lexington, is using the Credit to enable a coffee company to purchase land in West Louisville, build a new 17,500 square foot facility, and renovate a 4,000 square foot structure. The new business site is located in a census tract where the poverty rate is 44.8%. This project doubled the number of employees at the company, enabling it to develop new product lines, allowing it to start a new division to refurbish coffee-brewing equipment, and even made possible the enhancement of its employee-training program.

Another Kentucky-based CDE, Kentucky Highlands Investment Corporation, was awarded \$22 million in New Market Tax Credits last year. It plans to use its allocation to invest in health-related businesses and health care facilities throughout rural Eastern Kentucky where many counties are considered to be medically underserved.

In September, I introduced a bipartisan bill, H.R. 3957, which extends the Credit for five years. I hope my colleagues will take some time to read the attached article, learn more about how the program is improving economically distressed urban and rural areas across America and support our efforts in Congress to extend this program.

[From the New York Times, Jan. 25, 2006]

#### LURING BUSINESS DEVELOPERS INTO LOW-INCOME AREAS

(By Lisa Chamberlain)

When the low-income housing tax credit was created in 1986, it took years for developers, investors and advocates to understand the program and to learn how to make the most use of it. Now it is one of the most important tools for low-income residential real estate, responsible for creating approximately 1.5 million units of affordable housing to date.

Advocates of a little-known development tool called new-market tax credits, the only federal tax credit program for commercial projects in low-income areas, believe the same thing is beginning to happen with commercial real estate. Efforts are already under way to reauthorize the program, which expires next year.

Enacted in December 2000, the new-market tax credit program is helping to create jobs and revitalize streets and even entire downtowns. Projects large and small that most financial specialists agree would never come to fruition otherwise are taking shape because of tax credits worth \$500,000 to \$150 million and even more.

For instance, the tax credits are currently financing the rebuilding of a butter manufacturing cooperative in New Ulm, Minn., that was damaged in a fire. The loss of the cooperative put 130 people out of work, caused economic hardship for 400 family farms and indirectly affected hundreds more jobs in the low-income rural area.

Just south of the central business district in Grand Rapids, Mich., is a nearly completed arts-related mixed-use redevelopment project in an area largely abandoned since the 1950's. Called Martineau Division-Oakes, the 12,000-square-foot commercial space is occupied by the art department of Calvin College and a cafe. There are also 23 spaces for artists to live and work in. Once the project got off the ground, the city committed \$2 million to landscaping, repaving, new lighting, signage and sidewalk improvements in the development's neighborhood.

"It's a very flexible and powerful program," said Robert Poznanski, president of the New Markets Support Company, one of the main recipients of credits from the Treasury Department, which administers the program.

"It's driven by market forces. The federal government doesn't say, 'Use it for this type of business.' It can be used for commercial real estate, a charter school or a community center, as long as the application is competitive and the project is in a low-income area as identified by census tract data."

Tax credits make riskier projects more viable by reducing the debt associated with development costs. Private investors pay less in taxes and the developer passes the savings on to the community by, for example, lowering rent per square foot.

The federal program will allocate up to \$15 billion in tax credits to community development groups over seven years to make businesses or commercial real estate projects in low-income areas more attractive to private investors. Applicants vie for the credits, and so far the process has been highly competitive. In the first three rounds of allocation, beginning in 2003, demand for the credits has outpaced supply by 10 times, according to figures provided by the Treasury Department. Though the tax credits can be used for business development, the majority are used for commercial real estate because of the way the program is structured.

The most recent allocation was completed last fall, bringing the total disbursement to \$8 billion to date. Recipients have five years to use the tax credits to attract private investment, or they are withdrawn and can be reissued elsewhere through 2014.

Dennis Sturtevant, president of Dwelling Place, a nonprofit community development organization, spearheaded the Martineau Division-Oakes project in Grand Rapids. The project used historic tax credits and other grants, in addition to new-market tax credits, to generate \$2.2 million in equity from National City Bank.

"When you're talking about tough neighborhoods and all the costs associated with renovating dilapidated, obsolete buildings with lead and everything else," Mr. Sturtevant said, "you need to combine all these resources to make it work."

Sean P. Welsh, regional president of National City Bank, said: "It required a lot of

creativity. It's complicated, but it's really driving a lot of the urban redevelopment in this and other areas around the country."

One deal that most everyone agrees would have never happened were it not for the tax credits is Plaza Verde in South Minneapolis. Formerly an abandoned building in a low-income Hispanic neighborhood, it is now a 43,000-square-foot business incubator, with locally owned retailing on the ground floor, office space on the second level and a theater company on the top floor.

JoAnna Hicks is the director of real estate for the Neighborhood Development Center, the nonprofit organization that spearheaded Plaza Verde. Even after expenses were deducted, including legal fees, new-market tax credits created almost \$1 million in equity for a project that cost \$4.2 million total.

"Because it's such a complicated financial tool, it's hard for small nonprofits to use," Ms. Hicks said. "But now that we understand it better, we're able to apply it to other projects as well."

Using another allocation of the tax credits, Ms. Hicks's organization has also undertaken the development of a nearly completed public market, called Midtown Global Market, a \$17 million project that will be home to more than 60 vendors selling fresh and prepared foods, as well as handmade arts and crafts.

As the program has only begun to mature, larger projects are just getting under way. Bridgeport, Conn., is undertaking a major redevelopment of its downtown, with approximately 25 percent of the financing coming from new-market tax credits. The total project is estimated to cost up to \$150 million.

"If structured properly, it makes a real difference between a scary development and the deal not being done at all," said Kevin Gremse, director of the National Development Council, which provides financial advice and services to municipalities.

Mr. Gremse used his organization's new-market tax credit allocation to attract a New York City-based private developer, Eric Anderson of Urban Green Builders, to take on the task of reviving downtown Bridgeport, which has suffered years of decline.

Advocates are cautiously optimistic that the program will be reauthorized in 2007. Congress recently passed a bill to assist Gulf Coast states with rebuilding efforts after Hurricanes Rita and Katrina, which included \$1 billion more for the new-market tax credit program geared toward that region.

"The fact that Congress expanded the program is a good sign," said Robert Rapoza, who manages the New Market Tax Credit Coalition, an advocacy organization pushing for the program's reauthorization. "But we have work to do. This is a new tool and government-sponsored finance is relatively uncommon. We're continuing to put together data to strengthen our case."

Of course, it helps to have banks advocating for the tax credit as well. As one of the more active players in the tax credit industry, Zachary Boyers, a senior vice president of US Bank in St. Louis, closed more than 50 deals involving new-market tax credits in 2005 alone.

"The banking community is behind this," Mr. Boyers said. "We are deeply involved in spreading the word. We are working on ways to quantify its impact, which is not easy to do. But other investors, including banks and large corporations, would confirm that they would never be investing in these projects without it."

## TRIBUTE TO RYAN PATTON

**HON. MELISSA A. HART**

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, February 8, 2006*

Ms. HART. Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate and welcome home Ryan Patton from Iraq.

Sergeant Ryan Patton has returned home after spending a year serving his country patrolling the streets of Baghdad. Sergeant Patton was part of the 458 Engineers Unit of the U.S. Army Reserve, and found out he was going to be deployed to Iraq in November 2003. After months of training Sergeant Patton left for Iraq in March 2004. Sergeant Patton left his wife and two young children to defend his country.

Sergeant Patton has returned to his family life, and his old job as the assistant manager at #1 Cochran's Collision Center in Monroeville, Pennsylvania.

I ask my colleagues in the United States House of Representatives to join me in honoring Sergeant Ryan Patton for all of his work and dedication to defending our country. It is an honor to represent the Fourth Congressional District of Pennsylvania and a pleasure to salute such a dedicated soldier like Sergeant Patton.

IN RECOGNITION OF 150TH ANNIVERSARY OF AUBURN UNIVERSITY, AUBURN, ALABAMA

**HON. MIKE ROGERS**

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, February 8, 2006*

Mr. ROGERS of Alabama. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Auburn University on its Sesquicentennial Celebration. On February 1, 1856, then-Governor of Alabama, John Winston, signed a charter that established the East Alabama Male College, a small, private male liberal arts college. One hundred fifty years later, Auburn University has become one of the pre-eminent research universities in the South, and most certainly one of our state's most proud and cherished institutions of higher learning.

The University was founded on a three-part mission: instruction, research and outreach. Auburn maintains this mission to this day, boasting an enrollment of over 23,000 students and employing a highly talented faculty of over 1,200. Many of its 13 schools are ranked among our nation's best, and its athletic program certainly is cause for celebration for thousands and thousands of fans and alumni every year.

I am honored today to congratulate Auburn University on its first 150 years, and am proud and humbled for the opportunity to represent its students, faculty and administrators here in the House of Representatives. I thank the House for joining me for this important occasion, and wish Auburn all the best in its next 150 years, here in the "loveliest village on the plains." War Eagle!

IN HONOR AND REMEMBRANCE OF DR. CARMELITA A. THOMAS, PRESIDENT OF TRI-C WEST

**HON. DENNIS J. KUCINICH**

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, February 8, 2006*

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor and remembrance of Dr. Carmelita Thomas, beloved wife, mother, grandmother, sister and friend. Dr. Thomas leaves behind a remarkable legacy of leadership, accomplishment and activism on behalf of higher education and throughout our Cleveland community.

Dr. Thomas was born and raised in northern Italy. Her family emigrated to Cleveland when she was a high school senior, yet she quickly overcame the challenges of a new culture and language and graduated with her class from Warrensville Heights High School. With a steady focus on academic achievement, Dr. Thomas earned several bachelors, masters and doctoral degrees from the University of California at Los Angeles. After many years in leadership roles at the Los Angeles Community College District, Dr. Thomas brought her passion, knowledge, expertise and energy to Cleveland, where she served as the President of Cuyahoga Community College, Western Campus, where 12,000 students enroll each semester. Dr. Thomas was respected and admired by colleagues and leaders in both the public and private sectors. Her unwavering focus on improving the College is reflected throughout the Campus. Because of her direction, Tri-C's Western Campus is now a training center for digital technology for visual communication and also includes cutting-edge medical technology used to train health care professionals, such as electroneuro technology and diagnostic sonography.

Dr. Thomas' commitment to others extended beyond the campus of Tri-C. Her boundless energy and commitment to making a positive difference is evidenced within her activism and volunteer service on many local boards and organizations, including her service as a member of the Board of Trustees at St. John Westshore Hospital; the Parma Area Chamber of Commerce; the American Council on Education; and the American Council for International and Intercultural Educational Organizations. Dr. Thomas' personal interests mirrored the passion and energy she committed to her profession, and ranged in scope from travel, to cooking, to the classical arts.

Mr. Speaker and Colleagues, please join me in honor and remembrance of Dr. Carmelita A. Thomas. I offer my deepest condolences to her husband of 45 years, James E. Thomas; to her daughters, Sondra and Sonia; to her sons-in-law, Timothy and Jim; to her grandsons, Jeremy and Bradley; to her brothers and sisters; and to her extended family members and many friends. Her numerous accomplishments, marked by personal and professional integrity, served to make a positive difference in all areas of higher education throughout the Western Campus of Tri-C and throughout our entire community, and she will be remembered always.

HAPPY NEW YEAR TO THE ORGANIZATION OF CHINESE AMERICANS

**HON. MELISSA A. HART**

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, February 8, 2006*

Ms. HART. Mr. Speaker, I would like to wish the membership of the Organization of Chinese Americans a healthy and happy New Year for the year 4704, the year of the Dog.

The New Year is a time for reflection and thanksgiving for the joys of life and loved ones and I am thankful for the richness that this organization brings to my region. Chinese Americans have made great contributions of western Pennsylvania and to our nation as a whole and I am very honored for this opportunity to wish them the best year yet in 4704.

I ask my colleagues in the United States House of Representatives to join me in wishing the members of the organization of Chinese Americans a very happy and prosperous New Year.

IN RECOGNITION OF LAURA STEELE

**HON. MIKE ROGERS**

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, February 8, 2006*

Mr. ROGERS of Alabama. Mr. Speaker, it is my honor to pay tribute to Miss Laura Steele, an Auburn University student who recently led an effort to change the University's "Holiday Tree" back to its more traditional name, "Christmas Tree."

In December of 2005, Miss Steele took issue with an attempt to rename the school's traditional tree. In a widely publicized initiative, Steele, a senator-at-large and Chairwoman of the Auburn College of Republicans, introduced a resolution before the Student Government Association calling for the more traditional "Christmas Tree" name to be restored for use at Auburn.

Her campaign gathered hundreds of signatures in support of the effort, and led to more than 20,000 calls of support to student leaders. She garnered the support of our state legislators, Governor Riley, and influential leaders across our state and around the world. I was delighted to see her resolution adopted, and am pleased that next year Auburn's tree will once again be known as its Christmas Tree.

We are indeed proud of Miss Steele. Her efforts to recognize and promote the true meaning of Christmas here at Auburn should serve as a reminder for us all that our belief in the Almighty is one of the core strengths of our nation. I applaud her efforts, and congratulate her for her leadership, her courage, and abiding faith.