

proud of your many achievements. Your career of distinguished service is a tribute to your professionalism as an officer and leader of character to the nation. Your accomplishments, past and present, are exceptionally well known. Your receipt of this award is yet another confirmation by the West Point Society of Philadelphia and the Long Gray Line that you have been an outstanding role model for us all. For you, the words from our Alma Mater ring true, "May it be said, well done!" The Corps of cadets, staff and faculty and the entire West Point community wish you the very best in the years ahead.

Sincerely,

WILLIAM J. LENNOX, Jr.  
Lieutenant General, U.S. Army  
Superintendent.

Congratulations, General Downing.

#### RECOGNIZING MR. MARCO ANTONIO FIREBAUGH

**HON. HILDA L. SOLIS**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, March 28, 2006*

Ms. SOLIS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and celebrate the life of Marco Antonio Firebaugh. Marco Antonio Firebaugh was a former California state Assemblyman and a tireless advocate for working families.

Mr. Firebaugh was an advocate for millions of Californians who have no voice in government. He represented the 50th Assembly District in southeast Los Angeles from 1998 to 2004 before leaving office due to term limits. Mr. Firebaugh was appointed Assembly Majority Floor Leader in 2002 and chaired the California Latino Legislative Caucus from 2002–04. His achievements on behalf of the people of Los Angeles significantly improved their day-to-day quality of life.

Perhaps Mr. Firebaugh's most notable accomplishment was the passage of his legislation to allow students living in California to pay in-state tuition to California state colleges and universities regardless of their immigration status. During his time in the Assembly, Mr. Firebaugh's work also included a bill directing state air quality funding toward low-income communities heavily affected by pollution. At the time of his death, Mr. Firebaugh was a candidate for the state Senate in the 30th District, in southeast Los Angeles County.

I want to extend my sincere condolences to the family and friends of Marco Antonio Firebaugh—a man who so passionately fought to improve the lives of those he was elected to serve. Mr. Firebaugh is survived by his two children, Tlalli Ariana and Nicolas Andres, his mother, Carmen Ramos Garcia, brothers Carlos and Jesse, and sisters Cecilia and Esmeralda.

#### TRIBUTE ON THE OCCASION OF THE 185TH ANNIVERSARY OF GREEK INDEPENDENCE

**HON. MICHAEL R. McNULTY**

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, March 28, 2006*

Mr. McNULTY. Mr. Speaker, the American people join with the people of Greece in celebrating the 185th Anniversary of the revolution

that freed the Greek people from the Ottoman Empire.

The bedrock of our close relationship with Greece is our mutual devotion to freedom and democracy and our unshakable determination to fight, if need be, to protect these rights.

Greek philosophers and political leaders—Cleisthenes and Pericles and their successors—had great influence upon America's Founding Fathers in their creation of these United States.

We, as a nation, owe a great debt to Greece. Greece is the birthplace of democracy, as we know it.

Thomas Jefferson said, "To the ancient Greeks, we are all indebted for the light which led ourselves (American colonists) out of Gothic darkness."

The terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001 were an attack on democracy and freedom—not just against our people, but also against all freedom-loving people everywhere in the world. The Greek people understand this.

I congratulate the people of Greece and wish them a Happy National Birthday.

#### PAYING TRIBUTE TO DR. HERMAN ASH

**HON. MAURICE D. HINCHEY**

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, March 28, 2006*

Mr. HINCHEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to a great man, a great American, and a great friend of mine, Dr. Herman Ash, who passed away in Saugerties, New York at the age of 96 earlier this month. I have had the pleasure of knowing Dr. Ash for most of my life, since he treated me for a football injury in high school.

After fleeing Germany in 1937, Dr. Ash and his wife, also a doctor, settled in Saugerties and opened a medical practice. What many will remember most about Dr. Herman Ash, in addition to his medical practice, was his love of music. Dr. Ash was an accomplished pianist and violinist and enriched the small town of Saugerties with music that he played, composed, and taught. In addition to his own musical talents, he brought the Saugerties Pro Musica to town in 1995. This organization continues to host regular performances each year.

Not only was Dr. Ash's service to his community commendable, he was a true American. Endearred to the country that gave him refuge in 1937, Dr. Ash joined the U.S. Army and served as a captain in the European Theater of Operations during World War II. He was also a member of the Lamouree-Hackett Post #72 American Legion for over 60 years, most of which he served as the Post's medical officer.

Dr. Herman Ash's commitment to service to his community is something to be celebrated. Over his lifetime he tutored young musicians in Saugerties, was a literacy volunteer, taught English as a Second Language classes, volunteered for the Heart Association, the Leukemia & Lymphoma Society and the Juvenile Diabetes Association, a cause near and dear to my own heart.

Words cannot express the gratitude and appreciation felt by those whose lives, including my own, Dr. Ash touched. The world would be a much better place if everyone gave back to

others just a fraction of what Dr. Ash gave throughout his life. My thoughts and prayers remain with the family and friends of this great man.

#### TRIBUTE TO REVEREND WILBERT LEO DANIELS

**HON. GENE GREEN**

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, March 28, 2006*

Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the late Reverend Wilbert Leo Daniels and his brother the late Reverend Cooper Darryl Daniels for their dedication and service to the elderly and non-elderly disabled citizens of our community.

During his tenure as pastor of the Greater Jerusalem Baptist Church, Reverend W. Leo Daniels secured the funding from the Department of Housing and Urban Development to begin development of an eight story housing facility in Northeast Houston. His dream of constructing a home for the elderly and handicapped was realized after his death under the guidance of his brother, Reverend Cooper Darryl Daniels.

The W. Leo Daniels Towers were dedicated in 1979 and have maintained nearly full occupancy for 27 years. The Towers, located at 8826 Harrell, Houston Texas consist of 100 units and serve to assist residents in their daily independent lifestyles. The residents are offered a variety of services including a beauty shop, a washateria and a cafeteria with a central dining room that accommodates 299 persons. The Towers also offer a remedial education class that is supported through the Houston Community College.

The W. Leo Daniels Towers has become a powerful influence among the residents and the Northeast Houston Community alike. In 2002, a computer literacy lab with bi-weekly classes was opened for all the residents and Northeast Community population to attend. The Towers have also collaborated with the Houston Food Bank and with the United Way of Houston Gifts to provide access to food, furniture, office supplies and clothing for its residents.

The solidarity of the Greater Jerusalem Baptist Church membership and the united efforts of all concerned have made the dream of Reverend W. Leo Daniels a reality. The Towers have helped fill the need of so many in the Northeast Houston Community, and I ask that we all honor this great achievement and pay tribute to those that are responsible for its success.

#### RECOGNIZING ACADEMY NOMINEES FOR 2005 FROM THE 8TH CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT OF PENNSYLVANIA

**HON. MICHAEL G. FITZPATRICK**

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, March 28, 2006*

Mr. FITZPATRICK of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, since 1830, Members of Congress have had the great honor and privilege of nominating outstanding young men and

women to our military academies. Each year, I have the opportunity to meet students who have excelled in both their academic fields as well as their extracurricular activities. Each of these fine young men and women would excel at our finest private and public universities; however, they all share a singular distinction that separates them from their peers—they all share a deep commitment to their communities and their nation and so, they seek nomination to our prestigious military academies.

This year the nominating board interviewed over 60 superb applicants from the 8th District of Pennsylvania to our service academies and I want to take time to recognize each one of them by name. I think it is also proper to acknowledge the board members who had the arduous job of interviewing so many exceedingly qualified students that the 8th District has to offer. I congratulate these students on their commitment and dedication. They all make our nation and our world a better place.

ACADEMY NOMINEES FOR 2005 FROM THE 8TH CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT OF PENNSYLVANIA:

United States Military Academy: Rocco C. Boccuti of Doylestown, Bronne Joseph Bruzgo, Jr. of Yardley, Evan Alexander Cumming of Yardley, Andrew Curtis Detwiler of Souderton, Thomas R. Dunn of Chalfont, David Edison Geib of Telford, William Paul Herbert of Dresher, Andrew Kim of Dresher, Charles Kenneth Ridge, Jr. of Langhorne, Alexander C. Shelby of Morrisville, and William Warren Zuber, Jr. of Newtown.

United States Naval Academy: Eamon Emmett Coleman of Yardley, Carli Ann Dimino of New Hope, William Edwin Doar of Langhorne, Thomas Michael Kane of Doylestown, Rachael Elizabeth Koehler of Perkasio, Van Gordon Lawson of Doylestown, Aaron Christopher Marchant of Doylestown, Stephen William Ullrich, Jr. of Southampton, Andrew Ventresca of Chalfont, and William Warren Zuber, Jr. of Newtown.

United States Air Force Academy: Kathryn Leigh Aden of Newtown, Bronne Joseph Bruzgo, Jr. of Yardley, Evan Alexander Cumming of Yardley, Andrew Curtis Detwiler of Souderton, Jason Robert Hallenbeck of Upper Black Eddy, Jacob Cody Hunt of Morrisville, Andrew Kim of Dresher, Daniel Andrew Lusardi of Holland, and Philip Michael Smith of Doylestown.

United States Merchant Marine Academy: Jacqueline Elizabeth Bors of Willow Grove, Bronne Joseph Bruzgo, Jr. of Yardley, Evan Alexander Cumming of Yardley, John Anderson Geating of Roslyn, Stefan Nordtveit of Newtown, Haley Rae Wallace of Doylestown, and William Warren Zuber, Jr. of Newtown.

USMA Board Members: Mr. Joseph R. Barkley '65, Mr. Scott Belveal '92, Mr. Dan Caraccio '84, LTC Willis C. Collett Jr. '58, Ms. Elizabeth W. Fineburg, Mr. Alex Gorsky '82, Mr. Frederick R. Gudknecht, Mr. Paul Pryor. USMA-MALO: Mr. Kevin J. Wallace '84, Mr. Robert J. Welch '84.

USNA Board Members: Adm. Steven Chadwick, USN, Mr. James J. Gormley, Jr., Mrs. Barbara Z. Kolbe, Col. Tom Manion, USMC, Dr. Jonathan W. McCullough, Captain Dave Stacy, USN, Mrs. Suzanne M. Twiggs, Captain R. A. "Skip" Wiegand, USN, (Ret.).

USAFR Board Members: Col. Harris H. Brooks, USAFR, Mr. Bob Campbell, Lt. Col. Janice B. Cope, USAFR (Ret.), Lt. Col. Sue DeGiovanni, USAFR, Lt. Col. Vincent DeGiovanni, USAFR, Maj. Wayne Fowler, USAFR, Mr. Raymond Fresella, Mr. Eugene Schaefer, Jr.

## HAND-IN-HAND

### HON. JIM GERLACH

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, March 28, 2006*

Mr. GERLACH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Hand-in-Hand, an organization that seeks to break down barriers by uniting the entire Saint Joseph's University community, area volunteers, and the disabled communities of the tri-state region. Saint Joseph's University was founded by the Society of Jesus in 1851 and is home to 3,450 full-time undergraduates and 2,900 graduate and nontraditional students. The University's strong liberal arts tradition is marked by rigorous and open-minded inquiry, high academic standards, and the development of the whole person.

Hand-in-Hand was founded by George Carasiti, a Saint Joseph's of 1978 graduate. Hand-in-Hand brings to campus approximately 450 area people with mental and physical handicaps and 750 local high school students who have volunteered to be their buddies for the day. The high school students also pair with Saint Joseph's students from various campus organizations, sports teams, and fraternities and sororities who in turn, run game booths, play music, and serve as mascots and buddies for their annual event.

Hand-in-Hand earned a 1988 Presidential Citation from the White House Office of Private Sector Initiatives for "outstanding contributions to the American spirit of volunteerism and community action." Also honored by the Montgomery County Association for Retarded Citizens and the Elwyn Institute, Hand-in-Hand is the model for similar festivals at 10 other colleges and universities, including the University of Scranton, Johns Hopkins University, and Georgetown University. Additionally Saint Joseph's Office of Student Leadership and Activities named Hand-in-Hand the best student organization in 2000 and again in 2004.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that my colleagues join me today in honoring Hand-in-Hand for their efforts to change the mindsets, open hearts, enrich lives, and break down the barriers of fears and ignorance that have isolated people with disabilities from the rest of American society.

## RECOGNIZING PECO INC.'S DESIGNATION AS BOEING'S "SUPPLIER OF THE YEAR"

### HON. EARL BLUMENAUER

OF OREGON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, March 28, 2006*

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to recognize the accomplishments of PECO Inc., a company that operates in Oregon's 3rd Congressional District and has been in business for nearly 70 years.

PECO Inc. has received Boeing's "Supplier of the Year" honor for the Interiors category. This distinguished award highlights the value of efficient, professional companies with long histories in this region.

PECO Inc. employs more than 200 people, and has previously won the Boeing President's Award in 1988 and the Outstanding Performance Award in 1994, as well as similar awards from IBM, Raytheon, Control Data, Varian, and Storage Technology. The employ-

ees at PECO Inc., have earned a high honor for the region.

## HONORING UNITED STATES COAST GUARD COMMANDER NEIL L. NICKERSON

### HON. PETE SESSIONS

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, March 28, 2006*

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor United States Coast Guard Commander Neil Nickerson and to commemorate his illustrious career of dedicated service to our nation.

Commander Nickerson graduated from the Coast Guard Officer Candidate School in March 1984. Since then, he has served a wide range of tours taking him from the Atlantic, to the Pacific, through the Panama Canal, across the Equator and into the Arctic Circle.

During his first tour in Miami Beach, Florida, Commander Nickerson assisted with search, rescue and recovery for the tragic Space Shuttle Challenger explosion. He then served in Guam and Alameda, California, where he began law enforcement missions ranging from drug interdiction to fishery regulation. Several years later, Commander Nickerson began service as Coast Guard Liaison Officer to the San Diego, California Navy Fleet Training Group. From there, he became Commanding Officer of USCGC *Liberty* in Alaska.

Over the course of these tours, Commander Nickerson distinguished himself as an outstanding officer, earning the respect of his peers and superiors alike. Based on these merits, in 1995 he was one of the elite few selected to attend post-graduate education at the Naval War College. Upon completion of this rigorous coursework, he began service in the Budget Office of Coast Guard Headquarters in Washington, DC.

Soon thereafter, Commander Nickerson assumed the position of Executive Officer of the USCGC *Alex Haley* in Alaska. During his tenure, he oversaw the complete refurbishing of the former US Navy ship. Commander Nickerson then led the USCGC *Alex Haley* on its maiden voyage from the Naval shipyard in Philadelphia through the Panama Canal and up to Kodiak, Alaska. Following this tour, Commander Nickerson began service as Executive Officer of the USCGC *Jarvis* in Honolulu, Hawaii, where he continues to serve today.

This year, Commander Nickerson will retire from 22 years of service to the US Coast Guard. Throughout his accomplished career, Commander Nickerson has kept with the highest traditions of the US Coast Guard and serves as an inspiration to us all. In recognition of his exceptional performance of duty, Commander Nickerson has been awarded six Coast Guard Commendation Medals with Operational Distinguishing Device on all. On the occasion of his retirement, the US Coast Guard also will be awarding him the Meritorious Service Medal. This prestigious honor recognizes officers that have demonstrated expert knowledge, effective management and outstanding leadership.