

HONORING MS. TRUDY KRAMER

HON. TIMOTHY H. BISHOP

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 12, 2007

Mr. BISHOP of New York. Madam Speaker, I am proud to rise on behalf of New York's first congressional district in order to recognize the extraordinary achievements of Ms. Trudy C. Kramer, who will retire at year's end after 26 years of service to the Art Museum Parrish in Southampton, Long Island.

For over a century, the Parrish Art Museum has been devoted to the collection and preservation of American art with particular focus on displaying art of the eastern end of Long Island. The museum is a landmark in my district, known for its commitment to bringing art and people together in its education and outreach programs. Trudy Kramer has been an integral part of that mission for almost three decades, serving as the museum's director.

Trudy is widely admired for her vision and foresight, which helped expand the museum's membership and prestige. During her tenure, the museum also built upon its impressive collection of new works by renowned artists. She directed the acquisition of the museum's neighboring library, now known as the Carroll Petrie Center for Education. And she has been instrumental in the museum's expansion, which includes a truly breathtaking new facility in Water Mill, Long Island.

Madam Speaker, on behalf of a proud community that has long admired the Parrish Art Museum's contributions to the artistic legacy of Long Island's east end, I am especially proud to recognize Trudy Kramer's role in the museum's success and congratulate her on her retirement.

TRIBUTE TO REV. DR. ROBERT E. LOWERY

HON. PETER J. VISCOSKY

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 12, 2007

Mr. VISCOSKY. Madam Speaker, it is with great respect and deep sadness that I take this time to remember one of Northwest Indiana's most distinguished citizens, Reverend Dr. Robert E. Lowery, pastor of Saint Timothy Community Church in Gary, IN. On Tuesday, July 10, 2007, Reverend Lowery passed away at the University of Chicago Medical Center at the age of 82. A constant fixture in the community, Reverend Lowery understood how to communicate with all people. For this, Reverend Lowery appropriately earned the nickname, "Everyman's Preacher."

Robert E. Lowery was born on the west side of Chicago. An accomplished scholar, he obtained degrees in theology from the Chicago Theological Seminary, the Garrett Theological Seminary in Evanston, IL, and a Bachelor of Science degree from George Williams College in Chicago. Though Chicago was his home, he eventually relocated to Gary, Indiana and took over as pastor of Saint Timothy Community Church in 1957. For the past 50 years, Reverend Lowery has called Gary his home, and the impact he has had on his congregation and the entire community will forever be

remembered. Under his leadership, Saint Timothy has grown to become one of the city's largest congregations with over 1,600 members.

Reverend Lowery's lifetime of service to his community goes far beyond his pastoral duties. Knowing that preaching was only a small part of the impact he could have on people's lives, Reverend Lowery became actively involved in many local organizations. Realizing the need to reach people at an early age, he dedicated himself to programs aimed at improving the lives of the youth in the community and enhancing their opportunities to lead successful lives. Reverend Lowery felt a tremendous responsibility to reach out to the youth, and it was for this reason that he became active in the Boy Scouts of America. Fully dedicated to the mission of the Boy Scouts, Reverend Lowery served as Scoutmaster for Troop 53 at Saint Timothy, and he also served as an executive board member of the Calumet Council of the Boy Scouts of America. Reverend Lowery's generosity and commitment to the children of Northwest Indiana will forever be remembered by the children he mentored.

Recognized for his work in his community, Reverend Lowery was the recipient of many awards, both local and national. While it would be impossible to name them all, Reverend Lowery's efforts led to him being honored with the prestigious Drum Major Award, presented by the Gary Frontiers Service Club in honor of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., and his most worthy induction into Gary's Steel City Hall of Fame in 1990.

Reverend Lowery leaves to cherish his memory three daughters: Gay Marlene Lowery, Jan Avis Lowery, and Lynn Michele Lowery-Darby, as well as an entire community whose lives have been improved by such a caring and benevolent friend and mentor.

Madam Speaker, I respectfully ask that you and my other distinguished colleagues join me in honoring Reverend Dr. Robert E. Lowery for his outstanding devotion to his congregation and to all of Northwest Indiana. His unselfish and lifelong dedication to the people he served is worthy of the highest commendation. Reverend Lowery's selflessness was an inspiration to us all. While the entire community is saddened by his passing, his message will live on through the many lives he has touched.

RECOGNIZING THE HISPANIC ASSOCIATION OF COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES (HACU) NATIONAL INTERNSHIP PROGRAM'S 15TH ANNIVERSARY

HON. JOE BACA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 12, 2007

Mr. BACA. Madam Speaker, on behalf of the Congressional Hispanic Caucus, I rise today to recognize the outstanding achievements of the Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities, HACU, National Internship Program in providing Hispanic students invaluable real world working experiences that have allowed these students to make more educated career choices.

Over the past 15 years, the HACU National Internship Program (HNIP) has offered more than 6,500 meaningful paid internships with

federal and corporate partners during spring, summer and fall sessions. HNIP has become the largest Hispanic college internship program in the United States.

On July 26, 2007, the HACU National Internship Program will celebrate its 15th Anniversary at a Gala in Washington, DC. This gala will showcase the achievements of former and current interns as part of a summer-long itinerary of special events marking this remarkable program's first 15 years.

We applaud HACU and the HACU National Internship Program for exposing these students to public- and private-sector career opportunities and specifically helping address the historic underrepresentation of Hispanics in the federal work force.

The HACU National Internship program began in 1992 with 24 interns. In 2006 alone, the program provided internships to 616 college students in 22 federal agencies and nine private corporations.

This competitive program selects top students from among HACU's 450 member and partner colleges and universities, which collectively serve more than two-thirds of all Hispanic higher education students. HNIP provides meaningful work experiences to these students by matching their skills and career goals with the objectives of federal and corporate partners, enabling these students to make more informed career choices.

The Office of Personnel Management, OPM, also recognizes the value of the HACU National Internship Program and has included it as a best practice in its fourth annual report on Hispanic Employment in the Federal Government.

As the youngest and now largest ethnic population, Hispanics already make up one of every three new workers in the overall workforce, and by 2050 are projected to make up one of every two new workers. Yet, it is well documented that Hispanics remain the only underrepresented ethnic group in the Federal Government. Today, Hispanics represent 7.5 percent of the Federal workforce—5.1 percent below the current civilian labor employment level. With the help of HNIP we are lowering this gap and creating a pipeline of qualified Hispanics in the Federal workforce.

We salute the HACU National Internship Program and applaud its success at opening the doors of opportunity for new generations of exceptional students while enhancing workforce diversity.

IN HONOR OF OFFICER DAYLE WESTON HARDY, PLANO'S POLICE OFFICER KILLED IN THE LINE OF DUTY

HON. SAM JOHNSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 12, 2007

Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas. Madam Speaker, many are grieving the death of Officer Dayle Weston Hardy. The 9-year veteran of the Plano Police Department leaves behind a wife and 3-year-old twin girls. He died in the line of duty shortly after he was hit by a car while in pursuit of a traffic violator.

His sudden and unfortunate death reminds us of the crucial role first responders play and the courage and selflessness they exhibit

while protecting the American people and keeping our vibrant North Texas community safe. Wes impacted the lives of many people and he will be dearly missed.

He is the second police officer in Plano to die in the line of duty, the first one since 1920. His death has truly rocked the area. To his family—please know that Shirley and I grieve Officer Hardy's death. We grieve for you. We grieve with you. And we lift you and your daughters up in prayer.

Wes was a shining example of public service and inspiring courage. God bless him and God bless America.

TRIBUTE TO MR. FERNANDO REY

HON. CIRO D. RODRIGUEZ

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 12, 2007

Mr. RODRIGUEZ. Madam Speaker, I am honored to rise here today to pay tribute to a man who exemplifies leadership, Mr. Fernando Rey of San Antonio, Texas.

Mr. Rey was born in 1940 in Southern California and comes from a family of veterans with his father and seven uncles having served in World War II. While he was unable to serve in the armed forces, he remained dedicated to commemorating the sacrifices of others by becoming a lifelong historian of World Wars I and II.

For nearly two decades, Mr. Rey has worked to bring recognition to our nation's Medal of Honor recipients for their valor and bravery.

The Heroes & Heritage organization was founded in 1995 in order to recognize the achievements of our military heroes and to encourage higher standards of education for our youth. Thanks to Mr. Rey's leadership as Executive Director, the Heroes & Heritage organization gained a reputation for having a direct and positive impact on the future of our armed forces and the community of San Antonio.

Mr. Rey's displayed outstanding and natural leadership in the planning and coordination of the Department of Defense's participation in the first student career fair and symposium presented by Heroes & Heritage. By exposing hundreds of college and high school students to career and employment opportunities in military science and technologies, Mr. Rey immeasurably expanded their horizons and opened the doors to endless possibilities.

As a motivational speaker, Mr. Rey helps many high school and university students understand the importance of patriotism and service to our country by sharing and thus preserving the legacy of our distinguished veterans.

Recently, Mr. Rey was presented with a Certificate of Special Achievement from the Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness for his accomplishments and contributions.

I congratulate Mr. Fernando Rey, Chief Operating Officer and Executive Director for Educational Programs with Heroes & Heritage, for this well-deserved recognition.

COMMENDING THE MUNTU DANCE THEATRE OF CHICAGO

HON. DANNY K. DAVIS

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 12, 2007

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Madam Speaker, great societies are often described by their cultural attributes which are often weaved into the fabric of a community, a city and a nation bringing joy, satisfaction and hope into the hearts and minds of the people. Such has been the case and the experiences of the Muntu Dance Theatre of Chicago which was founded in 1972 and has developed a remarkable history and a great legacy.

The Muntu Dance Group is more than dances, they are a concept, an embodiment of psychic movement. They are a program, a place, an opportunity for young people, for people of all ages to be engaged, involved and influenced. Madam Speaker, the Muntu is an art form to be copied, preserved and proliferated throughout the world and that is why their capital campaign is so vitally important.

The Muntu Group is well into a \$17 million capital campaign to build its own performing center at 71st and Ellis on the South Side of Chicago. The Muntu Dance Group has come a long way in 35 years and I am pleased to commend and congratulate them on their outstanding achievement.

AFRICA GROWTH AND OPPORTUNITY ACT'S BENEFITS TO AFRICA

HON. CHRISTOPHER H. SMITH

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 12, 2007

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Madam Speaker, this morning the Subcommittee on Africa and Global Health held a hearing on the African Growth and Opportunity Act. This law provides duty-free and quota-free access to the U.S. market for certain goods from designated countries in sub-Saharan Africa. It was based on the congressional finding that it is in the mutual interest of the United States and the countries of sub-Saharan Africa to promote stable and sustainable economic growth and development on the continent. The criteria for beneficiary countries includes evidence of progress toward a market-based economy, rule of law, economic policies to reduce poverty and promote economic growth, a system to combat corruption and bribery, and protection of internationally recognized worker and human rights.

The recent report from the U.S. Trade Representative to Congress contains some impressive information about AGOA's impact. Since it was enacted in 2000, trade between the United States and sub-Saharan Africa has increased 143 percent, and AGOA has played an important role in this increase. In 2006, over 98 percent of U.S. imports from AGOA-eligible countries entered the United States duty-free. U.S. imports from AGOA countries totaled \$44.2 billion in 2006, which was an increase of 16 percent over the previous year.

It is disappointing, however, that most of this increase in 2006 was due to oil, and non-

oil trade increased by only 7 percent after having declined a precipitous 16 percent in 2005. Non-oil AGOA trade constituted only \$3.2 billion of the total. These latter statistics indicate a need for greater attention to the non-oil potential on the continent.

The Subcommittee on Africa, Global Human Rights and International Operations that I chaired held a hearing on a five-year assessment of the act in October 2005, which included two witnesses who we heard from again today: Ms. Florizelle Liser and Mr. Steve Hayes. One of the issues that I raised at the prior hearing was the protection of labor and other human rights in AGOA-eligible countries. Ms. Liser testified at the time that AGOA was having a positive impact on worker and human rights, and she provided examples of reforms that had been undertaken by beneficiary countries which included the prevention of child trafficking and addressed the worst forms of child labor.

It is important that this issue be examined, particularly in light of the 2007 Trafficking in Persons Report that was released by the State Department last month. It contains a "Tier 2 Watch List" of countries that have a serious trafficking problem and that do not fully comply with minimum standards to eliminate trafficking. These countries will be the subject of particular scrutiny by the State Department's Trafficking Office during the coming year to ascertain whether they are making sufficient efforts to bring themselves into compliance with those standards.

It is disturbing that eight countries on the Tier 2 Watch List are AGOA beneficiaries, and that each of these countries are cited in the TIP report for child and/or forced labor concerns. Sexual exploitation, particularly of children, as cited in some of these reports would also be relevant in the AGOA context as gross violations of international human rights standards. In addition to the other human rights assessments that are legislatively mandated as part of the AGOA eligibility process, one would expect the tier placement for trafficking in persons to be a critical consideration. I would strongly encourage the U.S. Trade Representative to collaborate with the State Department Trafficking in Persons office on this issue.

While questions may be raised concerning the relation between AGOA and improvement in human rights, it does seem that the act together with the Millennium Challenge Account is providing an impetus for other advances. The World Bank is reporting that corruption in Africa is declining, stating that even some of the poorest countries have made "significant progress" in improving governance and fighting corruption over the past decade. This trend is certainly attributable to a significant extent to the eligibility requirements for both of these U.S. initiatives.

AGOA and the MCA are also addressing infrastructure and technical capacity that are essential for long-term development, but which are arguably not receiving sufficient emphasis from other assistance sources. As I indicated earlier and in the subcommittee's recent hearing on the MCA, Congress needs to look at ways to improve and strengthen these benefits in both pieces of legislation.

And finally, one should not minimize the good will and positive bilateral relationships in Africa that are being reinforced through AGOA and the MCA, together with the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief. This latter