would authorize federal funding to improve student achievement, increase teacher training, encourage education research, and develop effective instructional materials and strategies for geography education. It will leverage and expand support for geography education partnerships. And it will prepare America's students to move forward and succeed in a rapidly-changing, competitive, global economy.

It is time to be sure that American citizens are informed citizens of the world. I ask my colleagues to join Congressman WICKER and me and support the Teaching Geography is Fundamental Act.

RECOGNIZING THE 116TH AIR CONTROL SQUADRON

HON. DARLENE HOOLEY

OF OREGON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 28, 2007

Ms. HOOLEY. Madam Speaker, today I rise to praise the courage, dedication, and selflessness of the following 116th Air Control Squadron volunteers.

The ''Fighting Longracks'' from Camp Rilea, Warrenton, Oregon answered the call of service and stood up, so their active duty counterparts could temporarily stand down for the holidays.

From September 2006 through January 2007 the Oregon Air National Guard in association with citizen-airmen from Air National Guard units from Hawaii, Ohio, Puerto Rico, and Wisconsin provided tactical command and control for all combat assets within Afghanistan.

Unfortunately, too often we stand here in this chamber to publicly acknowledge the contribution of our military and their families after a tragedy—we honor our fallen—and often forget the living, our veterans.

Lieutenant Colonel Timothy Olson, Lieutenant Colonel Jim Gregory, Major Paul Evans, Major Keith Townsend, Captain Leon McGuire, Captain Bryan Habas, Captain Victoria Habas, Senior Master Sergeant Robert Birman, Senior Master Sergeant Ralph Lehman, Senior Master Sergeant Leslie Wright, Master Sergeant William Baer, Master Sergeant Randy Dickenson, Master Sergeant Donald Hillgaertner, Master Sergeant Gary Gudge, Master Sergeant Cory Jackson, Master Sergeant Albert Luquette, Master Sergeant Adam Melerski, Master Sergeant Troy Mitchell, Master Sergeant Richard Murren, Technical Sergeant Ann Chancey, Technical Sergeant Edwin Corcoran, Technical Sergeant Carl Domingo, Technical Robert Foreman, Technical Sergeant Bryan Garret, Technical Sergeant Matthew Gudge, Technical Sergeant George McMahan, Staff Sergeant Michelle Nelson, and Staff Sergeant Laurence Rose raised their hands, willingly accepted duties in war-torn Afghanistan, and served us with honor.

These airmen worked with our allies in the region to provide command and control that sustained complex, time critical air sovereignty missions in support of International Stabilization Assistance Force (ISAF) priorities. Their contributions cannot be overstated, nor in truth measured.

As a Congresswoman from Oregon, I am proud of what these citizen-airmen accomplished, and humbled by their continued willingness to answer the call of a nation that is in need far more often than anyone expected.

I ask this chamber to recognize and applaud these airmen who like hundreds of thousands of their peers ask for little, give everything they can, and believe our America is worth the sacrifice.

Thank you for standing a post that few even know exists.

TRIBUTE TO MR. DAVID GIBSON

HON. JOSÉ E. SERRANO

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 28, 2007

Mr. SERRANO. Madam Speaker, as the nation reflects and commemorates the myriad of ways in which African Americans have shaped the social, economic, cultural and political landscape of our nation, I rise today in honor of Mr. David Gibson—a distinguished human service professional whose daily stewardship of people's health related needs reminds us of the impact a single individual can have in improving the lives of many.

Presently, Mr. Gibson serves as the Director of the Highbridge Facility at Samaritan Village, a leading substance abuse center in the Bronx. Educated at the Hunter College School of Social Work, Mr. Gibson graduated with honors and was later accepted into Hunter's prestigious Doctoral Program. A New York State Licensed Clinical Social Worker and a Credited Alcoholism and Substance Abuse Counselor, Mr. Gibson brings to Samaritan Village more than twenty-five years of experience within the social and human services field.

In addition to his daily work as an administrator, Mr. Gibson's extensive involvement in the community and civic life of both the Bronx and New York City is reflected in his numerous educational and organizational affiliations. Mr. Gibson acts as an adjunct professor at both the City and State University of New York, the College of New Rochelle, and the Metropolitan College of New York City. Moreover, he is presently affiliated with: the Health and Human Services Committee of Community Board 4 (Member); the Morrisania Revitalization Corporation (Member, Board of Directors); and the Association of Substance Abuse Providers of New York State (Executive Board Member, former Chair of the Cultural Diversity Committee).

Madam Speaker, Frederick Douglass is quoted as saying, ''Man's greatness consists in his ability to do and the proper application of his powers to things needed to be done.'' This statement, seemingly so self-evident, nevertheless reminds us that those who act righteously in support of others face the prospect of one day realizing their own greatness. Madam Speaker, for a life dedicated to honorably serving people in need, I am pleased to recognize Mr. David Gibson.

RECOGNIZING NATIONAL MENTORING MONTH

HON. DANNY K. DAVIS

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 28, 2007

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Madam Speaker, as we celebrate February as National Mentoring Month, I am reminded of the words of Martin Luther King, Jr.: ''Occasionally in life there are those moments of unutterable fulfillment which cannot be completely explained by those symbols called words. Their meanings can only be articulated by the inaudible language of the heart.''

Mentoring is one of those moments in life that cannot be truly appreciated with words. It is a valuable activity that gives all involved a sense of happiness and connection that material things cannot. By reaching into the hearts of children, mentoring opens young people's eyes to a brighter future, and every young person deserves that opportunity.

A mentor, of course, is often an adult who, along with parents, gains a sense of fulfillment when making a positive difference in the quality of life for that young person. The average mentor spends about 8 to 10 hours a month with his or her mentee on activities such as reading a good book aloud, visiting museums, or going to the playground.

I am proud of the many mentoring programs that are already in place in the Chicagoland area, such as Mercy Home's Friends First Program and Sinai Mentoring Program, which links Mount Sinai Hospital professionals with youth from North and South Lawndale High Schools.

I also want to commend the Chicago Public School system and the Board of Education for the development of a program called Cradle to the Classroom. This program involves mentors who work individually with young parents and students who are pregnant and who have children. These youth, with the help of a mentor, finish their high school education and graduate.

When a young person is matched with a caring, responsible individual, this relationship often makes for a counsel, friendship, and constructive example. For too long we have focused on providing remedies to problems that only address negative behavior, rather than looking at ways to promote the positive and healthy development of our young people. National Mentoring Month focuses on what children need in order to grow into healthy, safe, and well-educated adults.

In Chicago and across the country, it is clear that the mentoring framework is in place. Now we just need more people to volunteer their time to help change the life of a child. Research shows that young people who are mentored have a stronger attachment to school, higher graduation rates, and decreased involvement with drugs, gangs, and violence.

Mentoring is a strong investment in our children and in the future of our country. Therefore, Madam Speaker, I am indeed pleased to join with my colleagues in celebrating the essential role that mentoring plays in the lives of our young people during this National Mentoring Month.