

RECOGNIZING THE COCKRUM FAMILY AS THE CRAWFORD COUNTY FARM FAMILY OF THE YEAR

HON. JOHN BOOZMAN

OF ARKANSAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 1, 2010

Mr. BOOZMAN. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor the Cockrum family of Crawford County Arkansas. The Cockrum's have devoted their lives to the service of Crawford County and the State of Arkansas through the service and hard labors of cattle farming. It is because of their devotion and hard labors that they were named Crawford County's 2010 Farm Family of the Year.

For 63 years, the Arkansas Farm Family of the Year Program has honored farm families all across the State for their outstanding work both on their farms and in their communities. Recognition from the program is a reflection of the contribution to agriculture at the community and State level and its implications for improved farm practices and management.

The Cockrum's have worked diligently to contribute to the protection of the environment and the conservation of soil, water, and energy. Mr. Cockrum's journey began at the age of seventeen when he rented 32 acres of land and purchased his first twelve cows. Today, through hard work and determination, the Cockrum's now own more than 300 acres of land and two businesses.

I congratulate Randy, his wife Anjie, and their children Shelby, Tyler, and Siera for their outstanding achievements in agriculture and ask my fellow colleagues to join me in honoring them for this accomplishment. I wish them continued success in their future endeavors and look forward to the contributions they will offer in the future of Arkansas agriculture.

RECOGNIZING OF ARTHUR WOLF FOR DECADES OF DISTINGUISHED PUBLIC AND COMMUNITY SERVICE

HON. CAROLYN B. MALONEY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 1, 2010

Mrs. MALONEY. Madam Speaker, I rise to honor Mr. Arthur Wolf, a great New Yorker and a great American who has devoted himself to serving others. Arthur provided top-notch public service to the citizens of the Empire State for decades as an official at the Social Security Administration and then at the New York City Department for the Aging. He has provided invaluable and expert advice to me on issues related to aging, and in particular, Social Security and Medicare, for the last seventeen years. Last month, he hosted a celebration of his upcoming 80th birthday (he will actually turn 80 on September 25) at a gathering at Aleo restaurant in Manhattan.

Here in Congress, we are elected by the people to make laws, but the job of implementing, applying and enforcing them falls to others. Throughout his professional life, Arthur Wolf has, in his own mild-mannered way, helped citizens overcome the barriers that sometimes exist between often byzantine bu-

reaucracies and the people whom government is supposed to serve.

A proud son of the Bronx, Arthur Wolf has been a consummate New Yorker throughout his life. He did venture far from home to begin his undergraduate education at the University of Georgia, where he witnessed first-hand the mean-spirited racial segregation that then permeated the region, an experience that helped inspire him to try to make a difference for the better. After two years, Arthur returned to his hometown to finish his undergraduate education at New York University, an outstanding institution of which he is a proud, loyal, generous, and highly revered alumnus. After earning his bachelors degree, Arthur became a welfare investigator. In areas like the South Bronx, Arthur Wolf ensured that often underprivileged New Yorkers got a fair shake from the government when it came to accessing benefits to which they were legitimately entitled. He was also a diligent steward of taxpayer dollars who made certain that the public till was not bilked by those who fraudulently tried to qualify for welfare benefits.

As a Social Security Administration official, Arthur helped countless senior citizens cut through red tape that stood between them and the benefits to which they were entitled. Many of these citizens would be penniless if it weren't for the dedicated work of this extraordinary man. In one memorable instance, Arthur helped an elderly widow tap into Social Security benefits to which she was unknowingly entitled, providing her with a sum in the six figures that constituted an enormous boost to her quality of life. He carries that same commitment to serving others everywhere he goes. A longtime resident of Peter Cooper Village, a bastion of middle class housing on Manhattan's East Side, Arthur often helps seniors in the neighborhood by offering uncompensated counsel on how to traverse the Social Security bureaucracy. His work ethic is only matched by his remarkable selflessness. A former Scout Master, he helped introduce inner-city kids to the great outdoors. For many years, he also volunteered his time hosting a radio show on Fordham University's radio station, WFUV, answering callers' Social Security inquiries.

An active member of many community, civic and fraternal organizations, Arthur Wolf is a Full Mason and upstanding member of the Grand Lodge of Accepted Masons of the State of New York, which he has served as Secretary for many years. He remains a longtime member of the Executive Board of the Samuel J. Tilden Democratic Club.

Madam Speaker, for his extraordinary contributions to others and to the civic life of our nation's greatest city, I ask that my distinguished colleagues rise and join me in honoring Mr. Arthur Wolf.

COMING HOME: TRANSITION FROM MILITARY SERVICE TO CIVILIAN LIFE

HON. CORRINE BROWN

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 1, 2010

Ms. CORRINE BROWN of Florida. Madam Speaker, I rise on this 4th of July Independence Day Weekend to congratulate and thank

Congressmen SANFORD D. BISHOP, Jr. and CHARLES B. RANGEL for joining me last year in convening a powerful national dialogue at the 21st Anniversary of the Congressional Black Caucus Veterans Braintrust during the Congressional Black Caucus Foundation's 39th Annual Legislative Conference (ALC) held in Washington, DC. Our September 25, 2009 forum titled: Coming Home: Transitioning from Military Service to Civilian Life, brought together members of the Obama administration, federal agencies, distinguished scholars and professionals, and two of today's highest ranking black military officers to discuss the important challenges and obstacles facing thousands of returning soldiers and veterans who struggle to negotiate family life, jobs, education and health care after honorable discharge from the U.S. military.

As is our tradition, the morning session began with Dr. Zachery Tims, Jr., Senior Pastor, New Destiny Christian Center (NDCC) giving the invocation to bless the occasion, and inspiring international singer Brenda Jackson singing our national anthem, and a stirring rendition of 'Lift Every Voice and Sing,' the Negro National Anthem by Paul Lawrence Dunbar before a standing-room-only crowd of 400 people.

Rep. CHARLES B. RANGEL provided the framework for the forum using his own experience as a Korean War soldier who had experienced the difficulty of transitioning to the real world after a tour of combat. He opened the morning saying, "I went from being a respected and decorated Army staff sergeant to being viewed as nothing more than a high school drop-out." He was able to navigate his way using the GI Bill from underemployed in the garment district of New York City to obtaining his undergraduate and law degrees. But not everyone is as fortunate.

"Although we have a very effective Department of Veterans Affairs, thousands of today's veterans are falling through the cracks. Most of those who flounder are simply not aware of the assistance available from the VA and other service organizations," RANGEL said. "Our vision was that any veteran who walked into this session lost or disillusioned about the future—after hearing our speakers—would walk out feeling that the VA was there for him or her."

Our keynote speaker was Secretary Eric K. Shinseki, of the Department of Veterans Affairs, the first Asian American Four Star General in American military history, a real 'Soldier's Soldier.' He was joined by two other distinguished military officers, Rear Admiral Michelle Howard, the first female graduate of the U.S. Naval Academy to command a U.S. naval vessel, and Four Star General William "Kip" Ward.

Adm. Howard made history as the commander of the USS *Rushmore* that led the successful rescue effort of Captain Richard Phillips and his crew of the *Mearsk Alabama* captured by Somali pirates during April 2009. Gen. Ward is a Morgan State University graduate and the highest ranking African American in the U.S. military. He spoke eloquently about his military career. He serves as the first-ever commander of the newly formed U.S. AFRICOM, one of six geographical commands within the Department of Defense, tasked with training African soldiers and delivering aid and resources to the continent's residents. Also in attendance were retired Generals Julius Becton, George Price, and Robert Cocroft.

Other federal agency representatives and distinguished scholars included Assistant Secretary Ray Jefferson of the Department of Labor's Veterans Employment and Training Services (VETS), Deputy Assistant Secretary Mark Johnston of the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), Corporate Liaison Officer Chuck Southern, Center for Veterans Enterprise, Department of Veterans Affairs, Chairman James Bombard, Veterans Advisory Committee on Education, Department of Veterans Affairs, and Drs. Shirley Marks, Chief, Mental Health Service, West Texas VA Health Care System, and Kristen Lester, Clinical Psychologist and VA Researcher, Women's Health Sciences Division, National Center for PTSD.

Thus, the forum sought to present the latest up-to-date and vital information to take home to veterans, their families and communities, particularly communities of color across the Nation. Secretary Shinseki's remarks focused on three specific areas: access to services and benefits, the VA disability backlog, and homelessness. He also described the VA footprint and new community health care delivery services such as telehealth, as well as a list of issues confronting the VA: homelessness (approximately 50 percent African American), depression, suicide, joblessness, substance abuse, PTSD, and TBI stigma. Secretary Shinseki, as well as others also graciously acknowledged FY 2010 funding levels as a congressionally enhanced budget, but more importantly, a special 'debt of honor.' He continued, "we intend to end homelessness among veterans as opposed to witnessing their downward spiral into hopelessness through education, jobs, mental health and housing as an investment in America's future." Coupled with announcing new VA initiatives such as increasing SBA to 15 percent, \$500 million going toward homeless veterans programs, along with 20,000 HUD VASH vouchers for housing support—the Obama administration and he will transform the VA into a 21st century organization. Lastly, he promised that 40 years after Vietnam, and 20 years after the first Gulf war, he will seek satisfactory answers to two nagging issues: (1) Agent Orange and its host of illnesses, and (2) Gulf War illness.

The afternoon session consisted of the Veterans Stakeholders Roundtable Discussion, Part II. The roundtable was moderated by Mr. Leonard Dunston, MSW, President Emeritus of the National Association of Black Social Workers (NABSW) and featured the following subject matter experts as discussants: Dr. William Lawson, MD, Ph.D., Chairman, Department of Psychiatry & Behavioral Health, Howard University, Dr. Jay Chunn, Director, National Center for Health Behavioral Change, Urban Medical Institute, Morgan State University; Dr. Cedric Bright, MD, VA Staff Physician, Dr. Reginald Wilson, Ph.D., Tuskegee Airman & Senior Scholar Emeritus, American Council on Education (ACE), Dr. Jerome Brandon, Ph.D., Professor of Exercise Physiology, Department of Kinesiology & Health, Georgia State University, Dr. Vincent Patton, III, Ed.D., Director of Community Outreach for Military.com, Dr. Donna Holland Barnes, Ph.D., Suicidologist, Howard University, Dr. Kristen Lester, Ph.D., Clinical Psychologist, Women's Health Sciences Division of the National Center for PTSD & member, American Psychological Association and commentary by Dr. Tom Berger, Ph.D., Senior Advisor at Vietnam Veterans of America (VVA), Peter Dougherty,

Director of VA Homeless Programs, Fredette West, former Chief of Staff for the Hon. Louis Stokes (D-OH), Retired, and Dr. James Woodard, Ed.D., JD, former Senior Staff Member for the late Hon. Joseph Moakley (D-MA), and original Braintrust member.

The mission of the roundtable discussion was to complement the morning session with greater details and re-analyses related to veterans transitional difficulties involving behavioral health, PTSD, TBI, suicide, depression and other mental illnesses with both a professional service provider and an interdisciplinary perspective—emphasizing that no one comes home from war unchanged, and unfortunately many emotionally and psychologically wounded troops fall through the cracks.

For example, veterans make up only 13 percent of the population, but account for 20 percent of the suicides. Dr. Barnes indicated veterans with PTSD are more than 3X as likely to die by suicide as their civilian counterpart. White college educated veterans living in rural areas are at the highest risk. Yet, African Americans may be the second highest especially those between the age 18–44. This concurring with Dr. Mark's earlier presentation, that veterans in the general US population are at an increased risk of suicide, with a projected rise in the incidence of functional impairment and psychiatric morbidity among veterans of the conflicts in Afghanistan and Iraq. Consequently, more clinical and community interventions that are directed towards veterans in both VA and non-VA healthcare facilities are needed. Dr. Chunn spoke about physical assault and attempted murder rates being more than 3X higher among Iraq and Afghanistan returnees, alluding to a direct correlation between homicide and suicide echoed by a number of mental health professionals. Even more so, that the VA is seeing only 40 percent of the behavioral health problems as opposed to the 60 percent in the general population. Dr. Berger pointed out that of the eight VA recommendations concerning suicide, there are no action plans, despite the National Vietnam Veterans Readjustment Study (NVVRS) and the RAND Study of 2008. Correspondingly, risk factors such as multiple deployments, military sexual trauma, TBI linked to PTSD all appear to be disconnected. This is compounded by the fact that close to 50 percent of the National Guard troops come from rural areas of the country, strongly suggesting that the VA and military health systems are not working, because there is no connectivity!

VA researcher Dr. Lester responded that the VA is not a perfect system by any means. Additionally, that there are not a lot of studies comparing ethnic minorities and white PTSD treatment; other research problems stemming from too small sample sizes, and the need for more research targeting issues of relevance to OEF/OIF women service members. Furthermore, she indicated that women's exposure to combat results in increased dual risk, decreased social support, increased parental stress, unsupportive homecoming reception and barriers to health care. Therefore the need for evidence-based treatment and training is essential. Dr. Brandon added a systems reevaluation perspective, more specifically aimed at VA moving from a sick care system to a health care system which includes more individual responsibility and healthy thinking, or healthy lifestyle choices. He also refocused us on the triangulation of expectations such as knowledge, practices and programs, and outcomes. Lastly, with respect to practices, he

questioned effectiveness. Moreover, Dr. Lawson, reiterated, the VA is not culturally competent so mental disorders and traumatic brain injury are not recognized by professionals, nor appreciated as stigmatizing for veterans. Furthermore, the complexities of mental health issues are such that veterans are simply non-responsive to treatment, because they do not get state of the art treatment. With respect to trauma, he said, we know about self-medication and incarceration (the majority of which are non-violent drug abusers) and the revolving door cycle. For depression, he recommended, early screening, culturally relevant education and referral. Like other African Americans, he said, veterans have less access to services, poor recognition of mental disorder, and lack access to state-of-the-art care. Although better than civilians still there exist disparities in services and care!

In terms of the new GI Bill Dr. Wilson stated, today 30 percent of the modern military is black, versus high rates of unemployment plaguing black communities across the nation. Consequently, blacks are more inclined to reenlist, more are married, and have a couple of kids, thus ruling out college! Further, since the new GI Bill has only been in effect for a few months there are no statistics available. However, a recent higher education review reveals: 57 percent of higher education institutions have some kind of program, or service for veterans; 46 percent of private colleges have no program, or service; 22 percent provide special enrollment, and 75 percent provide credit for military occupational training. Yet, focus groups reveal that there is little provision for veterans with families and children, and online education is not recognized.

Also raised was the issue of the impact of non-veterans on veterans in the clinical setting, such as whether or not the peer to peer approach is best (i.e. comfort levels). However, no data currently exist to answer this question. VA staff physician Dr. Bright, a non-veteran talked about the importance of listening and stressed the need for Blacks to participate in clinical research and be informed, while encouraging community-based participatory research to tailor products to local needs, and stressed health equity. Tincie Lynch, a member of the new VA Community Advocates Program based in South Carolina, Alabama and Georgia commented on serving as a life coach to get veterans to the next level, and the start of a new Georgia Veterans Treatment Court. Still others insisted that domestic violence is related to PTSD, but suggested we are not looking at emergency room (ER) data. At the Howard University Hospital PTSD Symposium presenters pointed out that domestic violence is not necessarily included in the national dialogue about returning soldiers, or veterans, families and PTSD. Also widespread usage of new technology such as websites, cell phones, twitter, facebook, etc. by family members raised the issue of how do we capitalize on the worldwide phenomenon known as social networking to better serve veterans. Equally important, Dr. Lawson emphasized 'electronic medical records must be able to talk to one another.' There also seemed to be consensus about quality time with VA physicians and that 15 minute interactions are problematic. Consequently, unanimous agreement was voiced for 'changing reimbursement for primary care providers.' Other

comments consistently reinforced 'we have a broken system,' and 'can't just anyone engage no veteran!'

Furthermore, Ms. West, Mr. Dougherty and Dr. Woodard's commentaries provided a well-rounded critique of veterans' substantive issues, along with accurate assessment and reasonable recommendations through the prism of their own policy experience. West's critique highlighted that the military tradition runs in the family; also, families have PTSD. Thus, we need to look at a minority health bill now, and health care reform must include military, veterans and family coverage. Dougherty's commentary indicated 20 percent of people who called the VA suicide prevention hotline are homeless. He also emphasized that coordination of services and benefits are crucial, along with building relationships and new partnerships with others. Moreover, the VA is moving to a proactive stance in terms of criminal justice and justice outreach, court diversion, the GI Bill, expedited VA claims and planning, as well as plan redesign. Dr. Woodard's commentary, on the other hand, posed a more difficult set of questions: 'what is the nexus of sick care to health care transition, individual responsibility (vs. governmental obligation) and VA access and treatment issues?'

All told, the outcomes of the Congressional Black Caucus Veterans Braintrust 'Coming Home' forum (including the Howard University PTSD Symposium) can be measured in terms of: (1) three summary reports (a) Resulting Trauma: Identifying the Signs, Symptoms & Impact of Post Traumatic Stress Disorder in African Americans; (b) Coming Home: Transitioning from Military Service to Civilian Life & Veterans Stakeholders Roundtable Discussion, Part II; and (c) Affirming Life: Suicide Prevention & Intervention in Communities of Color; (2) potential enhancements for Representative CHARLES RANGEL's legislation (H.R. 1963) and recommendations for CBC Chairwoman BARBARA LEE's (D-CA), Task Force on Veterans; (3) an outline of questions for future GAO research in the following three critical areas: (a) veterans' homelessness, (b) women veterans, particularly those single parents with children, and (c) mental health, especially PTSD, TBI, depression, suicide, and mental illness stigma; (4) the successful launching of a new round of issues education outreach workshops based on content and information from September 25th's Veterans Braintrust (2010 New Abstracts: Meeting the Needs of African American Homeless Veterans; U.S. Military Personnel: Women & Veterans of African Descent; & The Veterans Braintrust as a Strategic Intervention); (5) uncovered or identified at least four clearly relevant, but essentially unanswered questions with implications for veterans policy in the future: (a) why are Iraq and Afghanistan combat returnees not using the system, or VA services?, (b) why are African American veterans disproportionately represented among the homeless?, (c) why are only one-third of the entire veterans population enrolled in the VA?, and (d) what is the most effective method for advocating the VA system's needed 21st century transformation, especially, with respect to cultural competence and cultural diversity, or racial, ethnic, and gender differences based

on veteran's health equity? Last, but not least, several recommendations for legislative consideration or action in the future.

The evening's gala reception, "Saluting Veterans & Their Support Organizations" and "African Americans in Transportation," featuring special musical guest Chuck Brown, the 'Godfather of Go-Go', was sponsored by the Association of American Railroads and the A. Philip Randolph Institute and recognized me for my work as Chairwoman of the Subcommittee on Railroads, Pipelines and Hazardous Materials. The U.S. Army's Freedom Team Salute awardees included Lt. Col. William Calbert, USA, Ret., William Dabney, Herculano Dias, Sgt. Maj. Yolanda Glover, USA, Ret., Col Kathaleen Harris, USA, Ret., Stanley Murphy, Capt., USA, Vietnam, MSgt. Edwards Posey, USA, Ret., Dovey Johnson Roundtree, USA, WWII, Horace Taylor, USA, WWII, and Dr. James Woodard, Ed.D., JD, Capt., USA, Vietnam. Emile Milne, Legislative Director for the Hon. CHARLES RANGEL (D-NY) was presented the Citizens Beneficiary Award by the Mike Handy Foundation & Fund for his unique contribution to our Nation's veterans, along with 2009 Veterans Braintrust awardees, including: Dr. E. Curtis Alexander, Leroy Archible, Lt. Gen. Julius Becton, Jr., USA, Ret., Aseneth (Mays) Blackwell, Maj. Gen. Joseph Carter, Dr. Darlene Collins, Roy Foster, C.R. Gibbs, Brig. Gen. Stayce Harris, Wanda Ruth Lee, BGen. Allyson Solomon, Barbara Ward, Maj. Gen. (Ret.) Enoch Williams, Joe Wilson, Jr., Eddie Beard Veterans Home, 9th Ordinance Training Battalion Alumni Association, The Units K-West & B-East (US) Reunion Booster Club, The Friends of Charlton Gardens, Sister Soldiers Project, African American Veterans Project of Lancaster County, Dayton African American Legacy Institute, The Legacy Museum of African American History—Much in Demand Exhibit, Tangipahoa African American Heritage Museum & Black Veterans Archives.

Furthermore, in trying to capture the mood of the moment during the festive 2009 awards ceremony honoring veterans, their families, and friends the word that best describes the long, rich legacy of African American military contributions is "Service", not money. They admirably and nobly performed service to God and country despite the challenges of race and discrimination. And, no less important, their "Service" to family and friends constituted the essential building block of community.

Finally, as a member of the Veterans Braintrust leadership I want to extend my heartfelt thanks to speakers, panelists, authors, and attendees, but particularly Dr. Frank Smith, Jr., Dr. William Lawson, Dr. Donna Holland Barnes, Guilaine Kraft, Jason Young, Jean Davis, Constance Burns, Dr. Clarence Willie, Edna Wells Handy, Dr. Diane Elmore, Lucretia McClenney, Ralph Cooper, Robert Blackwell, Ervin Russell and T. Michael Sullivan, as well as congressional staff members Roshan Hodge, Lee Footer, Emile Milne, Robin Peguero, Kristen Rice-Jones, Holly Biglow, and Jonathan Halpern for what can only be described as, the best ever Veterans Braintrust.'

I want to once again thank the presenters at the forums and awardees for their long, rich

legacy of service, both in the military abroad and in the fight for equal rights at home.

CONGRATULATING SOUTH AFRICA ON FIRST TWO CONVICTIONS FOR HUMAN TRAFFICKING

SPEECH OF

HON. HENRY C. "HANK" JOHNSON

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 30, 2010

Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in order to express my support for House Resolution 1412, congratulating the Government of South Africa upon its first two successful convictions for human trafficking. I would like to thank Representative SMITH for his efforts on this resolution and his dedication to eradicating human trafficking throughout the world.

This summer people all over the world are watching South Africa. The country is hosting the 2010 Fédération Internationale de Football Association (FIFA) World Cup. South Africa is estimated to attract nearly 2.7 million local spectators and anywhere between 350,000 and 500,000 visitors from around the world. South Africa has made huge efforts within the last several months to ensure that their country is safe, secure, clean, and comfortable for tourists and visitors. A large part of that effort to prepare for this event has been a notable reduction in, and increased prosecution of, human trafficking. This resolution congratulates South Africa on its efforts and the recent successful convictions for human trafficking.

The Department of State reports that, "South Africa is a source, transit, and destination country for trafficked men, women, and children . . . Children are largely trafficked within the country . . . to urban centers like Johannesburg, Cape Town, Durban, and Bloemfontein—girls trafficked for the purposes of commercial sexual exploitation and domestic servitude; boys trafficked for forced street vending, food service, begging, crime, and agriculture . . ." I am very pleased that the South African government, in conjunction with other nongovernmental agencies including the Tshwane Counter-Trafficking Coalition for 2010 and Cape Town Tourism has invested resources and energy into preventing human trafficking during the 2010 FIFA World Cup and I hope that these efforts will continue.

I want to congratulate the South African Government for its enormous stride in addressing human trafficking. I also want to urge the government to move quickly to adopt the Prevention and Combating of Trafficking in Persons Bill in order to facilitate future prosecutions, as well as prioritize anti-trafficking law enforcement during the 2010 FIFA World Cup through expanded law enforcement presence, raids, and other measures in areas where trafficking for labor and sexual exploitation are likely to occur. I truly believe that we can eradicate human trafficking and make this world a safer place for all people, and urge my colleagues to support this important resolution.