

Wesley has been very active with his troop, participating in many scout activities. Over the many years Wesley has been involved with scouting, he has not only earned numerous merit badges, but also the respect of his family, peers, and community. Most notably, Wesley has contributed to his community through his Eagle Scout project. Wesley scraped, painted and replaced the floor molding in the front entryway and men's bathroom for St. Rita's school at St. Munchin in Cameron, Missouri.

Mr. Speaker, I proudly ask you to join me in commending Wesley Henry Scherler McDowell for his accomplishments with the Boy Scouts of America and for his efforts put forth in achieving the highest distinction of Eagle Scout.

CONGRATULATIONS TO MRS. PAT
STELLA

HON. LOU BARLETTA

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, April 15, 2011

Mr. BARLETTA. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to honor and acknowledge Pat Stella, a recipient of the 2011 Volunteers of America Pennsylvania's Spirit of Youth award.

The Spirit of Youth award is given to those who instill hope and belief in the advancement of all. Their support of the community and of Volunteers of America ranges from helping children to helping those who are young at heart. Pat has dedicated herself to doing just that through her business and volunteer efforts.

Pat Stella is the owner and operator of 11 McDonald's restaurants throughout Luzerne, Carbon, Lackawanna, and Wayne counties in Pennsylvania. Growing up in Chicago, Pat's mother started working as a secretary in the McDonald's corporate office. Her family moved to Pennsylvania after selling everything they had to buy a McDonald's franchise. Pat, a former elementary school teacher, began working for McDonald's when her family opened a second restaurant more than 30 years ago. She became the owner-operator of the enterprise in 1980.

Pat's work ethic and service has been recognized in many ways. In 2003, Pat received the McDonald's Street Fighter Award for her superior marketing and business sales. She has also received the Women Operators' Network 2003 Shining Star Award. Most notably, Pat earned the highest award a McDonald's owner can receive, the Golden Arch Award.

Pat not only dedicates herself to her work, but she also dedicates herself to her husband and three children, and to her community. In addition to working with Volunteers of America, Pat serves on the boards of the Pittston Chamber of Commerce and Scranton's Ronald McDonald House. She is a past member of McDonald's National Operators Advisory Board and its Steering Committee, and she has served as the co-chair of the Philadelphia McDonald's Owner/Operator Association.

Mr. Speaker, Pat Stella's work ethic is not the only trait to make her stand out in our community. Pat's service to our area has touched many lives. Mr. Speaker, today, I ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating Mrs. Pat Stella, a recipient of this year's Vol-

unteers of America Pennsylvania's Spirit of Youth award.

GOD'S CHILD PROJECT 20TH
ANNIVERSARY

HON. RICK BERG

OF NORTH DAKOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, April 15, 2011

Mr. BERG. Mr. Speaker, today, I would like to recognize the 20th anniversary of the God's Child Project, a North Dakota-based program to combat international human trafficking.

Human trafficking is among the largest criminal industries in the world, second only to the illegal drug trade.

It is also the fastest growing, with an estimated 12 million people enslaved worldwide—including many in the United States.

God's Child Project has been providing education, medical care, and other critical aid to children and families around the world since 1991.

For the past 10 years, this non-profit has worked with an affiliate in Guatemala to combat international human trafficking and exploitation.

This month, as the program celebrates its 20th anniversary, I want to commend the good and selfless work being done through God's Child Project.

I am proud that this program has given so much to help the victims of human trafficking, and I'm happy that the program is able to call North Dakota home.

IN SPECIAL RECOGNITION OF MATTHEW SLOCUM ON HIS OFFER OF APPOINTMENT TO ATTEND THE UNITED STATES MERCHANT MARINE ACADEMY

HON. ROBERT E. LATTA

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, April 15, 2011

Mr. LATTA. Mr. Speaker, it is my great pleasure to pay special tribute to an outstanding young man from Ohio's Fifth Congressional District. I am happy to announce that Matthew Slocum of Perrysburg, Ohio, has been offered an appointment to attend the United States Merchant Marine Academy in Kings Point, New York.

Matthew brings an enormous amount of leadership, service and dedication to the incoming Class of 2015. While attending Perrysburg High School in Perrysburg, Ohio, Matthew consistently achieved honor roll. Matthew involved himself in a number of athletic activities, including football and baseball, in which he earned varsity letters. He also served as a volunteer at youth football and baseball camps.

On top of this, he excelled academically and served his church on its Youth Leadership Committee.

I am confident that Matthew will carry the lessons of his student and athletic leadership to the United States Merchant Marine Academy.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating Matthew Slocum on the ac-

ceptance of his appointment to the United States Merchant Marine Academy where he will gain a world-class education and invaluable leadership experience. I am positive that Matthew will excel during his career at the United States Merchant Marine Academy, and I ask my colleagues to join me in extending their best wishes to him as he begins his service to the nation.

RECOGNIZING THE ACCOMPLISHMENTS OF AMERICAS HIGH SCHOOL MOCK TRIAL TEAM

HON. SILVESTRE REYES

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, April 15, 2011

Mr. REYES. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the outstanding accomplishments of the Americas High School Mock Trial team from my congressional district in El Paso, Texas. On March 5, 2011, at the Texas High School Mock Trial Competition, the Americas High School Mock Trial team became the first team from El Paso in the competition's 32-year history to win the Texas state title. This is a remarkable achievement that I am proud to recognize.

Mock Trial offers students across the nation the opportunity to develop critical thinking and public speaking skills, as well as knowledge of legal practices and procedures, in a real courtroom setting. Teams devote long hours to work on case theories and examinations to prepare for competition.

Undeclared in the regional competition for three years in a row, the Americas High School Mock Trial team's dedication secured their victory as they defeated the defending state champions. The team members include Enrique Esparza, Edwin Felix, Zach Fields, Joshua Monarez, Nayell Palomino, Jacob Parson, Texas Quezada, Chris Ramos, Savannah Rappe, and Anabella Tarango. In addition to the team victory, Zach Fields was awarded the Outstanding Advocate Award at the competition in a unanimous decision by the judges.

The Americas High School Mock Trial team is coached by Mr. Robert Almonte II, Assistant City Attorney for the City of El Paso, and Mr. Jaime Esparza, the District Attorney for the 34th Judicial District of Texas. The team's teacher sponsor, Teresa Candelaria, has served as their sponsor for seven seasons since 2004. I commend these three outstanding professionals for their dedication to the educational development of El Paso students.

Americas High School, located in east El Paso, is one of seven high schools in the Socorro Independent School District. The school opened in September 1996, serving a predominantly Hispanic student population.

In early May, the Americas High School Mock Trial team will travel to Phoenix, Arizona, to represent the State of Texas at the National High School Mock Trial Championship. I am pleased to honor this team for their impressive accomplishments, and wish all team members the very best in their future endeavors.

REFLECTS ON THE 100th ANNIVERSARY OF THE TRIANGLE FIRE

HON. ROSA L. DeLAURO

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, April 15, 2011

Ms. DeLAURO. Mr. Speaker, from Wisconsin to Washington, we are at a crossroads right now about the kind of America we want to be. At this important moment, it would do us well to reflect on our shared past, when our nation reached a similar crossroads—after the Triangle Shirtwaist Fire, one of the worst industrial accidents in American history, which occurred a century ago last month.

I say “accident,” but really there was more at work here. If you do not know the story, the Triangle Fire resulted in the death of 146 garment workers—17 men and 129 women—most of them young immigrant women under the age of 25. In the months before the fire—until they successfully struck for shorter hours and better pay—they had been working 13-hour days, and getting paid 13 cents an hour.

The fire happened in a garment factory that took up the eighth, ninth, and tenth floors of a New York City building, one with poor ventilation and no real safety measures in place. When the fire started, likely due to a cigarette or match, the owners of the Triangle Company were notified by phone and escaped.

But nobody told the workers. And so, when the fire began to rage, these women could not get out. Fire blocked many of the exits, and one of the main stairways had been locked shut by the Triangle Company—the foreman with the key had also left. And so many women tried to escape by jumping to their deaths. Those who did not leap burned.

The Triangle Fire was a nightmare that unfolded before the entire nation. Because of this tragedy, church leaders called for a renewed commitment to the principles of social justice, known as the Social Gospel. And a generation of progressives was moved to reform. Within three years, 36 new state laws passed to regulate fire safety and workplace safety, and New York became a model for the nation.

Because of the Triangle Fire, all of America saw firsthand what happens when women and workers are left without basic protections. And we as a people realized that government has an important role to play in ensuring the life, health, and dignity of workers.

That is why I am concerned about the many attempts by the majority to cut basic protections, or to see the assaults on employees' rights taking place in states like Wisconsin and Ohio. We know where all of this leads—Our nation has lived it, a century ago.

Before us are two different visions of America. I know which I want to live in, and which I want to strive for.

HONORING THE LIFE OF VIRGINIA BRAUN

HON. DAVID DREIER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, April 15, 2011

Mr. Dreier. Mr. Speaker, today I would like to pay tribute to Virginia Bradley Braun—

a philanthropist, a civic leader, a proud Californian, and a patriot. She was very active in politics and a long-time friend and supporter of Governor and President Ronald Reagan. It was a privilege to call her a friend as well.

GINIE, as she was known to all, contributed enormously to her adopted home in the greater Los Angeles area. Like me, Ginie grew up a Midwesterner, then came to California at a young age, and quickly called it home.

She and her husband Henry gave generously to the community, supporting a vast array of worthy causes, from education to the arts to children's health. But Ginie was most generous with her time. She spent a lifetime volunteering for civic organizations, political causes, and charities that helped to improve the lives of those who shared her community.

One of her most dedicated endeavors was her support for Pepperdine University, a tremendous institution that has served Southern California since 1937. Ginie joined the Pepperdine University Board in 1983 and was named to the University's Board of Regents in 1995. Her legacy lives on in the Henry A. and Virginia B. Braun Center for Public Policy, which was dedicated in 2003. The Braun Center will continue to advance the academic excellence to which Ginie was so devoted.

But Ginie's greatest generosity to the university was reserved for institutions and programs that did not bear her name. From athletics to arts, Ginie was a very proud supporter of Pepperdine, its facilities, its faculty and its students.

As University President Andrew Benton said, “Ginie radiated life.” Her energy and charisma were irrepressible. She brought them to every one of her life's endeavors, and inspired those around her with her love of life and generosity of spirit. I know that I am joined by countless others in celebrating the tremendous life of Ginie Braun.

CONGRATULATIONS TO MR. AND MRS. JOHN AND TINA DOWD

HON. LOU BARLETTA

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, April 15, 2011

Mr. Barletta. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to honor and acknowledge Mr. and Mrs. John and Tina Dowd, recipients of the 2011 Volunteers of America Pennsylvania's Spirit of Youth award.

The Spirit of Youth award is given to those who instill hope and belief in the advancement of all. Their support of the community and of Volunteers of America ranges from helping children to helping those who are young at heart. John and Tina Dowd exemplify these traits, and have used their own lives to help others.

John Dowd grew up in Sunbury, Pennsylvania. He attended Shikellamy High School before studying engineering at the Pennsylvania State University. John is the president of Sundance Vacations, which he grew from one small office in Pocono Lake, Pennsylvania, into a national company that was named one of the Inc 500 fastest-growing companies two years in a row. As he grew his business, he also dedicated himself to giving back to his community. In addition to his work with Volunteers of America, John donates to the Luzerne

Foundation and the Wyoming Valley Children's Association. His company sponsors local Little League and booster club sports teams, and he participates in many other local and national charitable causes.

Tina Dowd co-founded Sundance Vacations with her husband, John. Tina is a graduate of Kutztown University of Pennsylvania. She has been an integral part of growing the business. In November 2010, Tina accepted the Employer of the Year Award at the seventh annual Stevie Awards for Women in Business. In addition to managing and training employees, Tina oversees all of the firm's communications. John and Tina spend a lot of time with their three daughters, but like her husband, Tina volunteers for many organizations. Tina serves as vice president of an organization serving homeless children and their families in Carbon County—an organization she helped found. She is a member of the Lehigh Area School District Board of Directors, the Community Action Council of Palmerton Area Churches, and the Luzerne Foundation Millennium Circle. She is a past board member of the Northeast Pennsylvania Better Business Bureau.

Mr. Speaker, Mr. and Mrs. Dowd have not only grown a business that employs more than 700 people, but they have used their talents to give back to the community they love so much. Their philanthropic efforts and volunteerism have helped so many of our neighbors. John and Tina are extraordinary both as a couple and as individuals. Mr. Speaker, today, I ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating John and Tina Dowd, recipients of this year's Volunteers of America Pennsylvania's Spirit of Youth award.

RETIREMENT OF LAUSD SUPERINTENDENT RAMON CORTINES

HON. HENRY A. WAXMAN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, April 15, 2011

Mr. Waxman. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the distinguished 55-year career of Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD) Superintendent Ramon Cortines.

Superintendent Cortines began his career as an educator in 1956, teaching a class of 44 sixth graders, in Aptos, California. He taught at the elementary, middle and high school levels before becoming a school administrator and ultimately serving as Superintendent of Schools in Pasadena, San Jose, San Francisco, New York City and Los Angeles.

Superintendent Cortines is one of our nation's most experienced educators. He has advised every President or his Education Secretary since the Carter Administration, and in 1992 he chaired the Department of Education transition team for President Clinton. Cortines served as Superintendent of LAUSD briefly in 2000 and returned to the position in 2008, during which time he steered the district through unprecedented fiscal challenges while improving pupil attendance, school safety and student achievement.

Upon his retirement today, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing the distinguished career of this dedicated public servant.