

succeed, Iliana and Agnes are transforming lives and helping students to reach their full potential.

As our nation observes Teacher Appreciation Week, I urge my colleagues and all Americans to support critical investments in education that help to provide all students with a high quality education and to make teaching one of the most valued professions in America.

IN RECOGNITION OF THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF DEBORAH SZEKELY

HON. SUSAN A. DAVIS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 10, 2012

Mrs. DAVIS of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize a treasured member of the San Diego community. Deborah Szekely is an extraordinary woman of tenacity and dedication, and on May 3rd she celebrated her 90th birthday.

Deborah is a renowned health and wellness advocate, philanthropist, community leader, and champion for childhood nutrition. At 90 years old, she represents the beauty and energy that comes from a life committed to health and wellness, and she outpaces younger fitness advocates. She truly lives what she teaches. Along with her husband, Edmond Szekely, she founded Rancho la Puerta, a destination spa and wellness center in Baja California, and the Golden Door Spa in Escondido, California. She is committed to helping others prioritize healthy living.

Deborah has worked with my office on initiatives related to educating children about health and nutrition. She is committed to changing the culture of eating and making sure young children understand the importance of healthy food, and the role it plays in wellness. Ever the energetic advocate, on May 3, 2012, her 90th birthday, Deborah launched wellnesspring.org, a grassroots effort to encourage the creation of a culture of wellness throughout the United States. I appreciate her laser focus when it comes to reaching people and educating them about the importance of living a healthy lifestyle and eating well.

In addition to her healthy living work, Deborah has served as the president of the Inter-American Foundation, worked with the Organization of American States, and served as principal delegate to the Inter-American Commission on Women. She currently works as the Chairman and Founder of the New Americans Museum in San Diego and serves on the Board of Directors for the Center for Science in the Public Interest and the Old Globe Theatre in San Diego.

Deborah ran for Congress in 1982, and while she did not win that election, through that process she conceived the idea of Setting Course, a publication of the Congressional Management Foundation which provides guidance on the fundamentals of managing a congressional office. The first edition of Setting Course was published in 1984, and the 12th edition of Setting Course just recently came out. This manual has been an invaluable resource to congressional offices, including my own. Deborah is still a member of the Board of Directors for the Congressional Manage-

ment Foundation and continues her critical role in the publication of Setting Course.

I truly admire Deborah's ongoing commitment to helping people of all ages understand the importance of good nutrition, healthy living, and being a force for positive change in their communities.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE'S 150TH ANNIVERSARY

HON. LAURA RICHARDSON

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 10, 2012

Ms. RICHARDSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to one of our greatest American success stories. Today let us all pause to recognize the United States Department of Agriculture's 150th Birthday.

President Abraham Lincoln established the USDA 150 years ago, on May 15, 1862. That act helped ground our nation's agriculture industry in science, and helped give our nation the ability to lead the world in feeding the globe. One of the first responsibilities delegated to the USDA was the Homestead Act. The Homestead Act gave pre-approved U.S. citizens undeveloped federal land at no cost if they agreed to develop that land. This act led to the settling of the Great Plains; today those lands are the world's largest producers of wheat and corn.

Our nation's agriculture industry has, throughout our history, been a significant force in our economy. One out of every twelve Americans is employed in an agriculture-related industry. So it is important to recognize that agriculture is not just a nostalgic notion of the past but remains a foundation of the American economy. The influence of American farmers and ranchers not only reaches every state and household within the United States, but it can be felt all around the world. The Port of Long Beach, in my district, exports millions of metric tons of agricultural cargo to our vital Asian trade partners every year.

American consumers spend on average less than ten percent of their disposable income on food. That ten percent represents the lowest percentage in the history of the world. By comparison, most European consumers spend more than double that and in developing countries the percentage is often higher than 50 percent. Our nation's advanced system of production agriculture is evidence of how successful the USDA has been in ensuring a safe, affordable and abundant food supply.

Today, the United States is the world leader in the development and use of agricultural biotechnology, contributing to our positive balance of agricultural trade. We must continue supporting policies that promote the smart use of research, science and biotechnology that has enabled production agriculture to thrive. We must embrace the importance of agricultural innovation in the same way we endorse innovation in fields such as health care or communications.

Mr. Speaker, our producers remain a critical source of jobs and innovation. Maintaining a strong agriculture industry is vital to the present and future U.S. economy and is critical to the economic and political stability. It is with great pride and respect that I honor our

nation's farmers and ranchers and extend birthday wishes to the USDA.

TEACHER APPRECIATION WEEK

HON. DEBBIE WASSERMAN SCHULTZ

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 10, 2012

Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to the teachers of Broward and Miami-Dade Counties during National Teacher Appreciation Week, taking place this year from May 7 through May 11, 2012.

This week affords students, parents, and communities across the nation a chance to come together and honor the extraordinary work our teachers are doing in the classroom to transform the lives of young people and educate the next American generation.

It is a time to remember that education is the cornerstone of a vibrant and prosperous America, and to recognize the teachers that make America's successful future a reality.

As a member of Congress and the proud mother of three children in Broward County Public Schools, I see the talent and hard work of our teachers every day—not just in my role as a policy maker, but in a very personal way.

Educating the next generation is an essential and great act of public service—it's a calling that our teachers have answered because they care, they believe in our children, and they choose to make a difference in the lives of future generations.

For our students, nothing is more important than an excellent teacher at the front of the room and in their lives, and now more than ever, we must make an investment in our future by investing in our teachers.

We must provide them with the resources they need to successfully do their jobs, and we must afford them the respect and support that their profession deserves.

Thank you to Florida's teachers for investing your skills and talents into the lives of future generations, and thank you for the sacrifices made each day to ensure that our kids have the tools they need to learn. We are all grateful for your work.

HONORING FALLEN STAFF SGT. THOMAS KENT FOGARTY

HON. FORTNEY PETE STARK

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 10, 2012

Mr. STARK. Mr. Speaker, I rise, along with my colleague Rep. BARBARA LEE of California, to honor the service and sacrifice of Staff Sgt. Thomas Kent Fogarty, age 30, of Alameda, California. He was killed in action on May 6th, 2012 in Pakista Province, Afghanistan. The married father of two sons, ages 2 and 5, was felled by an improvised explosive device that detonated near the vehicle he was commanding.

My heart goes out to SSG Fogarty's wife Vanessa, their young sons, his parents and his friends for the loss of this noble man and soldier. SSG Fogarty made the ultimate sacrifice in service to his country. His fellow countrymen and women, and I, will be forever grateful.

A graduate of Alameda High School, SSG Fogarty entered the military in 2003 and his first deployment was in January of 2005. His tragic and untimely death occurred after eight years and three months of service to his country, and only a month after his arrival in Afghanistan. He had served two previous tours in Iraq. Before being deployed, SSG Fogarty was a military recruiter. He was assigned to the 3rd Battalion (Airborne), 509th Infantry Regiment, 4th Brigade Combat Team (Airborne), 25th Infantry Division at Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson in Alaska.

SSG Fogarty was an accomplished soldier. His military awards include: 3 Army Commendation Medals, 2 Army Good Conduct Medals, National Defense Service Medal, Afghanistan Campaign Medal w/Bronze Service Star, Iraq Campaign Medal w/Bronze Service Star, Global War on Terrorism Expeditionary Medal, Global War on Terrorism Service Medal, 2 Noncommissioned Officers Professional Development Ribbons, Army Service Ribbon, Overseas Service Ribbon, Combat Infantryman Badge, Combat and Special Skill Badge, Basic Marksmanship Qual Badge—Bar, Weapon: Rifle (Inscription: Rifle), Expert, Parachutist Badge, Basic, U.S. Army Recruiter Identification Badge, Gold, and Overseas Service Bar.

It is because of the commitment of truly brave individuals like SSG Fogarty that our Nation can enjoy the freedoms that we are all afforded. It takes an exceptional man to give his life for the betterment of his country, and SSG Fogarty was a truly exceptional man.

HUNTER FRITZ

HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 10, 2012

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and applaud Hunter Fritz for receiving the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award. Hunter Fritz is a 7th grader at Oberon Middle School and received this award because his determination and hard work have allowed him to overcome adversities.

The dedication demonstrated by Hunter Fritz is exemplary of the type of achievement that can be attained with hard work and perseverance. It is essential students at all levels strive to make the most of their education and develop a work ethic which will guide them for the rest of their lives.

I extend my deepest congratulations to Hunter Fritz for winning the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award. I have no doubt he will exhibit the same dedication and character in all his future accomplishments.

CONGRATULATING PRESIDENT MA YING-JEOU OF TAIWAN

HON. EDOLPHUS TOWNS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 10, 2012

Mr. TOWNS. Mr. Speaker, I rise to congratulate President Ma Ying-jeou on his inaugu-

ration to his second term as the leader of The Republic of China (Taiwan).

Back in January of this year, the people of Taiwan reelected President Ma Ying-jeou and on May 20th he will have his second inauguration. President Ma has worked hard to maintain a peaceful relationship with China and his efforts must be recognized. The United States deeply appreciates his efforts to keep the peace, promoting stability in an important region.

Over his first term, President Ma worked with the United States to continue Taiwan's longstanding security partnership with the United States, requesting to purchase and U.S. defense systems. I and my colleagues in Congress remain strong supporters of The Taiwan Relations Act, which spells out the relationship between the United States and Taiwan, and is critical to the peace and prosperity of the region.

President Ma achieved acceptance from the World Health Organization for Taiwan to observe at the World Health Assembly, a significant step forward for Taiwan's international standing, and for the health of the people of the East-Asian and Pacific region. We should work to encourage Taiwan's participation in participate in other international organizations such as the United Nations' International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO).

I would also like to note that this also marks the 10th anniversary of the Congressional Taiwan Caucus, of which I have been a proud member for years.

President Ma has diligently maintained peace and stability and we look forward to his future term as it provides an opportunity to achieve even greater accomplishments for the people of Taiwan and further strengthen the U.S.-Taiwan relationship.

HONORING THE 175TH ANNIVERSARY OF UNION BAPTIST CHURCH IN ALTON, ILLINOIS

HON. JERRY F. COSTELLO

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 10, 2012

Mr. COSTELLO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing the 175th Anniversary of the Union Baptist Church in Alton, Illinois.

In the first half of the 19th Century, Alton, Illinois had developed as a major stop on the Underground Railroad as slaves came north in search of their freedom. It was a small group of these former slaves, some having arrived via the Underground Railroad and some having previously been freed, that gathered to form a Baptist Church in Alton.

The group organized as the African Mission Freedmen. In 1837, the same year that the City of Alton was incorporated and also the same year that the famed abolitionist journalist, Elijah Lovejoy, was killed, the Union Baptist Church was founded. The first pastor was Rev. John Livingston and one of the founding members, John Anderson, had worked as a pressman for Elijah Lovejoy at The Alton Observer.

As the church congregation grew, a two-story building was constructed in 1854, with

Union Baptist Church meeting on the second floor and the first African-American school in Alton using the first floor.

The church was forced to sell the building in the later years of the 19th Century and went back to meeting in congregation homes. In the early 1900's a new church was built.

The 175 year history of Union Baptist Church has seen its membership go through periods of decline, followed by resurgence. Throughout those years, however, the spirit of its founders, who came searching for freedom and a better life, has sustained the church and kept it thriving as a place of worship up to today.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring the 175th Anniversary of the Union Baptist Church and to wish the congregation the best for many years to come.

A TRIBUTE TO KAYLA DE WEERD

HON. TOM LATHAM

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 10, 2012

Mr. LATHAM. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor and congratulate Kayla De Weerd, a 14-year-old 4-H'er of Hull, Iowa, who has been named the state's top high school youth volunteer for 2012 by the Prudential Spirit of Community Awards.

The Prudential Spirit of Community Awards program is our country's largest youth recognition program based entirely on volunteer community service. Since 1995, 345,000 American youths have participated in this program, with only 102 state honorees chosen each year. Kayla's path to this prestigious award began with her efforts through Reach Out Iowa, a federally funded grant that supports young people who benefit their local communities through service.

To accomplish this goal, Kayla started a nutrition and physical activity program at her junior high school. Kayla gave presentations to her fellow classmates warning of the dangers of obesity and how to live a responsible, healthy lifestyle to avoid the long-term consequences of inactivity. In addition to arming her peers in the fight against obesity, Kayla also educated others to effectively implement similar programs in more schools across her community. Kayla and her mother, Deb, traveled to Washington D.C. earlier this week to accept this great honor.

Mr. Speaker, I applaud Miss De Weerd for her sincere dedication to positively impact the lives of others in her community and beyond. Kayla's commitment to a cause greater than herself is a testament to the high-quality character and unwavering work ethic instilled in Iowans both young and old. I know I speak for all of my colleagues in the United States Congress in congratulating Kayla, thanking her supportive family, and thanking all of those involved in this wonderful project for their life-changing efforts. Thank you.