

North Country. These accolades include the USDA Rural Development New Hampshire Partner of the Year in 2002, the Federal Home Loan Bank-Boston Partner of the Year, and the Citizens Bank Champion in Action in 2005.

In addition to his full-time responsibilities at AHEAD, David has served on the Board of the New Hampshire Community Development Finance Authority for 20 years, spending four of them as its chair. He has been an active member of the National Neighbor Works Association and spent 6 years on the Advisory Council for the Federal Home Loan Bank of Boston. David has also been a crucial voice in Housing Action New Hampshire's advocacy efforts to promote affordable housing across our State.

These impressive accomplishments demonstrate David's dedication to improving the lives of families in Coos and northern Grafton Counties. I am sure that David will modestly attribute this success to his talented and dedicated team of staff and supporters, but it was his vision for community development that led to the founding of AHEAD. His belief in stable families as the foundation of a vibrant community resulted in projects like the McKee Inn in Lancaster and Littleton Town & Country Family Housing. Because of his commitment to this cause, hundreds of families in New Hampshire now have access to safe, warm, and affordable homes.

Put simply, Mr. President, David has made New Hampshire a better place to live and raise a family. I know that the great energy and spirit with which he has led AHEAD for the past 20 years will endure at this enormously successful non-profit organization. I congratulate David on all his achievements and wish him the best in his retirement.●

RECOGNIZING BLUE CROSS BLUE SHIELD OF MASSACHUSETTS

● Mr. KERRY. Mr. President, today I would like to recognize the accomplishments of Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts (BCBSMA), a company that has provided affordable health insurance options for families in the Commonwealth for the past 75 years.

As our Nation's health care system has evolved, BCBSMA has remained a leader in the industry by focusing on the principles of service, leadership, and innovation. In fact, it was the first organization of its kind to offer statewide insurance coverage for hospitalization—providing all working families a financially realistic option so they could afford a hospital stay when it was needed. And decades later, BCBSMA was instrumental in helping to create several of the State's best-known health maintenance organizations (HMOs).

BCBSMA has been actively working to improve the health of their members through an innovative benefit design that focuses on prevention and customized wellness programs, encourages

community-based care, and improves care coordination.

Additionally, they have been national leaders in payment reform by designing an innovative model that has demonstrated the ability to improve the quality of patient care while simultaneously slowing the growth of health care spending. In 2008, BCBSMA created a new payment system called the Alternative Quality Contract (AQC). This model rewards physicians and hospitals for the quality and outcomes of the care they provide to patients. Providers receive a global budget for their patients and are responsible for any excessive spending and are rewarded for quality. This combination of the global budget and pay-for-performance incentives establishes provider accountability for both the quality and cost of care.

BCBSMA isn't just committed to its members; they are leaders in the community with a distinct focus on corporate citizenship and civic engagement. They spend countless hours working within the community to make a measurable and sustainable impact on issues such as child development, healthy environments, and family nutrition. During the last year, BCBSMA associates volunteered to perform more than 26,000 hours of community service throughout Massachusetts. In their tradition of supporting the work of not-for-profit organizations, BCBSMA is commemorating their 75th anniversary by providing grants to community stakeholders working to advance the health and nutrition of families facing economic hardship.

BCBSMA founded the Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts Foundation in 2001, one of the largest health-focused private philanthropies in New England, to expand access to health care. The Foundation played an important role in the passage of Massachusetts health reform in 2006 by providing reliable data and objective analysis to policy-makers and convening stakeholders for sessions of public debate. Massachusetts now has the best health care coverage rate in the Nation with 98.1 percent of residents having health insurance, including 99.8 percent of all children.

Not only did BCBSMA work to expand health care coverage in the Commonwealth, they were a leader in the national effort to expand health care coverage to all Americans. BCBSMA was the only health plan in the Nation to file an amicus, or "friend of the court", brief in support of the constitutionality of the Affordable Care Act when it was considered by the Supreme Court earlier this year. They believed the health reform law was critical to ensure that all Americans have the same health care benefits and protections that Massachusetts residents have known for years.

As we continue to implement the Affordable Care Act, I am confident that BCBSMA will be there every step of the way. They are rated among the na-

tion's best health plans for member satisfaction and quality and their commitment to both exceptional and affordable health care is clearly evident to their nearly three million members in Massachusetts.

I congratulate Andrew Dreyfus, President and Chief Executive Officer, and all the employees at BCBSMA who work together to advance the availability of quality health care on this remarkable milestone. I look forward to the innovation and leadership you will deliver over the next 75 years for the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.●

RECOGNIZING THE LOWELL MILKEN CENTER

● Mr. ROBERTS. Mr. President, today I wish to commemorate the Lowell Milken Center's 2012 National Projects Kick-off. Located in Fort Scott, KS, the Lowell Milken Center discovers, develops, and communicates the stories of unsung heroes who have made a profound and positive difference on the course of history. The Lowell Milken Center was opened in 2007 as an international nonprofit organization focused on creating a better future by developing projects that teach respect and understanding. This approach has been built upon student-driven, project-based learning so that Americans and people around the world may learn that each of us has the responsibility and the power to take actions to improve the lives of others.

During its 6 years of operation, the center has hosted over 15,000 visitors and reached over 550,000 students in 5,000 schools by telling inspiring stories of unsung heroes to influence change in behaviors and attitudes. In May, I had the pleasure of visiting the Lowell Milken Center. During my visit, I was able to meet the center's visionary and founder Norm Conard and its program director Megan Felt. Both are outstanding Kansans who have helped shape the way we approach history and learning. Ms. Felt has been honored nationally and internationally for her projects with students, and she is the founder of the internationally acclaimed work, "Life in a Jar: The Irena Sendler Project."

Irena Sendler was a devout Catholic who helped save the lives of 2,500 children during the Holocaust in Poland. She smuggled children out of a Warsaw ghetto and placed them with families not threatened by the Nazis. Toward the end of the war, she was arrested, severely beaten, and almost died for her actions to save these children.

In 1999, three high school students from Uniontown, KS, uncovered the remarkable story of Irena Sendler after Uniontown High School teacher Norm Conard tasked his students to compete in a National History Day contest. The students investigated an article published in 1994 mentioning Sendler and uncovered a heroic story that had gone virtually unreported. The students eventually met their hero and began exchanging letters.

This relationship inspired the students to write a play about Sendler's life and work. "Life in a Jar: The Irena Sendler Project" continues to be performed in Uniontown, KS, and has been preformed across the U.S. and in Europe. Fortunately, this project brought Sendler much overdue national attention in Poland, and in 2007 Sendler was nominated for a Nobel Peace Prize. In 2008, Irena Sendler passed away at age 98.

The Lowell Milken Center continues to pursue those often missed in history books and to promote cross-cultural understanding in the world. It is an honor to represent the Lowell Milken Center in the United States Senate, and I commend their efforts to promote the unsung heroes who changed the world through the 2012 National Projects Kick-off.●

TRIBUTE TO KRISTEN MCGONIGLE

● Mrs. SHAHEEN. Mr. President, today I wish to honor a remarkable citizen, Kristen McGonigle of Concord, NH. On June 9, 2012, Kristen saved the life of a fellow runner during a local road race.

Every June, Portsmouth, NH hosts a 10K road race in conjunction with Market Square Day, an annual celebration honoring the renovation of one of the historic city's vibrant downtown areas. Kristen was participating in the race when she noticed another runner, Steve Whitney, showing signs of a significant heart attack.

As a cardiac care nurse at Concord Hospital with more than 16 years of experience, Kristen immediately recognized Steve's symptoms and took swift action to save his life. Kristen possessed the skills necessary to keep Steve alive until paramedics arrived. In fact, Kristen continued to perform chest compressions even after the arrival of emergency medical technicians. Her quick action ensured that Steve safely reached the qualified health care providers at Portsmouth Regional Hospital.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, heart disease is the leading cause of death in the United States. Sadly, nearly every American knows an individual impacted by heart disease, and all too many people suffer a catastrophic cardiac event similar to the one Steve Whitney experienced.

Nursing professionals dedicate their working lives to caring for those in need, providing the comforts and necessities required for their patients to regain strength and recover good health. The frequent acts of heroism performed by these men and women often go unnoticed, but it is impossible to overvalue the work they perform. The daily efforts of nurses for the betterment of others serve as an invaluable bridge to care between doctor and patient.

I applaud and thank Kristen for her devotion to those in need. She has spent her career helping others while also caring for her family, including

her husband Kirk and her two children, Camden and Ally. Her exemplary behavior gives her family, her workplace, her community, and the State of New Hampshire great pride.

I wish to thank Kristen McGonigle for her service and her actions on June 9, 2012, and commend her kindness, compassion, and dedication to her field and her fellow citizens.●

RECOGNIZING YALE CORDAGE

● Ms. SNOWE. Mr. President, it is no secret that my home State of Maine boasts an expansive coastline, unmatched in beauty. With its numerous bays and inlets, this coastline provides endless opportunities for the many industries that have come to be known as quintessentially Maine, including commercial fishing, shipbuilding, and pleasure boating. One excellent example is Yale Cordage of Saco, ME, a small business dedicated to manufacturing quality products used by industries throughout Maine and the world.

Founded in 1950 by O. Sherman Yale, Yale Cordage introduced synthetic fiber to the commercial fishing industry when it began manufacturing ropes. For 20 years its focus remained on commercial fishing; however, it expanded its product line to provide ropes for the pleasure marine marketplace when Yale's son Tom, an avid sailor, joined the company. From there, Yale Cordage began building its reputation as a leader in the pleasure marine industry by introducing technologically innovative products and, through Tom's leadership as President of the Cordage Institute, influencing industry standards. Moreover, in 1983 *Australia II* won the America's Cup for yacht sailing using all Yale Cordage rigging. But Yale Cordage's desire to seek new markets did not stop there.

Recognizing certain limitations of the pleasure marine market, Yale Cordage sought new ways to use its products in different industries. Now, Yale Cordage's products are not only found on boats but throughout the world and in a variety of capacities. For example, Central Maine Power uses Yale Cordage's products to string new power lines while Bath Iron Works uses them in the destroyer class of naval warships. You can find Yale Cordage products in the ocean for use with offshore oil rigs, beneath the Earth's surface in the Sudbury Neutrino Observatory, in the sky on the Hood Blimp, at the tops of trees with arborist climbers, and recently at Niagara Falls when Yale Cordage rope was used in the hoisting and securing process for the world's first tightrope walk directly over the falls. The National Data Buoy Center trusts Yale Cordage products to moor weather buoys critical in the tracking of storms, including the recent hurricanes in the Gulf of Mexico. Even our armed services have taken advantage of Yale Cordage's quality products: the U.S. Army uses Yale Cordage ropes to remove tanks from

ditches in Afghanistan, and the Navy SEALs use it when rappelling from helicopters.

Through hard work, ingenuity, and determination, Yale Cordage has evolved from a commercial fishing rope supplier to a \$20 million company that manufactures rope for a wide range of industries. It now operates a state-of-the-art facility, and provides jobs for 75 people in my home State. Yale Cordage is a shining example of the entrepreneurial spirit of Maine. I am proud to commend everyone at Yale Cordage on their success and offer my best wishes for the future.●

TRIBUTE TO PETER J. FOS

● Mr. VITTER. Mr. President, today I wish to recognize Dr. Peter J. Fos. In January, Dr. Fos was named the sixth leader and first president of the University of New Orleans. A New Orleans native and graduate of UNO, Dr. Fos received his degree in biological sciences and a doctor of dental surgery from LSU Health Sciences Center. He also earned his masters of public health and doctor of philosophy in health care decision analysis from Tulane University.

Prior to being selected as president, Dr. Fos served as a professor and program director of health policy and systems management at LSU Health Sciences Center where he oversaw curriculum development and assessment and student and faculty professional development.

He also served as provost and executive vice president for 3 years at the University of Texas at Tyler and spent 4 years as dean of the College of Health at the University of Southern Mississippi. Dr. Fos has also held positions at the Mississippi State Department of Health, the University of Nevada, Las Vegas School of Dental Medicine, Tulane University School of Public Health and Tropical Medicine, and Tulane University Department of Health Systems Management.

In addition to increasing enrollment under new admissions standards, Dr. Fos also has both short and long-term goals which include improving communication both on and off campus and reconnecting UNO to the local business community.

At a time when Louisiana's higher education system is being asked to do more with less, it is important that those tasked with guiding our universities into the future do so in ways that will not compromise the educational value provided to Louisiana's students. With his long career educating our youth, I am pleased for Dr. Fos that he has been selected to lead UNO, and I congratulate him on this great honor.●

MESSAGES FROM THE PRESIDENT

Messages from the President of the United States were communicated to the Senate by Mr. Pate, one of his secretaries.