

Col. Don C. Faith Jr. was awarded the highest U.S. military honor for valor, the Medal of Honor, during the battle of Chosin Reservoir in 1950 for his heroics and leadership.

I rise today to celebrate the life, honor, leadership and incredible sacrifice of a true American hero. An honor to which we all owe a debt of gratitude.

May God bless you, Lt. Col. Don C. Faith Jr.

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IN RECOGNITION OF EDWARD VITTARDI

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**HON. JAMES B. RENACCI**

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, April 17, 2013*

Mr. RENACCI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Mr. Ed Vittardi who has proudly served 31 years in public education in the great State of Ohio. Mr. Vittardi's career began as a social studies teacher at Dodge Middle School in Twinsburg, Ohio. From there, he served in many other roles in Twinsburg, ultimately becoming principal of Dodge Middle School. He also served as principal of Claggett Middle School (Medina), Independence Middle School (Independence), and North Royalton Middle School (North Royalton). For the past four years, Mr. Vittardi has worked as the North Royalton City District Superintendent. Under his leadership the district has made incredible progress. The Strategic Plan, developed in 2010 with unprecedented community involvement, has become a true living document. Through Mr. Vittardi's direction, the North Royalton City School District has maintained its Excellent rating on the Ohio Department of Education's Local Report Card. He implemented a five-year strategic plan, engaging more than 800 community members. Mr. Vittardi was also instrumental in the development of the North Royalton Stadium Foundation which raised more than \$1.3 million to build a new stadium complex, including field turf, without a tax increase. I would like to acknowledge his achievements throughout his long career of public service and thank him for his outstanding contribution to the 16th Congressional District and the community of North Royalton.

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KENYA'S 2013 ELECTIONS: AN EFFECTIVE ASSISTANCE MODEL?

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**HON. CHRISTOPHER H. SMITH**

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, April 17, 2013*

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, yesterday, the Subcommittee on Africa, Global Health, Global Human Rights, and International Organizations held a hearing that examined U.S. actions to support the March 2013 elections in Kenya, a critically important African ally. The United States has devoted more than \$35 million since 2010 alone to prepare for and manage this year's election process.

After the massive violence following the closely contested December 2007 election, many precautions were taken to prevent a similar occurrence in 2013, and election-day

and post-election violence have been greatly reduced. However, an effort to use new technology did not work as well as hoped. There were questions about the effectiveness of this election, which had promised to be a technological advancement. Given future important African elections, this hearing will look at what a responsible U.S. policy toward African elections should look like in an era of constrained development aid budgets.

The tragic election day deaths of 19 people, although attributed mostly to Islamic separatist elements and not to specifically election-related causes, cannot be overlooked and the perpetrators must be held to account. It is unacceptable that in the violence that followed the 2007 elections, an estimated 1,200 Kenyans were killed, and approximately 600,000 were displaced, according to media reports. Yet no one has thus far been held accountable.

Kenya this year conducted its first election under the 2010 constitution. In addition to voting for a president and members of the National Assembly, Kenyans selected members of the new Senate, as well as governors and local Assembly representatives in the 47 newly-created counties, each with a designated women's representative. More technology was brought into polling places to better ensure accuracy of voting and vote tabulation. Unfortunately, reported malfunctions of the equipment in some polling stations and at the national level, where a server broke down, for awhile stoked fears of vote rigging. If the court process had not been handled well as it was, we might now be looking at another wave of post-election violence.

Uhuru Kenyatta was elected President with 6,173,433 votes to 5,340,546 votes for Raila Odinga, and this was certified by the Kenyan Supreme Court. Nevertheless, violence was still a possibility until Odinga gave a magnanimous concession speech following the court ruling.

The amount of U.S. support for the Kenya election was extraordinary. American and Kenyan civil society organizations were enabled to conduct civic education, including radio and television messages and programs aimed at youth to encourage participation in the election process and discourage violence. Youth organizations were created nationwide to give young people an enduring voice in their country's political system. Several innovative approaches were created, including a comic book called Shujazz with young characters involved in commenting on the Kenyan political scene.

The three organizations presenting testimony today all played major roles in creative preparations for the 2013 Kenyan election. The International Republican Institute printed nearly 1.2 million sample ballots and 400,000 election posters for the IEBC and also distributed 800,000 Shujazz posters. The National Democratic Institute conducted an important poll on voter attitudes heading into the election, covering such issues as whether the country was headed in the right direction, whether their lives would improve during the next five years, whether the election posed a security threat to them and their community and whether they felt others were being encouraged to do harm to their ethnic group because of the elections.

The International Foundation for Electoral Systems advised Kenya's electoral commis-

sion on the process to conduct an election where there were 1,882 different configurations of the ballot, depending on the local races being run. The cell phones necessary for reporting of vote totals from polling stations were so late in being procured that IFES went ahead and purchased 1,200 to send into the field in time for election day.

Despite the extraordinary efforts by NGOs in preparing for the Kenyan election, we must be selective in what lessons we take from this experience. We will not be able to devote such resources to what will be several important elections yet to be held in 2013.

The U.S. Government has pressed both the governments of Mali and Madagascar to hold elections at the earliest possible date in order to normalize relations after coups replaced elected leaders. Zimbabwe, which recently held a constitutional referendum, is scheduled to hold presidential and legislative elections that many in that country hope will break the long cycle of repression of the political opposition. Ethiopia's next election will replace the late Prime Minister Meles Zenawi and also will determine whether the political opposition will have more space to operate than in previous elections. Guinea's election also is being conducted in an atmosphere of uncertainty for the political opposition.

These elections are important to U.S. foreign policy as was the election in Kenya. So how do we ensure that they are successful and represent the will of the voters if we can't devote the resources we did in Kenya? That was the question we put to the witnesses, whose organizations have broad experience with African elections and have a unique viewpoint that we hope will allow Congress and the administration to agree on funding for a policy that is fiscally sound while being politically effective.

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HONORING DANIEL B. HASTINGS, JR.

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**HON. HENRY CUELLAR**

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, April 17, 2013*

Mr. CUELLAR. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the contributions of the late Daniel B. Hastings, Jr. of Laredo, Texas—a well-known local businessman and philanthropist.

Daniel B. Hastings was born January 8, 1948 in Laredo, Texas to Daniel and Irma M. Hastings. Daniel Jr., and was the third child and only son among the couple's five daughters. Daniel graduated from Martin High School in 1965, and continued his education at Laredo Junior College and later received his B.S. degree in chemistry with minors in both math and physics from Texas State University (formerly then, Southwest Texas State University).

At the young age of 13, Mr. Hastings, Jr. began working in Laredo for the U.S. customs brokerage firm, Daniel B. Hastings, Inc. The company, established by his great-aunt, provided him and other members of the Hastings family a strong livelihood. It was not long until Daniel, Jr. moved up in ranks from running errands and performing warehouse duties to officially joining the firm as a partner in 1973. Seven years later, in 1980, he would follow his father's footsteps and assume ownership.

Mr. Hastings has been highly regarded for having a strong network of personal, business, and religious relationships. His dedication and work ethic have earned him numerous awards for his contributions to business and educational development including the Laredo Chamber of Commerce Small Businessman of the Year (1989), Junior Achievement Hall of Fame (2001), Alumni Achievement Award from Texas State University (2010) and the U.S. Department of Commerce Border Champion Award (2012). As a founding member of the Laredo Community College Education Foundation and endowment fund Mr. Hastings' mission will continue to touch the lives of many.

Mr. Hastings is survived by his wife of 36 years, Mrs. Gloria V. Montemayor Hastings; their loving children, Daniel B. Hastings III (Lucina), V. Nicole Hastings and David B. Hastings; and grandchildren Daniel B. Hastings IV and Dillon B. Hastings. A noble friend to the people of my district and hometown; there is no doubt that Mr. Hastings will be missed.

Mr. Speaker, I am honored to have had the opportunity to recognize the late Daniel B. Hastings, Jr. His hard work and generosity have truly impacted many lives and our community.

CELEBRATING THE 25TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE CLOSE UP FOUNDATION'S PROGRAM FOR NEW AMERICANS

**HON. RUBÉN HINOJOSA**

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 17, 2013

Mr. HINOJOSA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize one of the nation's preeminent civic education organizations, the Close Up Foundation, on the occasion of the 25th anniversary of their Program for New Americans.

Close Up is a nonprofit nonpartisan organization that informs, inspires, and empowers young people to exercise the rights and accept the responsibilities of citizens in a democracy. Over the past forty years, Close Up has brought hundreds of thousands of students and teachers to Washington for week-long civic learning experiences. Close Up believes that a strong democracy requires active and informed participation by all citizens and seeks to reach participants of every race, creed, geographical community, socio-economic level, and academic standing. The Close Up Foundation partners with educators, schools, and youth organizations throughout the country to help young people develop the skills and attitudes to become informed and engaged citizens.

Today we celebrate the 25th anniversary of the Close Up Program for New Americans. This unique civic learning program has helped more than 20,000 recently immigrated and migrant high school and middle school students understand American democracy, government, and U.S. political traditions. Using experiential education methodologies, the Program for New Americans helps young people understand both the rights and responsibilities of democratic citizenship.

The program is comprised of three parts: service learning in preparation for the pro-

gram; a week in Washington in which students use the city as a classroom to learn about the government and develop an action plan to address a community need; and implementation of the action plan at home. The goal of the Program for New Americans is to help these young people adjust to and become an active participant in the communities in which they live.

The Washington portion of the program focuses students on the founding documents of our nation—the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution—to provide them with an understanding of our nation's democratic principles and traditions. Through study, workshops, and visits to the memorials and monuments of the nation's capital, students examine the rights and responsibilities of citizenship in our society.

As Congress begins consideration of immigration legislation we should keep in mind the importance of innovative programs such as the Close Up Program for New Americans in providing young people with opportunities to engage with their government, its institutions and representatives and learn to apply those civic skills in their communities. It is essential that our nation's youth acquire the knowledge and the critical skills and attitudes necessary for active citizenship in our democracy.

I applaud the work of the Close Up Foundation and the outreach that they have done in the immigrant and migrant communities for a quarter century. I hope that Congress will continue to support these programs that build informed and active citizens and strengthen our communities.

HONORING WALTER SEGALOFF, FOUNDER OF AN ACHIEVABLE DREAM ACADEMY AND 2013'S VIRGINIAN OF THE YEAR

**HON. ROBERT C. "BOBBY" SCOTT**

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 17, 2013

Mr. SCOTT of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life and career of a local community leader, businessman, and humanitarian from Newport News, Virginia—Walter Segaloff.

I have known Walter throughout my career in public service representing the citizens of Newport News. He has dedicated his life to improving the lives of his fellow citizens. When he owned Virginia Specialty Stores, he would often interview young people seeking jobs but noticed many lacked the needed skills, despite having graduated from high school. Walter knew these young people had great potential that was going to waste and he wanted to do everything he could to make sure they had access to the right opportunities.

Walter took matters into his own hands. He joined forces with other local business leaders, citizens, Newport News Public Schools, and the City of Newport News to help improve the lives and educational outcomes of our City's most at-risk young children. Out of this effort, An Achievable Dream was born in the summer of 1992 as a summer education and tennis program.

Due in large part to Walter's dedication and tenacity, An Achievable Dream quickly expanded since that first summer. In 1994, it be-

came a full-time, extended day school serving 400 children in grades three through five. A year later, An Achievable Dream expanded the extended day program to students at Dunbar-Erwin Middle School. By 2000, An Achievable Dream Academy was founded as a year-round full time elementary school and by 2007 a separate full time middle and high school opened under the An Achievable Dream name.

An Achievable Dream provides a social, academic, and moral educational framework for its students and every day starts with a motivation rally where each student shakes the hand of an adult. The Achievable Dream program is structured to give young people the skills needed to succeed in life. Those skills are taught at An Achievable Dream on the tennis court, in the classroom, on field trips, and in sharing experiences with successful and caring adults in our community. Today, An Achievable Dream is educating more than 1,200 at-risk students in Newport News and is putting these students on the path to success.

Often, young people don't think too much about the future, and don't realize that choices made today may limit those in the future. Walter has worked to ensure that the students at An Achievable Dream have every opportunity to be successful in life.

As a public-private partnership with Newport News Public Schools, the City of Newport News, the Newport News Police Department, the Newport News Sheriff's Department, the U.S. Army, the Rotary Club, Riverside Health System and the College of William and Mary, An Achievable Dream has received national recognition as one of the most effective urban school programs in the country and has provided a model for integrating support from the business community to support quality educational opportunities for at-risk students.

On April 19th, the Virginia Press Association will honor Walter as its Virginian of the Year for 2013. Walter was nominated by our hometown newspaper, The Daily Press, in recognition of his decades of dedication to improving the educational opportunities of thousands of at-risk young people living in Newport News and the Association was unanimous in selecting Walter as this year's recipient.

Walter recently stepped down as CEO of An Achievable Dream, but he leaves behind a strong legacy. His vision is expected to expand to other localities in Hampton Roads, helping improve the lives of thousands of more at-risk young people in our community.

I commend Walter for being recognized as this year's Virginian of the Year and I thank him for his years of dedicated service to improving the lives of so many young people in Newport News.

NATIONAL DAY OF PRAYER AND REFLECTION

**HON. MICHELE BACHMANN**

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 17, 2013

Mrs. BACHMANN. Mr. Speaker, for centuries America has been blessed by God. Americans today and in previous generations looked to God for guidance on both private and national designated days of prayer and fasting.