

open space, I ask that my colleagues join me today in recognizing Kevin Kuhn and Andy Motel of Charlestown Township, Chester County, Pennsylvania, for their many valuable contributions to their community.

HONORING THE TOWN OF RUMFORD'S NATIONAL MAIN STREET DESIGNATION

HON. MICHAEL H. MICHAUD

OF MAINE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, June 3, 2013

Mr. MICHAUD. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the town of Rumford on receiving a national Main Street designation and for joining the Maine Downtown Network program.

The National Main Street Program was launched in 1980 by the National Trust for Historic Preservation. For over three decades, this program has promoted the revitalization of downtowns across the country by leveraging local assets such as cultural or architectural heritage, local enterprise, and community pride. Since 2009, the Maine Downtown Center, MDC, has served as the state coordinator for the National Main Street Program. MDC has done an excellent job building a network of participating communities over the last several years.

As a national Main Street designee, Rumford will receive guidance, resources and professional training in community development from MDC. They will also have access to MDC staff, 24-member volunteer Advisory Council and the National Main Street Center resources. Rumford is capitalizing on its distinct character, through a unique public-private partnership, to stimulate economic vitality in the heart of their community.

This recognition acknowledges the hard work that the Town of Rumford and its business community have put towards strengthening the local economy. Their efforts are already yielding dividends and making the region a better place to do business.

Mr. Speaker, please join me again in congratulating the town of Rumford and on their outstanding achievement.

HONORING CAPITAL ENERGY GROUP INCORPORATED (CEG)

HON. ELEANOR HOLMES NORTON

OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, June 3, 2013

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to ask the House of Representatives to join me in honoring Capital Energy Group Incorporated (CEG) as the 2013 District of Columbia Small Business of the Year, as well as its president and chief executive officer, Norman H. Jones, Sr.

CEG is a District of Columbia small business specializing in energy efficient windows and glass installation. CEG has been awarded contracts on three of the largest projects in the District of Columbia, the U.S. Coast Guard building at the Department of Homeland Security complex at St. Elizabeths, Progression Place—The United Negro College Fund Building, and City Center D.C. In addition to working

on large-scale projects, CEG has completed projects for Anacostia Senior High School, Unity Healthcare and Building K167 in Southwest D.C. Because of CEG's high-quality work, it has now become the largest African-American owned glass and window company in the national capital region. CEG has used its growth to further its goals of employing D.C. residents and promoting glass/glazing as a career option.

CEG's president and chief executive officer, Norman H. Jones, Sr., has over 30 years of experience in the glass/glazing and window industry. He continues to share his knowledge with future generations by establishing apprenticeship programs for District residents to learn more about window glazing and installation.

I ask the House to join me in honoring Capital Energy Group Incorporated and its president and chief executive officer, Norman H. Jones, Sr., for their outstanding accomplishments and commitment to the residents of the District of Columbia, and in commending Capital Energy Group Incorporated on becoming the 2013 District of Columbia Small Business of the Year.

RECOGNIZING LOUDOUN STUDENTS WHO "BEAT THE ODDS"

HON. FRANK R. WOLF

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, June 3, 2013

Mr. WOLF. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize four remarkable students from my congressional district who were recently awarded college scholarships through the "Beat the Odds" program.

Hosted by the Loudoun Bar Association, "Beat the Odds" provides financial support to area students who have overcome challenging, and often tragic circumstances. The students who received awards this year have endured hardships ranging from sexual abuse to illness to poverty, yet have still achieved great success in the classroom or on the athletic field.

I had the privilege of attending a ceremony for the recipients on Thursday, May 23, in Leesburg. It was an honor to meet the students and hear firsthand how they overcame adverse situations. Their ability to remain positive and work hard despite the difficulties they face is inspiring. I wish them all the best as they embrace this wonderful opportunity and move on to college.

The recipients of this year's scholarships are: Jonathan "Cory" Dickey of Loudoun County High School, Shannon Hayes of Park View High School, Leanna Moron of Loudoun County High School and Vineetha Thekkel of Tuscarora High School.

I submit two recent news articles from the Loudoun Times-Mirror and Leesburg Today on these remarkable students.

[From the Loudoun Times-Mirror, May 24, 2013]

FOUR LOUDOUN STUDENTS AWARDED "BEAT THE ODDS" SCHOLARSHIPS

(By Alanna Dvorak)

Looking at Loudoun County High School senior Leanna Moron, one wouldn't suspect the challenges she's overcome.

The poised girl of Thai and Bolivian descent is an academic, sitting within the top

10 percent of her class. She takes time out of her day to work with English Language Learners. She will be attending Penn State to study nursing.

She's also endured multiple traumas, from sexual abuse, financial struggles, alcoholic family members and "tremendous heartache and pain."

"To know what she has lived through everyday and see her still be who she is is amazing," said Megan Dunn, a guidance counselor at Loudoun County and the person who nominated Moron for the award.

Moron received a \$6,000 scholarship from the Loudoun Bar Association's Beat the Odds program at a ceremony May 24 at the historic courthouse in Leesburg. "It's an amazing honor," Moron said. "I'm very thankful for this scholarship and this opportunity."

The Beat the Odds program awards scholarships to students who have overcome significant life obstacles, such as abuse, illness or poverty. A national program, the Loudoun chapter was founded nine years ago by members of the Loudoun County Bar Association.

"In a given year, there are roughly 245 days we hold court," said Juvenile and Domestic Court Judge Pamela Brooks, who hosted the ceremony. "I have two favorite days: today and adoption day."

In addition to Moron, three other students received merit awards at the ceremony.

Jonathan "Cory" Dickey, a senior football player and wrestler at Loudoun County High School, received a \$2,000 award. At age 14, he physically stopped his alcoholic father from strangling his mother. His father left and the family was forced to make do with food stamps, social security benefits his mother, who is unable to work, receives and a part-time job Dickey took on. Still: the family was unable to stave off foreclosure.

"I did it not only for myself, but I try to be strong for my brothers," Dickey said. "It is very tough growing up at an early age but I think it's made me a stronger person in the long run."

Park View's Shannon Hayes' parents divorced when she eight, after her father's struggles with alcoholism made it unsafe for her. Two years later, her mom became ill and her father moved back in with the family to help out.

"I thought our family was finally growing back together," Hayes said.

However, her father was diagnosed with Leukemia and died just 15 days before Hayes' 13th birthday. Hayes' family has also struggled financially.

Hayes received a \$2,500 award to put toward her education at Penn State, where she plans to study biochemistry to become a genetic engineer.

Vineetha Thekkel of Tuscarora received the third merit award of the evening. Thekkel and her parents came to America in 2009 and the then 13 year old immediately had to take on an adult role, trying to find transportation for the family from the airport. Once the family settled in Leesburg, the young teenager then solicited for jobs for her mother and deaf father. Despite being laughed out by numerous business owners, Thekkel was able to help her parents find employment. They currently each work three jobs.

Thekkel credits much of her success to agencies around Loudoun County who supported her family during their financial struggles with food stamps and free medical care and teachers who personally supported her.

"With their support, I was able to stay on top of my schoolwork," Thekkel said.

Thekkel will be attending Mt. Vernon Nazarene University in Ohio and hopes to become a missionary doctor. She received a \$2,500 scholarship.

Several prominent members of the community came out to support the students, including Board of Supervisor member Ken Reed, School Board member Thomas Reed, Town of Leesburg Mayor Kristen Umstatt and Congressman Frank Wolf, who served as keynote speaker.

Wolf told of his adversities from childhood and being teased as a stutterer and poor student. He told the students their adversity would determine their success, rather their character and ability to overcome.

"Do not be afraid to take on tough issues," Wolf told the students.

The Beat the Odds program will hold a special event June 13 at the Tally Ho in Leesburg from 5 to 7:30 p.m. The event will serve as both a fundraiser and an opportunity for the community to hear the stories from this year's winners.

[From the Leesburg Today, May 24, 2013]

BAR AWARDS SCHOLARSHIPS TO HELP STUDENTS CONTINUE BEATING THE ODDS

"Everything has a way out. You have the choice to keep going."

Those were the words of Vineetha Thekkel, a graduating senior at Tuscarora High School, but it was a message shared by all four students awarded scholarships through the Loudoun Bar Association's Beat the Odds program during a ceremony at the historic courthouse in Leesburg Thursday night.

In its ninth year, the program provides financial support to college-bound students who have overcome remarkably challenging, often tragic circumstances. The annual awards ceremonies—attended by relatives, teachers and members of the Bar—are known for their emotional rollercoaster ride of pride in the students' accomplishments and sadness at the situations the teens lived through. The tales bring tears to the eyes of even the most experienced lawyers in the room. The wider public will have the opportunity to hear the stories of this year's honorees and past scholarship winners during a special June 13 event at the Tally Ho Theatre in Leesburg.

This year's winners, while coming from decidedly different backgrounds, told similar stories involving domestic violence, financial struggles and lost youth.

At age 14, Jonathan "Cory" Dickey said he stopped his alcoholic father from choking his mother and then had to start working to support her and his siblings when his father left. "Dad got off easy," the Loudoun County High School senior said. Food stamps and Social Security benefits for his mother, who is unable to work because of a medical condition, helped, but not enough to hold off a foreclosure. His hard work has paid off with a chance to continue his education in college. "It's going to help me in so many ways," he said of the \$2,000 scholarship award.

Park View High School's Shannon Hayes' parents divorced when she was 8, after her mother felt that her father's alcoholism made it too dangerous to live together. Two years later her mother became ill and her father returned to help. Although the relationship with her father healed and a strong bond was formed, he died when she was 12. "He was my best friend," Hayes said. It was her father's wish that she succeed that has inspired her to pursue a degree in biochemistry at Penn State and a career in genetic engineering. "He is with me everyday. He is my angel."

Thekkel said she flew to the U.S. March 18, 2009, with her deaf father and a mother who did not speak English. It was at the airport making phone calls to try to find a ride where the then-13-year-old realized, "I had to be the adult in the family." Once settled in

a Leesburg townhouse, she went around to area businesses to collect job applications for her parents who now work three jobs. Although the halls of Tuscarora High School presented a completely new experience for the first-generation immigrant, it was at school where she found support from teachers who understood the challenges she faced.

"I loved going to school. That was the only place where I could stay away from the tough times," she said. "I was forced to become an adult at a very young age." With the help of her \$2,500 scholarship, she will attend Mount Vernon Nazarene University in Ohio with the goal of working as a missionary doctor.

Loudoun County's High School's Leanna Moron received the largest scholarship—the \$6,000 Beat the Odds Award. She described her story as "complex," involving family financial struggles, a foreclosure, alcoholic and abusive family members, "and tremendous heartache and pain."

At times life may seem too challenging and hopeless, she said, but with determination you can get through it. She found education as "a way out" and will graduate in the top 10 percent of her class. She will pursue a nursing degree at Penn State.

Juvenile and Domestic Relations Court Judge Pamela L. Brooks led the ceremony and U.S. Rep. Frank R. Wolf (R-VA-10) was the keynote speaker, telling students of his struggles growing up in Philadelphia as a picked-on, stuttering youth and poor student. He urged them to continue to be willing to pay the price to do the right things and to thank God for the adversity that helps make them better people.

Attorney Matt Snow, co-chairman of the Bar's Beat the Odds Committee, encourages residents to attend a special forum at the Tally Ho, 5-7:30 p.m. Saturday, June 13, to gain a better understanding of the program and the impact it is having on the lives of the students. Attendees are advised to bring tissues to wipe away tears; and may bring their checkbooks to support the program.

INTRODUCTION OF THE ASSESSMENT ACCURACY AND IMPROVEMENT ACT OF 2013

HON. THOMAS E. PETRI

OF WISCONSIN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, June 3, 2013

Mr. PETRI. Mr. Speaker, as Congress considers the reauthorization of the No Child Left Behind Act this year, we have an obligation to listen closely to the students, parents, and educators that we represent to ensure that our efforts result in responsible and pragmatic improvements. While we have made great strides in the areas of assessment and accountability over the last nine years, this reauthorization provides a critical opportunity to learn from our experiences and fine-tune the law.

One example of a lesson my constituents have learned, and have vigorously shared with me, is that we should be encouraging states to move towards better assessment models. As I have met with educators over the past several years, one of the primary concerns that I have heard is that the state assessment fails to provide information of value to educators and administrators. Even more disturbing, it often takes four to six months before scores are returned to schools, which leaves little or no time for teachers to use the information to address student performance before they advance to the next grade.

However, I believe there is a sensible solution that Congress can adopt to address these concerns and give states more options in assessment design. Today, working with Representative G.K. Butterfield, I am introducing the bipartisan Assessment Accuracy and Improvement Act of 2013 to give states the option to use adaptive testing as their statewide assessment measuring reading, math, and science to fulfill No Child Left Behind requirements. I believe that this legislation will give states the ability to truly track the academic growth of every child and provide more accurate information to teachers, parents and school administrators through the use of an adaptive test.

For those who may be unfamiliar with adaptive testing, it is a test that changes in response to previously-asked questions. For example, if a student answers a question correctly, the test presents a question of increased difficulty. If a student answers incorrectly, the test presents a question of decreased difficulty. As you can see, an adaptive test customizes itself to a student's actual level of performance with a great degree of accuracy.

Giving states the flexibility to use an adaptive test and to ask questions outside of grade level will improve the accuracy of student assessment and enable educators to target appropriate instruction for each child based on performance at, above, or below grade level. In addition, using an adaptive test over time will allow accurate measurement of the performance growth of each individual student.

In Wisconsin, hundreds of school districts currently use their own funds to participate in adaptive testing in addition to the state assessment required by NCLB. Educators and administrators appreciate the diagnostic information it yields and the efficiency that it provides. I believe that school districts nationally are already "speaking with their wallets" by spending scarce resources to voluntarily participate in this testing because it provides valuable information that the state assessment does not.

Mr. Speaker, adaptive testing is one of the keys to putting the 'child' back into No Child Left Behind. I hope that our colleagues will join us in this pragmatic and responsible improvement to the law as we work towards a bipartisan reauthorization this year.

RECOGNIZING THE 40TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE CHARLESTOWN HISTORICAL SOCIETY

HON. JIM GERLACH

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, June 3, 2013

Mr. GERLACH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the Charlestown Historical Society on the occasion of its 40th anniversary.

The Charlestown Historical Society was founded in 1973 at the home of Ms. Betty Stonorov to discover and maintain the rich historical heritage of Charlestown Township, Chester County, Pennsylvania. The Society currently boasts over 160 members and is led by President John W. Pitcock, who has served in that capacity since 2007. The Society meets