

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

HONORING CONGRESSIONAL AWARD RECIPIENTS

HON. JOHN A. BOEHNER

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 19, 2013

Mr. BOEHNER. Mr. Speaker, the Congressional Awards recognize four avenues of individual growth—community service, physical fitness, exploration, and personal development—and how the fulfillment of these goals forms balanced and promising young citizens.

In their pursuit of these goals, recipients of the Congressional Awards have gained new skills and greater confidence. For many, these projects will be the cornerstone for future endeavors, further enriching their lives and encouraging others to follow their lead.

The recipients of the 2013 Congressional Awards set the finest example and demonstrate dedication to improving their communities and the Nation as a whole.

On behalf of the U.S. House of Representatives, it is my privilege to recognize the honored recipients of the 2013 Congressional Award Gold Medal—the highest achievement for America's youth:

Gareth Evans, Martha Costello, Max Benning, Emily Burns, Aimee Miller, Courtney Hayes, Brooke Vittimberga, Matthieu Kaman, Katherine Liu, Alexander Schnorr, Harry Chung, Woody Chung, Austin Devine, Jason Flahie, Diana Kwok, Katarina Mayers, Kyle Kearney, Brandon Hsiu, Jackie Lee, Lauren Cochran, Max Kaplan, Taehyung “Kevin” Kim, Han John Tse, Quinn Hatoff, Anna Najor, Katherine Najor, Samantha Stafford, Austin Threadgill, Nicholas Cousino, Alouette Greenidge, Daniel Greenidge, James Bilko, Brittney Calloway, Brianna Goley, Hannah Foster, Milan Patel, Alexander Smith, Ryan Sutherland, Jake Bakkedahl, Mikaela Balzer, Ilana Berghash, Christine Brookshire, Kathryn Dowling, Steve Glener, Benjamin Horowitz, Rebecca Meiser, Caitlin Melnyk, Joshua Newell.

Kyle Pantan, Brady Pere, Cassidy Poirier, Hiren Prajapati, Kethan Rao, Lauren Rouseau, Erin Tufano, Jamie Wilkinson, Nicky Wood, Katherine Pansky, Sarah Murray, Riley McDonough, Hannah Howard, Haritha Pavuluri, Megan Chambers, Esther Frederick, Rachel Hooper, Talia Merrill, Emily Peel, Angela Renn, Taylor Adler, Madison Dahlquist, Bryce Ervin, Claire Goss, Micyla Huston, Carmen Perez, Thane Seward, Rebecca Tweedie, Linda Wells, Kimber Sable, Nicholas Oliva, (Joshua) Luke Durell, Chesley Rowlett, Vaibhav Vavilala, David Wintermeyer, Adam Campbell, Seth Campbell, Austin Bachar, Emilio Fajardo, Ryan Fajardo, Lissa Leibson, Darah Pourakbar, Priyanka Rao, Lexi Shealy, Andrea Clarkson, Olivia Foster, Christopher Loucif, Rachel Green, Shabnam Ahmed, Veronica Whelan, Jared Lichtman.

Olivia Stanhope, Kayla Nicole Peabody, Pranita Balusu, Gabrielle Herin, Bronson Bruneau, Gabriela Anderson, Gregory Botts, Zohra Coday, Henry Bair, Molly Burton,

Annika Fredrikson, Brett Hodgins, Theresa Jabouri, Natalie O'Loughlin, Griffin Reed, Glenn Lane, Canary Brooks, Paulina Hinton, Bridget Bergin, Carol Ann Schwarzenbach, Caroline Fay, Elizabeth Van Eerden, Michael Brienza, Terrell Chestnutt, Randall Schroeder, Wilmoth Kerns III, Lukas Stewart, Jacob Grabowski, Rebecca Sis, Matthew Ostiek, Aaron Clark, Kristin Davis, Chad Kahn, Sean Platt, Erin Price, Francis Uzzolina, Niral Desai, Nora Laberee, Rishi Sharma, David Wu, Christina Coleburn, Shivangi Goel, Sera Lim, Eric O'Hare, Spencer Holmsborg, Melissa Louie, Kathleen O'Donnell-Pickert, Smitha Pallaki, Neeraj Shekhar, Aparna Sundaram.

Olivia Lascari, Zachary Certner, Robert Harvey, Catherine Wong, Eva Boal, Reema Chopra, Kunaal Patade, Lindsay Ramsland, Divya Ramakrishnan, Taylor Miller, Michael Farese, Courtney Stiles, Christopher Kunkel, Samuel Lam, Sachit Singal, Dan Wang, Jonathan Gidley, Tushar Goswami, Katherine Ervin, Alexandra Gritta, Stephen Christianto, Karika Gnep, Irene Thio, Albertus Nugroho, Elyse McMahon, Geoffrey Pyke, Nayeli Avalos, Evangeline Cai, Daniel Castellanos-Mendez, Thalia Medina, Christopher Merken, Jonathan Rosenbaum, J. Cameron Barge, Natalie Domeisen, Seung Jin Bae, Won Chang, Ana Cvetkovic, David Ha, Chae-Eon Jang, Samuel Joo, Grace Kim, Julianne Lowenstein, Quincy Morgan, Channouch Morn, Christine Palazzolo, Kara Schoch, Zachary Schwarz, Abbie Starker, Michael Tershakovec, Andrew Van Buren.

Sereipong Yoeurn, Elizabeth Gahman, Valerie Poutous, Madison Thomas, Robert Cook, Rachel Park, Andrew Barry, Taiyi Ouyang, Daniel Hux, Angela Fan, Eric Menees, Joseph Rosenberger, Timothy Harakal, Nicholas Cruz, Hunter Behrends, R. Adrian De Leon, Abby McAnany, Sharon Li, Nevin Shah, Niloy Shah, Nicholas Cen, Karsyn Robb, Abby Mitchen, Caroline Dunmire, Joshua Tubb, Elizabeth Bird, Jonathan Rintels, Meagan Bedsaul, Truman Custer, Isaac Grunstra, Megan Ganley, Jane Willner, Dev Lakhia, Chase Robinett, Erik Edwards, Elisha Gentry, Katrina Freeland, Samantha Below, Samuel Brackett, Reed Dickerson, Bailey Dolph, Zachary Griffith, Daulton Grube, Jaimie Lee, Kayleigh Skolnick, Grant Thompson, and Sara Vestal.

FOUR STUDENTS HONORED WITH CONGRESSIONAL GOLD MEDAL AWARD FOR THEIR COMMIT- MENT TO SERVING PINELLAS COUNTY

HON. C. W. BILL YOUNG

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 19, 2013

Mr. YOUNG of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise to commend four students who are being honored today with the Congressional Award Gold Medal for individual achievement in volunteer public service, personal development, physical fitness, and exploration. For the benefit of my colleagues, I would like to outline some of their accomplishments.

Hannah Foster, a resident of Seminole, Florida, volunteered with the Largo Library and the Florida Gulf Coast Center for Fishing & Interactive Museum in Florida's 13th congressional district where she arranged exhibits and hosted a summer camp for students. She tested her endurance through kayaking voyages and attended the Student Leadership University to enhance her ability to inspire others. She has studied history extensively in order to widen her international perspective. Hannah reconnected with her heritage through a seven-day Mandarin language immersion trip to Chinatown in San Francisco.

Another one of my constituents, Milan Patel of Clearwater, Florida, volunteered more than 400 hours for Suncoast Hospice, a valued center in the community, for more than 35 years. She founded the Suncoast Hospice Teen Music Program and played the guitar daily at the bedside of terminally ill patients. In addition, Milan traveled to Boca Raton every weekend to hone her fencing skills. She also fenced in the Junior Olympics for the past two years and journeyed to Cambodia and Laos to learn the art of meditation while living with a group of monks.

Alexander Smith of St. Petersburg volunteered with Habitat for Humanity of Pinellas County. He worked both in a warehouse and on job sites to build houses in low-income communities. Alexander also hiked for seven days in the Blue Ridge Mountains to refine his survival and team-building skills and played the bagpipe competitively. A skilled athlete, he also participated in his high school's rowing team, won a United States Rowing Silver Medal, and is currently rowing for Cornell University.

Ryan Sutherland volunteered at Bay Pines Veterans Administration hospital, and he also served as a sailing instructor for underprivileged youth. Because of his deep interest in healthcare and his experience as a boy scout, he completed both an advanced emergency medical technician and American Red Cross lifeguard course and dedicated 1,000 hours to focusing on expanding his healthcare, music, and leadership knowledge. Ryan aided in Pinellas County's humanitarian efforts through his own organization, Water for Africa. He served as the president of the Inklings Book Club, which sought to promote literacy in my district. Ryan reached the summit of Mount Washington and spent 300 hours hiking, cycling, and running. He also sailed a 34-foot sailboat to Key West and the Dry Tortugas.

Mr. Speaker, these four young people serve as models of patriotism and principle for the rest of our nation's youth. Their goals of self-motivation will continue to guide them throughout their lives, and I have no doubt they will make great contributions to our country in the future. The Congressional Award program is essential to our nation, and I commend these students for attaining this high level of community service and personal responsibility for which it stands.

• This “bullet” symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.

IN MEMORY OF DR. JOHN M.
SMITH

HON. HAROLD ROGERS

OF KENTUCKY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 19, 2013

Mr. ROGERS of Kentucky. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to a World War II Veteran and tremendous leader in rural healthcare, the late Dr. John M. Smith.

Dr. Smith was quite a pioneer in his time. He was one of the first graduates from Caney Creek College, now known as Alice Lloyd College in Pippa Passes, Kentucky. After graduating from the University of Kentucky in 1942, he enlisted in the United States Navy and valiantly served as a first lieutenant aboard the U.S.S. *Weeden*, serving in both the Atlantic and Pacific campaigns. Smith was later selected as one of the first recipients of the Rural Kentucky Medical Scholarship Fund and graduated from the University of Louisville School of Medicine in 1949. After completing medical school, Dr. Smith decided to extend his service to our country by volunteering as a medical officer during the Korean War at the Louisville, Kentucky recruitment station.

In 1951, Dr. Smith began his mission to provide healthcare to the people of southeastern Kentucky, in a rural region plagued by high rates of health disparities and limited access to healthcare. He opened his first medical practice in Beattyville, Kentucky where he faithfully treated patients for eleven years. However, his passion for additional education in the medical field also led him to practice radiology at Morehead Hospital, Woodford County Hospital, and the Lexington Clinic for a little more than a decade. In 1974, he returned to Beattyville as a general practitioner where he dedicated nearly 40 years of quality healthcare for the people of Lee and surrounding counties until the age of 90.

He was involved in numerous civic activities, serving as a member of the Masonic Proctor Lodge 213, the Lee County Shrine Club, VFW Post 11296, and the Kentucky Medical Association. He served as the Medical Director of the Lee County Constant Care and Geri Young House, and a member of the Lee County Board of Health.

Dr. Smith leaves behind a devoted family: his loving wife, Patty of 54 years; seven children, 17 grandchildren, and 11 great-grandchildren. His son, William, has been one of my most trusted advisers, working on my team since 1995, and now serving as my Chief Clerk of the U.S. House Appropriations Committee. Will's extensive policy knowledge and legislative wisdom has been vital for our nation's economy and for projects supporting the good people of southern and eastern Kentucky. On behalf of my wife Cynthia and myself, I want to extend our deepest heartfelt sympathies to the entire Smith family.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring a tireless leader in rural healthcare and a true patriot, the late Dr. John M. Smith.

THE FUTURE OF RELIGIOUS
MINORITIES IN THE MIDDLE EAST

HON. FRANK R. WOLF

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 19, 2013

Mr. WOLF. Mr. Speaker, yesterday I delivered the following remarks at a Wilson Center event focused on the future of religious minorities in the Middle East.

I'd like to begin by thanking my former colleague, Congresswoman Jane Harman, and the Wilson Center for hosting this discussion on such a timely issue. I have long been focused on international religious freedom—specifically on the plight of persecuted people of faith wherever they may be.

Martin Luther King Jr. famously said, 'In the end, we will remember not the words of our enemies, but the silence of our friends.' America has always been a friend to the oppressed, the persecuted, the forgotten. But sadly today, that allegiance is in question as religious freedom and human rights abuses around the globe increasingly go unaddressed and unanswered.

Looking to the Middle East there is often societal and communal violence and repression against religious communities which specifically targets religious minorities.

Too often the governments of these lands foster an atmosphere of intolerance or in some cases such as Iran, outright criminality as it relates to different faith traditions like the Baha'is.

Tragically, since 1979, the Iranian government has killed more than 200 Baha'i leaders and dismissed over 10,000 from government and university jobs. Further, throughout the region, there is impunity surrounding acts of religiously targeted violence, onerous registration requirements for houses of worship, and a general climate of fear which isolates and too often drives out religious minorities.

These realities have been exacerbated by the so-called Arab Spring—a Spring which has devolved into Winter for many of the most vulnerable in these societies—foremost among them the ancient Christian communities.

The future of religious minorities in the Middle East is of course the focus of our discussion today. I would argue that if the current trajectory holds true, the future of these communities—communities which are woven into the very fabric of the region—is uncertain at best.

In February I travelled to the Middle East—specifically to Lebanon and Egypt. One of the main purposes of the trip was to spend time with the Syrian Christian community—a community with ancient roots dating back to the 1st century. We read in the Bible about Paul on the road to Damascus.

According to the latest estimates the brutal civil war, which continues to rage, has taken nearly 93,000 lives.

With the Syrian crisis entering its third year, the eventual outcome, including how many will perish in or be displaced by the continued violence and who will step into the power vacuum, is far from certain. Moreover, what that will mean for the Christian community in Syria is largely unknown and, unfortunately, rarely addressed by Western media.

I wanted to hear firsthand from Syrian Christians about their concerns and to put this issue in the larger context of an imperiled Christian community in the broader Middle East, specifically in Egypt and Iraq.

Coptic Christians and other minorities in Egypt have increasingly been marginalized

with the ascendancy of the Muslim Brotherhood. The recently drafted constitution, which made blasphemy a criminal offense, is highly problematic.

A February 5 Associated Press article reported, '[p]rovisions in the document allow for a far stricter implementation of Islamic Shariah law than in the past, raising opponents' fears that it could bring restrictions on many civil liberties and the rights of women and Christians.'

Increasingly these fears are being born out. Just last month, a young Christian teacher in Egypt was accused of insulting Islam while teaching a social studies class.

In a Christian Science Monitor article about this case and the trend more broadly, a local human rights activist reportedly said, 'All Coptic teachers are scared here now that any child who fights with them could accuse them of blasphemy and drag them to court.'

The issues I've just outlined must be viewed not simply as today's news but rather through the lens of history.

A phrase not often heard outside the majority Muslim world is 'First the Saturday people, then the Sunday people.' The 'Saturday people' are, of course, the Jews.

Except for Israel, their once vibrant communities in countries throughout the region are now decimated. In 1948 there were roughly 150,000 Jews in Iraq; today 4 remain. In Egypt, there were once as many as 80,000 Jews; now roughly 20 remain.

It appears a similar fate may await the ancient Christian community in these same lands.

Consider this observation by author and adjunct fellow at the Center for Religious Freedom, Lela Gilbert, who recently wrote in the Huffington Post: "Between 1948 and 1970, between 80,000 and 100,000 Jews were expelled from Egypt—their properties and funds confiscated, their passports seized and destroyed."

They left, stateless, with little more than the shirts on their backs to show for centuries of Egyptian citizenship. . . ."

One of my last meetings in Egypt was with 86-year-old Carmen Weinstein, the president of the Jewish Community of Cairo (JCC). She was born and raised in Egypt and had lived her entire life there—a life set against the backdrop of a great Jewish emigration out of Egypt, namely the departure of thousands of Egyptian Jews from the 1940s–60s. She led a small community of mostly elderly Jewish women in Cairo, who with their sister community in Alexandria, represent Egypt's remaining Jews.

There are 12 synagogues left in Cairo. Some, along with a landmark synagogue in Alexandria, have been refurbished by the government of Egypt and/or U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) and have received protection as cultural and religious landmarks—many have not. Further, the 900 year old Bassatine Jewish Cemetery is half overrun with squatters and sewage.

Ms. Weinstein sought to preserve these historic landmarks as well as the patrimony records of the Egyptian Jewish community.

Not long after my return to the U.S., Ms. Weinstein passed away and is now buried in the very cemetery she sought to protect. Meanwhile, with the fall of Hosni Mubarak, Coptic Christians, numbering roughly 8-10 million, are leaving in droves in the face of increased repression, persecution and violence.

A January 8 National Public Radio (NPR) story reported 'Coptic Christians will celebrate Christmas on Monday, and many will do so outside their native Egypt. Since the revolution there, their future in the country has looked uncertain and many are resettling in the United States.'