

of their way to make relationships with anyone that they can and to make believers out of all they come across because the passion is so genuine.” That article, entitled “Vt. home to many worldwide development groups,” is notable because it points out the many ways our small State has contributed in a big way to those less fortunate all across the globe. I ask unanimous consent that a copy of the article be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD as follows:

[From the Associated Press, Feb. 10, 2013]

VT. HOME TO MANY WORLDWIDE
DEVELOPMENT GROUPS

(By Wilson Ring)

DORSET, VT. (AP).—From a converted garage in Dorset, James Hathaway helps rid Afghanistan and Vietnam of land mines. A few miles away in Manchester, Kathleen Colson helps women in northern Kenya start businesses.

They are just a few of the nonprofit, non-governmental organizations that call Vermont home while doing work worldwide in fields as varied as promoting democracy or clean water. Besides working on development projects in some of the remotest and neediest parts of the globe, the organizations are also pumping millions of dollars and hundreds of jobs into the Vermont economy.

“These are people who are willing to think big with small resources. They will go out of their way to make relationships with anyone that they can and to make believers out of all they come across because the passion is so genuine,” said Peace Corps recruiter Brian Melman, who earned a graduate degree at the University of Vermont in Burlington and has also lived in Montpelier.

“There are people in Vermont who accomplish amazing things with just about nothing,” he said.

While many of the organizations are small, taken as a whole, Vermont’s international nonprofit sector appears to boost the state’s economy.

Though precise figures for international nonprofits are hard to come by, a 2011 Vermont Community Foundation report found that 3,626 domestic and international nonprofit organizations bring \$2.5 billion to the state, about 12 percent of the gross state product.

Some groups do local fundraisers. Others attract grant money from foundations while the larger ones work on contracts with government agencies.

The Montpelier-based Institute for Sustainable Communities, formed in 1991, does environmental, health care and other projects in Serbia, China, India and Bangladesh. It’s working with Burlington’s Champlain College to learn more about the international organizations in Vermont.

“There’s a wealth of global experience hidden in our hills and valleys, and most people don’t know it,” said vice president Barbara McAndrew. “Putting together a real picture of Vermont’s international footprint helps us build connections between people working in the same regions. It can raise our profile with national and international funders and it helps us attract and retain talented people.”

Melman said that the same sense of community and the desire to help that he sees in Peace Corps volunteers is what led Vermonters to form nonprofits, in many cases based on work they did while overseas in the Peace Corps or other service. Vermont, per capita, produces more Peace Corps volunteers than any other state.

Burlington, he said, “was just absolutely awash with nonprofits,” Melman said. “We used to joke that there were more nonprofits than people.”

One of Vermont’s first international NGOs was the Brattleboro-based organization now known as World Learning. The organization employs 185 people and does work with education, exchange, and development programs in more than 60 countries. It was founded in 1932.

“Even back then, Vermont was attracting innovative, different thinking individuals,” said Simon Norton of World Learning.

Norton, who lives in Nevada but travels to Vermont frequently, said there are pockets across the country that have “the same vibe” as Vermont and have many groups working across the globe. He mentioned the San Francisco area; parts of Seattle; Flagstaff, Ariz.; Boulder, Colo.; and Asheville, N.C. In Vermont, it’s statewide.

“People choose to either stay or move to Vermont for those small-town community values,” he said.

Colson fits the profile. She said she got her first taste of Africa through a program offered by her college and later spent 25 years in Africa running safaris. In the mid-2000s she branched out and started working on a program that helps women start tiny income-generating businesses in areas where opportunities are otherwise unavailable. Now her program, the BOMA Project, has a staff of four.

A native of western New York, she and her husband moved back to the U.S. to raise their children in a small town similar to where she grew up.

Colson now spends about three months a year in Kenya where she travels with an armed bodyguard.

“To be able to be in that place and then come home to Vermont . . . all of a sudden you are in one of the safest places on the planet,” Colson said.

Many of the organizations are in Vermont’s larger communities, but others are on back roads. Hathaway helped found Clear Path International in the converted garage outside his Dorset home in 2000, where he still works as its communications director. The organization’s main office has since moved to Bainbridge Island, Wash.

Rutland-based Pure Water for the World, which helps provide clean water to communities in Honduras and Haiti, employs three people in Vermont and about 25 overseas. It has a budget this year of \$1.2 million, much of which comes from individual donations, said the group’s executive director, Carolyn Crowley Meub.

“I know individuals who have a small NGO they run from their living room and are doing all kinds of interesting work from these seemingly small, sleepy towns that are incredibly connected to the world,” said Norton.

BIG SKY CONFERENCE CHAMPIONS

Mr. BAUCUS. Madam President, Johnny Wooden, the 10-time national championship winning coach of UCLA, once said: “The main ingredient of stardom is the rest of the team.”

It takes a little star power and teamwork to win 10 championships, but it takes something extra special to win the Big Sky Coach of the Year Award 20 times. That is Lady Griz Coach Robin Selvig.

Coach Selvig hails from Outlook, MT. He has true grit. He grew up north of the Hi-Line. I know the occupant of the

chair knows where the Hi-Line is. That is up in northern Montana. There is a Hi-Line across Montana that even stretches over Highway 2 over into North Dakota.

Under Coach Selvig’s leadership, the Lady Griz have made it to the Big Dance 20 times in the NCAA’s 32-year history. Selvig has 798 wins in 35 seasons.

I also rise to honor Montana Grizzly men’s basketball coach Ben Tinkle. Coach Tinkle was also honored this week as the Big Sky’s Coach of the Year for the men’s basketball program. Coach Tinkle is leading the team to their second trip in a row to the NCAA tournament, after winning a dramatic Big Sky Conference championship against Weber State. Jordan Gregory’s free throws in the final seconds of the game were icing on the cake that pulled the Griz ahead to win the game. The Griz basketball teams have had many spectacular seasons. And the Congress, I might add, could learn a lesson or two from the Big Sky Conference basketball champions. Both programs join a long tradition of excellence and a long tradition of teamwork that makes Montana proud. That is why they win games. These teams have shown a dedication to their school, their fans, their studies, and their community that is a reflection of our Montana values.

As both the Lady Griz and the Grizzly Men’s basketball teams head into the NCAA tournament this week, I take this opportunity to publicly congratulate each player on the roster, the coaching staff, and the entire University of Montana community for this terrific season. I join Montanans in celebrating their teamwork and wishing them the best.

Go Griz.

Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the names of the players and coaches be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

12-2013 UNIVERSITY OF MONTANA MEN’S BASKETBALL TEAM

COACHES

Wayne Tinkle—Head Coach
Jonathan Metzger-Jones—Assistant Coach
Freddie Owens—Assistant Coach
Kerry Rupp—Assistant Coach
Matt Erickson—Director of Basketball Operations

Joey Petschl—Manager

PLAYERS

Will Cherry
Spencer Coleman
Keron DeShields
Nick Emerson
Jordan Gregory
Kevin Henderson
Eric Hutchison
Kareem Jamar
Andy Martin
Mathias Ward
Michael Weisner
Jake Wiley
Morgan Young

2012-2013 UNIVERSITY OF MONTANA WOMEN’S BASKETBALL TEAM

COACHES

Robin Selvig—Head Coach

Annette Rocheleau—Assistant Coach
Shannon Schweyen—Assistant Coach
Trish Duce—Assistant Coach

PLAYERS

Katie Baker
Kellie Cole
Kenzie De Boer
Hannah Doran
McCalle Feller
Shanae Gilham
Torry Hill
Alexandra Hurley
Molly Klinker
DJ Reinhardt
Maggie Rickman
Carly Selvig
Alyssa Smith
Rachel Staudacher
Jordan Sullivan
Haley Vining

HONORING OUR ARMED FORCES

STAFF SERGEANT STEVEN BLASS

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I rise to pay tribute to the life of SSG Steven Blass, who was killed in a helicopter crash in Afghanistan while serving his country. My thoughts and prayers are with his wife Tricia, his young son Hayden, his parents, Randy and Carol, and all his family and friends. I know they are feeling his loss very deeply now, as is the entire community of Estherville, IA, his hometown. I understand that Steven Blass was patriotic even as a child and that joining the Army had been a dream of his. He was doing what he loved when he gave the ultimate sacrifice. His love of country and zeal for freedom represent the very best of America. Like all the patriots before him, his sacrifice has helped keep the torch of liberty burning bright. The United States of America is indeed fortunate to have a native son like Steven Blass, eager to serve his country and risk everything for his fellow citizens. We are forever in his debt. Although it is a debt which we can never repay, it is a debt we must honor by remembering SSG Steven Blass and what he did for all of us.

AFFORDABLE CARE ACT
ANNIVERSARY

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Mr. President, this Saturday marks the third anniversary of the passage of the Affordable Care Act. At age 3, the law is protecting consumers against abusive insurance practices, helping seniors by lowering prescription drug costs, and building the infrastructure to expand health insurance coverage to millions of Americans. For the first time, patients' interests and needs are being put ahead of those of the insurance and drug companies.

The Obama administration has worked tirelessly to implement the law, in the face of constant opposition. My Republican colleagues in Congress have voted to repeal or defund the Affordable Care Act well over 30 times. It is a chilling, if useless, political refrain from the tea party.

On this third anniversary, it is important not only to reflect on how far

we have come but to continue pressing forward on the Affordable Care Act's many improvements to our health care system, particularly the delivery system reforms.

The Council of Economic Advisers' 2013 "Economic Report of the President" identified a number of sources of waste in our health care system, including the fragmentation of the delivery system; duplicate care and over-treatment; the failure of providers to adopt best practices; and payment fraud. The council notes:

Taken together, [these factors] have been estimated to account for between 13 and 26 percent of national health expenditures in 2011. The magnitude of this waste offers an equally large opportunity for spending reductions and improvement in quality of care an opportunity that underpins many of the provisions of the Affordable Care Act.

Thankfully, we have the tools necessary to seize the opportunity described by the Council of Economic Advisers to drive down costs and improve the quality of patient care. The Affordable Care Act included 45 provisions dedicated to improving the way we deliver health care in 5 priority areas: payment reform, primary and preventive care, measuring and reporting quality, administrative simplification, and health information technology.

The effort to extract from the wasteful swamp of our health care bureaucracy a lean, humane, patient-centered system is vital. National health spending hit \$2.7 trillion in 2011 or about 18 percent of GDP. The next least efficient developed country—the Netherlands—spent 12 percent of its GDP on health care in 2010. Germany and France spent 11.6 percent of their GDP on health care. If we were as efficient as the Netherlands, if we merely moved from last place to second-to-last place in health care efficiency, we would save over \$800 billion per year.

For all of our excess spending, one might expect that Americans live longer, healthier lives. But that is not the case. The Institute of Medicine recently compared the United States to 17 peer countries. We were worst for prevalence of diabetes among adults, worst for obesity across all age groups, and worst in infant mortality. We suffer higher death rates and worse outcomes for conditions such as heart disease and chronic lung disease.

According to the Week, avoidable infections passed on due to poor hospital hygiene kill as many people in the United States—about 103,000 a year—as AIDS, breast cancer, and auto accidents combined. These deaths are tragic because they are largely preventable. As we have shown in Rhode Island, when hospital staff follow a checklist of basic instructions washing their hands with soap, cleaning a patient's skin with antiseptic, placing sterile drapes over the patient, etc.—rates of infection plummet, and the costs of treating those infections disappear. The costs of treating the 100,000 who die, as well as the hundreds of

thousands who suffer nonlethal infections, disappear.

Delivery system reform has real promise in improving the management and prevention of chronic disease. These diseases accounted for 7 out of 10 deaths in the United States in 2011 and at least 75 percent of our health care spending.

I am not alone in saying that a correct diagnosis of the problem will lead us to delivery system reform. Gail Wilensky, the former Administrator of the Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services under President George H.W. Bush, said in 2011, "If we don't redesign what we are doing, we can't just cut unit reimbursement and think we are somehow getting a better system."

In the private sector, George Halvorson, chairman and CEO of Kaiser Permanente said, "There are people right now who want to cut benefits and ration care and have that be the avenue to cost reduction in this country and that's wrong. It's so wrong, it's almost criminal. It's an inept way of thinking about health care."

Saving money by reforming how we deliver health care isn't just possible, it is happening. At a 2011 hearing I chaired of the Senate Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Committee, Greg Poulsen of Intermountain Healthcare said:

Intermountain and other organizations have shown that improving quality is compatible with lowering costs and, indeed, high-quality care is generally less expensive than substandard care.

So when Republicans say we must cut Medicare and Medicaid benefits to fix our deficit, that assertion is flat-out wrong.

Attacking Medicare and Medicaid is consistent with a particular political ideology, but it is not consistent with the facts. It ignores the fact that we operate a wildly inefficient health care system and that our health care spending problem is systemwide, not unique to Federal health programs. It is not just Medicare and Medicaid; former Secretary of Defense Robert Gates said of the Defense budget, "We're being eaten alive by health care."

The President's Council of Economic Advisers estimates that we could save approximately \$700 billion every year in our health care system without compromising health outcomes. The Institute of Medicine recently put this number at \$750 billion. Other groups are even more optimistic: The New England Healthcare Institute has reported that \$850 billion could be saved annually. The Lewin Group and former Bush Treasury Secretary Paul O'Neill have estimated annual savings of a staggering \$1 trillion. Most recently, the Commonwealth Fund laid out a set of policies that would accelerate health care delivery system reform and slow health spending by \$2 trillion over the next 10 years.

These savings will have a dramatic impact on the Federal budget. The Federal Government spends 40 percent of