

When the WBDC was founded in 1986, less than 10 percent of the businesses in the United States were owned and operated by women. Today, thanks in part to the leadership and encouragement provided by Hedy and Carol, there are over 8.6 million women-owned businesses throughout the country, generating over \$1.3 trillion in revenues this year and employing nearly 7.8 million people.

As a champion for women's economic development, the WBDC has worked to assist tens of thousands of women in entrepreneurial efforts nationwide. From business certifications to financial assistance workshops, the WBDC provides women business owners with the training they need to establish and expand their businesses. By providing women with essential resources to become successful business owners, the WBDC has empowered women and helped them achieve economic independence through entrepreneurship.

Since its founding in 1986, the WBDC has expanded in size and scope from a two-person operation seeking to address the lack of representation of women in the business sector, to a staff of 24 full-time employees and contractors that now influence policies on the federal, State and local levels. The achievements of Hedy and Carol are significant, and the positive role of the WBDC in supporting women's entrepreneurship is evident.

On behalf of the people of Illinois, I thank Hedy and Carol for their 27 dedicated years with the WBDC and congratulate them on their many contributions for women in the business sector. I wish both of them the best as they continue to inspire and provide leadership for women's entrepreneurship in the years to come.

NATIONAL CENTER FOR BIOTECHNOLOGY INFORMATION ANNIVERSARY

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, I rise to recognize the 25th anniversary of the National Center for Biotechnology Information—NCBI—part of the National Library of Medicine at the National Institutes of Health, America's world-renowned research institution in Bethesda, MD.

The late Senator Claude Pepper, for whom a major building on the NIH campus is named, authored six separate laws creating individual institutes at NIH. In 1987, while a Member of the House of Representatives and chairman of the Select Committee on Aging's Subcommittee on Health and Long-Term Care, Pepper introduced H.R. 393, the National Biotechnology Information Act, which established the NCBI. At a March 1987 hearing on H.R. 393, Pepper explained that "we are dealing with nothing less than the mystery of human life and the unfolding scroll of knowledge, seeking to penetrate that mystery, which is life itself." He noted that his bill was intended "to facilitate the development of advanced computer

and communication systems that will make it possible for the vast expanding knowledge of the gene to be assimilated into a computer system and made available for distribution to researchers and to people generally all over the World."

Soon thereafter, Congress embraced the importance of the biotechnology field, recognized the pressing need to harness the large volume of data emanating from the genetic revolution in science, and endorsed the establishment of NCBI to manage this valuable resource for the benefit of human health. With strong bipartisan support in Congress, Pepper's bill was enacted as part of Senator Ted Kennedy's comprehensive measure, the Health Omnibus Extension Programs of 1988, on November 4, 1988.

Today, biomedical research encompassing genomic and genetic knowledge is a major driver of medical progress. The foresight of Congress in establishing the NCBI, combined with the innovative leadership of Director Dr. David Lipman and the expertise of the agency's dedicated staff, has led to the emergence of an impressive national resource for molecular biology information. In June of this year, Dr. Lipman was honored by the White House with the "Open Science" Champions of Change Award for his work at NCBI. By organizing and integrating genomic data for developing diagnostic and clinical applications, the Center serves as a bridge from research to the medical community. Each day, more than 3 million users access NCBI's 40 interlinked genomic and bibliographic databases and download more than 30 terabytes of data.

I am proud that Congress has continued to support funding for the NCBI over the past 25 years. Recently, by requiring that the results of NIH-funded research be made public through the Center's PubMed Central Database, Congress has opened to everyone the full text of published journal articles that are essential to advancing scientific research and public health.

The biomedical research funded by the NIH provides knowledge essential to combat debilitating diseases, and continuing this research is dependent on the resources and tools that NCBI has developed so successfully for the benefit of the biomedical community. As NIH Director Francis Collins has noted, we are entering an era of precision medicine in which a patient's genetic makeup may determine the exact treatment that is provided. Surely, the NCBI databases and tools will be needed on the front lines of this new effort.

On the occasion of this 25th anniversary, I ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating Dr. Lipman and the outstanding staff of NCBI, who through their skill and vision have built this unique biomedical resource.

TRIBUTE TO DR. CHARLES M. VEST

Mr. ROCKEFELLER. Mr. President, it is my great privilege to rise today to recognize the distinguished career of Dr. Charles M. Vest, a native West Virginian, on his retirement as president of the National Academy of Engineering, NAE. In his time at the NAE, Dr. Vest worked tirelessly to identify and address the most pressing and important challenges facing American engineering, including the declining interest in math and science among our Nation's students and the growing challenges of information flow among government, the private sector, and academia. As NAE president, Dr. Vest was instrumental in urging Congress to pass the America COMPETES Act, which provided a blueprint for investing in critically important scientific and technological pursuits. Dr. Vest also helped craft the Grand Challenges for Engineering, a global initiative that identifies the greatest challenges and opportunities facing engineers today. In this increasingly technology-based and globalized world, Dr. Vest recognized the need for a clear and strong national vision for our engineers and scientists. He provided the dynamic leadership that the NAE required to allow American engineers to compete and thrive in a rapidly evolving world.

A native of Morgantown, WV, Chuck displayed a clever and inquisitive mind from a young age. Growing up under the shadow of Sputnik, he developed a keen interest in electronics and he would constantly tinker with surplus World War II gadgets, such as microphones and resistors. This curiosity led him to West Virginia University where he received a degree in mechanical engineering. Chuck continued his education at the University of Michigan, earning a Ph.D. in mechanical engineering; he remained there for 22 years as a professor, a dean, and university provost.

Dr. Vest has since served as a director of DuPont and IBM. He has held positions on an array of Federal committees and commissions, including the President's Council of Advisors on Science and Technology and as vice chair of the U.S. Council on Competitiveness. Chuck has authored three books, received honorary doctoral degrees from 18 universities, and was awarded the 2006 National Medal of Technology and the 2011 Vannevar Bush Award.

Quite possibly, Dr. Vest's most important achievements occurred during his tenure as president of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, MIT. In his 14 years at the helm of MIT, Dr. Vest proved a worthy advocate of more robust communication and sharing within the science community. Under his extraordinary leadership, MIT launched its OpenCourseWare initiative and cofounded the Alliance for Global Sustainability. As he will readily attest, though, one of Dr. Vest's

proudest accomplishments at MIT was in improving the diversity of the university's student body and faculty. Chuck worked tirelessly to ensure that opportunities at MIT were available to anyone with the right mind and work ethic.

In all that he has done and stood for, Chuck has embodied what is best about being a West Virginian and an American. Chuck's passion for helping others—whether as a teacher, an engineer, or a leader—has impacted countless lives and ensured his place among our country's most respected and honored citizens. Dr. Charles M. Vest has long shone as one of West Virginia's brightest stars, and today it gives me great pleasure to commend him—and thank him—for his enormous contributions to the Nation's science, technology, engineering, and mathematics enterprise.

GREENE COUNTY COURTHOUSE CENTENNIAL

Mr. BLUNT. Mr. President, I rise today to honor an important historical date in Greene County, MO, my home county. October 26 was the centennial of the historic Greene County Courthouse—the place where I worked for more than a decade as county clerk.

The current Greene County Courthouse is actually the third built in Greene County. The 20th century courthouse was intended to be a unifying structure for what had developed as two communities prior to the Civil War. Both communities came under one municipal government in 1887, and the new courthouse was to be a structure built between North Springfield and the central business district. Work to find a site was begun in 1904 and concluded with the purchase of a lot on Central Avenue in 1908.

Architect A.N. Torbitt, of Miller, Opel and Torbitt in Jefferson City, MO, was chosen to draft plans for the new structure, and the cornerstone ceremony for the new courthouse was held on July 16, 1910. The impressive new building, built of Greene County Phoenix stone, took nearly 2 years to complete. In March 1912, the courts moved into the new building. Even Springfield's city hall took up residence there, where it remained for more than 25 years until its move into the post office a block away.

The historic Greene County Courthouse was and remains important to the economic growth, development and prosperity of Springfield and Greene County. Over the years, the courts expanded to an additional judicial center nearby, but the old courthouse remains the center of Greene County administrative duties. Today, it is occupied by the Greene County commissioner, clerk, recorder of deeds, treasurer, assessor and collector of revenues.

Today, the interior of the 100-year-old courthouse is in great shape, and plans are underway to raise funds to replace the parapet. Past elected officials have worked to improve the

building's energy efficiency and maintain its appearance. As a former Greene County clerk and one who has a deep appreciation for the history of Greene County and this grand building, I want to express my pride in the services that are provided in this structure and those county employees who work in it every day. My hope is that the historic Greene County Courthouse has many years of service ahead.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

WILLIAMS-CONE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

• Ms. COLLINS. Mr. President, I am delighted to commend the Williams-Cone Elementary School of Topsham, ME, on being named a 2013 National Blue Ribbon School of Excellence. This year, Williams-Cone was one of only 236 public schools across the country to receive this prestigious recognition of high accomplishment by the U.S. Department of Education.

Created in 1982, the Blue Ribbon Schools Program honors public and private schools that are either academically superior in their States or that demonstrate significant gains in student achievement. The schools singled out for this national recognition are models of high educational standards and accountability.

This award recognizes the remarkable improvements made in student achievement rates at Williams-Cone Elementary over the past several years. During the 2007–2008 academic year, students achieved 66 percent proficiency in reading and math. Four years later, Williams-Cone's approximately 200 students scored 81 percent proficiency in reading and 77 percent in math. These outstanding academic improvements can be attributed to the positive learning environment fostered at Williams-Cone School, where students are encouraged to pursue their interests, teachers instruct in innovative ways, and teachers and administrators engage with families to create a strong school community.

I am pleased that the U.S. Department of Education has selected Williams-Cone Elementary School for this well-deserved honor, and congratulate not only the students, but also the administrators, teachers, staff, and parents on this outstanding achievement. Together, they are making a difference in the lives of hundreds of students and helping them become responsible learners and engaged citizens in their community.●

REMEMBERING PETE CENARRUSA

• Mr. CRAPO. Mr. President, my colleague Senator RISCH joins me today in honoring the life of former Idaho Secretary of State Pete Cenarrusa. The State of Idaho lost a dear friend with the passing of Pete Cenarrusa.

Pete had a unique capacity to lead people and institutions with good will,

great humor and wise counsel. Pete was a personal friend and adviser to both of us, and we will forever remember the example he set for all public servants.

Throughout his distinguished career, Pete was widely respected for his integrity, fairness, determination and dependability. He dedicated more than 50 years to public service, serving nearly 36 years as Idaho's Secretary of State and nine terms in the Idaho House of Representatives, three of which he served as Speaker of the House. In addition to his public service, Pete ran a successful sheep operation with his wife of 66 years, Freda. He was also a private pilot for 59 years and was a high school teacher in Cambridge, Carey and Glens Ferry, ID. Additionally, he served as a U.S. Marine Corps officer, aviator and instructor, which included his service as a pilot in World War II. Further, Pete was a strong advocate for the Basque community. Pete and Freda founded the Cenarrusa Foundation for Basque Culture that has provided resources for the promotion of the Basque culture.

Like the many people who greatly respected him, Pete's list of qualities and experiences is remarkably long. Pete lived life to the fullest. He developed skills in a variety of fields and utilized his talents and principles for the betterment of Idaho. We are truly blessed to have known Pete and to have learned from his example of committed service, honesty and resolve. Pete's long and dedicated service to the people of Idaho will last forever. He was a beloved public servant, rancher, pilot, veteran, teacher, son, brother, husband, father, uncle, grandfather, great-grandfather and friend. Our thoughts and prayers are with Freda, their family and all of Pete's friends.●

TRIBUTE TO SANDRA MATHESON

• Ms. AYOTTE. Mr. President, today I wish to recognize and congratulate Director Sandra Matheson of the NH Attorney General's State Office of Victim/Witness Assistance, OVWA, for more than 30 years of dedicated service to the State of New Hampshire.

A former law enforcement officer and crisis center director, Ms. Matheson was on call to respond to homicides for over 12 years, where she learned first hand about the unique needs of victims. She coordinated New Hampshire's efforts to establish victim/witness services in all 10 counties and to establish the New Hampshire Victim Compensation Program in 1989.

During her long career, Ms. Matheson was responsible for founding and overseeing the OVWA homicide victim unit, which provides 24-hour statewide direct services in all of the State's homicide cases, from death notification throughout the judicial process. She has also developed and presented numerous trainings on traumatic grief and loss, homicide, and the extensive