

They have done this through the creation of the Buffalo State Challenge. This initiative was first implemented in the fall of 2010 and will now usher in its first graduating seniors in 2014.

This program enlists students in their freshman year from McKinley High School of the Buffalo Public Schools and Oracle Charter School, and serves them throughout their four years of high school. Buffalo State has repeatedly demonstrated its commitment to the community through its efforts to stem the rising tide of high school drop outs.

The "Challenge" program not only seeks to aid students within the community during high school, but aims to set these students up to take advantage of their potential through higher education. Students participating in this program who graduate with an 85 or higher average and have combined SAT scores of 1000 or higher in reading and math are awarded a \$1,500 scholarship to attend Buffalo State.

Education is the key to success, and Buffalo State has acknowledged its understanding of this concept through the "Challenge" program. Given the means to succeed, students will succeed and Buffalo State is giving students the means to accomplish this. These achievements make me proud to honor my alma mater for its involvement in working towards making higher education a realistic possibility for so many students.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in acknowledging Buffalo State's efforts to help make higher education more accessible to many students within the local community and also the outstanding accomplishments of the participants of the Buffalo State Challenge. I am grateful that there are institutions like Buffalo State working so hard to help improve the area that I represent.

RECOGNIZING THE 377TH AIR BASE WING AT KIRTLAND AIR FORCE BASE

HON. MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM

OF NEW MEXICO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 9, 2014

Ms. MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM of New Mexico. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor the 377th Air Base Wing located at Kirtland Air Force Base in Albuquerque, New Mexico for their continued dedication to our nation's security.

From May 28, 2014 to June 6, 2014, the Air Force Material Command and Defense Threat Reduction Agency Inspector General teams visited Kirtland AFB to evaluate the 377th Air Base Wing's ability to manage nuclear deterrence and global strike resources while complying with strict nuclear surety standards.

Nuclear surety inspections are extremely detailed and demand the highest standards of performance, compliance and accountability. The IG teams methodically evaluated numerous scenarios, special interest items and conducted a formal assessment across the 377th Air Base Wing during their Nuclear Surety Inspection.

Not only did the 377th Air Base Wing complete this demanding inspection successfully, but they received the highest nuclear surety inspection rating possible. The inspectors found that the Airmen of the 377th Air Base Wing demonstrated their ability to ensure the

safety, security and reliability of our nation's strategic deterrence capability, all while maintaining extremely high motivation, professionalism, and proficiency throughout the rigorous inspection process.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to personally congratulate the Airmen of the 377th Air Base Wing not just for their stellar completion of this demanding inspection, but more importantly, for the great work they do every day to deter our adversaries, assure our allies and protect the American people.

IN RECOGNITION OF THE WINNAKEE LAND TRUST

HON. CHRISTOPHER P. GIBSON

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 9, 2014

Mr. GIBSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of the Winnakee Land Trust, an organization dedicated to preserving the beautiful history and nature of northern Dutchess County, New York. This Saturday, July 12, the Winnakee Land Trust will be celebrating its twenty-fifth anniversary, marking a tremendous achievement in land conservation and care for New York's natural resources.

Founded in 1989, the Winnakee Land Trust was born out of the desire of local Dutchess County residents to protect open spaces and agriculture. The name "Winnakee", meaning "good land," comes from the name of a Native American tribe that roamed Dutchess County. In 2011, Winnakee earned accreditation from the Land Trust Alliance, a national conservation organization with high standards for membership.

As a member of the House Agriculture Committee, and as an Upstate New Yorker, I am honored to have the privilege of recognizing this great organization. The Winnakee Land Trust has worked hard to engage our community all over the region and build relationships with stakeholders in the towns and villages of Clinton, Hyde Park, Milan, Red Hook, Rhinebeck, and Tivoli, among others.

Mr. Speaker, I want to congratulate Winnakee again on twenty-five years of excellence. I look forward to attending their anniversary gala this Saturday, July 12. I urge my colleagues in the House and Senate, and all Americans, to look to their example as a beacon of historic land conservation in our great nation.

VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS STUART E. EDGAR POST 493 WOMEN'S AUXILIARY 90TH ANNIVERSARY

HON. RODNEY P. FRELINGHUYSEN

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 9, 2014

Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the Veterans of Foreign Wars Stuart E. Edgar Post 493 Women's Auxiliary located in the Township of Nutley, Essex County, New Jersey as it celebrates its 90th anniversary.

The Veterans of Foreign Wars is a national organization, established in 1899, that sup-

ports and honors veterans and their families across the United States. Throughout the organization's history, the VFW has played a large role serving American veterans, including its strong support for the establishment of the Veterans Administration, creation of the National Cemetery system, and the passage of legislation for veterans, such as the G.I. Bill for the Twenty-First Century. In 1996, the VFW launched Operation Uplink, a program that allows deployed service members to call home, free of charge, on three designated days each month.

The Women's Auxiliary of the Veterans of Foreign War was established in 1924 and brings together the mothers, wives, sisters, and daughters of veterans in order to celebrate those who have served in the military. In 2010, the Post 493 Women's Auxiliary found itself in serious financial trouble. However, through the dedication of its members, coupled with help from local community, the Auxiliary was able to raise the funds to allow the organization to continue and flourish. Today, VFW Post 493 and the Women's Auxiliary continue to bring together about 100 men and women from the Township of Nutley, as well as the Township of Belleville.

In addition to advancing the broader mission and goals of the Veterans of Foreign Wars, Post 493 and the Women's Auxiliary carry out a number of duties throughout the year. These duties include marching in local parades as well as performing services at war memorials on holidays such as Memorial Day and Veterans Day. They also hold events to raise funds for scholarships, services for veterans, and other goals of the Veterans of Foreign Wars. In 2010, through the Adopt-A-Unit program, Post 493 sent packages of goods to two Army units—the Second Battalion, 113th Infantry of Newark and First Battalion, 102nd Cavalry of West Orange. Twice a year, members host parties and serve dinner to patients at the Veterans Affairs Medical Center in East Orange, New Jersey.

The Auxiliary's efforts and contributions have made an enormous impact on the community, local veterans, their families, and the VFW at large.

Mr. Speaker, I ask you and my colleagues to join me in congratulating the Veterans of Foreign War Stuart E. Edgar Post 493 Women's Auxiliary as it celebrates its 90th anniversary.

HONORING DR. JOHN HAEGER ON HIS RETIREMENT FOR NORTHERN ARIZONA UNIVERSITY

HON. ANN KIRKPATRICK

OF ARIZONA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 9, 2014

Mrs. KIRKPATRICK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a friend and extraordinary educator in my community of Flagstaff, Arizona, Dr. John Haeger, who is retiring after 13 years as president of Northern Arizona University (NAU).

NAU is one of the great universities in my state and, with Dr. Haeger's vision and commitment, has become one of the best universities in the country.

Collaborations and partnerships were a hallmark of President Haeger's leadership and

legacy. His pursuit of creative funding solutions in the face of increasing enrollment and budget constraints contributed to the university's reputation and educational mission, provided alternative revenue sources and created efficiencies at every level. New ventures with public and private entities—such as TGen North, the High Country Conference Center and the Northern Arizona Intergovernmental Public Transportation Authority (NAIPTA) transportation spine that has become central to the growth of NAU—also played a role in the university keeping up with growth.

The physical transformation of NAU—both in Flagstaff and throughout the state—is a defining aspect of President Haeger's legacy. Under his watch, dozens of new buildings have been added or renovated, the result of careful and deliberate planning and a demonstrated commitment to sustainability during economically challenging times. They include the new W.A. Franke College of Business and Engineering School, nearly a dozen new services including an expanded University Union, a Native American Cultural Center, new transportation options through NAIPTA and new parking structures, expanded opportunities statewide for NAU students with campuses in North Valley, Tucson, Yavapai and others and new residence halls to accommodate the phenomenal growth of the university.

His commitment to affordability and accessibility is intrinsically linked to NAU's mission. In 2008, President Haeger initiated the tuition pledge guaranteeing the same tuition rate for each incoming undergraduate student for four years. It's a promise of predictability that has become not only a motivating factor for choosing NAU but that also serves as an incentive for students to complete their degree in four years.

His charge has been largely devoted to fundamentally changing the way college-bound students gain access to higher education. Some of the university's most pioneering alternatives to the traditional four-year college experience also have emerged under his watch. The cost-saving model at NAU—Yavapai garnered the attention of Governor Jan Brewer, who called it "visionary" and "an example for the entire state and the nation." The award-winning 2NAU joint admission program with community colleges across the state has won a statewide award for helping students earn college degrees. Students save money by completing their first two years at the community college tuition rate.

The Personalized Learning program that launched last year is now at the forefront of the emerging competency-based movement.

Under Dr. Haeger's leadership, he helped NAU in the resurgence of athletics by hiring its first vice president for Intercollegiate Athletics. His bold leadership was critical to the effort to re-energize Lumberjack pride and draw more fans to athletic events. Fan support is at an all-time high, and a new athletics branding effort puts the focus on such ideals as strength, pride, heroism, determination and hard work.

In this effort to improve athletics, NAU has impressive standards for its student-athletes: succeed in the classroom, contribute to the community and win. NAU Athletics has twice under Haeger's leadership been honored with the prestigious Big Sky Conference Presidents' Cup, recognizing overall athletic success in competition and in academics.

Finally, from his first days leading the University, President Haeger was committed to di-

versity, first-generation students and student success. His Student Success Initiative ambitiously implemented a number of programs to increase freshman retention and, ultimately, the percentage of students who complete their degrees. The First-Year Learning Initiative is an extensive effort to boost the effectiveness of first-year courses by creating an environment that supports student effort. One of the greatest strides in this area has been the launch of University College, which brought about curricular change at the first-year level as well as a culture change to provide new students with the framework they need to thrive academically. It's a giant leap in efforts to retain students at a higher level from their freshman to sophomore years, and from there to help them graduate on time.

The Lumberjack Mathematics Center combines the sophisticated technology with enhanced personal contact from their instructors. Governor Brewer called NAU "a true pioneer of education innovation" and called the center an example of its "steadfast commitment to its students."

A tangible representation of NAU's commitment to serving Arizona tribes, the Native American Cultural Center connects students to their culture and supports them through mentoring and advising. The center also directly supports Native student organizations, recruitment and retention efforts. NAU has earned a welcome place among the best colleges in the nation for Native Americans.

NAU's Center for Military and Veteran Student Center reflects President Haeger's commitment to our veterans and active-duty soldiers. The center has earned recognition for its efforts, including 'Military Times' Best for Vets designation in the Southwest region and a military-friendly designation from 'GI Jobs.' The Veteran Student Center in the business college ranked No. 6 among public business schools, No. 10 overall and is the top business school for military veterans in Arizona.

Mr. Speaker, as you can see, President Haeger's contribution to NAU is lasting. NAU, and the Flagstaff community, will miss him but we are better for having him. His commitment to education is unheralded, yet his legacy will endure. I'm proud to call you a friend, Dr. Haeger. Thank you for your service to NAU and to providing a bold vision for our future generation of leaders.

COMMEMORATING THE
GROUNDBREAKING OF ZURICH
NORTH AMERICA'S NEW HEAD-
QUARTERS IN SCHAUMBURG, IL.

HON. TAMMY DUCKWORTH

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 9, 2014

Ms. DUCKWORTH. Mr. Speaker, I submit the following proclamation:

Whereas; Zurich North America has been headquartered in Illinois since 1912, and in Schaumburg, Illinois since 1980, and insures global corporate, large corporate, middle market, specialties and programs sectors through the individual member companies for over 100 years as one of the first European insurers to enter the United States market; and

Whereas; Zurich is extending its long term partnership with Schaumburg, Illinois and the

company's over 30 year presence in the north-west suburbs; and

Whereas, Zurich's new headquarters is currently the largest build-to-suit office transaction in the United States; and

Whereas, their 2,500 employees in Schaumburg will be moving to the new, state-of-the-art, sustainable and environmentally friendly headquarters facility; and

Whereas; the new 700,000+ square foot facility will cost \$200 million to build and will create up to 700 skilled vertical construction jobs; and,

Whereas; Zurich continues its tradition of supporting its customers and neighbors during moments of tragedy, helping restore and protect business, homes, and families during their hour of need; and

Whereas; Zurich engages with its local communities to support charitable efforts financially and with the time and expertise of their employees;

Now Therefore, be it known that the undersigned Member of the United States Congress, the Honorable L. TAMMY DUCKWORTH of the eighth Congressional District of Illinois, hereby recognizes the groundbreaking of Zurich North America's new headquarters in Schaumburg, Illinois, and congratulates Zurich for its continual commitment to insuring America's businesses.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. BETTY McCOLLUM

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 9, 2014

Ms. McCOLLUM. Mr. Speaker, on June 26, 2014, I traveled back to my district to survey the damage caused by severe flooding across Minnesota's Fourth Congressional District and missed votes. Had I been present, I would have voted against H.R. 4899.

This Republican led omnibus bill does nothing to lower gasoline prices for consumers. Instead, this bill will benefit oil and gas companies by easing not only regulations, but weakening environmental review requirements. This is nothing more than a repackaging of bills already voted on by this Congress, and which I voted against. H.R. 4899 once again demonstrates the Republicans commitment to giveaways to big oil, while families in Minnesota are paying even more at the pumps.

On Wittman's amendment, I would have voted "no."

On Lowenthal's amendment, I would have voted "yes."

On Capps' amendment, I would have voted "yes."

On Deutch's amendment, I would have voted "yes."

On Blumenauer's amendment, I would have voted "yes."

On Bishop's amendment, I would have voted "no."

On DeFazio's amendment, I would have voted "yes."

On Democratic Motion to Recommit H.R. 4899, I would have voted "yes."