

horizon is technology that will immerse us into entertaining worlds, or project those worlds and experiences into our lives. In essence, entertainment will be immeasurably enhanced with both virtual-reality experiences and augmented-reality experiences. Bringing us into created worlds and bringing created worlds into our world will fundamentally explode the boundaries of storytelling, unburdening the storyteller in ways we can't yet imagine.

The challenges? Technology can be an invasive force, competing for our attention and eroding the time we have for ourselves and our families. Few of us would give up the tech tools that keep us productive and informed; even fewer can remember the last time we completely unplugged on vacation. The more ubiquitous technology becomes in our lives, the more diligent we must be to ensure it doesn't overwhelm or diminish our leisure time.

Ultimately, technology is about connecting, not cocooning; it's a tool that should empower us to reach more people and bind us closer together, rather than encourage us to disengage from one another. Even as we use technology to create more individualized experiences, social interaction is still a basic need, a fundamental part of our humanity.

That's why we value entertainment "events" that create treasured memories, strengthen personal connections and deliver shared experiences, whether at the movies, in a theme park, or at a sports stadium. This is entertainment that cannot be time-shifted or duplicated; you have to be there, immersed in the moment.

An experience is enhanced when shared with others, becoming something to be savored and remembered long after it's over. These social events enrich our lives, and our need for them will never change.

The human love of storytelling, whether individualized or shared, will also be a constant. Although I can't predict the precise future of entertainment, I share Walt Disney's optimism and his belief that whatever lies ahead, it will be defined by great storytelling. Just like it always has been.

FINANCIAL AID SIMPLIFICATION AND TRANSPARENCY ACT

Mr. ALEXANDER. Mr. President, I recently spoke to Senate interns regarding the Financial Aid Simplification and Transparency Act. I ask unanimous consent that my full speech be printed in the RECORD.

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

FINANCIAL AID SIMPLIFICATION AND TRANSPARENCY ACT

Thank you for coming. We know it's the pizza more than anything else that brought you here, but to some extent it may be the dreaded federal student application form. What we would like to do today is tell you a story. We will call this a "teaching moment." I think that may have been Senator Bennet's phrase, but it is a teaching moment for you as to how legislation is supposed to work in the United States Senate. And I think it may be a teaching moment for senators, about how to do our jobs.

We are going to tell you a story of how we got to where we are and tell you what our proposal is. And then we are going to invite the experts to tell us what kind of students we senators have been in terms of listening to them and then coming up with something. Then we will ask you what you think. Then

we are going to put this out for our committee on which we serve, which Senator Harkin is the chairman of, which is working on the reauthorization of Higher Education with our colleagues to see if we can get co-sponsors and make a difference in something. So what I will do is begin the story, and I will just take a few minutes. Then I will turn it over to Senator Bennet, and he will tell you more about exactly what the proposal is. First, let me introduce the three experts: Ms. Kim Cook, executive director of the National College Access Network, Dr. Judith Scott-Clayton, assistant professor of economics and education at Teachers College at Columbia University, and Ms. Kristin Conklin, founding partner at HCM Strategists, LLC.

Here's why they are here. Several months ago at one of the hearings of the Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee, those three, and one other, who is from Harvard Graduate School of Education, testified before us. I am down on the Republican side and Michael is on the Democratic side. It looked to me like we had the same reaction, because they were talking about this federal student application form, which is 106 questions, with 68 pages of explanations that you have to fill out every year you apply for a grant or a loan.

It gets audited during the year, and, of course, you would probably make a mistake on one of those questions, so you might not get your money. It is so discouraging to people who apply for it that many who should do not. One of the community college representatives said that a quarter of the community college students do not even fill out the form, and they are probably the ones who we most want to have the opportunity to do that.

So what we heard the four say was you could eliminate all those questions except two and get 90 or 95 percent of all of the information that you need.

Of course I am the first one to wonder, "Is that just a bizarre outlier? Is that just one witness with a weird proposal?" But every single one of the four said that. Then they went on to make some other very common sense recommendations about being able to fill it out earlier in your high school year, suggestions about over-borrowing, about simplifying the loan and student repayment process—all of which made a lot of sense.

So, at the end of the hearing, I said, "Would four of you please write a letter to us on the things that you agree with?" By the time I got down to see them, they said, "We won't write you four letters, we'll write you one." So they did.

Michael and I began working together to see if we could take their recommendations and put it in a piece of legislation. In doing that, we wanted to show the proper respect to our colleagues, so we let our chairman, Senator Harkin, know about it. We mentioned it to Arne Duncan, so he would know what we are doing, because we would like in the end to have Republican support, and the president's support, and the House of Representatives' support. We are not here to make a political point. We are here to get a result. And then we thought about what would be the best way to introduce it. Senator Bennet said, "Why don't we invite the interns to come over for lunch? Why don't we lay it out to them? Why don't we ask the experts who suggested it to us what they think?"

Next week, then, we will introduce it and see what is going on and how we can improve it over the next few weeks. And then maybe when you fill out the form in your next year of college, it will be the size of a postcard instead of the size of that. That thing takes, if you add it up, 20 million students filling that

out every year, and the form itself says it takes at least three hours. If you add up the amount of money and time spent on that, you get into billions of hours wasted, you get into hundreds of millions of dollars that might be spent on construction, instead of hiring staff people at the college to help you fill these things out. You might encourage a lot more people, who are eligible and who need the money, to get the surest step toward improving their lives.

Of course, the College Board says that a college four-year degree is worth a million dollars in increased earnings over your lifetime. It is one sure ticket to a better life that we know about. Finally, I want to say that it has been a great pleasure to work with Michael. I am a pretty good Republican, he's a pretty good Democrat, but that does not make any difference. The reason we are here is that the Senate is a place where you are supposed to have extended debate about important subjects until you come to a consensus, and then you get a result. That is the way you govern a complex country. So what we hope is that this is just a small example of one part of the Higher Education reauthorization process that will help make life simpler.

Michael, there is one other thing that I should say. You may ask, how did this happen? How did this long thing happen? It wasn't any evil-doer who did it. What happened was the Higher Education Act was authorized in 1965. In my opinion, what happened was it got reauthorized eight times by different groups of senators and congressman, different group of regulators wrote things. People had good, well-intentioned ideas and after that [process], you get that. So what we are doing is starting from scratch to try to turn 106 questions into a postcard and get the money where it should go, to the eligible students who want to go to college.

CONGRATULATING THE VANDERBILT UNIVERSITY COMMODORES

Mr. ALEXANDER. Mr. President, as a fellow Commodore, I would like to congratulate the Vanderbilt University baseball team on winning the College World Series and bringing home Vanderbilt's first men's national championship.

Tim Corbin, Vanderbilt's outstanding coach who has been named National Coach of the Year by Collegiate Baseball, is to be commended for his exceptional leadership and determination throughout the entire season.

This was a hard-fought win, and I am so proud of the perseverance and tenacity of Coach Corbin and these young men.

Vanderbilt is a very special university, one that produces student-athletes of exceptional character, integrity, and pride in themselves and their school.

It is a privilege to be a home-State alumnus of a university that continues to embrace these values while also encouraging its students to excel in both academics and athletics.

I am filled with pride today for my alma mater, and I wish the baseball team and all of Vanderbilt University the best.

This achievement would not have been possible without the skill, determination and teamwork of the following outstanding student-athletes:

Tyler Beede, Ben Bowden, Walker Buehler, Tyler Campbell, Ro Coleman, Vince Conde, Will Cooper, Jason Delay, Karl Ellison, Tyler Ferguson, Carson Fulmer, Tyler Green, Chris Harvey, Ryan Johnson, John Kilichowski, Aubrey McCarty, Brian Miller, Jared Miller, Penn Murfee, John Norwood, Drake Parker, T.J. Pecorano, Adam Ravenelle, Bryan Reynolds, Steven Rice, Nolan Rogers, Jordan Sheffield, Kyle Smith, Luke Stephenson, Hayden Stone, Dansby Swanson, Xavier Turner, Zander Wiel, and Rhett Wiseman.

Go Does!

AWARDING CONGRESSIONAL GOLD MEDAL TO RAOUL WALLENBERG

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, I wish to honor the memory of one of the world's most courageous humanitarians: Raoul Wallenberg. Seventy years ago today, Raoul Wallenberg arrived in Budapest, risking his own life to save the lives of tens of thousands of Hungarian Jews from the atrocities of the Holocaust.

Raoul Wallenberg emerged as a champion of those who were persecuted during one of the darkest chapters of human history. Mr. Wallenberg served on the War Refugee Board, an independent government agency established in 1944 by President Franklin D. Roosevelt and tasked with the "immediate rescue and relief of the Jews of Europe and other victims of enemy persecution." Through his courageous work on the War Refugee Board, Mr. Wallenberg prevented the deportation of tens of thousands of Hungarian Jews to Auschwitz-Birkenau. Wallenberg risked his own life and livelihood in order to save Jewish people through a variety of means by issuing thousands of protective documents for them; by securing their release from deportation trains, death march convoys, and labor service brigades; and by establishing the International Ghetto of protected houses.

While the Holocaust showed us that human beings are capable of committing unspeakably evil acts, heroes like Raoul Wallenberg proved that we are also capable of bravery, selflessness, and goodness.

It is only fitting that we passed legislation in 2012 bestowing one of America's highest civilian awards, the Congressional Gold Medal, to one of the greatest heroes this world has known. That actual medal is being awarded to Raoul Wallenberg's family in a ceremony today to honor his legacy.

American citizenship is not a requirement for receiving the Congressional Gold Medal; but if it were required, Wallenberg would be eligible. He received honorary U.S. citizenship in 1981 thanks to the efforts of former Congressman Tom Lantos (D-CA, 12th) who, as a 16-year-old in 1944, escaped from a Nazi forced labor camp outside of Budapest and hid with his aunt in a safe house Wallenberg had established.

Throughout the world, streets have been named after Raoul Wallenberg in-

cluding one here in Washington, where the U.S. Holocaust Museum is located. Monuments bearing his name are testaments to Raoul Wallenberg's heroism and to the thousands of lives he saved during the Holocaust. Awards are given in his name to honor humanitarians around the world. The most important reminders of all that he accomplished are the human ones the descendants of those who survived the Holocaust, thanks to Raoul Wallenberg's heroism. Raoul Wallenberg left this earth too soon but he accomplished more in his short life than most of us could ever hope to.

We can honor Mr. Wallenberg by trying to live with the courage and conviction that he demonstrated in his short time. By doing so, we can do right by him, and we can do right by all those whose lives were lost or forever changed by the Holocaust.

HONORING OUR ARMED FORCES

SECOND LIEUTENANT TOBIAS C. ALEXANDER

Mr. INHOFE. Mr. President, I wish to remember the life and sacrifice of a remarkable young man, Army 2LT Tobias C. Alexander. Along with one other soldier, Toby died May 20, 2012 of injuries he sustained when his unit was attacked with improvised explosive devices in Tarin Kowt, Afghanistan, in support of Operation Enduring Freedom.

Toby was born June 8, 1981 in Wesel, Germany and graduated from Eglin High School in 1999.

Toby entered the Active Duty Army in August 2002 as a signal intel analyst. He deployed to Afghanistan in 2007 in support of Operation Enduring Freedom with the Combined Joint Special Operations Task Force—Afghanistan (3rd Special Forces Group, Airborne). He obtained the rank of sergeant first class.

In 2011 he earned a bachelors' degree in interdisciplinary studies from Cameron University where he was a part of the Reserve Officer Training Corps. After receiving his commission, he attended the Field Artillery Basic Officer Leader Course B at Fort Sill, OK and was then assigned to the 1st Battalion, 14th Field Artillery, 214th Fires Brigade. He served as a platoon leader for Alpha Battery before being selected for the Security Forces Advisory Team, SFAT, which was responsible for the training of Afghanistan's national security forces. He deployed for his second tour to Afghanistan in June 2011.

His friend, Myles Mendez, said "He was the guy you went to if you needed to know something, so a lot of people were always going to him with 'What's this? What's that? Can you help me?' He was the go-to guy."

"I honestly don't think that he would have had it any other way. I think if he had to choose to go out, I think he would have wanted to have it serving his country. He was a patriot."

On May 30, 2012, the family held funeral services at Cameron Baptist Church in Lawton, OK.

He is survived by his wife Amanda, his children: Angelicia, Kevin and Lexie, and his parents Bill and Heike Alexander.

Today we remember Army 2LT Tobias C. Alexander, a young man who loved his family and country, and gave his life as a sacrifice for freedom.

ARMY PRIVATE FIRST CLASS JON R. TOWNSEND

Mr. President, I also wish to remember Army PFC Jon R. Townsend. Along with three other soldiers, Jon died September 16, 2012 in Zabul province, Afghanistan, in support of Operation Enduring Freedom due to injuries sustained due to enemy small arms fire.

Jon was born October 28, 1992 and was raised in Claremore, OK. Two days after he graduated from Claremore Sequoyah High School in 2011 he left for Army basic training at 17. His friends and family watched as he transformed—downing 5 dozen eggs a week—from an average kid into a bulked-up recruit.

After completing initial training, Jon was assigned to the 1st Battalion, 23rd Infantry Regiment, 3rd Stryker Brigade Combat Team, 2nd Infantry Division, based at Joint Base Lewis-McChord, WA. He deployed to Afghanistan in December 2011.

His mother said that Jon believed in the mission and was particularly fond of the children he encountered. He asked her to send him care packages with treats that he could give his "babies," and he'd use his wet wipes to clean the children. "Jon loved life and wanted to share it with everybody," she said. "He wanted to make everybody happy."

In February 2012, he went home on leave from Afghanistan and married his high school sweetheart, Brittany Carden. They had 3 days together as a married couple before he departed back to Afghanistan.

"I'm not mad. . . Jon did this because he loved his country," his mother said. "He wanted to make it safe, and (joining the military) was the only way he knew how."

On September 28, 2012, the family held a service at First Baptist Church and Jon was laid to rest in Lone Chapel Cemetery in Claremore, OK.

Jon is survived by his wife Brittany Townsend; Lois Harrison, granny; Karen (Katy Harrison) Nelson, mother; Aunt Honee Sue (Harrison) Grumbein and spouse Keith Grumbien and their children: Kobe, Kalvin, and Katelyn of Foyil; respected father-like figure Roland Long of Foyil; Jeremy Nelson, brother, and spouse, Courtney and their children: Austin, Jeremiah, Keegan and Xelia Nelson; Andrew Bingham; and Caleb and Myah Smith; Jennifer (Nelson) Tucker and spouse Paul Tucker and children: Tanner and Addison; Nancy (Roberts) Carden, mother-in-law; James L. Carden, Jr., father; Cherish (Carden) Moye, sister, and husband Brent Moye; and James Larry Carden, III, brother; and faithful four-legged friend, Teddy. He was preceded in death by his father Robert