

Convention. In 1973, he was appointed to the National Highway Safety Advisory Committee and became chairman of the advisory committee until 1976. From 1976 to 1979, he was a Federal commissioner for the National Transportation Policy Study Commission. He became Administrator of the U.S. Department of Transportation's Federal Railroad Administration in 1989 and served until 1993. He later served as chairman of the Amtrak Reform Council.

It is a pleasure to acknowledge Mr. Carmichael whose selfless personal qualities reflect a great deal of credit on my State and this Nation.●

TRIBUTE TO BRIGADIER GENERAL BRUCE BRAMLETTE

● Mr. DAINES. Mr. President, today I wish to recognize former BG Bruce Bramlette of Fort Benton, MT, on behalf of his lifetime of dedication to our Nation and his selfless service on congressional U.S. Military Academy nomination boards. Bruce has tirelessly served on nomination boards for 25 years, both as a member and board chairman, and has interviewed more than 1,000 young Montana students seeking a nomination to one of our Nation's service academies. Throughout his years of conducting interviews, he has had numerous opportunities to meet and interact with incredible students from all over Montana. Bruce said it was his pleasure to help these students pursue their dreams of becoming an officer in one of our Nation's military branches.

In addition to Bruce's tremendous volunteer hours for the nomination boards, he proudly served in the Montana Air National Guard for 34 years. He retired in 1994 as the assistant adjutant general for air for the State of Montana. As a National Guard fighter pilot, Bruce successfully flew over 2,000 hours in the F106 Dart, F102 Dagger, and F89 Scorpion.

A graduate of Montana State University, Bruce has also been an active member in his community. He has served on the Highwood School Board for 9 years, is a lifelong member of the Air Force Association, and is an active member of Representative RYAN ZINKE's Veterans Advisory Board. Bruce and his wife of 43 years, Miriam, have three daughters and nine grandchildren.

Bruce recognizes the great value in supporting our next generation of leaders—especially those who will be defending and protecting our country. I am deeply thankful for Bruce's years of service to our State and Nation and his tireless work on behalf of Montana students.●

REMEMBERING BIG ED SMITH

● Mr. DAINES. Mr. President, I would like to honor Edward B. Smith—a man of great character and a dedicated public servant who was called home on January 25, 2016, at the age of 95.

"Big Ed" was born in Dagmar, MT, in 1920. He and his wife, Juliet, raised four children near the family homestead, where Ed helped manage the family farm and ranch. He was an avid hunter and sportsman and earned his nickname "Big Ed" while playing in the Big Muddy Baseball league. Ed was an active member of the Sheridan County community, serving as a member of the Sheridan County Stockman Association, Wool Growers, and the Sheridan County Fair board, as well as a 4-H leader.

Ed's heart for service led him to run for the Montana State Legislature in 1966, where he served for 20 years. In 1972, Ed ran as Montana's Republican candidate for Governor. He went on to serve on Montana's Highway Commission for several years after retiring from the State legislature.

Big Ed was a commonsense and independent leader and a man of great integrity. He made a lasting impact on Montana and will be truly missed. Cindy and I will keep his wife, Juliet; his four children; and his many grandchildren and great-grandchildren in our thoughts and prayers.●

TRIBUTE TO RANNA DAUD

● Mr. HELLER. Mr. President, today I wish to recognize Ranna Daud, executive director for the After-School All-Stars Las Vegas, ASASLV, for her tireless efforts in helping Las Vegas's youth achieve prosperous futures. Ms. Daud has contributed greatly to her community by working to make ASASLV the best it can be.

ASASLV was initially organized in 2003 to provide Las Vegas's youth with a variety of free academic, athletic, and cultural afterschool programs, encouraging Nevada's students to maintain a successful and healthy lifestyle during afterschool hours. These programs are offered to students in pre-kindergarten through 8th grade at 13 different schools across the Clark County School District. To help students academically, ASASLV offers homework assistance, test preparation, and tutoring from certified teachers. It also offers classes in art, music leadership, cooking, business, and dance.

Aside from educational aid, the organization also emphasizes health and fitness. Activities such as soccer, volleyball, basketball, martial arts, yoga, and hiking are offered to students. Our State is fortunate to have someone such as Mrs. Daud leading this organization, which is critical in helping students across Las Vegas maintain a positive lifestyle.

Ms. Daud began working for ASASLV in 2004 as a program manager. She later returned to the organization in 2009 and served for 4 years before being selected as the executive director. In this role, Ms. Daud leads the organization in pursuit of its mission to help Nevada's youth. She also serves as the main voice in the community, working to build recognition for the program.

Ms. Daud's work with ASASLV has contributed greatly in making the organization an invaluable resource to Las Vegas's youth. She has gone above and beyond to build a positive base for Nevada's future generations.

I extend my deepest gratitude to Ms. Daud for all of her hard work in encouraging our youth to have successful and active futures. She is a shining example of someone who strives for the betterment of her community and displays true selflessness in her work. I am thankful to have Ms. Daud serving as an ally to Las Vegas's students, providing them a safe, healthy, and ambitious environment.

I ask my colleagues and all Nevadans to join me in recognizing Ms. Daud and her work for ASASLV, a program that is so important for Nevada's youth. I wish Ms. Daud the best of luck in all of her future endeavors working to help students across southern Nevada.●

RECOGNIZING WESTERN GOVERNORS UNIVERSITY NEVADA

● Mr. HELLER. Mr. President, today I wish to recognize Western Governors University, WGU Nevada. I am proud to honor this institution that offers Nevadans a unique opportunity to learn and achieve successful and positive futures.

Established in 1997, WGU Nevada is an online institution designed to offer greater access and flexibility to higher education. This university provides 50 accredited bachelor's and master's degrees in business, information technology, K-12 teacher education, and health professions, along with a variety of other tracks. WGU Nevada's mission to provide Silver State citizens with an opportunity to obtain an academic degree at their own pace will help enhance the lives of thousands of students, while also ensuring the needs of Nevada's employers are met.

WGU Nevada has gone above and beyond to help Nevadans obtain the tools they need to succeed. Recently, this institution provided 10 students in Nevada with the financial support needed to earn a degree that will advance their careers. I am grateful that WGU Nevada is working to create a brighter future for many across the Silver State.

As the husband of a teacher, I understand the important role academic institutions play in enriching the lives of Nevadans. Ensuring that students throughout Nevada are prepared to compete in the 21st century is critical for the future of our country. The State of Nevada is fortunate to be home to WGU Nevada.

I ask my colleagues and all Nevadans to join me in recognizing WGU Nevada. This institution is truly dedicated to enriching the lives of Nevadans, and I am honored to recognize its efforts.●

TRIBUTE TO COLONEL JOHN NOVAK

● Mr. ISAKSON. Mr. President, I wish to pay tribute to COL John Novak for

his past year of exemplary dedication to duty and service as an Army congressional liaison for the Chief of Army Reserve. In that role, he managed the operations and readiness portfolio for the Army Reserve. I am grateful that he will continue to serve the Army and Congress in his new assignment as commander, 361st Civil Affairs Brigade, in Kaiserslautern, Germany. We wish him well in his new position.

A native of Ohio, Colonel Novak enlisted in the Army as a psychological operations specialist in the 21st Psychological Operations Company, Cleveland, OH. He graduated with honors from John Carroll University, magna cum laude, and the Reserve Officer Training Corps Program, distinguished military graduate, in 1991 and was commissioned into the infantry. Throughout his career, he also earned a master's degree in business and organizational security management from Webster University; a master's degree in legislative affairs from the George Washington University; a master's degree in strategic intelligence from the National Intelligence University, Defense Intelligence Agency; a master's degree in strategic studies from the U.S. Army War College; and associate of arts degrees in Russian studies and law enforcement.

As an officer in the U.S. Army Reserve, Colonel Novak served with military intelligence, logistics, psychological operations, and civil affairs units at the platoon, detachment, company, battalion, group, and major command level as an executive officer, platoon leader, detachment commander, psychological operations officer, Product Development Center chief, logistics officer, assistant operations officer, S3, company commander, plans officer, operations officer, aide-de-camp, assistant chief of staff, and battalion commander.

His service in the Army Reserve is highlighted by his selection in 2009 to serve as an Army congressional fellow. While assigned to the Office, Chief of the Army Reserve from 2010 to 2012, Colonel Novak spent a year representing the Army to the Congress by working in the office of Senator Saxby Chambliss. Following the completion of battalion command, he returned once again to the Office, Chief Army Reserve to serve as a legislative liaison officer.

As with all our citizen soldiers, it is important that we acknowledge his service in the civilian sector. Colonel Novak has extensive law enforcement experience, serving as both a municipal police officer in Ohio and as a Federal civilian special agent with the U.S. Air Force Office of Special Investigations. It is because of their cooperation and understanding during his many tours on Active Duty that he is able to make such a positive impact on the Army Reserve.

John is accustomed to working long hours in all of his positions in the Army and civilian sector, so it is only

fair and proper to acknowledge the tireless support of his wife Stacey and his children—Patrick John Novak and Caitlin Lynn Novak. I thank them for their sacrifices and wish them all the best for continued success in the future.

Throughout his 30-year career, COL John Novak has made positive impacts on the careers and lives of his soldiers, peers, and superiors; and I am grateful that he has chosen to serve as an Army leader. I join my colleagues today in honoring his dedication to our Nation and invaluable service to the U.S. Congress as an Army congressional liaison.●

TRIBUTE TO DAVID W. SCHEIBLE

● Mr. PERDUE. Mr. President, I wish to honor a great Georgian, David W. Scheible, chairman and CEO of Graphic Packaging International, Inc. David is retiring from Graphic Packaging after a decade of transforming the company.

Under David's leadership, Graphic Packaging has grown to become a Fortune 500 company with over 12,000 employees globally and a highly respected leader in the paper and packaging industry.

Last year, David was the recipient of the Executive Papermaker of the Year award, which is based on corporate vision, strategic objectives, and strong leadership within the individual's company and the paper industry.

David is also a pillar in our community with a passion for education, sustainability, and feeding the hungry. He serves on the board of directors of Benchmark Electronics, the board of Cancer Treatment Centers of America, and the Metro Atlanta Chamber of Commerce, where he was chairman of the education committee for the last 5 years.

As the immediate past chairman of the American Forest & Paper Association, David was a powerful and visionary advocate working with Federal, State, and local officials on issues critical to the pulp and paper industry. David's charisma, focus, and quick intellect earned the respect of many legislators, including myself.

It is with great pleasure that I recognize David Scheible, a man who continues to make a difference, and I wish him well in his future endeavors.●

VERMONT ESSAY FINALISTS

● Mr. SANDERS. Mr. President, I ask to have printed in the RECORD copies of some of the finalist essays written by Vermont High School students as part of the sixth annual "What is the State of the Union" essay contest conducted by my office. These finalists were selected from nearly 800 entries.

The material follows:

ADAM FLEISCHMAN, SOUTH BURLINGTON HIGH SCHOOL (FINALIST)

The state of the union is strong. Americans are working hard, unemployment is down, the stock market is up, and the reces-

sion of 2008 feels like ancient history. Still, we face problems. Climate change is one of those issues, particularly because of the denial by politicians in our government that refuse to do anything, because their re-election campaigns rely on oil and gas companies' contributions.

In the 114th congress, 170 members deny that global warming is real. Many representatives receive huge donations, as much as \$63 million from big oil and gas companies, and in return, they support deregulation initiatives in Congress to protect the corporations. In other words, they prevent progress and obstruct a move away from non-renewable energy sources. In this way, they are not representing their constituents—they're representing the interests of the very wealthy corporations—and it's undermining the political system we have.

In a legislative body that is constantly blinded by the goal of staying in office, rather than passing comprehensive reforms to save our planet, the denial is rampant. Even though 97% of scientists agree that climate change is real, and manmade, these elected officials with no background in science choose to ignore it, and instead put trillions of taxpayer money into a defense budget that is bloated and unnecessary. For climate change to be properly addressed, it starts with Congress. If we invest money into clean energy—solar panels, wind turbines, natural gas—we will slowly be able to move away from non-renewable, dirty sources.

We also must take a stand against the corporations profiting off of non-renewable sources, making it clear that their campaign contributions should not be the difference between whether or not we leave a healthier planet for future generations. If we wait long enough, it will be too late to do anything. It's not part of a "liberal agenda" that some in Congress like to criticize. It's a common problem that is hurting our common home, and it's up to all of humankind to deal with it. That can't happen if the political charades are continued in Washington, D.C.

ELLERY HARKNESS, CHAMPLAIN VALLEY UNION HIGH SCHOOL (FINALIST)

My fellow Americans, there are many important issues burdening our world today; in order to fix these problems, we need an education system that produces well educated leaders to solve these issues. Our education system as it stands today needs to be modified and socioeconomic factors hindering education need to be addressed.

Education should be an equalizer, so that anyone, no matter their circumstances, can realize their potential; this isn't the reality though. The truth is that kids from disadvantaged families have a far lower chance for success. Inequality due to wealth and race are huge problems; the disturbing school to prison pipeline is one outcome of this. Only 1 in 12 children in poverty will graduate from college today and almost half won't graduate from high school. Studies have also found that African American and Hispanic high school graduation rates are 10% lower than the U.S. average. Education can raise people out of poverty, while ignoring these problems only continues to perpetrate a horrific cycle of poverty and create more economic problems.

Consider that by 2020, 65% of U.S. jobs will require a postsecondary education, according to Georgetown Public Policy Institute. Yet only 1 of 4 students are ready for college in the 4 core subjects when graduating high school, according to U.S. news. Regrettably, the education system not only isn't preparing students for college, it also forces students to bear an unreasonable financial burden in order to go to college. With free or reduced tuition programs, college education would be more accessible.