

the fear of retirement and give workers the tools they need to retire with dignity. I am willing to do that, and I hope my colleagues will join me.●

#### NATIONAL DRUG COURT MONTH

Mr. ISAKSON. Mr. President, as part of National Drug Court Month, I want to honor a program that has directly and indirectly benefited so many Americans and American families.

In my hometown of Marietta, GA, we had the good fortune of having a driving under the influence, or DUI, court program, established nearly 10 years ago in 2008. Since that time, the Cobb County DUI court program has saved our Cobb County Sheriff's office more than an estimated \$3 million in incarceration costs alone.

However, these accountability courts have saved much more than just money. For example, there is the little girl who was living with parents in active addiction who now has a sober father who was able to gain custody of her and raise her in a stable home environment. We have seen parents, children, and entire families saved through recovery and restored through the healing work of counseling.

More than 300 individuals have been saved from addiction, crime, recidivism, unemployment, and incarceration by the structure, accountability, and tough love approach of the DUI court program. These individuals have been able to move forward with their lives as productive, tax-paying citizens. Through drug and DUI court programs, the cycle of probation and addiction is broken and history rewritten. The number we can't count is the number of lives potentially saved from fatal accidents and other tragic events that were prevented through participants' recovery.

It is such a special opportunity for me to write to many of the graduates of the drug and DUI court programs in our State and think of the strength of these individuals who are turning their lives around to live free of drug and alcohol addiction. I applaud their efforts, and I always remind them that, while getting off drugs or alcohol may be the hardest thing they will ever do, it is also the most important thing they will ever do for themselves and their families.

On May 2, 2017, the Cobb DUI court program hosted its 30th graduation ceremony. Graduation day is such a special one not only for these graduates, but for the staff who work tirelessly in trying to save lives. That is the day where they see the long hours, the countless emails, the midnight phone calls, and the reams of paperwork pay off. They can look at where a defendant used to be and see how that man or woman's life has changed. On graduation day, lives are reformed and new ones begin.

I applaud all those fighting to change lives for the betterment of all.

#### REMEMBERING AMEDEO "ARMIE" C. MEROLLA

Mr. REED. Mr. President, today I pay tribute to a great Rhode Islander and patriot, BG Amedeo "Armie" C. Merolla, Rhode Island Army National Guard, RIARNG, retired, who passed away last week at the age of 88.

Mr. Merolla was born in Providence and graduated from Mount Pleasant High School before attending Brown University and Harvard Law School. At Brown, he enlisted in the U.S. Marine Corps Reserve, beginning what would become a 36-year career in service to our country marked by distinction and numerous decorations.

In 1955, Mr. Merolla enlisted in the RIARNG and was later commissioned as a first lieutenant in the Judge Advocate General Corps. The U.S. Senate approved Mr. Merolla's appointment to the rank of brigadier general in 1984, making him the first Italian American to become a general officer in the RIARNG. Indeed, he was part of a generation of Italian Americans who served with distinction, bringing great pride to this community while becoming an integral part of the fabric of our State. He was subsequently appointed assistant adjutant general and deputy commanding general—Army of the RIARNG. Even after his retirement in 1987, Mr. Merolla continued to serve. He was appointed commander of the Rhode Island State Defense Force, where he served until 1997, and to the honorary rank of major general in the Rhode Island Militia in 2005.

Mr. Merolla's military service was considerable and noteworthy, as was his legal career and contributions to his community and our State. He held numerous positions, including as legal counsel to several Rhode Island officials and agencies. He was also a former president of the Rhode Island Trial Lawyers Association, chairman of the Warwick School Committee, president of the Boys & Girls Clubs of Warwick, and trustee of St. Gregory the Great Church, among many other leadership roles.

I offer my heartfelt condolences to Mr. Merolla's wife, Norma, and their four children: Katherine Merolla, Julie Merolla, Major Sandra Merolla, USARNG, retired, and Warwick City councilman Steve Merolla, as well as to the rest of his family and friends.

#### TRIBUTE TO EDWARD GNEHM, JR.

Mr. ENZI. Mr. President, I greatly appreciate having this opportunity to share with my colleagues the presentation of an award that means a great deal to me for a number of reasons. It is the president's medal that will be presented by Steven Knapp, the president of The George Washington University, GW. Its recipient, Edward Gnehm, has been a friend of mine ever since we were college freshmen at GW.

When Edward Gnehm, Jr., or "Skip" as everyone came to know him, came

to Washington, DC, from rural Georgia and I left rural Wyoming to tackle the challenge of my own college education at GW, I don't think either one of us knew what a great impact those 4 years would have on us and how our college experience would change our lives forever. It was a purely random thing, but when the administration of George Washington University decided which rooms we would use as freshman, they assigned Skip and me to the same dorm. We became friends pretty quickly. Then, when we pledged the same fraternity, we became brothers as well. Skip is the only real brother I have ever had, and I have relied on him and enjoyed that same kind of friendship and relationship ever since.

Our room was a pretty interesting place to be. I was a night person, studying accounting and business issues that would become my first major career. Skip, on the other hand, was a morning person, interested in reading whatever he could to sharpen his knowledge and understanding of foreign relations. He had a dream even back then that he would someday be an ambassador for the United States.

As I watched him pursue his dream, I learned that Skip was an interesting guy, very smart, dedicated, and determined to be the best he could possibly be at his chosen field. He helped me learn to expect the same of myself.

Soon, our college years were over, and we each went our separate ways, keeping in contact, pursuing our life's dreams and taking advantage of every opportunity that presented itself. Soon Skip was making his way through our Nation's diplomatic and foreign service system. For my part, what began as a small business soon had me working my way through Wyoming's political system on the local, State, and national levels.

As the years went quickly past, Skip and I continued to follow a similar path in life as we both met and married our special wives. Our kids were even born about the same times. Skip found in his wife, Peggy, and I found in my wife, Diana, the kind of support and assistance it was going to take if we were to achieve the kind of success we were both hoping for. For Skip, Peggy's encouragement and guidance has helped him to be a force for the United States and to serve our country all over the world. For my part, Diana has been exactly what I needed to serve the people of Wyoming at every opportunity.

For Skip, one of the greatest moments of his career had to be his service as our Ambassador to Kuwait. He was nominated to that post when Saddam Hussein came calling with his army and attempted to set up shop there. Fortunately, Skip had what it takes to face up to a challenge like that with great courage, bravery, and determination. Those who knew him weren't surprised. We knew he had it in him, and when our Nation emerged from that challenge, our President,

George Bush, knew he had chosen wisely when he selected Skip Gnehm for that difficult post. I got to watch on television as Skip raised the American flag at the recaptured U.S. Embassy in Kuwait.

I could go on at length about some of his other posts and the places he has served to promote and protect U.S. interests. He has been our Deputy Permanent Representative to the United Nations. He has also served as our Ambassador to Australia and to the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, presenting his credentials on 9/11 and then flying to peace meetings with the King of Jordan. He still has special contacts throughout the Middle East.

Over the years, Skip received a number of awards for his work overseas, including the Secretary of State's Distinguished Service Award for his service in Jordan and Superior Honor Awards for his service in Kuwait and Riyadh.

Skip has also been an active force for the betterment of The George Washington University in a number of different capacities. He has been a member of the board of trustees, the vice president of the general alumni association, and the faculty representative to the board of directors.

Skip is currently on the faculty of the Elliott School of International Affairs where he is inspiring our next generation of foreign policy advisers and experts by sharing his own experience borne from a lengthy career in our foreign service. Thanks to Skip, we can rest assured that our future diplomatic efforts will be in good hands.

Looking back to those days years ago when Skip and I were spending another night hitting the books for the next day's class or exam, I don't think either one of us could have dreamed how well things would turn out for the two of us. I have been given an opportunity to represent the people of Wyoming as mayor, member of the State legislature, and now as a U.S. Senator. I was always proud to work on Skip's confirmation to these different postings. Skip has had an impact all over the world and touched more lives than we will ever be able to count.

Simply put, I couldn't be more proud of Skip and all he has accomplished over the years. I don't think anyone is more deserving of the president's medal that he will receive from The George Washington University's president Steven Knapp. Steven is doing great work to promote GW and ensure its future will be even better than its past.

This is a great honor for Skip, and I am sure he couldn't be more appreciative of this recognition. It represents a lifetime of achievements for him and an amazing list of accomplishments. As the title of the classic film reminds us, Skip has had a "wonderful life" of which both Skip and GW can be truly proud. He represents what a tremendous advantage an education at George Washington University can be when placed in the right hands.

Thank you.

#### ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

##### REMEMBERING JAMES AND JOE PRATT

• Mr. ISAKSON. Mr. President, today I would like to remember two brothers from my hometown of Marietta, GA, James and Joe Pratt, whose lives were cut short in a tragic accident on April 24, 2017.

James and Joe were upstanding students in their community and at Lassiter High School, where they were both members of the Junior Reserve Officers Training Corps. They were loved by their family, and they were beloved by their friends, advisers, and coworkers.

James, called "Jim" by those who knew him, was 18 years old and just a few weeks shy of high school graduation. He was the JROTC unit's morale and wellness officer, and Jim had already enlisted in the U.S. Marine Corps. He was looking forward to beginning boot camp in a short time and later to attending Kennesaw State University.

Joe was a 14-year-old freshman and, in addition to attending school, served in the JROTC unit and was known for helping keep his friends' spirits light-hearted with his knowledge of trivia and sense of humor.

Their unit of the JROTC, the Lassiter-Pope-Kell Navy JROTC, armed exhibition drill team has performed annually at our Georgia congressional delegation's Military Academy Day. Out of respect for these young men, their unit did not perform at this year's event, held last Saturday, April 29, and instead, we held a moment of silence in their honor.

Lassiter High School and our community is in mourning over the loss of these fine brothers. My deepest condolences go out to the entire Pratt and Lago families and to our community, and my wife, Dianne, and I hold them in our prayers.●

##### TRIBUTE TO BERNADETTE GRAY-LITTLE

• Mr. MORAN. Mr. President, today I wish to honor University of Kansas Chancellor Bernadette Gray-Little, a chancellor who has made a significant impact on both the university and our State.

This summer, Chancellor Gray-Little will step down from her 8-year term serving as the 17th chancellor of KU. Serving since 2009, she has expanded important research opportunities, elevated the university's national stature, and transformed the way KU serves the State, and the world.

Under Chancellor Gray-Little's direction, research has increased and provided greater opportunities for our Kansas students. KU's Alzheimer's Disease Center became nationally recog-

nized, while the KU Cancer Center achieved National Cancer Institute designation and is now taking an important step in pursuing a "Comprehensive" status designation.

In her 8 years at KU, Chancellor Gray-Little has advanced the university's mission to educate leaders by implementing new admissions standards, launching a new undergraduate curriculum, strengthening scholarship offerings, prioritizing retention and graduation rates, growing the freshman class for 5 consecutive years, reinvigorating the academic environment, and making the university a true "community of scholars."

The university's growth under Chancellor Gray-Little's administration is plainly visible in the number of renovations that have taken place and the new buildings on campus. Support for Capitol Federal Hall, the Health Education Building, Self and Oswald Halls, the Central District Redevelopment Project, the DeBruce Center and the Earth, Energy & Environment Center, as well as major renovations to Swarthout Recital Hall, the Spencer Museum of Art, and Jayhawk Boulevard, all stand as testaments to her vision for the future of KU.

While her term as chancellor will be remembered for her numerous successes and achievements, Chancellor Gray-Little will also be remembered as the first female and first African-American chancellor in the university's history.

Chancellor Gray-Little has led the university with remarkable dignity, grace, and humility. She serves as a role model and an inspiration to students, staff, faculty, and colleagues throughout the State and Nation. I am grateful to have worked with her to improve the University of Kansas and our State, and I wish her well as she moves on to new endeavors.●

##### AMERICA AT THE CROSSROADS

• Mr. NELSON. Mr. President, I want to share a poem and song titled "America at the Crossroads," written by my dear friend and fellow Floridian, JoAnna O'Keefe. She conveys a message of unity and patriotism that I believe is important for Congress and our Nation as we tackle many challenges at home and abroad. Mrs. O'Keefe's work won her the George Washington Honor Medal by the Freedoms Foundation at Valley Forge this year, and I am honored to share it with my Senate colleagues.

The material follows:

AMERICA AT THE CROSSROADS

(By JoAnna O'Keefe)

We the people  
Are on opposite sides;  
We've lost sight of the middle  
Where Resolutions reside.

If Jefferson were here right now  
He would pick up his pen.  
On parchment he'd write:  
Be Patriots again!  
Look into the eyes