

I am honored to recognize MaKenzie as the May Granite Stater of the Month. MaKenzie represents the strength of character that defines the Granite State, and her actions are an excellent reminder that, no matter our age, it is critical that we are equipped with the knowledge of what to do in case of an emergency.●

TRIBUTE TO GEORGE KING

● Mrs. HYDE-SMITH. Madam President, I am pleased to commend George King of Washington County, MS, for his service and contributions to the State of Mississippi while serving as the 82nd president of the Delta Council.

Founded in 1935, Delta Council is a widely-respected economic development organization representing business, professional, and agricultural leaders in the Delta region of Mississippi. I commend Delta Council for its continuous role in improving the quality of life in this unique part of our country.

George King's tenure as council president began in May 2017. The Delta Council under Mr. King's leadership has benefited from this extensive experience as a strong voice for the region on farm policy. He is an important private-sector leader in water resource developments, which are vitally important to this highly productive agricultural region of Mississippi.

Mr. King graduated from Leland High School and earned an agronomy degree from Mississippi State University. He is a partner in Nelson-King Farms, a diversified row-crop farming operation. In addition to his leadership in Delta Council and farm production activities, Mr. King has served as Director of the National Cotton Council, and Cotton, Incorporated. He is also past president of the Southern Cotton Ginners Association, and a former Chairman of the USDA-Farm Service Agency County Committee.

I am pleased to offer congratulations to George King and to share this appreciation with his wife, Lisa, and their four children, Walt, Caroline, Caitlin, and Nelson, as the 83rd annual meeting of the membership of Delta Council convenes on June 1 at Delta State University.●

TRIBUTE TO UTAH'S SERVICE ACADEMY NOMINEES

● Mr. LEE. Madam President, I come before you today to recognize seven exemplary young men and women from the great State of Utah who have answered the call of service to our country. It is a great privilege to represent these exceptional Utahns in the U.S. Senate, who will attend the U.S. Air Force Academy, the U.S. Military Academy, and the U.S. Naval Academy.

Each year Members of Congress, under title 10 of the U.S. Code, are authorized to nominate a number of young men and women from their district or State to attend the country's

service academies. I am proud to honor these Utahns as they undertake this calling.

Each of these students is of sound mind and body, which will serve them well in Colorado Springs, West Point, and Annapolis, but to succeed, they will need more than this.

In addition to mental and physical aptitude, the journey upon which these young men and women will soon embark demands strong moral character: leadership, courage, honesty, prudence, and self-discipline. It calls for a commitment to service and love of country.

These students have already displayed these qualities of character and standards of excellence upon which America's service academies are built. Today, I would like to recognize and congratulate these dedicated and generous young men and women.

Delia Margene Cheney will be attending the Air Force Academy after graduating from the Utah Military Academy, where she served as commander of the largest Air Force JROTC program in the western United States. She was captain of both her school's academic team and volleyball team and served as a member of their State champion drill team. Delia was also a delegate to Girls State and served as an intern for two sessions of the Utah State Senate. She stayed active in her community through service with the National Honor Society, as well as her choir and church youth group.

Daniel Scott Dwyer, from Bingham High School, accepted an appointment to the U.S. Naval Academy. Daniel serves in the Boy Scouts as a senior patrol leader and earned the rank of Eagle Scout with a project that entailed sending care packages to marines serving in the Middle East. He ran with both the Bingham Miners' track and cross-country teams and was a member of the JROTC. He also served his peers as a volunteer with special needs youth, all while taking rigorous classes and maintaining a high GPA.

Talmage Cragun Gaisford will be attending the U.S. Military Academy. As a graduate of Orem High School, Talmage was a member of the National Honor Society and received high honor roll awards. He earned the rank of Eagle Scout in the Boy Scouts and served as a volunteer in Accra, Ghana, where he worked to build an orphanage. In addition to serving as a leader in his church's youth organization, he served on the Orem City Youth Council and is an avid mountain biker and hiker.

Gage Geoffrey Maki attended the New Mexico Military Institute after graduating from Park City High School. He worked hard and earned an appointment to the U.S. Air Force Academy. Gage, whose parents are both graduates of the U.S. Air Force Academy, was a leader in both the Air Force JROTC and the Civil Air Patrol. He attended Boys State and earned the rank of Eagle Scout, where his ambi-

tious project led to the replanting of hundreds of trees in an area devastated by a forest fire. Gage has trained as a skeleton athlete with the Junior Development USA Bobsled/Skeleton Team.

Malachi Kay Ruf will be joining his brother at the Air Force Academy. Malachi graduated from North Summit High School and has been attending Utah Valley University. He served as drumline bass captain and the congress debate captain, as well as vice president of the debate team and the Leos. He was honored to attend Boys State and was a member of his school's State champion swim team. Malachi sought opportunities to serve others as a volunteer for Primary Children's Festival of Trees, collecting prescription glasses with the Lions Club, volunteering for local triathlons and races, and playing cello at church and community events.

Tasia Stevens accepted an appointment to the U.S. Military Academy at West Point. She graduated from Murray High School where she was captain of both the soccer team and basketball team, where she was named MVP. A model student-athlete, Tasia maintained a 4.0 GPA while excelling in sports and volunteering hundreds of hours at the Loveland Living Planet Aquarium. She provided additional community service with the National Honor Society and was a member of high school German club.

Sariah Kim Watchalotone will be attending the Air Force Academy. A graduate of West High School, Sariah was president of both the DECA and horticultural clubs and vice president of Panther Pals. She captained both her high school volleyball team and the High Country Volleyball National Team. Sariah volunteered with the Rescue Mission of Salt Lake City, Community Animal Welfare Society, and with University of Utah Health Care. Her grandfather, who served in the South Korean Army, has instilled in her a love of country, and inspired her to enter the military and live a life of service.

It has been my distinct honor to speak to and nominate each of these admirable young men and women. These Utahns give me great hope for the future of our great Nation and the future of our Armed Services.

To these seven students and to all their future classmates from around the country, I commend your achievements. I urge you to remember the foundation of your success thus far: hard work and sacrifice.

Strive to continue on the path of strong moral character and to keep love of country as a guiding principle. If you stay this course, your future will hold great things in store. I wish you all the best as you embark on this journey.

Thank you.●

RECOGNIZING THE ALWAYS FREE HONOR FLIGHT NETWORK

• Mr. MANCHIN. Mr. President, today I am incredibly honored to rise and recognize a group of 23 heroic military veterans who will travel from West Virginia this week to visit our Nation's Capital as part of the ninth Always Free Honor Flight. On the occasion of their visit, in which they will see for the first time the monuments built in their honor, I want to express my utmost gratitude to these special men and women for their extraordinary bravery and patriotism and for their noble sacrifice to help keep our country free.

I have said this time and time again: West Virginia is one of the most patriotic States in this great Nation. With one of our country's highest per capita rates of military servicemembers and veterans, West Virginia is undoubtedly one of our Nation's most patriotic States. According to the Department of Defense, West Virginia had the highest casualty rate in the nation during the Vietnam war, and I am so proud that the Honor Flight will allow these West Virginia veterans to pay homage to their brethren at the Vietnam Wall. The 23 veterans participating in this week's Always Free Honor Flight truly embody the Mountain State's history and contributions to the safeguard of our American freedoms.

Our special West Virginians visiting this week represent warriors from 50 to 94 years old and have traveled from all parts of our great State, from Buckhannon to Bluefield, Princeton to Beckley, and many places in between. In addition to our Mountain State veterans, one veteran from North Carolina and two veterans from Virginia will be accompanying their West Virginia neighbors on the daylong adventure. Of the patriots attending, four served in World War II, two served in both the Korean war and the Vietnam war, 17 served in the Vietnam war, two served in the Cold War, one served in the Gulf War, and two served stateside.

I would especially like to recognize our World War II Veterans who will be on this Honor Flight. Ninety-four-year-old Sergeant Wetzel Ray Sanders from Midkiff joined the Army in Princeton in 1941. He was a gunner and rifleman stationed in Hawaii and is a Pearl Harbor survivor. Former Seaman Samuel Helmandollar will also be coming to Washington, DC. The Princeton native and 91-year-old joined the Navy in 1944 in Huntington and was a gunner. We will also be joined by 93-year-old Sergeant Rudolph Dillon Jennings from Bluefield. He joined the Army Air Corps in 1943 in Princeton and was stationed in England and served in the European Theater. John Howard Winfrey, a 93-year-old from Lindsie joined the Navy and Air Force in 1942. He served aboard ships in the Atlantic and Pacific as a torpedoman 2nd class during World War II.

These men represent our Nation's Greatest Generation, and their sac-

rifices and valor embody American patriotism. They fought in such a pivotal war, in an era that threatened our existence as a nation. Unfortunately, as the years go by, we are losing so many of our World War II veterans, and we must show them our utmost gratitude each and every day.

As I mentioned, we will also be joined by veterans of the Korean, Vietnam, Cold, and Gulf wars. They engaged in combat all over the world. They were pilots, helicopter gunners, and radio operators.

One of these veterans, Curtis Ray Vest of Bluefield, joined the Marine Corps in 1952 in Freeman and served in both Korea and Vietnam. In Korea, he served as a Field Observer for Field Artillery and was stationed in Incheon and Pusan. In Vietnam, he was part of the American rescue mission of the French from Vietnam to safety in Japan.

Another of these Veterans is Sergeant Marshall Glenn Mann who joined Air Force in 1968 in Falls Church. On March 4, 1971 during combat at Khe Sanh, the Republic of Vietnam air lift urgently needed to get ammunition to Khe Sanh in to support operation Lam Son 719. The objective of this mission was to destroy supply dumps and sever the Ho Chi Minh Trail, which was the corridor running through eastern Laos from North Vietnam to Cambodia and into South Vietnam. Because of the Cooper-Church Amendment passed by Congress in late 1970s, US ground troops and advisers were prohibited from entering Laos. However, U.S. helicopters supported the operation and U.S. fighter bombers, and B-52 bombers provided air cover. Sergeant Mann received the Distinguished Flying Cross for extraordinary achievement while participating in aerial flight for this operation.

Another Vietnam Veteran joining us is Staff Sergeant Danny Lewis Meadows, who joined the Air Force in 1966 in Beckley. Staff Sergeant Meadows was a mechanic on KC-135 Air Refueling Tanker for two years and refueled B-52 bombers and F-4 fighters in Southeast Asia. During his last two years of service, Staff Sergeant Meadows was a crew chief on a C-130 cargo aircraft in the Philippines and Vietnam. He flew to Saigon and Cam Ranh Bay Vietnam for fifteen to twenty-one days each month. He flew from several bases in Vietnam into the jungle to perform assault landings. He was working on his aircraft and was attacked with rockets and fell off the wing, broke his hip and wrist and with four months remaining on his enlistment and was shipped back to the U.S. to recover.

We will also have two Veterans that served in the Cold War One of them, Jackson P. Thompson served as a Recon Specialist from 1971-76. He was stationed at Fulda Gap in Germany, which was near the area between the Inner German Border of East and West Germany that contained two corridors of lowlands subjected to a potential invasion by Warsaw Pact forces.

Showing our appreciation to those who have served is something that we should do each and every day, but today is a special day to pay tribute and thank those who have volunteered to put their lives on the line for our freedoms. The memorials our Honor Flight participants will visit today serve as an important reminder to us all that our freedoms and liberties come at a steep cost. However, I know our veterans will find special meaning and potentially long-lost emotions when they tour such touching sites.

The brave West Virginia heroes today have all served this country in a variety of ways, working both at home and abroad. They have engaged in combat on U.S. soil in Pearl Harbor and all over the world, at the Panama Canal, working on the docks of Saigon, protecting the border of West Germany and serving in Desert Shield and Desert Storm. One of our visiting Vietnam veterans, Sergeant Dean Fluharty, who joined the Marine Corps in Parkersburg, earned a Purple Heart, Silver Star, Vietnamese Cross of Gallantry and a Good Conduct Medal. But regardless of their rank or duty, each and every one of these veterans answered our nation's call and has served with incredible pride and valor.

This week's 'Honor Flight' and the continued support of our Veterans would not be possible without the dedication of so many volunteers and caregivers. I would like to thank the four JROTC Cadets from Montcalm, Bluefield and Princeton High Schools as well as the military spouses serving as the guardians on this year's 'Honor Flight.' These guardians have selflessly given their time to travel alongside our veterans all the way from Princeton, West Virginia to Washington, D.C. to share this very special journey with them.

I also commend those in the 'Always Free Honor Flight' Network for their dedication to providing our Veterans with such a unique and meaningful experience. Without the diligence and passion of Dreama Denver, President of 'Always Free Honor Flight' Network and owner of Princeton, West Virginia's Little Buddy Radio, as well as Pam Coulbourne, the coordinator of these flights, many of our Veterans would never have the opportunity to travel to Washington and pay homage to the men and women they fought beside. Dreama and Pam launched the 'Always Free Honor Flight' in 2012 and every year, they continue to make this dream a reality for many of our West Virginia Veterans.

I'd also like to recognize Sergeant First Class Paul Dorsey, Vice President of Always Free Honor Flight and Official Photographer Steve Coleman, who have done a tremendous job of ensuring that our Veterans receive the recognition they deserve. Dreama, Pam, and Steve have also dedicated themselves to the Denver Foundation, serving as incredible examples of how individuals can give back to their communities.