

Kodiak is also home to the largest Coast Guard base in the United States—the 17th District. By the way, we are making that base bigger, with more assets and more aircraft coming to Alaska, because we need it. As the chairman of the subcommittee in charge of the Coast Guard, I am going to continue to make that happen, for sure. In an average month in Alaska—get this—the Coast Guard saves 22 lives, performs 53 assists, and conducts 13 security boardings and 22 security patrols. This is in 1 month. Think about that. That is daily heroism for Alaska and for America. They do this all in the largest geographic area of any Coast Guard district in the country—nearly 4 million square miles—in some of the most challenging weather environments on the planet. That is what the men and women of the Coast Guard do in my great State every single day.

Now, being a rescue swimmer in the Coast Guard is an elite assignment. Being a rescuer in the Coast Guard station in Alaska is, according to our Alaskan of the Week, PO Evan Grills, the “tip of the spear” of this elite assignment. So let me tell you a little bit about Evan.

Raised in Stuart, FL—the home of our Presiding Officer, Florida—the military had always appealed to Evan. His grandparents and uncles were marines. As a Marine colonel myself, I say “Semper Paratus” to them. Some of his older friends and mentors went on to the academies, but going overseas didn’t really appeal to Evan. Serving in the United States and saving American citizens at home did, as did the tough training required to be a Coast Guard rescue swimmer. “It’s the most elite [assignment],” he said, “and that’s what appealed to me, [so I joined].”

Evan had been in Alaska for less than a year when, on New Year’s Eve—just 2 months ago—the call came in that a boat that was about 170 miles southwest of Kodiak was in trouble.

Having trained mostly in swimming pools, this rescue—the one he was being called upon—was going to be his first. Think about that. Your first rescue—and I am going to describe conditions that would terrify anyone. Nothing prepared him for what he would soon be undertaking.

Mr. President, let me transport you now to this crabbing boat, the *Scandies Rose*, in the Gulf of Alaska on New Year’s Eve. The winds are 40 knots. The seas are 30 feet. The boat is listing to the starboard side. It is 10 degrees out. Everything is freezing. It is nighttime. It is very dark.

It was clear the boat was going down, but the captain, heroically, with minutes to spare, was able to get off a mayday call and in doing so let the Coast Guard know exactly where to find them and, as a result of the captain’s heroic actions, save two lives.

The two survivors, Dean Gribble, Jr., and John Lawler, managed to get into their survival suits and a life raft and

waited to be rescued in these heavy, rough seas. It was a 4-hour wait. It was very, very cold. They were covered in ice. The seas were pitching their raft. They were hypothermic, it was pitch black, and they had no idea if anyone was coming.

Gribble told a reporter that during the wait, he talked to John.

We’re not going to die today, John. This isn’t our time. We’re not dying today.

Even though, in his head, he knew they would die if a rescue didn’t come soon. Then they saw the lights from the helicopter, with Evan Grills aboard, hovering above like an angel coming to save them. But it wasn’t a given that in those conditions, they could even conduct a rescue; that it would be safe for the rescuer to jump in 30-foot swells to save them. To even try in these huge waves, in 40-knot winds, in icy conditions, was a danger to the crew and the pilots. The flight from Kodiak in those conditions had taken 2 hours, and the helicopter was short on fuel. They only had minutes left to make the decision whether to try to rescue them or turn around and go back to Kodiak. That, combined with the extreme winds and seas and freezing temperatures, made any attempt at deploying a rescue swimmer very, very risky.

The pilots conferred with our Alaskan of the week, Evan. They were nervous for his safety. They were hovering. They had to hover high because they didn’t want to be hit by waves.

“Are you good with the plan?” they asked.

“I guess so,” Evan said.

This was the first rescue of his career. I don’t think there was much of an option not to do it. A thousand different thoughts went through Evan’s head when he leapt into the frigid waters in a gale-force storm in pitch darkness, risking his life to save others.

When he reached the first survivor, he said:

I knew exactly what to do and how to do it. It was almost second nature.

His training kicked in. His great Coast Guard training kicked in. He explained the hoist he had come down with—that came down from the helicopter to the first survivor and how it worked to be hoisted up into the helicopter. And then to the second survivor, he said, “We’re going to go up in this hoist together. Relax. I’ve got you covered.” Calm. Courage. Heroic. And he did. He had them covered.

These are the actions of a hero, a true American hero, a true Alaskan hero. These are actions that need to be celebrated and known in our country. How many Americans or Alaskans, even, read about what this young man did to save lives on New Year’s Eve when the rest of America was celebrating and having fun? Well, now they know.

But there are five, as I mentioned, who tragically couldn’t be saved. We know their memories live on. And in

Kodiak, the community, the family, and the loved ones of the Cobbans are beginning the long, slow process of healing.

As for Evan, our Alaskan of the week, he thinks a lot about those who were lost, wishing he could have done more, but he is grateful he was able to save two lives. He is also grateful for his training and what the Coast Guard does and how what he had trained for as a rescue swimmer worked. So he knows and now has the confidence that he can save others when they are in trouble.

“That’s the core of it,” Evan said. “Obviously, we don’t ever want anybody to get in trouble on the seas”—particularly the rough seas of Alaska—“but they do. And I’m happy I have the skills and training to save them.” Spoken like a true, humble hero, which this young man is.

We are also glad you have the skills and training to save others, Evan, and we want to thank you.

Petty Officer Grills. *Semper Paratus*. Thanks for all you are doing. Thanks for your courage, your example, your inspiration, and thank you for being our Alaskan of the week.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Ohio.

TRIBUTE TO LAURA DOVE

Mr. PORTMAN. Mr. President, I would like to start this morning by talking about a friend of ours who has chosen to move on and leave the Senate and spend more time with her wonderful family. I certainly understand that because the job she has, which is Secretary for the Majority, is more than a full-time job; it is living, breathing, sleeping this place, and she does a great job at it.

Her name is Laura Dove. She has been doing this particular job for 7 years. Prior to that, she actually was here on three different occasions, as I understand it, working for the Senate. She grew up with it. Her dad was the Parliamentarian here for 36 years.

Laura is a consummate professional. I work with her a lot on legislation. She helps me to get things through the process here, which is not always easy, but as significant, she works very closely with her counterpart on the Democratic side of the aisle and figures out how to get stuff done, how to keep this place operating so that the world’s greatest deliberative body, as they call the U.S. Senate, can meet its great potential and expectation.

So, to Laura Dove, we are going to miss you. As much as we understand why you need some time with your family right now and your great, great kids, we are going to miss you a lot.

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

Mr. President, I am here on the floor today to talk about how this strong American economy has led to historic workforce needs and how, if we do the right things to respond to that problem, it can become an opportunity—an opportunity to bring Americans off the

sidelines, who for too long have not been in the workforce or have been underemployed, to bring them back in to work.

It gives us the potential to do two things. One is to strengthen the economy. It is already strong, but it would be even stronger if we could fill this gap. By the way, if we don't fill this gap, if we don't provide the workforce, the economy will weaken. Second, it is to help millions of Americans who are not working, on the sidelines, or who are underemployed to find meaningful employment with good pay and good benefits.

Pro-growth Federal tax policies, regulatory policies, and other policies over the past few years have worked. Some of us have talked about the need to reform the Tax Code and make it work better. A trillion dollars has been invested in the U.S. economy since tax reform. As an example, we have seen unemployment at low levels—3.6 percent unemployment today, which is just about a 50-year low in terms of unemployment.

The Congressional Budget Office has told us through recent data that we have grown at a steady 2.3 percent rate in the past year. That is good. This unemployment number is important, but also important is that we are seeing wage growth. In fact, we have now had 18 straight months of wage growth of over 3 percent. It is the first time we have had this in at least a decade. That is very important because you think about really, for the past decade, what we have had is flat wages or even declining wages relative to inflation. That is certainly true in my home State of Ohio. It has been about a decade and a half since we have seen any real wage growth. Now we have this steady wage growth.

In fact, among blue-collar workers—what the Labor Department says—non-supervisory employees have seen the highest percentage increase in wage growth. For blue-collar workers, there has been a 6.6-percent wage growth over the past 2 years. By the way, that is about \$1.50 an hour on average.

It is a big deal, and it is very important because that was one of the great objectives we had in tax reform and tax cuts, was to ensure that we get the economy moving and give people the chance to earn more, to be able to have a feeling that if they worked hard and played by the rules, they could get ahead. We are seeing that. That is great news for the American people and great news for the folks I represent in Ohio who are finally benefiting from higher wages.

At the same time, I am hearing from small business owners all over the State of Ohio—in fact, businesses at every level—that although they are able to move forward and add jobs, they are looking for workers, and that workforce is their biggest single challenge.

We have now had 22 straight months of more jobs being offered than there

are workers looking for work—22 months, almost 2 years of that. So there are a lot of openings out there.

One thing that is interesting is that even though the economy is strong and we have unemployment at about 50-year lows, there still are people on the sidelines who aren't coming in to work, as they would normally. Economists call this a low labor force participation rate. What that means is, even though we have a strong economy and lots of jobs out there, there are still millions of Americans who are on the sidelines. It is estimated that there are about 8 million working-age men—this would be between the ages of 25 and 55—who are not looking for work today.

This means the unemployment number which I mentioned earlier, at 3.6 percent, which is a very low number—almost a 50-year low—is not the real number. The real number is actually higher than that if you assume a normal labor force participation rate. In other words, if you had some of these people who are out of work—I mentioned the 8 million men—coming into the workforce, the unemployment rate would be higher. In fact, if you go back to what the normal labor force participation rate would be just before the last great recession, the unemployment rate today would be about 7.6 percent, so about double what it actually is. That is an opportunity. That is an opportunity.

Now, why aren't these folks working? Well, there are a number of reasons for that. Let's be honest. We don't really know. We have done a lot of analysis of it in our own office trying to figure it out, and part of it is the opioid crisis, I am convinced.

I have come to the floor 60 times in the last few years to talk about the opioid crisis. We are making progress on that now. That is good. But when surveys are done by the Department of Labor or by the Brookings Institute, they show that a substantial number, as many as 45 to 50 percent of people they survey, say they are taking pain medication on a daily basis who are out of work altogether. So those, roughly, 8 million men, for example, in one study, 47 percent say they are taking pain medication on a daily basis. Two-thirds have acknowledged it is prescription pain medication. This goes to the issue of opioids—opioid prescription drugs, heroin, fentanyl, and so on. When people are addicted, often it is impossible for them to get their act together to be engaged in work on a regular basis. So the opioid crisis definitely affects this.

Another one, of course, is a lot of people are in our jails and prisons. We have a record number of people in prison. A lot of people are now getting out. The idea of the First Step Act and the Second Chance Act, which is legislation that is actually helping to get people back to work, is important, but, frankly, if you have a felony record, it is tough to get a job. That is why we often see these people are on the sidelines.

Another issue that I think needs to be looked at is this skills gap. This is a big part of what is going on right now. There are jobs out there, but they require a certain level of skill. So it is great that we have low unemployment. It is great we have all these openings right now, but we just don't have enough skilled workers to fill those jobs that keep growing.

I visited dozens of factories and businesses over the past year, and I keep hearing: We have this job for a welder, and we can't find any welders. There are plenty of people looking for work out there, on the sidelines looking for work, but there are no welders. There is one company in Ohio that told me they can hire up to 100 welders. It is a big manufacturing company. In Ohio and across the country, there are lots of these job openings for machinists, medical technicians in hospitals, and there are a lot of techs who are wanted right now—computer programmers, people who know how to code. Coding is really important right now, particularly as you go into medical electronic records, as an example.

If you look on ohiomeansjobs.com this morning—and that is a website that is up there showing what jobs are available in Ohio—there are 187,000 jobs this morning being offered in Ohio. When you look at what those jobs are, you will see a lot of them require these skills we are talking about. They don't require necessarily a college degree, by the way. I am talking about technical skills. I mentioned techs and welders. I didn't mention truckdrivers, but that is one area where we need workers in Ohio. We are desperate for people who have the skills to be able to drive a truck. That requires getting a commercial truck driver's license, a CDL. These jobs are there, but they do require some level of skills training after high school.

I think that skills gap, if it can be closed, would make a huge difference right now for our economy. Obviously, we need these jobs, and if the workforce isn't there, these businesses are going to move. They are going to move from Ohio, not just to Indiana but to India because that is where the jobs are going to be if we don't provide this level of skills training.

Secondly, it is just a great opportunity for these individuals. Some are young people coming up, some are people midcareer. Getting skills training is so critical. Post-high school certificates are what we really need.

Deloitte and the Manufacturing Institute have highlighted this with a survey they do regularly. They say there are roughly 360,000 unfilled manufacturing jobs across the United States right now. They say it is going to get worse. They say the skills gap may lead to an additional 2.4 million manufacturing jobs unfilled over the next 10 years with a negative economic impact of \$2.5 trillion. This is a big deal for our economy.

The basic training for the kind of jobs I am talking about is called career

and technical education, CTE. For those who are a little older, you might think of a vocational school. CTE is so impressive today. It is not your old vocational school, it is high-tech, using much better equipment. The schools that are taking it seriously are bringing in excellent teachers from the outside, from industry, to understand what is needed in the real world. CTE is a great opportunity for so many young people.

A few months ago, I toured the Vantage Career Center in Van Wert, OH. I go to a lot of career centers. I love to go. I am very inspired when I go. In Van Wert, they have juniors and seniors from more than a dozen school districts coming into one CTE center. They are studying things such as automotive technology, welding, nursing assistant training, carpentry, and truckdriving. They are finding when these students get out, they can typically get a job. Some are going on to further skills training. Some are going on to community college, some are going on to 4-year institutions, but for young people in high school, look at CTE. It makes so much sense.

I cofounded and co-chair what is called the Senate CTE Caucus. When I first got here in 2011, I started this with Senator TIM KAINE of Virginia. We started off having 3 of us in the caucus, and now there are 29 people in the caucus. Why? My colleagues go home, and they are hearing the same thing I am hearing, which is that we need to close the skills gap. Companies are looking for people, and it is a great opportunity for people who are on the outside to get into the inside to get a job with good pay and benefits.

Our job is to increase awareness of these skills programs as an education option. Our job is to get students who are more interested in skills training into these jobs. This month of February is Career and Technical Education Month. We are putting together a resolution. We have 57 Senators who signed on to the resolution so far, and if you haven't signed on, let us know. It is an opportunity to just raise visibility about what is working well in so many of our States and the amazing opportunities out there for our young people.

We passed some good legislation to help. In 2018, we passed the Educating Tomorrow's Workforce Act, which is working to improve the quality of CTE education programs, making sure we are using equipment and the standards of today's industry to make these programs even more effective.

But skills training goes well beyond just these great high school programs. Industry-recognized, certificate-granting technical workforce training programs post-high school are another key to close the skills gap. Think of some of the workforce training programs you have probably heard about in your community that are being offered by your community college or may be offered by a local technical school. They

give people a certificate they can then take to get a job that is industry recognized. For these kinds of post-high school training programs, I think the big opportunity comes in improving access because programs are expensive and a lot of young people can't afford them. A lot of midcareer people can't afford them.

One thing we can do immediately is say: Let's expand Pell grants to include these kinds of programs. You can get a Pell grant if you want to go to a community college or go to a 4-year college or university. For some people, that is the right track, but, frankly, for a lot of people, they are looking to get these technical skills and get a certificate and get a job. There is no reason they shouldn't get the same help that the government is providing someone who wants to go to a 4-year college or university for these programs to provide the skills that are so desperately needed. In fact, I would say we ought to focus on that more. We ought to change our mindset and say: Let's not just focus on college, as important as it is—and it is the right track for some students—but let's put an equal emphasis on skills training.

We have legislation that is very simple. It says that for low-income families, where the students are eligible for Pell for college or university, let's make them eligible for one of these skills training programs that are less than 15 weeks. It has to be a high-quality program and provide this industry-recognized certificate.

Our legislation is called the JOBS Act. It makes so much sense. It is bipartisan and bicameral and we should get it done. By the way, for those students who go through a technical training program and get that certificate and end up getting a job, a lot of them do go to college, but guess who pays for it? Typically, it is the company who pays for it. So they don't end up having this big debt or burden that so many students have.

Student debt in Ohio is about \$27,000 per student; whereas, if you go to one of these programs and end up getting an associate's degree or bachelor's degree or master's degree, typically you aren't paying anything because your employer is going to pay for you to get that additional training.

My hope is that we can move this legislation forward quickly. It is something I hear from everyone back in Ohio. Over the past few weeks, we held roundtables on workforce at manufacturing businesses such as Stanley Electric in Madison County and Fecon, Inc., in Warren County, and we talked about this issue with businessowners, with community colleges, with workers who are actually on the job, and all these groups agree the JOBS Act is needed and needed badly.

What is more, we know that a lot of businessowners who are getting engaged in this are willing to help these skills training programs to be more effective and to provide the skills training that actually works for them.

The JOBS Act has now been endorsed by the National Skills Coalition, the Association for Career and Technical Education, the Business Roundtable, and other groups. It is the No. 1 priority, we are told, of the Association of Community Colleges and the American Association of Community Colleges. We heard the same thing from the Ohio Association of Community Colleges when I met with them earlier this month.

I must state that I am also very pleased that the JOBS Act is included in the President's budget this year, as it was last year. I applaud President Trump and his administration for promoting this and on the work they are doing in training, internships, apprenticeships, and the JOBS Act, to provide this funding to encourage more Americans to get the skills training needed for them to have a better future. It is the best proposal out there, I believe, to help fill the skills gap right away.

There are some alternative proposals out there that limit the kind of programs that would be eligible for this by requiring them to be a certain number of hours. Our community colleges in Ohio tell me that none of their short-term training programs would qualify for some of these alternatives that people are talking about. For programs like welding, precision machining, and electrical trades, we need to get the funding into the short-term training programs now.

As I said earlier, this is CTE Month, Career Technical Education Month, so it is a good time to talk about all forms of technical education. If we make expanding these technical skills programs a priority, if we enact the JOBS Act that I have been talking about today, we are going to address the No. 1 issue we hear from our employers, and we are going to help millions of Americans have a better opportunity.

There is momentum in Ohio right now. Businesses are expanding and seeking skilled workers, but, again, the skills gap is still an impediment. We need to seize this opportunity, keep our economy moving in a positive direction, and help Ohioans develop the skills to grow in the career of their choice and fulfill their potential in life.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oklahoma.

Mr. INHOFE. Mr. President, first, let me comment that the Senator from Ohio is right on target. I know that when we did the authorization bills—we actually have language now that we put in to try to encourage people while they are still in high school to find out what they want to do with their lives.

One of the problems we have right now is, we have a great economy—the best economy we have had in my lifetime—but the bad side of that is, there is a lot of competition out there, and we want to make sure that people are directed into areas where they really can enjoy life and where the market

will work in their favor. We are very much concerned about that with the two bills we have done so far that has new language in there to encourage people to use pilot programs in high school to know what direction they want to go with their lives.

ABORTION

Mr. President, this week, we voted on two very important bills—the Pain-Capable Unborn Child Protection Act and the Born-Alive Abortion Survivors Protection Act. Unfortunately, my colleagues on the Democratic side voted to block these bills, but I would like to thank my colleagues, Senators GRAHAM and SASSE, for their leadership on these bills. I would like to thank Senator MCCONNELL for his efforts to bring these bills to the floor.

Now this short comment period I have here does have a happy ending, and I am actually anxious to share some things with people. When you look at these two bills—first, Senator SASSE's bill, the Born-Alive Abortion Survivors Protection Act—a bill I cosponsored in the past—it would ensure that a baby who survives an abortion would receive the same treatment as any other child who was naturally born at the same age. Now that is interesting. How many people out there realize that if someone goes to an abortion and they were not successful in killing the unborn baby, when they survive and they are out and they are breathing, they don't get the same treatment any other baby would get? People are not aware of that.

So that is what this bill is all about. That is just morally right, and I don't see why there would be any disagreement about it. The bill is not even about abortion. It is about infanticide.

It was 28 years ago that I came down here in this very Chamber to tell the story of Ana Rosa Rodriguez. This is what I said. Keep in mind this was 28 years ago. I said:

Mr. Chairman, there is a big misconception regarding abortion and the issue of women and their right to protect their bodies. It is not that right that I object to but the right that is given them to kill an unborn fetus—an unborn child.

I want to share with you a story that my colleague CHRIS SMITH told me some time ago on this very floor.

Ana Rosa Rodriguez is an abortion survivor. . . . At birth she was a healthy 3 pound baby girl, except for her injury; she was missing an arm. Ana survived a botched abortion.

Her mother attempted to get an abortion in her 32nd week of pregnancy when she was perfectly healthy—8 weeks past what New York State [at that time would] legally [allow]. In the unsuccessful abortion attempt, the baby's right arm was ripped off. However they failed to kill Ana Rosa. She lived. Pro-life supporters agree that nightmare situations like the Rodriguez case are probably not common, but abortion-related deaths and serious injuries occur more frequently than most people are aware.

It is amazing that we [and I am still quoting from 28 years ago] can pay so much attention to issues such as human rights abroad and can allow the violent destruction of over 26 million children here at home. We

are fortunate that Ana was not one of those children. She survived.

That was 1992. And today, we still don't have explicit Federal protections for babies who survive the brutal abortion process. As I said, this issue is not about abortion but about caring for a baby outside the womb. This baby is alive. It is a baby who is living in the real world.

The need for these protections has become even clearer as we see States like New York and Illinois allowing abortion for virtually any reason up to the point of birth and supporting infanticide by removing protections for an infant born alive after a failed abortion.

Just a few years ago, after that speech—and that would have been in 1997—I was on the floor with my good friend Rick Santorum to try to pass a partial-birth abortion ban and end the practice of late-term abortions. Fortunately, we won—won the battle against partial-birth abortions and finally ended that practice in 2003. That ban was upheld by the Supreme Court in 2007.

We have yet to pass legislation banning late-term abortion. Only seven countries allow abortion after 20 weeks, including the United States and North Korea. Now, that is horrific. The United States is supposed to be an example in regard to global human rights, yet we are on par with North Korea when it comes to protecting the unborn.

Senator GRAHAM's Pain-Capable Unborn Child Protection Act would help roll back the practice by prohibiting abortion after 20 weeks post-fertilization. The reason he is using this 20 weeks is there is one agreement that no one takes issue with, and that is, babies feel pain after that time. Most people say that babies feel pain greater than adults do. That is why that 20 weeks was used in the legislation.

This is another commonsense bill that should not divide us along partisan lines. A baby is a baby whether in or outside the womb, and each baby deserves a chance to live as an individual created in the image of God.

There is still much more we need to do to end the abortion-on-demand culture, but, thankfully, we have the most pro-life President we have had in history. This January, President Trump became the first sitting President to attend the annual March for Life. It is a rally in Washington. Hundreds of pro-life Oklahomans joined the President and tens of thousands of Americans in the march. I had a chance to meet many of these Oklahomans, many of them extremely young—as young as in high school. They were here marching. They asked me how to respond when the radical left attacks their views, and I told them to be kind but not to be afraid to voice their opinions. After all, they are right.

Under President Trump's leadership, we protected the Hyde amendment. We reinstated and expanded the Mexico

City policy and stripped abortion providers like Planned Parenthood from using title X funding for abortions. And not just that, but under this President, we have also confirmed 193 new judges. That is the largest number of judges in this particular timeframe of a new President. There are 193 new judges, the second highest total in history at this point in a Presidency.

These judges actually understand and uphold the Constitution. I haven't polled them myself, but I suspect the vast majority or maybe all of them are very sensitive to the sanctity of human life.

The need to stand up for our babies is as important today as it was when I made this speech in 1992 and in 1997. I am looking forward to building on the successes under this President.

We have something happening that is unusual now. We have a President who is very pro-life, and we also have a lot of new judges whom we suspect will be conservative, constitutional judges. We will overcome evil with good by upholding and affirming the dignity and inherent worth of every human life, and we will seize the opportunity that we have today.

With that, I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mrs. FISCHER). The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. BLUNT. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

BLACK HISTORY MONTH

Mr. BLUNT. Madam President, I want to talk today about Black History Month and, specifically, about Black History Month and baseball. This month marks the 100th anniversary of the founding of the first successful, organized league for professional African-American baseball players.

On February 13, 1920, a group of eight midwestern team owners got together at the Paseo YMCA in Kansas City, MO, to form the Negro National League. Before then, these African-American teams had a lot of great players. They barnstormed around the country. They played sort of wherever they could and whenever they could. But in 1920, these eight owners got together and decided that everybody would benefit with more structure in the league, and they established a league to see that we got that structure.

In the first 10 years of the league, the Kansas City Monarchs won the pennant four times. As the league thrived, other leagues were formed for African-American players in the South and in the East. Over the years, some of the greatest players in baseball played in the Negro leagues. Jackie Robinson, Satchel Paige, and Kansas City's own Buck O'Neil played there. There were many others we would recognize who