

My State director served on the ground with him in Iraq during this time and attests to his solid leadership, having seen him operate during the most challenging, life-and-death conditions. She called him "the best in a unit of the bests," which is a testament to his leadership in the most difficult of conditions.

After his combat deployments to Iraq, he was promoted to sergeant major in 2008 and after completion of the U.S. Army Sergeants Major Academy was assigned as the 8th Army Operations and Protection Sergeant Major in Yongsan, Korea.

Command Sergeant Major Cantrell was then competitively selected to serve as the battalion command sergeant major of 4th Battalion, 3rd Infantry Regiment at Fort Myer and in 2012 was hand-selected as the brigade command sergeant major of the 3rd Infantry Regiment, "The Old Guard." This hallowed unit is America's oldest Active Duty infantry unit where only the best are selected to serve. The Old Guard is the official ceremonial unit of the Army, providing a guard at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier and performing countless commemorations at Arlington National Cemetery, amongst other missions. Phillip's service at The Old Guard is of the highest caliber and reflects great credit upon his patriotism and abilities.

After serving as the most senior enlisted member of The Old Guard, Phillip was again competitively selected as an Army congressional fellow, an honor awarded to very few highly competitive servicemembers. That is where I really got the chance to know Phillip and see him in action when he served as a member of my staff for a year.

I have come to know Command Sergeant Major Cantrell well throughout the years as a valuable part of my team as an Army congressional fellow and can attest to his strength of character and profound leadership. It is a privilege to recognize him for his service to our State and Nation.

Following the year in my office, he was a congressional legislative liaison in the Army Senate Liaison Division, traveling around the world with congressional delegations.

Command Sergeant Major Cantrell holds a master's degree in legislative affairs from George Washington University and a bachelor's in human resource management from American Military University.

Because of Phillip's career and his unique leadership talents, it is my greatest honor to recognize his service. When visitors come to West Virginia, I jump at the chance to tell them we have fought in more wars, shed more blood, and lost more lives for the cause of freedom than most any State. We have always done the heavy lifting and never complained. We have mined the coal and forged the steel that built the guns, ships, and factories that have protected and continue to protect our country to this day.

I am so deeply proud of what West Virginians have accomplished and what they will continue to accomplish to protect the freedoms we hold dear. Command Sergeant Major Cantrell is a part of this legacy of excellence and an inspiration to all who will follow in his footsteps. I want to wish Phillip, his wife Sherry who has been with him every step of the way, along with his family and many friends, a heartfelt congratulations and warm wishes for future health and happiness.●

REMEMBERING MARK ALLEN GOUZD

● Mr. MANCHIN. Mr. President I rise today to honor the life of a proud West Virginian and a devoted husband, father, and grandfather, my cousin, Mark Allen Gouzd.

Put simply, Mark embodied what it means to be a West Virginian, and the legacy he has left is such an important part of our heritage. There is no greater accomplishment than being in a position to give back to your community, and his work in mine safety and rescue truly benefited our home State in a profound way that undoubtedly saved countless lives.

After graduating from Mannington High School and later Fairmont State College, Mark began his career in land surveying and eventually began working with Federal Number 2 Mines. As an instructor for the Mine Rescue Program, Mark diligently prepared miners for the rigors of working underground. The teams he trained always went on to perform well in local, State, and even national competitions. For the last few years, Mark worked as an extension agent for West Virginia University as the manager of mine rescue and emergency response training at WVU's Doll's Run facility. He also served as the WVU Collegiate Mine Rescue Team trainer.

Having experienced a coal mining tragedy within our own family, Mark's work was especially admirable and came from a place of caring deeply for the people who keep our lights on, as well as their families. West Virginia suffered an immeasurable loss when 78 brave coal miners were killed in the Farmington No. 9 mine disaster 52 years ago. My dear uncle John Gouzd, one of my neighbors, and several high school classmates were in the mine that day. For days, we all sat around the company store waiting for updates about the fate of our loved ones. I will never forget the look on my mother's face when she heard the news that her younger brother had died in the explosion. Our community and the entire State came together to mourn the lives we lost. For Mark and me, that disaster fueled our passion for promoting changes that would help keep our miners safe and also ensure their families were taken care of.

I always consider myself fortunate to have grown up around such strong, inspiring people. Marion County and our

home State as a whole is just special that way. I always respected and admired Mark for the strong, passionate leader he was. As a lifelong member of St. Patrick's Catholic Church in Mannington, Mark served as a lector, Eucharistic minister, and choir member. The importance of faith and family was at the forefront of everything he set out to do, and it carried him through any hardships he faced.

He loved to work with his hands and found solace in gardening and working on his farm, and I know I join our entire family in remembering Mark as the hard-working, generous soul he was. His legacy lives on through our many loving memories of him as well as through the brave coal miners who learned from his lifesaving training.

What is most important is that he lived a full life, surrounded by his loved ones. Gayle and I extend our condolences to his beloved wife of nearly 36 years, Lora; their sons, Zachary and his wife Kelly, and Jeremy and his wife Allie; and his grandson Oliver; as well as his parents Joe and Carole; his sisters, Christina and her husband Jack, and Cynthia and her husband Steve; his brother-in-law Remy Petrucci; and his mother-in-law and father-in-law, Leonard and Judy Myers; in addition to his numerous nieces and nephews. Again, we extend our most sincere condolences from our family to theirs for our shared loss of this remarkable person. The unwavering love he had for our family, friends, and our home State will live on forever in the hearts of all who had the privilege of knowing him.●

REMEMBERING CASSIE JOHNSON

● Mr. MANCHIN. Mr. President, I rise today to honor the life and legacy of one of West Virginia's finest. Patrolwoman Cassie Johnson of the Charleston Police Department represented the very best of who we are as a statewide community, and she was taken from us far too soon on December 3, 2020, at the age of 28. Cassie was the daughter of an ironworker; she shared her mother's steely resolve and iron constitution.

Being a police officer in the city she loved and grew up in was a dream come true for Cassie. She was sworn in by Mayor Amy Goodwin in January of 2019 and had previously worked as a city humane officer. Cassie was born and raised in our State's capital. She could have gone anywhere, and she chose to stay and protect and serve the community that made her who she was.

She was truly a beautiful person in every way. Growing up, Cassie was an athlete and particularly loved softball. She would one day find that the Little League field she played on as a child was on her beat, and so she watched over it with great care so the current generation of children could play in safety. One of the first things she did when she was assigned to the field was to clean up the drug paraphernalia to make it a safe place for kids. Because

of her efforts, children and their families have been able to enjoy the field as a clean, safe, fun place to play.

Cassie was an animal lover and dedicated her life to rescuing pets who had been cast aside, even taking an animal behavior class in Tennessee so she could better understand the language of dogs. Cassie's beloved dog, Emma, was a chocolate lab who passed away just a few months ago. Cassie grieved deeply for Emma because she had a special connection with her. Years ago, when Cassie was in high school, Emma had nine chocolate lab pups—in Cassie's bedroom. Her mom tells the story of taking the runt of the litter with her to pick Cassie up at school. When they got home, there were chocolate lab pups everywhere. That was just one of the many adventures Cassie had with Emma. No doubt, they are reunited again.

Cassie was a music lover, most likely because her mother sang her to sleep as a child. She was surrounded by instruments and music throughout her life. She loved to make the world beautiful, and that is also why she enjoyed decorating for the holidays. The weekend before she passed, she decorated her mother's house for Christmas, alongside her dear sister, Chelsea. One of the last actions she took the day of her passing was to wipe the snow from those holiday decorations because she always looked out for her mother any way she could.

Most importantly, Cassie was a genuinely good person and lived her whole life with West Virginia values. She worked hard and bought her own home at the age of 25. She was beloved in the community and in her profession, as evidenced in the tremendous outpouring of grief, support, and fellowship that followed her tragic passing. Her mother describes her as respectful and well-mannered throughout her whole life. Cassie will be deeply missed not only because of who she was but because we are all so keenly aware of and sorrowful for what might have been.

No one can ever take away what Cassie represented to the Charleston community and the entire Mountain State. Every one of our female leaders in West Virginia is the epitome of strength and advancement in their fields and serve as inspiring role models for the next generation, and that is due in great part to the women who broke ground in generations past. Because of their accomplishments, more young women like Cassie have, and will, blaze their own trails and continue to make our State and entire Nation proud. I have such tremendous respect for our police officers and all of our first responders. Cassie's compassion, courage, and selflessness will live on through the memories of those who knew and loved her, as well as through the countless lives she touched and inspired every day. She leaves us having made a profound impact in the community she loved as well as in the lives of those around her.

I had the tremendous and humbling honor of visiting with Cassie's family at her bedside in her final hours. It is clear to me that Cassie came from strong roots and that her life was filled with joy and love. She was a beloved daughter, sister, and a loyal friend, who adored her three dogs and all animals. True to her character, Cassie was an organ donor, and her final act of selflessness has given someone else a chance at life.

The Charleston Police Department has retired Cassie's unit number, 146. I know I join the entire Mountain State in mourning our shared loss of this bright, generous, vibrant spirit. Gayle and I extend our deepest condolences to Cassie's mother Sheryl, her sister Chelsea, her brother Terry, and all her family and friends, her colleagues with the Charleston Police Department, as well as the city of Charleston, and will forever keep them in our prayers.●

REMEMBERING DR. RICHARD HOWARD

● Mr. MANCHIN. Mr. President, I rise today to honor a proud West Virginian, noble veteran, a beloved son, brother, uncle, godfather, great-uncle, and a dear friend to all who had the pleasure of knowing him. It is a privilege to recognize the life and legacy of a very dear friend to myself and Gayle, Dr. Richard Howard, for his many years of dedicated service to the city of Charleston and beyond.

Born and raised in Charleston, WV, Richard attended West Virginia University, where he achieved many distinctions as a member of the National Blue Key, Helvetia, Sphinx and president of the freshman class in 1960. He received early acceptance into the West Virginia University School of Dentistry, earning his doctor of dental surgery degree in 1967. Put simply, when Richard put his mind to something, there was no stopping him from doing it at 100 percent.

That mentality worked in his favor as he joined the U.S. Air Force as a captain, stationed during the Vietnam era at Dover Air Force Base. Following his honorable discharge, Richard returned to Charleston to start his long-tenured career in dentistry. After a year as a partner with a local dental office, Richard set up his own practice as Howard Family Dentistry, later known as a joint venture with his brother as Howard and Howard Family Dentistry.

There is a lot to be said of someone who bravely serves our Nation, then returns home to continue giving back to the community that made them who they are. When visitors come to West Virginia, I jump at the chance to tell them we have fought in more wars, shed more blood, and lost more lives for the cause of freedom than most any State. We have always done the heavy lifting and never complained. We have mined the coal and forged the steel that built the guns, ships, and factories

that have protected and continue to protect our country to this day. I am so deeply proud of what West Virginians have accomplished and what they will continue to accomplish to protect the freedoms we hold dear. That is Richard's legacy, and his courage, loyalty, and humility will never be forgotten.

Richard was deeply involved in the community through the Kanawha Valley Dental Association, the West Virginia Dental Association, the American Dental Association, and the Academy of General Dentists, the International College of Dentists, and was founder and twice-serving president of the Virginia Street Dental Study Club. He was a member of the Beni Kedem Shrine, the Legion of Honor, Shrine Jesters, a 32 degree Mason, the Veterans of Foreign Wars, the Charleston Symphony, the Charleston Community Music Association, and the West Virginia University Woodburn Circle of Honor. Richard was a major supporter of his church, St. George Orthodox Cathedral, of which he was knight in the Order of St. Ignatius of Antioch.

Richard had such a zest for life and was a true renaissance man in every sense of the word. Each challenge he took on, he conquered, and he did so with unparalleled generosity, humility, and leadership. When his father passed away, Richard truly stepped up as the family patriarch. He adored his siblings and his entire family, always willing to offer advice. He would be honest with you if you were wrong, but his judgment was always fair. His bright smile and vibrant personality made any occasion even more special. His accomplishments are endless and he was an inspiration to all. He is dearly missed.

Put simply, Richard represented the very best of West Virginia, which is saying quite a lot. In the Mountain State, if you are hungry you will be fed. If you are lost, someone will not only give you directions but will offer to drive you to your destination. That is just who we are, and that is who Richard was. We have lost a shining star in our home State's capital, but his impact on the lives of his patients and his passion for this special community will last forever. It was an honor to have known him and to call him my friend.

What is most important is that Richard lived a full and accomplished life, surrounded by dear friends and family. It is my hope that his loved ones are able to find peace, strength, and support in one another. I extend my condolences to his brother Dr. Edward E. Howard; sisters Jolene Howard, Janet M. Howard, Margaret Howard Teeter (Andrew), and Sabrina Howard Stump (James); nephew, Dr. Matthew D. Stump; and nieces Dr. Jacqueline H. Stump, Elizabeth Stevens Bloch (Tom), and great nephew Thomas M. Bloch III. Gayle and I, from our family to yours, extend to you our most sincere condolences for our shared loss of this wonderful person. The unwavering love