

but has a friend who went through boot camp with Hammond.

Now comes the funeral. We'll all meet—his sister from Texas, his brother from Detroit, the comrade-in-arms from Indiana, the teacher from Fort Worth, the woman and boot camp pal from Michigan, the journalist from Gloucester County.

Maybe then I'll find a clue to this incredible mystery, to the charisma of this remarkable hero who died never knowing how much he'd affect lives of family, friends and complete strangers.

TRIBUTE TO DR. TYREE WEIDER

HON. HOWARD L. BERMAN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 22, 2004

Mr. BERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Dr. Tyree Weider who is celebrating her 10th anniversary as President of Los Angeles Valley College. She is a remarkable woman whose accomplishments are extraordinary.

Dr. Weider was raised in South Central Los Angeles. She attended local public schools and began her career path as a student at Compton Community College. She completed her Bachelor's degree in sociology at California State University Northridge and earned a Master's degree in Educational Psychology. A few years later, she received her Doctorate degree in Higher Education Administration from the University of California Los Angeles.

Early in her career, Dr. Weider worked as an Employment Counselor for the State Employment Service in Compton, South Central Los Angeles, and Pacoima. She also worked as a therapist in adult outpatient mental health. She then moved to Los Angeles Mission College to serve as Dean of Student Affairs and was later appointed Dean of Academic Affairs. She was then selected as the Director of Educational Programs for the Los Angeles Community College District. In 1989, she began working at Los Angeles Valley College as the Vice President of Academic Affairs. In 1995, Dr. Weider became the President of the College.

Since becoming President, Dr. Weider has taken significant steps to revitalize the campus to benefit students and the community at large. Under her guidance, the college has begun developing plans for the construction of five new educational buildings and major renovations to several campus facilities. Dr. Weider has also forged innovative partnerships with various businesses and organizations in the community to provide students an opportunity to perform community outreach and become involved in public service.

Over the years, Dr. Weider has proven to be a tireless leader for numerous community-based agencies and organizations. For example, she is currently a member of the California Community College CEO Board of Directors and a member of the advisory committee of the Auto Club of Southern California. She has also served on the Board of Directors for Northridge Hospital Medical Center, Universal City Tomorrow, the Economic Alliance of the San Fernando Valley, Catholic Healthcare West and Temple Ahavat Shalom.

Dr. Weider's hard work and leadership deserves acknowledgement. Recently she re-

ceived the 2004 Pioneer Women Award. In March 2002, she was recognized as one of the most outstanding residents in the San Fernando Valley. In 1998, the Speaker of the Assembly bestowed upon her the San Fernando Valley's Woman of the Year Award. Her achievements are legion and recognition is well deserved.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring and congratulating Dr. Weider for all of her wonderful accomplishments and her unyielding commitment to education and public service.

COMMEMORATION OF THE 89TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE ARMENIAN GENOCIDE

HON. SANDER M. LEVIN

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 22, 2004

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commemorate the 89th anniversary of one of history's most terrible tragedies, the Armenian Genocide.

On April 24, 1915, 300 Armenian leaders, intellectuals and professionals were rounded up in Constantinople, deported and killed, under orders from the Young Turk government. This was the beginning of a campaign of terror resulting in the deaths of 1.5 million Armenians and the deportation of more than 500,000.

The government of the Ottoman Empire justified this policy by claiming it was necessary to suppress revolts being launched by Armenians as a consequence of the ongoing military operations of World War I. This assertion was patently denied by survivors and witnesses. United States Ambassador to the Ottoman Empire Henry Morgenthau reported at that time, "Deportation of and excesses against peaceful Armenians is increasing and from harrowing reports of eyewitnesses it appears that a campaign of race extermination is in progress under a pretext of reprisal against rebellion."

Not content with perpetrating this atrocity, the Young Turks denied a genocide had taken place. Generations have since been raised denying this tragedy. Such denials are refuted by the archival documents and first-hand accounts found in such recent scholarly works as Peter Balakian's *The Burning Tigris* and Samantha Power's *A Problem From Hell*. Director Atom Egoyan presented the horror of the siege of Van in his film *Ararat*, which was based, in part, on the memoirs of Clarence Ussher, an American physician and missionary working in Turkey at the time.

In Detroit and its surrounding suburbs live one of the largest Armenian-American communities in the United States, many of whom are the children and grandchildren of survivors or actual survivors themselves. This weekend, I will be attending a commemoration ceremony at St. John's Armenian Church in Southfield, Michigan, in which some of these individuals will be in attendance. To those who suggest that this ruthless genocide of a people and culture did not happen, I ask, what further testimony could the world possibly want?

Mr. Speaker, for myself and my constituents, I rise today to urge those who deny this genocide to accept it as fact. Only then can

we move forward and stop these atrocities from repeating themselves over and over again.

H.R. 1799—THE GUARDSMEN AND RESERVISTS FINANCIAL RELIEF ACT OF 2003

HON. LORETTA SANCHEZ

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 22, 2004

Ms. SANCHEZ of California. I would like to express my strong support for H.R. 1799, the Guardsmen and Reservists Financial Relief Act of 2003. This bill would allow penalty-free withdrawals from retirement plans during the period that a military reservist or national guardsman is called to active duty for an extended period.

It is now more important than ever to work to mitigate the financial hardship we are placing on our reservists. At the outset of Operation Iraqi Freedom, both the White House and Department of Defense spoke of swiftly achieving victory in Iraq and bringing our servicemembers home within a few short months.

Despite the valorous efforts of our military personnel, it is clear that we are facing a very different picture. According to DOD, stabilizing and ultimately winning the peace in Iraq will require the mobilization of at least 100,000 to 150,000 reserve component personnel annually for the next several years. Reserve component personnel comprise nearly 40 percent of our current force, whereas they only comprised 2.0 percent of the initial force used in the invasion.

In light of the tragic upsurge in violence over the last month, 20,000 soldiers recently learned that their year-long deployments to Iraq had been extended for an additional 3 months. Nearly one-fourth are reservists.

It is apparent that our success in Iraq and Afghanistan, and in the broader war on terrorism, is dependent on the continued commitment of our reservists. And I don't think we are doing enough right now to ensure that they are being adequately compensated for their sacrifice.

According to GAO, nearly 41 percent of reservists are impacted by a pay discrepancy between his or her military and civilian salary. This is taking its toll. Not only are families racking up credit card debt, falling behind on bills, and losing businesses, but many are grappling with not re-enlisting when their service is up.

And the fear of financial hardship may be hurting recruiting efforts. In 2003, every active and reserve component achieved its recruiting goals except the Army National Guard, which fell short of its recruiting goal by 7,798 (12.6 percent).

We must begin to alleviate the financial burden on reservists, and I believe this bill is an important step in the right direction. However, it is not enough. Simply allowing our reservists to raid their retirement is not the answer.

We must provide better re-enlistment bonuses, we must secure the extension of TRICARE benefits, we must secure the continuation of hazardous duty pay and family separation allowance, and we must continue to push for pay raises for our military families.

In short, we must do everything in our power to compensate our guardsmen and reservists for their unprecedented sacrifice.

INTRODUCING CASSANDRA
TAMEZ'S ESSAY INTO THE CON-
GRESSIONAL RECORD

HON. RON PAUL

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 22, 2004

Mr. PAUL. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to enter into the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD the following essay by Miss Cassandra Tamez, a high school student who resides in my Congressional district. Miss Tamez's essay, entitled "My Commitment to America's Future," earned her a Voice of Democracy Scholarship award from the Veterans of Foreign Wars. I am very proud of Miss Tamez's efforts and I wish her well in her future endeavors.

"MY COMMITMENT TO AMERICA'S FUTURE"

(By Cassandra Tamez)

When I think of the word "commitment," an image of my school's athletic teams pops into my mind. I think of what the coaches used to say during their pep talks before a game, "There's no question about it, we're going to win tonight. I have seen the effort put in by this team . . . We have determination; we have dedication; and we have commitment." My teammates and I would get really "pumped up." We were ready to go out there and win. Looking back now, though, I do not think that as individuals we were truly committed, because commitment is not merely an effort for one game but for every practice and every game.

I think commitment is doing something, whether you have the ability to or not, and sticking with it. Commitment is following through every single day. Commitment is focusing solely on the one thing that you commit yourself to. Commitment is binding yourself to something. It is a pledge.

So with all this in mind I ask myself, what is my commitment to America's future? Should I recycle or join a beautification committee to preserve America? Should I donate money to foundations that help kids? Or perhaps I could pledge my time to hospitals or nursing homes to help the sick people of America . . .

Most people would probably think that my efforts in any of these would make little difference. After all, I am only one person, a speck of sand on a beach.

Recycling . . . Yes, collecting cans and glass bottles would be a Tremendous help. My mother recycles. I went with her one day to help her put all our old newspapers in the recycling bin. I started thinking. How many people are there in the world, billions? Out of all these people, how many recycle? I laughed to myself, probably not that many. My mom was definitely wasting her time.

Donating money . . . I am not rich. How could the amount of money that I give even help one person with cancer or in need of help? I have seen programs on T.V. that talk about saving the life of a child by just donating 88 cents a day. Then I began thinking about how much it costs for me to eat for just one day. I estimated that my food alone costs eight to fifteen dollars. How could a child survive on 88 cents a day? Is it possible?

Pledging my time . . . I used to do volunteer work in a nursing home. I would go there every day during the summer and try and help out however I could. However, I re-

member this one day that something really horrible happened. I was walking down the hall when all of a sudden this lady started screaming. I looked around, waiting for someone to come running and help her. I waited for about ten seconds, but no one came. I ran towards the nurses' station to see if anyone was on their way. Three of them were just standing there. I knew they could hear the woman screaming. . . . I wanted to tell them something, but was it my place? I returned to the woman screaming instead. As soon as I walked in the room she said, "Help me, Honey. Please, it's my leg. I need to move it." I moved forward to help her, but then I hesitated. What if her legs were not supposed to be moved? Could I hurt her if I moved them? By this time I was getting frantic. I told her I would go get someone to help and ran out. I took five steps out the door, and a nurse was standing there, calmly writing on a piece of paper. "Um, I think that lady needs some help", I told her. She looked up in annoyance and shouted to another nurse that she needed something for "The Screamer." I stood there for a moment in shock. They acted as if this woman were just a nuisance. At that moment I felt hatred; clearly that woman was in pain. I did not know what was wrong with her, and I could not help her. There was no point in my being there.

Taking all of my experiences into consideration, I think this is exactly how many other people think; they feel helpless and insignificant. They feel too small to make any real difference in the world. And then I came across this poem by Edward Everette Hale. He said,

I am only one,
But still I am one.
I cannot do everything
But still I can do something.
And because I cannot do everything
I will not refuse to do
The something that I can do.

I have to admit that this poem has inspired me. Because even though I am but one speck of sand on a beach, I know that I am a solid and firm speck, and that there are other specs like me that compose the sand. I am one of many who may carry the optimistic attitude of commitment to America. Once again, I think back to my efforts of recycling, donating money, and pledging my time, and realize that they were not futile efforts at all. When I recycled, I know it was probably only thirty newspapers out of trillions in the world, but what if I recycled once a month? That would be 360 newspapers a year for a lifetime. I might save a beautiful tree or even more. As for donating money, well 88 cents a day from me might not feed a child, but if only nine more people in my state donate 88 cents, then that child has a total of \$8.80, my estimate of money needed for a day. Now, as far as pledging my time goes, I do not think my time spent in the nursing home was a complete waste. I did help one patient who was in pain.

So once again, what is my commitment to America's future? My commitment is to "play to my strengths." My commitment is to do my best. Like the patriotic commercials on television say, "We, the children, are America's future," and every bit we can do helps.

TRIBUTE TO VIOLA PITTS

HON. MARTIN FROST

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 22, 2004

Mr. FROST. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commemorate the late Viola Pitts, an African

American leader who made a tremendous impact in the lives of many throughout the North Texas community.

Mrs. Viola Pitts, a native born Texan, spent the vast majority of her life in the heart of Como, a historically black neighborhood in west Fort Worth. Her vigorous efforts to strengthen the voter turn out amongst African Americans, earned her the title of "unofficial mayor of Como." Mrs. Pitts' determination, tenacity and honesty earned her the respect of many top elected public officials in North Texas.

Mrs. Pitts, who was never afraid to confront an issue, worked tirelessly to ensure that the Como community received proper funding for their community center, elementary school, and neighborhood streets. Her selfless contribution to the Como area were recognized and honored in 2000, when Tarrant County officials renamed the new medical clinic to JPS Health Center—Viola M. Pitts/Como.

Mrs. Viola Pitts was truly a civic minded individual who helped make the Fort Worth community a better place to live by simply being active and involved. Hopefully, through her memory we can all continue to draw on these same personal qualities that so many of us have come to respect and admire.

Mr. Speaker, I honor Mrs. Viola Pitts for her lifelong contributions and commitment to the residents of the Fort Worth community.

HONORING SELMA F. BARTLETT

HON. JON C. PORTER

OF NEVADA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 22, 2004

Mr. PORTER. Mr. Speaker, it is with great pleasure that I stand here today and honor an individual that has been dedicated to her community for over 50 years. Selma F. Bartlett has been a resident of Henderson Nevada since 1954, when she began working as a banker. In 1958 Selma became one of Nevada's first female bank officers, in which she served in many capacities.

Selma Bartlett has given of her time freely and without reserve to the many business and civic organizations surrounding her in Southern Nevada. She has helped Henderson, Nevada to become what it is today through her service and dedication to the people there. Through continually striving for the progress, success, and growth of Henderson through her support of educational needs within the community, she has been able to win many friends and the respect that only those like her can achieve. Her example will be a lasting one in which all will be able to look to for the future. Children will have the opportunity to attend a school named after Selma in which her example will be a lasting impression upon those that attend the school.

Mr. Speaker, I congratulate Selma Bartlett on her successes and on her dedication to her fellow neighbors and colleagues. I know that she will continue to give to those in her community and I sincerely hope that those around her will see her as an example and learn from her teachings.