

these who raise our aspirations, motivate our youth, and provide us with powerful national role models of integrity and spirit. We thank you for your commitment and honor your achievements.

IN RECOGNITION OF THE SHEPARD
ACCELERATED SCHOOL

HON. RICHARD A. GEPHARDT

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 17, 1997

Mr. GEPHARDT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to salute Shepard Accelerated School in my district for being named a national Blue Ribbon School recipient.

The Blue Ribbon Schools Program identifies and gives national recognition to a diverse group of public and private schools that are unusually effective in meeting local, State, and national goals and in educating all of their students. The program seeks to promote school improvement nationwide through the collaborative self-evaluation required of local school communities that participate. In addition, recognized schools serve as models for other schools and communities seeking to provide high quality education for all their students.

Shepard Accelerated School was one of only 264 schools across the United States recognized as a Blue Ribbon School. Now, you might think that sounds like a lot of schools. But think about this—there are about 76,000 public and private elementary and middle schools in America. That means that one out of every 288 elementary and middle schools in the entire United States has been named a Blue Ribbon School for 1997. And I'm pleased that Shepard Accelerated School right here in St. Louis, MO, is one of those schools.

To qualify for this award, I know Shepard went through rigorous reviews by some of the Nation's leading educators. The school impressed everybody and they deserve the highest praise for that. The innovative programs and supportive community Shepard has established truly demonstrate the importance of a positive learning environment.

Shepard Accelerated School has a shared purpose among faculty, students, and parents to improve the education of the 600 children who attend. I am proud of Shepard for being named a national Blue Ribbon School recipient. Ms. Savannah Young, all the teachers, and especially the students should be saluted for their dedication to high standards and excellence in teaching and learning.

Congratulations Shepard Accelerated School.

TRIBUTE TO MARGARET S.
BENEDIKT

HON. E. CLAY SHAW, JR.

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 17, 1997

Mr. SHAW. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to convey the sad message of the death of a great American, Margaret S. Benedikt.

Widowed in the 1950's with a dependent child, Peggy Benedikt submersed herself learning all there was to investment and con-

struction. Her daughter remembers awaking late at night to find her mother reading and was amazed at her mother's extraordinary ability to retain what she read. Peggy moved to south Florida in the 1960's and established what would become a very successful construction and development company. Knowledgeable in all areas of the construction business, she felt equally at home donning a hard hat on the building site or dressed for presentations in the sales office.

As her successes grew, Peggy Benedikt was generous with both her time and her money in supporting a wide variety of organizations in her adopted hometown, Fort Lauderdale, FL. She touched many in the community through her efforts with such diverse groups as Kids in Distress, the Opera Guild, the Humane Society, the American Cancer Association, and the Freedoms Foundation.

Margaret S. Benedikt loved Republican politics but she stands as a symbol for Democrats and Republicans alike. Through her actions, she taught all of us that we should stand tight for what we believe in. If there are politics in heaven, Peggy is already in the thick of it.

Margaret S. Benedikt was a great lady and a good friend. Peggy, we love you. We'll miss you.

TRIBUTE TO SPECIAL GRADUATES
OF NEW YORK'S 12TH CONGRES-
SIONAL DISTRICT

HON. NYDIA M. VELÁZQUEZ

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 17, 1997

Ms. VELÁZQUEZ. Mr. Speaker, with great pride I would like to congratulate some special graduates of the 12th Congressional District of New York. I am certain that this day marks the culmination of much hard work and many valiant efforts for these students; work and effort which have led and will lead them to continued success. They have overcome the obstacles of overcrowded and dilapidated classrooms, antiquated and insufficient instructional materials, the all too frequent distractions of random violence and pervasive drug activity, and, for some, having to adapt to a new language and new customs. But these students have persevered despite the odds. Their success is a tribute not only to their own strength, but also to the supportive parents and teachers who have encouraged them to achieve.

These students have learned that education is priceless. They know that education will provide them with the tools and opportunities to be successful in any endeavor they pursue. In many respects, this is the most important lesson they will carry with them for the rest of their lives.

In closing, I would like to say that youth in America must be encouraged to stay on course and complete their educations so they can pave the way for a better future. Let us not forget that their future is the future of this Nation. These successful graduates of the 12th Congressional District take the charge to lead our Nation very seriously as their commitment to their education has demonstrated. Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues in the U.S. House of Representatives to join me in congratulating the following graduates who have triumphed despite adversity and who have achieved outstanding academic standing.

Congratulations to the 1997 graduates of the 12th Congressional District:

Sherley Medina, John Denton and Geimy Colon—El Puente Academy for Peace and Justice High School.

Evelyn Reynoso and Carlos Segura—Eastern District High School.

Naisha Arthur and Ragon Atkhas—Bushwick High School.

Dawn Stokes and Alberto Sanchez—East New York High School.

Jetaime Toliver and Shykia Bell—Maxwell High School.

Dory Garcia and Kaleena Torres—Intermediate School 291.

Christina Rodriguez and Bartosz Bernatowicz—Charles O. Dewey Middle School.

Nina Soto—Middle School 88.

Delaila Catalino and Edwin Carrion—Public School 86.

LAVAR FOSTER AND SHALIEK
RIVERA: COMMUNITY HEROES

HON. EDOLPHUS TOWNS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 17, 1997

Mr. TOWNS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commend two incredibly brave youth, Lavar Foster and Shaliek Rivera, for their heroic efforts.

On May 5, 1997, these P.S. 346 sixth graders rescued a senior citizen from an attacker. Not only did they save her life, but their detailed descriptions ultimately led to the criminal's capture. What makes their accomplishments so remarkable is that they did not let their young age or small size prevent them from extending a helping hand to a fellow citizen. For their fearless efforts, they were also named "New Yorkers of the Week" by New York 1 News.

Lavar and Shaliek are shining beacons of hope for the future of our community. Citizens such as these are few and far between. They are truly role models for Brooklyn and the entire Nation.

Mr. Speaker, it is with great pride that I ask my colleagues to join me in saluting Lavar Foster and Shaliek Rivera for their outstanding contributions to the Brooklyn community.

TRIBUTE TO STEPHEN AND IRIS
GAINES

HON. BRAD SHERMAN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 17, 1997

Mr. SHERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Stephen and Iris Gaines for their contributions to the Chabad of the Conejo Adult Education Program. In the spirit of Jewish unity, the Chabad of the Conejo recognizes the Gaines family for their time and dedication.

Stephen and Irish were inspired by their children to not only join an adult education program but promote adult education throughout our community. After sending Brandon and Ryan to Chabad, the Gaines' realized that Chabad would also be useful in their own lives.