

THE 250TH ANNIVERSARY OF
KEENE, NEW HAMPSHIRE

• Mr. SUNUNU. Mr. President, I rise today to honor a truly great American community, the city of Keene, NH, which will celebrate its 250th Anniversary during a week of festivities beginning Tuesday, May 27 and culminating on Saturday, May 31, 2003.

On September 18, 1734, a group of eight individuals eager to expand the growing colonies settled on the outer edge of New Hampshire in an area that was then called Upper Ashuelot. In 1753, when the colony of New Hampshire granted a new township in the southwest section of the province, the Royal Governor, Benning Wentworth, named the town "Keene" out of gratitude and respect for his friend and business associate, Sir Benjamin Keene, a career diplomat and one time British Ambassador to the court of Spain.

Although agriculture was an important part of the region's early economy, Keene gained a reputation as an important glass producing center. In 1814, the New Hampshire Glass Factory was founded, producing mostly window glass for the New England region for nearly 40 years. Other glass manufacturers soon opened, making bottles and flasks that are now known as "Keene Glass," and which remains highly valued today.

With the arrival of the railroad in 1848, Keene's stature as an economic center grew. Rail lines between Boston and New York allowed Keene to thrive and by the end of the 1850s, Keene had seen the addition of some 100 buildings. During the 19th century, such industrial commodities as flannel, pottery, and furniture were being produced in Keene, and at the beginning of the 20th century, Keene even made automobiles.

As Keene's economic growth expanded, so to, did its population. At the beginning of the century, the population was about 1,650 people. By 1850, there were nearly 3,400 people in Keene and by 1870, that number expanded to almost 6,000. In 1874, the citizens of Keene passed a measure which established the city of Keene—9 years after the New Hampshire State legislature voted to allow Keene to become a city and after the citizens had twice voted down the idea.

Today, more than 125 years later, Keene is still a vibrant city, home to many diverse industries, well renowned institutions of higher learning, and an acclaimed performing arts community.

Each year, students from across the State and the Nation flock to southwest New Hampshire in order to expand their horizons at Keene State College, founded in 1909, and Antioch New England Graduate School. These and other quality institutions of higher learning throughout the region educate some of America's premier students.

Culturally, Keene thrives, boasting the Redfern Arts Center on Brickyard Pond at Keene State College as well as

the non-profit Colonial Theater on Main Street and numerous singers and musicians who perform at a number of other locations in Keene. The region's largest newspaper, the Keene Sentinel, is also the Nation's fifth oldest. Having been in publication since 1799, it continues to serve as a vital source of news and information for the people of Keene.

Surrounded by mountains, lakes, and forest, in terms of quality of life, Keene is a community that has it all. In fact, the National Trust for Historic Preservation recently named Keene one of America's Dozen Distinctive Destinations, which is no surprise since the Elm City is often times described as the "suburb without the big city next door." With its commitment to historic preservation, attractive architecture, and diversity of businesses, Keene epitomizes the quaint New England municipality it has grown to be.

I congratulate Keene, New Hampshire on its 250th anniversary, and I extend my best wishes to its more than 22,000 citizens in celebration of this splendid milestone. •

THE NEW HAMPSHIRE EXCELLENCE IN EDUCATION AWARDS

• Mr. SUNUNU. Mr. President, I rise today to congratulate this year's winners of the New Hampshire Excellence in Education Awards. The "ED"ies are awarded to those individuals, schools and educational programs that have made significant contributions to public education and have met the highest standards of excellence. Educators and schools are measured on criteria, including curriculum and instruction, teaching and learning process, student achievement, leadership and decision-making, community and parental involvement, and school climate. On June 7, 2003, 35 individuals and 5 schools will be recognized for their leadership and outstanding achievements in preparing New Hampshire students for success in the 21st century, and I believe I represent my State well in conveying our appreciation and respect for the professionals they are and the sacrifices and contributions they make every day in classrooms throughout the Granite State.

The "ED"ies are presented in various categories of excellence, such as art education, world languages, school nursing, counseling and technology. The specific criteria for the "ED"ies, which is developed by the board of directors for the New Hampshire Excellence in Education Awards, has been applied to elementary, middle, and secondary schools, along with teachers, administrators, and other education professionals performing at each of these levels, as well as higher education. Selection committees are charged with the responsibility of applying these standards and evaluating nominees, and consist of some of New Hampshire's finest educators and com-

munity leaders. The committees carefully review nominees, study school applications and conduct assessments through on-site visitations.

I have very fond memories of so many teachers that had a profound impact on my life. Their work that created a positive learning environment and provided me with the direction necessary to succeed, made an enormous difference in my growth as a person and as a public servant. They allowed me to appreciate the importance of a sound public education, as well as the need for individuals to make a contribution to their community. In my most important job—that of being a parent—I realize how delicate the task of educating can be, and understand more now than ever the vital resource our schools and teachers provide to the parents in the towns and cities of New Hampshire.

Similar to the classroom heroes I knew growing up in Salem, the group of educators chosen this year for the "ED"ies have demonstrated superior dedication and service to their students, schools and communities, and deserve this prestigious honor for the important roles they play in helping our children reach their goals and succeed in school. The teachers, principals, counselors, librarians, and other school leaders being commended this year have provided students with the tools they need to become productive and engaged citizens, and have been some of our State's most treasured role models—setting positive examples for the children that surround them, teaching personal responsibility and hard work, and shaping the character of young minds. For these achievements, our State and our country owe them a great deal of gratitude.

I am proud of the strides that the President and Congress have made in working to reform our Nation's public education system. Since first elected to Congress in 1996, I have made improving education a legislative priority of mine. However, I am cognizant of the fact that the men and women on the front lines of our classrooms tackle the toughest of challenges and enable our country to realize the promise of leaving no child behind. The State of New Hampshire's education system is a true model to be highlighted, and I am confident that the success we enjoy in our State is due in large measure to the contributions and leadership of the many educators and schools being recognized here today.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the list of the 2003 New Hampshire Excellence in Education Award winners be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

NH Art Educators Association—Award: Art Educator of the Year—Luci Prawdzik, Peter Woodbury School.

NH Association for Gifted Education—Award: Educator of the Gifted Award—Barbara DeVore, Reeds Ferry Elementary School, Merrimack.