

of thousands of children and adults of all ages. This multifaceted institution has flourished academically, by student enrollment, by improved facilities, and economically.

In one of his first acts as college president, Jack Burd created the State's very first weekend college in 1986, enabling thousands of returning adult students an opportunity to advance their education and their career potential at Brenau. Just about every college and university in Georgia now emulates this educational model. In 1993, under Dr. Burd's leadership, Brenau College became Brenau University to more accurately reflect the comprehensive nature of the institution. Now graduate programs serve educators and business leaders in management, accounting, and healthcare, continuing education programs engage retired adults, and traditional and non-traditional scheduling formats serve a local, regional, and worldwide student population. And to even further extend the university's outreach, Dr. Burd created the Online College in 2001. This unique institution now includes the Women's College, the Evening and Weekend College, the Online College and Brenau Academy.

Jack Burd's greatest accomplishment may be that he was able to preserve the 125-year-old heritage and legacy of Brenau's original mission, which is the Women's College. At one time there were two-hundred plus women's colleges across the United States. Today there are only sixty-eight. According to the Women's College Coalition, the decline is despite evidence that proves going to a women's college greatly increases the chances that a woman will become a leader, that she will become a scientist or elected official and that she will keep her sights high. Brenau women are leaders in their chosen professions and in their communities.

Under Jack Burd's leadership, the arts assumed center stage at Brenau. The Permanent Art Collection, now one of the fastest growing collections of any college in the United States, boasts more than 1,200 pieces with such names as Renoir and Lichtenstein. Nationally and internationally acclaimed artists exhibit regularly at Brenau with works seldom seen outside New York or Los Angeles. School children by the thousands come to view exhibits and experience hands-on workshops hosted by the art & design department. The performing arts have also flourished under Burd's direction. He negotiated one of the first ever collaborations in higher education between a public institution, Gainesville College, and a private institution, Brenau. The merger, called the Gainesville Theatre Alliance, has brought accolades and honors, regionally and nationally, to all involved.

During Jack Burd's tenure the campus, located in downtown Gainesville, Georgia, has enlarged to include a new library, a new business and communication arts building, performing arts center, fitness center, tennis center, several student houses and apartment buildings. There has been extensive renovation of buildings listed on the National Register of Historic Places—upgrading 19th century buildings for 21st century use. By preserving the university's heritage, Jack Burd brought stability to a neighborhood of Gainesville that is but two blocks from the center of town. Once a declining area with many structures in need of repair, Burd's endeavors and fund-raising increased property values and the

safety and security of the area, and revitalized what is now a vibrant, desirable area.

Spare time is hard to come by for a president of a busy college. But, Jack found time to lend his considerable talents for leadership and organizational planning to myriad community service groups such as Northeast Georgia Medical Center Advisory Board, First United Methodist Church, the Women's College Coalition, the Gainesville/Hall County Chamber of Commerce, Crawford W. Long Museum, Gainesville Symphony and the Georgia Association of Colleges.

In conclusion, to list all of the Brenau's accomplishments under Dr. Burd's leadership would be laborious and impossible. But a few notable ones that occurred over the past nineteen years include; increasing enrollment by more than 60 percent to 2,300 students; adding 7 graduate level degrees; renovating, constructing, and acquiring 19 campus buildings; obtaining national accreditation; and improving the university's financial situation dramatically from a meager endowment of \$2.5 million in 1985 to more than \$50 million today. There is no operational deficit and the university's economic contribution to the region is estimated to be \$38 million.

How can one exaggerate the importance of what this man has given to northeast Georgia? He leads a private college that manages its finances wisely, contributes to the economic welfare of all, returns highly qualified people to the workforce, and augments our quality of life with cultural events that feed the soul.

Thank you Dr. John S. Burd for all you have given the citizens of northeast Georgia. Congratulations on your well-deserved retirement.

RECOGNITION OF ASPHALT GREEN AND THREE OF ITS OUTSTANDING LEADERS, STEWART B. CLIFFORD, AL ZESIGER, AND BARRIE ZESIGER, ON THE EVENING OF THE BIG SWIM BENEFIT

**HON. CAROLYN B. MALONEY**

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, April 21, 2004*

Mrs. MALONEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize the achievements of Asphalt Green and its honorees, Stewart B. Clifford, Al Zesiger and Barrie Zesiger, on the evening of the Big Swim Benefit and Asphalt Green's 30th anniversary celebration. Asphalt Green is a wonderful nonprofit organization that offers a wide array of health and fitness facilities to New York City residents. Our community is truly fortunate to have such an enjoyable and necessary resource.

The Asphalt Green facility began in 1974 as one of the last city-owned open spaces on the Upper East Side of Manhattan. By 1976, the Asphalt Green campus included a one-and-a-half acre park, gardens and a wading pool, all of which were available for public use free of charge. Later that year, Stewart B. Clifford assisted the organization's successful efforts to persuade the City to designate the asphalt plant adjacent to the organization's park (Asphalt Green's namesake) as a New York City landmark and to convert the plant into a multi-use community center. In 1984, the former

plant was renamed the George and Annette Murphy Center, in honor of the organization's founder, Dr. George Murphy.

The next phase in Asphalt Green's development began when Dr. Murphy enlisted the help of two of this evening's honorees, Al and Barrie Zesiger, to add an Olympic-sized swimming pool to Asphalt Green's already extensive facilities. The pool, along with a full-service sports and fitness complex, opened in 1993. These facilities have been of tremendous benefit to New Yorkers—and not just on hot summer days. Indeed, water exercise classes at the pool are available year-round, and are particularly well-suited to the fitness needs of the elderly, who are susceptible to the joint and muscle stresses associated with dry-land exercise. In all, more than 42,000 New Yorkers use Asphalt Green's facilities each year.

This evening, Asphalt Green will hold its annual Big Swim benefit, which will raise funds for the organization's Waterproofing program, a joint venture with the New York City Public School District to teach underprivileged children how to swim. Swimming ability is strongly linked with both socio-economic status and race: only 14 percent of those with annual incomes under \$10,000 know how to swim, and the rate of drowning among African-Americans is significantly higher than that of other ethnic groups. The Waterproofing program is notable not only because it encourages a lifetime of fitness, but also because it helps to save lives.

The foregoing would not have been possible without Al and Barrie Zesiger's dedication to public service and financial support, and the leadership of Stewart B. Clifford, a member of Asphalt Green's Board for more than twenty years. All three of these great citizens of New York will be honored at this evening's benefit.

Mr. Speaker, I request that my colleagues join me in paying tribute to this fine organization and its honorees, Al and Barrie Zesiger and Stewart B. Clifford.

TRIBUTE TO FREDDY FENDER

**HON. SOLOMON P. ORTIZ**

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, April 21, 2004*

Mr. ORTIZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to an American patriot, cultural icon, and leader in our South Texas community: Freddy Fender, an accomplished artist whose appeal is ageless. Freddy proved his everlasting influence in 2002 when he won the Grammy for Best Latin Pop Album and again this year, as the Texas Folklife Resources celebrated 50 years of Freddy's music with a concert as part of its Folk Masters series on Saturday, April 10, 2004, at the Paramount Theatre in Austin, Texas.

A San Benito, Texas, native and legendary performer, Freddy was born Baldemar Huerta. He began his career as teenager recording popular English language songs in Spanish that found an audience in Mexico and Latin America in the 1950s. In the 1960's his career took off in the United States with the hit, "Wasted Days and Wasted Nights."

Those wild, early days eventually put him on more disciplined path. He went back to school and worked as a mechanic, but he continued singing.