

of service to the people of Solano County. Mr. Merrill began his employment with Solano County on February 22, 1984, as an entry level Deputy Probation Officer in the Probation Department, and has since held positions ranging from Probation Services Manager to Interim Chief of the Probation Department.

Mr. Merrill has provided valuable intensive services to many probationers. His effective management of the Repeat Offender Prevention Program Grant, the Targeted Truancy Grant, and the Fouts Springs Aftercare Grant are just a few examples of his responsible stewardship of public services.

Furthermore, Mr. Merrill demonstrated exemplary leadership, both as Chief Deputy Probation Officer and as Interim Chief of the Probation Department. Mr. Merrill developed and implemented a comprehensive Administrative Policy Manual for the Solano County Probation Department, and was instrumental in coordinating the development of the departments "Task and Standards" Manual for Adult and Juvenile divisions.

Clearly, Clifford has been an exceptional and loyal employee of the Solano County Probation Department and has distinguished himself by providing outstanding, professional service and leadership to Solano County.

Again, I am proud to honor Clifford J. Merrill for his twenty-one years of dedicated service to the citizens of Solano County. I thank Clifford for his career contributions to the Solano County Probation Department, and I wish him a well-deserved retirement in the community he has done so much to improve.

HONORING NANCY CROSS OF FOREST HILLS ELEMENTARY SCHOOL UPON HER RETIREMENT

HON. DANIEL LIPINSKI

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 28, 2005

Mr. LIPINSKI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of Ms. Nancy Cross in recognition for her commitment and dedication to the youth of School District 101 in Illinois. For over 30 years, Ms. Cross has devoted her time to students and families of the Third Congressional District. Now, as she prepares for retirement, we would like to thank her for her countless years of fine service.

For the last thirty-six years, Ms. Cross has spent her life educating the residents of Illinois School District 101, first at the John Laidlaw Elementary School, and for the past twenty-four years at Forest Hills Elementary School, both located in Western Springs. At Forest Hills, Ms. Cross not only serves in a teaching capacity for the fifth grade, but also as the Head Teacher, who is second in command. In this position, she has been willing to help her principal in any capacity, especially by running the school in the principal's absence.

However, Ms. Cross's main contribution has been to her students, helping them learn how to enjoy reading. A bibliophile herself, Ms. Cross has shown through her own dedication to the written word and the imaginative world of books, that reading can be not only productive but enjoyable and engaging. She is often found reading to her students, and this exercise has left an indelible mark on many of them who still remember those class times spent listening to Ms. Cross.

Because of Ms. Cross's undeniable love for books and her ability to shape the minds of her young students, she has been an outstanding teacher for over thirty years, expanding and encouraging all of her students to reach as far as they can. It is a certainty that our entire community will feel a loss left by the retirement of Ms. Cross.

The parents and children of School District 101 are fortunate to have had such an energetic and devoted teacher like Ms. Cross. Through her dedication and love of educating the young minds of this country, Ms. Cross has made a difference and should be recognized for her outstanding and selfless contributions to our nation's youth and their families, especially the students and families of Western Springs.

Today, I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring Ms. Nancy Cross as an outstanding educator who has had a distinguished career. She has done nothing less than an extraordinary job preparing America's future generations. We thank and congratulate her for an extraordinary career, and we wish her well in retirement.

HONORING THE ACCOMPLISHMENTS OF NICHOLAS SCOTT

HON. STEVE ISRAEL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 28, 2005

Mr. ISRAEL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the accomplishments of a man that embodies many core principles of our country: hard work, opportunity, selfless service, integrity and dedication. Nicholas Scott, now a middle school math teacher in the Brentwood School District, serves as a role model for the students in his classroom and the community as a whole.

Nicholas Scott was born to immigrant parents, his father having fled Cuba prior to the beginning of the Fidel Castro regime. At the age of eight his parents divorced and Nick moved with his mother to Deer Park, New York. Although the family had limited resources, Nick's mother instilled in him the values of hard work and perseverance, and she insisted that he attend college to seek the opportunities available in America.

Nick graduated high school in 1987 and lacking the resources to attend private college, he enrolled at Suffolk County Community College. For two years, Nick pursued his studies while still working four days a week. His persistence paid off, as he earned his Associate Degree in the Applied Sciences and was rewarded with an academic scholarship to Hofstra University, where he earned a Bachelor's Degree in Political Science. Nick's thirst for knowledge and devotion to self-improvement led him to Villanova University Law School, where he earned a Juris Doctorate degree. Nick was then admitted to the New York State Bar Association, becoming not only his family's first college graduate, but also its first lawyer.

Throughout his education, Nick sought out opportunities to give back to the community. While studying for the bar exam, Nick enlisted in the U.S. Army. Although he was eligible to enter as an officer, Nick chose to start at the bottom and work his way up, an experience

with which he was familiar. Nick quickly earned his Sergeant's stripes and soon after won a commission as an officer.

Nick left the active army to return to New York where he began legal practice. Once more, Nick chose others over himself. Rather than enter private practice, Nick went to serve the most vulnerable members of society as a lawyer for the Suffolk County Legal Aid Society.

After several years in practice, Nick decided that he wanted to further serve his community by teaching. He earned his teaching certificate and returned to Brentwood to teach middle school math.

Nick's service to our country has not ended in the classroom. Having joined the U.S. Army Reserve as a member of the Judge Advocate General Corps, Nick volunteered for duty in Iraq. In December of 2002, he was deployed along with the 101st Airborne Division to Kuwait and subsequently into Iraq, where he adjudicated local disputes, providing compensation to Iraqis that suffered property and other losses due to the war. Nick's dedication to improving the lives of newly freed Iraqi civilians earned him a Bronze Star and the title of Captain.

The day before his deployment to Iraq, Nick married fellow Brentwood teacher Nadine P. Kroner, and they are now the proud parents of a six-month old son, Ethan Hunter.

Nick Scott is an inspiration to me, to each student in the Brentwood school system and to our entire community. He is a living testament to the greatness of America, a land where opportunity matched with hard work can trump any hardship. But Nick Scott is a true role model because he has channeled his opportunity and hard work into a lifetime of service to others. I commend Nick for his dedication to service, for his remarkable accomplishments, for his strong work ethic, and his contributions to his family, community and country.

CONGRATULATING JIM FOGLESONG

HON. MARSHA BLACKBURN

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 28, 2005

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Jim Foglesong on his induction into the Country Music Hall of Fame.

Jim grew up singing with his family and then after serving in the U.S. Armed Forces used his G.I. Bill to attend Eastman School of Music.

Later Jim Foglesong not only developed talent but also mentored legendary music performers. He nurtured the careers of Country Music superstars Garth Brooks, Barbara Mandrell, Reba McEntire, The Oak Ridge Boys, George Strait, and Tanya Tucker, among others.

Now at age 82, Jim remains an important part of the Nashville music community.

His induction is the most prestigious honor in all of Country Music. I thank Jim for the tremendous contributions he has given to the business, the artists, and the fans of country music.