

of the Idaho Commission on the Arts, ICA, since 2002, has recently been named board director of the National Assembly of States Arts Agencies, NASAA.

Dan's years of energetic and committed arts leadership in Idaho and the Northwest made his appointment to this position very fitting. He understands the intrinsic and overt value to society of a thriving arts community at all levels. In the course of Dan's leadership of the Idaho Commission on the Arts, the ICA has developed a new strategic plan for its mission and vision in Idaho. By reaching out to all parts of the community, including non-profits, cultural organizations, schools, art professionals, and State and local government officials, the ICA under Dan's direction has created a plan that aims to successfully integrate art into communities across Idaho for the greater benefit of all. Dan's seminal vision was demonstrated to his colleagues in other States when Idaho hosted the NASAA National Convention this year.

I want to publicly recognize Dan for his continued efforts and accomplishments as well as the commissioners and staff for their support. His children, Hunter and Fiona, are his inspiration and joy and we are pleased that they chose to make Idaho their home. What Idaho has gained by Dan's expertise and enthusiasm will now be shared throughout other States as he takes the helm of NASAA.●

HONORING SOUTH DAKOTA'S BLUE RIBBON SCHOOLS

● Mr. JOHNSON. Mr. President, it is with great pleasure that I rise today to publicly honor and congratulate O'Gorman High School of Sioux Falls, Alcester-Hudson Elementary, and Corsica Elementary on achieving blue ribbon status under the Federal No Child Left Behind Act. All three schools earned the prestigious blue ribbon designation based on strong test scores and a myriad of other successes.

These three schools are among only 295 recognized nationwide this year, and O'Gorman is 1 of only 40 high schools to receive this distinction. In fact, O'Gorman is the only high school in the entire Denver region, which includes South Dakota, North Dakota, Wyoming, Montana, Colorado, and Utah, to earn this honor.

For public schools such as Alcester-Hudson Elementary and Corsica Elementary to qualify for blue ribbon status, they must meet State testing levels or have a student body comprised of a high percentage of economically disadvantaged students, yet demonstrate improvement. Achieving this goal is a wonderful accomplishment and Alcester-Hudson and Corsica elementary schools ought to be commended.

Although all South Dakota public schools are required to take part in Dakota STEP, the State's test for tracking progress under the No Child Left

Behind Act, private schools, on the other hand, are under no such obligation. Nonetheless, O'Gorman administers the Dakota STEP exam to provide parents and supporters a comparison between O'Gorman students and those of other schools. Unlike the criteria used to rate public schools, the standards private schools are required to meet in order to achieve blue ribbon status are more rigorous, as students must place in the top 10 percent on both the State test and on the national level for reading and math. As noted by Kyle Groos, principal of O'Gorman High School, the junior class scored in the top 10 percent of schools on the State test, with more than 90 percent of students considered proficient or advanced in reading and math.

While test scores play a significant role in determining whether a school fits the blue ribbon standard, O'Gorman also submitted in its application a 24-page report detailing the school's various attributes. The statement highlighted students' high participation in the performing arts, the school's many sports championships, the 13,000 hours students devoted to volunteering and community service last year, as well as O'Gorman's emphasis on foreign language, math and theology studies.

Earning this distinction under No Child Left Behind is certainly an achievement for all these outstanding schools; however, O'Gorman was also a blue ribbon school under the Federal Government's former recognition program that began in 1982. Like the previous Blue Ribbon Schools Program, this distinction is one that never expires unless the program is replaced.

I am proud to have this opportunity to honor these three exceptional schools. It is a privilege for me to share with my colleagues the exemplary leadership and tireless commitment to education O'Gorman High School, Alcester-Hudson Elementary, and Corsica Elementary provide to their students. I strongly commend the hard work and dedication all the faculty, administrators, and staff devote to these three institutions, and I am very pleased that their dedication and the students' substantial efforts are being publicly honored and celebrated. On behalf of all South Dakotans, I would like to congratulate these three extraordinary schools and wish them all the best.●

HONORING FATHER BRIAN SHANLEY

● Mr. REED. Mr. President, on July 1, 2005, we welcomed home a son of Providence College to assume the presidency of that great institution. Father Brian Shanley is a man of great intellect, great enthusiasm, and a man of deep and abiding faith.

He is superbly prepared to continue the extraordinary progress of Providence College as a distinguished community of scholars serving to educate

the talented young men and women who proudly claim PC as their own.

Generations of students and graduates of Providence College have enriched our Nation and our State not only with their knowledge but just as importantly with their character.

Father Shanley understands this great legacy of Providence College and, through his effort and his energy, he will sustain and enhance this extraordinary place.

St. Thomas Aquinas, a theologian who Father Shanley is acquainted with, wrote "If the highest aim of a captain were to preserve his ship, he would keep it in port forever."

Under Father Shanley, I do not think Providence College will get many "port calls." He will sail forward with determination, faith, and good humor to inspire faculty and students to think seriously, to face the challenges of our times, and to live a life of character and concern that has always been the hallmark of Providence College.

I wish him good luck and Godspeed.●

BLACK HILLS POW-WOW

● Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, it is my distinct pleasure to take this opportunity to inform my colleagues in the U.S. Senate about a special event taking place in the beautiful Black Hills of South Dakota. In Rapid City, on October 7 through October 9, the 19th Annual He Sapa Wacipi and Fine Art Show, otherwise known as the Black Hills Pow-Wow, will be held. Hundreds of dancers from throughout the Northern Plains and Canada will celebrate, compete, and engage in fellowship.

It is also a time of coming together and enjoying the fine art and authentic handmade crafts of many gifted artisans. There will also be contemporary indigenous music and handgame tournaments, which have become quite popular with the Native youth in our State. This year, for the first time, educators and officials with the National Aeronautics and Space Administration, NASA, will be in attendance with exhibits and presentations that will help foster the possibilities of careers in space and technology for South Dakota youth.

The Tribes of the Great Sioux Nation are a uniquely family-oriented culture that has always placed great emphasis and importance on relationships with family and friends. Worthy of note, is the Indian way of life that means when you walk into their home, you never leave hungry. Their hospitality is legendary. They are kind and generous and will give from the bottom of their hearts. They embrace their spirituality as a part of who they are and they respect and honor their Creator.

Their desire to continue their language and traditions is very dear to their hearts. For many years, the language of the Lakota, Dakota and Nakota was in danger of being lost. But in the last 30 to 40 years, it has begun to flourish and is being restored,