

as its CEO. He also serves on a number of local and national boards and commissions. Thomas founded and is the presiding chairman of the board of Springfield's New Leadership Charter School, is a member of the board of the American Camping Association, and chairs the board of trustees of the Springfield Cable Endowment. He founded and is a co-chairman of Step Up Springfield and is on the executive committee of the Hamden County Regional Employment Board.

An earnest and inspired educator, Thomas has been a visiting professor in the Master's of Regional Planning Program at the University of Massachusetts Amherst and at Curry College in Milton, Massachusetts. He hosts a weekly community talk show, "Urban League Community Focus," now in its 15th year on Springfield radio station WTCC.

Thomas grew up in Springfield, where at Technical High School he was his class's only black gymnast. Equally adept on the gridiron, he was offered dozens of college football scholarships and accepted one at American International College in Springfield. There he founded the black student organization and earned a bachelor's degree in psychology in 1971 and a master's degree in human resource development 2 years later. In 1983 he received a jurisprudence doctorate from Western New England College School of Law. Thomas has called his law degree "an invaluable tool for dealing with government officials, community leaders, and the business aspects of running a multimillion-dollar nonprofit agency. . . . Virtually every area of my work involves law in some degree."

He has also received honorary doctorates from Westfield State College and Bay Path College. In 1999, he received an Executive Leadership Program Certificate from the Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University.

Thomas gives enormous credit to his wife, Devonia J. Thomas, for the support and encouragement she has provided throughout his career. The Thomases have been married for 35 years and live in Springfield's historic Forest Park neighborhood in a home well stocked with books and artifacts reflecting their love of African American history and African art, especially Shona art from what is now Zimbabwe. Their son, Perren, is an investment banker on Wall Street. Their daughter, Shadae, is a fourth-grade teacher in Cambridge, MA. Thomas relaxes by playing racquetball and the saxophone and by reading and watching a good deal of football.

HONORING FREDERICK DOUGLASS

HON. LOUISE McINTOSH SLAUGHTER

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 31, 2007

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Madam Speaker, I rise today to humbly honor the life of one of America's most courageous pioneers in the civil rights movement—Frederick Douglass. Frederick Douglass was born 189 years ago this month, and although it has been over a century since he has walked this earth, his imprint on American history remains.

For the past 21 years, I have had the privilege of representing Rochester, New York in Congress; and the city's historic commitment to the advancement of progressive causes has always served as an inspiration to me. When I am standing on the House floor, exhausted

by another debate to protect our civil liberties, my spirit is reinvigorated when I think of Frederick Douglass' Rochester newspaper, the North Star, and the phrase printed on its masthead: "Right is of no sex—Truth is of no color—God is the Father of us all, and we are all Brethren."

Beyond being a source of inspiration, Frederick Douglass is the subject of adoration as one of America's bravest heroes. After he escaped slavery in 1838, he devoted the remainder of his life to freeing other slaves and to ending the practice of slavery itself. Upon settling in Rochester, he used the city's location near the Canadian border to lead local Underground Railroad activities, giving sanctuary to freedom seekers as they fled from slavery, oppression, and injustice.

In addition to his work in the abolitionist movement, Douglass fought to ensure that freed slaves were treated fairly. In 1863, Douglass met with President Lincoln to discuss the treatment of black soldiers in the civil war. He later met with President Andrew Johnson to discuss black suffrage. His tireless efforts in support of freedom and equality laid the ground work for future civil rights movements.

Intolerant of any injustice, Douglass worked closely with another one of Rochester's leading progressive advocates, Susan B. Anthony, to fight for women's suffrage. In fact, he used his North Star newspaper not only to denounce slavery, but also to advocate for women's rights.

Douglass found a home in Rochester among the progressive activists of the mid-1800 who fought for social reforms, the peace movement, and universal equality. It is certainly no surprise that Frederick Douglass felt a special connection to the City of Rochester, and chose to be buried here.

Madam Speaker, Frederick Douglass' persistence, perseverance, and pertinacity serve as a timeless source of inspiration for Americans struggling for freedom against today's injustices. I urge my colleagues to join with me in celebrating and honoring Frederick Douglass' birth-month. America and the City of Rochester are fortunate to have had such an outstanding leader among us. We must never forget his legacy.

PAYING TRIBUTE TO FREDERICK A. LOHMAN AS HE RETIRES FROM THE GREATER WILKES-BARRE CHAMBER OF BUSINESS AND INDUSTRY

HON. PAUL E. KANJORSKI

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 31, 2007

Mr. KANJORSKI. Madam Speaker, I ask you and my esteemed colleagues in the House of Representatives to pay tribute to Mr. Frederick A. Lohman, senior vice president of real estate and asset management for the Greater Wilkes-Barre Chamber of Business and Industry, who recently announced his resignation to accept a position with Mericle Commercial Real Estate Services.

During his 19 years with the Greater Wilkes-Barre Chamber of Business and Industry, Mr.

Lohman has been responsible for all aspects of real estate development including planning, financing, development, management and disposition of real estate assets. He also served as the executive vice president of the Greater Wilkes-Barre Development Corporation and the Greater Wilkes-Barre Industrial Fund, Inc.

The Greater Wilkes-Barre Chamber of Business and Industry is a community, economic development and business service organization charged with the mission of collaborating with community and regional partners to create quality employment and business opportunities and improve the area's quality of life through strategic planning, programs and investments.

Throughout his tenure, Mr. Lohman worked successfully with talented coworkers and dedicated volunteer community leaders to change the economic landscape of the greater Wilkes-Barre area.

He joined the chamber in 1987 as business manager. He later served as vice president, controller, senior vice president, chief financial officer and senior vice president of real estate and asset management.

Mr. Lohman contributed toward the expansion of the Crestwood and Hanover Industrial Parks and the construction of three new parks including the Corporate Center at East Mountain, Hanover Crossings and Highland Park, home to the Wachovia Arena at Casey Plaza.

The chamber was responsible for redeveloping the former Pomeroy's Department Store building into what is now Public Square Commons, a first class office building, and the former Woolworth's Five and Dime Store, which is now home to the Innovation Center, a business incubator, as well as a joint collegiate bookstore, Barnes and Noble College Booksellers.

Mr. Lohman played an integral role in one of the chamber's most aggressive efforts—the Northampton and Main Redevelopment Project, a 160,000-square-foot urban mixed use, entertainment-based, commercial and residential complex containing a 14-screen cinema, retail space and loft housing.

Lohman is a 1976 graduate of Wilkes College, now Wilkes University, and received his master's degree in 1986 from Marywood University. He previously served as municipal manager for Edwardsville Borough and Towanda Borough and as director of the Wilkes University's Small Business Development Center.

On a personal note, let me express my sincere appreciation for all the assistance Fred has provided to me throughout the years. Whenever I have called on him to assist in furthering the progress of any project that would bring jobs to the region, he has been unfailingly generous with his time and expertise. He is a truly talented professional, and I am pleased to also call him a personal friend.

Madam Speaker, please join me in congratulating Mr. Lohman for his years of service to the Greater Wilkes-Barre community. The talent and dedication he brought to his role as a business development executive has paid many dividends that have improved the quality of life throughout the region, and I wish him well in his new position in the private sector.