

twentieth anniversary of its founding. For the past two decades, Independent Living has championed the cause of equal rights, access, and opportunity for persons with disabilities, and has worked throughout the Hudson Valley region to enhance the quality of life for these individuals and their families.

Founded in 1987, Independent Living currently provides services and assistance to more than ten thousand people annually. Through the hard work, vision and leadership of founder and Executive Director Douglas J. Hovey, Independent Living has continued to develop and expand its programs and advocacy for persons with disabilities, increasing its staff to more than two hundred.

Independent Living continues to make progress towards the goals of eliminating physical and attitudinal barriers for all persons with disabilities and ensuring that these individuals have universal access and opportunity in every aspect of community life. The organization's programs include information and referral services, peer counseling, individual and systems advocacy, and independent living skills training. Independent Living provides critical assistance with housing, education, employment, medical needs and personal attendant services, as well as advocacy for needed public policy changes at the local, state and federal levels of government.

Independent Living has systematically worked to reduce barriers for persons with disabilities by consulting with and educating family members, educators, service providers, public officials and representatives from the business community. The organization is operated by people with disabilities who clearly understand such barriers and can work effectively to resolve these obstacles. Through their diverse programs for individuals with disabilities, Independent Living also has helped to foster motivation, independence, self-direction, employment, social integration, and community participation.

Madam Speaker, I am delighted to honor Independent Living for its 20 years of committed and distinguished service. I congratulate and salute Doug Hovey, the board of directors and the staff and supporters of this organization for their very positive and lasting impact on the lives of so many individuals and families. I offer my appreciation to Independent Living, Inc., which continues to serve as a strong model for similar efforts throughout our Nation.

HONORING HELENA TRAFFORD  
DEVEREUX

HON. JIM GERLACH

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, November 15, 2007*

Mr. GERLACH. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor Helena Trafford Devereux—a pioneer in special education. From the beginning of her impressive career, her interest as a young school teacher from south Philadelphia was focused on children, usually in the back of the room who were unable to keep up with the rest of the class and were all too often forgotten by other educators. In the early 1900s, Helena Devereux began working with these children and others throughout Philadelphia as she developed the cornerstones of

modern-day special education. Her passion led her to work further with these children, bringing eight of them into her home so that she could provide the necessary instruction not only educationally, but vocationally and socially as well. Her success led to the 1912 founding of Devereux, which has become the Nation's largest nonprofit provider of behavioral healthcare for people with developmental/intellectual disabilities, behavioral disorders and mental illness. Ninety-five years later, it now serves 15,000 clients in 11 states throughout the country.

Ms. Devereux's work was truly at the cutting edge for its time. Professionals throughout the country and representing diverse disciplines came to Devereux to study her models of treatment and special education. Being a true visionary, Helena Devereux knew the importance of providing educational services to people with special needs. But more importantly, she knew the importance of training professionals in the fields of education, psychology, social work, psychiatry and related areas. It was therefore important to her that this mission be incorporated in the 1938 charter of Devereux and the 1956 bylaws.

Fifty years ago, shortly before her resignation, Helena Devereux established the Institute of Research and Training, now known as the Institute of Clinical Training and Research (ICTR). ICTR is one of the ten oldest, continuously accredited internship training sites by the American Psychological Association in the country. Since its inception, over 1,200 individuals have received their pre- or post-doctoral training at Devereux and many of these individuals have gone on to attain positions of prominence in the field of psychology.

ICTR has also excelled in developing best practices in the field of education for infants and toddlers, children with significant behavioral disorders and mental illness, and children with developmental disabilities, including autism.

In celebration of the 95th anniversary of Devereux and the 50th anniversary of the ICTR, Devereux is planning a Gala celebration at the Independence Seaport Museum on Friday, November 16, 2007. The Gala is expected to draw the greater Philadelphia business and civic community for an evening of entertainment and appreciation.

While Devereux is recognized as a national leader in providing services for children, adolescents and adults, the largest population base served is in southeastern Pennsylvania. Almost every town and township in the Delaware Valley, as well as more than 40 counties throughout the state, are served by Devereux. In Pennsylvania alone, it serves 1,800 individuals.

Madam Speaker, I am sure all of my colleagues join me today in celebrating the 95th anniversary of Devereux and the 50th anniversary of the ICTR. Their legacy—and the tireless work undertaken by Helena Devereux—is evident in the countless lives that they have affected, and those students who they continue to help every day.

HONORING ANDREW HERDMAN

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, November 15, 2007*

Mr. GRAVES. Madam Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize Andrew Herdman of Kansas City, Missouri. Andrew is a very special young man who has exemplified the finest qualities of citizenship and leadership by taking an active part in the Boy Scouts of America, Troop 247, and earning the most prestigious award of Eagle Scout.

Andrew has been very active with his troop, participating in many scout activities. Over the many years Andrew has been involved with scouting, he has not only earned numerous merit badges, but also the respect of his family, peers, and community.

Madam Speaker, I proudly ask you to join me in commending Andrew Herdman for his accomplishments with the Boy Scouts of America and for his efforts put forth in achieving the highest distinction of Eagle Scout.

RECOGNIZING ERIKA B.  
SCHLAGER'S 20 YEARS OF SERVICE AT THE COMMISSION SECURITY AND COOPERATION IN EUROPE

HON. ALCEE L. HASTINGS

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, November 15, 2007*

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Madam Speaker, today I am pleased to pay tribute to Erika Schlager for her 20 years of tireless service to the U.S. Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe, the Helsinki Commission. Erika began her advocacy work as a member of the Commission's professional staff on September 8, 1987, during a period marked by repression and widespread violations of human rights and fundamental freedoms in Central and Eastern Europe, the region of her particular expertise.

Driven by a passion for upholding the human rights commitments enshrined in the Helsinki Final Act, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other international instruments, Erika devoted herself to documenting the cases of political prisoners, prisoners of conscience, and others denied their fundamental freedoms. Her focus on the countries of the region began with her academic studies as well as her personal experience. Indeed, Erika was in Poland for further studies when the regime imposed martial law in late 1981. Shortly after she joined the Commission staff, she helped organize a delegation of members to Czechoslovakia where, among other activities, they planned to meet playwright and Charter 77 founder Vaclav Havel. The courageous rights leader was detained by the secret police and prevented from meeting the delegation. Erika was an ardent champion on his behalf as well as for those lesser known victims of repression. She was able to accompany a delegation of Commissioners to Poland in 1989 to witness the installation of the first democratically elected government there in more than six decades. Her diligent monitoring of developments in these countries continues