

and engage our children to become lifelong learners. As a parent and grandparent, I am grateful for the contributions of our teachers in the El Paso area, and today I want to take this opportunity to congratulate Mrs. Christine Gleason, a teacher at Fabens High School in the Fabens Independent School District, for being selected as the 2009 Texas Secondary Teacher of the Year. The Texas Teacher of the Year is the highest honor that the State of Texas can award to a teacher and Mrs. Gleason will be representing the State of Texas in the National Teacher of the Year program in Washington, D.C. Facilitated by the Texas Education Agency, the Texas Teacher of the Year Program annually recognizes and rewards teachers who have demonstrated outstanding leadership and excellence in teaching. Mrs. Gleason represents the best of the best in the teaching profession, and we salute her energy, efforts, and dedication.

Mrs. Gleason earned a Bachelor's degree in English and creative writing as well as a Master's degree in English and American literature from the University of Texas at El Paso. At Fabens High School, she teaches English IV, AP English IV, and Dual Credit English. She currently serves the school district as Chair of the English Department, National Honor Society Sponsor, Dual Credit Facilitator, UIL Coordinator, and is a literary criticism coach. Mrs. Gleason originally intended to be a novelist, but found teaching to be "life-changing" and "unreservedly rewarding." Mrs. Gleason said that her goal is to be a "vibrant, tenacious, creative and absolutely unforgettable teacher because that is what [she] never had and that is what every kid in this country deserves in every classroom they attend." The El Paso community is very fortunate to have Mrs. Christine Gleason in the classroom and we are appreciative of her commitment to our children.

Mrs. Gleason is part of a larger history of educational excellence in El Paso. I am also proud to note that for the past three years, El Paso area educators have been chosen as Texas Teachers of the Year. In total, El Paso has had nine Texas Teachers of the Year. The National Teacher of the Year Program began in 1952 and continues as the oldest, most prestigious national honors program that focuses public attention on excellence in teaching.

In recognition of these distinguished educators, I am submitting the names of all former Texas Teachers of the Year from the El Paso area.

I am proud of the work of our teachers, and I am committed to ensuring that education remains a top priority in this Congress.

TEXAS TEACHERS OF THE YEAR FROM THE EL PASO, TEXAS AREA

1970—Clarence K. Stark; Irvin High School, El Paso, TX—Government.

1982—Rita Harlien; Eastwood High School, El Paso, TX—Speech.

1992—Rosa E. Lujan; Ysleta Elementary School, El Paso, TX—Bi-lingual Education.

1995—Miguel Ignacio Tinajero; Ramona Elementary School, El Paso, TX—Self-Contained 5th-6th Grade.

1997—Antonio A. Fierro; Sierra Vista Elementary, El Paso, TX—Bilingual Education K-1st Grade.

2004—Kyann McMillie; Canutillo Elementary, Canutillo, TX—Bilingual Education 1st-2nd Grade.

2007—Dana K. Boyd; Dolphin Terrace Elementary, El Paso, TX—2nd Grade.

2008—Paul F. Cain; Ysleta High School, El Paso, TX—Mathematics/Physics 9th-12th Grade.

2009—Christine Gleason; Fabens High School, Fabens, TX—English 12th Grade.

COMMENDING KRISTINA SILVESTRY OF UNION COUNTY, NEW JERSEY

HON. LEONARD LANCE

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 24, 2009

Mr. LANCE. Madam Speaker, I rise in honor of National Women's History Month and to congratulate Kristina Silvestry of Cranford, New Jersey who will be honored on Friday, March 27, 2009 at the 17th Annual Women of Excellence Dinner held in Union County, New Jersey.

This special annual event is hosted by the Union County Commission on the Status of Women in the Seventh Congressional District and highlights the amazing work of individuals who are making our communities better places to live. The Commission on the Status of Women recognizes the contributions of women in the fields of education, health care, the arts, government, business, law, community service, technology, public service and women's advocacy and lifetime achievement.

This year's Women's Advocacy Award will be given to Kristina Silvestry. Currently, she is a primary counselor at "A Child's View," a Union County PALS Program. Kristina currently is employed as a counselor for the YWCA of Eastern Union County, serving the women, children, and families of Union County. Kristina's position allows her to work with battered families in the area, helping to establish housing, financial assistance, education, and emotional readiness, assisting these victims of violence regain their lives.

In addition to her busy workload, Kristina spends a great deal of time working with the courts. She advocates for the safety and well being of families, serves as an expert witness in the field of domestic violence, accompanies victims to their hearings, and she provides the encouragement and support to victims of violence. Ms. Silvestry speaks at various meetings and organization gatherings to discuss issues such as Teen Dating Violence and Domestic Violence.

Kristina Silvestry of Cranford, New Jersey has made significant achievements in women's advocacy. I am very pleased to congratulate Kristina for her outstanding efforts and share her good work with my colleagues in the United States Congress and the American people.

IN MEMORY OF THE EXTRAORDINARY LIFE OF GEORGE KELLER

HON. JACKIE SPEIER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 24, 2009

Ms. SPEIER. Madam Speaker, I rise in both sadness and awe as I reflect on the passing of George M. Keller who, together with his late wife Adelaide, was a philanthropic titan on the San Francisco peninsula and across our country.

Born in Kansas City and raised in Chicago, Mr. Keller moved to San Francisco with his new bride when he took a job with Standard Oil after graduating from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology with a degree in chemical engineering—a degree delayed by George's service in the United States Army Air Force during World War II.

Settling in San Mateo, George worked for Standard Oil (later Chevron) for half a century, eventually becoming the company's chairman in 1981. As chairman, he led Standard's 1984 bid to acquire Gulf Oil Corporation, at the time, the largest corporate takeover in history. Two years after retiring from Chevron in 1988, George and his wife established the George M. and Adelaide M. Keller Foundation.

Madam Speaker, I am constantly reminded of the generosity of the Keller family. The 12th Congressional District's San Mateo County Health Center is a principle beneficiary of the foundation, having received millions of dollars in recent years. Much of that money went to helping some of the most vulnerable members of our community through the Keller Center for Family Violence Intervention.

George Keller's work in our community touched virtually everyone. He served as Chairman of the Board of Belmont's Notre Dame de Namur University from 1982 to 1994 and as Chair of the Bay Area Council from 1985 to 1988. He and Adelaide's philanthropy has benefited many local institutions, including the Lighthouse for the Blind, the Exploratorium, the Coyote Point Museum and the Monterey Bay Aquarium. In addition, the Keller Foundation has supported homeless shelters, firefighters and helped build a playground for special needs children in Burlingame.

Adelaide, the love of George's life, passed away last year. She and George are survived by three sons, Bill, Bob and Barry, and six grandchildren.

Madam Speaker, not all of us leave an indelible mark on our community when our time on earth is done, but George Keller certainly did, and we are all the better because of it.