

Private First Class Maura Rettman of Meriden served in Germany between 1977 and 1979 where she suffered a life-altering car accident. Now, she takes care of her grandson with the hope that he can have a bedroom of his own. Sergeant Rudolph Pistey of Stratford served in the Army National Guard during World War II. Now, at 93, he is well-known in his community, always ready to lend a hand or shoot a smile to his neighbors.

Since 2000, House of Heroes has spread influence and awareness from its founding chapter in Columbus, GA, across the country. In Connecticut, co-founders are Steve Cavanaugh of Biltmore Construction and Billy May, a U.S. Army Veteran, Black Hawk test pilot, and business development and strategy leader at Signature Brand Factory. They seek to complete 10 projects in 2012 and to double this number each subsequent year. Both Mr. Cavanaugh and Lieutenant Colonel May bring experience, skill, and dedication to House of Heroes. Their hope is that general contractors and subcontractors across the state and country will donate several hours a week to helping our Nation's veterans.

Amidst the sound of repairs, there were tears in all our eyes when the veterans were serenaded by Nashville singer and songwriter, Tim Maggart. The song—both solemn and celebratory with spiritual music and grounded lyrics—conveyed eloquently the emotion of everyone gathered:

You were young, scared Willing to go anywhere/ When your country called, you stood tall

You came home, scarred/ Didn't think it would be so hard, You don't like to talk about what you saw/ Beyond what I can comprehend/ The sacrifice of the women and men who gave so much without applause/ I don't know you and you don't know me, but thanks to you, I wake up safe and free/ I hope you never feel forgotten, because

Chorus: You've got a home, in the house of heroes/ Your name will live on in the house of heroes/ I want to honor you/ it's been long overdue/ You're right where you belong in the house of heroes

In a world, where Life's not always fair/ And sometimes we have to fight for what we believe

There's a price, paid I can't help be amazed/ By the brave who gave their all for you and me.

At each House of Heroes project, the spirit of volunteerism, patriotism, and human connection was unwavering. As the tremendous energy of the House of Heroes' Connecticut chapter spreads across the country, this theme song will be an anthem for a national movement that touches the lives of one veteran at a time.

The volunteers and donors of House of Heroes convey a tremendous spirit—America's boundless appreciation and spirit. Through this great work, and its anthem, we show our veterans—who fought for our security—that America will join together to pay back our debt of gratitude by helping our veterans feel secure and safe.

Appreciative but slightly uncomfortable receiving rather than giving, these

men and women were shown by House of Heroes how much we treasure and owe them as a Nation. Donning House of Heroes t-shirts and bobbing along to the music, fellow veterans and citizens showed their thanks—a fitting spirit now and in the future.

RECOGNIZING THE HARTFORD FOUNDATION FOR PUBLIC GIVING

Mr. BLUMENTHAL. Mr. President, today, I wish to congratulate the Hartford Foundation for Public Giving, which was awarded the 2012 Bronze Award by the Council on Foundations this past Spring as part of their Wilmer Shields Rich Awards Program. Every year, the Council on Foundations recognizes foundations around the country that have engaged in strategic communications strategies and innovative projects that inspire and inform other grantmakers.

Since 1925, the Hartford Foundation for Public Giving has been a thriving philanthropic institution where Connecticut nonprofit organizations can seek financial support and connect with givers throughout the State. This highly professional, industrious, and dynamic institution singularly impacts the Capitol Region of Connecticut, having granted \$532 million since its beginning to address community needs. It fosters partnerships, assists nonprofits in developing their long-term plans and funding strategies, and hosts informational forums for the sharing of fresh perspectives. The Foundation is unique in its broad and diverse support for the Greater Hartford area, showcasing families on their website, who invite others to join them, advising "We're not the Rockefellers. We're just a normal family . . . willing to take this step."

The Council on Foundations recognized the Hartford Foundation for Public Giving specifically for its 2010 Annual Report, *Creating Brighter Futures*, which focused on the Foundation's efforts towards effective childhood development and education through its *Brighter Futures Initiative*. The great success of the *Brighter Future Initiative* has strengthened existing early education programs as well as inspired the development of innovative strategies around the country. In the report's introductory letter, President and Chief Executive Officer Lindy Kelly eloquently shares the groundbreaking changes she has witnessed in our Hartford-area schools. She tells the story of Lavarey—then a second-grader at Rawson School at risk for illiteracy. Through the Hartford Haskins Literary Initiative, he learned to read with joy. Ms. Kelly writes of her memory of Lavarey on stage during their annual Celebration of Giving ceremony, waving confidently at the 400-member audience, who in turn, mirrored Lavarey's happiness, proud to be part of the journey of a young boy who will soon become a contributing member of their community.

The Hartford Foundation's 2010 Annual Report—a large, comprehensive

document that expertly weaves stories, accomplishments, and statistics—reflects the rich tapestry of the Hartford Foundation for Public Giving. By seamlessly inviting families, all levels of government, schools, nonprofit organizations, professional advisors, volunteers, and donors to join their mission for change, they evoke and provoke humanitarianism and patriotism.

I invite my Senate colleagues to join me in congratulating the Hartford Foundation for Public Giving for bringing hope and help to Connecticut's institutions, programs, and citizens that need it the most.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

TRIBUTE TO DR. ROBERT BELL

• Mr. ALEXANDER. Mr. President, I would like to congratulate Dr. Robert Bell on his outstanding record of service to Tennessee. Dr. Bell will be retiring as president of Tennessee Technological University at the end of this month and has served the university for 36 years.

He has served as president of Tennessee Tech since 2000, and before becoming the university's president, he served as both a professor and dean of the College of Business.

During his time at Tennessee Tech, Dr. Bell has fostered both an increase in student enrollment and university recognition, while ensuring that student education remained affordable.

His contributions to Tennessee extend beyond the university level. He has served as a member of the board of directors for the Tennessee Center for Performance Excellence since 1993 and chairs the Cookeville Industrial Development Board. He is also a proud member of the executive committee of the Middle Tennessee Boy Scouts of America, an organization dedicated to helping young men achieve their potential.

I want to add my appreciation for his years of service to Tennessee Tech and wish him well in his retirement.

I ask to have the following resolution printed in the RECORD.

The resolution follows.

A RESOLUTION OF APPRECIATION FOR THE SERVICE OF DR. ROBERT R. BELL TO THE TENNESSEE BOARD OF REGENTS

Whereas, Dr. Robert R. Bell has thirty-six years of service with the Tennessee Board of Regents system and Tennessee Tech University, serving as a professor in TTU's College of Business, then as dean, then as President of the University since 2000,

Whereas, as President of TTU, he oversaw 12 straight years of enrollment growth, with TTU's enrollment approaching 12,000,

Whereas, he chaired a TBR Vision of Teaching Excellence committee in 2004 to establish future teaching standards and led his University to develop and expand extended education, distance learning and virtual classrooms,

Whereas, he supported the Regents Online Degree Program and championed degree innovations at TTU to increase access to education and to respond to industry needs in order to improve the education and economic progress in the state,