

Marco, Inc., of St. Cloud, Minnesota, for making Fortune's list of best small- and medium-sized companies to work for.

Marco has an incredible story and is proof that the American Dream is alive and well. What began as a small typewriter shop in St. Cloud quickly evolved into one of the top technology providers in the country, with offices located throughout the Midwest.

However, what truly stands out about Marco is that they are one of the first companies to create an employee stock ownership plan, and they are among the few companies in this country to be 100 percent employee owned.

I truly commend Marco, Inc., for understanding that employees are the heart and soul of every company and that they must be taken care of and rewarded. Your quick rise and large success is undoubtedly due to the way you treat your employees and your positive work environment. I am proud to recognize you here today.

NORTH CAROLINA OPPORTUNITIES INDUSTRIALIZATION CENTER

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. BUTTERFIELD) for 5 minutes.

Mr. BUTTERFIELD. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize a great American, Howard Curtis Jones, a constituent and dear friend who is the founder and president of the Wilson, North Carolina, Opportunities Industrialization Center.

This past Monday, September 29, Mr. Jones was presented with the Outstanding Rural Leader of the Year award at an auspicious occasion in Raleigh, North Carolina, the highest award bestowed by the North Carolina Rural Center and the Rural Economic Development organization.

This recognition could not be awarded to a more deserving individual. Mr. Jones has long been an inspiration to many with his compassion and work. I am honored to call Howard Jones my friend of more than 45 years.

The Rural Leader award recognizes an individual who demonstrates remarkable commitment to improving the way of life in rural North Carolina by enhancing the community and positively impacting the quality of life for its residents.

Mr. Jones has been helping people from Wilson and surrounding communities for more than 40 years. He has earned this recognition through decades of hard work and community involvement.

Born in Sims, North Carolina, during the Depression in 1933 as one of 16 children, Howard has spent the majority of his life trying to empower disadvantaged populations in rural eastern North Carolina. He motivates them to reach their full potential by teaching vocational skills and helping them secure gainful employment.

In 1972, after returning to his home community from employment in New

York City, Mr. Jones started OIC of Wilson, a 501(c)(3) tax-exempt organization, with the goal of helping to empower individuals to find employment opportunities.

Wilson OIC, as we call it, provides services to disadvantaged youth and adults, including prevocational training, employment readiness and referral services, health educational programs, and programs to help dislocated workers transition to new careers.

Remarkably, Mr. Jones began OIC with little more than his faith in God and an unshakeable resolve and steadfast dedication that it could be done. He had no funding. He had no staff when he started except volunteers.

Over the years, Wilson OIC has expanded to employ 35 workers and place more than 200 citizens per year in jobs. Importantly, Wilson OIC adapts the services and training they provide through our changing world and assists clients in acquiring the skills needed to compete in the 21st century economy.

For 10 years, I had the honor of serving as board chair for Wilson OIC and was involved in helping to secure its present site, which was an abandoned elementary school in the city.

In addition, Mr. Speaker, to Mr. Jones' work with OIC, he has been a leader among OICs nationally and internationally. He was a personal friend and confidant of the national founder, the Reverend Dr. Leon Howard Sullivan, who must be remembered as the first African American to serve on the board of directors for General Motors and the author of the Sullivan principles, which led to the dismantling of South Africa's system of apartheid.

Mr. Speaker, Howard Jones has received more than 100 awards during his career: in 1987, he received the Governor's Award for Outstanding Volunteer Service; in 1987, he was recognized at the national level with the Thomas Jefferson Award; in 1997, President Clinton presented Mr. Jones with the Lifetime Achievement Jefferson Award; and in 2009, he received the First Community Stellar Award by Success Dynamics. The list goes on and on.

Finally, Howard Jones and Wilson OIC, four times each year, distribute thousands of pounds of food to low-income families in the community. When they conduct their food distribution program, hundreds of citizens literally line up through the night to receive these commodities. Howard Jones, Mr. Speaker, is an icon in our community. Howard has been married to his wife, Sylvia Neal Jones, for many years. He is the father of five adult children and seven grandchildren.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating Howard Curtis Jones on being selected as Outstanding Rural Leader of the Year. He is most deserving of this honor. Mr. Jones is an example of how a single individual can make an immense positive

impact in his community, in his State, and in his country.

RUSSIA'S ATTACK ON SYRIA

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. KINZINGER) for 5 minutes.

Mr. KINZINGER of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I had no intention of coming to the floor and actually speaking this morning—I have a committee hearing, in fact—until I saw the news.

Now, let me paint a picture just briefly. Every day there are men, women, and children that live in a nation called Syria that wonder if the next barrel bomb is going to come and drop in their neighborhood. Now, this isn't a barrel bomb targeted, by the way, at any real opposition. It is targeted at inflicting the maximum amount of pain on innocent civilians so that a brutal dictator by the name of Bashar al-Assad can ruthlessly, heartlessly keep power for himself in a country that does not want him.

We know that Bashar al-Assad used chemical weapons against his own people. Young kids were choking and gasping for air, knowing that this was their last breath and knowing that their dreams of becoming a doctor, a police officer, maybe a teacher was cut short by this ruthless, heartless man, Bashar al-Assad.

You know, Mr. Speaker, the President said a few years ago, almost divisively, that the opposition to Bashar al-Assad is just a bunch of doctors, lawyers, and pharmacists, as if that were a bad thing.

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I believe that a bunch of doctors, lawyers, and pharmacists in charge of Syria today would be a very good thing. Mr. Speaker, about 2 weeks ago I stood in this Chamber and gave just a 1-minute address and said: Let me be clear. There is one reason and one reason only that Russia finds itself in the Middle East and one reason and one reason only that Russia finds itself in Syria, and that one reason is to prop up this brutal dictator Bashar al-Assad.

Now, let me remind people that ISIS would not exist in Syria had it not been for Bashar al-Assad brutally cracking down on the opposition, the peaceful opposition of his own people, but today we see that ISIS calls Syria home and we find ourselves engaged—albeit halfheartedly—in a war against ISIS because of this brutal dictator Bashar al-Assad. I stood in this Chamber and warned that the reason Russia is there is to prop him up.

Now, I told you that this morning I had no intention of coming onto the floor, Mr. Speaker, except this morning I saw the news that Russia has begun airstrikes in the Middle East. Now, if they were striking against ISIS, some could maybe argue that, hey, this is an opportunity to unite a world coalition. But it appears that, actually, the Russians have struck the doctors, lawyers,