

It is with great pride that I congratulate Chief Evans upon his retirement, express appreciation for his service and wish him and his family all the best as they move on to face new challenges and rewards in the next exciting chapter in their lives.

INTRODUCTION OF THE
EDUCATION FOR DEMOCRACY ACT

HON. DALE E. KILDEE

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, November 2, 1999

Mr. KILDEE. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to introduce the Education for Democracy Act and have my Subcommittee Chairman, Representative CASTLE, join me in this effort today. The legislation we are introducing would continue two vitally important and highly regarded education programs: The We the People * * * program and the International Education Program. Both of these programs are up for reauthorization this year.

For well over a decade the We the People * * * program has involved elementary, middle and secondary school students throughout America in an innovative approach to learning about the U.S. Constitution, Bill of Rights and the principles of democratic government. More than 26.5 million students in some 24,000 elementary and secondary schools in every congressional district in the United States have participated in this important program. It has directly involved more than 82,000 teachers, and as a result of this program, more than 80,000 sets of civics education textbooks have been distributed free to schools throughout our Nation.

The We the People * * * program is widely acclaimed as a highly successful and effective education program. Washington Post columnist David Broder described its national finals as "the place to have your faith in the younger generation restored." The International Education Program, while only five years old, has produced dramatic results in providing civic education assistance to emerging democracies in Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union.

Currently, educators in 15 U.S. states are linked with more than 17 fragile democracies in programs on the principles of democracy and the responsibilities of living in a free society. This year alone the program has reached 225,000 students and more than 2,000 educators in the emerging democracies and more than 56,000 students and more than 550 educators here in the United States. As a result, students in the new democracies and here at home learn the importance, difficulties, and rewards of building and sustaining a democratic government.

Mr. Speaker, it is imperative that these programs be continued, and not be allowed to languish. Inclusion in a block grant such as the Dollars to the Classroom Act would be the death knell. While a few districts might spend some of their block grant funds on civic education, the plain fact is that we would lose a national focus and international focus on civic education.

Gone would be the national competition on knowledge and understanding of our Constitu-

tion and Bill of Rights; gone would be the free distribution of textbooks; and gone would be the regional teacher training institutes. Gone would be civic education assistance we provide to emerging democracies and gone would be the program where U.S. students learn firsthand about the difficulties of building and sustaining a democracy in the modern world.

As the ranking minority member of the subcommittee that will have the responsibility of reauthorizing these programs, I can assure my colleagues that I will work hard to see that these programs remain where and how they are. They are not large programs, but they are highly effective ones. They are worth the small amount we spend. They are a critically important investment in the future strength and welfare of democracy both here at home and in the emerging democracies abroad. They are worthy of our support.

TEACHER OF THE YEAR

HON. CORRINE BROWN

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, November 2, 1999

Ms. BROWN of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I would like to congratulate Professor Marilyn Repsher, a mathematics teacher at the University of Jacksonville, who was awarded the Professor of the year award for 1999. Out of 400 competing professorial nominees representing institutions of higher learning across the nation, and on behalf of the city of Jacksonville, I am proud to commend Professor Repsher of her receipt of this award.

Professor Repsher had been teaching for over a decade when she was honored as one of the four national professors of the Year.

This award, the most prestigious national recognition in college teaching, is granted annually by the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, and the Council of Advancement and Support of Education.

Marilyn Repsher began her 30 year teaching career at Jacksonville University in 1969. The daughter of a high school math teacher, Professor Repsher was honored and indeed, elated, upon the award announcement.

Presently, even though Professor Repsher serves as the Head of the mathematics department, she still manages to devote 75% of her time to teaching, and interacting directly with students.

A few years ago Professor Repsher decided to change the way she taught math courses. Originating from a desire to teach students in a more down-to-earth fashion after listening to student complaints about their professors' teaching methods, and the lack of practicality of the material being taught, she realized that students were being forced to study theoretical concepts in math before studying math's every day life applications.

With her colleagues and this new way of teaching, Dr. Repsher completely revolutionized the way in which mathematics is taught at Jacksonville University. She now focuses on practical equations in her classes first, and then moves on to theory afterwards, but only after the students already have a grasp of the practical ways in which this material can be applied in concrete situations.

As an example of her new teaching methods can be seen in her introductory Algebra course. In this course, she begins the semester by teaching basic algebraic concepts, while at the same time plotting the growth of a puppy on a computer screen. In more advanced math classes such as calculus, the students use the same technology to create visual displays on the data.

It is for this reason that Dr. Repsher is given credit for being a true innovator in utilizing technology in the classrooms of Jacksonville University, an idea that is quickly catching on in other university departments. In fact, she won two teaching awards at the university, both for projects involving the use of computer technology.

Some of Dr. Repsher's former and current students have described her lectures as "anything but long and arduous," while another said: "she keeps the class involved and is very focused."

I congratulate you, Dr. Repsher, on the receipt of this award, and am proud to have such outstanding role models like yourself in my district in the great state of Florida.

EBENEZER AME CHURCH, 117
YEARS OF COMMUNITY SERVICE
AND LEADERSHIP

HON. JANICE D. SCHAKOWSKY

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, November 2, 1999

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. Mr. Speaker, it is with great admiration that I rise today to pay tribute to a great institution in my hometown of Evanston, Ebenezer African Methodist Episcopal Church.

Ebenezer AME Church is celebrating its 117 years of worship and service in our community. I want to congratulate Pastor and Mrs. James C. Wade, the congregation, and all those who have helped make Ebenezer a shining light in our community. I also send my best wishes to all those enjoying this year's celebration, "Catch the Vision," especially the young men and women from all across Chicago.

Under Pastor Wade's leadership, the church has reached out to the Evanston community and beyond. Their activities have had a profound impact on the lives of countless individuals. Their commitment to civic service knows no bounds. The church continues to lead by example, helping those in need, including senior citizens who need affordable housing, and positively influencing the lives of our youth.

Having worked closely with Pastor Wade, it is clear to me and to all in our community that the Pastor is an ambassador of good will. He reaches out to all those that he meets and forms lasting bonds that help to strengthen the spiritual bridge between human beings.

The success of Ebenezer and the AME community is a testament to all those who have contributed and continue to give their energy to this worthy cause.

I consider myself blessed to have attended many services at Ebenezer, and I am honored to call Pastor Wade and the Ebenezer community my friends. We have formed close ties