

you're a loser," he says. "That's unacceptable to me."

In college, Montoya spent a summer writing a proposal to the Mora School Board that would implement a general honors program at the high school. The program would set up independent studies for students who had exhausted the school district's traditional options.

Montoya wrote in his proposal that an instructor would craft semester-long lesson plans for each student. A student who enrolled in a class on contemporary, moral and ethical issues, for instance, would read books such as Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* to gain insight into such issues as "euthanasia, genetic cloning, chemical testing on animals and humans, freedom-of-speech issues and hate crime." He included a 40-page economic analysis.

The school board signed the proposal in August 1997. The board later rescinded the program because it could not fund an instructor to oversee it, Montoya says.

Montoya says he was disappointed by the outcome, but that he has not given up on his project.

"Next time I'm going to have everything ready to go," he says. "No questions, no doubts."

Montoya also has worked diligently on another long-term project—to build an archive and museum that would house the town's family and cultural histories. He envisions a Plaza where the community could gather; Mora no longer has one.

Montoya, who has been accepted to Stanford Law School, says he also dreams of the day when each person is appreciated for his or her potential, when his brothers are held up for their talents, just as he has been celebrated for his.

"One time, my grandfather made a china cabinet with no nails, structurally sound," he says. "My brother (Francisco) can do that. It's something that I envy in him. The time hasn't come where they say that this is just as beautiful as being a Rhodes Scholar, and that bothers me."

Toby Duran, director for the Center for Regional Studies and the Center for Southwest Research at UNM, worked with Montoya on the museum proposal. Duran says that one of the first things they discussed was Montoya's dream of becoming a United States Supreme Court Justice.

"I was impressed by his boldness," says Duran, who gave Montoya a fellowship that enabled him to spend time preparing his Rhodes Scholar application. "He has a way of feeling for things and for people, but in addition to that, he uses reason. He's able to balance that very well."

Friends and family, those who have influenced Montoya, say that despite his rigorous intellect, he is stripped of pretension. Montoya's dream is to return to Mora and practice law with his closest confidant, Cyrus Martinez, also a Mora High School graduate.

The Rev. Tim Martinez, who was once a pastor in Mora, explains it this way:

"For a lot of people that grow up in rural communities, they have to leave before they realize the value of their upbringing," he says. "He realized the value long before he left his community. He carries that with him, always."

A DATE AT THE WHITE HOUSE

Montoya will participate in a White House ceremony before he leaves to study jurisprudence philosophy in England. He will meet President Clinton and members of the U.S. Supreme Court.

Even then, Montoya says he will be "the farm boy from Mora making messes in my

mother's kitchen." And for that, he is immensely proud.

"I don't learn things without them being fixed in human experience," he says. "The facts can exist without human experience, but the truth cannot."

The truth, Montoya says, is that he is a culmination of many lives and many lessons, the embodiment of a town. He is his uncle, the Vietnam veteran and his Godmother, a shy and humble woman; he is his father, hardworking and unapologetic, and the viejo who plants a tree at the chapel each year.

He is also a man, now—one who has made it his life's mission not to allow his people to lose hope.

"If you don't surrender to your community, you will never unify what you have inside of you," he says. "It's indescribable. It's a healing that I have yet to comprehend."

ADDRESSING A GENERATION

Manuel-Julian Rudolpho Montoya's speech for The University of New Mexico's general commencement ceremony in May:

What then, I ask myself, shall we do this fine morning? How will we give praise to our education and our light?

I say we shout.

Shout in honor of the gathering. Give praise to your talents and those who lay hands on that talent. Form a song, without words and without beat save the rhythm of the many standing alongside you. Hear the rhyme of one language in unison as we shout in shades of Black, Yellow, Brown, White and Red. Shout in colors, shout in creeds. Shout in praise of the legacies that brought you here. Shout difference! Shout unity! And remember that they do not betray each other, they simply approach your soul from one end to the other.

Dance.

Dance in honor of your celebration. Give substances to the presence of our smiles and our laughter. In our dancing, let us love the greatness of this day, for it is a day that we recognize the trials of wisdom and knowledge brought to bear upon our very souls.

Cry.

Cry in honor of your suffering. Give it a voice so that it may surrender to the echoes of healing among our communities. Give it to the ignorant, so they may have heard that pain of their brothers and sisters.

Fight.

Fight with your minds. Gather your faculties in honor of the shouting, the dancing and the crying. Give them reason for existing. Validate them. Look to your minds and recognize the great unifier within you. Reconcile your pain with the promise of a better day because you fought with your mind. Know that you have learned all you can so that one day learning can take its place in the symphony of change.

Fight with your heart. Fight with kindness and do not relent when the wits of the many sway against the singular revolt of your heart. Cherish your passion and let it bleed for your neighbor. In this lies the hand that picks up our enemies and cares for them.

Let us now be called forth and have our names announced to the community. Call my name, for in it you evoke the legacy of my grandmothers and grandfathers. My beloved father and mother. My brothers. My friends. My family. My happiness and strength. Let it be called because our name shall ring the truth of my veneration for my community. Mora, New Mexico. Mi tierra y mi vida.

Let us call the names of our graduates. Let their names ring forever in the past. So

today, as we call names and hand diplomas, let us celebrate the world that lives alive and well within us.

Bless you all.

CREDIT CARD CONSUMER PROTECTION ACT

HON. DARLENE HOOLEY

OF OREGON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 18, 1999

Ms. HOOLEY of Oregon. Mr. Speaker, credit card late fees are becoming an increasing burden on consumers. More and more of my constituents are telling me that credit card companies are charging them \$30 late fees when they shouldn't be. I believe some companies are abusing their ability to charge late fees. In fact, just recently, First USA, a company that has millions of customers, was caught charging its customers late fees regardless of when they sent their payment in. (ABC News, Nightline: "Let the Borrower Beware." August 31st, 1999).

In addition, many companies are shortening grace periods and imposing early morning deadlines for when a payment is due. One of the worst things they are doing is sending bills out just a few days before they're due, which makes it very difficult to get the payment in on time.

Obviously, these practices do not help credit card customers maintain good credit ratings. Additionally, these practices can cost customers hundreds of dollars in charges each year. In order to address some of the problems that people are encountering with late fees, today I am introducing the "Credit Card Customers Protection Act of 1999." This legislation would require credit card companies charging late fees to clearly disclose a date by which if your payment is postmarked, it cannot be considered late. Right now, most companies charge you based on when your payment arrives. But with passage of this legislation, if you mail your credit card payment in before the postmark date, you'll be okay.

This is similar to what the IRS does with your tax return. Regardless of when your return arrives at the IRS, if it is postmarked by April 15, it is not late. To me, this makes perfect sense, since we do not control the internal bill collecting processes of the credit card companies, nor do we want to. And we do not control the time it takes for a letter to be delivered.

This bill will put the balance of power back into the hands of credit card customers. I ask my colleagues for their support for this important legislation.

JOHN G. SHEDD AQUARIUM CELEBRATES THE BIRTH OF A BELUGA WHALE

HON. DANNY K. DAVIS

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 18, 1999

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to recognize the John G. Shedd

Aquarium in Chicago as they celebrate the birth of a beluga whale. On August 3rd, a 4-foot-6-inch female calf was born weighing approximately 115 pounds. This is the first calf for Immiayuk, a 13-year-old beluga whale who has been in Shedd Aquarium's care since 1989.

Immiayuk is a first-time mother, and less than half of the calves born to those mothers, either in captivity or in the wild, are able to survive their first year. The new beluga has cleared many of the first hurdles, by swimming, diving and nursing with her mother. Shedd visitors will be able to see the calf in an underwater viewing area in late September. A contest to name the calf will be held for children ages 8 to 13.

The belugas reside in the Shedd's Oceanarium, a re-creation of the Pacific Northwest. Throughout the Oceanarium, large underwater viewing windows give Shedd visitors the opportunity to see the animals from the vantage point of their environment. Whales, dolphins, sea otters, harbor seals and penguins are some of the marine life on display.

The birth of the beluga is a milestone for the Shedd because the Oceanarium was built for the purpose of breeding marine mammals. The knowledge gained from the birth will provide Shedd staff with a better understanding of belugas and in turn that information will be used to help educate the public and contribute to the conservation of wild populations.

The birth of the beluga also is significant to the general beluga population as the National Marine Fisheries Service plans to list the beluga whales in Alaska's Cook Inlet as a depleted population. The 1998 Cook Inlet beluga census, counted 347. In 1994, about 675 belugas were counted; it is believed that 1,000 whales were in the inlet in 1980.

Mr. Speaker, please join me in congratulating the John G. Shedd Aquarium on the successful birth and continued health of Immiayuk's beluga calf.

INTRODUCTION OF THE SMALL BUSINESS TELECOMMUTING ACT

HON. MARK UDALL

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 18, 1999

Mr. UDALL of Colorado. Mr. Speaker, today, I am introducing the Small Business Telecommuting Act, a bill designed to raise awareness about telecommuting among small business employers and to encourage employers to offer telecommuting options to their employees.

In many areas of this country urban sprawl and traffic congestion are growing at alarming rates. Telecommuting surely is part of the answer to reducing traffic congestion and air pollution.

Mr. Speaker, telecommuting has many positive bi-products to which I would like to draw my colleagues' attention.

Traffic congestion: telecommuting could reduce peak commuter traffic, thereby reducing traffic congestion and air pollution.

Family wellness: telecommuting benefits the health of our communities by giving workers more time to spend with their families.

Employee productivity: studies have shown that telecommuting increases both employee productivity and morale, which in turn helps the business bottom line.

This legislation will direct the Administrator of the Small Business Administration to conduct a pilot program to raise awareness about telecommuting among small business employers. Telecommuting is quickly becoming a standard business practice. High-tech industries have employed telecommuting with great success for many years. In addition, the Federal Government has embraced telecommuting as well. This legislation will encourage and aid our nation's small business owners to embrace telecommuting.

Telecommuting in the small business community is a critically important tool, because it would allow small employers to retain valued employees with irreplaceable skills and institutional memory when their lives no longer allow them to be in the office daily.

Mr. Speaker, all around us we see remarkable strides being made in the use of technology to improve our quality of life and allow us to work more efficiently. I believe the Small Business Telecommuting Act will allow our nation's small business owners to also reap the benefits of these technological strides.

H.R. 2, THE STUDENTS RESULTS ACT

HON. CHARLES A. GONZALEZ

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 18, 1999

Mr. GONZALEZ. Mr. Speaker, on October 21, 1999, the U.S. House of Representatives overwhelmingly passed H.R. 2, the Students Results Act, which reauthorized funding for Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act. Title I provides funding to local education agencies to help educationally disadvantaged children learn the core subjects, like math and reading, and authorizes other programs to assist low-achieving students. Last revised by the Improving America's Schools Act of 1994, Title I is the largest federal elementary and secondary education grant program.

In general terms, H.R. 2 was a good bill. It provided a billion dollar increase in Title I funding, focused on holding Title I students to the same high academic standards as all students, targeted funds to the poorest communities, and it improved accountability measures. In addition H.R. 2 addressed the quality of instruction in Title I classrooms by requiring certification for all teachers and strengthening professional development opportunities.

Unfortunately, H.R. 2 also included the "Parental Notification and Consent for English Language Learners" provision. In my opinion, the "Parental Notification and Consent" language in H.R. 2 was unfair at best and discriminatory at worst. The provision would at minimum have an unjust and disproportionate impact on limited English proficient (LEP) students, of which over 70% are Hispanic.

Schools provide LEP children the necessary language support services to ensure high academic standards in addition to developing their

ability to speak, read and write English. However, the proposed "Parental Notification and Consent" requirements would unjustly prohibit schools from providing services until parents provide consent or until the school meets the mandatory requirement to build a written record of attempting to obtain parental consent.

While I do not presume to know why each of those who voted against H.R. 2 did so, I believe that in the case of the Democrats, that decision was based, at least in part, on concerns regarding the "Parental Notification and Consent" provision. It was apparent to me, and likely to others, that this provision potentially violates Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, which guarantees access to equal educational opportunities for LEP students.

As a parent, I must stress that I fully support and encourage enhanced parental involvement in schools and increased parental participation in their children's education. Nevertheless, I am convinced that this legislation, in its ill-advised attempt to include parental consent as part of Title I, will instead result in discriminatory practices and in limited resources being focused on bureaucratic requirements rather than on educational programs.

I did not easily arrive at my decision to oppose H.R. 2 and to make a statement regarding its potentially discriminatory effect on a limited group of students. In the end though, I could not vote to validate legislation that would result in isolating LEP students for different treatment than is applied to any other group of students, while denying access for millions to important Title I educational services.

HONORING MEGAN CHARLOP

HON. ELIOT L. ENGEL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 18, 1999

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to honor Megan Charlop, who has been chosen as a Robert Wood Johnson Community Health Leader for 1999. Each year, the Community Health Leadership Program honors ten individuals who overcome tremendous odds to expand access to health care and social services to underserved populations in their communities. This year, the program has selected Ms. Charlop for her work as the Director of the Montefiore Medical Center Lead Poisoning Prevention Project in the Bronx.

While working as a housing organizer in the 1970's Megan unwittingly exposed herself and her fetus to lead dust and became poisoned. In the early 1980's, she organized a building in deteriorating condition where the children had become lead poisoned. As a result of these experiences Megan founded the Lead Poisoning Prevention Project in 1983.

As Director of the Project, Megan has diligently advocated for resources to create the Lead Safe House, which provides transitional housing for lead poisoned children and their families while their homes are undergoing abatement. Megan also co-founded the New York City Coalition to End Childhood Lead Poisoning, bringing together environmentalists,