TRIBUTE TO RUTH A. GELLER

Mr. LIEBERMAN. Mr. President, I rise today to pay a well-deserved tribute to Ruth A. Geller, MSW on the occasion of her retirement from the Connecticut Mental Health Center after 25 years of service as a psychiatric social worker supervisor.

Ruth has demonstrated exceptional compassion, dedication, and professionalism in caring for the severely, chronically mentally impaired of Connecticut. As a mentor and teacher, Ruth has trained a generation of mental health professionals with the same devotion she has brought to her clinical work. As a result, Ruth has instilled in them the ability to become respectful, empathetic mental health providers.

I am proud to stand before the Senate to congratulate Ruth Geller upon her retirement and thank her for an outstanding career which has enhanced the lives of so many. I wish her continued success in the years ahead.

TRIBUTE TO IRENE AUBERLIN

Mr. ABRAHAM. Mr. President, I rise today to pay tribute to the late Irene Auberlin, the “Mother Teresa” of Detroit.

Mrs. Auberlin is the founder of World Medical Relief (WMR), an organization which, to date, has distributed more than $500 million worth of medical goods both in Detroit area, where she lived, and abroad.

Mrs. Auberlin was a quiet homemaker until she saw a television program about orphans in Korea in 1953. She provided supplies to the nuns who ran the orphanage, thus beginning over 40 years of service to the poor. Since then, WMR has sent food, medical equipment, and supplies throughout the United States and to over 120 countries. In 1996, WMR began a monthly prescription program that still exists today, providing medicine to elderly poor in the Detroit area.

Mrs. Auberlin received over 60 awards and commendations, including The President’s Volunteer Action Award and Silver Medal, presented to her by President Reagan.

On behalf of the residents of Michigan, the United States, and elsewhere, I want to thank Irene for all that she did to help those in need.

NATIONAL BLUE RIBBON SCHOOLS IN MARYLAND

Mr. SARBANES. Mr. President, I am pleased to announce that ten elementary schools throughout Maryland have been named Blue Ribbon School Award winners by the United States Department of Education. These schools are among only 266 elementary schools nationwide to be honored with this award, the most prestigious national school recognition for public and private schools.

The designation as a Blue Ribbon School is a ringing endorsement of the successful techniques which enable the students of these schools to succeed and achieve. Over the past few years, I have made a commitment to visit the Blue Ribbon Schools and have always been delighted to see first hand the interaction between parents, teachers, and the community, which strongly contributed to the success of the school. I look forward to visiting each of these ten schools and congratulating the students, teachers and staff personally for this exceptional accomplishment.

According to the Department of Education, Blue Ribbon Schools have been judged by particular effectiveness in meeting local, state and national goals. These schools also display the qualities of excellence that are necessary to prepare our young people for the challenges of the next century. Blue Ribbon status is awarded to schools which have strong leadership; a clear vision and sense of mission that is shared by all connected with the school; high-quality teaching; challenging, up-to-date curriculum; policies and practices that ensure a safe environment conducive to learning; a solid commitment to family involvement; evidence that the school helps all students achieve high standards; and a commitment to share the best practices with other schools.

After a screening process by each State Department of Education, the Department of Defense Dependents Schools, the Bureau of Indian Affairs, and the Council for American Private Education, the Blue Ribbon School nominations were forwarded to the U.S. Department of Education. A panel of outstanding educators from around the country then reviewed the nominations, conducted site visits, and made recommendations to Secretary of Education Richard Riley.

The ten winning Maryland elementary schools are as follows:

- Ashburton Elementary School, located in Bethesda, is home to 515 students and 64 staff members which provide for a richly diverse school community with an exemplary record of student achievement and an outstanding academic program.
- Salem Avenue Elementary School, the first school to be named a Blue Ribbon School; the first to create and appoint the position of Curriculum Coordinator; and the first to be named a National Distinguished School.
- Templeton Elementary School, located in Riverdale, is an award winning Prince George’s County school which has made dramatic gains on the Maryland School Performance Assessment Program (MSPAP).
- Templeton’s mission is to provide its diverse student body with the knowledge and skills to be productive members of society.
- Vienna Elementary School, located in Vienna, is a small, rural school that draws from a geographical area and is an integral part of the community. With virtually no staff turnover and a strong School Improvement Team, students, staff and parents form a close-knit community and serve as a model in the district for student achievement, staff commitment and participatory leadership, including development of character and ethical judgment.
- West Annapolis Elementary School, situated in downtown Annapolis, was used as the location for the Maryland State Department of Education for two videotapes highlighting outstanding teachers. This award also credits West Annapolis’ belief in the importance of a united school community as evident in its concept of TEAM/excellence which works to improve the teaching and learning environment in which students can excel.

The Summit School is a non-profit school that was created 10 years ago to serve the literacy and school success needs among children with unique educational needs, namely bright students who are disabled readers. Summit, located in Edgewater, enables students...