

Olusegun Obasanjo was inaugurated after his victory in democratically-held national elections. This is a moment of truth for Nigeria. Obasanjo faces several tremendous challenges. He must build up democratic institutions in a country that has had precious little experience with them. He must overcome serious economic problems. And, he must repair Nigeria's negative international image. Nigeria may finally be on the path to prosperity and democracy, and the entire African continent could reap the benefits.

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PERSONAL EXPLANATION

**HON. ROBERT E. ANDREWS**

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, June 8, 1999*

Mr. ANDREWS. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall No.'s 167, 168, and 169, I was unavoidably detained and unable to cast my vote. Had I been present, I would have voted "aye" on all three of these votes.

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A SALUTE TO OWEN MARRON,  
CENTRAL LABOR COUNCIL OF  
ALAMEDA COUNTY'S UNIONIST  
OF THE YEAR, 1999

**HON. BARBARA LEE**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, June 8, 1999*

Ms. LEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise in honor today to salute Owen A. Marron on his achievement of being named the Unionist of the Year, 1999, by the Central Labor Council of Alameda County and acknowledge his accomplishments as he completes his career as the Central Labor Council's Executive Secretary-Treasurer. Mr. Marron has been a longtime leader in the U.S. labor movement, particularly in California.

Mr. Marron was born in Buffalo, New York and grew up in Southern California. Upon completion of high school, he worked in the Kaiser steel mills in Fontana, California. When he joined the United Steel Workers Union, he became the fourth generation in his family to join.

Following his discharge from the U.S. Army in Korea, Mr. Marron returned to the steel plant, soon becoming a grievance committee-man for his local. He later served his local as the recording secretary and Chairman of the Incentive Committee.

In 1964, Marron left the steel mills to pursue a career in the labor movement in California by working as a representative for SEIU Locals 660, 616, and 700.

In 1976, Marron became a delegate to the Central Labor Council of Alameda County and a labor representative of the State Council on Developmental Disabilities.

In 1982, Marron was appointed to the Alameda County Central Labor Council's staff. During his career with the Labor Council, he served as Assistant to the Secretary and Executive Secretary-Treasurer. In addition, he was elected as Vice President of the California Labor Federation.

Throughout his more than forty-year career in the labor movement, Marron has displayed strong and passionate leadership. His highlights include organizing over 150,000 trade unionists and their families in labor marches in 1982 and 1984; leading the historic Alameda County employees strike of 1976; mobilizing the entire Alameda County labor movement in a strike against Summit Hospital in 1992; and playing a pivotal role in bringing President Bill Clinton to the Alameda County Labor Day Picnic and South African President Nelson Mandela to visit Oakland.

He has made a positive and profound impact on the lives of many individuals and organizations. His leadership skills and dedication will be sorely missed. I proudly join his many friends and colleagues in thanking and saluting him on receiving this prestigious award and extending my best wishes on his upcoming retirement.

Marron will be honored as the Unionist of the Year in Oakland, California, on June 17, 1999.

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WETLANDS RESERVE PROGRAM  
ENHANCEMENT ACT

**HON. CHARLES W. "CHIP" PICKERING**

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, June 8, 1999*

Mr. PICKERING. Mr. Speaker, today I am proud to introduce alongside my colleagues, Mr. THOMPSON of California and Mr. CHAMBLISS of Georgia, the Wetlands Reserve Program Enhancement Act to extend authority for the Wetlands Reserve Program (WRP) to help family farmers stay on their land, and to benefit waterfowl and sportsmen at the same time.

Across the country, thousands of private landowners have discovered the WRP is an attractive alternative to farming high-risk and high-cost cropland that is frequently flooded. WRP provides these landowners with a voluntary, financial incentive to restore such areas to wetlands. The landowner in turn is free to use his or her WRP incentive payment to refinance debt, upgrade machinery or to buy additional land to make their farming operation more profitable.

In my hope state of Mississippi, WRP has been a very popular program with private landowners, and for good reason. With today's farm crisis, WRP is helping Mississippi farmers who could not otherwise afford to stay on their land or to pass it on to future generations. To give you a better idea of how popular WRP has been with farmers, let me share with you some statistics.

Since 1992, nearly 4,000 landowners from 47 states have enrolled 655,000 acres in WRP nationwide. My home state of Mississippi has benefited through the WRP by enrolling more than 74,000 acres for the purpose of wetland conservation. However, due to limited funding, only about one-third of all eligible Mississippi landowners could be accepted into the program. In some states, landowner demand for WRP exceeds available funding 5 to 1. Mr. Speaker, many more wetland acres could be preserved nationwide through the provisions of this bill.

The purpose of the Wetlands Reserve Enhancement Act is to extend WRP authority to help more landowners in the future. Specifically, my legislation extends WRP authority for enrolling new lands by three years to 2005, and replaces the current WRP acreage cap with a new 250,000-acre annual enrollment limit. This will allow 4,000 to 5,000 additional landowners to enroll in WRP over the next five years.

This additional land enrolled in WRP will benefit not only farmers, but also waterfowl and other wetland wildlife. In the Mississippi Delta states, most of WRP land is planted in high-quality hardwood trees that flood in the winter and provide critical habitat for waterfowl and other wildlife. In fact, WRP has become one of the largest wetland restoration programs ever attempted on private lands.

WRP is restoring waterfowl breeding habitat in states like South Dakota, Minnesota and Wisconsin. It is restoring migration habitat in Illinois, Iowa, Ohio and New York. Most of all, WRP is restoring waterfowl wintering habitat in such diverse states as California, Texas and Louisiana.

Where there are ducks, there are duck hunters. Many waterfowlers have discovered that private land enrolled in WRP makes for excellent hunting. In places like Mississippi that have a proud waterfowling tradition, access to quality hunting sites is in high demand. In many cases, WRP is creating new opportunities for sportsmen to participate in this time-honored tradition.

My legislation seeks to encourage more of these kinds of partnerships and to ensure that WRP takes every advantage of opportunities to restore and enhance wetland habitat for waterfowl.

In summary, this legislation represents a win-win opportunity for farmers, conservationists, sportsmen, and wildlife. This is a commonsense proposal which I believe my colleagues in the House will find good reason to support. The WRP is the kind of non-regulatory, incentive based conservation program that landowners want and wildlife need as we enter the next century.

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CONGRATULATIONS TO MAJOR  
GENERAL DAVID W. GAY ON THE  
OCCASION OF HIS RETIREMENT

**HON. ROSA L. DeLAURO**

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, June 8, 1999*

Ms. DELAURO. Mr. Speaker, it gives me great pleasure to rise today to honor one of Connecticut's finest military officers. Major General David W. Gay is the Adjunct General of the Connecticut National Guard and today friends and family will gather to wish him well on his retirement.

Beginning his military career with the Marine Corps in 1953, General Gay has dedicated his life to serving and protecting our great nation. Throughout his distinguished career, General Gay has received numerous meritorious awards and decorations from the Marine Corps, Army National Guard and State of Connecticut for outstanding conduct. Among

his many accolades, he has been honored with the Connecticut Longevity Service Medal, the Marine Corps Good Conduct Medal, the Legion of Merit Award, and the National Guard Bureau's Eagle Award—the most prestigious award issued by the National Guard Bureau. These signs of recognition are testament to a prominent and honorable career.

His commitment and dedication to service culminated in his appointment as Adjunct General of the Connecticut National Guard, serving as the ranking member of the Governor's Military Staff and commissioner of the State Military Department since 1992. General Gay has been an invaluable resource to me in my capacity as a Member of Congress. His professionalism and unparalleled skill in his field have helped to address the concerns of my constituents quickly and effectively. I appreciate all that he has been able to provide for Connecticut's Third Congressional District.

In addition to his illustrious military career General Gay has demonstrated an extraordinary commitment to his community. As well as being a member of several local organizations, General Gay chairs the State Management Board of the Community Learning and Information Network (CLIN), a pioneer project in distance learning education technology. He has also served as President of the Nutmeg Games, a state-wide multi-sport festival for Connecticut amateur athletes. His innumerable contributions to the community and the State of Connecticut will not be forgotten.

I am honored to stand today to join his wife, Nancy, children, David, Jennifer, and Steven, and the many other voices of family and friends in congratulating General Gay on his retirement. His service to our country and community will not be forgotten and we wish him much health and happiness in the coming years.

HONORING THE BROOKLYN  
SCHOOL SETTLEMENT ASSOCIATION

**HON. NYDIA M. VELÁZQUEZ**

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, June 8, 1999*

Ms. VELÁZQUEZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the leaders and members of the School Settlement Association for ninety-eight years of service to the Brooklyn community. The work they have done over the years has had an impact on thousands and thousands of lives. They have seen the critical needs that exist in our communities and addressed them. They have stepped in and filled gaps where children and older people in our communities are at risk.

Unlike so many others who have tried and failed, the School Settlement Association here in Brooklyn has succeeded. As the only remaining School Settlement Association in Brooklyn, their longevity is a testament to the strength of their vision, the importance of their mission, and the quality of their teachers, service providers and leaders.

Not only have they remained strong for these ninety-eight years, but they have grown and expanded. Their initial objective of helping

strengthen the attendance and performance of young students in school has broadened. Now, they successfully work to enhance children's health and nutritional needs. They have implemented summer and after-school programs, literacy programs, as well as college and career seminars that help students prepare for a successful future.

In addition to this, their outreach now includes the needs of many of our community's older adults. Many of our seniors who might otherwise go without the proper medical assistance and healthcare services can safely rely on the School Settlement Home Attendant Service Corporation and home Health Care Service.

Finally, as the scope of their mission has expanded, so have the number of neighborhoods in which they operate. Originally founded in Ridgewood, they now reach out to Williamsburg, Greenpoint and other areas around Brooklyn. The large area they now help is reflective of the deep concern they have shown for everyone in our neighborhoods.

As we look to the future, and they prepare to celebrate their 100th anniversary, on behalf of the 12th Congressional District, I want to thank them for all they have done. They have helped keep the fabric of our communities strong, and our future bright. I ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating the School Settlement Association. May their next 100 years be better than the last.

THE WHITE BEAR LAKE'S CENTRAL MIDDLE SCHOOL ODYSSEY OF THE MIND TEAM

**HON. BRUCE F. VENTO**

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, June 8, 1999*

Mr. VENTO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to acknowledge a local middle school's achievement at the Odyssey of the Mind World Finals and the achievement of other Minnesota schools at this special competition in Knoxville, TN.

Odyssey of the Mind is an activity designed to engage children's minds and helps them develop their creativity. Through exercises that require impromptu and creative responses, the team works together to create a solution. White Bear Lake's Central Middle School received one of five special awards during this unique competition. The team was recognized for its outstanding creativity in its solution to the "Environmental Challenge" Division II category. The team competed with more than 800 teams representing 28 countries. Success against tough competition such as this is truly an outstanding achievement. Its encouraging as an educator and member of Congress to see the emphasis upon academic achievement and excellence.

Mr. Speaker, I submit for the RECORD an article from the May 31, 1999 Star Tribune detailing the accomplishments of White Bear Lake's Central Middle Schools Odyssey of the Mind team as well as the achievements and recognition accorded additional Minnesota schools.

WHITE BEAR GETS A TOP ODYSSEY AWARD  
CENTRAL MIDDLE HONORED FOR CREATIVITY;  
ANOKA HIGH AMONG TOP STATE FINISHERS

(By Terry Collins)

White Bear Lake's Central Middle School was one of five teams internationally to receive a special award during this weekend's 20th Annual Odyssey of the Mind World Finals competition in Knoxville, Tenn.

The students received the "Ranata Fusca" award for outstanding creativity for the solution of a problem in the "Environmental Challenge" Division II category.

The students were nominated by a panel judging their problem.

"It's outstanding," said Karen Karbo, director of the Minnesota state Odyssey of the Mind. "They took a great risk that involved great skill. It's quite an award. I couldn't be more proud."

Anoka High School had one of the highest finishes of any Minnesota school. Students placed second in the "Radiometric Structure" Division III problem-solving category.

"They were exceptional," Karbo said. "To finish that high out of several hundred teams in their division is remarkable."

They were among about 5,500 students from the United States and 28 countries who participated, all winners of their local or regional Odyssey competitions.

More than 800 student teams tested their wits in several categories, including devising a species-survival plan, putting a contemporary spin on Shakespeare and calculating how much weight a self-built balsa-wood structure can hold.

The finals started Thursday and concluded Saturday.

Other Twin Cities-area finalists included: Cedar Ridge Elementary, Eden Prairie: fourth place, "Customer Service," Div. L.

Inver Grove Heights Middle, Inver Grove Heights: ninth place, "Customer Service," Div. II.

Hopkins Community Education Program Gold, Hopkins: 11th place, "Over the Mountain," Div. II; 13th place, "O, My Faire Shakespeare," Div. III.

St. Louis Park School District's Gifted/Talented Program, St. Louis Park: 14th place, "Radiometric Structure," Div. L.

Greenleaf Elementary, Apple Valley: 19th place, "Environmental Challenge," Div. I.

Coon Rapids High, Coon Rapids: 23rd place, "Over the Mountain," Div. III.

Other Minnesota finalists included:

Fergus Falls Middle, Fergus Falls, Minn.: Third place, "Environmental Challenge," Div. III.

College of St. Benedict, St. Joseph, Minn./St. John's University, Collegeville, Minn.: Fourth place, "Radiometric Structure," Div. IV; 14th place "O, My Faire Shakespeare," Div. IV.

Hermantown Middle, Hermantown, Minn.: 12th place, "O, My Faire Shakespeare," Div. II.

Queen of Peace Middle, Cloquet, Minn.: 16th place, "Radiometric Structure," Div. I.

Robert Asp School, Moorhead, Minn.: 24th place, "O, My Faire Shakespeare," Div. I.

Karbo said Minnesota has the ninth-largest Odyssey student participation in the world. More than 1,000 students participated this year in 10 regional Odyssey competitions throughout the state.

"They truly represent the finest students we have in this state," Karbo said. "To even get to this level of competition is extraordinary."