

support and solidarity by the international community for Taiwan.

Now, a year after the tragic quake, it is possible to assess the massive assistance which the Taiwan government has taken to help those affected by the disaster. It has provided \$87 million to assist families with members who died in the quake or are still missing. Monetary compensation for families with total or partially destroyed homes has amounted to \$520 million. Through private sector funding, the government has established shelters for over 5,200 families. Some \$430 million has been allocated for quake victims for rent subsidies, and an additional \$3.3 billion has been provided for rebuilding loans for quake victims and their families. In quake-affected areas, the government has made major efforts to repair damaged roads and bridges.

Mr. Speaker, realizing that reconstruction is a long term project, Taiwan's new President, Chen Shui-bian, established a cabinet-level special commission on June 1 of this year to oversee reconstruction efforts in home design, engineering, infrastructure, and sanitation. The commission will also oversee public welfare and counseling of survivors. Members of this commission will be drawn from different government agencies and ministries. The goal of the commission is to coordinate all relief operations and to form a comprehensive plan to enable quake victims and their families to rebuild their lives.

Mr. Speaker, as we mark this anniversary, I urge my colleagues to join me in extending condolences to the victims of this horrible tragedy. I also invite my colleagues to join me in commending the government of the Republic of China in Taiwan and its leaders for their extensive efforts in providing immediate and long-term assistance to the victims affected by last year's tragic earthquake in Taiwan.

TRIBUTE TO GILBERT DE LA O

HON. BRUCE F. VENTO

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 21, 2000

Mr. VENTO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commend the work of an outstanding citizen of Minnesota's Fourth District, Gilbert de la O. Mr. de la O is being honored on September 22 for his contributions to our community, as the recipient of the first National Alumnus of the Year Award from the United Neighborhood Center of America (UNCA).

UNCA is a voluntary, nonprofit, national organization with neighborhood-based member agencies throughout the United States. The program works in partnership with neighborhood centers to find solutions to social problems that prevent productive community life.

Mr. de la O, once considered a juvenile delinquent, credits his turn-around in part to the caring workers at the West Side Neighborhood House community center. For the past 30 years he has remained involved with this organization by working in the child care center and taking part in activities geared toward young people in the community—young people Mr. de la O can relate to, having once walked in their shoes.

Beyond his work at the center, Mr. de la O is active in many other capacities in our community. Whether it's teaching diversity training to the Saint Paul Police Department, serving on the Saint Paul School Board, or working with groups such as the Ordway Center for the Performing Arts or the Saint Paul Public Library, he always seems to have the best interest of the community at heart.

Gilbert de la O is truly an example of what can be accomplished when we look beyond ourselves and strive to benefit others. So many in Saint Paul have been touched by his work and I am pleased that he is being recognized with such a prestigious national honor. I thank him for his dedication and wish him the very best of luck in his future endeavors.

ST. MICHAEL'S LUTHERAN CHURCH AND RICHVILLE, MICHIGAN

HON. JAMES A. BARCIA

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 21, 2000

Mr. BARCIA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate the 150th anniversary of the founding of Richville, Michigan and St. Michael's Lutheran Church in that community.

In the beginning, the town and the church grew from the same source, springing forth as a haven for poor young men and women denied the chance to marry in their native Germany because they lacked property.

This sad situation in Germany in 1850 prompted Pastor Wilhelm Loehe to propose a fourth colony in mid-Michigan to be called Frankenhiilf, which later became Richville, to allow Lutheran men to acquire land and money to marry, raise families and practice their faith. Richville was the last of four Michigan Franconian colonies established by Loehe. Postal authorities later renamed the town to avoid confusion with Frankentrost, Frankenlust and Frankenmuth.

Unfortunately, many of the first German Lutheran settlers who made that pilgrimage of faith to Richville left shortly after arriving. However, two families persevered and in the fall of 1851 three more families joined them, along with Pastor John Diendorfer. On the second Sunday of Advent, December 7, 1851, Pastor Diendorfer preached to the first congregation gathered at St. Michael's.

In time, the colony and the church welcomed more members. By 1875, the congregation built a second church to seat up to 500 members and later they also opened a school. Other structures followed. Since its founding, the congregation has outgrown the community, with 1,600 baptized members and 300 residents. The school now has 11 full-time teachers and 200 students.

Mr. Speaker, this clearly is a church with its foundation firmly embedded in the rock of Christian love. The guiding principles of Christianity have provided past and present members of this congregation with a spiritual sense of community that will serve future generations well, taking those who practice it a step closer to God.

HONORING ELEANOR AND FRANCIS FORD COPPOLA AND HANDS ACROSS THE VALLEY

HON. MIKE THOMPSON

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 21, 2000

Mr. THOMPSON of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize two extraordinary residents of my congressional district whose tireless humanitarian efforts will ensure that hundreds of individuals and families in our Napa Valley will not go to bed hungry tonight.

On Saturday, September 23rd, Eleanor and Francis Ford Coppola will once again host the 7th Annual Hands Across the Valley benefit to raise funds for local food programs. The Coppolas have made countless contributions toward improving our community but none are as significant and far-reaching as their efforts regarding this monumental event.

The Coppolas' hospitality in opening up their beautiful Niebum-Coppola Estate Winery is the driving force that has made this event the success that it is. In 1995, Eleanor and Francis hosted the event at their home in Rutherford. Joined by 650 guests, the benefit gained statewide and national acclaim. Due to the event's tremendous popularity, the Coppolas agreed to host the benefit in 1996 at their then newly-acquired Niebaum-Coppola Estate Winery where 1,000 guests enjoyed Napa Valley's finest wines and foods.

Thanks in large part to the Coppolas' incredible hospitality, this year's event is expecting nearly 2,000 guests. Mr. Speaker, it is little wonder why Hands Across the Valley has now become a tradition of our Northern California community.

And, Mr. Speaker, it is no surprise that the Coppolas have put their heart and soul into this worthwhile cause. Despite the media perception of Napa as a community for the wealthy, more than 7% of the county's population is below the poverty level and more than 21% is near the poverty level. A recent survey by University of California and the Redwood Empire Food Bank found that 43% of individuals seeking food assistance each month at Napa food pantries and soup kitchens are children. The average household seeking assistance has four people. More than 30% do not have a stove or oven and 28% do not have a refrigerator.

Mr. Speaker, I believe it is fitting and appropriate to honor the service these two distinguished individuals have given to our community. Thanks to the Coppolas and many of their friends, Hands Across the Valley has raised over \$600,000 to feed Napa's hungry families. I commend all of those involved in this annual benefit and wish them great success on Saturday. We are all better off because of their efforts.