

join with all past and present Peace Corps volunteers as we celebrate Peace Corps Week 2005, February 28–March 6.

Mr. KOHL. Mr. President, I rise today to recognize the accomplishments of the Peace Corps during National Peace Corps Week—February 28 through March 6.

For 44 years, the Peace Corps has engaged in meaningful work and made innumerable contributions to both America and the countries served by Corps members. Today, more than 2,700 Peace Corps volunteers are working to train men and women in 72 countries to provide for their own needs, as well as to promote mutual understanding between Americans and other cultures.

It gives me great pride to know that the Peace Corps and the people of Wisconsin have a strong relationship. Right now, there are 289 Peace Corps volunteers from Wisconsin, including 137 volunteers from the University of Wisconsin–Madison—more volunteers than any other university in the Nation. The State of Wisconsin can also be proud that the university served as a training ground for many groups bound for service in the early years of the Peace Corps.

To better illustrate the work that Wisconsinites do for the Peace Corps, I would like to share this story of great accomplishment. In August 2004, for the first time, the Peace Corps honored returned volunteers with an award recognizing efforts to promote a better understanding by Americans of other cultures. This award was presented to the Returned Peace Corps Volunteers of the University of Wisconsin–Madison. Since 1987, the group has raised money by selling calendars with pictures of Peace Corps experiences from around the world. The money is used to promote grassroots projects in countries where the volunteers served. The group also works to raise awareness about the Peace Corps and participates in charity events.

This story is both an inspiration and a call to further service. The \$98,000 that the Returned Peace Corp Volunteers of Wisconsin–Madison donated over a 2-year period to the Peace Corps Partnership Program is a wonderful and meaningful achievement. It is my hope that other people in Wisconsin and throughout the United States will view these returned volunteers as role models.

In closing, I wish to thank the 171,000 Americans who have served in the Peace Corps since 1961 and extend special recognition to the 4,409 Wisconsinites counted among that number. The work of the Peace Corps has made an extraordinarily valuable difference to so many people throughout the world.

#### CELEBRATING WOMEN IN SCIENCE WEEK

Mr. JOHNSON. Mr. President, it is with great honor that I rise today to

publicly recognize South Dakota's Women in Science Conference that is taking place March 7–11, 2005.

Hosted by the National Weather Service, this conference introduces junior and senior high school females to the multitude of opportunities available to women in science- and math-related occupations. Studies indicate that, while females thrive in science and mathematics in grade school, far too frequently female students lose interest in these subjects by the time they reach graduation. As Kristine Thompson, a geologist and curator of the Mammoth Site's In-Situ Bonebed notes, "In the past, many girls and young women with an interest in science and math often were redirected to other fields. Although women account for half of the work force, they constitute less than 20 percent of scientists."

Consequently, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's, NOAA, National Weather Service forecast offices in Aberdeen, Rapid City, and Sioux Falls, in conjunction with local and State agencies, schools, and businesses, are cohosting Women in Science conferences throughout South Dakota. These symposiums, created 5 years ago by the Aberdeen National Weather Service, are designed to foster personal connections between accomplished professional women scientists and female students. The Women in Science Conference creates a unique forum where successful female scholars and professionals meet and hopefully inspire young women to continue developing and cultivating their interests in the natural and physical sciences. To demonstrate the significance of these events, Governor Mike Rounds, by Executive Proclamation, declared this week "Women in Science Week in South Dakota."

Among the notable guests featured throughout the week is keynote speaker Karen Stoos. Karen is a native of Hoven, SD, and is currently a biologist at the Genetics and Molecular Biology Branch of the National Human Genome Research Institute in Bethesda, MD. Other presenters' areas of expertise span the fields of geology, animal science, engineering, medicine, and metrology. Additionally, the National Aeronautics and Space Administration, the National Weather Service, and the Girl Scouts will have exhibits and representatives in attendance. More than 1,000 seventh through twelfth-grade students and teachers are already registered to attend.

I am proud to have the opportunity to share with my colleagues this exciting and significant series of events, and I am very pleased that the conference's efforts are being publicly honored and celebrated. I strongly commend the hard work and dedication of the National Weather Service and all of the sponsors of the Women in Science Con-

ference, as their contributions will positively impact the lives of so many young women in South Dakota.

#### COMMENDING IFES

Mr. SALAZAR. Mr. President, we are all very impressed by the results of the Iraqi elections in January. The results exceeded our expectations, and I am hopeful it is evidence that Iraq is moving toward democracy. I wanted to add my voice to the letter sent by Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice commending IFES. Without the tremendous work of our troops who provided security at over 10,000 polling places around Iraq and the work of IFES, these historic elections would not have happened. I ask unanimous consent that the letter from Secretary Rice to IFES President Richard Soudriette dated February 28, 2005, be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

THE SECRETARY OF STATE,

Washington, DC, February 28, 2005.

Mr. RICHARD SOUDRIETTE,  
President, International Foundation for Election Systems, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. SOUDRIETTE: On behalf of the Department of State, I would like to offer my thanks for the International Foundation for Election Systems' role in supporting the recent elections in Iraq. On January 30 we saw millions of Iraqis brave intimidation and threats of death to demonstrate their commitment to democracy. We are heartened by this process for the future of vibrant, thriving democracy in Iraq.

The success of this first step in Iraq's transition to democracy is due in no small part to your organization's diligence and the dedication of your highly skilled staff. IFES's guidance on election regulations and operations, complaints adjudication, and public information not only helped to ensure transparency but also served to buoy confidence that these historic elections were indeed credible and transparent. Additionally, IFES's continuing role in building the Independent Electoral Commission of Iraq's capacity for future electoral events will buttress Iraq's evolving democratic institutions.

Thank you again for your great contribution to the future of Iraq. Together, we will help the Iraqi people realize their dream of living in a free and democratic society.

Sincerely,

CONDOLEEZZA RICE.

#### ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

##### CASUALTIES IN IRAQ

• Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. President, 1,500 American service men and women have been killed in Iraq, and more than 11,000 have been wounded.

We were all moved by the Iraqi elections last month. I and all Americans support the creation of a legitimate, functioning Iraq Government that guarantees the rights of all Iraqis. We all want democracy in Iraq to take root firmly and irrevocably.