

system that changes how our children learn. Today, I honor an elementary school in Paradis, LA that has served as an example of a great school that is achieving the goals we set forth in these halls.

R.J. Vial Elementary School will turn 30 years old this Friday, April 8th. There will be festivities and celebrations for students, alumni, teachers, administrators, and parents. But I would like to take a minute to talk about the real celebration of this school. In the past 5 years, R.J. Vial Elementary School has steadily increased the number of students passing the LEAP 21 test in all four areas that the test covers. R.J. Vial is clearly meeting its mission of developing respectful, lifelong learners. That is what I would like to celebrate today in the United States Senate.

In the April 2005 Community Newsletter of R.J. Vial Elementary School, Principal Frederick A. Treuting wrote, "Our greatest and perhaps only truly effective discipline tool is a strong relationship that bonds us to our children." Principal Treuting could not be more correct. If we are to succeed in educating our children to the best of our ability, we must reach out to them and work to raise academic achievement in our public schools by putting the priority on performance instead of process, delivering results instead of developing rules, and on actively encouraging bold reform instead of passively tolerating failure.

At 510 Louisiana Street in Paradis, LA, R.J. Vial Elementary School is already doing these things and because of that, has become one of the finest schools in the state of Louisiana. There is no greater investment we can in our future than in the education of our children. I commend the hard work of all the people who have and currently work at and with R.J. Vial Elementary School; you are giving the best gift you can to our youth. It has been said that it takes a village to raise a child, so we must all work together to see that we educate our children to the best of our ability. And to the students, both past and present, of R.J. Vial, I offer my congratulations. Because of your efforts in the classroom for the past thirty years, R.J. Vial Elementary School has become the beacon of success that it is today.

Happy Birthday, R.J. Vial Elementary School! My heartfelt congratulations to all involved with the school, and best wishes to another great 30 years.●

HONORING POPE JOHN PAUL II

● Mr. ALLARD. Mr. President, I was unable to be present for today's vote honoring His Holiness, Pope John Paul II. At the time of the vote, I was in Colorado attending my father-in-law's funeral service. Having been an origi-

nal cosponsor of the resolution, I would have supported the measure if present.

As we mourn the passage of Pope John Paul II, we also pause to reflect on the many blessings his life bestowed upon the world. This great man was not only a defender of his faith, but of the weakest and most vulnerable among us. He will be remembered, without doubt, as one of the most significant and influential figures of the 20th Century. His influence transcended the Roman Catholic Church and has had an impact on everyone's relationship with the Creator. I humbly pay my respects and honor the legacy that he leaves behind.●

NICOLE WAYANT AND CORMAC O'CONNOR

● Mr. BROWNBACK. Mr. President, I congratulate and honor two young Kansas students who have achieved national recognition for exemplary volunteer service in their communities. Nicole Wayant of Topeka, KS, and Cormac O'Connor of Prairie Village, KS, have just been named State Honorees in The 2005 Prudential Spirit of Community Awards program, an annual honor conferred on only one high school student and one middle-level student in each State, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico.

Ms. Wayant is being recognized for creating a youth health council to promote the benefits of an active, healthy lifestyle among the students in her school district.

Mr. O'Connor is being recognized for implementing an intergenerational arts program that brought senior citizens and at-risk children together for classes in visual arts, movements, theater and jazz.

In light of numerous statistics that indicate Americans today are less involved in their communities than they once were, it is vital that we encourage and support the kind of selfless contributions these young people have made. People of all ages need to think more about how we, as individual citizens, can work together at the local level to ensure the health and vitality of our towns and neighborhoods. Young volunteers like Ms. Wayant and Mr. O'Connor are inspiring examples to all of us, and are among our brightest hopes for a better tomorrow.

The program that brought these young role models to our attention—The Prudential Spirit of Community Awards—was created by Prudential Financial in partnership with the National Association of Secondary School Principals in 1995 to impress upon all youth volunteers that their contributions are critically important and highly valued, and to inspire other young people to follow their example. Over the past 10 years, the program has become the Nation's largest youth recognition effort based solely on commu-

nity service, with more than 170,000 young people participating since its inception.

Ms. Wayant and Mr. O'Connor should be extremely proud to have been singled out from such a large group of dedicated volunteers. As part of their recognition, they will come to Washington in early May, along with other 2005 Spirit of Community honorees from across the country, for several days of special events, including a congressional breakfast on Capitol Hill. While here in Washington, 10 will be named America's top youth volunteers of the year by a distinguished national selection committee.

I applaud Ms. Wayant and Mr. O'Connor for their initiative in seeking to make their communities better places to live, and for the positive impact they have had on the lives of others. I also salute the other young people in my State who were named Distinguished Finalists by The Prudential Spirit of Community Awards for their outstanding volunteer service. They are Shawn Bryant of Leavenworth, KS; Brad Harris of Saint Paul, KS; Amanda Knox of Clifton, KS; and Creighton Olsen of Larned, KS.

All of these young people have demonstrated a level of commitment and accomplishment that is truly extraordinary in today's world and they deserve our sincere admiration and respect. Their actions show that young Americans can—and do—play important roles in their communities, and that America's community spirit continues to hold tremendous promise for the future.●

EXECUTIVE AND OTHER COMMUNICATIONS

The following communications were laid before the Senate, together with accompanying papers, reports, and documents, and were referred as indicated:

EC-1454. A communication from the Acting Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to law, the annual report covering defense articles and services that were licensed for export under section 38 of the Arms Export Control Act during Fiscal Year 2004; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC-1455. A communication from the Assistant Legal Adviser for Treaty Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to the Taiwan Relations Act; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC-1456. A communication from the Assistant Legal Adviser for Treaty Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to the Case-Zablocki Act, 1 U.S.C. 112b, the report of the texts and background statements of international agreements, other than treaties; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC-1457. A communication from the Assistant Legal Adviser for Treaty Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to the Case-Zablocki Act, 1 U.S.C. 112b, the report of the texts and background statements of international agreements, other than treaties; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.