



United States
of America

Congressional Record

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE *112th* CONGRESS, FIRST SESSION

Washington, D.C.

Tuesday, December 13, 2011

House of Representatives

VISCLOSKY HONORS SOCIETY OF INNOVATORS OF NORTHWEST INDIANA

Mr. Speaker: It is my distinct honor to commend Ivy Tech Community College Northwest and its regional partners, who recently celebrated their 7th Annual “Spirit of Innovation” Induction Ceremony, in which twenty-three individuals and sixteen teams were inducted as members of the 2011-2012 class of the Society of Innovators of Northwest Indiana. Individuals were selected from these new members and inducted as Society Fellows for their exceptional efforts in innovation. These individuals include: Mayor Jon Costas, Robert Johnson III, Julie Rizzo, Angela Hambling, and Janet Brown, Ph.D. Also honored was the Chanute Prize team recipient, IVDiagnostics at Entech, Valparaiso. For their outstanding efforts, these honorees were inducted during a prestigious event that took place in the Pavilion Ballrooms located at the Horseshoe Casino in Hammond, Indiana, on October 20, 2011.

The Society of Innovators of Northwest Indiana was created by Ivy Tech Northwest with the goal of highlighting and encouraging innovative individuals and groups within the not-for-profit, public, and private sectors, as well as building a “Culture of Innovation” in Northwest Indiana. The importance of innovation in Northwest Indiana, as well as globally, is crucial in today’s ever-changing economy.

The five Fellows selected by the Society of Innovators were chosen for their remarkable diversity of innovation and the impact of their efforts throughout the community of Northwest Indiana. The 2011-2012 individuals named Society Fellows are as follows: Mayor Jon Costas, of Valparaiso, has worked hard to ensure that the City of Valparaiso is an innovative leader. Revitalizing the downtown area, creating a new urban park, improving the city’s infrastructure, and launching a citywide bus service, as well as a commuter bus to Chicago, are some of the many outstanding projects completed under the direction of Mayor Costas. Robert Johnson III is the President/CEO of Cimcor, Inc., Merrillville. Robert developed cutting edge information technology security software that takes real time change detection to the next level by offering instant remediation of unauthorized changes. This security software system is used by the United States Army and the National Nuclear Security Administration, among others. Julie Rizzo is the President of US Greenworks, LLC and is also Executive Director of My Choice Recycling, Saint John. Julie’s network of granite recycling centers has saved an estimated five million pounds of granite and stone scraps from being dumped into landfills nationwide. Angela Hambling, Principal of Rolling Prairie Elementary School in La Porte County, created an offsite activities center that is used to improve the educational outcome of underserved minority students. Angela, along with school administrators and teachers, was able to help over 100 students this past year. As a result of this exceptional program, the school’s status was raised to “exemplary.” Janet Brown, Ph.D. is the Dean of the College of Nursing, Valparaiso University. Under Dr. Brown’s direction, the College of Nursing’s enrollment went from 25 students to 350 undergraduate students, 45 master’s program students, and 28 doctoral students. Dr. Brown also initiated the overseas “cultural immersion” experiences for nursing students.

The recipient of the Chanute Prize for Team Innovation is: IVDiagnostics at Entech Innovation Center, Valparaiso. IVDiagnostics launched a new diagnostic tool to help in the fight against cancer by indentifying rare circulating tumor cells in vivo. This procedure is non-toxic and also helps to eliminate issues that arise in current methods, which calculate high false positives and negatives. Preclinical studies have been conducted at two medical centers which illustrate the effectiveness of this innovative technology.

Mr. Speaker, I ask you and my distinguished colleagues to join me in commending these outstanding innovators on being named Society Fellows and the Chanute Prize recipient. Their dedication and commitment to innovation is truly an inspiration. Their years of hard work have played a major role in shaping future development in Northwest Indiana and communities worldwide, and each recipient is worthy of the highest praise.