

CONGRESSMAN MARK KIRK'S

# Leadership Awards

August 2006



*Meet 10 very special Americans  
who make a difference in the 10th  
Congressional District of Illinois*





Dear Friends:

We live in one of the best educated congressional districts in the nation. In my service to our community, I am continually struck by the patriotism, talent and commitment of the people who I represent.

Two years ago, we launched a program to recognize some of the people you should know, highlighting what they have done for our community, country and planet. Today, I would like you to meet our second “Ten for the Tenth” — ten individuals who make stunning contributions for fellow citizens of Illinois and people overseas we have never met.

The Ten for the Tenth saved our VA hospital, raised money for tsunami relief and rescued children from gang violence. They range in age from 18 to 86. In many ways, they underscore the optimism and “can do” spirit of the American people.

Take a moment to read their stories and remember, these people are not just heroes — they are our neighbors.

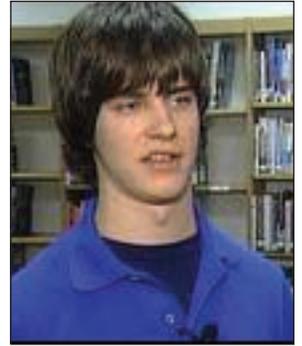
Sincerely,

Mark Kirk  
Member of Congress

## Young Leader Helping Tsunami Victims

*Dan Klein of St. Viator raised \$1 million for tsunami relief*

Dan was a senior at St. Viator’s High School in Arlington Heights. Moved by the tsunami disaster, he was inspired by the Lance Armstrong “Live Strong” bracelets to create his own in hopes of raising money for tsunami relief. Starting with just \$300 of his own money and with the help of Quest Applied Technologies, Klein created 1,000 red rubber bracelets and an organization, “Students for Relief,” that would donate all its proceeds to tsunami relief. Through a website and his hard work, he sold over 500,000 bracelets, raising nearly one million dollars for CARE International.



Dan Klein

## Teaching Latina Mothers English So They Can Help With Homework

*Rosa Reyes Prosen leads Latino efforts to keep kids in school and reunite grandmothers with their kids*

Rosa Reyes Prosen co-founded the Latino Coalition, served as chairwoman of the College of Lake County Board of Trustees and chairs Congressman Kirk’s Latino Advisory Board. With too many Latino kids dropping out of school, Rosa helped create the Families Involved in Reading Stories Together (FIRST) program in conjunction with the College of Lake County. With the help of Congressman Kirk and a \$248,000 federal grant, FIRST helps young Latino mothers learn English so they can help with their son’s or daughter’s homework. Rosa also developed “Projecta Abuelita” to help grandmothers in Mexico with three-week visits to see their children and grandchildren in America.



Rosa Reyes Prosen

## The Hero Who Broke the Navy's Color Barrier

*Frank Sublett was commissioned as one of the U.S. Navy's first African-American officers*

A pioneer for African-Americans everywhere, Frank Sublett bravely stood up in the face of racism in the Armed Forces and in 1944, became one of the first 13 African-American naval officers. Dubbed the "Golden 13," these men scored higher on standard tests than their white counterparts and went on to fight the Nazis in the Atlantic and Japanese in the Pacific. With the Congressman's help, Glencoe native Sublett helped inspire the construction of the first memorial to World War II African-American Navy veterans. The memorial will be completed near Great Lakes Naval Training Center in North Chicago.



**Frank Sublett**

## Taking Down Suburban Drug Gangs

*Bill Biang is the leader of Lake County's most effective anti-gang police force*

Chief Bill Biang leads Waukegan's Police Department and its effort to stop the spread of suburban gangs. There are over 2,000 documented gang members operating north of Lake-Cook Road. Chief Biang's Neighborhood Enforcement Team (NET) has become the most effective law enforcement organization fighting suburban gangs in northern Illinois. With the help of Congressman Kirk, the Waukegan Police Department's gang intelligence unit received \$100,000 in new federal money. Waukegan's murder rate has dropped from 25 per year to three because of Chief Biang's proactive leadership to fight crime and gangs.



**Bill Biang**

## Stem Cell Research Advocate

*Gary Eizenga helped make the Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation the most effective advocate for stem cell research*

As President of Health Systems & Administration for Cardinal Health and a lifelong supporter of the Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation, Gary Eizenga tirelessly worked to promote stem cell research. With his help and the support of Congressman Kirk, Congress passed the Stem Cell Research Enhancement Act (H.R. 810) to lift the current restrictions on stem cell research to accelerate a cure for Parkinson's, diabetes and cancer.

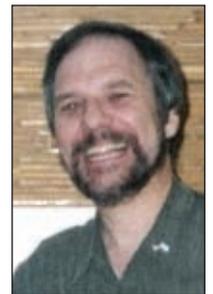


**Gary Eizenga**

## Saving a Prisoner of Conscience from Jail

*Dr. Richard Benkin won the release of Bangladeshi pro-Israel writer Shoaib Choudhury from jail.*

Mt. Prospect resident Dr. Richard Benkin advocated for Shoaib Choudhury's release from prison after being moved by his touching story. Choudhury, a Bangladeshi journalist, encouraged Jewish-Muslim dialogue in Bangladesh, wanting to establish ties between Israel and Bangladesh even though travel to Israel was forbidden. Choudhury was charged with the capital crime of sedition — accused of spying for Israel — and imprisoned for over a year. Dr. Benkin contacted Congressman Kirk's office and with his help, freed Choudhury after 17 months in jail. Choudhury's case is still pending but at least he knows he has friends he never met back in the American state of Illinois.



**Dr. Richard Benkin**

## A World Without Mercury Poisoning

*Cheryl Levi inspired children, parents and elected officials to fight mercury poisoning*

Cheryl Levi inspires her seventh grade social studies students at Elm Place Middle School so they can make a difference in our community. As part of Project Citizen, she helped students focus on the issue of mercury pollution plaguing the Great Lakes. Her students spent months researching, analyzing and eventually creating a forum to discuss how private, state and federal efforts could remove this threat to human health. Congressman Kirk worked with 50 of her students at a widely-covered forum, inspiring a number of local officials to pledge action against mercury pollution.



**Cheryl Levi**

## Raising Academic Performance To Unprecedented Levels

*Dr. Marsha Hestad is pioneering new levels of academic performance for gifted students*

Dr. Hestad is an education leader with 28 years of experience as principal of Libertyville's Rockland Elementary School and executive director of child learning for Lake Forest District 67. As a long time advocate of gifted education, Dr. Hestad spearheaded the Tenth District laureates program. This year, she worked with Congressman Kirk to guide 20 seventh grade Laureates through "mini-medical school," where students witnessed open heart surgery and learned about trauma care and cutting edge medical research.



**Dr. Marsha Hestad**

## Rescuing At-Risk Children

*Evelyn Chenier runs the "Family First" Support Center and has rescued dozens of at-risk kids*

As executive director of the Family First Support Center (FFSC), Evelyn Chenier teamed up with Congressman Kirk to receive a \$200,000 Department of Health and Human Services grant to help with the center's Educational Assessment Program. The center mentors at-risk kids in northern Lake County. Evelyn has helped dozens of kids stay out of gangs and away from drugs. Her counseling and mentoring is making our community safe, while preserving a bright future for many young men and women.

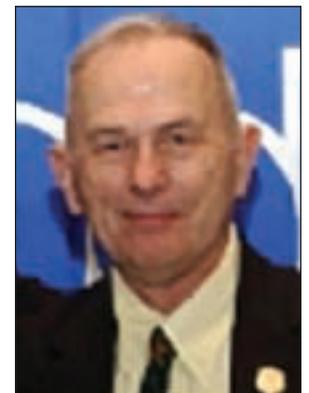


**Evelyn Chenier**

## Saving a Veterans' Hospital

*Phil Mazur leads the stakeholders of North Chicago VA and was the linchpin in the effort to save the hospital*

In 1999, the Department of Veterans Affairs decided to close the North Chicago VA. Phil Mazur organized veterans to win the support of elected officials and was Congressman Kirk's relentless partner in building the campaign to save the VA hospital. Earlier this summer, the VA opened a \$13 million new suite of emergency and operating rooms. Next January, the Navy and VA will break ground on a new \$100 million state-of-the-art Navy/VA hospital. Thanks to Phil, our VA hospital's future is secure.



**Phil Mazur**