

On July 24, 2011, Sergeant Patterson and three members of his squad were conducting security at the Charkh Bazaar when an improvised explosive device detonated, collapsing the building in which they were positioned. As his platoon sergeant radioed for medical assistance, Sergeant Patterson conducted a search for the remaining members of the squad and administered first aid. He and two other members of his squad were medevac'd to Forward Operating Base Shank to receive treatment for traumatic brain injuries.

On August 5, 2011, on Sergeant Patterson's second day back after 2 weeks of treatment and observation for his injuries, he and his squad were again conducting security in the bazaar when a grenade was tossed into his position, landing on his shoulder and coming to rest near his back. The grenade detonated, resulting in significant injuries to Sergeant Patterson and three other members of his squad. Sergeant Patterson ignored the heavy bleeding from his own back and administered first aid to his platoon leader and provided assistance to medics treating the other wounded soldiers.

Sergeant Patterson was admitted to Frostburg State University in western Maryland in 2016. He is on course to graduate next May with a bachelor's degree in materials engineering with a minor in math and physics. He continues to have significant pain from shrapnel in his back, arms, neck, and shoulder, but he refuses to take pain medication so he can remain focused like a laser beam on his studies. For his capstone course in engineering, Sergeant Patterson is the project leader on converting organic material—nanocellulose—from trees and turning it into a compound that is lighter and stronger than Kevlar for use in flak jackets and vests for law enforcement officers and military personnel. This project has been accepted for presentation at the 2018 Materials Science and Technology Conference in Columbus, OH.

This past Sunday was Veterans Day, and it was the 100th anniversary of the armistice which ended World War I. We owe so much to our servicemen and servicewomen, to our veterans, to those who gave "the last full measure of devotion," and to their families. Repaying that debt begins with gratitude. I encourage my colleagues to join me in expressing the Senate's sincere appreciation to Sergeant Brent Patterson for his distinguished service to our Nation, our congratulations on his academic achievement, and our best wishes for his continued success.

TRIBUTE TO MICHIGAN'S VETERANS

Ms. STABENOW. Mr. President, today I wish to pay special tribute to the nearly 600,000 Michigan residents who have proudly served in our Nation's Armed Forces.

Today's veterans have served on many fronts, from the beaches of Nor-

mandy and Iwo Jima, to the rice fields of Korea, to the jungles of Vietnam, to the Cold War, to the deserts of the Persian Gulf, to the fight against terrorism in Afghanistan and Iraq, and right here at home.

This spirit of service lives on in so many different ways across our State. Whether they are supporting military families, providing help for fellow veterans, giving back through religious organizations and community nonprofits, or inspiring the next generation while coaching Little League or the local softball team, these patriots show us that service is more than something you do once. Instead, it is a way of life all of us should strive for.

Our veterans have done so much for us. It is our solemn duty to keep the promises we have made to them.

We must also ensure that our veterans receive each and every military honor they have earned while defending our country. I have been so fortunate to get to know Jim McCloughan of South Haven, who was awarded the Medal of Honor earlier this year for saving the lives of 10 of his fellow soldiers during the Vietnam war. Like so many of our veterans, Jim has spent the decades since then continuing to serve his community.

I know the sacrifices our veterans made because I have seen it firsthand. My own father served in the Navy during World War II, and he always said that veterans shouldn't stand in the back of any line, not for healthcare, education, housing, the chance at a good job, or the military honors, they have earned. He was absolutely right, and I have made it my mission to ensure that every promise made to our veterans is a promise kept.

Michigan's veterans are the best of us. On this Veterans Day—and every day—we salute them, we honor them, and we thank them for their service.

Thank you.

TRIBUTE TO DR. NANCY L. SPRULL

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. President, I wish to honor my constituent, Dr. Nancy L. Spruill, who will be retiring this year after more than 47 years of service to our country.

Since 1999, Dr. Spruill has served as Director of Acquisition, Resources and Analysis for the Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition and Sustainment. In this capacity, she is responsible for all aspects of A&S's participation in the Planning, Programming, and Budgeting and Execution System, the congressional process, and the Defense Acquisition System.

Dr. Spruill serves as the Executive Secretary to the Defense Acquisition Board and is responsible for the timely submission to Congress of reports for Major Defense Acquisition Programs. She performs systematic analysis to improve acquisition policy and education and leads the Department in developing plans to manage property,

plant and equipment, inventory, operating material, supplies/deferred maintenance, and environmental liabilities. She also manages a broad portfolio of information technology applications and infrastructure supporting the mission of the organization. Dr. Spruill has played a key role in improving the way the Department acquires major automated information systems. A strong advocate of improving the acquisition workforce, she works closely with the Defense Acquisition University and the rest of the Department in leading and training the thousands of personnel performing cost analysis and financial management for acquisition programs to improve acquisition outcomes.

Dr. Spruill graduated with a bachelor of science degree from the University of Maryland in 1971. She joined the Center for Naval Analyses from 1971–83. In 1975, she earned a master of arts in mathematical statistics from George Washington University, followed by a doctorate in 1980. Dr. Spruill served on the staff of the Office of the Secretary of Defense from 1983, first as senior planning, programming, and budget analyst in the Manpower, Reserve Affairs, and Logistics Secretariat, and then as Director of Support and Liaison for the Assistant Secretary for Force Management and Personnel and Senior Operations Research Analyst for the Assistant Secretary for Program Analysis and Evaluation.

In 1993, Dr. Spruill served as Chief of the Programs and Analysis Division for the Comptroller of the Defense Mapping Agency. She also served as Acting Deputy Comptroller and was a member of the Reinvention Task Force for the Vice President's National Performance Review.

Dr. Spruill has received many prestigious awards, including the Department of Defense Medal for Distinguished Civilian Service, the Hammer Award, the Acker Skill in Communications Award, and numerous awards of the Secretary of Defense Medal for Meritorious Civilian Service, the Secretary of Defense Medal for Exceptional Civilian Service, and the Presidential Rank Award. A member of the Senior Executive Service since 1995, she has published many papers on her work for the statistical community and the public. Her expertise on these important issues has been invaluable.

I ask my colleagues to join me in thanking Dr. Spruill for her distinguished service to our country and in wishing her a fulfilling and enjoyable retirement.

TRIBUTE TO KATHERINE "KAY" BJORKLUND

Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, I rise today in celebration of Kay Bjorklund, Wyoming AARP's 2018 Andrus Award honoree.

Since 2001, the Wyoming chapter of AARP continues to make a positive difference in the lives of senior citizens