

and eventually secured a job with the South Carolina Ports Authority.

As a young kid, this was the granddaddy I knew, not one that let his circumstances hold him back or let his frustrations overtake his love for his family. After my parents' divorce, my mom, my brother, and I all moved into my grandparents' house—about 800 or 900 square feet and one bathroom. The three of us shared a bedroom—and were happy to do so.

What I remember most about my granddaddy from this time was, on so many mornings, he would sit down at the kitchen table, have a cup of coffee, and leaf through the newspaper. He wanted us to see him reading, reinforcing the importance of doing well in school. It wasn't until years later that I learned he couldn't read.

My cousin also loves to tell the story of how granddaddy would wake up to do the laundry at 4 a.m. and make sure everyone else got up and started working as well. That work ethic and dedication started to funnel down through the rest of our family and showed us all the importance of hard work.

Granddaddy's messages worked—my brother recently retired as a command sergeant major after 30 years in the Army, my cousin is a preacher in North Charleston, and I eventually got my own act together as well. My nephew, granddaddy's great-grandson, has earned his undergrad from Georgia Tech, his master's at Duke, and is now headed to medical school at Emory.

That is the power of a strong role model, someone who knows there is a better future out there for his family. In my granddaddy's lifetime, our family went from cotton to Congress, and I could never even pretend to thank him enough. He was the rock for our family—our trailblazer.

CONTRIBUTIONS OF AFRICAN-AMERICAN ARMY ENGINEERS TO THE STATE OF ALASKA

Mr. SULLIVAN. Mr. President, today I wish to recognize the immense contributions of the African-American community to my State of Alaska and to our great Nation.

I want to highlight in particular a contingent of troops, members of the African-American Army Engineers, who were stationed in Alaska during World War II, hundreds of men who served our Nation at a time when their basic human rights were being denied, some 6 years before the military was desegregated. In spite of that despicable injustice, they exhibited a great love for this country, even a willingness to die for this country.

These soldiers were stationed in Alaska among several regiments assigned to build the ALCAN—Alaska-Canada—Highway. For a State as big and diverse as Alaska, infrastructure is critically important to the well-being of our communities. And in the 1940s, infrastructure assets—roads, bridges, ports—were few and far between. In

fact, there was no road linking the contiguous United States to Alaska through Canada. We were isolated.

We think of construction projects today, the many tools and machines our hard-working crews have at their disposal. But back then, many of those technologies and advancements didn't exist, making this enormous undertaking all the more daunting. Worse still, the machinery that was available was often given to the all-White units, leaving the African-American servicemembers ill-equipped. Nonetheless, the men of the African-American Army Engineers labored on under extreme weather conditions, creating a roughly 1,700 mile cross-continental corridor in a mere 8 months.

The project, too, came at a time when our Nation was under imminent threat in the Pacific, just 2 months after the attack on Pearl Harbor. Our country needed to get supplies and soldiers to the furthest stretches of U.S. territory. Without the ALCAN, Alaska would not be the cornerstone of our national defense in the Pacific and the Arctic, nor the prosperous land of opportunity we see today.

For these enormous contributions and for their selfless service to our country, we thank the thousands of African-American servicemembers who for too long were dismissed and overlooked.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

TRIBUTE TO DONNA MILLER

• Mr. HELLER. Mr. President, today I wish to recognize an individual who has gone above and beyond to save lives in the State of Nevada, Donna Miller. Ms. Miller's drive to provide a dependable health care option to the people of Tonopah is commendable. Her actions warrant only the greatest gratitude and recognition, and I am proud to honor her for her invaluable work for people across the Silver State.

Ms. Miller was born in Romania and immigrated to the United States in 1991. In 1996, she graduated from nursing school and moved to Las Vegas 3 years later. She obtained her flight nurse wings in 2001, beginning her career caring for others. In 2002, she helped found Life Guard International Air Ambulance, and in 2007, she reorganized it into Life Guard International—Flying ICU, Flying ICU. This incredible organization serves as a flying intensive care unit, transporting critically ill and injured patients from one hospital to another that offers more resources in a different location.

Beginning in 2009, Flying ICU served as a necessary resource to the Tonopah community, transporting all ill and injured patients from the Nye Regional Medical Center to facilities in Las Vegas and Reno. Unfortunately, last fall, the Nye Regional Medical Center closed its doors, leaving this rural community with a devastating lack of ac-

cess to health care. After the medical center's closing, Ms. Miller courageously decided to keep Flying ICU's Tonopah location, changing the organization to an emergency medical service, which treats and transports patients by plane while traveling to the closest hospital in Las Vegas or Reno. This service currently is the only resource in the region for the critically ill and injured to receive lifesaving care.

Ms. Miller also took the initiative to relocate a second plane to Tonopah and increase staff with additional critical care nurses, paramedics, and pilots to provide greater services to the local community. In order to minimize the amount of time that Tonopah's flight crews were away from the Tonopah station, Ms. Miller organized additional Flying ICU flight crews on standby at Nevada airports to allow patients to be further transported by the standby crew, allowing the flight crew to return to the station in a timely manner. Ms. Miller's work on this organization is one of a kind, and I am thankful for her work in saving the lives of Nevadans. Her decision to step up to the plate and provide the Tonopah community many medical resources it would otherwise be without remains invaluable for our State.

Today Flying ICU's services reach across the State, saving lives with four aircraft, a hangar at McCarran International Airport, and operation bases in Las Vegas and Tonopah. The organization employs over 50 medical and aviation professionals to help those in need. Flying ICU's reputation of safe and quality care is well deserved.

In 2014, Ms. Miller was elected as the president of the Nevada Nurses Association, district Three. She has received many awards for her actions, including being recognized as Ambassador for Peace by the International Women's Federation for World Peace in 2014, SBA's Nevada Woman-Owned Business of the Year Award in 2014, the 2014 Women of Distinction Awards—Entrepreneur of the Year, and as one of Las Vegas's 2015 Top 100 Women of Influence. These accolades are given only to those who have done extraordinary acts to earn them, and Ms. Miller without a doubt deserves each one. Nevada is fortunate to have someone like Ms. Miller representing our State. She is a shining example of selflessness for myself and others.

Ms. Miller has demonstrated an unwavering commitment to our State, saving lives and providing care to Nevadans in need. Her drive to help those around her is inspiring, and I thank her for all of her hard work. I ask my colleagues and all Nevadans to join me in thanking Ms. Miller for her many contributions to our State. I wish her well as she continues her efforts to help those in need and in servicing the city of Tonopah and those across central Nevada.●