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Helena Education Foundation's Celebration of Excellence (1)

Max S. Baucus

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Helena Education Foundation's
Celebration of Excellence: *Above and Beyond!*
Tuesday, May 6, 2003
Carroll College, Helena, Montana

Hello everyone. Max here. Sorry I can't be with you today but Congress is in session. I do wish I could be there with all of you for this great event.

Congratulations to each of you who are being honored tonight. We're so proud of every one of you!

These awards honor your excellence in scholarship, citizenship, service, and achievement. You're leaders not only in your classrooms but also in this community. You have an outstanding record of service and demonstrated a commitment to helping others.

Now that you're on the verge of graduation, I'm sure many of you are prone to moments of nostalgia – early memories like reading your first book. Running down the hall on the way to recess. And later memories like solving geometry proofs. Going to your first Prom. And volunteering at your former elementary school. We learn a lot about ourselves when we take a minute to remember where we came from and how we got to be the way we are today.

If you're like me, there was probably someone who helped inspire you along the way. More than likely, that person was a teacher.

I had a number of excellent teachers growing up here in Helena, but one that I'll always remember is Jack Cohn. He was my football coach at Helena High. He also was my math teacher.

Jack would be the first to tell you that I wasn't his best student in the classroom or his strongest player on the field. But I always knew that Jack respected me. He knew I'd always give whatever I was working on everything I had. And I always wanted to give my best for Jack because I knew he cared. Even after I went off to college, Jack and I remained good friends. I know that I'm the person I am today in part because of Jack.

In addition to congratulating all of you outstanding students, I want to personally thank the teachers at Helena High and Helena Capital each student will honor tonight.

You teach. You empathize. You seek to understand. You care. And you inspire.

You help train the next generation of leaders for Montana. You're helping to build and strengthen Montana's workforce.

Education is the key in creating more good-paying jobs and boosting our state's economy. And you're a key part of that effort. Thank you for your dedication to your profession and to these students.

I want to especially thank Cindy Lewis with the Helena Education Foundation for coordinating this event. Thank you for all of your hard work.

I'd also like to thank Bruce Messinger with Helena School District for all of his work and dedication to the students of Helena School District.

And a big thank you to Tom Trebon (Truh-BONE) with Carroll College for hosting this event tonight. Thank you for all of your help.

Together, these honored teachers and students represent the best of our Helena schools, and I'm very proud of all of you. Congratulations!