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Jeannette Rankin Awards Banquet

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6:30 PM WELCOME REMARKS

(Guests to be seated for dinner)

I'd like to welcome everyone to the first annual Jeannette Rankin Awards banquet honoring the courage and leadership of one of our great Montana heroes.

Before we all sit down for dinner, I'd just like to take a moment to share why we are here.

We are here to honor the kind of Montana moral fabric that can withstand the trials of history.

We honor the women who have led the way.

Women like Jeannette Rankin.

Someone once said:

“One candle can wipe out darkness, one laugh can conquer gloom and one life can make a difference.”

The four women we honor tonight have made a huge difference in the lives of others.

They are here, lighting up the room with their inspiring stories. I’m looking forward to sharing their stories with you. Please take your seats. The program will begin shortly.

Enjoy your dinner.

6:50 PM INTRODUCTION

Someone once said: “A woman’s place is in the House...and in the Senate.”

Let me just say: this year, it’s been so terrific to have a record number of women colleagues serving in the U.S. Senate.

It’s so great to see so many good friends here tonight – thanks for being here.

First and foremost, before we mention any of the stars here tonight: I want to recognize my wife, Mel.

She’s dedicated her life to fighting for justice.

Thank you for being here, Mel.

Our sisters, mothers and daughters worked side-by-side with men to shape the Big Sky Country we know today.

Women have held our communities together and blazed new trails for our state.

In Montana, we are proud to have sent the first woman to Congress – Jeanette Rankin.

She was tough, worked hard and had the resolve to do what's right.

She also thought outside the box.

Does anyone know how Jeannette Rankin was able to win at a time when women were denied the right to vote?

She visited high school government classes around the state.

She knew that students and their parents talked around the dinner table.

And, she knew that if she could get those high school students excited about her ideas – the influence would be contagious.

It worked. That's the kind of spirit we're here to honor tonight.

7:00 Jeanette Rankin "Community Leader" Award:

LYNDA MOSS

The first person I'd like to recognize is Lynda Moss.

Lynda has a passion for public service.

She served in the Montana legislature from 2004 - 2012 and was well-respected by her peers.

As executive director for the Western Heritage Foundation, Lynda worked hard to preserve our unique Montana history for generations to come.

She is a tireless advocate for the Billings community.

Lynda is also a leader for all Montanans through her work on the Women's Mural Project at the state capitol.

Her work will truly help honor the unsung heroines who have helped built our communities and our state.

Join me in thanking Lynda – the recipient of our first Jeannette Rankin “Community Leader” Award.

Everyone, let's hear it for Lynda!

{Applause, Award Presentation/Photo Op}

{Lynda Moss Remarks 2-5 minutes}

7:05 PM Jeanette Rankin “Leadership” Award: MITZI

VORACHEK

Another hero we recognize tonight: Mitzi Vorachek.

She is a fighter.

Mitzi is a cancer survivor who uplifts those who are lucky enough to know her.

She is the kind of person you want in your corner.

She knows that a woman’s health care choices should be between her, her family and her doctor.

Women’s rights are not the place for political games.

Mitzi has served on the Planned Parenthood Board since 2007.

Mitzi is a strong and unwavering voice for victims of domestic violence and sexual assault.

Earlier this month, the Senate's strong version of the Violence Against Women Act became law.

The bill supports 50 programs across Montana designed to give victims shelter, resources to heal and opportunities to rebuild their lives.

Those programs only work with people like Mitzi leading the way.

Her daughter, Joanna, is with us tonight to help us honor Mitzi's contributions.

Please join me in recognizing our Jeannette Rankin "Leadership" Award winner: Mitzi Vorachek.

{Applause, Award Presentation/Photo Op}

{Mitzi Voracheck Remarks 2-5 minutes}

7:10 PM Jeanette Rankin “Trailblazer” Award: DENISE

JUNEAU

It’s not enough to elect women leaders.

**We need folks from Indian Country in office. We
always have.**

**We are proud to have Denise Juneau as our first
Native American elected to statewide office.**

**She is the first, and we must work together to make
sure she is not the last.**

Denise is a real trailblazer.

Our sisters and daughters can look up to her and believe:

I, too, could be elected to serve all Montanans.

Our young Native Americans can look up to her and believe: I too can help lead all Montanans.

Denise is proof of a theory I have.

You show me a real leader, and I'll show you someone who has a teacher in his or her family.

The Juneau family has a rich history of leading through education.

We are so lucky to have Denise as our Superintendent of Public Instruction.

With Denise at the helm, Montana is leading the Northwest in promoting Indian education, involving Indians on advisory boards and providing scholarships for college-bound Indian students.

On her watch, Montana's fourth and eighth graders dramatically improved math scores – becoming the 3rd best in the nation.

She's committed to raising the level of achievement for all Montana students.

She's strong, smart, and dedicated to leaving our state in better shape than we found it for our kids and grandkids.

**Please join me in recognizing our Jeannette Rankin
"Trailblazer" Award winner, Denise Juneau!**

{Applause, Award Presentation/Photo Op}

{Denise Juneau Remarks 5-10 minutes}

7:25 INTRODUCTION TO STEPHANIE SCHRIOCK

We are so lucky to have one of Butte America's finest back in Montana with us tonight.

When I think of Stephanie Schriock: three words come to mind.

EVERY. VOTE. COUNTS.

We all know Senator Tester and what a great guy he is.

But once upon a time: not a lot of Montanans knew who he was.

And very few thought he had a real chance at knocking off Republican incumbent Conrad Burns.

He won by 3,500 votes.

Stephanie helped Jon win.

A few years later when the balance of the U.S. Senate hinged upon another tight race – this time it was in Minnesota – there was Stephanie.

She led the \$12 million recount effort to ensure every vote counted.

Thanks in part to her dogged efforts – Senator Al Franken won...by 312 votes.

Earlier I mentioned how proud I was to start a new Congress this year with a record number of women colleagues in the Senate.

We can thank Stephanie for her part.

She leads EMILY's List – an organization driven by the desire to see that more women get elected.

EMILY's List works.

They've helped elect 100 pro-choice Democratic women to Congress.

19 Senators. 10 Governors. And hundreds of women to state and local offices across the nation.

Stephanie is a winner.

She's the kind of person Vince Lombardi described when he once said:

“Winning means you're willing to go longer, work harder and give more than anyone else.”

That's why, I'm proud to give Stephanie our Jeanette Rankin Honorary Award.

Jeannette Rankin was the first woman to address the Montana Legislature back in 1916.

She said: “I may be the first woman member of Congress, but I won't be the last.”

**Thanks to Stephanie and her work on EMILY'S list –
more women than ever have the resources to become
leaders and win.**

**She is truly paving the way for women and all
Americans committed to our democratic values.**

**Everyone – please welcome Butte's own, Stephanie
Schriock.**

{Applause, Award Presentation/Photo Op}

7:30 PM KEYNOTE: STEPHANIE SCHRIOCK

15 minutes

7:45 PM CLOSING REMARKS

Thank you for making our first annual Jeannette Rankin Awards dinner a success.

Please be thinking of women you'd like to recognize for next year and keep me posted!

It's important to take time to thank those who work so hard to put others before themselves and fight the good fight every day.

I look forward to hearing your ideas.

Have a great night.

{EVENT CONCLUDES}