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## House of Representatives

Statement by Representative Gerald E. Connolly  
Recognizing the Recipients of the 2009 Beat the Odds Awards

HON. GERALD E. CONNOLLY  
OF VIRGINIA

**MR. CONNOLLY:** Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize the recipients of the 2009 Beat the Odds Awards. These extraordinary youth are recognized by the Prince William County Bar Foundation for their determination to overcome adversity and lead a full, productive life.

The narrative of these awards is truly compelling. To qualify for a Beat the Odds award, a youth must have come into contact with the juvenile justice system. Despite this potential obstacle, Beat the Odds Award recipients have strived to overcome abuse, neglect or juvenile delinquency with an earnest effort to realize a successful future.

It is my great honor to commend the following individuals who have risen above substantial negative influences and are now being recognized as community success stories:

Recipients of the 2009 Beat the Odds Phoenix Award are: Jessi Danner, Angela Garcia, Cynthia Hubler, Sha-Kina Jackson, and Maria Ann Sisson.

Recipients of the 2009 Beat the Odds Scholarship Award are: Diana S. Alvarado, Howard James Artis, Courtney Blaydes, Ian Gabriel Byrd, Breanna Lee West Chrisman, Christopher England, Kendra A. Hedgespeth, Devon Kennedy, Brittani Nicole Rodriguez, Yaileen Rodriguez, and Rebecca L. Smith.

Madam Speaker, I ask that my colleagues join me in congratulating these young people for the positive example they set for their peers. Our community sends a powerful message to our youth when we encourage them to triumph over setbacks and to gain strength from hardship. The over \$100,000 of Beat the Odds scholarships awarded thus far is a resounding endorsement of that message.