

The Connecticut General Assembly



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
June 18, 2008

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CONNECTICUT HALL OF FAME MEMBERS ANNOUNCE SECOND SET OF INDUCTEES

Honors for Marian Anderson, Harry Gray, Jackie Robinson and Ralph Sturges

Hartford – During a special awards ceremony, the members of the Connecticut Hall of Fame Committee, **Senators Joseph Crisco (D-Woodbridge), Sam Caligiuri (R-Waterbury) and Representatives Elizabeth “Betty” Boukus (D-Plainville), Michael Caron (R-Danielson)** announced the second set of inductees to the Connecticut Hall of Fame, which is located on the second floor break-out area of the Legislative Office Building.

The Connecticut Hall of Fame is designed to recognize current or former residents of Connecticut who have distinguished themselves in their profession and performed outstanding service to our state or nation. The first three honorees, Katharine Hepburn, Mark Twain and Igor Sikorsky were inducted into the Hall of Fame during a ceremony in February, 2007.

The 2008 Connecticut Hall of Fame inductees are:

- **Marian Anderson**, the first Black opera singer to perform with the Metropolitan Opera is considered to be Connecticut’s Voice of Freedom. A powerful contralto, she made history in 1939 with her concert at the Lincoln Memorial after the Daughters of the American Revolution refused to let her perform at Constitution Hall because she was Black. Marian Anderson was born in Philadelphia, but for many years her home was in Danbury.
- **Harry J. Gray**, one of the outstanding business managers in the United States is the retired Chief Executive Officer and Chairman of United Technologies. He is a well known philanthropist. The cancer center at Hartford Hospital is named after Harry Gray and his wife Helen.
- **Jackie Robinson** broke the color barrier in major league baseball. He was the first Black man to play major league baseball in the 20th century when he was signed to play with the Brooklyn Dodgers in 1947. He promoted black businesses and was a civil rights advocate. Jackie Robinson moved to Stamford after he retired from baseball. He was inducted into the Baseball Hall of Fame in 1962.
- **Chief Ralph Sturges** was the lifetime leader of the Mohegan tribe. He was instrumental in helping the tribe gained federal recognition. He also worked with financial supporters to help develop and build the Mohegan Sun Casino, one of the leading Native American owned casinos in the world. Chief Sturges died last October at the age of 88.

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“This is one small way we can say thank you to individuals who have done so much for the state, the nation and for society. The legacy of these individuals will always live on for what they have achieved,” said **Senator Crisco**. “The Hall of Fame is also important to the education for the thousands of students who visit the Capitol every year. One or more of these inductees could serve as a role model to our young people.”

"Congratulations to everyone who is being inducted into the Connecticut Hall of Fame. Connecticut is a finer place to live because of your contributions to our state, and we are proud to add your names to the list of those who will be forever honored by your fellow state citizens. I am especially pleased to personally welcome Harry Gray as an inductee. Mr. Gray's impressive list of contributions to our state as both a business leader and a philanthropist has truly brought honor and distinction to Connecticut. Mr. Gray, and his fellow inductees, have earned their places in the Connecticut Hall of Fame," said **Senator Sam Caligiuri**.

“Connecticut’s borders are small, but its contributions are great. Once again we gather to honor those whose achievements have benefited society. The 2008 class of inductees to the Connecticut Hall of Fame is an incredible group. We should all be proud of their deep connections to our state,” said **Representative Boukus**.

“These are people who made a commitment and a contribution not just to Connecticut but to the nation, said **Representative Caron**. “For the second year, we are inducting a mix of outstanding people, both native born and those who found Connecticut a good place to make their mark in life.”

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