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## House of Representatives

**A TRIBUTE RECOGNIZING SARAH LOWE AND  
SONJA STEPTOE ON THEIR RECENT  
APPOINTMENT TO THE KNIGHT  
COMMISSION ON INTERCOLLEGIATE  
ATHLETICS**

A SPEECH OF  
**HON. LUCILLE ROYBAL-ALLARD**  
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
TUESDAY, JUNE 17, 2008

Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize Sarah Lowe and Sonja Steptoe, two residents of California's 34th District, on their recent appointment to the Knight Commission on Intercollegiate Athletics.

The Knight Commission was created by the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation in 1989 with the purpose of recommending a reform agenda that emphasizes academic values in college sports. The commission, which presented recommendations in a series of reports in the early 1990s and in the subsequent A Call to Action in 2001, continues to monitor and report on progress in increasing presidential control, academic integrity, financial integrity and independent certification of programs in college athletics.

Many of the commission's recommended reforms have been enacted by the NCAA. For example, the NCAA recently announced that 218 teams at 123 institutions will be sanctioned for failing to meet minimum academic benchmarks established as part of the Academic Performance Program. In 2001, the Knight Commission on Intercollegiate Athletics advocated that teams be ineligible for postseason competition if they failed to graduate at least 50 percent of their athletes. Although the current benchmarks are lower than those advocated by the Commission, the Commission has supported the full implementation of the NCAA's program since its adoption in 2004.

The commission convenes several times a year to highlight important issues facing intercollegiate athletics, including academic integrity and the rising costs of college athletic programs.

The Commission is comprised of prominent leaders in higher education and journalism as well as former collegiate athletes who have achieved excellence throughout their careers. I am proud to announce that Sonja Steptoe and Sarah Lowe are two of the Knight Commission's newest members.

Sonja Steptoe serves as client development manager at O'Melveny & Myers LLP, an international law firm based in Los Angeles. Prior to joining O'Melveny in 2007, Steptoe served as a senior correspondent and deputy news director for Time Magazine for 5 years following a successful career in sports journalism. Steptoe reported and wrote for CNN's sports network, HBO's RealSports with Bryant Gumbel and Sports Illustrated. Her investigation of East Germany's systematic doping of Olympic athletes earned her an Emmy Award for Outstanding Sports Journalism. Steptoe earned degrees in economics and journalism at the University of Missouri. She received a law degree from Duke University.

Sarah Lowe graduated magna cum laude and Phi Beta Kappa from the University of Florida in May 2006. Lowe was a leader on the women's basketball team serving as team captain 3 of her 4 years. Following her graduation, she studied in Costa Rica as a Fulbright Scholar. In addition to being a two-time Rhodes scholar finalist, she received numerous awards for her academic and athletics excellence including the Arthur Ashe, Jr. 2006 Female Sport Scholar of the Year.

Madam Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating Sonja and Sarah on their achievements and in commending them for their continued commitment to strengthening higher education through their work on the Knight Commission on Intercollegiate Athletics.

