

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

HONORING ASHLEY DUNBAR AS A DISTINGUISHED LEADER IN CENTRAL FLORIDA FOR BLACK HISTORY MONTH

HON. DARREN SOTO

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, February 23, 2024

Mr. SOTO. Mr. Speaker, Ashley Dunbar is a passionate, experienced trial attorney and a New Jersey native. Ms. Dunbar received her bachelor's degree from Villanova University and her Juris Doctor from the University of Florida Levin College of Law. While in law school, Ashley competed on the Black Law Students Association International Negotiation Team and advanced to the Final Four as a first-year student. The following year, she was appointed to be the team coach.

Ashley also competed on the University of Florida Alternative Dispute Resolution Team, served as the executive articles editor for the Journal of Law and Public Policy, presided as the vice president of the Black Law Students Association, and served as the community service chair for the Florida Association for Women Lawyers and for the Caribbean Law Students Association.

Ms. Dunbar began her legal career as a public defender, where she tried over 25 cases ranging from juvenile matters to felonies punishable by life. Additionally, Ms. Dunbar collaborated on several successful appeals and reached countless satisfactory settlements through effective negotiation and motion practice. Ms. Dunbar then gained substantial experience in civil litigation as an associate at McDonald Toole Wiggins and as in-house counsel for Progressive Insurance.

In addition to her legal career, Ashley dedicates substantial time to helping the community directly. She has led and participated in numerous protests, coordinated donation drives, mentored young scholars, and planned pro bono events in Orlando. Ashley has also chaired the Community Outreach Committee for the Paul C. Perkins Bar Association as well as served on the Justice Advisory Committee under Congressman DARREN SOTO in collaboration with fellow leaders in Florida to review the Justice in Policing Act of 2020 and other policy issues.

In her spare time, Ashley enjoys fitness, competing in bodybuilding competitions, traveling, and good food.

On February 22, 2024, Ashley Dunbar was honored as a distinguished leader in Central Florida for Black History Month.

HONORING THE LIFE OF CAPTAIN JACK CASEY

HON. CHRIS PAPPAS

OF NEW HAMPSHIRE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, February 23, 2024

Mr. PAPPAS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life and service of Captain Jack Casey of Dover, New Hampshire.

On February 7, 2024, Captain Casey was among 4 other Marines who tragically died in a CH-53E helicopter crash in Pine Valley, California.

Captain Casey was commissioned in the Marine Corps on May 16, 2019, and was promoted to the rank of Captain on September 1, 2023. As a Marine, Captain Casey was a member of the 3rd Marine Aircraft Wing's Marine Heavy Helicopter Squadron 361, nicknamed the Flying Tigers, where he was a pilot. During his career, Captain Casey was awarded the National Defense Service Medal.

Captain Casey and his family are well known and loved throughout his hometown of Dover, New Hampshire, where he attended Saint Mary Academy and St. Thomas Aquinas High School. After graduation, he went on to attend Virginia Military Institute (VMI) where he was a physics major and Company I commander for the 2018–2019 academic year. After graduating from VMI, he trained at flight school in Corpus Christi.

Captain Casey truly loved his life and lived it in service to others. He married his beloved wife Emma on December 3, 2022. Among his fellow service members, classmates, and friends, Captain Casey was known as a charismatic, helpful, and humble young man that made a positive impact on all. Back home, community leaders and teachers knew him as not only a smart and energetic student, but also a kind and joyous individual with a bright future. We are forever grateful for his selfless service and ultimate sacrifice.

During this difficult time, my thoughts and condolences are with his wife Emma, his parents Catherine and James, his siblings, James, Patrick, Sean, and Catherine, and all of Captain Casey's loved ones. On behalf of the constituents of New Hampshire's First Congressional District, I commend Captain Casey for his service and sacrifice to our Nation. He will be dearly missed.

COMMENDATION OF MISSY RAVER

HON. DAN NEWHOUSE

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, February 23, 2024

Mr. NEWHOUSE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Missy Raver of Yakima, Washington for her passion and work in the hop and beer industry over the last 20 years.

Ms. Raver holds the position of Senior Vice President of Grower Relations, Quality and ERM at Yakima Chief Hops.

Her experiences include working with growers on education to improve hop quality and sustainability, as well as leading Yakima Chief Hops to obtain and maintain several international quality, environmental, and food safety certifications.

She leads the team that performs all hop quality testing on their hop products, and more recently led the development and implementation of their enterprise risk management system.

Missy is a well-respected figure in the hop industry, having been active on several committees that support growers, as well as being a former president of the Hop Research Council.

It is an honor to represent hardworking constituents throughout Central Washington, including those in the hop and beer industry like Missy.

HONORING COACH ALBERT BATES AS A DISTINGUISHED LEADER IN CENTRAL FLORIDA FOR BLACK HISTORY MONTH

HON. DARREN SOTO

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, February 23, 2024

Mr. SOTO. Mr. Speaker, Coach Albert Bates is one of the leading pioneers in introducing youth sports to the Poinciana community alongside King Baker and Linda Cantreva. After the previous leadership decided to discontinue managing the Poinciana Predators to return home back north, he began coaching for the Predators in 1992. He wanted to help continue the development of youth sports programs in the Poinciana area because Poinciana back then was an underdeveloped community, and there was only one other program for the children in a fast-growing community to get involved in.

He became the president of the Poinciana Predators in the mid-90s. At that time, the Predators played in the Central Florida Conference from 1992 to 2000. Coach Bates and other league presidents decided to leave the Central Florida Conference, and by doing so, they created the Mid-Florida Football and Cheer Conference in 1999. In 2000, the Poinciana Predators officially joined the MFFCC. During the existence of the MFFCC, Coach Bates held multiple titles, including two terms as the president of the conference.

Due to the tremendous pressure of starting and helping to manage the MFFCC, he had to step away from managing the Predators. In 2006, after successfully helping the MFFCC flourish and grow, Coach Bates returned as the president of the Predators. In 2006, Coach Bates was not only the president of the Predators, but he was also president of the MFFCC. In 2006, the Predators became members of American Youth Football while remaining an active member of the MFFCC.

In 2008, Coach Mike Ditka of the Chicago Bears presented Coach Bates with the AYF

• This “bullet” symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.

Hall of Fame award. Coach Bates was inducted into the AYF Hall of Fame for his long-time service in working with the youth in Central Florida and abroad. In 2008, Coach Bates returned to the role of president of the Predators and continued holding multiple titles within the MFFCC. In 2010, Coach Bates also worked with others and established AAU Tackle youth Football in Central Florida.

Coach Bates has influenced multiple families' lives through his service to the Poinciana community and throughout Central Florida. In 2011, Coach Bates did the groundbreaking when Osceola County dedicated the football field to the Poinciana Predators at Vance Harmon Park.

Coach Bates has been a pillar in the community and a role model to the youth who have come through the program. Coach Bates' influence is so inspiring that former players and cheerleaders return to volunteer as coaches and mentors to the children in the Poinciana area.

On February 22, 2024, Coach Albert Bates was honored as a distinguished leader in Central Florida for Black History Month.

RECOGNIZING THE SECOND ANNIVERSARY OF THE ONGOING WAR IN UKRAINE AND THE BRAVERY OF THE UKRAINIAN PEOPLE

HON. MIKIE SHERRILL

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, February 23, 2024

Ms. SHERRILL. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize the second anniversary of the Russian invasion of Ukraine and the courageous defensive efforts of the Ukrainian people since February 24, 2022, fighting to protect their homeland.

During my two trips to Ukraine, once right before the war and another during, I saw firsthand the grit and determination of the Ukrainian people. Many thought Russia's military was the second best in the world; two years later we've come to find it is actually only the second best in Ukraine. Since 2022, the Ukrainian people have fought bravely—defying the odds by holding onto their Capital, Kyiv, keeping the Port of Odessa open for the world food supply, and strengthening their eastern manufacturing sector.

As Congresswoman for New Jersey's 11th Congressional District, I represent one of the largest Ukrainian American populations in the United States. Throughout this conflict, this vibrant community has organized many inspiring efforts to send medical and other needed supplies to Ukraine—collecting and sending over \$4 million of aid through just one local cultural center. Each time I have the honor of meeting with President Volodymyr Zelenskyy, including earlier this week at the Munich Security Conference, I tell him about the Ukrainian American community in New Jersey and the vast support he and the Ukrainian people have in our state.

New Jersey's 11th Congressional District is also proud to support Ukraine with ammunition and the M-777 Howitzers that are ensuring Ukrainians can keep up the fight against Russia developed by our military base, Picatinny Arsenal.

For New Jerseyans—supporting Ukraine is not a matter of partisan politics. Democratic or

Republican, New Jersey leaders, from the very beginning, have stood up for Ukraine. We understand the existential threat this poses on global democracy and the damage that would incur if we leave Russian aggression unchecked. America has stood by our ally since the beginning of this war and we must not turn our back on them now.

Slava Ukraine.

HONORING KAYDENCE TATE ON RECEIVING THE 2024 YOUTH OF THE YEAR AWARD

HON. RICHARD HUDSON

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, February 23, 2024

Mr. HUDSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Kaydence Tate on receiving the 2024 Youth of the Year award from the Boys and Girls Club of the Sandhills.

Kaydence is a sophomore at Pinecrest High School and has been a member of the Boys & Girls Club of the Sandhills (BGCS) for over four years. Since she joined back in 2019, Kaydence has been an incredibly active member of this acclaimed organization in more ways than one. Earlier this year, she won the Boys and Girls Club of America's Career Launch Essay Contest. Furthermore, she serves as President of the Keystone Club of BGCS, a platform she uses to help engage with her passion of working with the homeless population, especially providing them with nutrition services.

However, Kaydence's dedication to service does not stop there. In addition to helping assist the homeless population, both on her own time and with the Keystone Club, Kaydence also spends time working in the dining hall at Gracious Living Retirement Center, helping to serve food to the residents. She views service as a lifelong commitment, with her long-term goal being to obtain a nursing degree and ultimately become an OB/GYN.

Kaydence is a model student and citizen, and I cannot think of anyone more deserving of this award than her. I know I speak for the whole of our community when I say that Moore County is a better place because of her efforts.

Mr. Speaker, please join me today in congratulating Kaydence Tate on receiving this award and in wishing her all the best in her future endeavors.

HONORING CELESTIA L. McCLOUD AS A DISTINGUISHED LEADER IN CENTRAL FLORIDA FOR BLACK HISTORY MONTH

HON. DARREN SOTO

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, February 23, 2024

Mr. SOTO. Mr. Speaker, Celestia L. McCloud is a native of Winter Haven, Florida and the youngest child of the late Richard and Shirley McCloud and is a lifelong member of the AME church. She graduated from Winter Haven High School, Florida State University with a bachelor's degree in sociology, and Troy State University with a master's degree in public administration.

After completing her education, her professional work began in public service with the Department of Juvenile Justice, working with youth involved in the court system experiencing delinquent behaviors. After leaving the DJJ in 1996, she began her career at Orlando Housing Authority, where she worked until 2010. During her 14 years at OHA, she held positions that allowed her to work with people in various roles to encourage self-improvement and self-sufficiency.

Her most recent chapter with the Osceola County government began in 2010. Over the last 14 years at Osceola County, she mostly held the housing and community services director position. She is very proud of the work that the department has accomplished and is most proud of the great team she continues to build. She understands that her success is mostly because of the hardworking and dedicated staff in the department, as well as the support of county administration and the commissioners.

The department continues to thrive and accomplish great things through services to the community and the citizens of all income and economic levels. Some of the highlights over the last few years include several affordable housing partnership deals, managing HUD expectations in the areas of an entitlement community and Section 8 as a high performer, ongoing management of homelessness efforts, and the administering of COVID-19 funds just to name a few. She was also just awarded the 2004 Lt. Lloyd Burton Jr. Service Award.

On February 22, 2024, Celestia L. McCloud was honored as a distinguished leader in Central Florida for Black History Month.

RECOGNIZING THE ACCOMPLISHMENTS OF THE CONGRESSIONAL YOUTH COUNCIL

HON. LISA C. McCLAIN

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, February 23, 2024

Mrs. McCLAIN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize an exceptional group of young students who have worked with my staff and me to better their civic engagement and understanding of the federal government.

This year's Congressional Youth Council consists of some of the brightest and most dedicated young minds from throughout the Thumb of Michigan. These young leaders have remained committed to regular meetings, coming together to immerse themselves in the legislative process on a non-partisan, academic basis. Throughout their time in the program, these students have studied legislation, prepared mock bills, and worked to better understand critical issues that impact their communities and countless families across the country. It is incredible how in-depth and thorough their work has been.

This determined group of students has demonstrated an incredible wealth of knowledge of our democratic system, its key challenges, and what is to come in the future.

Mr. Speaker, as policymakers, we would be wise to take notes from this generation of promising young leaders. I ask all my colleagues to join me in commending Michigan's Ninth District Congressional Youth Council for their outstanding performance this year. These

students, along with their families and those in their lives who support them, should be incredibly proud of the work they have done.

RECOGNIZING AMY TRUJILLO

HON. BRITTANY PETTERSEN

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, February 23, 2024

Ms. PETTERSEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize Amy Trujillo for receiving Denver7's "Everyday Hero" award in recognition of her service to the Wheat Ridge community.

Amy has been volunteering for the Wheat Ridge Parks and Recreation's 50+ Trip & Outdoor Recreation (Ramblers) Program since 2021. This was a critical time for Wheat Ridge Parks and Rec, as they were rebuilding and restarting programs shuttered during the pandemic. During a time of staff shortages, Amy led volunteer trips to hiking destinations, concerts, hot springs, and much more from as far south as Pueblo and as far north as Cheyenne, Wyoming. Without the help of volunteers like Amy, the Ramblers Program could have been canceled and the trips and experiences they offer our seniors would not have been possible.

On behalf of the people of Colorado's Seventh Congressional District, it is my honor to congratulate Amy Trujillo for her extraordinary civic service and thank her for her dedication to our community.

HONORING NINA GLEE HILL AS A DISTINGUISHED LEADER IN CENTRAL FLORIDA FOR BLACK HISTORY MONTH

HON. DARREN SOTO

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, February 23, 2024

Mr. SOTO. Mr. Speaker, Mrs. Nina Glee Hill was born and reared in Orlando, Florida, and is a 1975 graduate of Jones High School. After graduation, she and her family decided to make Kissimmee, Florida, their home.

She is the mother of two sons, Cory and Jarvis, and grandmother of five. She is the matriarch of her family, not excluding extended family and friends, and enjoys spending her time with them all. Nina began a career in the medical field, where she enjoyed over 30 years as a massage therapist and front desk outpatient coordinator for HCA Florida Osceola Regional.

Nina offers her assistance in her community as an advocate for those in need. She sits on the Citizens Police Review Board for the Kissimmee Police Department and has held positions as first and second vice president for NAACP, Branch 5121 of Osceola County. She is presently nominated for president of this branch. Her major concern is the initiative to get more people out to vote.

She is recognized in the literary world as an accomplished author. She has been the Mistress of Ceremony for the African American Read-In for several years, hosted by the City of Kissimmee and Osceola Library for Black History Month.

Nina feels that her greatest accomplishment is her call to the ministry. She is licensed and

ordained, and now pastor's her own church, which will soon celebrate their third year as Agape Faith Based Ministries.

On February 22, 2024, Nina Glee Hill was honored as a distinguished leader in Central Florida for Black History Month.

RECOGNIZING JAMESON FRENCH'S 70TH BIRTHDAY

HON. CHRIS PAPPAS

OF NEW HAMPSHIRE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, February 23, 2024

Mr. PAPPAS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of Jameson (Jamey) French of Portsmouth, New Hampshire, on the occasion of his 70th birthday. Jamey has dedicated his life thus far to New Hampshire and its forest industry, impacting our state and public lands immensely. As President and CEO of Northland Forest Products, Inc., headquartered in Kingston, New Hampshire, and a 4th generation business owner, a passion for the forest industry's interests runs deep in Jamey.

Throughout Jamey's career, he focused on creating sensible solutions to forest usage issues while bringing the forest products industry and the environmental community to a common ground. Jamey was one of a small group of industry leaders in the mid-1990s who embraced the concept of forest certification. Jamey played an instrumental role in forming the national initiative for the Forest Stewardship Council in the United States (FSC-US) and was elected to the FSC-US Board for three years, serving as the first chairman from the economic sector. In addition to receiving many honors and awards, including the Sustainable Standard Setter Award by the Rainforest Alliance in 2004, Jamey is the Vice Chair of the National Wildlife Federation Action Fund and chairs Friends Forever International.

Over the last several decades, Jamey has donated his time, energy, and expertise to local, regional, and national environmental and charitable organizations. His deep-rooted passion for his work and community earned him the title of Portsmouth's most friendly face and a placement on The Portsmouth Herald's top 10 Most Influential list. Outside his dedication to New Hampshire's forests, Jamey's time is devoted to his wife and three beautiful children. On behalf of my constituents in New Hampshire's First Congressional District, I want to recognize Jamey French on his 70th birthday for his lifetime achievements. He continues to amaze the individuals of New Hampshire with his pure devotion to environmental advocacy, and I look forward to seeing what his next chapter holds. I wish him all the best in his future endeavors.

COMMENDATION OF BRICE HIATT OF JOHN I. HAAS, INC.

HON. DAN NEWHOUSE

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, February 23, 2024

Mr. NEWHOUSE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Brice Hiatt of John I. Haas, Inc. in Yakima, Washington.

Brice is a veteran of the hop industry and has been with John I. Haas, Inc. for over 40 years. He is an asset to the team at the HAAS Yakima Golding Farm in Yakima which is home to over 1,800 acres of trellised fields, harvesting facilities, hop kilns, and bailing operations.

Using his expertise and passion, Brice helped to design a state-of-the-art pellet plant that ensures the highest quality pellets from every hop variety. HAAS has been refining the pellet-making process for over five decades, and Brice has been at the forefront of this innovation.

He exemplifies true leadership qualities and his dedication to hops has helped HAAS deliver the highest quality products to its customers across the state and country. His colleagues have called him the "hop pellet whisperer" which even further illustrates Brice's devotion to his work.

It is an honor to represent hardworking individuals like Brice, and all the employees at the HAAS Yakima Golding Farm who provide the best hops throughout Central Washington and beyond.

HONORING THE LEGACY OF THE HONORABLE JUDGE HERBERT E. MILLEN AND BLACK HISTORY MONTH

HON. LLOYD SMUCKER

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, February 23, 2024

Mr. SMUCKER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to acknowledge the importance of February as Black History Month, a time to remember and celebrate the accomplishments of African Americans in the United States.

In that spirit, I want to recognize the Honorable Judge Herbert E. Millen of Strasburg, PA. Judge Millen was a man of great integrity, high-esteem, and persistent courage.

Judge Millen was born in 1888 in Lancaster, Pennsylvania. The Millen name is well-known in Lancaster County for being actively involved in their community and promoting equality following the Civil War.

In the fall of 1906, Judge Millen enrolled at Lincoln University of Oxford, PA, to study Sociology and Economics. There, he established himself as a powerful orator by participating in competitions.

In 1917, he was accepted into the University of Pennsylvania Law School. Upon graduating, he began working for George Mitchell, a lawyer who advocated for racial justice. Mitchell's approach espoused faith in our justice system, a conviction shared by a young Judge Millen.

In his fight for equality, Judge Millen fought against segregation in Philadelphia public schools by offering legal advice to groups filing complaints.

Judge Millen was continually active in his community, often visiting schools, congregations, and fundraising for Mercy and Frederick Douglas Hospitals.

Despite his widespread public support, he was continually passed over to serve as a judge in the Pennsylvania Courts due to his race. Yet, he never ceased fighting for a seat to bring representation of African Americans in the Pennsylvania justice system.

This changed in 1947, when he was appointed to a vacancy in Philadelphia's Municipal Court.

We are proud of the work of Judge Millen in the 11th District. Strasburg Heritage Society Magazine recently published an article celebrating Judge Millen's legacy. Remarks from his funeral by Reverend E. Luther Cunningham expressed, "He brought a sincerity of dedication, an integrity of mind, and a grasp of principle which commanded the respect of all associated with him."

Mr. Speaker, the Honorable Judge Millen embodies the spirit of what we celebrate during Black History Month. Today, we remember and honor his legacy and continue to advocate for a more just world.

CONGRATULATING THE FORMATION OF AMERICA'S CREDIT UNIONS

HON. BRIAN K. FITZPATRICK

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, February 23, 2024

Mr. FITZPATRICK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the importance of credit unions in the financial services marketplace. In Pennsylvania alone, there are 315 active credit unions, representing over 4.9 million members.

America's two national-level credit union trade associations, the Credit Union National Association and the National Association of Federally Insured Credit Unions, recently merged into a new organization called "America's Credit Unions."

As a long-time credit union member and supporter, I appreciate the difference between credit unions and banks. Credit unions are not-for-profit financial cooperatives that are democratically controlled. Every member, regardless of how much they have in savings or loans at a credit union, has an equal voice and vote in the governance of their credit union. Credit unions also have no outside shareholders, allowing these institutions to act purely in the interest of members and provide outstanding member services.

For these reasons, credit unions consistently rank as the most popular form of depository institution in America. I congratulate the formation of America's Credit Unions, now the largest credit union trade association in the United States, and I expect great things to come from this new organization.

HONORING PHYLLIS HANCOCK AS A DISTINGUISHED LEADER IN CENTRAL FLORIDA FOR BLACK HISTORY MONTH

HON. DARREN SOTO

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, February 23, 2024

Mr. SOTO. Mr. Speaker, Phyllis Hancock has been the president of the A. Philip Randolph Institute (APRI) Orlando, Florida chapter, for over 20 years serving Orange, Osceola, Seminole, and Lake Counties. A. Philip Randolph and Bayard Rustin founded the A. Philip Randolph Institute in 1965 to continue the struggle for racial equality, political, and economic justice for all working Americans. APRI is the senior constituency group of the

American Federation of Labor and Congress of Industrial Organizations (AFL-CIO). APRI consists primarily of trade unionists. Phyllis has been a member of the Communications Workers of America (CWA) since 1975. Local CWA 3108 Orlando is where she found her passion for working in the Black community.

Along with the support of her members, she has engaged the community along with students at the Evans High School ROTC in the nonpartisan get-out-the-vote campaign, voter registration/education, sign waving, phone banks, restoration of civil rights, and canvassing within Black communities. APRI hosted voter education activities in local churches, union halls, and community centers in Congressman DARREN SOTO's district. Phyllis' joy comes from watching students enhance their community pride.

Phyllis has run unopposed throughout her tenure partly due to her God-given, harmonious leadership ability. She built the largest APRI chapter in Florida under the direction of the APRI national President Clayola Brown. Her sisters, Sharon, and Fonda were natural leaders. Phyllis' leadership ability was taught and sparked by her mother, Mae Belle Whitley Hancock, Pete Bohaczyk, her Campbell Middle School history teacher, and membership in the Church of Christ.

Phyllis is the middle daughter of three girls born to Jadie and Mae Belle Hancock, Jr. She is a second-generation union member. As a child, she watched her parents host civil rights meetings.

Jadie, a member of the Transport Workers Union, used his influence to help Black people obtain employment at the Kennedy Space Center.

On February 22, 2024, Phyllis Hancock was honored as a distinguished leader in Central Florida for Black History Month.

RECOGNIZING THE RETIREMENT AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS OF DAVID R. CASTELLANO

HON. MIKIE SHERRILL

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, February 23, 2024

Ms. SHERRILL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Mr. David Castellano, who retired this month after 42 years of faithful and dedicated service as a civilian employee of the U.S. Army and in the Senior Executive Service.

After graduating from the New Jersey Institute of Technology, Mr. Castellano chose to apply his knowledge and experience to the U.S. military's armaments enterprise, including at Picatinny Arsenal located in NJ-11. The contributions he has made to our national defense, and to our allies' defense, are enormous, and we all owe him a debt of gratitude.

In 2003, Mr. Castellano was appointed to the Senior Executive Service. He later became the first Executive Director of the Weapons and Software Engineering Center, where he was in charge of over 1,400 employees between Picatinny Arsenal and other installations in New York and Maryland. The Center provides software support for critical combat and weapons systems.

In 2016, Mr. Castellano tackled a new challenge in innovation and modernization efforts

as the Executive Director of the Munitions Engineering and Technology Center at the U.S. Army Combat Capabilities Development Command Armaments Center. There, he led a top team of engineers and researchers in the development and implementation of over 1,200 munitions and armaments systems for the Army, the Marine Corps, and Special Forces combat teams. Thanks to his efforts, the Armaments Center has continued to develop and sustain combat systems that both our warfighters and our allies depend on and will continue to into the future.

In gratitude for his outstanding service, Mr. Castellano has been awarded the Presidential Rank Award, the Secretary of Defense Medal, and the NATO Certificate of Recognition. In addition, he also received several prestigious awards from the National Defense Industrial Association including: the Lt. Gen. Thomas R. Ferguson, Jr. Systems Engineering Excellence Award, the Firepower Development Award, and the John A. Ulrich Lifetime Achievement Award.

I want to thank Mr. Castellano for the critical engineering and systems work that he and his team have done over his career to support our national defense, and I wish him the best for a well-earned and restful retirement.

RECOGNIZING MR. FRANK BEBEREIA

HON. DAVID G. VALADAO

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, February 23, 2024

Mr. VALADAO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate Mr. Frank Bebereia on his 100th birthday and thank him for his service to our Nation. Mr. Bebereia was born in Laton, California on February 22nd, 1924 to Emily Gonzalez and Manuel Bebereia. He grew up in the Central Valley and attended Lemoore High School. Following his graduation, Mr. Laton spent time as a farmer in Hanford before being drafted to serve in World War II. After completing Army boot camp in 1945, he was deployed to the Asiatic-Pacific Theater. During his service, Mr. Bebereia was a member of the 43rd Engineer Construction Battalion, 27th Division. He served in Okinawa, Japan as a Heavy Equipment Operator and quickly moved up the leadership ranks—even being promoted to Sergeant after only 7 months of deployment. Mr. Bebereia received in many awards and recognitions to honor his service during the war, including the Asiatic-Pacific Campaign Medal, World War II Victory Medal, Army of Occupation Medal, and Army Good Conduct Medal. His fellow soldiers often spoke about their time serving with Mr. Bebereia, remembering him as a capable, strong, and fearless leader. Mr. Bebereia was honorably discharged from the U.S. Army in 1946. Following his service in the war, Mr. Bebereia returned to the Central Valley where he's spent most of his life. Today, we honor Mr. Bebereia's service to our country, commitment to his family, and dedication to the Kings County community. Mr. Speaker, I ask all my colleagues in the House of Representatives to join me in honoring the incredible life of Mr. Frank Bebereia and wishing him a happy 100th birthday.

HONORING THE LIFE AND LEGACY
OF JIM GOLDEN

HON. ELISSA SLOTKIN

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, February 23, 2024

Ms. SLOTKIN. Mr. Speaker, today I pay tribute to a man who served his community, his state, and his Nation with pride, and whose loss leaves a void in the hearts and lives of so many.

James Scott Golden was a Petty Officer 3rd Class in the Navy, but if you asked he'd simply smile and tell you he was a "tin can sailor." Jim was referring to his time aboard the *Charles P. Cecil DD835*, a Gearing Class destroyer where he served toward the end of the Vietnam War. All jokes aside, Jim's service had a profound influence on his life, including the moment he sailed into Sardinia and he met a young Navy medic named Ina who was stationed there. The two would eventually marry, settle in Holly, Michigan, and build a life of service together.

In Michigan, Jim went to work for General Motors Skilled Trades, where he would stay until his retirement in 2006. Known around town for his affable demeanor and his generosity, Jim was involved with many local charities and organizations, including Forgotten Harvest, where he and Ina donated food from their own gardens, and the YesterYear Tractor Club, where he repaired and restored old tractors for parades and local festivities.

Because they took so much pride in their own service, Jim and Ina were very involved in the Holly Area Veterans Resource Center, including an annual project to collect and pack boxes of treats and toiletries for military personnel.

One day, Jim struck up a conversation with a local high school student preparing to enlist in the Air Force as a means to pay for college, and she seemed embarrassed about her financial situation and her plan. Jim decided then and there to find a way to uplift and shine a light on community members like her. Together with Ina, he launched the Hometown Heroes project to recognize those going into service with a yellow ribbon on the oak tree in front of Holly Elementary School. This prominent and highly visible location would serve as a constant reminder to all that a community should have both pride in and gratitude for its men and women who are on active duty in the military.

I had the chance to visit this tree with Jim and Ina on a very snowy Veterans Day in 2019—a poignant sight and a tangible symbol of the sacrifices families all across our Nation are making in the moment in defense of our collective freedom. It speaks both to the power of the project and the Golden's themselves that even after they relocated to northern Michigan, and after Jim's passing, their friends at the Holly Area Veterans Resource Center continue to maintain the Hometown Heroes project, tying a ribbon for each departing serviceman or woman, and removing it when that person returns home.

Jim passed away on January 10, 2024, but his kind spirit, his endearing humor, and his legacy of service live on. I send my deepest condolences to Ina, their children, grandchildren, and to all who knew and loved him. Jim Golden, the tin can sailor and ultimate

hometown hero now rests in perpetual peace at the Great Lakes National Cemetery. With profound gratitude for his dedication to our armed forces and his lifelong mission to uplift the service of others.

HONORING REVEREND MATTHEW
AARON QUAINOO AS A
DISTINGUISHED LEADER IN
CENTRAL FLORIDA FOR BLACK
HISTORY MONTH

HON. DARREN SOTO

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, February 23, 2024

Mr. SOTO. Mr. Speaker, in 2019, at the age of 23, Reverend Matthew Aaron Quainoo, Ph.D., became the youngest senior minister in the history of Solid Rock Community Church in Kissimmee, the largest Caribbean/African-American congregation in Central Florida. He also earned his doctorate in American history from Howard University in Washington, D.C., in August of 2022 while pastoring at Solid Rock.

Dr. Quainoo has put his training as a professional historian to good use by leading Solid Rock to serve as the first and only organization in the Ninth Congressional District of Florida to teach the AP African-American Studies course that was banned by the Florida Department of Education free of charge for high school students and members of the community during Black History Month this year.

Under Dr. Quainoo's leadership, Solid Rock Church led Central Florida in offering its first mobile vaccine event in one of the poorest zip codes in Florida at the height of the COVID-19 pandemic. Over the last four years, Solid Rock has fed over 12,000 families experiencing food insecurity through a monthly food pantry. Under Dr. Quainoo's leadership, Solid Rock is the first and currently only church in the City of Kissimmee to offer a cold-night shelter to those experiencing homelessness in Central Florida. Dr. Quainoo is the educational establishmentarian and visionary for the Still We Rise Excellence Academy, a private Christian school housed at Solid Rock Church that is committed to spiritual formation in making disciples of Jesus Christ, academic excellence, and cultural, curricular, and civic courage. This elementary and middle school will teach the Black history that is banned in the state of Florida when it opens in August of 2024.

Dr. Quainoo sits on the Board of the prestigious Hope Partnership, the leading non-profit combating homelessness and poverty in Central Florida, as well as serving as the special advisor of the Black Empowerment Council of Osceola County, a non-profit committed to seeking justice and unity for oppressed persons of color and all disenfranchised people in Central Florida.

Dr. Quainoo is happily married to the beautiful Lady Rhessa Quainoo and has three marvelous sons, Matthew, Martin, and Micah.

On February 22, 2024, Reverend Matthew Aaron Quainoo was honored as a distinguished leader in Central Florida for Black History Month.

RECOGNIZING THE 23RD WINTER
MEETING OF THE OSCE PAR-
LIAMENTARY ASSEMBLY

HON. RICHARD HUDSON

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, February 23, 2024

Mr. HUDSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of the 23rd Winter Meeting of the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe Parliamentary Assembly (OSCE PA) which begins this week in Vienna, Austria.

The Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) is the largest regional security organization in the world and possesses the vital goal of promoting stability, peace, human rights, and democracy across North America and Eurasia. The OSCE traces its roots back to the 1970s and has since grown to include 57 member countries across three continents, many of which are former Soviet states looking to continue their transition into robust, healthy democracies.

The flagship political institution of this organization is the OSCE PA, which gathers as many as 323 legislators from across the OSCE region several times a year to discuss the most pressing issues facing the transatlantic community. Amidst global upheavals, the OSCE PA gives member states a place to use debate and dialogue to express the interests of the people, identify conflicts and commonalities, and pursue common-sense approaches to achieve global goals.

For the past four years, I have served as Chair of the OSCE PA's General Committee on Political Affairs and Security, known as the First Committee. This committee is focused on addressing critical security challenges across the OSCE region. The work of the OSCE PA as a whole and the work of this committee [in particular] have never been more imperative than they are today. In the wake of renewed great power conflict and rising international tensions—trends made most apparent in Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine—the United States and all freedom-loving countries must recommit to our shared democratic values and continue to push back against Putin and all those who seek to trample freedom around the world.

While I regret that I cannot be in Vienna for this year's Winter Meeting, I know the OSCE PA will continue its great work in my absence. I thank all in the Assembly, especially my friends President Pia Kauma, Secretary General Roberto Montella, and First Committee Rapporteur Laurynas Kasciunas, for all they do to keep this institution vibrant and strong. I look forward to joining my OSCE PA colleagues in Bucharest, Romania this summer for the Annual Session of the OSCE PA.

Mr. Speaker, please join me today in recognizing the OSCE, its Parliamentary Assembly, and its many participating states and parliamentarians, and to thank them for all they do to help foster peace and stability around the globe.

HONORING THE LIFE AND LEGACY
OF ROBIE HARRIS

HON. ROSA L. DeLAURO

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, February 23, 2024

Ms. DeLAURO. Mr. Speaker, it is with the fondest of memories and the heaviest of hearts that I rise today to remember author, educator, and my dear friend, Robie Harris, who we lost earlier this year. Robie was an extraordinary woman—a fierce defender of free speech, a dedicated teacher, an inspiring author, as well as a loyal friend and devoted wife and mother. Hers is a remarkable legacy as an advocate for children that will continue to inspire many.

Born in Buffalo, New York, Robie discovered her love for the written word very early in life. As she told it, at just six years old she “published” her first work, *Robie’s Stories*, an assignment from her kindergarten teacher. It was comprised of pictures and journal memories that each child produced every day that were then compiled into a book at the end of the year. As Robie grew up, so did her love of reading, writing, and learning—so much so that she would go on to dedicate her professional life to them.

Robie went on to become the editor of both her high school newspaper as well as her college yearbook. After earning her undergraduate degree at Wheaton College, Robie moved to New York City where she initially found work at the United Nations. However, she knew that this was not her passion, so she pursued a teaching degree at Bank Street College of Education. Following the completion of her degree from Bank Street, she became an elementary school teacher at the Bank Street School for Children, where she taught writing and later directed after-school programs in the school’s new Head Start program.

It was through her work with children, as well as the experience of watching her own children and nieces and nephews grow up, that Robie found a voice as a children’s book author. She was inspired by the many questions and curiosities she heard from them and made it her mission to write and produce books that would help them navigate the many changes they would experience as they moved from one stage of development to the next. Robie’s first book, a collaborative effort with fellow author and friend, Elizabeth Levy was *Before You Were Three: How You Began to Walk, Talk, Explore, and Have Feelings*, and her first solo books included the picture books *Don’t Forget to Come Back* and *I Hate Kisses*.

Over the course of her writing career, Robie maintained her commitment to writing nonfiction, age-appropriate books, writing more than thirty titles that covered a multitude of topics including engineering, architecture, nutrition, math, death, and genetics. But it was her groundbreaking work, *It’s Perfectly Normal: Changing Bodies, Growing Up, and Sexual Health*, a guided preadolescent children on puberty, their changing bodies, sexuality, and sexual health, that was not only her most successful, but also drove Robie’s fierce advocacy for free speech. While praised by medical professionals, child development specialists, and educators for its accuracy, reliability

and for offering children clear guidance on the topic, as well as having been translated into 27 languages and sold one million copies, and having been updated numerous times, including a 25th anniversary edition; this title has ranked among the most frequently challenged and banned books in the country according to the American Library Association.

Robie was an active member of PEN America, an organization that works to protect free expression in the United States and worldwide and champion the freedom to write because they understand the transformational power of words. Robie was a founding member of PEN America’s Children’s and Young Adults Books Committee and she was known for her calm, tactful, yet staunch and unwavering advocacy for the freedom of expression. In an essay for PEN, Robie once wrote, “I write books for children because in some small way I hope that they will find the words I write useful, reassuring, interesting, and at times humorous and also in some small way help them to stay emotionally and/or physically healthy by giving honest, accurate, up-to-date, and age-appropriate information.” Robie was fearless in her defense of her work and that of other writers. She once said in an interview, “This to me is the bottom line on freedom of expression. As a reader, you have the right to speak out for or against whatever you read. As a writer, I have the right to write whatever I want to write—and I am just not going to stop.”

Robie’s passion for working with children, particularly in early childhood development, was a shared mission. Her husband, Bill Harris, is the founder of KidsPac, a group that helped to focus legislators at every level of government on the importance of early childhood education. For more than two decades KidsPac was a leader and respected voice in the advocacy for policies concerning childcare, prenatal health, and early education. Robie and Bill’s activism was integrated into every facet of their lives, so it is no surprise that both of their sons, David and Ben, both followed in their footsteps. David, taking a page from his father’s work, has focused his professional life on research and advocacy for policies that address child poverty. Ben, whose interests more mirrored Robie’s, is now Clinical Professor at the Psychological Center at The City College of New York (CCNY), which provides low-to-moderate-cost services to the CCNY and West Harlem communities. In this role, and throughout his career, he has worked with a socioeconomically and culturally diverse range of children and adolescents as well as adults.

I found a kindred spirit in Robie. She never stopped, and she never took no for an answer. I will forever be grateful for the friendship, humor, and generosity she bestowed on me over the years. Illustrator and dear friend, Michael Emberly probably described her best when he said of Robie, “She was smart and sensitive, kind, and generous beyond reckoning. She was a complicated human being in the best sense, and she had one of the best attributes you can say about a human being—she was memorable.” I extend my heartfelt condolences to her husband, Bill, and her sons, David and Ben. Though we all feel that she was taken from us too soon, Robie Harris touched countless lives and she will be deeply missed by all those who knew her.

HONORING THE LIFE OF TONY
VIGNAROLI

HON. ZACHARY NUNN

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, February 23, 2024

Mr. NUNN of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the tremendous life of Gunner Anthony Vignaroli who passed away on February 6, 2024. Tony made service to his country and the state of Iowa his life’s calling.

Following his graduation from Saydel High School, Tony embarked on a life of dedicated service. He served our country valiantly in the Vietnam War and then worked at Valley View Village as a Maintenance Supervisor.

Many knew him for his work as a volunteer for the Department of Public Safety at the Iowa State Fair, where he helped with security efforts. I was honored to work directly with Tony to enhance Iowa State Fair safety for more than a million visitors by acquiring a security tower for the midway.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing Tony Vignaroli and the terrific impact he had on his community. I join his family and those closest to him in mourning his loss. May his memory never be forgotten.

HONORING BRIANA DANIEL AS A
DISTINGUISHED LEADER IN CENTRAL
FLORIDA FOR BLACK HISTORY
MONTH

HON. DARREN SOTO

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, February 23, 2024

Mr. SOTO. Mr. Speaker, during a run in Orlando in 2013, Briana Daniel encountered the stark reality of homelessness. Motivated to help but inexperienced in addressing this issue, she chose to immerse herself by living among the Downtown Orlando homeless community for over a month.

Through firsthand experience and conversations with them, she discovered their profound need for dignity through cleanliness. This insight led her to establish Street Team Movement Inc., an organization dedicated to offering hygiene services to the homeless community.

“It’s hard to have dignity or feel like you have value when you have nowhere to wash and no way to clean your clothes or yourself,” said Daniel.

Street Team Movement Inc. provides laundry services to the unhoused and hygiene items distributed through their hygiene vending machines. The machines are accessible for free to the homeless through their proprietary “Hope Cards,” which are special access cards allowing the population a limited number of transactions per week.

“We believe in compassionate assistance, not just handouts. The ‘Hope Card’ allows us to help without enabling dependency. We provide individuals the means to access items, and services while preventing any misuse,” said Daniel.

In 2021, Street Team Movement launched a special program specifically for homeless women called Project Lioness. The program aims to bridge the hygiene gap for unhoused

women by connecting them to critical feminine hygiene kits that will carry them through their monthly cycle. To date, Project Lioness has distributed over 1,000 hygiene kits stocked with panty liners, feminine napkins, tampons, and wipes. To date, Street Team Movement has washed over 30,000 loads of laundry, provided over 500 haircuts, and has given out over one million hygiene items. Since launching the hygiene vending machines in 2020, Street Team Movement has given out over 5,000 hygiene kits in five States.

On February 22, 2024, Briana Daniel was honored as a distinguished leader in Central Florida for Black History Month.

HONORING CLAY FIRE TERRITORY
CHIEF TIMM SCHABEL'S CA-
REER IN SERVANT LEADERSHIP

HON. RUDY YAKYM III

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, February 23, 2024

Mr. YAKYM. Mr. Speaker, it is my honor to recognize and congratulate Chief Timm Schabbel, who recently retired as Fire Chief of the Clay Fire Territory in South Bend, Indiana, after 35 impressive years with the department.

During his nearly four decades in public safety, Timm has served in different roles within the fire department, including as a firefighter, Engineer, Lieutenant, Chief of Operations, and Fire Chief. Timm was promoted to Fire Chief in 1997, making him the longest tenured chief officer in the agency's 75-year history.

Under Chief Schabbel's leadership, Clay Fire became the first internationally accredited fire department in Indiana. In addition, Clay Fire also expanded under Chief Schabbel's tenure, essentially tripling the area the department covers. These achievements were only possible thanks to Timm's vision and determination.

The many awards and accolades he has received over the years—including Firefighter of the Year from Clay Township, Fire Chief of the Year from the state of Indiana, the President's Award from the International Association of Fire Chiefs, and the Sagamore of the Wabash award—are all a testament to Timm's commitment to excellence and an accomplished career spent in the service to others.

The broader South Bend community and St. Joseph County are unquestionably better off and safer thanks to this good man who exemplifies what it means to be a leader and a true public servant.

Timm's example and leadership are also reminders that first responders are on the frontlines of some of the most difficult situations our communities face. When there is a problem, first responders like Timm answer the call and willingly put themselves in harm's way to keep us safe, and for that all of us are extremely grateful.

I am proud to join so many Hoosiers throughout Indiana's Second District in expressing our appreciation to Chief Schabbel for his service and in wishing him and his family all the best going forward during Timm's very well-deserved retirement. I thank Timm.

CELEBRATING THE 16TH ANNIVER-
SARY OF KOSOVO'S INDEPEND-
ENCE

HON. LISA C. McCLAIN

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, February 23, 2024

Mrs. McCLAIN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of Kosovo's Independence Day on February 17th. This date marks 16 years since Kosovo declared independence in 2008 after enduring years of conflict. Kosovo has since emerged as an independent democratic nation and today is one of the most valuable allies of the American people.

In celebrating this occasion, I also celebrate the many Albanian-Americans who have made Michigan their home. Our community continues to grow and foster immense cultural, economic, and creative growth throughout the State of Michigan. These families embody the values of freedom and democracy that represent the American Dream.

Historically, Michigan itself has played a substantial—and proud—role in Kosovo's road to stability and democracy through the deployment of Michigan National Guard units to the region as peacekeeping forces.

I am delighted to honor the independence of Kosovo alongside the vibrant and ever-growing Albanian-American community that calls Michigan its home. Kosovo's remarkable transition into sovereignty, alongside our state's everlasting bonds with the Albanian-American people, represents the power of democracy both at home and abroad. The shared principles between our two nations truly represent the ideals that have turned our connection into economic prowess, shared defense, and international cooperation.

Mr. Speaker, I ask all my colleagues to join me in commemorating this wonderful occasion. Kosovo's Independence Day allows us to reflect not only on the meaning of freedom, but also the Albanian-American contributions throughout Michigan's Ninth District and the entire state.

RECOGNIZING TEXAS-24 HOME-
TOWN HERO CADEN LEONARD

HON. BETH VAN DUYNÉ

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, February 23, 2024

Ms. VAN DUYNÉ. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize our Texas-24 Hometown Hero, Caden Leonard. As a sophomore at Southlake Carroll High School, Caden has made waves in the cross-country world. After winning the Class 6A individual state title and leading the Dragons to the 6A team championship, he went on to lift his team to a bronze medal at the Nike Cross Nationals (NXN) final. In qualifying for the NXN, he clocked a personal best, walking away with bronze and First Team All-Region recognition at Nike Cross Regionals South.

Not only is Caden an exceptional athlete, he's also a servant in the community, volunteering with the Young Men's Service League, the local branch of the Special Olympics, and serving in youth ministry at White's Chapel Methodist Church. Caden's dedication to aca-

demics, athletics, and public service led Gatorade to name him as Texas' 2024 Boys Cross Country Player of the Year.

Congratulations to Caden on his incredible accomplishments and well-deserved recognition. I look forward to following his cross-country career and cheering him on.

CONDEMNING RAPE AND SEXUAL
VIOLENCE COMMITTED BY
HAMAS IN ITS WAR AGAINST
ISRAEL

SPEECH OF

HON. RASHIDA TLAI

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 14, 2024

Ms. TLAI. Mr. Speaker, on February 14, during Roll Call No. 44, I recorded my vote as Present. The reason for my vote is as follows:

All acts of sexual violence are horrific. We should all be fighting to end it here at home and all over the world.

So, while this resolution rightly denounces any sexual violence by Hamas, I am disturbed that it completely ignores and erases any sexual abuse and violence committed by Israeli forces against Palestinians, especially children.

War crimes cannot justify more war crimes. We must stand up for everyone's safety and human rights, no matter their faith or ethnicity.

There are numerous, well-documented reports of sexual violence, including rape, committed by Israeli forces against Palestinians in their custody. Children detained and stripped to their underwear in public, for the world to see.

The UN and human rights groups have raised alarms for years—but Congress has never cared.

We all have a responsibility to denounce sexual violence in all forms, regardless of who is responsible. This resolution falls well short of that responsibility.

Mr. Speaker, outreach was made to the sponsor of H. Res. 966 on several occasions to support the inclusion of Palestinians who had been victims of sexual violence into the Resolution. However, the sponsor denied adding in any language that supports the well-documented fact that Palestinians have faced many atrocities similar to those described in the Resolution. Sexual violence is abhorrent and must be fully investigated and prosecuted. The intentional omission of Palestinian lived experiences in this resolution is dehumanizing and a disservice to survivors everywhere.

HONORING YOKEENBA JENKINS AS
A DISTINGUISHED LEADER IN
CENTRAL FLORIDA FOR BLACK
HISTORY MONTH

HON. DARREN SOTO

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, February 23, 2024

Mr. SOTO. Mr. Speaker, Yokeenba Jenkins was born and raised in Osceola County, where he attended elementary, middle, and high school, graduating from Osceola High School.

He spent his college years at Bethune Cookman University. Following his college years, Yokeenba found his passion for music, becoming one of the biggest DJs in the urban industry.

When he was not on tour, he would spend his time coaching youth football at the age of 18 and volunteering his time at Chambers Park, where he is now a recreation supervisor.

Yokeenba is a child of God, husband, father, mentor, community spokesperson, and leader. Yokeenba is a person with a passion for shaping the youth in his community. He is hard working, dependable, has great energy, and has a drive to see his programs succeed. He is always willing to help out wherever needed and assist his fellow co-workers, family, and community in any way possible.

He is a dedicated individual who displays an enormous sense of pride in his daily work. Since taking on his role at the Chambers Park Community Center, he has been instrumental in creating some well attended recreation programs while maintaining a successful summer camp program where a large portion of the community benefits from. In addition, he has organized essential events that promote fellowship within the community, such as Breakfast with Santa, Daddy and Daughter Dance, and Back to School Jam, among others.

He has done an excellent job of stepping right into the role and ensuring its continued success. He is an excellent team player and works very well with diverse populations of families, participants, employees, and co-workers who visit his facility daily. He is a capable and independent leader who takes pride in being an active member of the Kissimmee community.

On February 22, 2024, Yokeenba Jenkins was honored as a distinguished leader in Central Florida for Black History Month.

RECOGNIZING ALEXA BARTELL

HON. BRITTANY PETERSEN

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, February 23, 2024

Ms. PETERSEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life of 20-year-old Alexa Bartell from Arvada, Colorado.

Alexa's friends and family knew her as an outgoing, compassionate, and energetic young woman, saying she could light up the room with her infectious personality. She loved basketball, music, and connecting with others. Tragically, Alexa's life was cut short in April of 2023 by an act of reckless endangerment when she was driving near her hometown. Everyone who was fortunate to meet Alexa could see how intelligent, funny, and kind she was, and this tragedy took away her bright future.

On behalf of the people of Colorado's Seventh Congressional District, we honor the life of Alexa Bartell and continue to send support and love to her family and friends. In remembering Alexa, we not only mourn her passing, but also celebrate the joy and warmth she brought into the lives of those around her.

RECOGNIZING RARE DISEASE DAY

HON. CHRIS PAPPAS

OF NEW HAMPSHIRE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, February 23, 2024

Mr. PAPPAS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of Rare Disease Day on February 29, 2024. According to the Federal Drug Administration, over 7,000 rare diseases affect more than 30 million people in the United States. That's nearly one in every ten Americans.

The National Institutes of Health recognizes more than 7,000 rare diseases. Of those 7,000 plus diseases approximately 95 percent have no treatment. Instead, many patients receive treatments that are not approved by the FDA for their specific conditions. This treatment process can lead to patients experiencing difficulty with insurance reimbursements. All Americans deserve quality access to affordable health care, and we must do more to assist our fellow Americans with rare diseases in reaching these standards.

Rare diseases not only have a debilitating impact on the individuals affected but also the families and loved ones who support them. On average, individuals with rare diseases do not receive an accurate diagnosis for more than four and a half years, in addition to difficulty in finding medical experts and treatments for their conditions. This leaves patients, families, and caregivers waiting indefinitely for diagnoses, treatments, and additional support for indefinite periods of time.

Rare Disease Day is a significant step in increasing public awareness and encouraging funding for research into these conditions. It is critical that Congress continue to partner with patients, advocates, scientists, and health care employees to seek solutions that will prioritize public funding for the health, wellness, and treatment for all those impacted by rare medical conditions.

On behalf of my constituents in New Hampshire's First Congressional District, I want to commemorate this important day and remind my fellow Americans to recognize those impacted by rare diseases, in addition to the medical professionals committed to finding treatments for them.

COMMEMORATING BLACK HISTORY MONTH AND THE ERTEGUN BROTHERS

HON. STEVE COHEN

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, February 23, 2024

Mr. COHEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor and celebrate Black History Month, a time dedicated to recognizing the contributions of African Americans to the rich tapestry of American history. This month serves as an opportunity to reflect on the achievements, struggles, and enduring resilience of the Black community.

One noteworthy aspect of Black history that deserves recognition is the profound impact of African Americans on the world of music, particularly in the realm of jazz. Jazz, born from the African American experience, has become a universal language, transcending borders

and connecting people from diverse backgrounds. It is a powerful expression of creativity, resilience, and cultural richness.

In this context, I'd like to emphasize the significant partnership of the Turkish Embassy and the Ertegun brothers. Sons of Turkey's first ambassador to the United States, Ahmet and Nesuhi believed in the power of music to bring people together. Beginning in 1940, musicians such as Duke Ellington, Johnny Hodges, "Lead Belly," Teddy Wilson, Lester Young, and members of the Benny Goodman, Ellington and Count Basie orchestras performed at the Turkish Embassy. Their father insisted that in the embassy, all, regardless of color, be treated with dignity and respect.

As co-founders of Atlantic Records, the Ertegun brothers were instrumental in bringing together artists from different backgrounds, breaking down racial and cultural barriers in the world of music. Ahmet traveled to New Orleans and Harlem to sign the greatest black musicians of the time, including Stick McGhee, The Harlemaires, and The Drifters. In the 1960s, Atlantic Records, often in partnerships with local labels like Stax Records in Memphis, helped to develop the growth of soul music, with artists such as Ben E. King, Solomon Burke, Otis Redding, Sam and Dave, Percy Sledge, Aretha Franklin, and Wilson Pickett.

The Turkish Embassy's commitment to hosting these jam sessions exemplifies the importance of cultural diplomacy and the unifying power of music. Through these events, artists of diverse backgrounds, including African American musicians, have had the opportunity to showcase their talents, bridging cultural gaps and promoting understanding.

As we commemorate Black History Month, let us go beyond celebrating the achievements of the past but also recognize the importance of continued collaboration and dialogue to build a more harmonious future. The blending of Black history and jazz, coupled with the dedicated endeavors of entities such as the Turkish Embassy and the Ertegun brothers, stands as a powerful tribute to the transformative potential of cultural interchange and the unifying power of music.

I encourage my colleagues to join me in acknowledging the significance of Black History Month, celebrating the contributions of African Americans to the arts and culture, and recognizing the positive impact of initiatives like the Turkish Embassy-hosted jam sessions in fostering unity and understanding.

HONORING ABIGAIL ELLIS AS A DISTINGUISHED LEADER IN CENTRAL FLORIDA FOR BLACK HISTORY MONTH

HON. DARREN SOTO

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, February 23, 2024

Mr. SOTO. Mr. Speaker, Abigail Ellis is currently a registered mental health counselor intern, a devoted mental health advocate, a mentor, and an educator. She is steadfast in her commitment to effecting positive change in her community.

Raised in Moore Haven, Florida, she developed a passion for community service early on—learning from her grandmother, Ida M.

Ward, who was always giving back. Abigail earned a bachelor's degree in business and information management from Seminole State College, complemented by certificates in project management and human resource administration. Her academic journey culminated in a master's degree in clinical mental health counseling from Nova Southeastern University.

In 2001, Abigail made history as the first African-American Chalo Nitka Pageant winner in her hometown, Moore Haven, Florida. This accomplishment not only showcased her resilience but also set a powerful precedent for others to follow. Abigail and her son, Lamar Allen, are deeply engaged in community service. She founded Steps Foundation, Inc., a nonprofit organization established in 2019 to serve marginalized youth in Osceola County.

The organization was born after years of watching her mother, Darlene Ellis, struggle to find resources to support her brother, Samuel Ellis. Through this initiative, she has demonstrated a proactive and hands-on approach to addressing the unique challenges faced by underserved teens.

In addition to her foundation, Abigail actively serves on several boards throughout Central Florida, focusing on mental health, community engagement, and youth development. She serves as a member of Chi Sigma Iota, the Florida Counseling Association, and the Osceola Chamber, just to name a few. This involvement underlines her dedication to a holistic approach in supporting the well-being of adolescents. Abigail Ellis exemplifies leadership, compassion, and expertise, utilizing her multifaceted role to create a positive impact on the lives of young people and their families.

On February 22, 2024, Abigail Ellis was honored as a distinguished leader in Central Florida for Black History Month.

HONORING FRANCIS 'FRANK'
HUMMEL, JR.

HON. ANDY KIM

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, February 23, 2024

Mr. KIM of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the selfless service and incredible accomplishments of Francis 'Frank' Hummel, Jr., a United States Army Veteran, who passed earlier this month.

Born and raised in Philadelphia, Frank spent his adult life in southern New Jersey. In December 1950, he joined the United States Army where he completed his basic training

on Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst, right in his own backyard. Frank was then transferred to a small town in Germany where he went through military intelligence training and served in the Army Security Agency. During this time, Frank enjoyed boxing, playing center and linebacker for the Seventh Army Special Troops Ramblers football team, and being a member of the 97th Signal Satans basketball team. Today, we all remember him for his brave service, and love for sports with his fellow soldiers.

After the Army, Frank opened his own mechanical engineering firm, Hummel Engineering Corporation, which served New Jersey, Pennsylvania, New York, and Delaware. Frank also served as the Executive Vice President and then President of the Mechanical Contractors Association of Eastern Pennsylvania, and was the Secretary of the National Certified Pipe Welding Bureau of Philadelphia. Beyond that he was a member of the Christian Business Men's Association, where he helped mentor young men to succeed in their faith, business, and life's endeavors. Frank also taught project management at the Pennsylvania State University, Media campus.

A man of faith, Frank was an active member of his congregations and served on many church boards throughout the years. Formerly a member of Cherry Hill Baptist Church, he most recently was a member of Grace Baptist Church in Mount Laurel. Frank was active in supporting Christian mission work around the world and was an author in the Wiley Mission Community Newspaper.

Frank was not only a veteran, entrepreneur, and man of faith, he was a family man who loved spending time with his large family. He was known to spend his time visiting historical societies, libraries, and cemeteries across the United States and Europe where he listened to and learned about histories from ancestors and distant family members. He enjoyed recording family genealogy by hand, writing stories about his life experiences, and photography.

Frank married Lorraine Miller in 1951 and in their over 70 years of marriage, they had three children, eleven grandchildren, and nine great-grandchildren.

While many community members locally know Frank and his positive impact in our community, today I'm proud to honor his tenure as a veteran of the United States Army, and husband, father, grandfather, and great-grandfather. We are lucky to have his inspiration in our community.

HONORING NEALYA IRIS BRUNSON
AS A DISTINGUISHED LEADER IN
CENTRAL FLORIDA FOR BLACK
HISTORY MONTH

HON. DARREN SOTO

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, February 23, 2024

Mr. SOTO. Mr. Speaker, Ms. Nealya Iris Brunson is the dance director for the Osceola County School for the Arts, where she has dedicated 20 years to educating students in dance and the arts. Some of her contributions to student success include attending the National High School Dance Festivals in Miami and Philadelphia, as well as the Regional High School Dance Festivals in Norfolk, Virginia, where students received college acceptances and scholarships. Additional contributions include attending the Florida Dance Education Organization and Florida Dance Performance Assessment, where students in middle and high school received superior and excellent ratings in the areas of dance, technique, and performance. Over the years, Ms. Brunson has taught many students who have demonstrated outstanding achievements and have become professional dancers, artists, teachers, and choreographers nationally and internationally.

Ms. Brunson has served as a dance program coordinator, choreographed dances for many dance and theater programs, and served as a dance adjudicator in several public schools, universities, and performing arts centers, primarily in the state of Florida.

Ms. Brunson's training in dance began at B.J.'s School of Dance in St. Petersburg, Florida, under the direction of Barbara Hodges. She continued to study dance at the Pinellas County School for the Arts at Gibbs High School and at St. Petersburg College, Co-Motion Dance Theater. Ms. Brunson received a Bachelor of Fine Arts in Dance from the University of Florida, New World School of the Arts in Miami, Florida, under the direction of Daniel Lewis. She also received a Master of Arts in Dance from the American University in Washington, D.C., under the direction of Dr. Niama Prevots.

Ms. Brunson enjoys teaching the elements of dance, which is a major component of her dance classes. She will be releasing her first book titled, "Goals of Dance Technique: A Dancers Workbook," later this year.

On February 22, 2024, Nealya Iris Brunson was honored as a distinguished leader in Central Florida for Black History Month.