

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

RECOGNIZING TAMPA BAY'S TRAILBLAZER RUTH DUNCAN BELL, IN HONOR OF BLACK HISTORY MONTH

HON. KATHY CASTOR

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 5, 2024

Ms. CASTOR of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise today during Black History Month to celebrate the life of service of a true public servant and philanthropist in the Tampa Bay area, Mrs. Ruth Duncan Bell.

Mrs. Bell was born in Lansing, Michigan and received her bachelor's degree in mass communications from Arizona State University and after moving to the Tampa Bay area she obtained a master's in public administration from the University of South Florida. She has worked at the federal, state and local levels of government and served as an advocate for the public employment agencies associations in Washington, D.C.

After 27 years of service as senior vice president of public affairs, Mrs. Bell retired from the LifeLink Foundation, which is a nonprofit that facilitates the recovery of life-saving organs and tissue for transplantation. She has also participated on national professional organization boards, related to organ and tissue donation, and she is committed to increasing awareness and donor registration for those in need of life-saving transplants.

Mrs. Bell's work in the organ donation and transplantation community is nationally recognized. In 2018, in Madrid, Spain before the 27th International Congress of the Transplantation Society, she presented "Success of a Multicultural Donation Education Program to Increase African American Organ Donation in a Donor Service Area with a High African American Population," which is a work showcasing best practices that led to successful organ donation education and registration programs inclusive of the African American community.

Education is also an important part of Mrs. Bell's life and she and her husband have worked to improve the lives of African American students. During her time at Arizona State University, she and her now husband Jerry noticed friends or acquaintances leave on school break and not return due to financial reasons. It was at this time that they both agreed that if they were ever in a position to help, they would prevent this from happening.

At their alma mater Arizona State University, they established the Jerry and Ruth Bell W.P. Carey Black Student Success Scholarship for any students engaged with the Black Business Student Association or a similar association that supports Black students at ASU. They were also the first Black couple to endow a scholarship for Black students at the University of South Florida, and to date it has had a significant impact in the lives of more than 100

young people who have obtained their college degree through this fund. Mrs. Bell is also an active member of Tampa Alumni Chapter of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc., the Tampa Chapter of The Links, Inc., the Athena Society and numerous other professional organizations.

Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the Tampa Bay community, I am proud to recognize Mrs. Ruth Duncan Bell for her undeniable impact on our community and her unwavering commitment to supporting young African Americans through their college journey.

HONORING STAMPS BURGERS

HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 5, 2024

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor one of many great restaurants in Jackson, Mississippi, Stamps Burgers.

Stamps Burgers, often known as Stamps or Stamps Super Burgers, is a popular, family-friendly, well-known burger restaurant located in Jackson, Mississippi, and this week, it has made national news: Along with 46 other restaurants, Stamps Super Burgers was included in the 2024 USA TODAY Restaurants of the Year list.

A Black-owned family business, Stamps has legions of loyal fans and a casual walk-in atmosphere. Stamps serves all with a juicy burger, potato fries and a vibe you just can't help but love to feel. Co-owned by Phil Stamps Sr., who gives everyone a greeting when they walk into Stamps, the restaurant has been operating in the Washington Addition neighborhood in West Jackson since 1986.

The kitchen is an open area at the center of the restaurant with a Stamps employee who will more than likely be working behind the counter hand-making their famous beef patties or slicing potatoes for fries as a side right in front of your eye.

"We just want to continue to build relationships with people so that we can continue to grow our media platforms and take advantage of opportunities like this of such an amazing recognition and of course growing the business and having conversations with economic developers not only in the city of Jackson but other cities to grow our business and provide incentives for smaller businesses like ours to come to their city," Stamps Jr. said.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing Stamps Burgers for their dedication to serving the best burgers in the state of Mississippi.

RECOGNIZING THE SERVICE OF COMMANDER DAVID T. ST. AUBIN

HON. JACK BERGMAN

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 5, 2024

Mr. BERGMAN. Mr. Speaker, it is my honor to recognize Commander David T. St. Aubin for his 25 years of dedicated service to the United States Navy and our Nation. I'd also like to congratulate him on his retirement as Commander of Navy Patrol Squadron Four Zero.

Commander St. Aubin, a Negaunee native, enlisted in the United States Navy in 1999 and completed Nuclear Power School and prototype in 2001. Commander St. Aubin later graduated from the United States Naval Academy in 2005, receiving his Wings of Gold in 2007 upon his graduation from flight training. He would later receive his first assignment with Patrol Squadron Four Five in Jacksonville, Florida.

Before joining Patrol Squadron Four Zero, Commander St. Aubin served in multiple duty stations all over the globe. He has deployed with the Fourth, Fifth, Sixth, and Seventh Fleets as well as the J3 Directorate at the Pentagon and the Joint Chiefs of Staff. Finally, in 2021 he was selected for command of Patrol Squadron Four Zero.

Commander St. Aubin has diligently served as the Commanding Officer of Patrol Squadron Four Zero for the past two years. Standing by the squadron mantra, "Laging Handa,—Always Ready", Commander St. Aubin proudly served as the 73rd Commander of Squadron VP-40. From his time in service, Commander St. Aubin's personal awards include: the Defense Meritorious Service Medal, Navy Commendation Medal, Navy Achievement Medal, and various unit and campaign awards.

Mr. Speaker, it is my honor to thank Commander David T. St. Aubin for his 25 years of service and for his retirement. I wish the Commander a well-deserved retirement and all the best in his future endeavors.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. TERRI A. SEWELL

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 5, 2024

Ms. SEWELL. Mr. Speaker, on March 5, 2024, I was attending to matters in my district. Had I been present, I would have voted YES on H.R. 3391 (Roll Call No. 60), and YES on H.R. 3838 (Roll Call No. 61).

• 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.

HONORING THE IMPACT OF JESSY LAKIN AND TIANA FREEMAN ON ALASKA'S VETERANS

HON. MARY SATTLER PELTOLA

OF ALASKA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 5, 2024

Mrs. PELTOLA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor two exemplary Alaskans. They have been inspirational to others, as well as a gift to the communities they serve across our great state.

Jessy Lakin of Wasilla has served as the Program Lead for the Alaska Warrior Partnership since December 2022. As a combat veteran, co-founder of Battle Dawgs 501(c)(3) and veteran advocate, Jessy's skillset in collaboration, problem solving, marketing, and community relations has helped AKWP grow exponentially. Jessy's ability and collaboration skills have helped find solutions to generate momentum within the state to address difficult issues that veterans face. Jessy has spearheaded and organized monthly meetings that host up to 85 various agencies. This collaboration and partnership have been instrumental in the ability to assist veterans and their needs. Jessy also volunteers as a Co-Chair for the Veteran Community Partnership (VCP) with the Department of Veterans Affairs Alaska Health Care System. This group works with VA programs and community partners to address gaps in service, access to care, and provide outreach opportunities to connect veterans to the VA system.

Tiana Freeman of Eagle River serves as a case coordinator for the Alaska Warrior Partnership. Tiana works to engage veterans and stakeholders who are seeking resources for the warriors in our community needing assistance. Her duties include intake of warriors, determination of needs, and screening for Suicidal Ideation and Risk before then connecting the warriors with resources in the community. Tiana has worked and closed 147 cases so far this year. Tiana goes above and beyond for each warrior; she establishes a trusting and lasting relationship with everyone she encounters. She has outstanding reviews from veterans, community partners and state and federal level agencies.

Together, Tiana and Jessy work to identify gaps in services. They also work to obtain grants and funding. Their efforts to engage and recruit community agencies, businesses, and other non-profits have resulted in over 85 partnerships across Alaska. These partnerships have worked and closed 730 cases resulting in a successful closure rate of 97.5 percent since December 2022.

Jessy's and Tiana's dedication, selflessness, and empathy have positively impacted the veterans they assist as well as the community partners they engage.

RECOGNIZING TAMPA BAY'S TRAILBLAZER MARCUS BROOKS, IN HONOR OF BLACK HISTORY MONTH

HON. KATHY CASTOR

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 5, 2024

Ms. CASTOR of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise today during Black History Month to celebrate

a change agent and one of Tampa Bay's most distinguished torch bearers, Marcus Brooks.

Mr. Brooks is a fourth-generation resident of St. Petersburg, Florida, where he currently lives with his wife and children. He received his bachelor's degree in political science with a minor in communications from Florida State University. Brooks credits his upbringing of racial contrast in Clearwater, Florida and South St. Petersburg, which afforded him different perspectives to shape him into the leader he is today. He is also a recipient of the St. Petersburg NAACP's Next-Gen Trailblazer award and currently serves on the boards of the St. Petersburg Downtown Partnership and Allegheny Franciscan Ministries.

"Whatever gifts you are believed to have are not yours. They were gifted to you for a finite amount of time to be passed on and used in service of others." These are words Mr. Brooks uses to govern his work and daily life. After graduating from Florida State University, he began his journey in public service of more than 15 years. Mr. Brooks has served as the youth coordinator for Coordinated Childcare of Pinellas, development officer at St. Petersburg College, regional director of Junior Achievement of Tampa Bay, director of development for Eckerd Youth Alternatives, to name a few. While serving in these roles, his goal was to cultivate, plan and execute developmental efforts that would change and touch the lives of our youth through education.

Mr. Brooks is an advocate for diversity, equity and inclusion, and believes unequivocally that if we advance racial equity and improve the overall health of the community, we will see the growth of more sustainable communities. Mr. Brooks is the executive director of the Center for Health Equity, whose mission is to inspire and empower people, share ideas, exchange information, organize and build relationships to end differences in health due to institutional racism. Under his leadership, the Center for Health Equity has pushed new bounds with the creation of Courageous Conversations, which is an award-winning protocol for effectively engaging, sustaining and deepening interracial dialogue. This conversation examines the impact of race in our lives and fosters the development of essential literacy and competency through which to experience our personal, professional and organizational journeys. Mr. Brooks believes that if we are able to strip away past beliefs, experiences and actions to truly get to know our neighbor, we can begin to have a better understanding of one another.

Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the Tampa Bay community, I am honored to recognize the outstanding accomplishments, leadership and service of Mr. Marcus Brooks, who stands as a shining example of the tremendous impact of hard work, nurturing others and service to the community to encourage others to reach their highest potential.

HONORING TRISTAN CROCKETT

HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 5, 2024

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a remarkable servant, Tristan Crockett.

Mr. Crockett was born and reared in Grenada, Mississippi, to the parents, Mr. Chris Crockett and Mrs. Earline Crockett. Mr. Crockett attended and graduated from Grenada High School the year of 2015, graduating with high honors.

After graduating from high school, Mr. Crockett embarked on his career journey by enrolling at Delta State University (DSU), where he pursued a major in Commercial Aviation in Flight Operations. Through diligent effort and dedication, Mr. Crockett successfully completed his studies at DSU, earning his Bachelor of Commercial Aviation in Flight Operations degree.

After obtaining his degree, Mr. Crockett diligently advanced in his career path. Presently, he holds the position of Current First Officer at Delta Air Lines.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing Mr. Tristan Crockett for his dedication and tenacity to serving his community and desire to be an example for all.

HONORING DR. VANESSA ALLEN-MCCLLOUD DURING WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH

HON. FRANK J. MRVAN

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 5, 2024

Mr. MRVAN. Mr. Speaker, it is with great respect that I rise to celebrate National Women's History Month and its 2024 theme, Women Who Advocate for Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion. Each year, the National Women's History Alliance selects a unifying theme in honor of Women's History Month. This year's theme recognizes the numerous brave women throughout history who have fought and continue to fight for justice and equality for women in all aspects of American society.

As we celebrate the relentless efforts of women who have devoted their lives to this cause, I would like to take the time to honor a true leader in Northwest Indiana, Dr. Vanessa Allen-McCloud. Her passion for civil service and education serves as an inspiration for women throughout the region and beyond. Dr. Allen-McCloud holds a Bachelor of Science degree in Organizational Leadership from Calumet College of St. Joseph and a Master of Education degree from Purdue University Northwest. In 2013, she earned her Doctorate in Educational Leadership. Dr. Allen-McCloud's impressive career includes various professional positions in the field of education at Purdue University Calumet, South Suburban College, and the Gary Community School Corporation. In 2010, Dr. Allen-McCloud became President and CEO of the Urban League of Northwest Indiana, an organization that works to "promote, encourage, and enhance services to improve social, educational, and economic conditions of African Americans and other minority groups in Lake, Porter, and LaPorte counties." Under her leadership, the Urban League continues to grow and succeed and has become an outstanding source of support for many individuals and organizations. Throughout the years, the Urban League has hosted numerous programs and seminars highlighting opportunities for women. In addition, Dr. Allen-McCloud is a certified civility trainer in Civility in the Workplace and

Cultural Competence and has been a noteworthy speaker in this regard. For her extraordinary leadership and passion for giving back to the community, Dr. Allen-McCloud is worthy of the highest praise.

Over the years, Dr. Allen-McCloud has received many accolades honoring her impressive career. In addition, Dr. Allen-McCloud has generously served her community by giving her time and efforts to numerous charitable endeavors, and she serves on several local and national boards. For her exceptional devotion to these earnest causes, Dr. Allen-McCloud is to be commended.

Mr. Speaker, I ask you and my other distinguished colleagues to join me in celebrating Women's History Month and recognizing the dedication and contributions of Dr. Allen-McCloud and so many other extraordinary women who work to make our communities more equal, diverse, and inclusive.

HONORING CARLA JEAN MARTINEZ

HON. BLAKE D. MOORE

OF UTAH

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 5, 2024

Mr. MOORE of Utah. Mr. Speaker, I am grateful for the opportunity to honor the exceptional accomplishments of Carla Jean Martinez who currently serves as the National President for the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States (VFW) Auxiliary. She is the first veteran to hold this position. She is a dual member of both the VFW Auxiliary and the VFW and is also an All-American District Commander with VFW Post 409 in Salt Lake City, Utah.

Ms. Martinez's life serves as an exemplary model of selfless, patriotic service. Born in South Carolina, she joined the United States Navy in 1981, embarking on an honorable career as a cryptologist until her retirement in 1997. Her military service spanned the globe, including assignments in Japan, England, Korea, Virginia, and at the Pentagon. Whether stationed overseas or at home, Ms. Martinez consistently distinguished herself through unwavering commitment to her country. She was awarded the Defense Meritorious Service Medal in recognition of her exceptional military service.

Following her military retirement, Ms. Martinez moved to Utah and married Stanley Martinez in 2001. Her son, following in her footsteps, served in the United States Air Force. Shortly after retiring, Ms. Martinez joined the VFW Auxiliary and dedicated countless hours to serving fellow veterans through the VFW and at VA hospitals.

I express my deep gratitude to Ms. Martinez for her decades of dedicated service and sacrifice. She epitomizes courage, selflessness, and unwavering commitment to her fellow veterans and the Nation.

It is my honor to recognize her accomplishment as the first veteran to serve as the National President for the VFW Auxiliary.

RECOGNIZING TAMPA BAY'S TRAILBLAZER GERARD (JERRY) A. BELL, IN HONOR OF BLACK HISTORY MONTH

HON. KATHY CASTOR

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 5, 2024

Ms. CASTOR of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise today during Black History Month with immense gratitude for the selfless community service of philanthropist and retired Tampa Bay Buccaneers player, Gerard (Jerry) A. Bell. Through Mr Bell's dedication to advancing the success of his neighbors, young and old, our neighborhoods have positively transformed. Mr. Bell devoted his considerable time and talents to improving African American student retention and completion of higher education, and in doing has lifted us all.

Mr. Bell was born in Derby, Connecticut, in 1959. He earned his bachelor's degree in computer information systems from Arizona State University where he was a standout Tight End on the Sun Devil's football team and a master's in business administration from the University of Tampa. For the past 20 years, Mr. Bell has served as an adjunct faculty member at Hillsborough Community College, Pasco Hernando State College, and the University of Phoenix. He teaches various college courses in introduction to business, marketing, and personal finance.

Mr. Bell is married to Ruth Bell, his partner in life and in philanthropic and community service. They are notably most proud of their two children, Vanessa and David.

After five seasons as a Tight End for the Tampa Bay Buccaneers, Mr. Bell pursued his passion outside of the game and entered technology sales during the 1990's, a time when this industry was evolving before the world's eyes. Mr. Bell currently serves as the president and owner of Bell & Associates Business Consultants, Inc., a value-added reseller of information technology where he collaborates with local and national clients. Community service is at the crux of Mr. Bell's life and purpose. During his time with the Tampa Bay Buccaneers, when he was not on the field, he was organizing food drives, tutoring young African American students for their SATs and ACTs, and holding football camps. Mr. Bell has served on numerous local and non-profit boards and he is a proud member of Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity, Inc.

Mr. Bell's steadfast commitment to advancing student achievement has produced transformative results in diversifying higher education. The Bells were the first African-American couple to endow a scholarship at the University of South Florida, and to date have been able to provide financial assistance to more than 100 students who have successfully obtained a college degree, crediting the Bells' scholarship for their ability to succeed. Currently, Mr. Bell is a founding member of a new initiative at the University of South Florida, the Black Leadership Network, which is focused on the pillars of scholarship, mentorship, and internships for Black students.

Mr. Bell's public service is recognized widely. He was named a Community Hero by the Tampa Bay Lightning Foundation. Additionally, Mr. Bell's commitment to students was hon-

ored by the University of South Florida through the President's Distinguished Citizen Award.

Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the Tampa Bay community, I am proud to recognize Gerard (Jerry) A. Bell, for his selfless public service and commitment to educational success and his work in diversity and uplifting the Tampa Bay community one neighborhood at a time.

HONORING PHILLIP C. WEST

HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 5, 2024

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a remarkable servant, Phillip C. West.

Mr. West was born and reared in Natchez, Mississippi, to the parents, Mr. and Mrs. Sam West. Mr. West attended and graduated from Sadie V. Thompson High School in 1964.

After completing high school, Mr. West advanced his career by enrolling at Alcorn State University, where he emerged as a student activist between 1966 and 1968. Demonstrating unwavering dedication, Mr. West ascended to the position of Vice-President of the Natchez NAACP from 1972 to 1974. His leadership continued to flourish as he assumed the role of President of the NAACP from 1974 to 1980.

He was elected and served on the Adams County Board of Supervisors from 1980 to 1997. Notably, in 1992, he achieved a historic milestone by becoming the first black individual to serve as President of the board. Following his tenure on the board, Mr. West was elected three times to the Mississippi House of Representatives, serving from 1997 to 2004. During his legislative tenure, he distinguished himself as a two-term chairman of the Mississippi Legislative Black Caucus.

In 2004, Mr. West continued to break barriers by being elected as Mayor of Natchez, marking the first time a black individual had held the position since Reconstruction.

Presently, Mr. West is serving as Vice-President of the Natchez-Adams School Board of Trustees for approximately (7) years. He is still active in many community affairs. He has continued his lifelong fight for equal opportunity, equal justice under law, and real progress for all.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing Mr. Phillip C. West for his continuing dedication and tenacity to serving his community and desire to be an example for all.

RECOGNIZING BILLY MCKINNEY'S CONTRIBUTIONS TO NORTH-WESTERN UNIVERSITY ATHLETICS AND ITS COMMUNITY

HON. BRADLEY SCOTT SCHNEIDER

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 5, 2024

Mr. SCHNEIDER. Mr. Speaker, I proudly rise today to recognize the outstanding achievements and public service of a basketball star, radio announcer, local mayor and my

good friend, William Mervin “Billy” McKinney, III.

On March 2, Northwestern Athletics, along with the Wildcats men’s basketball program, will formally recognize Billy’s athletic accomplishments and lifetime of community contributions with the retirement of his jersey number 30 during Northwestern’s home game against Iowa. It marks the first time in school history that a student-athlete’s jersey has been retired.

Billy McKinney played varsity basketball all four of his years at Northwestern (from 1973 through 1977). He is widely regarded as one of the greatest players in Northwestern basketball history. He set numerous records and earned many accolades during his collegiate career, including multiple All-Conference and All-America honors. Billy was inducted into Northwestern Athletic Hall of Fame in 1986.

Following his collegiate career, McKinney enjoyed a successful career in the NBA, first as a player and then a front office executive. His eight-year playing career included stints with the Kansas City Kings, Utah Jazz, Denver Nuggets, San Diego Clippers, and Chicago Bulls. McKinney’s high energy play and his quickness on the court earned him the nickname “The Crazy Hummingbird.”

After retiring as a player in 1985, McKinney transitioned to NBA front office management—working over 30 years with the Chicago Bulls, Minnesota Timberwolves, Detroit Pistons, Seattle SuperSonics and Milwaukee Bucks. McKinney made history as the first African American front office executive in Chicago Bulls franchise history.

Following his days as an NBA Executive, McKinney has dedicated himself to public service. Returning to his hometown of Zion, IL, Billy was elected mayor in 2019. Since then, he has worked tirelessly to improve housing, address environmental concerns, and improve economic opportunities for his constituents.

McKinney also remains actively involved with Northwestern University. He serves as the men’s basketball radio color analyst and has a role with Northwestern University Development and Alumni Relations (NUDAR). The organization presents The Billy McKinney Award to the male student-athlete with outstanding leadership, effort, and a positive attitude.

As a player, Billy McKinney wore a medalion with the inscription: “They can conquer who believe they can.” Billy McKinney’s life story, his commitment and dedication to excellence, and his service to others set an example for us all.

As a fellow Northwestern University alum, I am pleased to recognize and celebrate his distinguished career and the well-deserved recognition bestowed on him by our alma mater. I wish Billy McKinney all the best in his future endeavors and continued success.

RECOGNIZING THE LIFE OF JAMES OLIVER FORD

HON. TRENT KELLY

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 5, 2024

Mr. KELLY of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor the life of James Oliver Ford, known affectionately as J.O., Jimmy, Jim, or

Ford, who peacefully passed away at the age of 79 on Thursday, February 1, in Tupelo, Mississippi. He was the eldest child of the late Oliver Ford, Jr. and Annie Mae Ford of Pontotoc, Mississippi.

James embraced Christianity at a young age and remained a dedicated member of McDonald United Methodist Church in Pontotoc, Mississippi. He served his church fervently as an usher, choir member, assistant Sunday School teacher, and President of the McDonald United Methodist Church Board of Trustees.

Graduating from Pontotoc Attendance Center in 1963, James pursued higher education, earning a Bachelor of Arts degree in History and Political Science from Jackson State University in 1967. He actively participated in Civil Rights movements, notably joining the historic James Meredith March of 1966 from Memphis, Tennessee to Jackson, Mississippi. Subsequently, he pursued a Juris Doctorate from the University of Mississippi in 1970.

Following his studies, James commenced his legal career, initially with North Mississippi Rural Legal Services in Oxford, Mississippi, before establishing his practice in Tupelo, Mississippi in 1973. He played a significant role in advocating for integration in school districts across North Mississippi, addressing violations of Brown v. Board of Education. Throughout his life, James remained committed to seeking justice for his clients, participating in free legal clinics and serving as the City Prosecutor for Baldwin, Mississippi.

Beyond his legal endeavors, he was elected President of the Concerned Citizens Coalition of Pontotoc. He also actively engaged in sports, particularly running and cycling, fostering camaraderie within the Pontotoc Runners and Bikers group.

James was a member of various organizations, including the Lee County NAACP, Black Business Association of Tupelo, and the Mississippi Bar Association. He also maintained a lifelong membership in Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc.

In recognition of his lifelong dedication to justice and peace, James was honored with the 2024 Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Drum Major Award by the Pontotoc MLK Dream Committee.

James is survived by his beloved wife, Rachel H. Ford; two sons, Steven Ford of Denver, CO and J. Corey Ford of Atlanta, GA; two daughters, Kristi Listenbee of Tupelo, MS and Ashley Listenbee of Atlanta, GA; four grandchildren, Antonio Lipsey, Kyle Ford, Matthew Rowe, and Laken Ruff; one great-granddaughter, Graycn; one brother, Barry Ford of Madison, MS; one sister, Phyllis (Rev. David) High of Pontotoc, MS; one brother-in-law, Hosie Holoman of Tupelo, MS; one sister-in-law, Joann (Barry) Ledbetter of Tupelo, MS; and numerous nieces, nephews, cousins, family, and friends who will cherish his memory dearly.

RECOGNIZING TAMPA BAY’S TRAILBLAZER ANTONIO BROWN, IN HONOR OF BLACK HISTORY MONTH

HON. KATHY CASTOR

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 5, 2024

Ms. CASTOR of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise today during Black History Month with appreciation of St. Petersburg native, small business owner and youth advocate, Antonio Brown. Through Mr. Brown’s dedication to increasing children’s literacy, especially Black and brown children, our youngest neighbors are empowered through stories and given the opportunity to turn the page on their lives to a new chapter filled with quality education and opportunity.

Mr. Brown was born in the Child’s Park neighborhood of St. Petersburg, and he comes from a community-minded family. Mr. Brown’s grandfather led recreation centers across the country and his grandmother helped babysit many neighborhood children. He was raised in a single-parent household and attended Boca Ciega High School and later took college courses at St. Petersburg College and St. Pete Technical College where he earned his plumbing certificate. In 2009, Brown graduated from the American Institute of Beauty.

Mr. Brown is a proud father of his son, Jaelyn and anecdotally, he strives to be a better man and father than the example he had.

Early in his career, Mr. Brown began as a telemarketer but knew this was not his calling. After spending time in meaningful reflection, he specifically thought about what was important to his life as a Black man and the impactful lessons his grandmother instilled in him while caring for children, bringing his new dream of becoming a barber and an impactful father to fruition.

While navigating fatherhood and an 18-month program to become a master barber, Mr. Brown knew his mission in life was to serve his community, particularly Black and brown youth. In 2015, he successfully opened his Barber Shop—Central Station Barbershop & Grooming—and in 2016, he began the Barbershop Book Club where kids could ‘grow up in his chairs’ and be surrounded by a positive environment that solidified their path for a chance at a better life.

When kids walk in for haircut at his Barber Shop, they have the option to receive their service for free, if they read a book aloud throughout the duration of the haircut. The children walk away with a fresh haircut and a new book to keep at no cost. In an effort to teach financial literacy, Mr. Brown encourages the families of the children to put the money they would have spent on the haircut, in a bank account for their child.

Mr. Brown curates a selection of books that are ‘culturally relevant’ and have characters that children recognize themselves in and stories that would teach them positive messages to do good in the world. After nine years of service to the St. Petersburg community through the Barbershop Book club, Mr. Brown has given out over 1,500 books and haircuts and expanded his shop to 10 different locations.

Mr. Brown’s work with children’s literacy has sparked local partnerships between beloved

bookstores in the St. Petersburg area and notably the Shirley Proctor Puller Foundation, Junior League of St. Pete, and the Juvenile Welfare Board to ensure every child that comes to his Barber Shop has the opportunity to enhance their literary skills.

When Mr. Brown is not at the Barber Shop serving local children, he serves his neighbors as the 13th President of St. Pete Heights Neighborhood Association, a St. Petersburg Sunshine City Ambassador, and a Pinellas Barbering College Instructor.

Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the St. Petersburg community, I am proud to recognize Antonio Brown for his selfless community service and dedication to fostering a safe environment for children to grow and thrive. Mr. Brown's commitment to increasing childhood literacy is a priceless investment helping our future generations one haircut at a time.

HONORING THE REVEREND
GEORGE LEE MUSEUMS OF AFRICAN
AMERICAN HISTORY AND
HERITAGE

HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 5, 2024

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a remarkable organization, The Reverend George Lee Museums of African American History and Heritage.

The Reverend George Lee Museums of African American History and Heritage is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization located at 17150 Highway 49 in Belzoni, Mississippi.

Who is Rev. George W. Lee? Rev. George W. Lee was a pivotal figure in the fight for civil rights for Black Americans. He is recognized as the first person to die in this struggle. His name holds a place of honor as the first among 40 names listed on the Civil Rights Memorial in Montgomery, Alabama. Rev. Lee was a prominent Baptist pastor in Belzoni, Mississippi, where he led a congregation. He was deeply committed to the cause of civil rights and served as a local official for the NAACP. Rev. Lee tirelessly encouraged his congregation to register and exercise their right to vote, recognizing that meaningful change for Black citizens in Mississippi, a state marked by racial discrimination, could only be achieved through the ballot box.

The mission of The Reverend George Lee Museums of African American History and Heritage is to safeguard and celebrate history, culture, arts, and heritage within the African American community. Through various programs and initiatives, the museum aims to increase awareness and appreciation of African American and Mississippi's history, while fostering racial harmony and a deeper understanding of cultural diversity. Collaborating with existing projects and organizations, as well as establishing new initiatives, the museum endeavors to preserve and promote the rich cultural heritage of the Mississippi Delta. The museum's primary focus areas include Blues, Gospel, Civil Rights, and the Arts.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing The Reverend George Lee Museums of African American History and Heritage for their passion and dedication to serving their community and the state of Mississippi.

CELEBRATING THE LIFE OF
ROBERT "BOB" RAMIREZ

HON. JIMMY GOMEZ

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 5, 2024

Mr. GOMEZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to mourn the loss of Robert "Bob" Ramirez, who passed away at the age of 78.

Robert, a lifelong Angeleno and founding member of the El Rio Veterans Collaborative, leaves behind a legacy of dedicated service and community leadership.

A proud graduate of Cathedral High School, Bob's career path led him from the Southern Pacific Railroad to the U.S. Air Force in 1965. His deployment to Vietnam in 1966 as a security police specialist with a scout patrol fire team earned him the Air Force Commendation Medal for his meritorious service.

Following his military service, Bob's commitment to advocacy and representation was evident in his role as general chairman for IBEW, where he tirelessly served for over 30 years.

His pursuit of knowledge culminated in a degree from California State University, Los Angeles, and he shared his expertise as a professor at Los Angeles Trade-Technical College. Bob's impact is felt not only through his professional and academic contributions but also through his role as a founding member of the El Rio Veterans Collaborative. He is survived by his wife, Caroline, and their two children.

Mr. Speaker, I hope everyone will join me in mourning the loss of Robert "Bob" Ramirez and celebrating his life of service.

CELEBRATING THE 10TH
ANNIVERSARY OF MxD

HON. MIKE QUIGLEY

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 5, 2024

Mr. QUIGLEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate the 10th anniversary of MxD, a Chicago-area manufacturing innovation institute.

Manufacturing times Digital, of MxD, was announced by President Barack Obama on February 25, 2014 as a partnership between private sector and federal government military focusing on digital manufacturing and design. MxD advances national security and economic prosperity by strengthening U.S. manufacturing competitiveness through technological innovation, workforce development, and cybersecurity preparedness. With nearly 240,000 manufacturers and 14 million manufacturing workers in the United States, MxD's work in digital technology adoption, cybersecurity readiness, and workforce development is essential to national economic competitiveness.

Over the past decade, MxD has launched a virtual training center to educate the next generation of manufacturing sector employees, worked closely with the Department of Defense to modernize manufacturing facilities, and supported local and federal pandemic-related needs throughout the COVID-19 crisis. MxD has received numerous awards and been recognized consistently for its leadership and innovation. These are just a few accomplish-

ments that the institute has achieved over the past decade, and I am excited to see what comes next. With nearly 300 members across industry, academia, and government, MxD is constantly advancing the field of manufacturing, and I am honored to have such an organization here in my district.

RECOGNIZING TAMPA BAY'S
TRAILBLAZER DR. CYNTHIA
JOHNSON, IN HONOR OF BLACK
HISTORY MONTH

HON. KATHY CASTOR

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 5, 2024

Ms. CASTOR of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise today during Black History Month to celebrate a true public servant, Dr. Cynthia Johnson. Her commitment to service in the community began at an early age while she accompanied her mother on weekly deliveries for Meals on Wheels and participated in other community service endeavors. Dr. Johnson developed a compassionate determination to make a positive impact on others' lives. Her family's unwavering support, appreciation for diversity, and the passion to serve others have shaped her servant leadership style.

Dr. Johnson is a native of St. Petersburg, where she grew up as the youngest of eight children. Her early experiences in the local public school system instilled in her a deep appreciation for education. She is a first-generation college student and received her bachelor's degree in education from Florida Memorial University and a doctorate in educational leadership & organization from Nova Southeastern University. Dr. Johnson also received her certification from Cornell University in diversity, equity, and inclusion and she later received the distinguished certification as a Master Economic Development Practitioner.

Dr. Johnson has more than 24 years of experience in economic development and over 27 years in leadership training and development. She has worked in Pinellas County government since 2000, where she currently serves as the Director of Pinellas County Economic Development. In her dual role as the Director of the Pinellas County Economic Development and a community change agent, she is committed to lighting the way for others.

Dr. Johnson has a wealth of knowledge in diversity, equity and inclusion. She is a fierce advocate for public policies and business practices that lift people, businesses and non-profits agencies. As a trusted advisor to businesses large and small, government agencies, policymakers, and community leaders throughout Florida, she has built her career around the diverse and inclusive space of economic development. As an economic development practitioner, trainer, mentor, and educator, she has supported hundreds of individuals with the creation, retention, and expansion of their businesses. She specializes in partner relations, federal and state grants management and compliance, business and strategic planning, entrepreneurial development, finance, and small business innovation.

She is also passionate about cultivating the next generation of leaders and dedicates her free time to mentorship and community involvement. Dr. Johnson is a member of the St.

Petersburg Chapter of the Links and Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. She has served on numerous boards including the Grow Smarter Steering Committee at the St. Petersburg Area Chamber, Chair of the Enterprise Florida Urban Working Group, Chair of Small Business Vendor Relations for Super Bowl XLIII in Tampa, and member of the Moffitt Cancer Center African American Advisory Board. She also actively supports the National Negro College Fund and advocates for participation in Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) across the United States. Dr. Johnson is married to “the best husband ever,” Kevin, and for over 21 years their four children and blended family have urged her on in service.

Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the Tampa Bay community, I am honored to recognize the outstanding accomplishments, leadership and service of Dr. Cynthia Johnson and her dedicated commitment to diversity and uplifting her neighbors in the Tampa Bay community.

HONORING THE EMMETT TILL
HISTORIC INTREPID CENTER

HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 5, 2024

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a remarkable organization, The Emmett Till Historic Intrepid Center (E.T.H.I.C. Museum).

The Emmett Till Historic Intrepid Center, also known as the E.T.H.I.C. Museum, is situated in Glendora, Mississippi (Tallahatchie County). This historic town holds significance as the birthplace of Sonny Boy Williamson II, a legendary figure celebrated as the “King of the Harmonica.” Since its inception in August 2005 under the visionary leadership of Mayor Johnny B. Thomas, the E.T.H.I.C. Museum has emerged as a beacon of remembrance and resilience, offering a sanctuary for reflection and education. As the first and sole museum dedicated to Emmett Till, the E.T.H.I.C. Museum holds a sacred responsibility to honor his memory and preserve his legacy. It stands as a testament to the enduring spirit of justice and reconciliation, bearing witness to the tumultuous chapters of history while striving to illuminate pathways towards healing and renewal.

Housed in a former cotton gin once owned by J.W. Milam, one of Emmett’s abductors, the museum’s mission is to provide an immersive, thought-provoking, and educational journey to preserve and celebrate the historical and cultural heritage of Glendora, Tallahatchie County, and Mississippi.

Through its diverse programs and initiatives, the museum seeks to raise awareness of African American and Mississippi’s history, while promoting racial harmony and a deeper understanding of cultural diversity. By collaborating with existing projects and organizations and spearheading new initiatives, the museum endeavors to uphold and promote the rich cultural legacy of the Mississippi Delta.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing The Emmett Till Historic Intrepid Center, as a beacon of inspiration, driven by an unwavering dedication to enhancing our community and the esteemed state of Mississippi.

HONORING HIS EXCELLENCY
MARKO DJURIC, AMBASSADOR
OF THE REPUBLIC OF SERBIA TO
THE UNITED STATES

HON. ERIC SWALWELL

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 5, 2024

Mr. SWALWELL. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize the outstanding service of His Excellency Mr. Marko Djuric, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Republic of Serbia to the United States of America. Ambassador Djuric is an exceptional diplomat who has dedicated his career to expanding Serbia’s relationships across the globe and shepherding his country’s accession into the European Union.

Ambassador Djuric assumed his duties as Ambassador to the United States in January 2021. In his three years of diplomatic service in Washington D.C., Ambassador Djuric has made countless contributions to the 140-year-old United States-Serbia relationship.

In Congress, the Ambassador substantially expanded the Serbian Caucus, forging new relationships on Capitol Hill while strengthening bonds with American industry through a series of working visits.

I was proud to host him in my district last year to connect him with the Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory and some of California’s most innovative and influential companies. I am hopeful that the Ambassador’s visit to my district will lead to permanent partnerships in the areas of fundamental physics, critical materials development, and other pressing issues of our time.

Under Ambassador Djuric’s leadership, the United States became Serbia’s number one trade partner in software and IT services, and the Serbian-American Business Council was established to promote US businesses inside of Serbia. He has also worked to promote the Open Balkan Initiative, which aims to bring more political and economic stability to the Western Balkans region.

I have had the pleasure of visiting Serbia twice, with the Ambassador serving as my host and guide. During those trips, I met with the Serbian President to discuss assistance to Ukraine and visited United States businesses with significant operations in Belgrade. We’ve also discussed, at length, the unique impact that wine production has on our regions.

I have the honor of calling Ambassador Djuric a true friend. The people of Serbia and of the United States owe Ambassador Djuric thanks for his steadfast service to his homeland and for his honesty and curiosity about our shared future.

TRUMAN STATE UNIVERSITY
GREENWOOD AUTISM CENTER

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 5, 2024

Mr. GRAVES of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate Truman State University in my district in Missouri. Since 2015, Truman State and its partners have been working to create the Greenwood

Interprofessional Autism Center. The Greenwood Center is now fully operational.

But before I talk more about the new Center, let me tell you about Truman State University. Truman State was founded in 1867 in Kirksville, Missouri and is Missouri’s only statewide public liberal arts and sciences university. Truman is consistently ranked among the nation’s best colleges. For 26 consecutive years, U.S. News and World Report has recognized Truman as the No. 1 public university in the Midwest Regional category. They also gave Truman a No. 1 ranking for “Best Undergraduate Teaching,” and Truman has rated No. 1 on the list of “Best Value Schools” in the region.

Autism is the fastest-growing developmental disorder in the United States. The Center will provide in-depth, interdisciplinary assessment and intervention for those with autism or suspected autism, as well as other neuro-developmental disorders in Northeast Missouri where these services do not exist. The Center will provide applied behavior analysis (ABA) services internally and work with a variety of external partners to meet the needs of the people the Center will serve. All partners will work within the Center’s model and guidelines to ensure consistency, quality, and collaboration.

The Center also provides high-quality training for students at Truman State University. Licensed professionals will supervise Truman students enrolled in health-related academic programs (Applied Behavior Analysis, communication disorders, counseling, education, exercise science, health science, nursing, and psychology).

I congratulate Truman State and its partners for creating this Center that will bring invaluable and much needed resources to the families and children of Northeast Missouri.

RECOGNIZING TAMPA BAY’S
TRAILBLAZER DR. KANIKA
TOMALIN, IN HONOR OF BLACK
HISTORY MONTH

HON. KATHY CASTOR

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 5, 2024

Ms. CASTOR of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor and celebrate the remarkable contributions and achievements of a life-long servant leader, Dr. Kanika Tomalin. Dr. Tomalin has devoted her life to improving access and opportunity for the underserved—who are not undeserved of opportunity.

For more than a decade, Dr. Tomalin served in key leadership positions at Bayfront Health which fueled her passion for a healthier St. Petersburg. She is the first Black woman to serve as a healthcare executive at Bayfront Health and while there, she led the creation of the joint venture partnership that resulted in the formation of the Foundation for a Healthy St. Petersburg.

In 2014, she was appointed St. Petersburg deputy mayor by Mayor Rick Kriseman and is the first Black woman to serve in that role. Dr. Tomalin helped launch numerous initiatives that have made St. Petersburg more vital, inclusive and healthier, including founding the Innovation District and Healthy St. Pete, which both helped reduce the Black poverty rate to

a new low. Ten years ago, Pinellas County ranked 38th of 67 counties in Florida for overall health and today, it ranks 17th. Also, out of Healthy St. Pete came St. Pete Eats: A Cookbook, which Dr. Tomalin published during the pandemic. It emphasizes healthy ingredients and recipes are taken from her own as well as from the city's independent restaurants as a salute to "the special role our small businesses play in this paradise of a place we call home." Proceeds from the book helped support small businesses affected by the public health crisis.

Before returning to the Foundation for a Healthy St. Petersburg for her full circle moment, Dr. Tomalin was chief operating officer and vice president for strategy for Eckerd College in St. Petersburg. Now as president and chief executive officer of the Foundation, which has a mission to understand health disparities and support community-driven solutions to achieve health equity, Dr. Tomalin is passionate about helping to rewrite the story of St. Petersburg's underserved communities so they can attain their full potential.

As a fifth-generation St. Petersburg native, Dr. Tomalin is the oldest of two daughters born to Yvonne and David Jelks. She grew up in West St. Petersburg, attending Bay Point Elementary School, Bay Point Middle School, Tyrone Middle School and graduated from Boca Ciega High School. She says she had an idyllic childhood, cradled by her extended family of about 250 relatives, who mostly live in St. Petersburg or within miles. During her formative years, Dr. Tomalin was an Ebony Scholar, a program that provides institutional and financial support to high-achieving African-American students and was the vision of Vyrle Davis, an education giant who became Pinellas County's first Black area superintendent. Her interest in journalism began early—her childhood best friend's mother was an editor at the then-St. Petersburg Times. Dr. Tomalin received her bachelor's degree in journalism from Florida A&M University, her master's degree in business administration from the University of Miami and her doctorate in law and policy from Northeastern University.

Dr. Tomalin was a Poynter Institute scholar writing stories for the St. Petersburg Times when she met her future husband, sports and outdoors writer Terry Tomalin. They raised two children, Kai and Nia, and were married for 17 years until his passing in 2016.

Dr. Tomalin also worked at the Palm Beach Post and television stations in Tallahassee, Florida and Louisville, Kentucky, as well as radio in St. Petersburg.

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to recognize Dr. Kanika Tomalin, who is honorably carrying forward the legacy of her deeply rooted St. Petersburg family while making an indelible mark on progress for St. Petersburg, the Sunshine City that is moving along the margin of excellence from great to iconic where opportunity shines on all.

HONORING THE LIFE OF GWEN-DOLYN "GWEN" BENSON-WALKER

HON. ELEANOR HOLMES NORTON

OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 5, 2024

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Gwendolyn "Gwen" Elaine Benson-

Walker, my former chief of staff, who died on February 2, 2024.

Gwen worked for me in various capacities for 20 years, starting as my scheduler and ultimately becoming my chief of staff. As my chief of staff, Gwen fostered a collaborative environment and helped me hire the best and brightest for my office.

Gwen was also a devoted mother and grandmother, and had a passion for wellness, physical fitness, and world travel. After her retirement, Gwen traveled the world and lived in Spain from 2013 to 2022.

Gwen was not only beloved by her family, friends and colleagues, she was also beloved by me. I am honored to have known Gwen, and I will be forever grateful for her service to Congress, as well as to the District of Columbia.

Again, I ask the House of Representatives to join me in honoring the life of Gwen Benson-Walker.

RECOGNIZING DIRECTOR OF CASEWORK DECONTEE SAWYER FOR HER EXCELLENT WORK ON BEHALF OF MINNESOTA'S THIRD CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

HON. DEAN PHILLIPS

OF MINNESOTA
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 5, 2024

Mr. PHILLIPS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize my Director of Casework, Deontee Sawyer, for her work on behalf of every constituent in Minnesota's Third Congressional District. This week, Deontee will depart my office for a new opportunity serving as Rep. ANGIE CRAIG's Casework Director, and I could not be more proud or grateful for her service.

As Director of Casework, Deontee masterfully led my casework operations and team of caseworkers, working tirelessly for our constituents. Deontee has always gone above and beyond to advocate for constituents, lending her expertise to a wide range of cases and crises. As a true servant-leader on the front lines, she restored Americans' faith in government one passport, immigration case, tax return, and VA benefit at a time.

A St. Cloud State University graduate, Deontee was an organizer on my first campaign in 2018, before joining my congressional staff as a Constituent Advocate. Her impressive success in that role and dedication to service led me to promote her to Director of Casework in 2023. From the beginning of her time with my office, Deontee demonstrated her commitment to our ethos that "Representation Begins with Listening" by connecting casework to policymaking. When Deferred Enforced Departure (DED) status was about to expire for the Liberian community, Deontee worked with our legislative team to introduce the bipartisan Protect Our Liberian Community Act. She and our team worked diligently on this issue until a pathway to citizenship for Liberians on DED was included in the NDAA that passed at the end of my first year in office.

Deontee has been our office ethos of "Radical Hospitality" personified for the past five years. She has been the heart of our casework team since our office opened—a role that allowed her to seamlessly blend her

professional experiences as a mental health professional and community organizer. No case has ever proven too big or too small for Deontee; she treats every constituent with an expert blend of professionalism and compassion. She has put her effortless way of connecting with people to work building authentic connections with communities throughout Minnesota's Third District.

Deontee's positive energy, radiant smile, enthusiasm for trivia, and inclination to dance after receiving good news on behalf of a constituent will be deeply missed by her colleagues. She has been a leader in our office, never afraid to share what is on her mind and stand up for her beliefs. Deontee knows the importance of bringing joy into work that can often feel heavy. She encourages team members to have fun in their jobs and celebrate hard-fought wins, and she demonstrates genuine care for her colleagues' wellbeing.

The people of Minnesota's Third Congressional District were lucky to have her expertise and leadership, and she will be dearly missed. However, I'm extraordinarily happy that this expertise will continue to serve the nation and the people of Minnesota's Second Congressional District. I wish Deontee all the best in her future endeavors and thank her for her five years of faithful service to this Nation.

RECOGNIZING TAMPA BAY'S TRAILBLAZER, GLORIA JEAN ROYSTER, IN HONOR OF BLACK HISTORY MONTH

HON. KATHY CASTOR

OF FLORIDA
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 5, 2024

Ms. CASTOR of Florida. Mr. Speaker, this Black History Month I rise to celebrate the life of a local trailblazer, author, and historian, Ms. Gloria Jean Royster.

Ms. Royster is a resident of north downtown Tampa where she regularly advocates for safer pedestrian access and infrastructure, and quality-of-life issues for residents living in her River Arts District neighborhood. In late 2022, she contributed to the story and history of Ashley Drive and the surrounding area for the City of Tampa's application for the Reconnecting Communities Grant Pilot Program/Ashley Drive Redesign Project. When the city was awarded the grant it shared credit with Ms. Royster for helping to tell Tampa's story as part of the application. Ms. Royster shared this significant achievement with some of the historic residents who were impacted by demolished communities and with her River Arts District community leaders. This project will include removal of an interstate ramp and open streets which fulfills a dream of Ms. Royster and her neighbors for direct pedestrian access to The Tampa Riverwalk.

She retired to Tampa to be a full-time tourist and ended up volunteering in her community. An avid Tampa history buff and researcher, Ms. Royster currently spends her time telling the story of Tampa through her signature Tampa History Postcards, which include many historical nuggets of Tampa's Black community. Ms. Royster helped erect the Madame Fortune Taylor Bridge Historical Marker (2018) in downtown Tampa and she is the creator of the Tampa Bay History Center Madame Fortune Taylor Walking Tour, which she led for

three years and received a “Best of the Bay 2021” nomination for Best Walking Tour. Madame Fortune was born into slavery and, after gaining her freedom, became a Tampa businesswoman who owned more than 30 acres of land in the late 1880s but sold it as part of an agreement that a bridge be built over the river which would connect East and West Tampa. The historic bridge was built in 1892 and named after Taylor.

Ms. Royster is a native of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, but life has taken her many places, and she considers Chicago, Illinois home, where she raised her only child Ike Murray, Jr. (ret. USAF), and where four of her seven siblings live. Ms. Royster has a passion for her two strengths, caring for others or writing about them. After high school she taught and cared for 2-year-olds at a pre-school in Raleigh, North Carolina before entering the hospitality industry. While in college she was hired as a Feature Writer for Muhammad Speaks Newspaper in Chicago (later Bilalian News and The American Muslim Journal).

While observing her story subjects she caught the hospitality bug again and left journalism for several years.

When she lived in Atlanta, Ms. Royster worked as a community grassroots organizer and was nicknamed the “The Quiet Riot.” It was at this time she was encouraged by her mother, Mrs. Doris L. Muhammad Royster to write children’s books. Ms. Royster wrote her first children’s book manuscript while spending time with her young nephew. He was a window to her destiny. She wrote her second children’s book manuscript “GO! In The Snow” and self-published in 2019. Her third children’s book manuscript, “Al Li Gator and J. Louis Bat”, which takes place at the Bat House in Tampa near the Historic Fortune Taylor Bridge will be released this spring and we will see other book projects in the future.

Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the entire Tampa Bay community, I am honored to recognize Ms. Gloria Jean Royster for her outstanding contributions to keep our local Black history alive and using it to create positive change in the future as well as her selfless acts of community service in uplifting her neighbors.

RECOGNIZING SETH UTTERBACK

HON. BRUCE WESTERMAN

OF ARKANSAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 5, 2024

Mr. WESTERMAN. Mr. Speaker, it is with great pride and admiration that I rise today to recognize a remarkable student currently attending classes at Cass Job Corps, located in Franklin County, within the bounds of Arkansas’ esteemed Fourth Congressional District. Seth Utterback embodies the spirit of dedication, leadership, and excellence that we strive to cultivate in our youth.

Throughout his time at Cass Job Corps, Seth has experienced tremendous growth and success, particularly within the culinary program where he has truly distinguished himself. Serving as both a dorm president and lead chef in the culinary arts trade, Seth exemplifies servant leadership, tirelessly ensuring that his fellow students feel welcome and supported on campus. His commitment to the success of others is truly commendable.

Seth’s passion for culinary arts is evident in his unwavering dedication to honing his skills. His natural talent, coupled with his strong communication and teamwork abilities, sets him apart as a standout student and a valued team player. Whether he is mastering new techniques or assisting his classmates, Seth consistently goes above and beyond, embodying the values of reliability, respect, and positivity.

In addition to his exemplary academic and leadership achievements, Seth has been selected to represent Cass Job Corps at the Leadership Summit in Washington, D.C., a testament to his exceptional leadership qualities. Furthermore, his participation in the Work Experience Program through WIOA has provided him with invaluable real-world skills and experiences under the guidance of Mr. Mike Brown, further preparing him for success in his future endeavors.

Looking ahead, Seth’s ambitions extend beyond the borders of Arkansas as he plans to attend Treasure Island Job Corps in California, with the long-term goal of becoming a chef on a cruise line. His determination, outstanding work ethic, and unwavering commitment to his dreams serve as an inspiration to us all.

I ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating Seth Utterback on his achievements and in wishing him continued success as he embarks on the next chapter of his journey. Seth is truly a testament to the limitless potential of our Nation’s youth, and I have no doubt that he will continue to make us proud in all his future endeavors.

HONORING CHIEF PATRICK PARKER

HON. JACK BERGMAN

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 5, 2024

Mr. BERGMAN. Mr. Speaker, Chief Patrick Parker grew up in Petoskey, Michigan as the oldest of 11 children and carried with him from a young age a sense of duty and responsibility. In high school, Chief Parker played football for the Petoskey Northmen, was a Proud Eagle Scout of Troop 7, and graduated in 1979. Chief Parker then attended North Central Michigan College where he earned an Associate’s Degree and later received a Bachelor of Science in Business Administration from Lake Superior State College.

Chief Parker started his fire service career in 1983 as a volunteer and morphed into a part-paid/on-call firefighter and EMT. He filled many roles such as Firefighter, Lieutenant, Captain, and Battalion Chief; and in 2004, he was promoted to the rank of full-time Deputy Chief. On January 1, 2006, Parker became the Chief of the Grand Traverse Metro Fire Department, encouraging his members to foster an atmosphere where everyone is empowered to give their best and live up to the credo: *Omnis Cedo Domus—Everyone Goes Home.*

Additionally, Chief Parker is involved professionally in the Michigan Association of Fire Chiefs Board, Northern Michigan Fire Chiefs Association Board, Grand Traverse County Local Emergency Planning Committee, Local Planning Team and 911 Advisory Board. Chief Parker is the founding member of MI-Mutual

Aid Box Alarm System Division 3701, which at the time of its founding included all of Region-7. He is the chairperson of the MABAS-Michigan Special Operations Work Group, the State’s Urban Search and Rescue Team, overseeing Michigan Task Force-1. Chief Parker was Michigan’s representative to the Great Lakes Division (GLD) of the International Association of Fire Chiefs (IAFC), and he currently is the immediate past president of the GLD.

Always looking for new ways to help his community, Chief Parker is involved with many local boards and committees, serving as the President of the American Red Cross—Northern Michigan, Camps and Services member of the Rotary Club of Traverse City, board member of the Rotary Camps & Services with the Knights of Columbus No. 9979, and board member of the Michigan Crossroads Council—Boy Scouts of America. He is the founding member and President of the Grand Traverse Region First Responder Alliance, a 501(c)(3) organization founded to find solutions to the unmet needs of the region’s first responders.

Chief Parker is also a dedicated husband, enjoying 39 years of marriage to his wife Michelle and their 3 golden retrievers. In his spare time, he is known for being an avid hiker, hunter, and Great Lakes boater, and he enjoys camping and snowmobiling in the wintertime.

Mr. Speaker, it’s my honor to congratulate Chief Patrick Parker on an exemplary career and legacy of giving back to his community. I thank him for his humble service and wish him and his family the best in their future endeavors.

HONORING THE LIFE OF BETTY HOLZENDORF

HON. DEBBIE WASSERMAN SCHULTZ

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 5, 2024

Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ. Mr. Speaker, it is in the spirit of bereavement that I rise to recognize the remarkable life of former Florida State Senator Betty Holzendorf. As a dedicated public servant, community leader, and advocate for social justice, her impact on the city of Jacksonville and the great State of Florida and its people will be felt for generations to come.

Senator Holzendorf passed away on February 29, 2024 at the age of 84.

As a lifelong resident of Jacksonville, Senator Holzendorf dedicated her life to the betterment of her community. She received her bachelor’s degree from Edward Waters University and her master’s in educational administration from the University of North Florida, the latter of which has a road named after her on campus.

As a former public school teacher and administrator at her alma mater, Edward Waters University, she was committed to quality education and began her career in public service in 1975 as an affirmative action officer under Jacksonville Mayor Hans Tanzler. Following several years of service in this role, she joined the staff of Jacksonville Mayor Jake Godbold as City Council liaison, where she developed the political skills that would catapult her into the Florida House of Representatives in 1988.

Throughout her esteemed career, Senator Holzendorf championed causes that uplifted the most vulnerable members of her community. Whether it was fighting for affordable housing, advocating for quality education, or promoting access to healthcare, she never wavered in her dedication to improving the lives of her constituents, especially children.

Senator Holzendorf's passion for justice and equality was matched only by her unwavering determination to create positive change. After four years in the Florida House, she served with distinction in the Florida State Senate from 1992 to 2002, where her leadership earned her the respect and admiration of colleagues on both sides of the aisle.

Beyond her legislative accomplishments, Senator Holzendorf was a pillar of her community, known for her kindness, compassion, and incredible cooking. Her impact extended far beyond the boundaries of Tallahassee and Jacksonville, truly touching the lives of countless individuals throughout Florida.

My heart is with Senator Holzendorf's family during this time of mourning. May they find solace in knowing that her legacy will live on in the hearts and minds of all who had the privilege of knowing her, and may her memory be for a blessing.

HONORING THE EDUCATIONAL CONTRIBUTIONS OF MR. MYCHAL THREETS

HON. JOHN GARAMENDI

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 5, 2024

Mr. GARAMENDI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the critical contributions of Mr. Mychal Threets to the Solano County community. As the Supervising Librarian at the Fairfield Civic Center Library and a social media content creator, Mr. Threets impacted the lives of countless youth in the Solano community and beyond.

As a homeschooled student in Solano County, Mr. Threets grew up taking advantage of the wide array of resources and services offered at his local library and received his first library card at just five years old. After earning his master's degree in library information science, Mr. Threets began working at the Fairfield Civic Center Library in 2013 and helped expand the library programs and resources that were fundamental to his education.

With the growing mental health crisis and declining literacy rates, Mr. Threets took to social media to discuss the vital emotional health resources and educational services that libraries provide. He wanted to ensure people knew that libraries are not just places with books but offer something for everyone. Through his social media posts, Mr. Threets shared stories about the vital role libraries play in people's lives and the "library joy" he sees in action every day. Mr. Threets used his viral social media presence to spread kindness and inspire American youth to fall in love with reading and libraries, just as he did.

For his advocacy and outspoken love of libraries, Mr. Threets was one of 10 librarians across the country to win the I Love My Librarian Award for Public Service. While Mr. Threets will be stepping away from his role in

the Solano County Library, I know he will continue striving to improve the Solano community and increase literacy rates for young children. I look forward to seeing his work to expand access to educational resources and make our communities more inclusive.

RECOGNIZING TAMPA BAY'S TRAILBLAZER WALLACE Z. BOWERS, IN HONOR OF BLACK HISTORY MONTH

HON. KATHY CASTOR

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 5, 2024

Ms. CASTOR of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor and celebrate the remarkable contributions and achievements of a distinguished individual of the Tampa Bay community, Mr. Wallace Z. Bowers. Supported by his wife, Lois Bowers, and son, Warren Lyle Bowers, his lifelong dedication to community service, advocacy, and leadership embodies the spirit of stewardship we all must strive towards.

Mr. Bowers grew up in Bascom, FL, the 11th of 13 children. In describing his upbringing, Mr. Bowers considered himself a "country boy," and often recalls the lessons of hard work and "making a difference" which his parents instilled in him and his siblings. This foundation inspired a call to service in the U.S. Army and later, his decades of community service within the Tampa Bay community. After returning from military service, Mr. Bowers moved to Tampa, Florida, eventually settling in a little community called Progress Village. He went on to study at the University of Tampa, Tampa Bible College and Florida Theological Seminary & Bible College.

Mr. Bowers was an early member of the Progress Village Civic Council, a Tampa-based community organization which played a pivotal role in offsetting the displacement of African Americans during the Civil Rights era. He also co-founded and served as President from 1986 until 1996 of the Progress Village Foundation which provides scholarships to local students. Mr. Bowers also played a pivotal role in rezoning negotiations with the Hillsborough County Commission, resulting in significant benefits for the community, including the revitalization of the Progress Village Park, and various other improvements.

Mr. Bowers' commitment to public service is also exemplified by his gubernatorial appointment to the Florida Housing Authority from 1983 to 1989, where he served as Chair during the later years of his tenure. Additionally, his dedication to transportation and community development is reflected in his roles as a county appointee to the Hillsborough County Regional Transit Authority (HART) and as a past member of the Hillsborough County Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) Board and Tampa Streetcar Board.

Throughout his life Mr. Bowers has invested in the communities and people of Tampa. And often recalling his parents' teachings of hard work and making a difference, Mr. Bowers was always aware of his higher calling as a spiritual leader. He was the Vice Moderator of the Mount Pilgrim Association for six years and is currently a member of the Progressive M & E Baptist State Convention of Florida and

National Baptist Convention of America International, Inc. As a licensed and ordained minister, he led and pastored the Saint Mary Missionary Baptist Church from 1996 to 2018 being given the honorary title of Pastor Emeritus.

In 1970, Mr. Bowers founded his own real estate business and has been practicing for over five decades. His entrepreneurial spirit also led him to own and operate Bowers Barber Shop. Mr. Bowers served as the Property Manager for the Progress Village Shopping Center and Progressive M & E Baptist State Convention Headquarters, always working hard and always making a difference.

Mr. Bowers has stated that for any community to progress and move forward we all must take an interest in improving the welfare of our fellow citizens. Not only has he led by that example for decades, but he has helped establish a foundation in the community that would ensure future generations, regardless of where they were from or the challenges they face so that they have the appropriate educational, economic, and social opportunities needed to achieve success.

Mr. Speaker, I am honored to recognize Mr. Wallace Z. Bowers, whose work is engraved in the streets of our Tampa community. His legacy of service, leadership, and hard work serve as an inspiration to future generations.

HONORING JOHN S. JOSSELL

HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 5, 2024

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor John Jossell.

John Jossell was born in Jackson, Mississippi, on December 2, 1985, to Michael and Evelyn Jossell. He is the second oldest of five siblings and spent his early years in Clarksdale, Mississippi. After attending Clarksdale Municipal School District, he later moved to Marks, Mississippi.

During his upbringing in Quitman County, John discovered a passion for teaching as he practiced with his siblings. This passion led him to graduate from Madison S. Palmer High School with a strong desire to pursue a teaching career.

Choosing Rust College as his alma mater, John focused his studies on English, the subject he was most passionate about teaching. As a student at Rust, he actively participated in the Baptist Student Union Gospel Choir and became a member of the esteemed Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc. After graduating in 2009, John's mother encouraged him to begin his teaching career in his hometown at Quitman County School District.

Starting as a first-year teacher at Quitman County Middle School, John taught Reading. He thoroughly enjoyed the learning environment, the students, and the educational culture. Motivated to enhance his teaching skills, he pursued a master's degree in Curriculum, Instruction, & Assessment from Walden University. This program equipped him with effective tools and assessment techniques to better educate his students. Transitioning to Madison S. Palmer High School, John faced the challenge of preparing students for the English II state test. Despite the difficulties, he found

great fulfillment in inspiring his students to excel academically beyond the Mississippi Delta. Recognizing his passion for teaching, several individuals encouraged him to explore administrative roles.

Building on his master's degree, John decided to pursue a specialist degree in Educational Leadership and Administration. While serving as the Assistant Principal of Madison S. Palmer High School, he continued to teach English II. Although demanding, John's determination propelled him to succeed in his position. During his tenure, numerous students pursued higher education outside of Mississippi, fulfilling their college dreams.

Presently, John serves as the principal of Quitman County Middle School as he diligently works towards his doctorate degree in Educational Leadership & Administration from Walden University. Guided by the scripture, "Do everything with Love" (1 Corinthians 16:14), he brings this spirit to his interactions with the faculty, staff, and students at Quitman County School District.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing Mr. John Jossell for his dedication in serving his school and community.

HONORING THE RETURN OF SHEN YUN TO THE DAVID H. KOCH THEATER AT LINCOLN CENTER IN NEW YORK CITY

HON. PATRICK RYAN

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 5, 2024

Mr. RYAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize the return of the Shen Yun Performing Arts Company to the David H. Koch theater at Lincoln Center in New York City in April 2024.

Shen Yun Performing Arts was established in New York in 2006 and has become a worldwide phenomenon as they travel to 180 cities every year to perform. Millions of people travel to see this unique performance time and time again and with the development of new dances each year, the performers, choreographers, and conductors continually develop an amazing show for all to enjoy.

The ancient Chinese traditions that are rooted in virtue, faith, and moral values are brought to life in the performances that feature dancing and singing with performers wearing intricate costumes. Artistic freedom is essential to a society and Shen Yun expresses that ideal in the face of continued opposition from the Chinese government.

I had the privilege of meeting many members of the Shen Yun community located in my district and watched the performance in Washington, D.C. It was a huge honor to see such talent.

I want to thank the members of Shen Yun for their great success thus far and wish them all the best performing at Lincoln Center.

HONORING ELLISON CAPERS "E.C." GRAYSON, JR.

HON. JOE WILSON

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 5, 2024

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, today I honor the life of Mr. Ellison Capers "E.C." Grayson, Jr. and offer my sympathy to his family. E.C. Grayson, born in 1928 in Saint Paul, Minnesota, was known for his vibrant personality, dedication to family and friends, and lifelong commitment to civil service. From his early achievements as an Eagle Scout, student leader, and athlete, to his distinguished career in the U.S. Navy, serving during the Korean war and as Assistant Secretary of the Navy under President Reagan, and later as a successful CEO and leader, E.C. left a lasting impact on all who knew him, celebrated in a Memorial Mass on March 1, 2024, in Tiburon, California. We deeply appreciate his exemplary service and personal courage, which epitomized the highest traditions of Navy service. I include in the RECORD the following obituary for E.C. Grayson, Jr.:

Ellison Capers "E.C." Grayson, passed away peacefully and faithfully on January 13, 2024, in La Quinta, Calif.

E.C. was born in Saint Paul, Minn., on September 7, 1928, son of Ellison Capers Grayson, Sr. and Inez Santos Grayson; and brother of Richard A. Grayson, Esq. E.C. will always be remembered for his big smile, boundless energy, eternal optimism, devotion to duty, honor, country, and his deep love of family and friends. E.C. loved the magic of relationships, knew everyone, and delighted in connecting them.

E.C. was raised in St. Paul, Minn., and was a student leader and athlete. He was an Eagle Scout, President of Central High School, a lifeguard, and a varsity football player. At the University of Minnesota, E.C. was President of Sigma Alpha Epsilon and the Inter-Fraternity Council. He loved his summers on the Isle of Palms, S.C., where his family had a long history. E.C. was an athlete his entire life, still swimming at 95. He loved tennis, downhill skiing, running, rowing on the Bay and playing water polo on the Olympic Club team. As a member of the Saint Francis and Corinthian Yacht Clubs, he loved racing around the Bay on "The Darby" to the delight of his granddaughters and their friends.

After graduation, E.C. joined the U.S. Navy as an officer during the Korean war. From his ship, he witnessed a nuclear detonation test off the Bikini Atoll. His active duty took him across the Pacific and ultimately, to San Francisco, where he met the love of his life, Jean Amy Mason. She was a flight attendant for United Airlines and for President Dwight Eisenhower during his presidential campaign. E.C. and Jean were engaged in Honolulu and married on Treasure Island Naval Base on December 26, 1953. They spent their honeymoon driving through Europe for three months and returned home to San Francisco aboard the QE II.

Thereafter, E.C. had a successful career as an insurance industry CEO. He was very active in civic affairs, including as President of St. Mary's Hospital and The Navy League, a Regent at Saint Ignatius College Prep, Commanding Officer of a Naval Intelligence Reserve unit and an advisor to Mayors George Moscone and Dianne Feinstein and Governor Pete Wilson.

In 1981, President Ronald Reagan appointed E.C. as the Assistant Secretary of the Navy. He received numerous awards, including the Navy's Distinguished Civilian Service medal. After serving in the Pentagon, E.C. returned to San Francisco and joined Spencer Stuart, becoming one of the country's top "headhunters" of Fortune 500 CEO's, CFO's, and board members. In later years, E.C. joined the Grayson Group as senior advisor and loving mentor to its founder, Laurie Grayson.

E.C. especially loved The Bohemian Club and Grove. He was a true Bohemian in spirit and deed. He also greatly enjoyed The Alfalfa Club, The Knights of Malta, The Metropolitan Club of Washington, D.C., and serving on The Guardsmen board. He was a member of The Springs Country Club in Rancho Mirage and a devout parishioner of St. Hilary Church in Tiburon.

E.C. is survived by his wife of seventy years, Jean Mason Grayson; his children, Darby Grayson Sutherland (Bruce) and William Ellison "Bill" Grayson (Laurie); his four granddaughters, Katherine (Washington, D.C.), Elizabeth and Caroline Grayson (Manhattan), and Lauren Gordon (Austin, Texas). He is also survived by Shadow, his beloved standard poodle. E.C.'s zest for life, service to his country, devotion to his family and love of his friends will continue to live on in all of us.

The Memorial Mass was on Friday, March 1, 2024, at 1:30 p.m., at St. Hilary Church in Tiburon, Calif.

COMMEMORATING THE WORK OF THE NAVY FEDERAL CREDIT UNION

HON. J. LUIS CORREA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 5, 2024

Mr. CORREA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the work of the Navy Federal Credit Union and its strong support for the military community throughout California and the United States. With a statewide membership totaling almost 1.5 million, with 18,000 residing in my district, I applaud the work they do everyday to ensure that our beloved servicemembers have access to convenient financial services.

Spread throughout its 50 branches in California, the Navy Federal Credit Union has worked tirelessly for the past 90 years to ensure that their mission of being the preferred financial institution to members of the military and their families stands true. As a member-owned and not-for-profit credit union, their worldwide membership consists of 13.3 million members. Additionally, they have 356 branches worldwide, ensuring that all servicemembers can take advantage of their services and products in the pursuit of financial wellbeing.

Furthermore, their awards and recognition speak to the impact of their mission for both their employees and members. With branches spread across the United States and the world, they've proven that they provide a well-rounded workplace for their employees. Most notably, they have been awarded the FORTUNE 100 Best Companies to Work For and have been named a Top Workplace by the

Washington Post. In addition, they have proven to have a strong military focus when they were named the Best Military Bank/Credit Union by the US News and World Report.

Their member-focused mission, including serving with compassion, putting members first, and championing community helps to ensure that there is a strong understanding of the needs for service members, while displaying integrity and honesty in their services.

I ask my colleagues to join me in commemorating the work of the Navy Federal Credit Union and the services they provide for servicemembers in California and the United States.

HONORING LATONZIA DORSEY-
EVANS

HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 5, 2024

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a tenacious and self-motivated leader, Mrs. LaTonzia Dorsey-Evans. LaTonzia has shown what can be done through hard work, dedication, and a desire to achieve success.

LaTonzia, a resident of Mayersville, Mississippi, is currently working on her Doctorate at The University of Memphis in African American Literature and Cultural Studies. Her research interest includes the Black Arts Movement, African American Literature, and Hip-Hop. She also holds a Bachelor of Science and a Master of Arts from William Carey University.

LaTonzia spent a year as the 11th and 12th grade English teacher at South Delta High School before transitioning to Mississippi Valley State University (MVSU) as the Sophomore Year Experience Coordinator in University College. Currently, she serves as an Instructor of English in the English and Foreign Languages Department at MVSU. In recognition of her outstanding contributions, she was awarded the title of Humanities Teacher of the Year for 2023–2024 by the Office of Academic Affairs.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing Mrs. LaTonzia Dorsey-Evans for her passion and dedication to the Arts & Social Justice.

INTRODUCTION OF THE WASHINGTON, D.C. AREA HELICOPTER NOISE INFORMATION EXCHANGE ACT

HON. ELEANOR HOLMES NORTON

OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 5, 2024

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, I introduce the Washington, D.C. Area Helicopter Noise Information Exchange Act, which would require the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) to create and implement a helicopter noise-sharing

mechanism for all helicopter operators in the National Capital Region (NCR) and to make such mechanism accessible to the public online. I got this bill included in the Securing Growth and Robust Leadership in American Aviation Act (H.R. 3935), which the House passed last year.

Residents of the NCR have been plagued by helicopter noise for years. Yet, there is no centralized complaint system nor any comprehensive data about helicopter noise in the NCR. Helicopter noise can harm health, quality of life, and the structural integrity of homes. In 2019, I led members of the NCR in requesting that the Government Accountability Office (GAO) study helicopter noise in the NCR. In 2021, GAO recommended that the FAA implement a noise sharing mechanism for helicopter operators in the NCR.

In 2022, the FAA initiated a pilot program with a private company to create a helicopter noise sharing mechanism in the NCR. After the end of the pilot program, Fairfax and Arlington Counties contracted with the private company to maintain such a mechanism solely for Northern Virginia. However, the company is not required to share the collected data with any jurisdictions, other than those in Northern Virginia, or the public. The FAA must be involved in the collection and analysis of helicopter noise data in the NCR to effectively address the impacts on the public, and the public has a right to know the source of the noise.

This bill would direct the creation of a more effective information sharing mechanism, which would allow for better, more comprehensive data on helicopter noise complaints. This data would in turn help us develop solutions to address helicopter noise.

I urge my colleagues to support this bill.

SPECIALIST JUSTIN MEDINA,
CLEMENTON TOWN HALL HOME-
TOWN HERO

HON. DONALD NORCROSS

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 5, 2024

Mr. NORCROSS. Mr. Speaker, born and raised in Blackwood, New Jersey, Specialist Justin Medina has shown dedication and commitment throughout his life. During his time at Highland Regional High School, he was involved in sports. Immediately after graduating from Highland Regional High School, Specialist Justin Medina enlisted in the United States Army.

Specialist Justin Medina enlisted in February of 2021 and served for two years, achieving the rank of PSE E-4, before he was honorably discharged in 2023. Specialist Justin Medina served as a paratrooper during his enlistment, and he was stationed at Fort Bragg, now known as Fort Liberty.

During his tenure in the United States Armed Forces, he served with distinction. Specialist Justin Medina was the recipient of multiple Army Commendation Medals which are granted for sustained acts of heroism or meritorious service.

Following his military service, Specialist Justin Medina began working as a security officer

and is presently employed at a local smoke shop. Throughout his career he has shown a willingness to learn in different environments.

Today, Specialist Justin Medina is determined to further his education and pursue a college degree and he desires to earn a Real Estate License. Specialist Justin Medina has a strong work ethic, and there is no doubt that he will continue to make significant contributions to our community.

Mr. Speaker, I ask you to join me in honoring and commending Specialist Justin Medina for his service to his community, the United States Army, and to the United States of America.

HONORING ED MELL

HON. GREG STANTON

OF ARIZONA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 5, 2024

Mr. STANTON. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor the life and legacy of Ed Mell, who we lost at the age of 81 on February 21, 2024. An inspiration to the Arizona arts community and the world, Ed will forever be remembered as the originator of some of the most iconic depictions of the desert landscape.

A Phoenix native, Ed was born in 1942 and at a very young age was drawn to the arts. He went on to graduate from Phoenix Junior College and the ArtCenter College of Design in Pasadena. After a six-year stint in New York City where he pursued his interest in commercial advertising, Ed aspired to have greater creative freedom which he was only able to find back in his home state of Arizona. In 1970, Ed accepted a teaching position on the Hopi Reservation during which he rediscovered the charm and beauty of the desert. Ed then relocated to Phoenix and in the decades that followed, he became one of the most respected and venerated artists of Arizona, dedicated to capturing the Southwest desert landscape.

Throughout his long career, museums and galleries around the globe exhibited his work, while private collectors sought the chance to add one of his pieces to their possessions. Although recognized globally for artistic accolades, Ed will always be remembered as generous and kind. He was a devoted friend and a loving and proud husband and father. Beyond his personal relationships, Ed's impact can be seen in numerous city projects including the imposing bronze rider astride a bucking horse in the middle of Old Town Scottsdale and his U.S. Postal Service Centennial stamp.

Ed's depictions of the vibrant Arizona sunsets, sweeping vistas, and dramatic mountains will forever cement him as one of the greatest landscape artists of all time. Ed is survived by his wife, Rose Marie, and his son, Carson, along with a deeply admiring and extensive fan base.

I thank Ed for his years of inspiration and dedication. Godspeed.