

producing, and implementing vital community programs across Newark, New Jersey.

Her work included the creation of summer programs, lunch initiatives, and a food bank that have helped meet the needs of families and children in underserved communities, ensuring they had access to essential resources during difficult times.

Josephine Barbee also founded the M.E. Stith Daycare Center at Zion Holiness Church, named in honor of her aunt. This daycare center became a cornerstone of early childhood development in Newark, serving as a nurturing and educational environment for generations of young children.

Her commitment to increasing community access to vital services continued throughout her career with the Essex County Division of Welfare, where she worked to improve socioeconomic conditions in the community. Even after her official retirement in 1985 she continued to support youth programs that still serve the greater Newark community today.

While Josephine Barbee passed away on February 1, 2025, her legacy is carried on by her son, Mark Barbee, who shares his mother's commitment to serving others, ensuring that her profound impact remains alive and well in the lives of those she touched. We are fortunate that Mark continues to carry the torch she lit in my hometown of Syracuse, NY.

CONGRATULATING MR. JOSÉ
CANTORAL ON BEING NAMED
MR. AMIGO 2025

HON. VICENTE GONZALEZ

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 26, 2025

MR. VICENTE GONZALEZ of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise to congratulate Mr. José Cantoral on being named Mr. Amigo 2025.

Since 1964, the Mr. Amigo Association has celebrated the friendship between the cities of Brownsville, Texas and Matamoros, Tamaulipas, Mexico. Each year, the Mr. Amigo Association selects an individual that promotes and contributes to the cultural exchange between our two countries and helps maintain the dialogue and friendship that have tied our cities together for so long.

Mr. Cantoral has spent his career producing quality music and entertainment that has enriched our culture and inspired people from across the world with a love for music and the arts.

Through his music and through his work on the Cantoral Institute, Mr. Cantoral has become a prominent figure in music and film. He has co-authored music in famous movies such as Disney Pixar's "Coco" as well as being nominated for a Latin Grammy for his musical contributions.

Mr. Cantoral is now the third member of his family to receive the honor of Mr. Amigo. His late father, Roberto Cantoral having received the honor in 1981 and most recently his sister, Itati Cantoral, in 2015.

Mr. Speaker, I wish to thank Mr. Cantoral, for his contribution to music and congratulate him on this remarkable achievement.

RECOGNIZING NICOLE SCHMITT

HON. ZACHARY NUNN

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 26, 2025

MR. NUNN of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of the extraordinary work delivered by Nicole Schmitt, our Director of Operations and Scheduler. Throughout her tenure in our office, she helped direct a dynamic and highly effective professional team, including recruiting and supervising staff assistants and Congressional interns.

During her tenure, Nicole executed many top-tier engagements, including meetings for foreign heads of state, national travel, and managing the 2025 Presidential Inauguration events for approximately five hundred Iowans who came to visit the Nation's capital.

Further, Nicole proved pivotal in helping the team work with stakeholders across the state and the aisle to earn our team the Top-10 most bipartisan member of Congress, by focusing on delivering results.

Equally, Nicole helped organize a series of "after-hours" Capitol tours and joined me in leading constituents on a unique historical look of the hallowed halls of Congress—just ask her about the Senate chandelier.

Leveraging her naturally spirited personality and proven expertise as a Parliamentary Intern in the Houses of the Oireachtas, Ireland, and clerk in the Iowa House of Representatives, Nicole remains successful in bringing people together to accomplish great things.

Most importantly, Nicole is a friend to us all, not least of all my kids, who will always remember her scavenger hunts during their Junior Congresswoman visits in Washington, D.C. We are grateful for her service with our team and wish her success as she returns to the Great State of Iowa, and all the victories Iowa State football can provide her.

The distinctive accomplishments of Nicole's service reflect well upon herself, the people of Iowa, and the United States.

HONORING THE BALTIMORE
SCHOOL FOR THE ARTS FOR 45
YEARS OF EXCELLENCE IN EDU-
CATION

HON. KWEISI MFUME

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 26, 2025

MR. MFUME. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to an iconic Baltimore institution and one of the top five public arts high schools in the United States, the Baltimore School for the Arts (BSA).

The Baltimore School for the Arts was founded in 1979, envisioned as a school with a specialized mission to give Baltimore City students the opportunity to train for a career in the visual and performing arts. The BSA set out to achieve this without sacrificing their students' academic potential, combining their artistic instruction with a rigorous college preparatory program.

For 45 years, the Baltimore School for the Arts has not only fulfilled the mission entrusted to it—it has far surpassed it. With a graduation rate exceeding 95 percent and one of Mary-

land's highest reading proficiency rates, the BSA's students thrive inside the classroom and beyond. Its alumni boast a six-year college graduation rate of 81 percent and they can be seen in prestigious galleries and on stages and television screens across the country.

The BSA has achieved these consistent and impressive results by instilling in its students the core set of values upon which the institution was founded. Its instructors encourage pupils' curiosity, foster their self-confidence; build up their technical expertise; promote cooperation and collaboration teach about global perspectives; and encourage students to develop a sense of purpose. These values enable them to mold students who are not only talented artists and scholars, but also well-rounded people.

The BSA has proven to be a tremendous boon for the Baltimore community. They have formed professional collaborations with institutions across the city, including the Everyman and Hippodrome Theatres, the Reginald F. Lewis Museum, and the Walters Art Museum, providing their students with the opportunity to learn from walking artistic professionals. So many notable alumni have walked through its doors: Actress Jada Pinkett Smith, actor Lawrence Gilliard, Jr., fashion designer Christian Siriano, visionary painter and sculptor Shinique Smith, and the one-of-a-kind rapper, songwriter, and actor, Tupac Shakur.

Along with the more than 400 high school students that the BSA serves every year, the school also provides a free after-school program, To Work in Gaining Skills (TWIGS), to over 500 Baltimore City students between the 2nd and 8th grades. These students are introduced to various art disciplines and skills, and TWIGS alumni make up roughly half of the BSA's annual freshman admissions. In addition, the BSA annually brings thousands of children and their families to their campus to see free live performances.

Mr. Speaker, I commend the Baltimore School of Arts for their great contributions to my community and its people over these last 45 years. The high-quality education that they offer introduces students to new art forms and career paths while imbuing them with deep confidence that they can achieve whatever they set their minds to. Given the magnitude of their achievements thus far, I eagerly look forward to seeing what great artists, performers, and innovators emerge from the halls of the Baltimore School for the Arts in the years to come.

RECOGNIZING THE PERFECT SAT
SCORE OF SAHLI NEGASSI

HON. LaMONICA McIVER

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 26, 2025

Mrs. McIVER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate Sahli Negassi, a NJ-10 student at West Orange high school who received a perfect score on the SAT this year. Less than 1 percent of SAT test-takers earn a perfect score each year, and Sahli's accomplishment is nothing short of extraordinary. His SAT preparation was largely self-directed, relying on free resources, and using his time and determination to study for the exam. Beyond