

HONORING BETHESDA-CHEVY
CHASE HIGH SCHOOL'S CENTEN-
NIAL

HON. JAMIE RASKIN

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 24, 2026

Mr. RASKIN. Mr. Speaker, I rise to celebrate the centennial of one of the country's great high schools, Bethesda-Chevy Chase High School, which is filled with serious learning and amazing public spirit. For the past 100 years, B-CC has educated generations of young Marylanders who have gone on to serve our community and our Nation with distinction, making extraordinary contributions to American life and culture. Today, B-CC is one of the Free State's top-performing high schools where students learn from great teachers, make lasting friendships, and participate actively in community life.

B-CC exemplifies America's historic commitment to excellence in public education. First incorporated in 1926 as a two-story, 14-classroom facility, B-CC became open to every student in our communities in 1956 after Brown v. Board of Education when African American students like Dr. Betty Holston Smith attended the newly desegregated school. Today, B-CC exemplifies Montgomery County's values of pluralism and educational opportunity by helping students from 66 different countries speaking 18 languages thrive in its classrooms.

Students at B-CC are fortunate to receive exemplary support from the B-CC Educational Foundation. The foundation expresses the wonderful commitment of parents, alumni and community members in Montgomery County to sustaining a world-class education at B-CC.

B-CC's Battlin' Barons distinguish themselves on and off the field (and rink) as State Champions in cross country, field hockey, ice hockey and many other sports. Students also participate in over 100 thriving clubs and extracurricular activities. These organizations help students find their passions and exercise their leadership skills every day. It is always a joy to visit B-CC.

B-CC boasts a wonderful list of accomplished graduates. B-CC alumni include successful scriptwriters, journalists, professional athletes, ambassadors, governors, state senators, federal judges, MacArthur Fellows, businesspeople and union organizers.

I wish my constituents—Bethesda-Chevy Chase's students, parents, faculty, staff and alumni—a memorable and beautiful Centennial Homecoming. Here's to another brilliant century and all of the achievements and adventures to come.

HONORING THE LIFE AND LEGACY
OF LIEUTENANT COLONEL JOHN
DAVID HAWTHORNE, JR., UNITED
STATES ARMY (RET.)

HON. SANFORD D. BISHOP, JR.

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 24, 2026

Mr. BISHOP. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to a soldier, a scientist, a builder of communities, and a faithful servant of God—Lieutenant Colonel John David Hawthorne, Jr.,

United States Army, Retired, of Albany and Baconton, Georgia, who entered eternal rest on Saturday, September 12, 2026, at the age of 77. His family and friends will celebrate his life on Thursday, September 24, at Saint Mary Missionary Baptist Church in Baconton, and on Friday he will be laid to rest with military honors at Andersonville National Cemetery.

Mr. Speaker, John Hawthorne was born on November 14, 1948, the eldest of six children of the late Rosa and John D. Hawthorne, Sr. He grew up in Highlands County, Florida, in the years when the law of the land said that a child like him should be kept apart. In 1966, he walked across the stage at Lake Placid High School as the only African-American graduate in his class.

Picture that young man, Mr. Speaker. A cap and gown. A diploma in his hand. And not one face in the rows behind him that looked like his own. He could have carried that loneliness as a wound. Instead, he carried it as an assignment—and he spent the rest of his life making certain that the young people who came after him would never have to walk across that stage alone.

He went on to Florida A&M University and to Tuskegee Institute, and in 1971 he graduated cum laude from Florida A&M with a Bachelor of Science degree in physics. That same year he was named a Distinguished Military Graduate, and on July 29, 1971, he was commissioned a Second Lieutenant in the United States Army. Years later, he earned a Master of Business Administration from Albany State University, an institution I am proud to represent.

Mr. Speaker, few Americans have lived a life of such remarkable range. As a young engineer trainee, he worked on NASA's Apollo Saturn program—a young Black physicist from rural Florida, helping this Nation reach for the moon. He served as a zone manager for the Lincoln Mercury Division of Ford Motor Company, and he held management positions with Procter & Gamble.

But it was in uniform that his country asked the most of him, and he gave it. Across 26 years of active and reserve service, he rose to the rank of Lieutenant Colonel of Field Artillery. He graduated from the Pershing Missile School and, while stationed in Germany during the Cold War, became one of the first African-American officers to command a Pershing missile unit—entrusted with some of the most consequential weapons this Nation has ever fielded. He completed the Army's Command and General Staff College, attended the Department of Defense and U.S. Army Europe Race Relations School, and later served as Deputy Commandant of the 3294th United States, Army Reserve Forces School. He retired from military service on November 14, 2008—his 60th birthday.

Mr. Speaker, a man with that record could have gone anywhere. John Hawthorne came home to his neighbors.

He served the City of Albany as Deputy Director of Community and Economic Development and as manager of its business incubator, and he taught business to the students of Albany State. In Florida, he served the City of Sarasota as Deputy Director of Planning and Redevelopment, led Highlands County Habitat for Humanity as its Chief Executive Officer, managed construction and assets for the Sarasota Housing Authority, and founded AHED Consulting Services. A Governor of

Florida appointed him to the Board of Directors of the Florida Housing Finance Corporation.

Mr. Speaker, I want this House to understand what those titles meant.

When John Hawthorne opened a place for young people, he named it the "Outer Limits Teen Center." It is no accident, I think, that a man who had worked on the rockets that carried America to the outer limits of what it believed possible would give that same name to a place for teenagers—because he believed their limits were out there too, farther than anyone had ever told them. Yes, he also ran an ice cream parlor, because a man who understood rockets also understood what a scoop of ice cream means to a child on a hot Georgia afternoon.

The man who once helped build machines to reach the moon spent the last chapters of his working life helping families reach something closer to home, and in its own way just as hard to reach: a front door with their own key. There are families in Georgia and in Florida tonight who sleep beneath a roof they can call their own because John Hawthorne believed they deserved one and would not rest until they had it.

Beneath every uniform and every title was a man of faith. At New Salem Missionary Baptist Church in Baconton, he served as Vice Chairman of the Deacons' Ministry and as Special Assistant to the Pastor. He served on the board of the Mitchell County House of Hope in Camilla. A man who had commanded soldiers and missiles in Germany was content to serve as a deacon in a country church in Mitchell County. That, Mr. Speaker, is what greatness looks like when it kneels.

He was a proud member of Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Incorporated, whose brothers will gather to bid him farewell.

For all the Nation knew him to be, to the people who loved him most he was simply husband, dad, granddad, and great granddad. He was the devoted husband of Iris Allison Hawthorne, his partner in faith and in life. He was counselor, protector, encourager, and friend. He shared what he knew with anyone willing to learn, and he left every room, every organization, and every person better than he found them.

Mr. Speaker, the Apostle Paul, near the end of his own life, wrote words that might have been written for John Hawthorne: "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith."

On Friday, the Army he served for 26 years will lay him to rest at Andersonville National Cemetery, in the Second Congressional District of Georgia, with the honors he earned. A bugle will sound. A flag will be folded and placed in the hands of those who loved him. The young man who once walked across that stage alone will be surrounded, at last, by generations of Americans who answered the same call he did.

Somewhere beyond the reach of any rocket he ever helped to build, I believe he has already heard the only words that ever truly mattered to him: "Well done, thou good and faithful servant."

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join my wife Vivan and me, along with the more than 765,000 people of Georgia's 2nd Congressional District in honoring the life and legacy of Lieutenant Colonel John David Hawthorne, Jr. We extend our deepest condolences to his