

NATIONAL LATINO AIDS  
AWARENESS DAY

**HON. CIRO D. RODRIGUEZ**

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, October 15, 2007*

Mr. RODRIGUEZ. Madam Speaker, today I would like to recognize National Latino AIDS Awareness Day. Today marks the fifth consecutive year that the U.S. has acknowledged October 15th as National Latino AIDS Awareness Day. This day presents us with the important opportunity to remember that Latinos, who represent only 14 percent of the population, account for nearly 19 percent of all AIDS cases. Today there are approximately 200,000 Latinos living with AIDS in the U.S.

Latinos make up the fastest growing minority population in the United States. Therefore, it is increasingly important that we work to achieve equality in treatment and ensure that Latinos who suffer from HIV and AIDS do not face barriers to care. National Latino AIDS Awareness Day serves both as a day of remembrance for those who are living with or have lost their lives to AIDS as well as a day to promote awareness of this disease among the Latino population.

TRIBUTE TO LAWRENCE TECHNOLOGICAL  
UNIVERSITY STUDENTS

**HON. SANDER M. LEVIN**

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, October 15, 2007*

Mr. LEVIN. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize the accomplishments of a talented group of students from Lawrence Technological University in Southeastern Michigan for being selected to compete in the U.S. Department of Energy's 2007 Solar Decathlon. Lawrence Tech's AloeTerra team is one of just twenty teams from across the United States, Europe and Canada chosen to participate in this event.

The Solar Decathlon is an international competition organized by the Department of Energy that brings together young people from many countries to design, build and operate an energy-efficient, completely solar-powered house. More than that, the Solar Decathlon is a chance to engage the public on how small changes in building and design practices can have a big impact. With rising energy prices and increased public concern over global warming, Americans want to know what they can do in their own lives to use energy more efficiently and cleanly. Indeed, the name of the Lawrence Tech team says it all: AloeTerra means "healing the land."

At the same time, there is a large and growing world market for renewable energy and efficiency technologies. This market is worth hundreds of billions of dollars over the next decade. Clean energy creates good jobs, and that is something that all of us should encourage.

I am proud that Lawrence Technological University is in the 12th Congressional District and I am proud to represent these bright young people who have worked so hard to show how sustainability, aesthetics, and comfort can coexist. I urge all my colleagues to go

down to the National Mall where the twenty Solar Decathlon teams have assembled their homes into a solar village.

TRIBUTE TO MARY LEE SLATER,  
A LIFE OF ACCOMPLISHMENTS,  
CARING AND PROMISE

**HON. KENDRICK B. MEEK**

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, October 15, 2007*

Mr. MEEK of Florida. Madam Speaker, it is with great sadness that I rise today to pay tribute to the late Mary Lee Slater, a mother of four, and grandmother to an only grandson. She died on Tuesday, October 9, 2007 and will be buried this Friday October 19, 2007 at Bethany Seventh Day Adventist Church in Miami, Florida where she was a member for many years.

Born on March 1, 1935 to the late Murdic and Illinois Jordan in Soperton, Georgia, she was the oldest of four siblings: James, Elvin, Floyd and Randolph. She moved to Miami, Florida with her family where she attended public schools, graduating from Booker T. Washington High School in 1953. She attended Hampton University in Hampton, Virginia.

Mary worked in the insurance industry for more than 30 years as an agent for such companies as Atlanta Life and American General. Because of her outstanding professionalism, work ethic and dedication to her career, she received numerous honors and awards including National Sales Achievement Award and Outstanding Sales Achievement Recognition.

Effectively balancing work and family, Mary was the dedicated mother of four loving children, Michael, Ronald, Surette and Illka. She was also the proud grandmother of one grandson, David "Boom Boom" Jonathan whom she loved and adored.

Always demonstrating love for her community, Mary was President of the High Ridge Neighborhood Improvement Association. With a reputation for helping others, solving problems and improving her community, she was a source of inspiration and wisdom. One of Mary's favorite programs was the Association's annual Thanksgiving Dinner, which provided an opportunity for residents, families and friends to gather in fellowship to give thanks to God for His many blessings. Mary received numerous awards and honors for her dedication and commitment to the community, including Making a Difference Award from Team Metro and Inner City Education Foundation Parent Club. She also served on the Model City/Brownsville Charrette Steering Committee.

A committed servant of God, whatever church Mary was a member of, she stood out as a beacon of light, who demonstrated the love of God to whomever she met. An active member in her church, Mary served on several ministries. She was a Deaconess, Sabbath School Teacher and dedicated servant. Her walk with God was evident. At Bethany Seventh Day Adventist Church, she was honored by the Sabbath School Department for Outstanding and Dedicated Service. Mary loved her church family.

Last Tuesday, Mary heard and answered her Lord's call to rest. She leaves to cherish

and celebrate her life four loving children, Michael, Ronald, Surette Sands (Christopher), and Illka; one grandson, David "Boom Boom" Jonathan; three brothers James Jordan (Loretta) of Myrtle Beach, South Carolina, Elvin Floyd Jordan (Sandra) of Oakland, California and Randolph of Miami, Florida; and a host of relatives and friends. May God bless her soul and grant her eternal rest.

MOTIVA ENTERPRISES

**HON. TED POE**

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, October 15, 2007*

Mr. POE. Madam Speaker, on January 10, 1901, the world changed. It was on this cold day in Jefferson County, Texas, the Gladys City Oil, Gas, and Manufacturing Company discovered the largest oil reserve the world had ever seen. Since that day the modern petroleum age has been upon us and Jefferson County, Texas, has been a leader in the oil and gas industry, fueling our Nation's economy. With Motiva Enterprises recently announced expansion of their Port Arthur Refinery, this tradition of leadership will continue into the future.

Motiva Enterprises will be expanding their 104-year-old Port Arthur Refinery, becoming the largest refinery in the Nation. When construction is complete, it will produce 600,000 barrels of crude oil per day. This project will generate an economic boost to southeast Texas by bringing in 5,000 construction jobs and 300 permanent jobs.

Motiva is more than just an oil company; it is an active corporate citizen concerned about all aspects of the community where it resides. By putting together a community Citizens Action Committee composed of representatives from across the community, Motiva has helped address the community's concerns about health, jobs, environment, education, and children. Through the work of this committee and Motiva, the Motiva Youth Training Academy was opened. This academy partners with local businesses to provide juniors and seniors at local high schools with training to help them transition from high school into a professional career or to higher education.

Motiva is to be commended on its corporate citizenship and giving back to communities not only in southeast Texas but across the Nation.

And that's just the way it is.

IN HONOR OF THE EXTRAORDINARY  
PUBLIC SERVICE OF MICHAEL J. MADONNA

**HON. SCOTT GARRETT**

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, October 15, 2007*

Mr. GARRETT of New Jersey. Madam Speaker, I rise today to commend Michael J. Madonna for his extraordinary service to the people of the State of New Jersey, and particularly to its law enforcement community.

Last month, Mike retired as President of the New Jersey State Policemen's Benevolent Association. He's been active with the PBA since 1968, when he became the State Delegate of

the Oakland PBA. He later went on to serve on the State PBA Executive Board. In 1996, he began a nearly 11-year tenure as President of the State PBA. Mike has dedicated his life to keeping the people of New Jersey safe, putting his life on the line and sacrificing so much on our behalf.

The PBA is the largest union of law enforcement officers in New Jersey, with more than 350 Locals representing more than 30,000 municipal, county, state, and Federal officers. These officers have benefited greatly from the hard work and dedication that Mike has given the PBA these last forty years.

Tonight, the members of the PBA and community leaders from all across New Jersey will be honoring Mike for his career of service. I join them in thanking Michael J. Madonna for demonstrating such tremendous commitment to the safety and well-being of New Jerseyans statewide. The Garden State is a better place because of the service of people like him.

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REMEMBERING NICHOLAS  
PALMIOTTO

**HON. FRANK R. WOLF**

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, October 15, 2007*

Mr. WOLF. Madam Speaker, I bring to the attention of the House Mr. Nick Palmiotto, a dedicated soldier, a leader, a father, a husband, a member of my Service Academy Advisory Board and my constituent from Sterling, Virginia, who passed away at the age of 44 on October 6 after a valiant fight against leukemia.

It was an honor to have Nick serve as a member of my Academy Board which assists in the selection of nominees for military academies. As a 1984 graduate of the Naval Academy, Nick recognized the character and integrity that would enable young men and women to become leaders and heroes, much like himself. Nick was the embodiment of what it meant to be a soldier and a true gentleman.

Nick Palmiotto was born on November 18, 1962, in Mount Kisco, New York. After completing high school at the top of his class, Nick attended the Naval Academy and graduated 11th in his class. He was accepted at the prestigious Nuclear Power School and was commissioned as a nuclear power submariner. Shortly thereafter, however, Nick was medically retired from the Navy after learning of a blood disorder that would prevent him from serving at sea.

Upon leaving the Navy, Nick continued his involvement with the military as a defense contractor, developing many high-tech programs which enhanced operations training and helped to save the lives of many soldiers on the battlefield. During the final years of his career he served in support of the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

Nick was an asset to the community and he will be greatly missed by all those who knew and loved him, including his two children, Kyleigh and Chad, and his wife, Janelle, of 19 years. We send our condolences to his family and friends and salute Nick Palmiotto for his life of service to his country.

HONORING MS. JANE DECKER

**HON. ZOE LOFGREN**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, October 15, 2007*

Ms. ZOE LOFGREN of California. Madam Speaker, I rise, not only for myself, but also on behalf of Congress Members ANNA ESHOO and MIKE HONDA, to honor Ms. Jane Decker who is retiring after 35 years of dedicated and honorable service in county government.

The County of Santa Clara encompasses what is popularly known as Silicon Valley. While the rest of the nation may speak of "Googling" or "Podcasting" as tech tools, those of us lucky enough to live there tend to regard the companies who invented those terms as neighbors, employers and members of the community.

Known internationally as the high tech center of the universe, Santa Clara County's people are diverse. In addition to those who are highly successful, the County also encompasses individuals who face challenges from life. It is especially those persons upon whom County government focuses. Jane Decker, in her long service to the County, helped make sure that as the County's people celebrated success, they did not forget those who suffered, whether from poverty, health troubles or tragedies. Jane Decker, with her high degree of professionalism, ethics and knowledge helped craft the strategies that allowed the government of Santa Clara County to meet its challenges successfully.

While Congressman HONDA and I served on the County Board of Supervisors, we had the pleasure of working closely with Ms. Decker. We appreciated her outstanding service then. In the roles we three Members of Congress play, each of us can attest to the high degree of intelligence, caring and dedication Ms. Decker has exhibited in her professional life.

Jane Decker joined the County of Santa Clara in 1979 as the Director of Intergovernmental Relations. Because of her demonstrable leadership qualities, she has been promoted several times until her most recent post as Deputy County Executive.

In addition to her professional commitments, Jane Decker is a committed and valued volunteer for several prominent organizations in the County of Santa Clara.

We collectively extend our thanks to Ms. Decker for her years of excellent service and wish her the best upon her retirement and this new phase in her life. She has served the people of Santa Clara County well.

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KINGWOOD CIVILIAN SERVES  
ALONGSIDE THE TROOPS IN IRAQ

**HON. TED POE**

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, October 15, 2007*

Mr. POE. Madam Speaker, Linda Shafer Mehrmann, of Kingwood, Texas, has recently returned from Iraq not as a member of our armed forces but as a civilian contractor. She has spent much of her previous working career in fine jewelry sales. Instead of being in an air-conditioned building, surrounded by diamonds and jewels, two years ago she decided

to go to a land of sand and rocks in order to support our troops.

In 2004, she was attending a job expo with her brother who was trying to get a job as a truck driver in Iraq. While she was waiting for him, a job recruiter struck up a conversation with Mehrmann and described a unique company position that she might be interested in because of her outgoing personality.

After discussing the position further and thinking about it for a week, she decided to become a Morale Welfare and Recreation Coordinator in Iraq. Even though she was a civilian, she worked alongside our troops in Balad, Iraq working 12 hour days 7 days a week. Her duties included operating a recreation center and a workout area for the troops.

She wanted to go to Iraq during Christmas because she felt that this would be a difficult time for the troops that were away from their families. While the troops defended our Nation's freedom in war, Mehrmann's job was to lift their spirits and be an inspirational force in their lives in Iraq.

She boosted morale by writing what she called, "love notes" to the soldiers which were small pieces of hot pink paper with inspirational quotes typed on them from a quote book. The notes were placed in an aluminum coffee can for anyone to reach in and take. At first, the macho soldiers were reluctant to accept the love notes from the 54-year-old grandmother of four, but after the first person took one the popularity of the notes quickly took off.

Her quotes became a commodity on the base and were sought by many from privates up to generals. The quotes became so popular that other areas of the base created their own quote cans and quotes even started to appear on the menu board of the mess hall.

She also distributed stickers and match box cars to the troops which they greatly appreciated and sent to their children in the U.S. The small gifts made a huge impact in brightening the day of the troops and their children were glad to receive a gift from their faraway parent. Some of her other activities on the base included hosting pool tournaments, talent shows and Texas Hold'em tournaments at the recreation center.

When she returned to the U.S. after two years, Mehrmann decided to create a support group for those that have returned from Iraq and for those that have friends and family overseas. The group Combat Zone Here and There meets once a month in a local church in Kingwood so that servicemembers and their families can discuss their Iraq War experiences at home and abroad. When Mehrmann describes the activities that other civilians like her do to boost morale with the troops, she said it helps put the friends and family of our servicemembers at ease.

Her job as a civilian support member brought colorful life to troops living in a land of brown sand and rocks. She turned a gym for the troops into a comfortable home away from home. Mehrmann said that she didn't go to Iraq for political reasons, but to share random acts of kindness with the troops.

I salute Linda Shafer Mehrmann for her bravery and willingness to assist our Nation abroad during a time of war. Her courage and support of our troops is an inspiration to us all. And that's just the way it is.