

firm. He was the senior vice president of Merchants Marine Bank in Port Isabel for two decades, and as a public relations liaison for Linebarger Goggan Blair and Sampson, LLP Law Office . . . explaining the law long before he took the bench.

Judge Vega was also an educator. The Point Isabel Independent School (PIISD) District Junior High School complex bears his name to honor his role for his 33 years (1969–2001) as a PIISD school board trustee. He was also a trustee for the South Texas Independent School District since Feb. 2005.

He had also been inducted into the Rio Grande Valley Walk of Fame in February 2005 and the Point Isabel Independent School District Hall of Fame in 2002.

As a civic leader, Vega served as an officer or member of many economic, education, and public service organizations including: the Port Isabel/South Padre Island Chamber of Commerce, Port Isabel Urban Development Board, Texas Association of School Boards, National Association of School Boards, Salvation Army Service Unit, Port Isabel Jaycees, Port Isabel Volunteer Fire Department and the Port Isabel/South Padre Island Lions Club. He was also a lifetime member of Our Lady Star of the Sea Catholic Church.

Judge Vega was married to Olga Medina Vega, who was his boss for 40 years, and the love of his life. The couple had six children and ten grandchildren. The children are: Joe Eliseo, Albert, Nelda, Armando, Olgaïsela, and Arlene.

Madam Speaker, Members of the House, I ask you to join me in expressing our condolences to Judge Vega's family—and the larger South Texas family—who lost a giant of a man in Judge Vega.

TRIBUTE TO TRUDY OWENS

HON. JANE HARMAN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 15, 2007

Ms. HARMAN. Madam Speaker, over the 92 years that she lived, my dear friend and legendary political activist Trudy Owens witnessed some of America's most important watershed moments and milestones. She was a political trailblazer, and her accomplishments stand as a reflection of the times in which she lived.

Trudy was born on the eve of woman's suffrage. In the aftermath of World War II, she helped organize the Palos Verdes Democratic Club. In the 1960's, she witnessed the expansion of civil rights and women's liberation while serving as the women's chair of the California Democratic Party. An opponent of the Vietnam War, Trudy worked on the campaigns of my political mentor, former California Senator John Tunney, and on Robert Kennedy's 1968 presidential campaign. She was a delegate to the Democratic convention in Chicago that same year.

In 2000, as a testament to her long service in Democratic politics, I chose Trudy as an Electoral College elector for Al Gore. Few people deserved this opportunity more. While the outcome of the election may not have been what she had hoped, Trudy still called this the culmination of her political life. She traveled to Sacramento, cast her vote, and broke her hip.

Trudy passed away last week, but not before the first female Speaker of the House was sworn in. And while she will not be with us during the 2008 Presidential election, she was no doubt thrilled to know that a woman has a genuine chance to become President of the United States.

Trudy's enthusiasm for politics and the Democratic Party was infectious. She was the consummate volunteer. And she naturally balanced her political passions with a gentle graciousness towards everyone around her.

Today, I honor her memory, her dedication, and her long, rich life.

CONGRATULATING BRUCE HEIDEN FOR RECEIVING THE 2006 HARRY S. BAKER DISTINGUISHED SERVICE AWARD FOR COTTON

HON. ED PASTOR

OF ARIZONA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 15, 2007

Mr. PASTOR. Madam Speaker, I rise before you today to congratulate Bruce Heiden for receiving the 2006 Harry S. Baker Distinguished Service Award for Cotton. This award, presented by the National Cotton Council, is given annually to an individual who has provided extraordinary service, leadership, and dedication to the U.S. cotton industry. Mr. Heiden exemplifies all of these qualities.

When talking about agriculture, Mr. Heiden says it's not just an occupation, but a way of life. Born in Buckeye, Arizona, Mr. Heiden grew up watching his father work on his cotton farm. After graduating from high school, he chose to continue his family legacy and began working on the farm full time. After his father's death in the 1970's, he took over the family business—H Four Farms, which produces cotton, wheat, and alfalfa, and the Heiden Land and Cattle Company, a cattle feeding business. Today, he handles the management and operations of the two companies, with his four children.

In addition to growing his successful family business, Mr. Heiden has been a leader in the agriculture industry not only in the Southwest, but in our Nation. As a former National Cotton Council President and Chairman, Mr. Heiden oversaw the successful drafting and passage of the 1990 farm law, helped expand funding for the trade, and directed a significant expansion in program activities and funding for Cotton Council International. For his efforts, Mr. Heiden was named the 1990 Progressive Farmer Magazine "Man of the Year" in Southwest agriculture and was inducted into the National Cotton Hall of Fame in 1996.

Madam Speaker, I am honored to recognize Bruce Heiden for being a recipient of this award and to thank him for his leadership and dedication to our Nation's agriculture.

RECOGNIZING THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF THE CARIBBEAN AMERICAN POPULATION OF THE UNITED STATES

HON. CHARLES B. RANGEL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 15, 2007

Mr. RANGEL. Madam Speaker, I rise today to enter into the RECORD an opinion editorial published in the Carib News newspaper the week ending February 27, 2007, titled "Black History Month: The Hand of People From the Caribbean Seen in Every Aspect of Human Development"; as well as an article appearing the same week in the CaribNews paper, entitled, "A Celebration of the Caribbean-American Contribution to Black History: Achievement and Hard-Won Successes Caribbean-Americans Have Added to the Rich Cultural Tapestry of the United States," by Michael D. Roberts. I cannot agree more with the author. Now is the time to reflect on past achievements of immigrants of Caribbean descent and their impact on our country, as well as look to the future with an abundance of hope that their continual contributions to the United States will resonate through eternity.

Since the abolition of slavery in 1834, the Caribbean has provided the primary source of the growth of the Black population in the U.S. Today many Caribbean workers residing in the U.S. are entrepreneurs and small business owners. They can be found working in hospitals, at construction sites and in technology and communication industries. They act as agents of social change in this country by participating in local, State and Federal Government, representing their communities while simultaneously inspiring others abroad to strive for stability and democracy in the homeland. Caribbean-Americans represent a large part of my district and have made a substantial contribution to the fabric of New York City's economy and they contribute to the diversity that characterizes the United States of America.

I ask my colleagues to join me in recognition of the contributions of the Caribbean-American population in the U.S.

BLACK HISTORY MONTH: THE HAND OF PEOPLE FROM THE CARIBBEAN SEEN IN EVERY ASPECT OF HUMAN DEVELOPMENT

"When the great day of our liberation comes, we will find the West Indian foremost in the ranks of those fighting with his armor on and his sword raised aloft."

Fenton Johnson, an African-American editor, poet and political activist in Chicago was looking back while keeping his eyes on the prize ahead of him in 1919.

"In every industry, in every profession, in every trade, we find this son of the islands holding aloft the banner of Ethiopia," he added.

Although much of what he had in mind: the black political, cultural and economic awakening, has been achieved, a lot remains to be done.

But as we celebrate Black History Month and the achievements of African-Americans, some things are quite clear: African Americans and people from the Caribbean have been consistent allies. Secondly, there is need for even more trust in each other.

Frederick Douglass, the ex-slave and the golden trombone of the 19th century anti-slavery movement and one of the leaders of the abolition crusade recognized the need for this united effort when more than 170 years

ago he said: "Let no American, especially no colored American, withhold a generous recognition of this stupendous achievement."

The great achievement he had in mind as he addressed immigrants from the Caribbean islands in Elmira in New York was the impact of emancipation of slaves in the West Indies in the 1830s.

"Emancipation in the West Indies was the first bright star in the stormy sky," was the way he put it in Elmira, New York in 1880.

It was more than that.

(It was) "The first ray of hope" for African slaves in America, he insisted, was a reason to continue to fight, agitate, revolt and run away from atrocities perpetrated across the land by white slave owners who considered four million people nothing more than "beasts of burden."

But emancipation in the Caribbean, which spawned expressions of joy and happiness, came at a price, thousands of lives lost in the revolts against the brutality of European domination.

As Douglass pointed out, "the emancipation of our brothers in the West Indies came home to us and stirs our hearts and fills our souls with grateful sentiments which link mankind in a common brotherhood."

That's why it is so important to recognize the contributions of people from the Caribbean to the development of human civilization long before and after slavery was abolished.

The contributions were recorded in all areas of human endeavor and they have had an impact on the wide range of emotions—exhilaration after outstanding successes, sadness over the loss of life during the struggle for freedom and hope for what may be ahead. From the fight for freedom from British colonialism in North America and the Caribbean, the growth of agriculture, including the sugar industry, the rule of law, and the struggle for independence and sovereignty to the outstanding educational advancement, literary accomplishments, global recognition as an incubator for sports stars, entertainment, and social and economic development, the Caribbean and its people have made their mark on society.

Dr. Winston James, a history professor at Columbia University in New York, listed some of them in his book, "Holding Aloft the Banner of Ethiopia," which should be read by those searching for factual information about how we got where we are today.

Denmark Vesey, who organized a Black uprising in Charleston in 1832, was from the Virgin Islands. John Russwurm, a Jamaican, was among the first Blacks to graduate from an American college and in the Spring of 1827, a year after he left Bowdoin College in Maine, he joined forces with the Rev. Samuel Cornish and launched the Freedom Journal, the first Black newspaper in the country.

Robert Elliott, one of the most erudite 19th century members of the U.S. House of Representatives and a strong advocate of civil rights in the Reconstruction era was also from Jamaica. Crispus Attucks, the first person to give his life fighting for the independence of the United States, was from Barbados and Prince Hall, also a Barbadian founded the Black Masonic lodge and led the struggle in Massachusetts to educate Blacks in the country. Marcus Garvey, the leader of the greatest Black mass movement of the 20th century, was also from the West Indies. Derek Walcott and Prof. Sir Arthur Lewis, two of the great Nobel Laureates, came from St. Lucia.

Today political, social and business leaders from almost every Caribbean country are carrying on that tradition of accomplishment at home in the Caribbean, in England, continental Europe, Africa, Latin America and other regions of the world.

That rich history of making a difference on the stage of life and of setting examples that the rest of the world can follow is undeniable and underscores the value of Black History Month and the need to examine the role of people from the Caribbean. This is a time to reflect on past achievements and look to the future with an abundance of hope.

A CELEBRATION OF THE CARIBBEAN-AMERICAN CONTRIBUTION TO BLACK HISTORY: ACHIEVEMENT AND HARD-WON SUCCESSES CARIBBEAN-AMERICANS HAVE ADDED TO THE RICH CULTURAL TAPESTRY OF THE UNITED STATES
(By Michael D. Roberts)

Today, nobody can doubt the sterling contribution of Caribbean-Americans to the growth and development of America. And it's been a long history of proven commitment for those who have made this country their adopted homeland.

That our ancestry from Africa labored without reward or recompense in the dark days of slavery underscores the stake that Caribbean-Americans have here in 2007. And for the ignorant and uninformed few who consider Caribbean-Americans outsiders, just sponging off the legacy of American hospitality, I say this—read your history.

But not so long ago, it used to be the politically correct thing to deny one's Caribbean-American roots. Indeed, early Caribbean immigrants only wanted to assimilate into the American mainstream. Don't rock the boat. Hide your Caribbean identity; speak "yankee" in a few days. Never speak in public about the "old country."

But even with this sentiment finding favor among certain sections of the growing Caribbean community, Caribbean nationals, later to be fully assimilated into American life by the honorific name "Caribbean-Americans," formed alliances, and remained at the vanguard of the Black struggle in their adopted homeland.

Today, the term "Caribbean-American" is synonymous with hard work, a growing community of highly literate and skilled people, a landed immigrant community taking hold of and fashioning with a true "Caribbean flavor" all those areas of American infrastructure—from government to religion. And while there is still some way to go before we can truly say that this community has "come of age," that should never diminish the contribution that these immigrants from the Caribbean have made and continue to make on the American scene.

Still, many stories are told even today about the early Caribbean immigrants who waged those initial struggles to be accepted by both Black and white America alike and for economic well-being. For the most part, these early immigrants, many of whom came from the middle and professional classes in their various Caribbean island homelands, were forced to take low-paying, menial jobs on the way up the social and economic ladder. They drove taxis, tended bar, worked in people's kitchens as housemaids, and did two jobs, and sometimes three, to help the family here and "back home."

And in today's climate of xenophobia, and the sustained attack on the immigrant community, Caribbean-Americans living here must be reminded that they are not all "wards of the state," and recipients of the legacy of white folks. Indeed, the Caribbean-American experience and achievement in the United States, and their unequalled penchant for hard work, is chronicled in the pages of Black History. And there can be absolutely no doubt that starting with the American War of Independence, Caribbean-Americans have been involved and at the forefront of every major struggle in the liberation of Black America.

From the War of Independence to the New Deal to the Civil Rights Era, the Caribbean-

American record in their adopted homeland is one of which generations yet unborn can be very proud. Beginning with Crispus Attucks, the Barbadian man who was the first casualty of the War of Independence, to modern day leaders all over the country, Caribbean-Americans have excelled. Hard work, dedication, and a commitment to excellence at all and every level have marked their sojourn in America. Today this large, dynamic and growing community is recognized as one of the most affluent, educated, and upwardly mobile ones within the wider Black and immigrant communities—and the American society as a whole.

Despite many hardships, Caribbean-Americans have focused on getting ahead. Now the early generation of immigrants is almost retired, own their own homes, and have sent their children to college. They have also educated themselves along the way. This rising middle class has only now begun to flex its political muscle since the economic and social tasks have now been completed. First and second generations of Caribbean-Americans, those born here in America, have helped this community put down its roots, thus becoming an important part of American life. These new torchbearers will build and solidify the foundations started by the tremendous hard work, sacrifices and tenacity that their grandfathers and fathers have built.

On their journey Caribbean-Americans have drawn on the achievements of many who traced their roots to the Caribbean region in the persons of Hulan Jack, legendary trade unionist Raymond Jones, "The Fox of Harlem," and one of the first Caribbean-American members of New York's City Council, the king-maker Fred Samuels.

Upon the shoulders of these pioneering Caribbean-American leaders now stands a modern generation of new leaders in all areas of American life. The entertainment industry is littered with the names and achievements of Caribbean-American actors like Cecily Tyson, whose portrayal of Harriet Tubman, the legendary Black freedom fighter is considered a classic; Harry Belafonte, singer, actor, activist, and ambassador of goodwill; and Sydney Poitier, exquisite actor of film and television. Today's crop of actors who trace their roots to the Caribbean are no less impressive: Sheryl Ralph and Delroy Lindo from Jamaica.

Two Caribbean-Americans, former Congresswoman Shirley Chisholm, the first elected Black woman to the United States Congress, and Trinidadian Congressman Mervyn Dymally, were indefatigable fighters for the cause of Blacks. Both have made their marks on national and international politics. As did the deceased former Stokely Carmichael, now Kwame Toure, who was born in Trinidad and Tobago, and who excelled during the Civil Rights/Black Power era in the United States. Of course, the work and dedication of the late Cleveland Robinson, a Jamaican who marched with Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., and who helped him plot the course of the Civil Rights struggle, also stands out, as well as his lifelong commitment to workers' rights in the trade union movement.

Retired General Colin Powell, the youngest Chief of Staff of the United States Armed Forces and former United States Secretary of State, was blessed by having a Jamaican mother and father. Minister Louis Farrakhan, leader of the powerful and influential Nation of Islam, traces his roots to the tiny Caribbean island of St. Kitts. And the legendary Malcolm X's mother came from the revolutionary island of Grenada, while his father was a Jamaican.

Today, New York is home to a little over two million Caribbean-Americans and while

there is still some way to go, Caribbean-Americans have prospered and excelled. Indeed the impressive list of achievements reflects strong and bold strides in every area in the fight for social and economic justice. Caribbean-Americans have partnered with African-Americans in forging a common understanding and a need to work in each other's interests. Not only that, Caribbean-Americans have reached out to other immigrant communities to broaden the base of the socio-economic and political struggle.

This natural dynamic has spawned the likes of Congresswoman Yvette Clarke, Assemblyman Nick Perry, Former City Councilwoman Una Clarke, Councilman Dr. Kendall B. Stewart, deceased Assemblywoman Pauline Rhodd Cummings, former City Councilman Rev. Lloyd Henry and State Senator John Sampson, in the present political arena. Social and educational interaction has produced Nobel Prize winner, the St. Lucian playwright Derek Walcott, the novelist Paulie Marshall, the basketball stars, Patrick Ewing and Tim Duncan and many, many others.

So this record of not remaining aloof from the fracas that is American life and politics is clearly outlined in Black historical records. Caribbean-Americans have also had to contend with similar problems faced by African-Americans, and then some more. They have had to deal with the problems of racism and discrimination. They have been used as handy scapegoats when opportunistic politicians needed a vulnerable group of people to beat up on. And they have been used as an unwitting tool against each other in the devious tactic of divide, rule and conquer.

Recent problems of having to come to grips with a horrendous xenophobic climate and some very draconian immigration laws which all but say to immigrants, "You are not welcomed here," has literally placed this community under siege. And compounding these problems is the pervasive nature of neo-racism which hits all Blacks—not only Caribbean-Americans. For many Caribbean-Americans, like their African-American brothers and sisters, education is the key to liberation and thousands have taken advantage of these opportunities in the United States.

They have succeeded despite the constant changing of the rules and the shifting of the bar to perpetuate a program of exclusion.

The Caribbean-American contribution to Black and American history is a saga of struggle, dedication and commitment to success. Caribbean-Americans have defied all odds and surmounted every obstacle along the way.

They have formed alliances and forged new partnerships to defend and protect common interests.

They have brought their political savviness to the Black liberation struggle. And they have made America richer for the experience.

PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 720, WATER QUALITY FINANCING ACT OF 2007

SPEECH OF

HON. KENNY C. HULSHOF

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, March 9, 2007

Mr. HULSHOF. Madam Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 720, the Water Quality Financing Act of 2007. I am pleased to support this important and needed reauthorization of the Clean Water State Revolving Fund.

Economic growth can only occur if the infrastructure, the roads, the power grids, and the water/wastewater systems can accommodate this growth. A community cannot prosper without suitable infrastructure.

Too often, this vital infrastructure is not keeping up with the existing needs or future development. A recent report by the Environmental Protection Agency, EPA, found that, "without continued improvements in wastewater treatment infrastructure, future population growth will erode away many of the Clean Water Act achievements." Further EPA studies have found there to be a gap of \$181 billion between the revenue that is available and the wastewater infrastructure that is needed. It is expected that this gap will widen to more than \$500 billion by 2019.

These shortfalls unfortunately hit small communities the hardest. Water systems that serve these communities face a continued battle to keep their infrastructure in working order, all the while construction and maintenance costs continue to rise. Moreover, small systems simply do not have the ability to pass these costs on to their consumers.

The Clean Water State Revolving Fund has helped address this need. This program allows communities to seek Federal and State dollars from the fund. From FY 2002 through FY 2006 the Missouri SRF provided \$745,776,200 in loans to water systems. These dollars went to create new collection sewers, replace existing or outdated sewers, and build treatment and secondary treatment plants. Without these updates, the environment around Missouri communities would have suffered. So for these reasons I rise in support of this legislation.

But I have concerns about extending Davis-Bacon Act requirements to all dollars within the Clean Water State Revolving Fund. While it is true the prevailing wage requirements of Davis-Bacon were attached to Federal dollars in the Clean Water State Revolving Fund program from 1972 through 1995, these requirements have never been attached to the State dollars in the Clean Water State Revolving Fund.

The unprecedented move of placing prevailing wage requirements on all State Revolv-

ing Fund dollars is bad national policy. Placing Davis-Bacon on all dollars within the State Revolving Fund is a gross overreach of Congressional power. Though Missouri does apply prevailing wage requirements, 18 States have said through referendum or resolution that they don't want to have a prevailing wage law. This is a decision that should remain at the State level, not be subverted by the Federal government. Unfortunately, H.R. 720 says to the residents and lawmakers of these States, "you were wrong and we're not going to listen to you." This is wrong. Congress should not be in the business of preempting State law in this area. For this reason, I voted for the Baker Amendment which sought to remove the Davis-Bacon provision from the bill. I was disappointed that this amendment was not adopted.

Because of the pressing need to improve our Nation's wastewater infrastructure, I will support this legislation but I do so with serious reservations about the Davis-Bacon requirements in the underlying bill. I am voting to move this important bill on to the Senate, but it is imperative that this unjustified and inappropriate provision be removed as this measure moves through the legislative process.

RECOGNIZING THE "STARS" OF THE 2007 LITTLE SMILES STAR BALL

HON. TIM MAHONEY

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 15, 2007

Mr. MAHONEY of Florida. Madam Speaker, it is my great pleasure to recognize the 2007 "Stars" of the Little Smiles Star Ball for their bravery and spirit. I am honored to be able to celebrate each of these exceptional children and the achievements they have made over the past year.

I would like to recognize Joey Botto, Nicole Cadavid, Steven Castro, Aleesha Choksi, Thannade "Eddie" Duclot, Ainsley Erb, James Franklin, Dominick Fuller, Gabriella Gonzalez, Sharnay Hightower, Tanner Hrobak, Cassandra McClanahan, Sean McKelvey, Chelsey Smith, Cesar Valasquez, and Syppress Wilson.

Each of these incredible children is being recognized for the courage they have shown and the big smiles they bring to their families and to the doctors, nurses and staff at the south Florida hospitals and hospices where they currently receive treatment. Each of them has a shining spirit and truly deserves "star" treatment.

Please join me in celebrating the "Stars" of the Little Smiles Star Ball and their outstanding achievements.