

In 1946 when he returned to Selma after the war, he went to the courthouse to register. He was given three forms that had to be signed by three white men testifying that he was “a good boy.” He persuaded three men who knew his father to sign the forms, but that was not sufficient. He also had to show that he owned \$3,000 worth of land—not cash, which he had, but real property. So he gave up. As he walked down the courthouse steps, he met a white veteran going to register to vote. The white man just signed up—no forms, no attestations, no real property. Having experienced the discrimination himself, Mr. Montgomery wanted to change the system. He was moved by having the opportunity to join with the other protesters, where they prayed on the steps of the very courthouse where his registration had been rejected. A sheriff with a large gun came by and advised them to go pray in church. Mr. Montgomery says he told him, “We feel sorry for you. All you have on your side is your gun. We have truth on our side, we have God on our side, and the truth and God will last forever; your gun will disintegrate.”

Mr. Montgomery volunteered to be a bodyguard for Mr. King during the march from Selma to Montgomery. The first time the marchers tried to cross the bridge, they were turned back. A federal court gave permission and more than 3,000 people marched over the Edmund Pettus Bridge. White people drove by and called them names. Undeterred, they made the 54 mile march that helped bring about the Voting Rights Act saying that all Americans should have the right to vote. In recent years, Mr. Montgomery’s service is earning him honors. In 2007, he and the other surviving Tuskegee Airmen were awarded the Congressional Gold Medal of Honor. On the morning of his inauguration, President Barack Obama had breakfast with the Tuskegee Airman, and Mr. Montgomery was there. He also took part in the reading of the U.S. Constitution at the Newseum. Fittingly, he was given Amendment 24, sections 1 and 2, barring a poll tax. Local 237 President Greg Floyd will present him with a Trailblazer Award at the Retiree Division’s Founders Day celebration tomorrow.

Madam Speaker, I ask my distinguished colleagues to join me in recognizing the achievements of Dabney Montgomery, an outstanding veteran, hero, civil rights activist and civil servant.

RECOGNIZING THE DEDICATION OF
SAMUEL L. GRAVELY, JR. ELE-
MENTARY SCHOOL

HON. GERALD E. CONNOLLY

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 4, 2009

Mr. CONNOLLY of Virginia. Madam Speaker, I rise to recognize the dedication of the Samuel L. Gravelly, Jr. Elementary School in Haymarket, Virginia. The school is named in honor of Vice Admiral Gravelly, a Virginia native, who forged the way for a more diverse United States Navy. I cannot think of a more appropriate person to inspire our children to break barriers and achieve their highest potential.

On December 14, 1944, Samuel L. Gravelly, Jr. became the first African American to be

commissioned as a United States Naval Officer through the Navy Reserve Officer Training Course. He went on to become the Navy’s first African American vice admiral.

During his distinguished 38-year career in the Navy, Vice Admiral Gravelly became the first African American to command a warship, the USS Theodore E. Chandler; the first African American to command a major warship, the USS Jouett; the first African American to achieve flag rank and eventually vice admiral; and the first African American to command a numbered fleet.

However, his service was not just one of firsts. Admiral Gravelly was highly decorated with the Legion of Merit, a Bronze Star, the Meritorious Service Medal, and the Navy Commendation Medal. He moved to Haymarket, Virginia upon his retirement in 1980, and passed away on October 22, 2004.

Just two weeks ago, the U.S. Navy commissioned a new Arleigh Burke-class destroyer in honor of Vice Admiral Gravelly during a ceremony at the shipyard in Pascagoula, Mississippi. His widow, Alma Gravelly broke a bottle of champagne across the bow to christen the vessel.

Vice Admiral Gravelly’s life accomplishments and service to his country represent the values that we would like to instill into our future generations. The Prince William County Public Schools’ vision statement identifies a commitment to a diverse, multicultural education that produces students who enjoy a life-long pursuit of learning. Vice Admiral Gravelly lived up to these ideals by setting a precedent of diversity in our nation’s military and continuing his education throughout his life. Whether it was at Virginia Union University, Columbia University or the Naval War College; his thirst for knowledge never ceased. Vice Admiral Gravelly’s life embodied the vision that the Prince William County School System has for its students.

Madam Speaker, I ask that my colleagues join me honoring this American hero and endorsing the example he set for our nation’s younger generation. I applaud Prince William County Public Schools for their decision to dedicate this school to Vice Admiral Samuel L. Gravelly, Jr.

ADDRESS TO ESCAMBIA COUNTY
HIGH SCHOOL’S CLASS OF 2009
AS READ BY TRAY SMITH,
CLASS SALUTATORIAN

HON. JO BONNER

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 4, 2009

Mr. BONNER. Madam Speaker, last month I had the privilege of giving the commencement address to Escambia County High School’s Class of 2009. My friend, Tray Smith of Atmore, the class salutatorian, also had the opportunity to address his fellow classmates. In just 18 years, Tray has already compiled an impressive list of accomplishments. In 2008, he served as a page in the U.S. House of Representatives in Washington, D.C., and earlier this year, he was named Atmore’s 2008 “Citizen of the Year.”

I rise today to ask that his address be entered into the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD for I believe it to be one of the finest and most in-

spiring addresses given by a high school student that I have ever heard:

LEAVING OUR CHILDREN A BETTER COUNTRY
THAN WE INHERIT
(By Tray Smith)

Thirty-five years ago, my father graduated from ECHS. Then, the country was shaken by the scandal of Watergate and the Vietnam War. Every year since, a different group of faces has arrived here during its own unique period in our history. Over time, America and the world have greatly changed. So now, we, the Class of 2009, come to graduate under different circumstances than those that faced our parents. Yet, the challenges that face us are just as great as those that faced them. And just as our moms and dads responded to the problems facing our nation by spreading freedom to every continent and the Internet to almost every home, we will meet our own challenges. For we know as our parents knew, that our greatest responsibility as Americans is to leave our children a better country than the one we are about to inherit.

Graduation means we are ready to meet this task—not because we know everything we will ever need to learn, but because we know how to learn anything we will ever need to find out.

I have the honor of commemorating this moment as the salutatorian of a class that has many talented students. And it is a special honor to stand before Joy Marshall, our valedictorian and my good friend. Joy, I am so proud for you, I will miss you, and I know this school will miss you, as well.

Congressman Bonner, Mr. Means, parents, teachers, friends, guests, and members of the community; thank you all for being here to join with us in this great moment in our lives. And on behalf of the entire Class of 2009, I extend a sincere thanks to you all, especially our parents and grandparents, for the contributions you have made to make this moment possible.

I want to specifically thank Congressman Bonner for making this event a priority. Congressman, the fact you are here signifies your strong commitment to our young people, and our future. While in Congress, you have done many great things for this district. On a personal basis, though, I am most appreciative for the life changing doors you have opened for me, a young kid from Atmore. I can’t imagine my high school years without the experiences I had working in Washington as your page. And the reason my class wanted you to come speak tonight is because, as we look forward to the future, there is no better person for us to emulate. Again, thank you.

Even though we graduate tonight, we will still depend on many of you in this room. I am sure I will not be the only member of the Class of 2009 to call Mom every time I have to do laundry in college. I still have no clue how to work the machines. Okay, I might be alone on that one. But I want our parents and mentors to know we will always be open to your advice and appreciate your insight.

Mom and Dad, Nee Nee and Paw Paw, Aunts and Uncles, Mrs. Bonnie and Mrs. West, other family members and friends, I love you all and I am so thankful for the role you have played in my life. And I know for all of my 132 fellow graduates, there are an equal number of people who share in the credit for this day, and who will share in the credit for the successes that come in the future.

When Mom asked me to describe my first day at ECHS years ago, I said it was like walking through the mall. But now, after having spent several years with classmates in school, at events, and serving our extra-curricular responsibilities, the faces that

were once like strangers in the mall to me are now the familiar faces of friends I pass daily in the hallway.

They are the faces of Nakeidra Brown and Brittney Martin arguing with Gordon Nichols and me in Algebra. They are the many happy faces of Lashae Powers defending me in SGA meetings. They are the ever-frustrated faces of Katie Coon, adamantly insisting that she and I are not related. And they are the almost indistinguishable, but always smiling, faces of the Forney twins.

And these faces will remain familiar long after this commencement exercise is over. Because the bonds that exist between us are not only the bonds of classmates, they are the bonds of friends, and they will endure.

They will endure because they have been forged in a place where everyone looks out for their neighbors, in a town that respects traditional values, by people who cherish family and friendship. Growing up in Atmore, we may not have had easy access to Wal Mart or Starbucks, but we have had each other. That, my friends, has made all the difference.

From this moment, we will all go down different paths: some of us will go on to college, others will enter the workforce, and some will start families. Yet, as graduates, we are now all adults in the world's greatest and most democratic country. As such, we have both an opportunity to make a difference and a responsibility to make a contribution.

Regardless of where we end up, there will be fatherless children in need of mentors and hungry people in need of food. These needs belong not just to individuals, but to the entire nation. And as President John Fitzgerald Kennedy once said, by lending a helping hand to those people, we serve not only our fellow countrymen, but also our country.

Our record at ECHS gives me faith in our ability to live up to that standard of service. In our four years here, we have had three principles and five assistant principals. In these periods of transition, students have had to step forward and carry the mantle of leadership. I am confident that we leave behind a dedicated team with Mr. Means, Mrs. Shuford, and Mr. Lanier, but I am also proud to say future students at this school will benefit from what the Class of 2009 accomplished, from saving the newspaper to starting the scholars' bowl team to reinvigorating our athletic programs.

However, the difficult tasks that come with significant roles in society are much more consequential and much more trying. Thankfully, some of our classmates are already rising nobly to those challenges. Tonight, I want to ask Hierry Carter, Cortina James, Thomas Johnson, and Wade Johnson to stand.

As the rest of us enjoy our newfound freedom as graduates, these members of the Class of 2009 have chosen to serve as the guardians of that freedom in perhaps distant and dark corners of the world. They have chosen to join the United States Military. They deserve our respect, our admiration, and our applause. Thank you.

As we go forward, let us remember with gratitude these brave individuals. Let their willingness to sacrifice selflessly for a cause greater than themselves inspire us all. And let us all remember that God put us in this place in history, at this moment in time, because He trusted no other generation with the charges that are already confronting us. And it is in God's glory that we must heed the call of duty to defend our freedoms, preserve our values, and maintain our way of life. So that when we are all long gone and the history of this generation is written, it

can be said that the graduates of the ECHS Class of 2009 were men and women of integrity, who did not give into the false choices and pretexts that so often corrupt our way of thinking, bow to the forces of mediocrity that so often restrain our true potential, or enslave ourselves to the prejudices and stereotypes that have for years crippled our society.

Let it be said that we, the Class of 2009, never forgot the lessons learned growing up here, in Atmore. That we, the Class of 2009, never forgot the people—moms and dads, teachers and administrators, pastors and friends and grandparents—who raised us. That we never forgot the importance of service or the significance of being Americans. That we never forgot our purpose, and worked tirelessly to make sure our purpose was fulfilled. Thank you. May God bless you and may God bless this honorable class.

COMMEMORATING NATIONAL
SMALL BUSINESS WEEK: MAY 17–
MAY 23

HON. ELIJAH E. CUMMINGS

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 4, 2009

Mr. CUMMINGS. Madam Speaker, over the last decade, small businesses have created 70 percent of our new jobs, and they are responsible for half of all the jobs in our nation's workforce. In fact, in my home State of Maryland, more than 500,000 small businesses provide our State with more jobs than any other source—except the federal government.

This job creating potential is even more important during economic downswings like the current one. It is interesting to note that, despite declines in corporate America, the entrepreneurial spirit is alive and well. Every month, 400,000 new businesses start up across the country. For these reasons, providing small businesses with the tools they need to grow and thrive again will be critical to the nation's overall economic recovery. It is with this knowledge and appreciation that I proudly express my support for President Obama's declaration of May 17–May 23 as National Small Business Week.

As a former small business owner for nearly 20 years, I know first-hand that one of the most pressing challenges facing small businesses is access to affordable credit and capital. I know how hard it can be to meet one's payroll, day after day and week after week. I also know what it is like to be turned down for the business loan that you desperately need (and deserve)—even while other less qualified competitors somehow receive that essential capital support.

In my thirteen years in the U.S. House of Representatives, I have supported efforts that have uplifted the small business community—and 2009 has been another marquee year. During National Small Business Week, the House passed a number of bills aimed at providing business owners with the requisite tools. H.R. 2352, the Job Creation Through Entrepreneurship Act of 2009 would provide critical resources to help businesses grow and adapt. Specifically, it creates a grant program designed to assist small firms in securing capital, supplementing the new small business

lending generated by the American Reinvestment and Recovery Act, which was signed into law by President Obama in February 2009.

These entrepreneurial development programs are a wise investment in our economy. It is estimated that for every \$1 spent on these programs, there is a \$2.87 return to the Treasury—and these programs have helped to create 73,000 jobs in 2008 alone.

As I close, I will also take this opportunity to align myself with the vision expressed by President Obama, who recently stated that “it is imperative that we do all we can to celebrate the achievements of small business owners and encourage the creation of new businesses.”

Americans are exploring new ways to conduct business, and small business owners are an invaluable resource in this national effort. They are the real heroes of American industry—and May 17–May 23 is deservedly theirs.

TRIBUTE TO CHRISTOPHER H.
MOFFITT

HON. TOM LATHAM

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 4, 2009

Mr. LATHAM. Madam Speaker, I rise to recognize Christopher H. Moffitt, an automobile dealer and resident of Boone, Iowa.

Christopher, president of Moffitt's Ford Lincoln Mercury, was recently nominated for the 2009 TIME Magazine Dealer of the Year award sponsored by TIME Magazine and Goodyear Tire. Christopher was nominated by Gary W. Thomas, President of the Iowa Automobile Dealers Association, and recently was honored at the National Automobile Dealers Association Convention & Exposition in New Orleans. The TIME Magazine Dealer of the Year award is one of the auto industry's most prestigious awards, recognizing both success in auto sales and outstanding community service.

Christopher is a third generation family dealer who owns a dealership that was first opened by his grandfather over 81 years ago. He began washing cars at the dealership at age 13, and while attending college at Iowa State University, he began selling cars part-time before becoming a full time sales manager after graduating in 1987.

In addition to his dedicated service at the dealership, Christopher has spent considerable time giving back to the community. From 1993–2000, Christopher was chairman of Good Connections, an organization that employed mentally and physically challenged individuals. He also received a YMCA Leadership Award after playing a pivotal role in reopening the Boone County Family YMCA in 2005 while serving as board chairman. The location had closed in the 1990's but is now growing and serving all of Boone County.

I know my colleagues in the United States Congress join me in congratulating Christopher Moffitt for his nomination for TIME Magazine Dealer of the Year, and thank him for his dedicated community service efforts. It is an honor to represent Christopher in Congress, and I wish him and his family happiness and success in the future.