

Representatives will join me in thanking him for his continued commitment to his country.

HONORING DR. GRACIELA SARMIENTO OF ARROYO GRANDE, ROGER LYON OF CAYUCOS, DR. JAMES THORTON OF ARROYO GRANDE AND CAL POLY SAN LUIS OBISPO STUDENT AND PARAMEDIC ANDREW THIEL

### HON. LOIS CAPPS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, November 18, 2010*

Ms. CAPPS. Madam Speaker, I rise today with a heavy heart. Last month, four cherished members of my community on the California Central Coast died when their plane carrying medical supplies crashed in Mexico. All four were participating in a humanitarian mission with the Flying Samaritans aid organization.

The tragic loss of Dr. Graciela Sarmiento of Arroyo Grande, Roger Lyon of Cayucos, Dr. James Thorton of Arroyo Grande and Cal Poly San Luis Obispo student and paramedic Andrew Thiel has been of tremendous shock and heart-ache to our close community. That these four selfless and dedicated individuals would pass on so suddenly and in an act of such generosity is all the more painful.

As our community grieves, we have pledged to honor the work of Graciela, Roger, James and Andrew in our own lives. In death, these remarkable people have reminded us in the most powerful and tragic of ways that life is short, and that genuine generosity knows no bounds.

While they were at different stages in life, all four were known to their families, friends and neighbors as bighearted, intellectually curious and passionate about contributing to the community and world around them. In leading through example, Graciela, Roger, James and Andrew demonstrated that there are no limits when working to make this world a better place.

I urge all my colleagues to celebrate the lives of Graciela, Roger, James and Andrew with their own acts of generosity and to pray for their surviving families and friends. Thank you and I yield back.

### A TRIBUTE TO REVEREND DAVID K. BRAWLEY

### HON. EDOLPHUS TOWNS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, November 18, 2010*

Mr. TOWNS. Madam Speaker, I rise today in recognition of Rev. David K. Brawley.

Reverend David K. Brawley's commitment to the call and demands of ministry is evidenced in his leadership and his availability.

At the age of sixteen, Rev. Brawley responded to God's will and was ordained by Rev. Winifred Phippen of First Baptist Church in Deer Park, New York. He became the Youth Minister at First Baptist, where he maintained his membership for thirteen years.

In 1994, Rev. Brawley began his full time career in ministry at St. Paul Community Bap-

tist Church in Brooklyn, New York, where Rev. Dr. Johnny Ray Youngblood has served as Senior Pastor for the past thirty-five years. Rev. Brawley served as Dr. Youngblood's Assistant Pastor beginning in 1995, and in January 2008, was named Pastor Successor of St. Paul Community Baptist Church.

During his tenure at St. Paul, Rev. Brawley has served in a large number of roles, including: Coordinator of the Men-in-Training program for the St. Paul Community Board of Elders, pastoral counseling, officiating at sacred events such as weddings, baby dedications, and home going services, community organizing, leading worship services, and as an on-call teacher to the congregation. His organizing efforts play a dynamic role in the church's community development activities where he serves as a member of the Governance Board and Strategy Team of East Brooklyn Congregations, EBC, an organization which has been at the forefront of construction projects that have resulted in over 3000 affordable homes in Brooklyn. Rev. Brawley has been an outspoken advocate for public school reform and has addressed issues such as public safety, housing, and quality of life concerns on behalf of neighborhood residents. Rev. Brawley's community involvement also includes his role as Vice President of E.D.I.F.Y. Communities of East New York. E.D.I.F.Y., which stands for Empower, Develop and Improve Families and Youth, seeks to increase the vitality and value of urban communities by pooling resources and charitable funds.

Rev. Brawley's four principles for a strong, productive ministry are: creating a thriving worship experience; actively engaging in community organizing; edifying God's people; and becoming a beacon of economic development for the community the ministry serves. As a pastor, Rev. Brawley possesses the gifts of exhortation, inspiration, motivation, and encouragement, which he shares in worship services and across the nation at men's conferences, revivals, and youth group programming.

In 2004, Rev. Brawley earned his Master's degree in Theological Studies from the Faith Seminary of Tacoma, Washington. He is currently pursuing his doctorate in ministry at Faith Seminary.

Rev. Brawley resides in Brooklyn, New York with his wife Debra and their two children, Rhonesha and Michael.

Madam Speaker, I urge my colleagues to join me in recognizing the contributions of Rev. David K. Brawley.

### HONORING THE LIFE AND SERVICE OF LIEUTENANT GENERAL ROBERT P. KELLER, USMC (RET.)

### HON. JEFF MILLER

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, November 18, 2010*

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Madam Speaker, it is with great honor that I rise to recognize the life and service of Lieutenant General Robert P. Keller, USMC (Ret.).

Robert Keller was born in Oakland, California, on February 9, 1920. As part of the Greatest Generation, he joined the United States Marine Corps and answered his call to

duty during World War II. Robert Keller became an exceptional Naval aviator, serving in World War II, Korea, and Vietnam. He further distinguished himself as an aviator by flying both fixed-wing aircraft and helicopters. In Vietnam, he flew with his son, Bob, Jr., on a helicopter mission as well as a fixed-wing aircraft mission. Through the course of his career, General Keller earned the Silver Star Medal, three Distinguished Flying Crosses, and three awards of the Legion of Merit. He retired as the Commanding General, Marine Corps Development and Education Command, Quantico, on July 1, 1972.

Over the course of his distinguished career and his various billets, General Keller served our nation with great pride and dedication. He continued to uphold the Marine Corps values of honor, courage, and commitment throughout the rest of his life.

Madam Speaker, on behalf of the United States Congress, I am proud to recognize Lieutenant General Robert P. Keller's immense contributions to our national security through his lifelong leadership and service to the United States Marine Corps and this great nation. General Keller was preceded by his wife Lucille and is survived by children, Ronald, Robert, Anne, and Joan, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren. I would like to offer my sincere condolences. Northwest Florida mourns the loss of a respected patriot. To his family and friends, he will forever be remembered as a loving husband, father, grandfather, great-grandfather, and friend; to all, he will forever be remembered as a great American hero.

### RECOGNIZING BREESE MATER DEI FOR WINNING THE VOLLEYBALL STATE CHAMPIONSHIP

### HON. JOHN SHIMKUS

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, November 18, 2010*

Mr. SHIMKUS. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize the achievements of a talented group of student-athletes from Breese, Illinois.

The Breese Mater Dei Knights volleyball team recently captured the Illinois High School Athletic Association Class 3A State Title and finished the season with an outstanding 41-1 record. The Knights lost the first set of the championship match to Joliet Catholic 25-15, but fought back and captured the last two sets 25-18 and 26-24 to secure the state championship.

I would like to congratulate Head Coach Fred Rakers and Assistant Coach Chad Rakers for all of their hard work with the team. But most of all, I want to congratulate the 2010 state champion volleyball team from Breese Mater Dei: Samantha Bedard, Kaley Boeckmann, Chelsea Crocker, Kayla Eversgerd, Alyssa Hitpas, Bailey Kampwerth, Emily Koelling, Alison Lampen, Abby Luebbers, Mallory Mensing, Alison Mueller, Ashley Rakers, Brooke Schulte, Nicole Strieker, Abbey Winter.

These young ladies have represented themselves, their school and their community in an exemplary fashion and I want to join with all the members of this House in wishing them continued success in their athletic and academic endeavors.

RECOGNIZING THE BUILDING REDEDICATION AND RIBBON CUTTING OF VIENNA ELEMENTARY

**HON. GERALD E. CONNOLLY**

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, November 18, 2010*

Mr. CONNOLLY of Virginia. Madam Speaker, I rise to recognize the rededication of Vienna Elementary School. Founded in 1872, Vienna Elementary is the oldest continually operational school in Fairfax County. Today, we are celebrating the completion of upgrades that will improve the classroom experience for educators and children in our community.

Vienna Elementary School is one of the finest public schools in the country. Its mission is to challenge and support individual excellence by setting high academic standards and empowering students to become successful citizens. As a sign of its success, Virginia Governor Tim Kaine and the State Board of Education awarded Vienna Elementary the Board of Education Excellence Award. The award recognizes a school's ability to successfully meet benchmark standards in academic performance, and it also recognizes progressive improvement over time.

Vienna Elementary School is strengthened by its superb staff and also by an engaged and active public. The strong support of parents and area organizations teamed with the dedication of the school educators and administration provides an atmosphere that enables children to have new opportunities and access to robust academic support.

Madam Speaker, I ask that my colleagues join me in recognizing the rededication of Vienna Elementary School. I extend my congratulations and appreciation to the teachers, administrators, staff, parents and community partners who understand that quality education is the key to a bright future for our children.

DR. MILDRED JEFFERSON INSPIRED AN ENTIRE GENERATION OF PRO-LIFE LEADERS

**HON. CHRISTOPHER H. SMITH**

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, November 18, 2010*

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Madam Speaker, today, I want to recognize and honor the life of Dr. Mildred Jefferson, who passed away on October 15, 2010, at the age of 84.

Dr. Jefferson was a trailblazer of her time. She was the first African-American woman to graduate from Harvard Medical School, the first female surgical intern at Boston City Hospital and the first woman admitted to membership in the Boston Surgical Society.

Dr. Jefferson was born in Pittsburg, Texas, on April 6, 1926, to Gurthie Jefferson, a minister, and Millard Jefferson, a schoolteacher. She graduated from Texas College in Tyler and earned a master's degree from Tufts University in Medford, Massachusetts before attending Harvard Medical School. In her lifetime she also was the recipient of 28 honorary degrees.

Her life was historic in many ways, yet she will be remembered not only for the lives she saved as a physician but also for the lives she saved as an advocate for the unborn.

From the earliest years of the right to life movement, she dedicated herself to the cause, always beautifully articulating the humanity of unborn children. Poised and passionate, always focused and extremely devoted, she made history and inspired an entire generation of pro-life leaders.

Dr. Jefferson was among the founders of the National Right to Life Committee (NRLC) and from 1975–1978 she served three terms as President of NRLC. She also served as director of Massachusetts Citizens for Life and a board member of American Life League. She was also a founding member of the board and a past president of the Value of Life Committee of Massachusetts and was active in Black Americans for Life.

Among all of her accolades and accomplishments, she should be best known for her own eloquent description of why she stood in solidarity with the unborn fighting day in and day out for their first right, the right to life. In her own words,

"I became a physician in order to help save lives. I am at once a physician, a citizen, and a woman, and I am not willing to stand aside and allow the concept of expendable human lives to turn this great land of ours into just another exclusive reservation where only the perfect, the privileged, and the planned have the right to live."

Dr. Jefferson was always graceful. She embodied compassion. Her life is an example to us of the impact of faithful devotion to the sanctity of human life. Dr. Jefferson knew that you cannot speak of human and civil rights, while precluding virtually all protection to the most persecuted minority in the world today: unborn children.

She reminded us all, "The right-to-life cause is not the concern of only a special few but it should be the cause of all those who care about fairness and justice, love and compassion and liberty with law."

Dr. Jefferson is correct when she said,—the cause for the right to life concerns all of us. Someday, when our goal of ending abortion is finally realized, future generations of Americans will look back on us and wonder how and why such a rich and seemingly enlightened society, so blessed and endowed with the capacity to protect and enhance vulnerable human life, could have instead permitted, and even promoted, death to children and exploitation of women by abortion.

It was an honor to work alongside Dr. Jefferson to fight the injustice of abortion, and I know her legacy and memory will live on in the lives of those who knew her and in the lives of the unborn children she helped save.

HONORING REVEREND DEFOREST B. SOARIES

**HON. RUSH D. HOLT**

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, November 18, 2010*

Mr. HOLT. Madam Speaker, Reverend DeForest B. Soaries has dedicated his life to im-

proving the lives of others. Whether it was organizing a campaign in college to stop drug use on campus, starting non-profit groups to improve the lives of his church community or working for the Federal Government to improve the voting system, he has been and will continue to be a true asset to the state of New Jersey. And while we were once adversaries in a political campaign, I am honored now to call him a good friend.

Reverend Soaries' leadership positions within our community, State and Federal Governments show the commitment he has to helping people move forward. As the Secretary of State for New Jersey, he was the first African-American male to serve as a constitutional officer and worked across party lines to achieve progress in the government, including increased funding for the arts.

His time as a Secretary of State and his years of ministry prepared him to be the first chairman for the Federal Election Assistance Commission. The agency was created to help improve the election system in America and to stay ahead of the curve on technological advancements in voting. Reverend Soaries' character was tested as he helped get the agency off the ground without the resources originally promised. While not all of the plans were accomplished during his time as chairman, Reverend Soaries did lay the ground work for the operation of the EAC.

I have appreciated Reverend Soaries insight and collaboration with my efforts to enact election reform. His contributions have strengthened my election reform legislation, and I greatly value his efforts.

Reverend Soaries has also made significant contribution to his community and the congregation of the First Baptist Church of Lincoln Gardens over the last twenty years. He has and is continuing to help create better family units by encouraging people to become foster parents or adopt. He is also creating new homes for low and moderate income families, while providing numerous financial and employment support groups to meet the needs of the community. Recently, he hosted a program that allowed those who had run into trouble with the law to come to church and deal with their pending arrest warrants or other legal issues in a safe environment.

The First Baptist Church of Lincoln Gardens has grown from a parish of a few to over 6,000 people. However the goals of improving the community have not changed. Reverend Soaries has helped the church maintain their goals of "spiritual growth, educational excellence and economic empowerment" through his continuous dedication to creating a debt free parish. He has created a four part program called "dfree" that teaches people how to live a financially responsible life and get out of debt. Reverend Soaries facilitated the construction of the inspirational \$17 million church complex that makes possible a number of church programs and has greatly benefited the surrounding community and Central New Jersey.

Reverend Soaries is a valued pastor of his parish and I congratulate him on the celebration of his 20th anniversary with the First Baptist Church of Lincoln Gardens, and look forward to the accomplishments yet to come in the next 20 years.