

BELOVED BY HER PEOPLE

If you ask the people who've worked closely with MarDee Xifaras how she pulled off leading the charge for the state law school, or any of her other impressive life accomplishments, they'll tell you she just has this remarkable ability to "connect" with people.

By the way, Xifaras has also been a Peace Corps volunteer in Africa; a fellow at the Fletcher School of Diplomacy at Tufts; an MBA from UMass Dartmouth; a grassroots political organizer and one of the moving forces behind Gerry Studds' first anti-war campaign for Congress.

Xifaras is startlingly, and charmingly, straightforward. She seems to understand that human beings are not perfect entities, and she has the ability to meet them where they live and inspire them to be better.

"It is the privilege of a lifetime to work with her," Ward said; "The quality of my life improved dramatically when I met her."

Jay Lynch, Xifaras' vice chairman on the SNESSL board, said that often it was only Xifaras' personal connections that kept the public law school dream alive.

"She never gave up on it," he said.

Xifaras succeeds, Lynch said, because she reaches people. She never badmouths folks, even opponents—either in public or in private—he noted.

"I think it was her unique ability to connect with everyone involved," he said.

Perhaps the most impressive endorsement comes from Michelle Keith, a 2009 graduate of SNESSL, and one of the mid-life law students for whom Xifaras seems to have fashioned the public law school.

Keith met Xifaras at a Women's Bar Association event, one of the many ongoing community events that Xifaras has made sure take place at SNESSL over the years.

Keith, a homemaker who had homeschooled her two children; said she went to SNESSL because she loves both Greater New Bedford and the school's public service ethic. She passed the bar on her first try.

She compares MarDee Xifaras to George Bailey in the Christmas film classic "It's a Wonderful Life." And she calls SNESSL the "Savings and Loan" bank that, in the classic movie, granted mortgages to low-income and middle-class people.

Xifaras, Keith said, really looks out for the school's students and advocates with them for public service to the community.

"There's a lot of successful people out there, but they go about it without any sense of honor," she said.

MarDee "has an inherent sense of honor and that's rare."

HONORING ROBERT JOSEPH PENCE

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 5, 2011

Mr. GRAVES of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize Robert Joseph Pence. Robert is a very special young man who has exemplified the finest qualities of citizenship and leadership by taking an active part in the Boy Scouts of America, Troop 397, and earning the most prestigious award of Eagle Scout.

Robert has been very active with his troop, participating in many scout activities. Over the many years Robert has been involved with scouting, he has not only earned numerous merit badges, but also the respect of his family, peers, and community. Most notably, Rob-

ert has earned the rank of Assistant Patrol Leader. Robert has also contributed to his community through his Eagle Scout project. Robert aided the City of Kearney, Missouri by repainting many of the town's fire hydrants.

Mr. Speaker, I proudly ask you to join me in commending Robert Joseph Pence for his accomplishments with the Boy Scouts of America and for his efforts put forth in achieving the highest distinction of Eagle Scout.

HONORING A REMARKABLE PUBLIC SERVANT, THE HONORABLE TOM VANDERGRIFF

HON. MICHAEL C. BURGESS

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 5, 2011

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to remember a remarkable public servant, the Honorable Tom Vandergriff. Judge Vandergriff began his 55 year long public service career as the youngest elected mayor of Arlington, Texas. There he made great strides to bring economic opportunity and expansion to the area with the luring of a General Motors plant, Six Flags theme park, and by bringing the Texas Rangers to the city.

These developments were no small task as it took thirteen years to bring Major League Baseball to North Texas and the positive effects can be felt through the vitality of Arlington as well as the Dallas-Ft. Worth Metroplex to this day.

Six years later, he went on to become the first Congressman of the 26th district of Texas in 1983. Although he only served one term, he played a fundamental role in establishing the office and representing the district.

For more than 25 years, Vandergriff served as County Judge of Tarrant County which includes more than 1.7 million residents and is one of the most populous in the United States. He retired from his role in 2007.

It is my great honor to recognize Judge Tom Vandergriff for his dedication, innovation, and insight that he has contributed to the North Texas region. I will always remember those exciting radio broadcasts when Judge Vandergriff was "the voice of the Texas Rangers" in the 1970s. My thoughts and prayers are with his family and friends. He was a great public servant, and all North Texans are thankful for his servitude.

CREATING JOBS, NOT EXPLODING THE DEFICIT

HON. RICK LARSEN

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 5, 2011

Mr. LARSEN of Washington. Mr. Speaker, day one of the 112th Congress and House Republicans are already violating their campaign promises and the needs of the American people. The set of rules they introduced today will explode our debt and deficit, kill our economic recovery and make the House of Representatives less transparent.

Like a lemming, the set of budget rules contained in this package will push us further off the deficit cliff. It breaks the promise so many

of us made to reduce the deficit and control the debt by refusing to pay for tax cuts for the wealthiest of Americans and forces future generations to foot the bill. Over the cliff like a lemming; but I suppose there is nothing like a little lemming to go with tea.

Instead of transparency, this set of rules confers "King for a Day" status to one Member of the House of Representatives—allowing him to set the entire budget for the federal government without any public input.

The last time this country allowed that was never. Only before we were a country did a king set our budget. And now Republicans are set to give this authority again to one person, the Chairman of the House Budget Committee, a person I admire as a Member of Congress—as a King, not so much.

And, in the next few days, the new House majority wants to repeal help for seniors on prescription drugs and take away consumer protections from families battling insurance problems. This effort will add \$143 billion to the deficit over the next ten years.

This is all happening while we should be focusing on the economic recovery that is underway thanks to the tough decisions that the last Congress made. We need to redirect our focus to the economy and stop exploding the deficits and debt.

INTRODUCING THE SOCIAL SECURITY FOR AMERICAN CITIZENS ONLY ACT

HON. RON PAUL

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 5, 2011

Mr. PAUL. Mr. Speaker, today I introduce the Social Security for American Citizens Only Act. This act forbids the Federal Government from providing Social Security benefits to non-citizens. It also ends the practice of totalization. Totalization is where the Social Security Administration takes into account the number of years an individual worked abroad, and thus was not paying payroll taxes, in determining that individual's eligibility for Social Security benefits.

Hard as it may be to believe, the United States Government already provides Social Security benefits to citizens of 17 other countries. Under current law, citizens of those countries covered by these agreements may have an easier time getting Social Security benefits than public school teachers or policemen.

Obviously, this program provides a threat to the already fragile Social Security system, and the threat is looming larger. The prior administration actually proposed a totalization agreement that would have allowed thousands of foreigners to qualify for U.S. Social Security benefits even though they came to, and worked in, the United States illegally. Adding insult to injury, this proposal could have allowed the Federal Government to give Social Security benefits to non-citizens who worked here for as little as 18 months. Estimates of what this totalization proposal would cost top \$1 billion per year.

Despite a major public outcry against extending Social Security benefits to those who entered this country illegally, a version of this proposal actually passed the other body in the

109th Congress. That the executive branch would propose, and part of the legislative branch would endorse, using Social Security monies to reward those who have willingly and knowingly violated our own immigration laws is an insult to the millions of Americans who pay their entire working lives into the system and now face the possibility that there may be nothing left when it is their turn to retire.

Even if the current Congress rejects all proposals to allow those who entered the country illegally to receive Social Security benefits, the only way to guarantee a future administration will not revive this scheme is for Congress to put an end to totalization once and for all. I therefore call upon my colleagues to stop the use of the Social Security Trust Fund as yet another vehicle for foreign aid by cosponsoring the Social Security for American Citizens Only Act.

STATEMENT OF SUPPORT FOR
H.R. 44, THE GUAM WORLD WAR
II LOYALTY RECOGNITION ACT

HON. MADELEINE Z. BORDALLO

OF GUAM

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 5, 2011

Ms. BORDALLO. Mr. Speaker, today I have introduced H.R. 44, the Guam World War II Loyalty Recognition Act, a bill that would implement the findings of the Guam War Claims Review Commission. Since being elected to the House of Representatives 8 years ago, I have introduced a version of this legislation in each Congress. Last Congress, this bill titled H.R. 44 passed the House on four separate occasions, once as standalone legislation and three times as part of the annual National Defense Authorization Acts.

This bill would implement the recommendations of the Guam War Claims Review Commission, which was appointed by Secretary of the Interior Gale Norton and established by an Act of the 107th Congress (Public Law 107–333). The Review Commission, in a unanimous report to Congress in June 2004, found that there were significant disparities in the treatment of war claims for the people of Guam as compared with war claims for other Americans. The Review Commission also found that the occupation of Guam was especially brutal due to the unfailing loyalty of the people of Guam to the United States of America. The people of Guam were subjected to forced labor, forced marches, internment, beatings, rapes and executions, including public beheadings. The Review Commission recommended that Congress remedy this injustice through the enactment of legislation to authorize payment of claims in amounts specified. Specifically, the bill would authorize discretionary spending to pay claims consistent with the recommendations of the commission.

It is important to note that the Review Commission found that the United States Government seized Japanese assets during the war and that the record shows that settlement of claims was meant to be paid from these forfeitures. Furthermore, the United States signed a Treaty of Peace with Japan on September 8, 1951, which precludes Americans from making claims against Japan for war reparations. The treaty closed any legal mechanism for seeking redress from the Government

of Japan, and the United States Government has settled claims for U.S. citizens and other nationals through various claims programs authorized by Congress.

The House of Representatives has continually been supportive of this legislation, passing the bill with bi-partisan support in 110th and 111th Congresses. The issue continues to stall in the Senate despite support from the administration and supportive Senators. In the 111th session of Congress, I worked to add the text of H.R. 44 to the National Defense Authorization Act for fiscal year 2010. This was unsuccessful because of the objections of Senators regarding the precedent that this legislation may establish notwithstanding the findings of the Guam War Claims Review Commission, which found that no new precedent was being made and that its recommendations were based on similar claims programs for similar circumstances. However, as a compromise, report language was added to the final statement of managers which called for additional hearings to review Guam War Claims matter in the 2nd Session of the 111th Congress. The House Armed Services Committee upheld its commitment and held a hearing on December 2, 2009 to further investigate the purpose and need for enacting H.R. 44. Last year, I worked again to include compromise language for H.R. 44 in National Defense Authorization Act for fiscal year 2011. Given the time constraints for floor time at the end of the session, the Guam War Claims provision had to be removed by the Senate in order for the final defense authorization bill to pass by unanimous consent in the Senate.

However, during negotiations on the defense authorization bill for fiscal year 2011 there was agreement that payment of claims to descendants of survivors of the Japanese occupation who suffered personal injury should be removed from the legislation. I accepted this compromise because I felt it was important to bring closure to this issue and that the objections to this provision by some Senators cannot be overcome at this time. As such, the bill I introduce today is compromise language that removes such claims payments and reflects the agreed upon compromise reached during negotiations on last year's defense authorization bill.

Congressional passage of this bill this Congress has a direct impact on the future success of the military build-up. The need for Guam War Claims was brought about because of mishandling of war claims immediately following World War II by the Department of the Navy. The long-standing inequity with how Guam was treated for war reparations lingers today. If we do not bring this matter to a close I believe that support for the military build-up will erode and impact the readiness of our forces and the bilateral relationship with Japan.

Mr. Speaker, resolving this issue is a matter of justice. This carefully crafted compromise legislation addresses the concerns of several Senators, and has the approval of both Senator JOHN MCCAIN and Senator CARL LEVIN. This bill represents a unique opportunity to right a wrong because many of the survivors of the occupation are nearing the end of their lives. It is important that the Congress act on the recommendations of the Guam War Claims Review Commission to finally resolve this longstanding injustice for the people of Guam.

THE FAIR AND SIMPLE TAX ACT
OF 2011

HON. DAVID DREIER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 5, 2011

Mr. DREIER. Mr. Speaker, our top priority is to get our economy going again. Helping families keep more of their hard-earned money and providing businesses with additional resources to invest in their operations will help create jobs and get our economy back on track.

The Fair and Simple Tax (FAST) Act is a commonsense plan that will provide certainty in the tax code and a boost to the economy. The bill cuts the current 6-bracket tax structure in half and employs three simple rates of 10, 15, and 30 percent. By reducing marginal rates and preserving major deductions, including mortgage interest, charitable, state and local taxes, the child tax credit and the personal exemption, the FAST Act provides working Americans with more money for their needs.

The FAST Act also addresses the need to get our economy moving again by providing important investment incentives and creating new opportunities for workers and job creators alike. As American businesses continue to participate in the global economy, the FAST Act makes domestic employers more competitive by reducing the corporate tax rate from the highest in the world to a more competitive rate. In order to encourage innovation and boost entrepreneurship, the FAST Act provides a permanent extension of the Research and Development Tax Credit. In addition, under the FAST Act, the tax code rewards, not penalizes, success by reducing the individual capital gains tax rate from 15 percent to 10 percent and indexing the tax for inflation.

The FAST Act is based on the principle that Americans deserve a tax code that is fair and easy to understand. This year, Americans are projected to spend \$392 billion preparing their taxes. To make this process easier, the FAST Act creates a simple, one-page tax filing form that employs the simplified marginal rate structure.

This bill brings a sense of fairness to the tax code by permanently repealing the Death Tax and indexing the Alternative Minimum Tax (AMT) to inflation. In doing so, the FAST Act ensures that fewer taxpayers will be impacted by the AMT each year. In addition, the bill permanently extends the 2001 and 2003 tax relief measures.

As Americans seek to save money for retirement, education and other needs, the FAST Act provides incentives to encourage individuals to save more. The FAST Act creates three new, tax-free savings accounts: the Retirement Savings Account, the Lifetime Savings Account, both providing a \$5,000 tax-free contribution, and the Lifetime Skills Savings Account, which provides a \$1,000 tax-free contribution. Each provides Americans with additional ways to save money for their future needs.

Americans should have more control, not less, over their health care expenses. That is why the FAST Act creates a \$7,500 tax deduction for individuals and a \$15,000 tax deduction for families who do not have access to employer-sponsored health coverage. This expanded deduction provides individuals and