

Commander to a very demanding and active fighter wing, 388th FW, Hill AFB, UT, and to prepare him to later command his own wing, the 33rd Fighter Wing, Eglin AFB, FL. His boss, Lt General Gary North, tasked him to direct important sorties such as protection to POTUS, space shuttle and several deployments at home and abroad. General North also hand-picked Colonel Harmer for a demanding position in Iraq's Ministry of Defense where he led a highly specialized planning and training team, and advised the U.S. Forces-Iraq leadership on sensitive Arab-Kurd issues. Upon returning to the U.S., the Air Force continued to challenge Sledge by assigning him to one of the most demanding positions within the Air Force, his current job as the Chief of Air Force House Liaison. Since June 2010, Sledge has advised the Secretary of the Air Force, Chief of Staff of the Air Force, the Director of Legislative Liaison, and numerous other senior military and civilian leaders on issues of the greatest concern to HQ Air Force and the Congress. He has more than served as a liaison between the Pentagon and the Hill, he has developed and improved key relationships that help us make better decisions about the Air Force. He is extremely intelligent and articulate, and has helped shape my thinking and influenced many Members of Congress. Simply, we trust him!

Colonel Harmer is a command pilot with over 3,300 flying hours primarily in the F-15 and F-16. He is the recipient of the following major medals and decorations for his service and accomplishments: the Bronze Star, Legion of Merit, Defense Meritorious Service Medal, Air Force Meritorious Service Medal, Air Medal, Aerial Achievement Medal, Air Force Commendation Medal, Air Force Achievement Medal, Combat Readiness Medal, National Defense Service Medal, Armed Forces Expeditionary Medal, Southwest Asia Service Medal, Iraq Campaign Medal, Global War on Terrorism Expeditionary Medal, Korean Defense Service Medal, and the NATO Medal.

Throughout his distinguished career he has represented our country and Air Force with dignity and honor, and this is why I am so privileged to pay tribute to this fine Airman. Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the Congress and the United States of America, I thank Colonel Todd Harmer, his wife Stacie and their daughters, Jordan, Leigh and Erika, for their service and sacrifices over the past 26 years. I wish them Godspeed, and continued happiness as they start a new chapter in their lives.

RECOGNIZING JOHN GUALTIER

HON. BRUCE L. BRALEY

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, June 18, 2012

Mr. BRALEY of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize John Gaultier of Vinton, IA for his years of service to veterans in Eastern Iowa.

John's service to the veterans and his community in Eastern Iowa has been a lifelong endeavor, as he's drawn on his own experience in war and battling PTSD to ensure that returning veterans are better served and that students are aware of the service and sacrifice their elders made in the Second World War.

At the age of 18, John served as an Army Medic in the European Theater of Operations where he saved many American lives and participated in the liberation of two concentration camps and a Russian POW camp.

Since 1995, John has logged over 7,000 hours of volunteer service at the Iowa City Veterans Medical Center visiting with his fellow veterans and drawing on his own experience battling post-traumatic stress to help them recover. John has worked with psychiatrists at the Medical Center to help them in treating servicemembers with PTSD returning from Iraq and Afghanistan. John has also donated money and vehicles to ensure that veterans have transportation to VA facilities for their care.

John's service to his community also extends to students at Vinton-Shellsburg and North Linn Schools where he has shared stories of his experience in the war for the past eight years. John has turned his difficult experience in war into a lesson for our community's youth.

For his work volunteering at the Iowa City VA hospital and sharing his experiences with students, John was honored earlier this year by Cedar Rapids' KCRG's "9 Who Care" Awards, and he was nominated to represent Eastern Iowa at the Jefferson Awards for Public Service, where he is a finalist for the Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis Award for "Outstanding Community Service Benefiting Local Communities."

As the son of a World War Two veteran, who landed on Iwo Jima when he was 17, I understand the service and sacrifice made by veterans like John. They truly are members of the Greatest Generation, and John deserves to be commended for continuing to serve after he returned home and turning his own trials from war into a learning experience for others.

Congratulations John for this well-deserved honor. Thank you for your continued service to our community and work on behalf of Veterans. You represent the best of Iowa, having served your country and community for over half a century. Keep up the good work.

COMMEMORATING THE 20TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE LEADERSHIP ALLIANCE

HON. CHAKA FATTAH

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, June 18, 2012

Mr. FATTAH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commemorate the 20th anniversary of the Leadership Alliance. The Leadership Alliance, established in 1992, is a national academic consortium of leading research universities and minority serving institutions with the mission to develop underrepresented students into outstanding leaders and role models in academia, business and the public sector.

Through an organized program of research, networking and mentorship at critical transitions along the entire academic training pathway, the Leadership Alliance prepares young scientists and scholars from underrepresented and underserved populations for graduate training and professional apprenticeships. Leadership Alliance faculty mentors provide high quality, cutting-edge research experiences in all academic disciplines at the na-

tion's most competitive graduate training institutions and share insights into the nature of academic careers.

In the 20 years since its establishment, the Leadership Alliance has mentored over 2,000 undergraduates who have participated in the Summer Research Early Identification Program and over 200 alumni who have obtained their PhD (215) or MD-PhD (19) degrees as Leadership Alliance Doctoral Scholars.

More than 53 percent of Leadership Alliance early identification students enroll into a graduate level program versus the national rate of 40 percent enrollment into graduate programs. Of this 53 percent, 42 percent enrolled into or completed PhD programs. Of the 42 percent of students enrolling into doctoral training programs, 46 percent completed PhD programs and more than half of those were in the science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) disciplines. Leadership Alliance institutions graduated approximately 25 percent of all biomedical sciences PhD degrees to underrepresented minority students in a five year time period (2004-2008), making it a leading consortium grantor of PhD degrees in the biomedical sciences in the United States.

In my district, over the past 18 summers, the University of Pennsylvania has hosted 210 undergraduates who were mentored by faculty and had an in-depth research experience designed to provide them with theoretical knowledge and practical training in research and scientific experimentation and other scholarly investigations.

Leadership Alliance Doctoral Scholars are diversifying the academy with 58 percent of them at research-intensive institutions. Doctoral Scholars also are engaging in career positions in government and industry. The Leadership Alliance has demonstrated its effectiveness as a model for identifying, training and mentoring underrepresented minorities who are poised to expand and diversify the base of the 21st century workforce.

I am pleased today to recognize the importance of sustaining efforts to invest in programs that identify, train and mentor talented underrepresented and underserved students; recognize the continued dedication of institutional leaders, faculty members, administrators and students across the United States and support their roles in the continued training and mentoring of underrepresented students along the academic pathway; and to congratulate and commend the Leadership Alliance, including the University of Pennsylvania, for 20 years of mentoring a diverse and competitive research and scholarly workforce.

CONGRATULATIONS TO MOUNT WASHINGTON CRUISES ON THEIR 140TH ANNIVERSARY

HON. FRANK C. GUINTA

OF NEW HAMPSHIRE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, June 18, 2012

Mr. GUINTA. Mr. Speaker, it is with great pleasure that I congratulate Mount Washington Cruises on reaching your 140th anniversary.

New Hampshire is proud to be home to some of the most beautiful sights in the Northeast. The White Mountains and Lakes Region have attracted tourists from all over the world, and the beauty and grandeur of Lake

Winnepesaukee has been shared with thousands of visitors thanks to the M/S *Mount Washington*.

The M/S *Mount Washington* is truly one of New Hampshire's greatest treasures and continues to be one of the state's leading tourist attractions in the Lakes Region and for Weirs Beach. The daily in season tours give visitors the chance to view firsthand the beauty and majesty of Lake Winnepesaukee. With the ability to hold 1250 passengers, the "*Mount*" has also been a popular venue for parties, weddings and various celebrations. Today Mount Washington Cruises is owned and operated by local individuals ensuring that this fine vessel and her operations maintain in New Hampshire and are run by New Hampshire's great citizens.

I congratulate the owners, officers and crew of the Mount Washington Cruises for their continued success and their dedication to maintain the great legacy of the M/S *Mount Washington* here in the Granite State. I wish you all the best for continued success in the future.

RECOGNIZING BISHOP T.D. JAKES

HON. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, June 18, 2012

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Bishop T.D. Jakes, senior pastor and evangelist at The Potter's House in Dallas. The Potter's House is not only a house of worship, but a global humanitarian organization with over 30,000 members, which Bishop Jakes has faithfully served for more than 15 years. As well as celebrating a career in service with over 35 years of ministry, Bishop Jakes also celebrates his 55th birthday this month.

During an event in his honor this month, Bishop Jakes was joined by various church members, celebrities, and dignitaries in Dallas for a spiritual celebration of his 35 years of accomplishments in the ministry. The event, titled "Triumphant Journey," highlighted Bishop Jakes' contributions to his congregants and supporters as a pastor, author, and husband.

Few people have the ability and the calling to lead such a great following into a life of devotion and compassion. Yet, Bishop Jakes has devoted his efforts in his commitment to helping the needy, and empowering the disillusioned. Through his ministerial work, Bishop Jakes has used his talents to unite tens of thousands of North Texans under a united spiritual cause. Harnessing the generosity of his congregation, Bishop Jakes continues to lead a commanding effort to better his community, and bring humanitarian assistance to other parts of the world.

Mr. Speaker, faith-based leaders and the powerful following they command serve as powerful tools in the furthering of altruism, and the building of strong communities. Bishop Jakes is a unifying force in North Texas, and his contributions to the faith-based community are undeniable. I commend Bishop Jakes for his leadership, and wish The Potter's House continued success in its pursuit of a better understanding of the faith.

A TRIBUTE TO COACH FINLEY READ

HON. MIKE MCINTYRE

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, June 18, 2012

Mr. MCINTYRE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to a truly outstanding North Carolinian, Finley Read, of Lumberton, North Carolina. Coach Read has dedicated over twenty years coaching and administrative work Lumberton High School, which is my alma mater. Coach Read deserves to be honored here today for his tireless contribution to the community of Lumberton. I ask that you join me in recognizing his long and remarkable career.

Coach Read enrolled and graduated from NC State University, where he was active in the football program. His impressive record during this time was interrupted only to serve our country in the U.S. Army. After returning to Lumberton, Coach Read became a high school teacher and multi-sport coach for the Lumberton Pirates, where he remained for two decades. In addition to his role as an administrator, Coach Read has bettered his community in countless ways. Through his leadership in football, baseball, and basketball, Coach Read has touched the lives of many Lumberton High students. He has been quite influential in our community, where he is known for his integrity and kindness.

Recently, the loss of long-time colleague and close friend, Coach Alton "Turmey" Brooks, left a hole in the lives of Lumberton High School students. His passing galvanized the community to honor Coach Brooks, which in turn has reminded us of the quiet, humble integrity of Coach Finley Read. His award today from the community of Lumberton comes in the form of a pirate ship, in recognition of his winning leadership for the Lumberton Pirates. His friends, former colleagues, and students from all walks of life have come together to praise him for role as a successful mentor, devout Christian, loving husband, and dedicated father.

I have known Coach Read all of my life, and I have personally witnessed and experienced Coach Read's powerful and positive influence in many different settings—from teaching me and other youngsters how to swim at Woodside Pool when I was in the third grade, to his giving me the opportunity to serve as Manager of the Pirates baseball team while I was in high school, to my work with him as a fellow Elder in our home church, First Presbyterian, in Lumberton. Coach Read, his wife Ruth, and all of his children, Kathy, Carey, and Allison, are dear friends that my family and I have long-known and respected.

Mr. Speaker, Coach Finley Read has mentored students in Robeson County for decades. As Co-founder and Co-Chairman of the Congressional Caucus on Youth Sports, I especially appreciate the work Coach Finley Read has done to make our community a better and healthier place. I wish Coach Read and his family God's richest blessings, and I ask that you join me today in recognition of his impressive career.

RECOGNIZING BARBARA WILLIAMS-SKINNER

HON. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, June 18, 2012

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Dr. Barbara Williams-Skinner, who is being honored by President Obama as a Champion for Change. Dr. Williams-Skinner is being commended for her dedication to addressing the needs of low-income men and boys.

Dr. Williams-Skinner has worked tirelessly through her organization, the Skinner Leadership Institute, to promote leadership building and evangelism. The organization prides itself in its holistic approach, which builds moral character, technical skills, and spiritual growth. Using this approach, the organization trains youth, ministry, and political leaders. Her work with young men, in particular, highlights the importance that she places on fatherhood within the family.

As former Executive Director of the Congressional Black Caucus, Dr. Williams-Skinner helped to coordinate the Congressional Black Caucus Prayer Breakfast, which today attracts leaders from across the Nation. Since 1992, she has worked through the Leadership Institute to empower the communities around her. She has helped to train up-and-coming leaders, many of whom are today the stalwarts of their communities. The Skinner Leadership Institute hosts bi-weekly prayer walks through the halls of Congress, and its African American Leadership seminars have helped to foster a sense of community among African American leaders. Dr. Williams-Skinner has also served as a board member of Operation Push, the Christian Community Development Association, and the Neighborhood Learning Center.

Mr. Speaker, the work of faith-based leaders should not go unnoticed. Dr. Williams-Skinner's commitment to cultivating spiritual maturity and public service has shaped leaders that help to reconcile the spiritual, moral, and technical needs of our country. These leaders will help build strong communities. Her work not only benefits today's leaders, but helps to secure leaders of the future. Her accomplishments and contributions to our Nation are indisputable. I applaud Dr. Williams-Skinner's leadership, and I wish her continued success with the Skinner Leadership Institute.

HONORING THE LIFE AND SERVICE OF NORTHWEST FLORIDA'S BE- LOVED WENDELL GRIFFITH

HON. JEFF MILLER

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, June 18, 2012

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the United States Congress, it is an honor for me to rise today to recognize the life and service of Northwest Florida's beloved Wendell Griffith.

For nearly 25 years, Wendell Griffith was a constant presence on the campus of Northwest Florida State College. As a professor of United States and World History, Mr. Griffith