

well into middle age when she obtained her Ph.D.

Right until the end, Anna remained active in her field. She lectured officials at the Federal Reserve when she thought they made wrong calls and blissfully engaged in debates in the opinion pages of newspapers to correct misstatements of fact and of economics by columnists she thought incorrigible.

Looking back on her career, she quoted the poet Wordsworth:

"Bliss was it in that dawn to be alive/But to be young was very heaven!"

I ask that the House join in paying tribute to this most inspiring woman and in expressing both our gratitude and condolences to her family.

TRIBUTE TO CARMEN CASTRO-  
CONROY AND HUD-CERTIFIED  
HOUSING COUNSELORS

**HON. CHRIS VAN HOLLEN**

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, July 17, 2012*

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise to bring to my colleagues' attention the "First Person Singular" interview by Amanda Abrams that appeared in the Washington Post magazine on Sunday, July 15, 2012 about my constituent, Carmen Castro-Conroy, the senior HUD-certified housing counselor serving my congressional district.

I commend this article to my colleagues because it highlights the dedication and compassion of the HUD-certified counselors who are assisting those hardest hit by the housing crisis. These counselors, whose services are funded by the federal government, help homeowners who are behind or at risk of becoming behind on their mortgages to analyze their options, prepare modification applications, and advocate on their behalf. Statistics show that homeowners who utilize these counseling services have greater success in obtaining mortgage relief from their lenders than those who do not.

My staff and I have worked with Ms. Castro-Conroy since the housing crisis began. She is a leader in her field—a truly outstanding, professional and dedicated public servant. As Ms. Castro-Conroy notes in her interview, applying for assistance is often emotionally difficult—and made even more so by the poor quality of service homeowners so often receive from the banks. Counselors like Ms. Castro-Conroy help homeowners to navigate these challenges with diligence and care.

I hope that this article will help to educate my colleagues who fund these counseling services and the homeowners who use them about the invaluable services that our HUD-certified counselors are providing.

FIRST PERSON SINGULAR: CARMEN CASTRO-CONROY, 40, GAITHERSBURG, HOUSING COUNSELOR, HOUSING INITIATIVE PARTNERSHIP

(By Amanda Abrams)

We see a lot of families who have either lost their jobs or experienced income reduction through a cut in salary or another type of crisis related to illness, death, divorce, disability. We see all of it. They feel overwhelmed. Our job is to educate them so they can know all the options available and make good decisions.

Losing a home is devastating; just thinking about losing a home is very stressful. It's

not necessarily just a house that we're talking about, it's a family. Some clients come to us when things have very much deteriorated, and they're under a lot of stress and their health is at risk. Not everyone will stay in the homes they're in, but it's better to be at peace than to try to keep a home that they cannot afford and end up in a hospital. It's difficult if you've lived in a home for a long time, and it's the only place that you think you're going to be okay.

Many times, even if they have family or friends, they feel embarrassed to let people know what they're going through, so they suffer in silence. I tell them that regardless of the outcome, they're not going to be going through this by themselves. It's my responsibility to encourage them and to lift them up. I tell them, "This is a house; you're bigger than this, and you're going to come out of this stronger."

I hear a lot of judgment out there of people that go into default, but I always think it could happen to anybody. I have clients who never thought they'd be diagnosed with cancer. Never thought they'd lose a husband. Never thought they were going to lose their job. It makes me very conscious about how one day you could think you have everything, and the next day your life could dramatically change.

I just got an outcome this week of a case I opened in January 2011. This was a client whose husband left her with five children to care for. She went from being a stay-at-home mom to finding a full-time job, but her income still wasn't enough to make regular mortgage payments. She just qualified for a permanent modification, so she'll be able to stay in the property.

I love what I do. I was thinking about this during the weekend, during Mass. This is one way to show that you love God, working in the face of people that are in trouble, people that are suffering. Before '08, I was working in a home-ownership education program. We were all pulled out from that to serve in foreclosure intervention counseling. We didn't know how long it was going to last, and now we're in the fourth year of crisis. And we don't see the light at the end of the tunnel.

Mr. Speaker, I am honored that Carmen Castro-Conroy is my constituent and that she is able to provide such outstanding service to so many others.

IN RECOGNITION OF MS. MARIE  
"RIE" BLAISDELL

**HON. FRANK PALLONE, JR.**

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, July 17, 2012*

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Ms. Marie "Rie" Blaisdell. Ms. Blaisdell will be recognized by the Monmouth County Historical Association at the 2012 Garden Party for her outstanding contributions to the association.

Rie Blaisdell has served as a member of the Monmouth County Historical Association since 1959. Ms. Blaisdell continues to volunteer countless hours and is a member of the Board of Trustees. She is a strong advocate for the study of Monmouth County history. Rie is fondly remembered for her role as a docent at Allen House. She often provides animated and historically accurate stories of Revolutionary soldiers for visitors to enjoy. Colleagues continue to applaud Ms. Blaisdell's warm personality, hard work and motivation. Rie Blaisdell

continues to personify the qualities of a true historian.

Members of the Monmouth County Historical Association praise Ms. Blaisdell for her instrumental role in launching the Historical Association's first Garden Party in 1975. At its inception, the Historical Association Garden Party included an informal afternoon cocktail party hosted by local residents. Ms. Blaisdell has remained an active Garden Party committee member for 37 years and continues to lend her experience and expertise. Ms. Blaisdell's unending generosity has undoubtedly touched many lives throughout Central New Jersey.

Mr. Speaker, once again, please join me in congratulating Ms. Marie "Rie" Blaisdell for receiving the honor bestowed by the Monmouth County Historical Association. Her dedication and service continues to provide inspiration and insight for future generations of historians throughout Monmouth County and New Jersey.

HONORING THE CITY OF RALSTON,  
NEBRASKA ON ITS 100-YEAR AN-  
NIVERSARY

**HON. LEE TERRY**

OF NEBRASKA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, July 17, 2012*

Mr. TERRY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the city of Ralston, Nebraska, for its 100-year anniversary.

Ralston is a city with a population of roughly 6,000 people, all of which are extremely hard working and are some of the friendliest people you will meet. It provides its residents with a small town atmosphere inside of Nebraska's largest city.

Ralston was founded in June 1912 with a population of about 200 people. The population continued to grow until March 23, 1913, when a devastating tornado destroyed much of the town. The residents banded together and decided to rebuild a better, more beautiful city.

The city of Ralston is recognized across the State as being a great place to raise a family. The city plays host to family friendly functions throughout the year and works to promote a safe place for families to reside. Ralston has been ranked as one of the top cities to relocate to in America and one of the most secure places to live in America by national Web sites.

Living an active lifestyle is highly valued by the people of Ralston. There are many city-wide events scheduled each month to provide citizens with opportunities to get involved in the community. Ralston has many beautiful parks, campgrounds, and a water and ride park.

The city of Ralston also makes a significant contribution to Nebraska's economy. Members of the Ralston Area Chamber of Commerce work to enhance the city's economy by creating jobs and encouraging the location of new businesses into the community.

Ralston has made meaningful contributions to the State of Nebraska and has been an excellent place for its residents to call home for the last 100 years. I would like to extend my congratulations to the city for a successful century and wish the community many more years of continued success.

NEW YORK STATE AMERICAN LEGION AUXILIARY DEPARTMENT PRESIDENT ANN GEER

**HON. CHRISTOPHER P. GIBSON**

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, July 17, 2012*

Mr. GIBSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today on behalf of the people of New York's 20th District to express our sincere appreciation for the continued hard work, dedication, and contributions made to our communities by New York State American Legion Auxiliary Department President Ann Geer.

Department President Geer has worked tirelessly for over 30 years to serve and protect our veterans' interests. As a 24-year veteran of the United States Army, I am personally humbled and appreciative of all the work that Ann has done. She has been active since 1981 in the Joyce-Bell Unit located in Otsego County, which she was able to join due to her husband Stephen's honorable service during the Vietnam era. After only a short period of time, Ann became the Unit President in 1982, a position she served for six years.

Ann's leadership and incredible dedication resulted in her being selected for every major committee and office position at the unit and county level until being elected as full Department President on July 16, 2011. She has since served with honor and distinction, leading the New York Department at a national level while continuing to serve at the local and State levels.

Beyond her service to our military men and women and veterans, Ann has been an active member of the Unadilla, NY community for the past 31 years. Ann raised her two sons while helping hundreds of other children through her career in education. As a dedicated volunteer and community leader, she was a founding member of the Recreation Commission and is active in the Sidney Community Band, in the Academic Team at Unatego High School, and has served on the Unadilla Community Foundation Board.

For these reasons, I am glad to stand today in recognition of NYS American Legion Auxiliary Department President Ann Geer's service in Otsego County, New York State, and across our country. I am honored to be given the opportunity to acknowledge her dedication to our community and especially our veterans. We all owe her a debt of gratitude and appreciation.

HONORING ANNE MITCHELL  
FELDER

**HON. CORRINE BROWN**

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, July 17, 2012*

Ms. BROWN of Florida. Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the constituents of the Third Congressional District of Florida and myself, I rise now to offer my heartfelt condolences and pay special tribute to the life of, Ms. Anne Mitchell Felder, a woman of many talents and passions, who honorably served our country in The United States Army, and who worked as an educator and was a faithful servant to her community and church. Anne Mitchell Felder

was a hero, humanitarian, community leader and friend.

We are inspired when we recall the accomplishments of a woman whose lifetime of service and dedication served many and whose lasting influence changed the lives of those around her. Beginning her career as an educator at Lincoln High, in Bradenton, Florida for six years, Anne Mitchell Felder went on to serve in The United States Army's, Women's Army Corps (WAC), where she became a medical laboratory technician at the Reception Center in Ft. Benning, Georgia. A recipient of the WAC three-year Service Ribbon, Good Conduct Medal, the Army Commendation Ribbon, and Victory Pin, Ms. Felder was a hero. She returned to civilian life to follow her passion of educating the young minds of tomorrow by teaching at Jones High School for over 22 years, teaching mathematics, serving as Guidance Counselor and later as Dean of Students. A religious woman who remained active in her church, The New Covenant Baptist Church of Orlando, Ms. Felder was secretary to the Charter Trustee Ministry from 1992–1996 and most recently a member of District Five and the Sanctuary Sunday School Class.

A woman for whom education was important, Anne Mitchell Felder received an Associate of Arts degree from Bethune-Cookman College; a Bachelor of Arts degree from Florida Agricultural and Mechanical College; a Master of Science Degree from Florida Agricultural and Mechanical University; and studied at Columbia University in New York. And, she was a member of Kappa Delta Pi, an honorary society for students in education. She also understood and valued her obligation and duty to serve our society and those in need and did so through Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Incorporated where she was a Golden Life Member, a 60Years-Plus Member, and a charter president of the Orlando Alumnae Chapter, who enjoyed the status of a Delta Dear.

The life of Anne Mitchell Felder was one of accomplishment and service. We are aware that a life well lived is a life well shared. As an educator and hero, she gave of her talents and gifts to benefit the community, the nation, and her family. In her passing, we pay tribute to an exceptional leader whose courage, strength, and love of her community left an indelible legacy for future generations. She will be remembered and respected because she had an awesome gift of teaching and providing love and support to those who knew her. We offer our prayers for her immediate family and host of loving relatives and friends whose lives have been forever changed by this exceptional woman. We thank our Heavenly Father for allowing us to be blessed with the time spent with Anne Mitchell Felder, our friend, mother, sister, and hero.

Anne Mitchell Felder is survived by her daughter Vicki-Elaine Felder, and brother Thomas Watson Mitchell.

OUR UNCONSCIONABLE NATIONAL  
DEBT

**HON. MIKE COFFMAN**

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, July 17, 2012*

Mr. COFFMAN of Colorado. Mr. Speaker, on January 20, 2009, the day President

Obama took office, the national debt was \$10,626,877,048,913.08.

Today, it is \$15,875,734,673,516.05. We've added \$5,248,857,624,602.97 to our debt in just over 3 years. This is debt our nation, our economy, and our children could have avoided with a balanced budget amendment.

On this day in 1945, President Harry Truman, Soviet leader Joseph Stalin and British Prime Minister Winston Churchill met at the opening of the Potsdam Conference. We must balance the budget so that we may continue to meet and lead other great world powers.

RECOGNIZING THE LEADERSHIP  
OF DR. DON BERWICK

**HON. FORTNEY PETE STARK**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, July 17, 2012*

Mr. STARK. Mr. Speaker, Don Berwick was Acting Administrator of the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services for President Obama. Unfortunately, the minority party in the U.S. Senate was able to prevent him from being confirmed into the post and so he was forced to leave at the end of 2011.

I've copied below a recent commencement address at Harvard Medical School by Dr. Berwick.

If Dr. Berwick doesn't embody the spirit we want for our medical professionals—as well as our public servants—I don't know who does.

I urge my colleagues to read this speech. Driving people like Dr. Berwick out of public service is not something of which anyone should be proud.

[From JAMA, June 27, 2012]

TO ISAIAH

(By Donald M. Berwick, MD, MPP)

THANK YOU FOR LETTING ME SHARE THIS GLORIOUS DAY with you and your loved ones. Feel good. Feel proud. You've earned it.

In preparation for today, I asked your dean of students what she thinks is on your mind. So, she asked you. The word you used—many of you—was this one: Worried. You're worried about the constant change around you, uncertain about the future of medicine and dentistry. Worried about whether you can make a decent living. You've boarded a boat, and you don't know where it's going.

I can reassure you. You've made a good choice—a spectacularly good choice. The career you've chosen is going to give you many moments of poetry. My favorite is the moment when the door closes—the click of the catch that leaves you and the patient together in the privacy—the sanctity—of the helping relationship. Doors will open too. You'll find ways to contribute to progress that you cannot possibly anticipate now, any more than I could have dreamed of standing here when I was sitting where you are 40 years ago.

But look, I won't lie; I'm worried too. I went to Washington to lead the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services, full of hope for our nation's long-overdue journey toward making health care a human right here, at last. In lots of ways, I wasn't disappointed. I often saw good government and the grandeur of democracy—both alive, even if not at the moment entirely well.

But, like you, I also found much that I could not control—a context torn apart by antagonisms—too many people in leadership, from whom we ought to be able to expect