

HONORING THE TENTH ANNIVERSARY OF THE ISLAMIC CULTURAL CENTER OF FRESNO

HON. JIM COSTA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 24, 2012

Mr. COSTA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the Islamic Cultural Center of Fresno, ICCF, its board of trustees, and members as they celebrate their 10th anniversary. ICCF is a non-profit religious institution in the heart of California's San Joaquin Valley which is dedicated providing spiritual empowerment and support to Muslims and non-Muslims alike. Through their work and educational endeavors, ICCF has been an asset to our community and a true reflection of the rich diversity in our nation.

Since its inception, ICCF has promoted instruction and dialogue in hopes of establishing understanding and harmony among persons of all faiths. An active participant and leader in interfaith collaboration, activities, and discussion, ICCF hosts a number of activities and programs designed to fulfill its goals. ICCF has developed diversity training seminars to provide insight into Islam and the local Muslim community. For example, in 2005, after consultation with Fresno Police Chief Jerry Dyer, ICCF began providing diversity training to police officers in an effort to increase awareness and knowledge of cultural differences. In 2007, ICCF, the California Health Department, and the Marin Abused Women's Services Center led two training seminars to discuss and advocate the prevention of domestic violence.

In addition to its cultural diversity training efforts, ICCF has also served our community by providing family support services. In partnership with Child Protective Services, CPS, ICCF has ensured that children who are removed from their homes because of safety concerns are able to maintain their cultural norms and traditional practices.

ICCF has worked tirelessly to improve the well-being of our entire community. They have worked with Fresno's Poverello House, an organization that serves the hungry, homeless, and destitute, to collect food and distribute it at schools and homeless areas. Additionally, they have joined efforts with the Marjaree Mason Center, a widely recognized non-profit center for victims of domestic violence, to educate and empower some of our Valley's most vulnerable residents.

As one of the premier faith and culture centers in Central California, ICCF has welcomed students and faculty from a number of educational institutions, including Fresno State, University of Phoenix, Fresno City College, as well as local school districts. Often, visitors learn about the teachings of Islam, women in Islam, as well as Islamic perspectives in areas related to anthropology, sociology, and economics.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in celebrating and recognizing ten years of worship, leadership, and community involvement. The Islamic Cultural Center of Fresno accurately reflects the best of what America has to offer—diversity, understanding, and service.

25TH ANNIVERSARY OF WE THE PEOPLE: THE CITIZEN AND THE CONSTITUTION

HON. GREGORIO KILILI CAMACHO SABLAN

OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 24, 2012

Mr. SABLAN. Mr. Speaker, this year, we celebrate the 25th anniversary of We the People: The Citizen and the Constitution. Since We the People began in 1987, more than thirty million high school students and ninety thousand teachers have participated in this valuable program that promotes a deeper understanding of the constitutional principles that shape and guide our nation, and instills a sense of civic responsibility in young people.

We the People is an instructional program that enhances students' understanding of the institutions of American constitutional democracy. Through the program, students discover the relevance of the Constitution and Bill of Rights in present day terms. The We the People program is directed by the Center for Civic Education and funded by Congress through the Education for Democracy Act. This is a program Congress should continue to support.

Teams qualify for the National Finals by prevailing in their regional or state competitions. The national competition is held through a series of simulated congressional hearings, during which students testify as constitutional experts before panels of judges acting as congressional committees. The program enjoys the active participation of members of Congress, as well as support from educational, professional, business, and community organizations across the nation.

This year, more than fourteen hundred students from every part of our country will take part in the National Finals here in Washington. The competition will test students' knowledge of the U.S. Constitution and the Bill of Rights, showcasing their intelligence, determination, and teamwork.

I want to recognize the 24 exceptionally talented and hard working students from Saipan Southern High School in the Northern Mariana Islands, who return to the Finals as repeat regional champions. They have spent many long hours studying and preparing for the competition. Working together and striving for excellence are defining traits of this team. I congratulate them and their teachers and coaches, and wish them all success in this year's We the People competition.

Let me acknowledge each student by name: Ms. Maria Louise Babriela Atrero; 1Mr. Rufino Aquino, Jr.; Ms. Angelica Awa-Ao; Ms. Akioni Nadine Babauta; Ms. Chelsea Marie Bartolo; Ms. Vanessa Rome Bartolo; Ms. Yunika Mae Biado; Ms. Rachel Nadine Borja; Mr. Don Marshall Davis Cabrera; Ms. Yoon Jae Chung; Ms. Teri-Sue Corpuz; Mr. Derick Dela Cruz; Ms. Jinky Marie Kintaro; Ms. Ji Won Lee; Ms. Allysha Hillary Lloren; Mr. Edward John Manibusan; Ms. Momoko Belle Nishikido; Mr. David Kido Paek; Ms. Rina Park; Mr. Seong Jin Park; Ms. Christine Maebelle Roque; Ms. Christina Marie Sablan; Mr. Mike Aries Vargas; Mr. Keisuke Yoshida.

I would also like to acknowledge the remarkable work and guidance by the team's coordinator Mr. Andrew Golden, coaches Justice John A. Manglona, Deanna Manibusan

Manglona, and Charlotte Sanders, student coach Carmen Borja, and Public School System representative Stephen Smith.

HONORING THE GAY AND LESBIAN ACTIVISTS ALLIANCE OF WASHINGTON, DC (GLAA)

HON. ELEANOR HOLMES NORTON

OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 24, 2012

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize a Washington, DC institution, which I have the distinct honor and pleasure representing in this body, that has been a local leader in the struggle for equal rights for lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender, LGBT, people: the Gay and Lesbian Activists Alliance of Washington, DC, GLAA.

GLAA has, since its founding in April 1971, remained a respected and tireless advocate for political freedom for the District of Columbia and for equal rights for its residents.

GLAA continues in the vanguard of efforts to strengthen enforcement of DC's landmark Human Rights Act of 1977.

GLAA, by working with coalition partners, DC officials and the wider public, implemented a well-crafted plan of grass-roots action and education that helped achieve marriage equality in the District.

GLAA fights to ensure that LGBT residents are treated fairly and respectfully by DC agencies, from the police and fire departments to the Department of Consumer and Regulatory Affairs to the DC public schools.

GLAA pushes for effective public health strategies and accountability in the fight against HIV/AIDS.

GLAA has rated all DC Mayoral and Council candidates in every election since the establishment of home rule, and uses a system noted for its fairness and nonpartisanship.

GLAA provides leadership in coalition efforts on a wide range of civil rights issues, from family rights to condom availability in prisons and public schools to police accountability.

GLAA activity opposes federal restrictions on the District's budget that adversely affect LGBT people.

GLAA enhances its outreach by maintaining a comprehensive website of LGBT advocacy materials, the GLAA Forum blog, and the DCGayEtc.com news aggregator.

On April 26, GLAA will hold its 41st Anniversary Reception honoring this year's recipients of its Distinguished Service Awards: Burgundy Crescent Volunteers, The Sexual Minority Youth Assistance League, Ruby Corado, Jeri Hughes, Will O'Bryan, and Jeffrey D. Richardson.

Burgundy Crescent Volunteers was founded in 2001 as a source of LGBT volunteers for gay and gay-friendly non-profit organizations in the District, Maryland, and Virginia, and brings LGBT singles and couples together for volunteer activities that are social in nature. The group, a non-profit, has over 5,000 members, who have provided over 100,000 volunteer hours to the community. Their good efforts have ranged from doing yard work for GLAA's founder, Frank Kameny, to pruning the cherry trees at the Tidal Basin.

The Sexual Minority Youth Assistance League, SMYAL, was founded in 1984 to promote and support self-confident, healthy, and

productive lives for LGBT and questioning youth ages 13–21, as they transition from adolescence into adulthood. SMYAL is the only Washington metro area service organization dedicated solely to supporting LGBTQ and questioning youth. The staff and volunteers concentrate on five activities: Life Skills and Leadership Development; Counseling and Support; Health and Wellness Education; Safe Social Activities; and Community Outreach and Education.

Ruby Corado has been a transgender rights activist in DC for over 15 years, focusing on the Latino community in the areas of health care, HIV, human rights, and immigration. She has been tireless and outspoken in defending and assisting transgender people, demanding justice for brutalized and murdered sex workers. She has been at victims' hospital bedsides, at meetings with police officials, and at crime scenes, and has organized vigils, bringing her own experience as a Latina transwoman to bear in promoting the interests of this at-risk community in our city. Ruby has worked as a program manager for Whitman Walker Health, Transgender Health Empowerment, and Latinas En Acción, a group she has led for many years.

Jeri Hughes has persistently and doggedly pressed the District government to increase its employment of transgender people. Her efforts led Mayor Vincent Gray to direct the Department of Employment Services to conduct Project Empowerment job training for transgender citizens. Her efforts to highlight violations of the DC Human Rights Act by the Department of Corrections have led to ongoing efforts by the city and activists to improve the treatment of the city's transgender inmates and detainees. Jeri Hughes helps transgender people every day in her job at Transgender Health Empowerment.

Will O'Bryan is Managing Editor of Metro Weekly, which he joined in 2005 as a community reporter. He previously served as a news reporter and arts editor for the Washington Blade, and as a media liaison for a nonprofit health organization. Prior to that, he was arts and entertainment editor for Just Out, the Pacific Northwest's premier LGBT publication. Will is an unwavering advocate for coverage of the entire breadth of the LGBT community, especially those who are often neglected. In his biweekly column, "Stonewall Baby," he personally engages issues affecting our entire community. He exemplifies the quiet, unheralded commitment of the many people who do the vital work of building community.

Jeffrey D. Richardson is Director of the Mayor's Office of Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgender Affairs, where he has taken the initiative to connect activists with key agency staff and get results. His tireless efforts have ranged from advocacy within the government to supervising young LGBT interns. He brings to his job the empathy and service-oriented approach that he developed in his career as a social worker. In his prior post as president of the Gertrude Stein Democratic Club, he was a steady leader who worked amicably and productively with GLAA and other advocacy groups and this year's recipients of its Distinguished Service Award.

I ask the House to join me in congratulating the Gay and Lesbian Activists Alliance.

HONORING MAYOR JOE AFFRONTI

HON. GUS M. BILIRAKIS

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 24, 2012

Mr. BILIRAKIS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Temple Terrace Mayor Joe Affronti. In addition to representing the City of Temple Terrace, Florida, Mr. Affronti has also been a strong advocate for Project Gratitude.

Project Gratitude was founded in 2006 by David Lefavor, a retired military chaplain and has been championed by Mayor Affronti. Its mission was to provide military chaplains returning from deployments to Iraq and Afghanistan with a three-day complimentary visit to Tampa, Florida. During their stay, the chaplains and their families would visit area attractions including Busch Gardens, the Museum of Science and Industry, the Kennedy Space Center, and local restaurants.

In addition to his loyal support of Project Gratitude, Mayor Affronti enjoys community support in this endeavor from individuals, businesses, and Veterans' Service Organizations including: American Legion Post 152, Suncoast Chapter of the Military Officers Association of America (MOAA), Tampa Navy League, Busch Gardens, Kennedy Space Center, Lupton's Catering, Chamber of Commerce of Temple Terrace Florida, Museum of Science and Industry (MOSI), Marriott Towne Place, Hilton Garden Inn—North Tampa, the Marine Corps League of Florida, as well as the Major Samuel Woodfill Chapter of the Association of the United States Army (AUSA) in Dayton, Ohio.

Due to the drawdown of U.S. military forces from Iraq and Afghanistan, Project Gratitude's mission will conclude with its last reception on April 25th in Temple Terrace, Florida having provided a total of 75 Chaplains and their families with a 3-day "R & R" in appreciation for their service and sacrifice for God and Country.

As Vice Chairman of the House Veterans' Affairs Committee, it is truly my honor to recognize Mayor Affronti for his dedication to this program and the cause of improving the lives of those who so selflessly gave to our Nation.

IN RECOGNITION OF CAROL STAFFORD

HON. JACKIE SPEIER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 24, 2012

Ms. SPEIER. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor Carol Stafford, a dear friend and an indefatigable health professional who for 39 years has dedicated her life to nursing and caring for the poor and those in need in San Mateo County. She retired as a triage nurse at Willow Clinic in Menlo Park on March 17, 2012 after a remarkable career that has touched the lives of thousands of county residents.

For almost four decades Carol brought life saving care to patients in the emergency room at San Mateo County General and she spearheaded comprehensive procedures for treating victims of sexual assault at a time when most hospitals had few protocols. She chose to work in facilities (Chope Hospital and Willow

Clinic) that treated the neediest and most vulnerable members of society because she believed that all patients deserve the highest level of medical care, regardless of economic circumstances. One of her patients described her as the nicest person he had ever met, but Carol treated all people the same way—with the utmost kindness, compassion and respect.

On June 10, 1973 Carol graduated from the College of San Mateo with an associate degree in nursing. The next day she started her career working nights on the medical surgical floor at Chope Hospital, which is now San Mateo Medical Center. Two years later she moved to the emergency room and by 1981 she was promoted to Nurse Manager of the Emergency Department. While she was working full time she returned to college and earned her Bachelor of Science Degree in Nursing at California State University at Long Beach.

Back then police had limited protocols for dealing with victims of sexual assault. Often times, assault victims were taken to emergency rooms for a rape kit, but no counseling would be offered. Carol decided she wanted to change that and worked with the emergency room physician manager, the police department and the board of supervisors to develop comprehensive treatments for survivors of sexual assault.

At the time, I was on the San Mateo County Board of Supervisors and worked with Carol to develop these new standards. Policies and procedures were implemented to train staff. There was always someone on call who knew exactly how to treat victims of sexual assault with both counseling and support and Chope Hospital emerged as a model and a leader in handling rape cases. Over time, the program evolved into the Keller Center for Family Violence Intervention, a nationally recognized program that provides victims of child abuse, elder abuse, sexual assault and domestic violence with comprehensive medical, emotional, social and legal support.

Carol has strong ties to the Bay Area. She was born in San Francisco and grew up in San Carlos. At age 15 Carol's father passed away. Her mother went to work to support the family, demonstrating qualities of strength and independence. All three sisters graduated from college and went on to have successful careers. Carol's younger sister, Denise Raabe, is the Santa Clara County Deputy District Attorney and her middle sister, Gail Raabe, served as San Mateo County Agricultural Commissioner.

Carol is a life-long Giant's fan and a baseball fanatic. Growing up, she posted 8-by-10-inch photographs of the entire San Francisco Giants team in her bedroom. To this day, she has season tickets. Carol's devoted husband of 41 years, George Stafford, her sons Paul and Joseph and her daughter-in-law, Courtney Stafford, will now enjoy more quality time with Carol. It's important to note that even as demanding as Carol's nursing career has been, she has always put family first and was home most days when her boys came home from school.

Though Carol has retired from a wonderful career, she will continue to play a vital role in our community and she will certainly have a friend in me for life.

Mr. Speaker, Carol Stafford has dedicated her life to assisting people in need. I ask that the House of Representatives to join me in