

Deuntae was raised in Lexington, MS. He went to Lexington Elementary School (LES) and Jacob J. McClain High School and graduated in the top 10 from both schools. He is currently a student at Jackson State University, majoring in mathematics. His goal is to become a math teacher.

While growing up, Deuntae had a desire to teach children, probably because his mother has been a teacher all his life. He became certain in his senior year in high school that he could teach children. During high school, Deuntae joined a group called TATU (Teens Against Tobacco Use). TATU is an organization that teaches students about the effects of using tobacco, the substances in tobacco, and the signs of peer pressure coming from friends and role models. It was then that Deuntae realized that he could be a good role model and that this was the key to being a good teacher and leader. Whenever he was out in the community around his peers and children, he led by example. If the smaller children wanted to play on the basketball court, he would either convince his peers to let them play on half the court or let them play with them while perhaps helping them improve their skills.

Living in the house with a teacher and a deputy taught Deuntae two important things: respect and education. Deuntae's father always told him to respect others and good things will happen and stressed to him the importance of making good grades in school. These teachings helped mold Deuntae into a respectable person and thus respecting all others.

Deuntae believes that if he had the power to help anyone he would do it. When his peers or even elementary kids asked him to help them with the classwork, he did and he was ecstatic whenever a child came back to tell him "Thank you."

Deuntae spent his high school summers at the Community Students Learning Center in Lexington, MS, where he got a head start on his learning before school started in August. At the center, he interacted with the children by playing games, talking with them, and helping them with their work, if asked.

Deuntae is now in his second semester as a junior at Jackson State University. He plans to come back home after graduation for a few years and help teach at one of the local schools or the Community Students Learning Center. His passion for teaching has heightened and he is anxious to start.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing a talented student, Mr. Deuntae Sheard, for his zest for teaching and making a difference in his community.

#### HONORING THE 30TH ANNIVERSARY OF RONDO DAYS

**HON. BETTY McCOLLUM**

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, July 8, 2013*

Ms. McCOLLUM. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to pay tribute to the families of the Rondo neighborhood in Saint Paul, Minnesota on the 30th anniversary of the Rondo Days festival. Rondo Days offers a remembrance of this historically African-American community that was dramatically altered by the construction of U.S. Interstate 94 in the mid-1960s. More impor-

tantly, Rondo Days is a celebration of the perseverance and tenacity of the modern Rondo community, which remains a vibrant, diverse and thriving neighborhood.

For many decades, Rondo Avenue was the lively center of the African-American community in Saint Paul. Construction of U.S. Interstate 94 in the 1960s resulted in the removal of the avenue along with hundreds of homes and businesses, shattering the tight-knit community. Many families were displaced and the appearance of the neighborhood was forever changed, but the spirit of Rondo lived on. Capturing a strong desire for a community revival, in 1982, Marvin "Roger" Anderson and Floyd Smaller founded a new festival to restore the sense of kinship, stability, and community values of the old Rondo neighborhood. Rondo Days was born, growing into a major annual weekend festival drawing together thousands of residents in celebration of the community. Each year, neighbors and families come together for activities including a senior dinner, 5K walk and run, drill team competition, and the Grand Parade.

The rich legacy of old Rondo Avenue is also the foundation for the future of the new Rondo neighborhood. For decades, many families called Rondo Avenue home, and many new residents from the South were welcomed on doorsteps along the avenue. Residents were proud of their neighborhood and planted deep roots, branching out to start businesses to serve the community and create new opportunity. During a time of segregation and harsh racial disparities, Rondo Avenue allowed many African-Americans to dream big and believe in a brighter future. This pride and these dreams remain undiminished today. As Saint Paul gathers for the 30th time to celebrate Rondo Days, families and neighbors will be reunited, new friends welcomed, and everyone will be looking to an even brighter future.

Mr. Speaker, in honor of the community, history, and legacy of the Rondo neighborhood, and as a neighbor myself, I am pleased to submit this statement for the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD recognizing the 30th Anniversary of Rondo Days in Saint Paul, Minnesota.

#### HONORING THE MIAMI HEAT ON THEIR THIRD NBA CHAMPIONSHIP

**HON. FREDERICA S. WILSON**

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, July 8, 2013*

Ms. WILSON of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I submit the following.

Whereas, The Miami Heat won their third National Basketball Association (NBA) Championship in franchise history on Thursday, June 20, 2013, by defeating the San Antonio Spurs with a score of 95 to 88 in the seventh game of the NBA finals, in Miami, Florida at the American Airlines Arena;

Whereas, During the 2013 NBA playoffs, the Miami Heat defeated the Milwaukee Bucks, Chicago Bulls, Indiana Pacers, and San Antonio Spurs;

Whereas, The Miami Heat are the second team in five years to win back-to-back championships, and the Miami Heat are the first to defeat the San Antonio Spurs in the NBA finals;

Whereas, Since its founding in 1988, the Miami Heat has won three world champion-

ships, four conference titles, nine division titles, and made 17 playoff appearances;

Whereas, The 2012–2013 Miami Heat organization is comprised of players: Ray Allen, Chris Anderson, Joel Anthony, Shane Battier, Chris Bosh, Mario Chalmers, Norris Cole, Udonis Haslem, Juwan Howard, LeBron James, James Jones, Rashard Lewis, Mike Miller, Jarvis Varnado, Dwyane Wade;

Whereas, LeBron James was named the NBA Most Valuable Player during the 2012–2013 regular season, was named the NBA Most Valuable Player during the 2013 finals, and joined Michael Jordan and Bill Russell as the only players in NBA history to win back-to-back NBA finals and regular season MVP awards;

Whereas, The San Antonio Spurs were seconds away from winning the NBA finals until Ray Allen hit a clutch three-pointer, sending the game into overtime and forcing a decisive game seven;

Whereas, The Miami Heat coaching staff exhibited exemplary leadership and guidance; Whereas, The Miami Heat coaching staff, included: Erik Spoelstra, Head Coach; Bob McAdoo, Assistant Coach; Ron Rothstein, Assistant Coach; David Fizdale, Assistant Coach; Chad Kammerer, Assistant Coach; Octavio De La Grana, Assistant Coach; Bill Foran, Strength and Conditioning Coach; Jay Sabol, Athletic Trainer; Rey Jaffet, Assistant Trainer; Rob Pimental, Assistant Trainer;

Whereas, The Miami Heat management has shown a positive commitment to the Miami Heat franchise by successfully acquiring, assembling, and maintaining a team of high-quality, winning players;

Whereas, The Miami Heat Organization consists of executive staff, including: Micky Arison, Managing General Partner; Nick Arison, Chief Executive Officer; Pat Riley, President; Erik Spoelstra, Head Coach; Eric Woolworth, President, Business Operations; Michael McCullough, Executive Vice President/CMO; Mike Walker, Executive Vice President, HEAT Group Enterprises; Alonzo Mourning, Vice President, Player Programs; Stephen Weber, Executive Vice President, Sales; Kim Stone, Executive Vice President/General Manager, American Airlines Arena; Sammy Schulman, Executive Vice President/CFO; Raquel Libman, Executive Vice President/General Counsel;

Whereas, The Miami Heat players have been outstanding role models on and off the court;

Whereas, The Miami Heat organization has enriched the South Florida community through public service programs, including: Heat Academy; Heat Scholarships; Miami Heat Read to Achieve; Miami Heat Fund-Raiser; Miami Heat Wheels; Shoot for the Stars; Books and Basketball Summer Clinics; Heat Youth Basketball; Miami Heat Learn to Swim Program;

Whereas, The Miami Heat fans have been an integral part of this championship by providing unwavering support throughout the entire season, and each and every season prior;

Whereas, The Miami Heat performance against the San Antonio Spurs during the 2013 NBA finals will go down as one the greatest series in NBA history;

Resolved, that the House of Representatives honors the entire Miami Heat organization for winning the 2013 NBA World Championship.

HONORING JAVARIS DEON  
RODGERS

**HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON**

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, July 8, 2013*

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Mr. Javaris Deon Rodgers, a dedicated student, who is making the difference in his community.

Javaris Deon Rodgers was born and raised in Lexington, Mississippi. He is an only child of two very wonderful parents, Andrew and Shirley Rodgers.

Javaris began school around 6 or 7 years of age. Throughout elementary school he has always had Perfect Attendance and has been on either the Dean or Principal's List. He also received the Superintendent's Award because he excelled so well in academics. He is a very active child, taking Taekwondo and playing baseball until middle school.

Javaris joined J.J. McClain Middle School Marching Band and found a real passion for it. He knew that it was something that he wanted to do long term. Throughout high school, he continued to be a part of the marching band, maintained top grades, and keep his perfect attendance record. In high school, Javaris was also a part of the Yearbook Committee and Prom Committee. During his Junior Year in high school, he received the title "Mr. Junior", elected Senior Class President for the following year and nominated for the Who's Who Among American Scholars. Javaris graduated in the top ten of his high school class in May of 2010 and began his journey on to college that fall. He is currently in college working on a Bachelor of Science in Biology and a Bachelor of Arts in Spanish at Ole Miss in Oxford, MS. He is also a member of the Alpha Phi Omega Community Service Fraternity, Tau Beta Sigma Honorary Band Service Fraternity, and Phi Beta Sigma Fraternity, Inc.

Javaris still does community service in the Holmes County community during his breaks. He plans to graduate in May of 2014 with honors.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing this student, Mr. Javaris Deon Rodgers, for his dedication in making a difference in his community.

IN RECOGNITION OF THE 30TH ANNIVERSARY OF "MAMA, I WANT TO SING" THE LONGEST RUNNING OFF-BROADWAY SHOW IN AMERICAN HISTORY

**HON. CHARLES B. RANGEL**

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, July 8, 2013*

Mr. RANGEL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor, recognize, and celebrate the MAMA Foundation's 30th Anniversary of the gospel musical "Mama, I Want to Sing." On Saturday, March 23, 2013, The Dempsey Theater hosted the 30th Anniversary Gala Celebration for "Mama, I Want to Sing," the longest running Black Off-Broadway show in American history, which debuted as a gospel musical in 1983. This Gala event, took place exactly 30 years to the day from when the original production opened in Harlem to great acclaim.

The Gala began with a very special performance that included musical highlights from "Mama, I Want to Sing and Sing, Harlem, Sing!", as well as a performance from the Gospel for Teens Choir. Lesley Stahl, who received an Emmy award for her "60 Minutes" profile on Gospel for Teens, was honored for her contributions to journalism and for her support of the Mama Foundation for the Arts. The 30th Anniversary celebration will include a gala featuring the best of Harlem's renowned restaurants including Sylvia's, Spoonbread, The Red Rooster, Corner Social, Chez Lucien, Jacob's Soul Food, Melba's and Make My Cake. The spiritually uplifting evening culminated in a spontaneous church-inspired closing with R&B divas Cissy Houston, Dionne Warwick, Angie Stone, Valerie Simpson and Crystal Aiken individually joining the Gospel for Teens Choir in a rousing version of "This Little Light of Mine" that brought the sold-out crowd to its feet.

In 1979, Vy Higginsen and her husband, Ken Wydro wrote the book and lyrics for Mama. It was rejected by every major producer in New York. Not one producer believed that the story was worth telling or that an audience could be found for a gospel-based production. Vy and Ken pushed forward and produced the now internationally-acclaimed "Mama, I Want to Sing" gospel musical that tells the story of a talented young girl who dreams of leaving her church choir to pursue a life in popular music, despite strong objections from her mother. A tribute to the many African American artists with church choir roots who rose to fame in the 1950s, 60s, and 70s, creator Higginsen based her musical on the life of her sister Doris Troy whose 1963 hit "Just One Look" launched her to international fame. The show, featured original music by Wesley Naylor opened at Harlem's Hecksher Theater (at El Museo del Barrio) in 1983 and since then has become the "little red engine that could" of Off-Off Broadway productions.

In 1998, Vy Higginsen created the Mama Foundation for the Arts to present, preserve, and promote Gospel, Jazz, and R&B as art forms for current and future generations. The Mama Foundation for the Arts (MFA) has been internationally acclaimed for rebuilding Harlem as an artistic cultural center featuring entertainment and arts education. The Mama Foundation has produced a dozen theater productions, which have been performed on several continents, including its best known musical, "Mama, I Want To Sing."

In 2003, Higginsen created the School of Gospel, Jazz, and R&B Arts. Three years later, she formed the award-winning Gospel for Teens program to train youth and "save the music." According to Lesley Stahl from CBS's "60 Minutes," "The Gospel for Teens program is not just teaching gospel, it is saving these kids." Mama Foundation members have performed at numerous special events including the TED2012 Full Spectrum conference, the Congressional Black Caucus' Annual Legislative Conference, The Stellar Awards, and a reception for Archbishop Desmond Tutu of South Africa. Madonna, Chaka Khan, opera singer Jessye Norman and gospel artist Shirley Caesar are among the many stars that have shared the stage with the Gospel for Teens Choir.

In 2006, she founded Gospel for Teens, a free educational program that offers a substitute for the arts programs removed from

many inner city schools. For her outstanding contributions to gospel music, she was presented with the Thomas A. Dorsey Most Notable Achievement Award at the 2012 Stellar Gospel Music Awards. The Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture proclaimed Vy a Harlem Hero in "Harlem Is" a public art and education project of Community Works.

Vocalist and Instructor Ahmaya Knoelle Higginsen, daughter of Vy Higginsen, is the current lead in "Mama, I Want To Sing: The Next Generation." She began her professional career at seven years old starring in 'Sing! Mama 2' with Shirley Caesar at the Theatre at Madison Square Garden and during its world tour in Japan. Ahmaya Knoelle has performed in Gospel Is . . .! and Sing, Harlem, Sing! Internationally, as well as recording on several albums. She studied at the Manhattan School of Music and the American Dramatic and Music Academy in New York. Ahmaya Knoelle also teaches private vocal instruction at the Mama Foundation for the Arts and trains young students in the Foundation's Gospel For Teens program.

The Mama Foundation's mission is to present, preserve, and promote the history and fundamentals of gospel, jazz, and rhythm and blues music for current and future generations. The Foundation has established a cultural space in Harlem where youth and adults have access to quality training and employment as performing artists. The Foundation was inspired by the worldwide success of our award-winning musical, "Mama, I Want to Sing." A combination of arts education, public workshops, and live events contribute to Harlem's resurgence as an artistic and cultural destination. I am so very appreciative for the many contributions of Vy Higginsen and the Mama Foundation. The dedication and devotion to the arts of our community is most commendable and deserving of Congressional Recognition. I ask my colleagues and our Nation to join me in this special celebration of the 30th Anniversary of "Mama, I Want to Sing."

HONORING LOUIS NAVARRO

**HON. ELIOT L. ENGEL**

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, July 8, 2013*

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, throughout our nation's history our freedom has been preserved by members of the Armed Forces, and they continue to do so today. As a Member of Congress, I have consistently supported veterans and servicemen and women. They deserve no less from us. We owe the preservation of our freedoms and our way of life to the veterans who proudly served their country. Today I join the City of Yonkers at its annual Veterans Appreciation Day in honoring Louis Navarro for his long-time service and participation in the community.

He was born in Puerto Rico, but is a long-time resident of Yonkers, and is the First Vice Commander of the Central Committee of Veterans Organization, where as Parade Chairman for the 2013 Memorial Day Parade, he led it to its largest participation in recent years.

Louis Navarro served in the United States Army for nearly thirty years of active and reserve duty, receiving the Bronze Star Medal, the Combat Infantry Badge, the Vietnam Campaign Medal, the Good Conduct Medal, Expert Rifle Award, and the Army Service Ribbon.