

prevention outreach throughout New York City. Councilman Vann's vision led to the co-naming of Fulton Street as Harriet Ross Tubman Avenue and New York State's recognition of Harriet Tubman Day.

Councilman Vann has truly been a trailblazer, whose positive influence will have an everlasting effect on the community. His record of achievement would not have been possible without the love and support of his wife, Mildred Vann, their four children and eight grandchildren. We thank his family for sharing him with us all. Mr. Speaker, I ask that you and my other distinguished colleagues join me in congratulating Councilman Vann on his 30 years of outstanding service. For his commitment to the people of Brooklyn, he is worthy of the highest praise.

TRIBUTE TO JORDAN AND SYLVIA WEDLOWE

HON. HENRY C. "HANK" JOHNSON, JR.

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, September 9, 2013

Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I submit the following proclamation:

Whereas, the union of Jordan and Sylvia Wedlowe in Twiggs County, Georgia in the 1800's began the Wedlowe family lineage which has blessed us with descendants that have helped to shape our nation; and

Whereas, the Wedlowe Family has produced many well respected citizens and the patriarchs and matriarchs of the Wedlowe family are pillars of strength that have touched many throughout our nation, family members of the past and present; and

Whereas, in our beloved Fourth Congressional District of Georgia, we are honored to have members of the Wedlowe family for they are some of our most beloved citizens in our District; and

Whereas, family is one of the most honored and cherished institutions in the world, we take pride in knowing that families such as the Wedlowe family have set aside this time to fellowship with each other, honor one another and to pass along history to each other by meeting at this year's family reunion in DeKalb County, Georgia; and

Whereas, the U.S. Representative of the Fourth District of Georgia has set aside this day to honor and recognize the Wedlowe family;

Now Therefore, I, HENRY C. "HANK" JOHNSON, Jr. do hereby proclaim June 29, 2013 as Wedlowe Family Reunion Day in the 4th Congressional District of Georgia.

Proclaimed, this 29th day of June, 2013.

IN MEMORY OF SEAN FRANKLIN SASSER

HON. ALCEE L. HASTINGS

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, September 9, 2013

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life of Sean Franklin Sasser. Sean was an educator and an activist, and dedicated his life to speaking out about HIV/AIDS. Sadly, Sean passed away on Au-

gust 7th, 2013 at the age of 44 after a short battle with Mesothelioma.

Sean was diagnosed with HIV in 1988 when he went to enlist in the Navy, and lived for 25 years with the disease. As a young black homosexual man living with HIV, Sean organized support for the HIV/AIDS community. He was active in Bay Positives, an organization established in 1990 as the first peer-run agency in the world for young people living with HIV/AIDS. In 1993, he was photographed by celebrated American photographer Annie Leibovitz as part of one of the first public awareness campaigns about HIV, organized by the San Francisco AIDS Foundation.

In 1993, Sean met Pedro Zamora, who gained fame as part of the cast of MTV Real World, San Francisco. Sean and Pedro's on-air relationship and marriage was thrown into the national spotlight, bringing international attention and putting a human face to the realities of HIV/AIDS. Though Sean's on-air presence was short, the impact of their televised relationship was great, and after Pedro's tragic death from AIDS at the age of 22, Sean went on to become an even greater advocate for the HIV/AIDS community.

Throughout his life, Sean travelled across the country to educate others about HIV/AIDS and living with the disease. He spoke at colleges, universities, and many organizations including the Gay & Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation, the Human Rights Campaign, Health Initiatives for Youth, and the AIDS Alliance for Children, Youth & Families. Sean was also a celebrated pastry chef, and just last May could be found making homemade ice cream at RIS restaurant in Washington D.C.

Mr. Speaker, this week we lost a great voice for the HIV/AIDS community. There are approximately 50,000 new HIV infections every year, and only through education, public awareness and community outreach can we prevent the spread of the HIV virus. Sean used his voice to bring attention to the HIV community, and as we pay tribute to his life, we must also continue his efforts. One day at a time, we move closer to an AIDS-free generation.

I offer my heartfelt condolences to Sean's family and his partner Michael. Undoubtedly, Sean touched the lives of countless friends and strangers alike. He leaves behind a legacy of activism, bravery, and service to the HIV community. He will be dearly missed.

HONORING THE COURAGEOUS ACTIONS OF SIX INDIVIDUALS

HON. BILL FOSTER

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, September 9, 2013

Mr. FOSTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the courageous actions of four young individuals, and two members of the Aurora Police Department, Sergeants Dan Eppard and Rick Ahlgren. With great valor and heroism, all six individuals, including Sergeants Eppard and Ahlgren risked their lives to save those of others who were trapped in a dam while rafting on the Vermillion River near Oglesby, Illinois.

On June 28, 2013, a 45 year-old man and his 10 year-old son were rafting on the river

when they became trapped in a dam. After forty minutes had elapsed, four boys on a second raft came across the two individuals, and demonstrated immense bravery in attempting to rescue them. After successfully bringing the 10 year-old boy aboard the second raft, they unfortunately became caught in the damn, trapping all five boys. The 45 year-old man was able to escape the dam, swim to shore, and dial 9-1-1.

At this same time, off-duty Sergeants Eppard and Ahlgren were kayaking down the river, and in an act of great courage rescued all five boys, whose ages ranged from 10 to 14. Sgt. Eppard has a history of heroism, having once rescued a woman at the exact same dam in 2009.

The selfless heroism of these extraordinary people serves as an example to us all. These individuals put their own lives in harm's way for the well-being of others. While the 10 year-old boy was treated for hypothermia, no one else was injured in an event that could have ended in tragedy.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring these brave individuals for their courageous acts and altruistic service.

IN CELEBRATION OF MRS. GRACIE G. SIMPSON'S 85TH BIRTHDAY

HON. SANFORD D. BISHOP, JR.

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, September 9, 2013

Mr. BISHOP of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise to pay tribute to a beloved role model and gracious woman of faith, Mrs. Gracie G. Simpson. On Sunday, September 1, 2013, Mrs. Simpson was honored by her family and friends at a birthday celebration at the Howard Community Club in Macon, Georgia.

Gracie Mae Peck was born on August 29, 1928, in Macon, Georgia, to the late Willie B. Peck and the late Claire Mae Fulton. She was the second child, with one older sister, one younger sister, and two younger brothers, all of whom are now deceased.

Back in the days when she was young, many children did not have the opportunity to complete school and had to begin working at a young age. For 43 years of her life, Mrs. Simpson worked at Tom's Foods, Inc., known to many as "the candy company." However, she was able to return to school to take computer classes before retiring.

Mrs. Simpson was married to J. Z. Simpson, Sr., for 54 years until his death in October of 2008. She has three sons, Donald Gibson, Jr., Zebbie Simpson, and Michael Simpson, and one daughter, Jan Simpson Walker.

She has eight grandchildren: Donald, Eunice, Christen, Jerome, Marcus, Marvin, Keisha, and Keliya. She also has six great-grandchildren: Grace, Hannah, Abigail, Katelynn, DJ, and Christian.

Mrs. Simpson has achieved numerous successes in her life, but none of this would have been possible without the love and support of her adoring family. Voted "Reigning Queen" at Pearl Stephens Village Senior Apartments, she enjoys fishing and going on walks. She loves spending time with her family and is a great cook. She makes a mean sweet potato pie and a delicious peach cobbler. She is full of life and spunk and her family knows very

well that “if you don’t want to hear the truth, don’t ask her a question.”

Most important to Mrs. Simpson is her sturdy and enduring relationship with the Lord. She has been a member of Greater Little Rock Baptist Church for over 60 years. She has served on the Mother Board Association, Choir, Deaconesses, Food Bank, Women of Flow Ministry, and Kitchen Ministry.

The race of life isn’t given to the swift or to the strong, but to those who endure until the end. Mrs. Simpson has run the race of life with grace and dignity and God has blessed her over her lifetime.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in paying tribute to Mrs. Simpson for her 85 fruitful and productive years of life.

RUBY MARIE SINGS LANGFORD
JOHNSON

HON. HENRY C. “HANK” JOHNSON, JR.

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, September 9, 2013

Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I present the following U.S. Citizen of Distinction: Whereas, our lives have been touched by the life of this one woman . . . who has given of herself in order for others to stand; and

Whereas, Mrs. Ruby Marie Sings Langford Johnson’s work is present in DeKalb County, Georgia for all to see, being an advocate for the youth, the elderly, the poor and ordinary citizens like you and me; and

Whereas, this remarkable woman gave of herself, her time, her talent and her life; she never asked for fame or fortune to uplift those in need, she just wanted to do what was right; and

Whereas, Mrs. Johnson led by doing behind the scenes, front and center for the state of Georgia, DeKalb County, her church, Beulah Baptist Church and for the DeKalb County chapter of the NAACP; this virtuous Proverbs 31 woman was a mother, grandmother, a daughter and a friend; she was our warrior, our matriarch, a woman of great integrity who remained true to the uplifting of our community until her end; and

Whereas, the U.S. Representative of the Fourth District of Georgia has set aside this day to bestow a Congressional recognition on Mrs. Ruby Marie Sings Langford Johnson for her leadership, friendship and service to all of the citizens in Georgia and throughout the Nation; a citizen of great worth and so noted distinction; now therefore, I, HENRY C. “HANK” JOHNSON, Jr., do hereby attest to the 113th Congress that Mrs. Ruby Marie Sings Langford Johnson of DeKalb County, Georgia is deemed worthy and deserving of this “Congressional Honor” Mrs. Ruby Marie Sings Langford Johnson U.S. Citizen of Distinction in the 4th Congressional District.

Proclaimed, this 28th day of June, 2013.

CONGRATULATIONS TO ARIZONA
STATE UNIVERSITY BIODESIGN

HON. PAUL A. GOSAR

OF ARIZONA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, September 9, 2013

Mr. GOSAR. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Arizona State University president Dr. Michael Crow on the impressive progress that ASU has made since Dr. Crow began leading there in 2002. I would like to recognize the Arizona State University Biodesign Institute, which I was able to visit and tour on July 11th.

The Biodesign Institute is an outstanding example of success in transdisciplinary research, with the Institute’s technologies and fields of research coming together to address national and global challenges with “bio-inspired” solutions in: new vaccine discovery and delivery; early detection and treatment of cancer and infectious diseases; techniques for detecting and removing contaminants from air and water and the application of nanotechnology for biomedicine and electronics.

Arizona State University Biodesign researchers generate an average of 50 invention disclosures and patents annually and have fostered more than a dozen spinout, startup companies. In 2009, the institute won Arizona’s “Excellence in Economic Development Award” for its innovative contributions to the state’s economic growth.

The Biodesign Institute embodies the guiding principles of the New American University, as defined by Arizona State University President Michael Crow. ASU is a comprehensive metropolitan university that has become the largest in the U.S. and recently ranked among elite 100 world universities. ASU ranked #17 in the country for research expenditures at a university without a medical school. The Wall Street Journal asked corporate recruiters which schools produced the best qualified graduates in the country and they ranked ASU #5. There has been significant progress at ASU.

Congratulations to Dr. Crow and to the Arizona State University Biodesign Institute for successfully fusing intellectual disciplines to conduct use-inspired and impactful research which are advancing our country’s technology development and economy.

HONORING FATHER MICHAEL
O’MARA

HON. TODD ROKITA

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, September 9, 2013

Mr. ROKITA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and salute a remarkable Hoosier, Father Michael O’Mara. Father O’Mara is a true leader in his community and the Hoosier state. I wish to express my heartfelt gratitude and appreciation for his leadership and service to his country, his community, and the State of Indiana.

Father O’Mara grew up in Greensburg, Indiana and was ordained on June 18, 1988 in the Cathedral of SS. Peter and Paul in Indianapolis. Father O’Mara has served dutifully to the church for many years and presided over

many congregations over the years. He was appointed as pastor of St. Pius X in Indianapolis in 1990. From 1993 to 1999, he was appointed as pastor and/or co-pastor for the parishes of St. Philip, St. Bernadette, St. Patrick, and St. Mary all in Indianapolis as well as the St. Paul Catholic Center in Bloomington, Indiana. Since then, Father O’Mara has been reappointed as pastor to St. Mary in 2004 and 2011. On July 3, 2013, he was appointed as pastor to the St. Gabriel Parish in Indianapolis.

The commitment that Father O’Mara has made has not stopped at serving the church, but to the community as well. He has also been greatly involved with the Hispanic community in Indianapolis. He immersed himself in the Spanish language and took classes through Indiana University in order to become bilingual so that he could preach to all members of the congregation.

He has committed his life to the church and has served the church for 25 years now. That kind of commitment is not made lightly. Committing your life to the church is one of the greatest sacrifices a person can make and Father O’Mara had to have put in a lot of time, thought, and prayer before deciding to commit himself fully to the church.

RECOGNIZING THE IMPORTANCE
OF AN ORGANIZED WORKFORCE
AND LABOR UNIONS

HON. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, September 9, 2013

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the importance of an organized workforce, and the critical role that labor unions play in the building of a robust and diverse economy. The United States has benefitted greatly from the labor movement, and protecting workers’ rights is more important now than ever before, particularly for African Americans.

Labor unions have provided a range of benefits for working men and women throughout our history, many of which we take for granted as being a normal part of life in the workplace. Simple concepts such as weekends and paid vacation time are thanks to the efforts of labor unions. More complex protections such as workplace safety standards and anti-discrimination laws also are the result of an organized and informed workforce coming together to resist unfair demands by employers.

Within the African American community, labor unions have provided a pathway to greater income equality and fairness in the workplace. While African American union workers can earn up to \$10,000 or 31 percent more than non-union members, workers across all races enjoy better wages when they are a member of a union. More simply, organized labor enables fair wages, safe working conditions, and equality in the workplace.

Mr. Speaker, as our economy continues its recovery, it is important that we preserve a sense of decency and respect among our workers. Fifty years ago, the March on Washington was as much a civil rights movement as it was a labor movement. Labor unions have fought to protect working men and women across all races, and I encourage my colleagues to continue this legacy by standing