

HONORING A'MYA IREANNA DAVIS

HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 27, 2013

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Ms. A'Mya Ireanna Davis, who is a remarkable student that is making a difference in her community.

A'Mya Ireanna Davis, a Crystal Springs, MS native, is the daughter of Mr. Roderick and Monica Davis. She is the eldest of two siblings, Malik Jones and Eunicesia Jones.

A'Mya is a ninth grade honor student at Crystal Springs High School where she serves as President of the Freshman Class. Known as a busy-body, A'mya is very active in her school, church, and community. She is a member of the Crystal Springs High School Band, the Soccer team, the Track and Field team, Student Council, the Drama Club, a member of My Sister's Keeper, an Usher, member of the church choir at Brushy Creek MB Church and serves as Youth Secretary and Treasurer for the Fran's Branch New Hope Sunday School Institute.

A'Mya is very passionate about her city and community. In 2012, she became the youngest person to serve on the Crystal Springs Mayor's Youth Council. While on the Council, she was involved in community organizing, performing at youth summits and serving as a representative for the youth in Crystal Springs at state-wide leadership conferences. Throughout all of her accomplishments at the very tender age of 14, A'Mya is a normal teen who loves to sing, dance, write music and poetry, and recite speeches. After high school, A'mya plans on attending Harvard University to become a prominent attorney.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing an energetic and dedicated student, Ms. A'Mya Ireanna Davis, for her determination to make a difference in the Crystal Springs community.

RECOGNIZING GEORGE
WASHINGTON MIDDLE SCHOOL**HON. DANIEL LIPINSKI**

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 27, 2013

Mr. LIPINSKI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize George Washington Middle School in Lyons, Illinois, for being named to the list of top performing middle grades schools in the country by the National Forum to Accelerate Middle Grades Reform.

George Washington represents one of only 103 middle grades schools from around the United States that were recognized as a "School to Watch" by the National Forum to Accelerate Middle Grades Reform. To achieve this honor, George Washington had to prove that they are academically excellent, developmentally responsive, and socially equitable. They are among the best schools in the country in those regards, and I am glad to see these schools recognized for their excellence.

Achieving such a high level of performance is not easy. Schools must establish an educational culture that creates structures, norms, and organizational support to sustain their im-

proving trend toward excellence. Principal Johnny Billingsley has demonstrated a sense of purpose that drives his decision making. Further this performance could not be possible without teachers who work tirelessly for their students and communities, and administrators, who work to provide a professional atmosphere to let teachers do what they do best. This hard work and dedication has created an exemplary learning atmosphere.

This achievement is made possible through the hard work and dedication of the students, and the loving guidance by their parents and guardians. The students' work ethic and the values that their parents have instilled within them made this award attainable.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing the outstanding faculties and students at George Washington Middle School, and congratulating them for being recognized as one of the outstanding middle grades schools in the country. May they continue to exhibit excellence and create one of the best learning environments in the country for our future leaders.

HONORING THE LIFE AND LEGACY
OF ANN DEMATTEO**HON. ROSA L. DeLAURO**

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 27, 2013

Ms. DELAURO. Mr. Speaker, it is with a heavy heart that I rise today to take a moment to pay tribute to a very special member of the Greater New Haven community, Ann DeMatteo, who was taken from us much too soon when she lost her battle with breast cancer. Daughter, sister, aunt, colleague, mentor, and friend, Ann was a remarkable woman whose passion, good nature, and infectious laugh touched the lives of many and will long be remembered by all of those fortunate enough to have known her.

Ann was a journalist spending the majority of her career as a reporter for the New Haven Register but also serving as the editor of the Middletown Press during the last years of her life. Anyone who has ever worked with Ann or been interviewed by her will tell you that no one knew more about the towns or issues they covered than she did. She delved into any story she was covering and served as a mentor to many up-and-coming reporters at the New Haven Register. Tough, but fair, Ann earned a distinguished reputation among her colleagues and in the community.

When Ann was diagnosed with breast cancer, she did what she did best—shared the story. The result was her column, "Inspirations," which she continued until the very end. She not only wrote about her own battle but shared the stories of others as well. Ann did not just write about breast cancer, she was actively involved in the fight to find a cure. She assisted local charities, serving as honorary chairwoman of the annual Silver Bullets Hamden Police Benefit game as well as Hamden Lights for Life, raising thousands of dollars for much needed research. She was named the New Haven Register's "Person of the Year" in 2008 and I was honored to join the National Organization of Italian American Women in recognizing her as one of the 2012 Wise Women.

Her friends and family will tell you that as dedicated as she was to her professional and charitable work, Ann was also known as the life of the party. She loved karaoke and was always ready to dance. But it is her compassion, generosity, and kind heart that they will remember most. Her friend and colleague, Helen Bennett Harvey may have put it best when she recently said of Ann, "In the end, what she gave so many of us also was an example of true grace under fire. Cancer took Ann's body, but it did not take the beauty and love that emanated from within her."

As I stand today to pay tribute to Ann DeMatteo and honor her legacy, I extend my heartfelt sympathies to her family—her mother, Ann; her brother and sister-in-law, Joseph and Patricia; her nephew and godson, John; and her niece, Rebecca. Put simply, Ann was one of a kind and her presence in our lives will be deeply missed, however, the indelible mark that she left on our community and on our souls will continue to inspire us every day.

HONORING COMPASS, THE GAY
AND LESBIAN COMMUNITY CENTER
(GLCC) OF PALM BEACH
COUNTY FOR THEIR 25TH ANNI-
VERSARY**HON. LOIS FRANKEL**

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 27, 2013

Ms. FRANKEL of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Compass, the Gay and Lesbian Community Center (GLCC) of Palm Beach County for their 25th anniversary and for their continued advocacy on behalf of the LGBT community.

On Saturday, June 29, Compass will hold its annual Stonewall Ball, a party that attracts over 1,000 attendees each year. This ball connects public leaders and elected officials with members of the LGBT community, an essential step in creating opportunities for LGBT citizens of South Florida to participate in public life.

Since its inception, Compass has acted as a true champion of the LGBT community. As the largest gay and lesbian community center in Florida, Compass is visited by more than 25,000 individuals each year. It provides social and health-related support groups for LGBT people and case workers who help obtain treatment for those living with HIV/AIDS. Compass also organizes the Pride Business Alliance, a group that promotes gay-owned and gay-friendly local businesses.

In honor of Compass GLCC's 25th anniversary, I am proud to recognize the entire Compass community for their achievements in promoting awareness and sensitivity to LGBT issues in South Florida.

HONORING MS. ALKEIRA GOOCH

HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 27, 2013

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a future leader of this country, she is currently a student making a

difference in her school and hometown of West Tallahatchie High School, Ms. Alkeira Gooch.

Throughout her life, Alkeira says she has been nothing less than determined to succeed and I quote her, "I was only given one life to live, to not take chances, accomplish the impossible, and take advantage of everything that is available to me." You see, sometimes things that are not so good can be great inspirations. Alkeira lives in a community that is limited in resources and opportunities.

So, let me share with you why Alkeira is a student making a difference. In school she is involved in many organizations that reach out to others. She participates in a group that reads to younger children and donates gifts during Christmas. Alkeira is a member of the Student Government Association, Future Business Leaders of America, and the Senior Beta Club. In her evening hours she makes time to tutor other students and volunteers at the local community center. Alkeira's well rounded participation has given her the experience that will help her become that future leader and pediatrician she wants to be.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing Ms. Alkeira Gooch for her current active role as a student making a difference.

RECOGNIZING CHRIS WALLS

HON. STEVE STIVERS

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 27, 2013

Mr. STIVERS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Chris Walls, one of my constituents from Wilmington, Ohio. Mr. Walls pulled his community together to help the 33,000 victims from the May 2013 tornadoes in Oklahoma.

Many of those affected by the tornadoes lost their homes and all of their possessions. When Mr. Walls found out about the extensive damage done, it reminded him of the time his home was ruined by a fire. Mr. Walls remembered how much he appreciated the support of his community when he lost so much and felt it was his job to help the tornado victims.

The way Mr. Walls felt he could best help the victims was by starting a drive for needed supplies. He called upon our community in Wilmington and opened up his tattoo shop as a drop-off point for the drive. The Wilmington community donated many supplies including bandages, bottled water and toothpaste. Then, on June 10, 2013, Mr. Walls and his wife drove out to Oklahoma to personally deliver supplies to the tornado victims.

I am very thankful for Chris Walls' hard work in helping the people of Moore, Oklahoma. I ask that all Members of Congress stand with me to recognize Mr. Walls and the people of Wilmington, Ohio, for their acts of selflessness and kindness.

OUR UNCONSCIONABLE NATIONAL DEBT

HON. MIKE COFFMAN

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 27, 2013

Mr. COFFMAN. Mr. Speaker, on January 20, 2009, the day President Obama took of-

fice, the national debt was \$10,626,877,048,913.08.

Today, it is \$16,738,580,905,836.39. We've added \$6,111,703,856,923.31 to our debt in 4 and a half years. This is \$6 trillion in debt our Nation, our economy, and our children could have avoided with a balanced budget amendment.

RECOGNIZING EVERGREEN ACADEMY MIDDLE SCHOOL

HON. DANIEL LIPINSKI

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 27, 2013

Mr. LIPINSKI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Evergreen Academy Middle School in Chicago, Illinois, for being named to the list of top performing middle grades schools in the country by the National Forum to Accelerate Middle Grades Reform.

Evergreen Academy represents one of only 103 middle grades schools from around the United States that were recognized as a "School to Watch" by the National Forum to Accelerate Middle Grades Reform. To achieve this honor, Evergreen Academy had to prove that they are academically excellent, developmentally responsive, and socially equitable. They are among the best schools in the country in those regards, and I am glad to see these schools recognized for their excellence.

Achieving such a high level of performance is not easy. Schools must establish an educational culture that creates structures, norms, and organizational support to sustain their improving trend toward excellence. Principal Marian L. Strok has demonstrated a sense of purpose that drives her decision making. Further, this performance could not be possible without teachers who work tirelessly for their students and communities, and administrators who work to provide a professional atmosphere to let teachers do what they do best. This hard work and dedication has created an exemplary learning atmosphere.

This achievement is made possible through the hard work and dedication by the students, and the loving guidance by their parents and guardians. The students' work ethic and the values that their parents have instilled within them made this award attainable.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing the outstanding faculty and students at Evergreen Academy Middle School, and congratulating them for being recognized as one of the outstanding middle grades schools in the country. May they continue to exhibit excellence and create one of the best learning environments in the country for our future leaders.

HONORING MAYOR WILLIE JAMES JONES

HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 27, 2013

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a remarkable civil servant, Mayor Willie James Jones. The Honorable Mayor Willie J. Jones is a resident of

Coahoma, Mississippi and he is affectionately known to many as Mayor W.J. Jones.

He has devoted his entire adult life providing selfless service, energy and resources to ensure that others fare well. When Mayor Jones initially came to the tiny town of Coahoma, Mississippi, many of its residents lived in two room shacks with no indoor plumbing. As Mayor of the town of Coahoma since 1981, and one of the longest running tenures in the State of Mississippi, he has launched multiple efforts to improve the living conditions of its residents and revitalize the community. Under his leadership and armed with the motto of "Go and Grow", the community began to change. Today, with a cadre consisting of concerned World Vision, Habitat for Humanity, and volunteer residents, over half the town's families now live in HUD approved two, three, or four bedroom homes.

Mayor Jones skillfully led a coalition composed of Coahoma Utilities, Coahoma Community Development Corporation, and Coahoma Habitat for Humanity to pull the community together. In addition, through Mayor Jones' lobbying efforts, the Town of Coahoma has been the beneficiary of federal funding for a sewage system to replace open sewers and a well and water tank to improve its drinking supply. Because of these efforts, Mayor Jones has been honored by the Mississippi Conference of Black Mayors.

In addition to improving the living conditions of the town, Mayor Jones has a dedicated interest in the education of all. After graduating Rust College in 1954 and serving two years in the U.S. Army, Mayor Jones and his wife, Vivian Virginia Moore, moved to the Mississippi Delta and worked in the Coahoma County School system for 40 years before retiring in 1996. He has a vested interest in education. In 1956, he was among those fighting for equal salaries for all educators, for equal school funding and for equal treatment in use of public facilities.

While serving as principal of Hull Elementary and Jonestown Middle Schools he saw that all students were clothed and fed in addition to receiving an education. For his contributions toward making the 1966 merger of the National Education Association (NEA) and the Black American Teachers Association a success, Jones was recognized in 2006 at the 40 Year Merger Anniversary Celebration. On the college level he promotes access to higher education for students of all ethnicities. He received the 1990 Rust College Alumnus of the Year and has received annual Outstanding Contribution Appreciation Awards at his alma mater since 1997.

In 1996, as an educator, human and civil rights activist, Jones was among only a dozen veteran educators recognized nationwide and honored by the National Education Association at its annual Human and Civil Rights dinner. He was presented the H. Council Trenholm Memorial Award for his efforts to free the education system of inequities based on race and his leadership in advancing intergroup understanding within the education profession. On the state level the Mississippi Association of Educators (MAE) has presented him with the Lifetime Achievement Award, the MAE Humanized Education Award and the 1996 Member of the Year Award.