

Well known for his early start of hard work, Mr. Smith started working as a city landscaper in Sidon, MS when he was still in high school under the leadership of Mr. Alford. His next job was with Leflore County Road Department in 1979 where he is presently employed now as County Road Manager.

Mr. Smith has served in many capacities contributing to this society. He served 10 years on the Leflore County United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Board. He currently serves on the Deacon and Trustee Board at Bell Chapel M.B. Church, on the Leflore County Sheriff Department, a Sidon Board Alderman, Yazoo Levy Board, Sidon Volunteer Fire Chief, and self-employed small farmer. As a farmer he has produced cotton, soybeans, and wheat.

Mr. Smith is married to the former Joyce Marie Thomas and they are the proud parents of Jeremy Smith and Jayla Smith.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing a Small Business Farmer Extraordinaire, Mr. Jerry L. Smith, for his dedication to serving others and giving back to his communities by producing crops through his farming business.

THE RETIREMENT OF WAYNE S.
BROWN

HON. JOHN CONYERS, JR.

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 7, 2014

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate the retirement of Wayne S. Brown, the Director of Music and Opera at the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA), who is stepping down from his position this week. Mr. Brown is a well-loved and integral part of the NEA, and both he and his record of accomplishments will be greatly missed.

The NEA recognizes and supports a wide range of music, from classical to contemporary, including America's native art form: jazz. It works with performing ensembles and music presenting institutions to enrich the cultural lives of Americans. As Director of the NEA's efforts in this area, he has provided critical guidance for countless chamber music ensembles; choruses; early music programs; jazz ensembles; music festivals; symphony orchestras and opera companies.

Mr. Brown has been with the NEA since 1997, having previously served as musical producer for the Cultural Olympiad in Atlanta, Georgia for the 1996 Olympic Games, and as executive director of the Louisville Orchestra where he has managed thousands of music and opera grants. He has also overseen national music initiatives, including the NEA Jazz Masters Fellowships, the nation's highest award in jazz; the NEA Opera Honors, celebrating individuals who have made extraordinary contributions to opera in America; and Great American Voices, which brings vocal ensembles from opera companies to our men and women in uniform.

During his time he has not only been an administrator; he has been a leader in strengthening the NEA's largest discipline program

and its ties with the broader music and opera community. His colleagues offer effusive praise for his accomplishments, his knowledge, and his steady judgment.

While the NEA is sad to see Mr. Brown go, as a Detroit and lover of music and the arts I am very proud to say he will be bringing his record of achievement to our city, where he will be the President of the Michigan Opera Theater at the Detroit Opera House. As Detroiters face great challenges ahead, I'm reassured to know that Mr. Brown will be bringing decades of experience to a city with a long and rich tradition of cherishing the arts. We are happy to welcome him home to where he first began his career in music and opera as an assistant manager with the Detroit Symphony Orchestra.

CONGRATULATING THE UNIVERSITY OF CENTRAL FLORIDA ON THEIR 2014 FIESTA BOWL VICTORY

HON. ALAN GRAYSON

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 7, 2014

Mr. GRAYSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the University of Central Florida (UCF) Knights for their victory in the 2014 Fiesta Bowl. UCF is the youngest school to compete in a Bowl Championship Series game. Despite being considered a 17-point underdog against their opponent, Baylor University, the UCF Knights won the Fiesta Bowl with an impressive 52-42 victory. Since its founding in 1963, UCF has become a prominent institution capable of competing on a national level in all aspects of university life. This most recent victory is a milestone for UCF, and a great way to celebrate the school's 50th anniversary.

HONORING THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF GERALD BLACK

HON. HENRY CUELLAR

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 7, 2014

Mr. CUELLAR. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the contributions of the late Gerald Black, former Pleasanton Express news editor and United States Navy veteran. Mr. Black served in the U.S. Navy for 27 years and contributed to the community through his distinguished career as a writer and as an editor for 19 years in Pleasanton, Texas.

Mr. Black was born on March 30, 1946 in San Antonio, Texas and passed away due to heart complications on November 23, 2013. His accomplished career as a news editor stemmed from his humble beginnings. His childhood was spent in Kingsville, Texas with his parents Raymond Elmer and Corrine Byrne. Mr. Black was described as a big hearted, gentle loving, hard worker. This reflected during his college years where he held several jobs for the local radio station, college

newspaper, as well as a staff photographer. Soon after, he enlisted in the United States Navy, where he was stationed in New Orleans, Memphis, Atlanta and California. Throughout his time in the Navy, Mr. Black continued his work in journalism. Finally, in July 1993, Mr. Black came to the Pleasanton Express where he wrote feature articles and was a photographer covering county and law enforcement news. His work for Pleasanton Express would lead him to win several awards throughout his career.

His efforts were helpful to many, including the Atascosa Water Watchers, where he would often attend Evergreen Underground Water Conservation District meetings. As a result of his continued support of the Atascosa water preservation efforts in the local newspaper, he was nicknamed "Mr. Neptune". Finally in 2012, he retired after nearly two decades of work in journalism.

Mr. Speaker, I am honored to have had this time to recognize the late Gerald Wayne Black, former Pleasanton Express news editor, on his career and community involvement. He has contributed his time, knowledge and efforts to journalism, our country, and serving his community.

RECOGNIZING THE 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE UNIVERSITY OF CENTRAL FLORIDA

HON. ALAN GRAYSON

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 7, 2014

Mr. GRAYSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the University of Central Florida (UCF) on its 50th anniversary. Founded as Florida Technical University, UCF has grown to prominence over the past 50 years. UCF is now the second largest university in the nation, educating almost 60,000 undergraduates and graduates each year.

UCF continuously strives for academic excellence. U.S. News and World Report ranks UCF as a top "up-and-coming" university, while The Princeton Review rated UCF as one of the best values in the country. UCF is also home to world-renowned programs like the Institute for Simulation and Training and the College of Optics & Photonics, both of which are leading the way in their respective fields.

Under the direction of President John C. Hitt, UCF recently opened its College of Medicine in Lake Nona Medical City. The medical school, in partnership with other research institutions in the Medical City, promises to make Central Florida a destination for medical research. The College of Medicine joins the Rosen College of Hospitality Management, located near the region's most popular attractions, in providing specialized education to UCF students. UCF has become "America's Partnership University," working closely with governments, nonprofit organizations, and industry to prepare students for their chosen careers.

UCF is also committed to achieving diversity and accessibility. UCF students come from all 50 states and 148 countries. The University's student body is comprised of a minority population of nearly 40 percent, and 10 percent of students are adult learners. To increase accessibility, the college offers numerous online

courses, including 69 entirely web-based degree and certification programs.

Perhaps fitting for a university on the rise, the UCF Knights recently won their first Bowl Championship Series (BCS) game, the 2014 Fiesta Bowl. They are the youngest university ever to win a BCS game.

It is my pleasure to recognize UCF for its accomplishments over the last 50 years. I congratulate the hard-working faculty and outstanding students that make UCF a destination for our nation's best and brightest young minds. Go Knights!