

clear of the *Sedona* as it was tossed about in the violent seas, and carefully manage fuel burn rates—giving Lieutenant Hess the ability to focus all of his attention on keeping the aircraft in a safe hoisting position. As CGNR 6033 returned to base, Lieutenant Vanderslice communicated with air traffic control and the operational commander to coordinate arrival procedures and initiate medical treatment for the survivors. Lieutenant Vanderslice maintained exceptional composure for the entirety of the mission.

Lieutenant Vanderslice has since received orders to Coast Guard Air Station Sitka, Alaska, where he continues to fly the MH-60T on various Coast Guard missions. Lieutenant Vanderslice is married to Stephanie, his wife of 3 years. In his spare time, he is a passionate guitar player and roasts the best coffee in Sitka.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud to rise in honor of Lieutenant Matthew Vanderslice, who perfectly exemplifies the highest standards of the United States Coast Guard. I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing this distinguished member of our Armed Services and wishing him the best of luck in his future endeavors.

CONGRATULATING BRIANNA DUDA  
ON RECEIVING THE CITIZEN  
SCHOLAR AWARD FROM MISSOURI  
STATE UNIVERSITY

**HON. BILLY LONG**

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, February 3, 2016*

Mr. LONG. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate Brianna Duda, an outstanding student at Missouri State University, on her selection to receive the Citizen Scholar Award.

Each year, this prestigious award is given by Missouri State University's Board of Governors to students who have contributed to the university, furthered the university's public affairs mission, and have been significantly engaged in extra-curricular accomplishments and/or in important service activities in the community. Since the award was created in 2007, only forty-seven students have been recognized for their stellar achievements.

Brianna, from St. Louis, Missouri, was one of six exceptional students to receive the award this year. She is currently a junior socio-political communication major with a minor in political science. Brianna has been recognized for her skills in identifying intersections of identities and historically excluded groups. She has navigated these issues with great maturity, while addressing the conflict and barriers surrounding them with grace.

Mr. Speaker, Brianna Duda's accomplishments have set a great example of what a Citizen Scholar should be, this award represents a great deal of her hard work and dedication. I am proud to represent students like her and I urge my colleagues to join me in congratulating her on this well-deserved achievement.

IN MEMORY OF LT. COL. MICHAEL  
MIERAU

**HON. DAVID G. REICHERT**

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, February 3, 2016*

Mr. REICHERT. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to honor the life of Lt. Col. Michael Mierau, who passed away just last week on January 29, 2016.

Lt. Col. Mierau served in the U.S. Army for 26 years. In 1956, he received a nomination to attend the United States Military Academy, where he later graduated in June of 1960, finishing ninth in rank of order of merit. Following his graduation, he was commissioned as an infantry officer and was deployed overseas several times, including tours in West Germany, Vietnam, and what is now South Korea. Lt. Col. Mierau had a decorated military career, earning the Parachute Badge, the Ranger Tab, the Combat Infantry Badge, the Silver Star, the Legion of Merit, the Bronze Star and the Army Commendation Medal with V Device.

After Lt. Col. Mierau retired from the U.S. Army, he founded a consulting company and continued to use his experience in the military by serving as a volunteer member of the Washington State Army Advisory Board, working as a U.S. Military Academy Field Force member in the 17th Congressional District of Ohio, and joining the Board of Governors of the West Point Society of Washington and Puget Sound.

Lt. Col. Mierau is survived by his wife Julie Mierau and five children and stepchildren, several of whom have followed in his footsteps and joined the military.

Mr. Speaker, I thank Lt. Col. Mierau for his service to our community and country and for his friendship. My thoughts and prayers are with his family during this difficult time.

RECOGNIZING THE CAREER AND  
RETIREMENT OF KARY "BERNARD"  
EVANS, MILITARY AND  
VETERANS AFFAIRS DISTRICT  
FIELD REPRESENTATIVE FOR  
THE FIRST CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT  
OF MISSISSIPPI

**HON. TRENT KELLY**

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, February 3, 2016*

Mr. KELLY of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to recognize the career and retirement of Bernard Evans, who has served as the Military and Veterans Affairs Field Representative for the First Congressional District of Mississippi for the past five years. Bernard's work is personal for him. As a Vietnam Veteran, he served with the 173rd Petroleum Co. in Phu Bai, Vietnam from 1968 to 1969. After 28 years of military service, he retired from the Mississippi National Guard. Bernard had an impressive career with the Mississippi Highway Safety Patrol. During his 25 years of service, he performed a multitude of roles before retiring with the rank of Lieutenant. He has also worked with the Department of Corrections as a probation officer, the Lee County Sheriff's Office as a deputy sheriff, and as the Lee County Veterans Service Officer.

A life-long resident of Mississippi, Bernard is also a man committed to his faith and family. He has been married to his wife, Gail White Evans, for 24 years and together they have five children, 14 grandchildren, and one great-grandchild. He is a member of the Saltillo First United Methodist Church. In his spare time his hobbies include antique cars, motorcycles, and traveling. He is a lifetime member of the American Legion, Military Officers Association of America, Vietnam Veterans of America, and the National Rifle Association. He is also the President of the Tupelo Veterans Park Council.

Veterans in the First Congressional District of Mississippi were given invaluable guidance and support from Bernard Evans. I would like to take this time to thank Bernard for his continued commitment to providing assistance and care for our returning veterans. I know he will continue to accomplish great things for the state of Mississippi.

IN RECOGNITION OF LIEUTENANT  
JOHN D. HESS

**HON. WILLIAM R. KEATING**

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, February 3, 2016*

Mr. KEATING. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of Lieutenant John D. Hess of the United States Coast Guard and his extraordinary actions on February 15, 2015.

Lieutenant Hess, a native of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, enlisted in the U.S. Coast Guard after completing Coast Guard basic training in 1997. He went on to prove himself extremely capable on assignments aboard the USCGC *Victorious* and at Coast Guard Stations Ashtabula and Chatham. Upon receiving his commission in 2004, Lieutenant Hess attended Officer Candidate School (OCS) in New London, Connecticut, and went on to receive his wings of gold in 2006.

As an aviator, Lieutenant Hess's first assignment was as an MH-60 Jayhawk pilot at Air Station Clearwater, Florida. There, he served as an Instructor Pilot and subsequently a Flight Examiner. He transferred to Air Station Cape Cod in Massachusetts where he served in the same role as well as Aircraft Commander aboard CGNR 6033.

It was during this time, on February 15, 2015, that Lieutenant Hess—along with the other three crewmembers aboard CGNR 6033—responded to a distress signal picked up by the Coast Guard Rescue Coordination Center in Boston from the fishing vessel *Sedona*, which was floundering two hundred nautical miles off the coast of Cape Cod.

Lieutenant Hess and his copilot, Lieutenant Matthew Vanderslice, showed exemplary aeronautical skill as they navigated through extreme conditions, facing no overhead cover through ice, lightning, and unrelenting snow squalls, all of which resulted in very little visibility. After finding the *Sedona*, he directed the survivors to abandon ship and swim toward the awaiting rescue swimmer, Petty Officer Staph. Upon failure of the primary hoist system, he expertly maneuvered the aircraft to coordinate with Petty Officer Suba, the on-board flight mechanic, to successfully lift Petty Officer Staph and the survivors out of the frigid, stormy seas. He then safely brought everyone back to the airfield, landing the aircraft despite whiteout conditions and extremely low

visibility. Lieutenant Hess' extraordinary skill and quick thinking under desperate conditions were instrumental in saving lives.

Today, Lieutenant Hess continues to serve in the Coast Guard at Air Station Kodiak, Alaska as a MH-60 Jayhawk Aircraft Commander. His wife, Kimberly, is also a Coast Guard pilot, and they have four children.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud to rise in honor of Lieutenant John Hess, who perfectly exemplifies the highest standards of the United States Coast Guard. I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing this distinguished member of our Armed Services and wishing him the best of luck in his future endeavors.

IN RECOGNITION OF STAN MORTON UPON RECEIVING THE DR. BETTYE MYERS HUMANITARIAN AWARD

**HON. MICHAEL C. BURGESS**

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, February 3, 2016*

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate Stan Morton on receiving the United Way Dr. Bettye Myers Humanitarian Award for his service to the local community.

Prior to his retirement last month, Stan Morton served as the President of Texas Health Presbyterian Hospital, Denton since March 2003. His impact in the community rivals his accomplishments as the leader of the hospital. Stan served on the board of directors for United Way of Denton County for nine years, is a past board chair and, upon completing his service on the board, was honored with the distinction of Lifetime Member.

In addition to serving as United Way of Denton County's board chair, Stan also served as the 2006 Campaign Chair. Under Stan's leadership, the organization reached the \$2 million fundraising threshold for the first time in the organization's history.

While serving on the Health Services of North Texas Board of Directors, Stan was instrumental in positioning them to successfully apply for Federally Qualified Health Center designation.

Recipients of this prestigious Dr. Bettye Myers Humanitarian Award are dedicated to helping others and promoting human welfare and have shown active engagement in the community. I would like to congratulate Stan Morton who is well deserving of this award and thank him for his tireless service to our community.

PASTOR IRENE STAGGERS HARRIS

**HON. CARLOS CURBELO**

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, February 3, 2016*

Mr. CURBELO of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Pastor Irene Staggers Harris. Pastor Irene Staggers Harris was canonized a Bishop in December of 2013 and has been selected as the first woman president of the South East Dade Ministerial Alliance.

God placed Bishop Harris in a position to make a difference in her family, her church,

and in the community-at-large. After receiving her education in Miami-Dade County Public Schools and graduating from the South Dade Senior High School, she sought higher education and attended the Miami Dade Community College. Following her academic endeavors, Bishop Harris was employed at the Turkey Point Nuclear Plant for numerous years before hearing the call from God to embrace full-time ministry in the Lord's Church.

After being licensed and ordained an Elder by the House of God Saints in Christ, Inc., Bishop Harris led the congregation of the Greater St. Matthews Holiness Church where she extended the church name to include and embrace the "Temple of Love". In October of 1997, Bishop Harris became the Shepherd of Greater St. Matthews Holiness Church and communicated to her congregation a message of dependence on the Word of the Lord.

Bishop Irene Staggers Harris has dedicated her life to the Call of God. Her invaluable contributions to the Miami-Dade community serve as the embodiment of her selflessness. I commend Bishop Harris for her unyielding commitment to the word of God and love for all people. She will undoubtedly continue to serve admirably as the president of the South East Dade Ministerial Alliance.

RECOGNIZING JIM HARRIGER FOR HIS LEADERSHIP OF THE VICTORY MISSION OF SPRINGFIELD, MO

**HON. BILLY LONG**

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, February 3, 2016*

Mr. LONG. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to thank Jim Harriger for his role in leading the Victory Mission of Springfield, Missouri, for the last 23 years.

The Victory Mission is a non-denominational ministry which offers educational and emergency services to the community of Springfield. The ministry offers rehabilitative and conciliatory services, as well as providing food and education for those struggling with financial turmoil. It is a certified member of the national Association of Gospel Rescue Missions and has been a pillar of the Springfield community since its founding in 1976.

Under Harriger's leadership, the Victory Mission has expanded and improved in significant ways. He was instrumental in the establishment of the Victory Trade School, which has helped countless citizens on their way to obtaining a productive career. The Mission has also drastically expanded their ability to help the needy in Springfield, feeding thousands of hungry people and offering a safe and supportive environment for those who needed help in their daily lives.

Jim retired from his position as Executive Director of the Victory Mission after a 23-year career. Far from being the type of man to sit idly in retirement, Jim believes that his next step in life will be just as exciting as his time with the Victory Mission, and will likely involve helping others improve their lives.

Mr. Speaker, Jim Harriger is not only a dedicated member of the Springfield community, but an embodiment of the ideals that we hold dear in Missouri. He has demonstrated compassion, a commitment to helping his fellow

man and has gone above and beyond to lead the Victory Mission in their admirable goals. I urge my fellow colleagues to join me in appreciation for his accomplishments.

HONORING THE VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS WILLIE BARRAZA POST 9173

**HON. BETO O'ROURKE**

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, February 3, 2016*

Mr. O'ROURKE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor and recognition of the Veterans of Foreign Wars Willie Barraza Post 9173 in my district of El Paso, Texas. The Post was founded in 1949 and is named after Mr. Willie Barraza, an Army Sergeant from an area in El Paso known as Smeltertown who went Missing in Action during World War II. Smeltertown is tied to El Paso as a historical location where workers of the American Smelting and Refining Company (ASARCO) resided and from where many of these workers decided to serve our country during WWII. The Willie Barraza Post is an important veteran service organization that has a longstanding tradition of aiding veterans, their families and the El Paso community.

The Willie Barraza Post is a leader among El Paso's veteran service organization community, with 300 members dedicated to serving Veterans, Active Duty, Reservists and their families as well as others in my district. The Post has helped fund and organize the VFW Voice of Democracy essay contest in the El Paso region, providing scholarships for students and a chance for these students to compete and showcase their writing talents at the state and national levels.

The Willie Barraza Post also works to ensure that Service Members at Fort Bliss are supported. Recently, the Post adopted a regiment from Fort Bliss and corresponded with these Soldiers while they were stationed in Afghanistan. Members also honor Active Duty Service Members with welcome back and farewell picnics.

I am proud to know that great veteran service organizations such as Veterans of Foreign Wars Willie Barraza Post 9173 are present in my district. The Post strives year-after-year to honor veterans, care for America's Service Members and their families at Fort Bliss and support our community, and for that I thank them.

IN RECOGNITION OF THOMAS P. RUFER UPON HIS RETIREMENT FROM THE UNIVERSITY OF NORTH TEXAS

**HON. MICHAEL C. BURGESS**

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, February 3, 2016*

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and thank Thomas P. Rufer for his service at the University of North Texas since his arrival in August of 2006. Retiring as Associate Vice President of Auxiliary Services, Tom, as he is known on campus, has been responsible for the leadership and management