

turn to in their time of need. He was also involved with helping to designate segments of state highways 359, 16, and 285 as the Veterans of the Korean War Memorial Highway. He even went so far as to use his own money to help pay for the highway signs.

Mr. McKeown is survived by his wife, Jeanette Moser McKeown; daughter, Carolyn J. McKeown; grandchildren, Carolyn Lauren Hinojosa Walker, Ann Michelle Hinojosa (Ari) Hoffman, and Eduardo Javier Hinojosa Jr.; great grandchildren, William Christopher Walker, Rhea Ashley Walker; siblings, Patricia (Herbert) Stanley, and Thomas (Ruth) McKeown.

Mr. Speaker, I am honored to have the opportunity to remember the legacy of Mr. John McKeown.

TRIBUTE TO SUGAR GROVE SUNSHINE 4-H CLUB

HON. DAVID YOUNG

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 8, 2016

Mr. YOUNG of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate the Sugar Grove Sunshine 4-H Club on celebrating its 100th anniversary on September 24, 2016.

Heart, Head, Hands and Health are the tenants of 4-H, and 4-H is one of the hallmark organizations that so many young Iowans have passed through during their formative years. Ever since the Sugar Grove Sunshine 4-H Club was founded during World War I, it has benefited the youth of central Iowa in countless ways. Originally called the 4-H Sewing Club, the Sugar Grove Sunshine 4-H Club has guided Dallas County area youth through innumerable fair projects, animal shows, and 4-H meetings, where they were able to build upon their own interests, create with their hands, learn about animal care, develop important social skills, master public speaking, and be involved in their communities. The skills developed and honed in 4-H stay with students throughout their lifetime, and the result is that our communities are filled with leaders who strive to do what's best for all.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud to represent the Sugar Grove Sunshine 4-H Club and its members in the United States Congress. It is with great pride that I recognize them today. I ask that my colleagues in the United States House of Representatives join me in congratulating them all on this momentous anniversary and in wishing them nothing but continued success.

REMEMBERING THE LIFE OF JUDGE SCOTT POLODNA

HON. ALAN GRAYSON

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 8, 2016

Mr. GRAYSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the life and legacy of the Honorable Scott D. Polodna, who passed away on Tuesday, December 6, 2016, after losing his battle with cancer. He was 51.

Judge Polodna was a respected leader in Central Florida and will be remembered as a

dedicated colleague, and a dignified, compassionate person and jurist. He helped many people improve their lives.

Judge Polodna began his service as a judge in 2006. Judge Polodna has served the Ninth Judicial Circuit Court for over 10 years as a circuit judge in Osceola County in the criminal division, and in the civil division specializing in probate, guardianship, and mental health issues.

Born in Chicago, IL, Judge Polodna moved to Florida 40 years ago. He received a bachelor's degree in psychology and a law degree from the University of Florida. Judge Polodna taught criminal evidence at Valencia College, and served as an assistant public defender for ten years in the Orange-Osceola Public Defender's Office and as an assistant county attorney in Osceola. Judge Polodna's commitments to the community included board service with Community Vision and the Osceola Education Foundation. He was a 2002 graduate of Leadership Osceola, leading a project aimed at protecting and preserving environmentally sensitive lands.

Judge Polodna's integrity, wisdom, and passionate outlook on life touched the lives of many and made Central Florida a better place. I am humbled to honor the memory, life, and outstanding achievements of Judge Scott D. Polodna.

RECOGNIZING DR. LOUIS J. AGNESE, JR.

HON. HENRY CUELLAR

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 8, 2016

Mr. CUELLAR. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the career of Dr. Louis J. Agnese, Jr. who served as president of the University of the Incarnate Word (UIW) in San Antonio, Texas for thirty-one years.

Dr. Louis J. Agnese grew up in Brooklyn, New York, as the youngest of five children. He received his Bachelor of Arts in History and Psychology from St. Mary of the Plains College; his Master of Education in Counseling and an Education Specialist Degree in Supervision of Counseling Services from Gannon University; and a Ph.D. in Counselor Education from The University of Pittsburgh. He went on to work at Briar Cliff University before interviewing for the presidency of Incarnate Word in 1985.

UIW eventually hired Dr. Agnese to become the university's eighth president. Dr. Agnese was only 33 at the time, making him one of the youngest college presidents in the nation. Immediately upon being hired, he sought ways to help improve the university. He spent much of his time researching the university's history, meeting with staff and faculty, as well as looking for innovative ways to help improve student enrollment, which had been declining for several years.

During Dr. Agnese's presidency, student global enrollment rose from 1,296 students in 1985 to 11,422 in 2016. This growth turned UIW from the 19th largest private university in Texas to the 3rd largest private university in the state. The number of living alumni has increased from 8,000 in 1985 to nearly 40,000 today.

Not only did the student enrollment grow, but the number of academic programs dou-

bled. The university created its first Ph.D. program and added professional doctoral programs in pharmacy, optometry, physical therapy, nursing practice, business administration, and beginning in 2017, osteopathic medicine. The university's endowment also increased from \$3 million in 1985 to \$130 million today, while the school's budget grew from \$2 million to \$217 million.

UIW has received numerous recognitions throughout Dr. Agnese's tenure. The university has been noted for eight consecutive years as one of the Great Colleges to Work For in the U.S. by the Chronicle of Higher Education, chosen as one of the Top Workplaces in San Antonio by The San Antonio Express-News, included in The Chronicle's national Top 10 Honor Roll category for medium-sized universities for the seventh straight year, and today, with more than 1,100 employees, UIW has an estimated \$100 million impact on the San Antonio economy. UIW is also currently ranked No. 1 nationally among private, not-for-profit universities in conferring the most bachelor's degrees to Hispanics, a group that continues to be underrepresented nationally in higher education.

Dr. Agnese's long and successful career has brought with it numerous awards. His many honors include: the Humanitarian Award from the National Conference of Christians and Jews, the Outstanding leader in Catholic education by the Archdiocese of San Antonio, the Ford Salute to Education Lifetime Achievement Award for his contributions to higher education, the Sister Cecilia Bush Award from the Dear Neighbor Ministries for his commitment to Minority Education, and multiple honorary doctorates along with several distinguished alumni awards.

Mr. Speaker, I am honored to have the opportunity to remember the legacy of UIW's eighth president, Dr. Louis J. Agnese, Jr.

TRIBUTE TO DR. SCOTT SHUEY

HON. DAVID YOUNG

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 8, 2016

Mr. YOUNG of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate Scott Shuey, D.V.M. of Corning, Iowa, for being honored as the 2016 Veterinarian of the Year by the Iowa Veterinary Medical Association. Dr. Shuey was nominated by 19 area farmers and producers in southwestern Iowa, in recognition of his dedication to the profession and his leadership in the community.

Dr. Shuey has been practicing veterinary medicine in southwest Iowa for 25 years. He received his Bachelor of Science degree in animal science from Kansas State University in 1989, a Master of Science degree in beef cattle nutrition from South Dakota State University, and his Doctorate of Veterinary Medicine from Kansas State University. He practices veterinary medicine and serves as the managing and senior partner at the Southern Hills Veterinary Clinic in Corning.

Mr. Speaker, I applaud and congratulate Dr. Shuey for this recognition by the Iowa Veterinary Medical Association. I am proud to represent him in the United States Congress. I ask that my colleagues in the United States House of Representatives join me in congratulating Dr. Shuey and in wishing him nothing but continued success.

RECOGNIZING FAMILIES AF-
FECTED BY THE NATIONAL
OPIOID EPIDEMIC

HON. ANN M. KUSTER

OF NEW HAMPSHIRE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 8, 2016

Ms. KUSTER. Mr. Speaker, it is my honor to include in the RECORD today the personal stories of families from across the country that have been affected by the opioid and heroin epidemic. In the U.S. we lose 129 lives per day to opioid and heroin overdose. In my home state of New Hampshire I have learned so many heartbreaking stories of great people and families who have suffered from the effects of substance use disorder.

Earlier this year, my colleagues and I were joined by many of these courageous families who came to Washington to share their stories with Members of Congress and push for action that will prevent overdoses and save lives. Since then, we passed both the Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act and the 21st Century Cures Act to provide much needed funding and critical policy changes to fight this epidemic.

The advocacy of these families truly is so important to leading to change in Washington and I am proud to preserve their stories.

ANTONIO LUCONI—POMPTON PLAINS, NEW JERSEY

On Sunday, March 20, 2016, Antonio “Ant” Luconi, lost the biggest fight of his life at the age of 28—to the disease of opioid addiction. Drug addiction does not discriminate—it ruins the lives of good people. When Ant died, the world lost a son, brother, Godfather, cousin, grandson, nephew and friend. Their loyal, handsome, funny, loving, Ant added so much to the lives he touched: He had a “tough guy” exterior and had the world’s biggest heart. Ant never failed to say, “I love you.”

Ant died nineteen days after being discharged from treatment. He was excited to start his life over, make his family proud and pursue his new life goals. He did not want to die. He had plans. Big plans. “28 is my year,” he said.

At the age of 21, Ant began recreationally using Percocet, which progressed to Roxicet. He ingested both by crushing the pills and snorting them. As his addiction progressed, so too did his tolerance and the cost of supporting his addiction. As a result, Ant turned to snorting heroin, which was less expensive. While attending an intensive outpatient program, another patient taught him how to use a needle to inject heroin.

Over the course of seven years, Ant made numerous attempts to get clean. He detoxed on his own and under medical supervision. He attended intensive outpatient programs and worked with therapists. Ant’s belief that he could conquer this disease on his own led to a disastrous end.

Ant was open and honest throughout his addiction. He spent numerous hours with his sister discussing his disease. She believed in Ant and named him the Godfather to her daughter. There were many nights when Ant’s mother held him in her arms as he cried, apologized, and pleaded for help to end the nightmare of addiction—to become whole again. Ant’s family encouraged him time after time to get help, but in retrospect, they did not fully understand the severity of the situation.

After accepting that his addiction had completely taken over his life and that death

was a real possibility, Ant decided to go to an inpatient treatment program. Can you imagine the relief Ant’s family felt at hearing this news? While attending the recovery center in Florida, Ant became a favorite patient. During weekly conference calls with Ant and his treatment team, the connectors reported on his progress with sincere optimism, “Finally, someone who gets it and works the program. What a great guy. We know Ant will be a success story.” He was chosen as group leader, which meant he was in charge of morning check-in meetings. Some of the most challenged men in the program sought Ant’s advice and friendship. Ever a “man’s man,” he made everyone feel important and was loyal to a fault.

When Ant arrived home after completing the program, he was proud of his progress and confident in his new life, but the fear of relapse was constant: “I cannot wait to just live in the moment again.” Ant shared with his family a letter that he wrote to heroin. The first sentence read, “I am saying goodbye because you have made me someone I am not, my life is now unmanageable, you destroy all good things in my life. I hate you.”

Ant’s counselors in Florida set up an intensive outpatient program for him to help him transition upon arriving home. But when Ant attended the scheduled assessment, he was declined admittance because a family member was already enrolled in the program. Given that Ant was in such a vulnerable time in his recovery, they should have made sure that he was enrolled in another intensive outpatient program before he left the building. Lack of continuity of care turned out to be a life or death situation.

Ant needed to stay in a program and continue to receive support but they turned him away. Ant was unable to get an assessment at another intensive outpatient program for a week and a half. Here was a man who was begging for help, had made the decision to change his life and was failed horribly by our system. This was not unfamiliar—if you only knew how many times Ant’s family drove him from detox to detox only to be turned down by each one due to insurance issues and a lack of available beds.

Ant’s mother and sister want things to change. They want more resources to be available for people who have that moment of clarity and decide to get help. They want someone to pick up the phone on a Sunday night when a person struggling with addiction decides to seek information about how to get into detox. The horrible alternative means a person wanting help has to wait until morning and continue to use in order to combat the withdrawal symptoms. That “one more time” hit could take their life.

Ant’s family is left with massive holes in their hearts that will never be healed. Their souls are devastated. Ant put up one hell of a fight. He was supposed to start a new job the day after he died. His family was rooting for him then and remain proud of him today. They were never ashamed or embarrassed about Ant’s struggle. They believe that it was the system that failed him.

Ant’s family wants to help bring awareness to the fact that this disease has reached epidemic levels and needs to be stopped. Too many young lives have been taken. Too many people that they know personally. If anything can be done to remove the stigma associated with a disease that does not discriminate between class, color, race, or religion, then Ant will not have died in vain. Ant’s family always felt that he was destined to do big things. Perhaps this is Ant’s legacy.

MICHAEL MARCELL—WITTMAN, MARYLAND

The mother of two wonderful, loving boys, Louis and Michael Marcell, never dreamed that addiction would devastate her family as

it has. This was not the life that she imagined when she became a mother. The grief and devastation of losing a child is unbearable and if her family’s story can prevent just one family from dealing with this disease alone, she feels she will have made a difference.

Michael was always quiet and shy. He struggled in classes and was bullied during his formative years in school. When Michael was 16 years old, he became depressed and more withdrawn. His parents tried several times to get him help through the school system but to no avail. By the time Michael was a junior in high school and had failing grades, his parents made the difficult decision to withdraw him from school. Michael was determined to graduate high school, so he decided to take GED classes and he passed.

Michael enjoyed working with his hands and found his calling in carpentry work. He also loved skateboarding, snowboarding, and spending time with his friends and brother. He was drawn to nature and had an old soul. Around the age of 17, Michael began experimenting with alcohol and marijuana. His mother was concerned but thought Michael was just going through a phase. A few days before Michael’s death, he told a friend that he needed help. Michael’s mother didn’t know the extent of his addiction until it was too late; never able to get him the help he so desperately needed.

Michael died on December 7, 2008, within days of celebrating his 18th birthday. He went to a party the night before and because of an argument going on at home, Michael decided to stay at the party overnight. That was the last time Michael’s mother saw her son. On December 7th, the police came to Michael’s home to tell his mother that Michael was gone and died of an accidental overdose of alcohol and oxycodone. Michael’s mother remembers that moment as if it was yesterday.

If Michael’s family had the tools and knowledge about addiction that they have today when Michael was struggling, they feel they might have been able to save him.

THEO MARINESCU—EAST HAMPTON, NEW YORK

If there is anything worse than losing a child, it is losing a child to a drug overdose because grief is often accompanied by judgement and blame. For parents, it is a gut-wrenching thing to watch your child suffer at their own hand.

Losing a child to addiction means you didn’t get to say goodbye. It means that (if you are brave enough to be truthful about the cause of death) every day you have to deal with the stigma that surrounds addiction. You question every decision—you look for what you did wrong, what you didn’t say, why you didn’t have the sense that something was wrong. You look back over the years and dissect each part of their life—scanning for clues. You look for places to lay blame but mostly you blame yourself. You find an online group of parents just like you, where there is no judgement and everyone has the same questions and feels the same pain. You force yourself to read the coroner and toxicology report hoping there is an answer there. And you cry—a lot.

Theo was 25 years old when he lost his life to a fatal combination of heroin and fentanyl. Theo was a warm, open, loving, bright, intelligent and handsome man. He had a huge laugh and a fabulous smile. Theo was an outstanding athlete and won many trophies and awards. He played linebacker in football and loved the sport. He was also gifted intellectually and an honor roll student in high school. Theo lived with wild ambition and no regrets.

Theo was a brilliant storyteller and always found a way to make you laugh. He seemed to make friends wherever he went and in