

Scout Service Project of the Year award from the Heart of America Council.

Mr. Speaker, I proudly ask you to join me in commending Nathan Riley for his accomplishments with the Boy Scouts of America and for his efforts put forth in achieving the highest distinction of Eagle Scout.

**LGBTQ PRIDE MONTH AND
HOUSTON PRIDE WEEK**

HON. SHEILA JACKSON LEE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, June 2, 2017

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise to commemorate LGBTQ Pride Month and the remarkable progress that has been made in making our country more diverse and tolerant and embracing of differences in the 17 years since the cruel murder of Matthew Shepherd, a college student from Laramie, Wyoming.

As a country, America has made and continues to make great progress in the area of social equality, as evidenced most dramatically by the seismic shift in public support for marriage equality over the past decade.

Today, supporters of marriage equality dramatically outnumber opponents by 61–35 percent; a near total reversal from 2004, when opponents outnumbered supporters 58–39 percent.

Our country made progress in bringing our LGBTQ brothers and sisters, mothers and fathers out of the shadows with the repeal of “Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell,” which I was proud to support.

Our nation is now stronger and our people are safer thanks to the sacrifices made by these brave Americans, who no longer need to choose between service and silence.

There have been other changes for the better.

In April 2015, President Obama issued a landmark Executive Order prohibiting discrimination against LGBTQ persons in the workplace.

This civil rights victory ensures the tax dollars used to pay government contractors support contractors that are committed to equal employment opportunity for all persons regardless of sexual orientation.

This legislation marks a major shift from a time when the U.S. Civil Service Commission prohibited the hiring of LGBTQ persons to a time when the Secretary of Defense has selected an openly gay man as his chief of staff.

And we are making progress in realizing the goal of making the H.R. 2282, the “Equality Act of 2017,” the law of the land so LGBTQ people will finally be guaranteed explicit, permanent protection under the nation’s existing civil rights laws against discrimination in vital areas of life, like employment, access to public spaces, housing, credit, education, jury service, and federally-funded programs.

It is unacceptable that in 31 states LGBTQ people can get married on Sunday and remain at risk of being fired or evicted on Monday simply because of who they are.

Mr. Speaker, this year marks the 48th Anniversary of the LGBTQ Civil Rights Movement, where activists such as Frank Kamney led the struggle for the voices of the LGBTQ community to be heard.

Frank Kamney’s courageous demonstrations inspired others to resist mistreatment and we

witnessed in 1969 what happens when a community says enough is enough.

Our country has made progress since the Stonewall uprising of 1969, and with the support of equal rights for all communities by leaders such as President Barack Obama, more and more voices are being heard.

Mr. Speaker, although more remains to be done to realize the full promise of America that all are equally treated and protected by the law, it is undeniable that America is closer to realizing that promise than it was during the dark days of Stonewall.

So there is much reason for joy and optimism when my home city of Houston hosts “Wonderland,” Houston’s Pride Week celebration later this month, from June 18 to 25, 2017.

According to the 2010 U.S. Census, the 16th largest LGBTQ community in the nation is located in the Houston metropolitan area, which I am privileged to represent.

The Houston LGBTQ community is culturally diverse, economically dynamic, and artistically vibrant.

Houston Pride Week has been an annual event for the last 38 years, since 1979, and promotes the individuality of Houston’s ever-growing LGBTQ community.

The Pride Festival and Parade are at the center of a celebration annually attended by more than 600,000 people from Houston and around the world.

Mr. Speaker, as the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. reminded us, “Darkness cannot drive out darkness; only light can do that. Hate cannot drive out hate; only love can do that.”

All Americans should be deeply concerned over the increase in violence and acts of hate perpetrated against members of the LGBTQ community we have witnessed in recent months.

Especially troubling is the rise in bigotry and violent crimes against transgender people, particularly transgender women of color.

According to statistics compiled by the Human Rights Campaign, at least 22 transgender people in the United States lost their lives due to fatal violence, the most ever recorded.

Sadly, we are on pace to break this record in 2017, as 11 transgender persons have been killed in the first five months.

Mr. Speaker, I invite all Americans to visit Houston during Houston Pride Week to observe how we live out our conviction that “Love Will Conquer Hate.”

Progress is made through the efforts of courageous men and women who actively engage their communities and face adversity to ensure that the rights of all are clearly recognized and protected.

People like the legendary Bayard Rustin, who organized the 1947 Journey of Reconciliation which inspired the Freedom Rides of the 1960s and helped Dr. King organize the Southern Christian Leadership Conference and who was the driving force behind the historic 1963 March on Washington.

Texas natives such as Sheryl Swoopes, a 3-time WNBA Most Valuable Player and champion for the Houston Comets, and former Houston Mayor Annise Parker.

These leaders have set an example of what can happen when we lift the limits of inequality and support our fellow Americans in their pursuits of their inalienable rights.

Other members of the LGBTQ community whose contributions have enriched American

culture and made our country better include the great poet Langston Hughes; Mandy Carter, 2008 national co-chair of Obama Pride and lifelong activist; Billy Strayhorn the musician and gifted composer whose 30-year collaboration with Duke Ellington gave the world some of the greatest jazz music ever; Tom Waddell, army medical doctor and Olympic athlete; and James Baldwin, one of the towering figures in the history of American literature.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud to acknowledge the achievements of just a few of the countless number of Americans who overcame prejudice and discrimination to make America a more welcoming place for succeeding generations of LGBTQ community members.

**RECOGNIZING CAPTAIN WILLIAM
PERLSTEIN**

HON. JIMMY PANETTA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, June 2, 2017

Mr. PANETTA. Mr. Speaker, I rise on behalf of a uniquely distinguished community leader, Captain William Perlstein, who has served the State of California as a Commander for the Highway Patrol. Bill began his career as a traffic officer in Hayward. He soon combined his career in law enforcement with his love of aviation, and trained to become a flight officer/paramedic, working on a CHP helicopter out of the Golden Gate Division. Subsequently, he became an instructor with the California Highway Patrol Academy and trained individuals on emergency medical procedures. As an instructor, he developed new emergency medical response programs, which helped to save lives across California.

Bill also encouraged transparency in policing and was promoted to work in the California Highway Patrol’s legislative affairs, working to develop cooperation with traffic and law enforcement advisory groups. Bill eventually was promoted to provide technical advice to the California State Legislature and advocate for the California Highway Patrol at the Capitol. In this role, he was able to protect California police officers and ensure equal protection under the law. Bill also managed finances for the California Highway Patrol and provided leadership, guidance, and supervision to area personnel.

Most recently, Bill became Commander for the California Highway Patrol’s Monterey Area. In this role he was able to establish goals, and develop strategies and tactics to keep the Monterey Bay area safe. Bill supervised employees and provided training and area management. He also ingrained himself within the community by joining the several organizations, including becoming a member of the steering committee for the Monterey County Gang Task Force; serving as treasurer of the Monterey County Chief Law Enforcement Officers Association; joining the Board of Directors of the Monterey Rape Crisis Center; and participating in the esteemed Leadership Monterey, a program aimed at providing the continuity of community stewardship.

Throughout his entire career, Bill has been dedicated to the safety and welfare of California citizens, including his own family: three wonderful children, Stephen, Matthew and Juliet, and his wife of twenty-four years, Stephanie.

Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure to recognize a distinguished law enforcement officer who has dedicated his life to supporting California families. I ask my distinguished colleagues to join me in recognizing a true public servant who embodies the spirit and values of a committed law enforcement officer, and to congratulate him on a well-deserved and well-earned retirement.

RECOGNIZING THE 15TH INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL OF LANGUAGE AND CULTURE

HON. HENRY CUELLAR

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, June 2, 2017

Mr. CUELLAR. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commemorate the 15th International Festival of Language and Culture (IFLC).

For the past 14 years, the IFLC has been showcasing both the diversity of our world and the talent of our youth. The IFLC draws participants from over 160 countries, with over 1,000 student performers each year at numerous regional events across the globe. This year the IFLC will be hosting 100 students and their teachers from 20 different countries in our nation's capital.

In its 15th year, Washington, D.C. will be one of many world capitals co-hosting this international event. In honor of this year's theme, "Universal Compassion," students will exhibit their culture and traditions through poetry, songs, and dances as an expression of friendship, optimism, and hope. In a world of conflict and despair, this special event shows that celebrating diversity and peaceful coexistence is possible, and that we can come together around our shared humanity.

I want to congratulate the students, parents, teachers, and volunteers of IFLC for their efforts. This event will continue to show the world that we can live and work together for a better future.

Mr. Speaker, I am honored to have the opportunity to recognize the 15th IFLC.

HONORING THE LIFE AND LEGACY OF MS. DYAN HAMILTON FRENCH COLE

HON. CEDRIC L. RICHMOND

OF LOUISIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, June 2, 2017

Mr. RICHMOND. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life of Ms. Dyan Hamilton French Cole, a New Orleans native and well known community and civil rights activist. Ms. Cole, affectionately known as "Mama D," passed away on May 20, 2017, at the age of 72.

Ms. Cole was a lifelong New Orleanian, and graduated from Joseph S. Clark High School. She was a relentless community activist, who would frequently attend city council meetings or other places where elected leaders were gathered to advocate for quality housing, recreation, and justice. Nearly every day, she headed to Orleans Parish Criminal District Court to advocate for young black men who were appearing in court that day.

Ms. Cole is best known for her support of the Stalling Gentilly Playground and serving as

the first female President of the New Orleans Chapter of the NAACP in January 1975.

After Hurricane Katrina, when Ms. Cole refused to evacuate, she organized crews she called the "Soul Patrol," to go through her native 7th Ward and other neighborhoods, saving people, feeding them and finding them clothes, assistance and other relief. Ms. Cole housed numerous people at her home on North Dorgenois Street that some people referred to it as Recovery Camp Dorgenois.

On December 6, 2005, Ms. Cole was one of the representatives from New Orleans invited to testify before the House Select Committee on Hurricane Katrina. Ms. Cole spoke passionately of the disgraceful lack of assistance in the aftermath of the storm and the racial discrimination that flowed in the city.

Ms. Cole loved the city and the people of New Orleans. Her legacy will forever be a part of the city and her dedication to community embodies the spirit of New Orleans. Ms. Cole's survivors include a son, Byron Cole; a sister, Audrey Jackson; six grandchildren; and two great grandchildren.

Mr. Speaker, I celebrate the life and legacy of Ms. Dyan Hamilton French Cole, a beloved mother, sister, grandmother, great-grandmother, and example to aspiring community activists everywhere.

HONORING JOHN REED FOR 75 YEARS OF SERVICE TO THE DAVENPORT HOTEL

HON. CATHY McMORRIS RODGERS

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, June 2, 2017

Mrs. McMORRIS RODGERS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Mr. John Reed of Spokane, WA for his 75 years of service to the historic Davenport Hotel.

John has been putting smiles on faces of those who come in and out of the Davenport Hotel for generations. He started working at the Davenport Hotel in 1943, at the age of 13, as a busboy in the Italian Gardens. Louis Davenport, the owner, taught him how to set up a table. His hard work and commitment provided him with an opportunity to become the doorman for the hotel, a position which he still holds at the age of 87. When asked if he plans to retire his response is "not any time soon."

Both local residents and guests of the Davenport can't help but smile when they are greeted by John, who wears a three piece suit, complete with a long red coat and black top hat to work. He has greeted John F. Kennedy, Bobby Kennedy, and George H.W. Bush in his time with the hotel and has said, "I enjoy being a doorman here and meeting and greeting people, and I'm proud to be a part of the Davenport."

Today, the Davenport will honor John with a board room in his name. His legacy and commitment to service will live on through this naming and his smile will always be remembered.

IN RECOGNITION OF CORLISS UDOEMA

HON. BARBARA COMSTOCK

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, June 2, 2017

Mrs. COMSTOCK. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize my constituent, Corliss Udoema, who is a successful entrepreneur and holds the unique distinction of being selected as the 2017 Virginia Small Business Person of the Year by the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA).

Corliss began her career in the federal government, where she worked with the U.S. Marine Corps, Department of the Navy, and the Department of the Army. Then after a successful 32-year career with the federal government, Corliss started Contract Solutions, Inc. (CSI) in 2006. CSI is a small business whose mission is to assist federal, state and local governments, private for-profit and non-profit clients, by offering professional staffing and management support services. Since its inception, CSI has thrived, as it has evolved from a one-person company to a multi-million-dollar business. CSI has proven to be a model for other businesses to emulate, which is why in 2013 it was chosen to participate in the U.S. Small Business Administration's esteemed Mentor-Protégé Program, designed to enable successful companies to develop strong protégé firms by providing newer firms still in their nascent with various forms of business development assistance.

I am impressed by Corliss's dedication and how in just a mere decade she has transformed CSI from a small startup business into a tremendous success and engine of economic growth. Starting and operating any small business, let alone one as successful as CSI, is an incredibly arduous process, as small business owners face many challenges and obstacles. The success of CSI is a testimony to Corliss's hard work, commitment, and innovative ideas. In addition to her extensive and distinguished career in the federal government and private sector, Corliss has always found time to serve her community. She is the founder and president of Agape Love in Action, a nonprofit organization which provides support for those in need, and serves as a minister at Mount Olive Baptist Church in Centreville, Virginia.

Mr. Speaker, it is my honor to recognize Corliss Udoema for her extraordinary achievement. I look forward to her ongoing contributions to Prince William County's diverse and innovative small business community and I wish her the best in her future endeavors.

HONORING TANNER COOK

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, June 2, 2017

Mr. GRAVES of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize Tanner Cook. Tanner is a very special young man who has exemplified the finest qualities of citizenship and leadership by taking an active part in the Boy Scouts of America, Troop 1376, and earning the most prestigious award of Eagle Scout.