

our community. We were able to meet some of the Kitchen's students, volunteers, and graduates who are now working at the Kitchen. They are inspirational.

But during our visit, we were also reminded that charities like DC Central Kitchen can't do it alone. They are only one piece of the puzzle when it comes to alleviating hunger and helping our most vulnerable neighbors get back to work.

In Congress, we need to support our Federal antihunger safety net and commit to long-term investments in areas like job training, housing, addiction recovery, and education, just to name a few.

At a time when progress in Washington is stalled, it was refreshing to join my colleague G.T., his staff, and a bipartisan group from the House Agriculture Committee in accomplishing something.

We all need to do more to help those who are having trouble putting food on the table, so it was great to chop peppers and carrots and radishes to help make nutritious salads for those in need. It was a great reminder that, working together, we can end hunger now.

RECOGNITION OF NATIONAL POLICE WEEK

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. BOST) for 5 minutes.

Mr. BOST. Mr. Speaker, every day law enforcement officers around this country protect our families from harm and keep peace and promote the cause of justice. As a former first responder myself, I am proud to support these heroes, especially those who have paid the ultimate price to keep our families safe.

National Police Week is a good reminder that we need to show support and appreciation to those who serve and protect us. We set aside this week each year to honor the call to service and profound commitment to duty embodied in our law enforcement officers—both in southern Illinois and across this Nation.

I join with the grateful communities around the Nation to thank our officers and honor those who have paid the ultimate sacrifice in the line of duty. We pray for them and we pray for their families as they watch over us.

“I AM JAZZ”

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from California (Ms. SPEIER) for 5 minutes.

Ms. SPEIER. Mr. Speaker, I come to the House floor for the second year in a row to read the book “I Am Jazz,” a children’s book about transgender youth cowritten by Jazz Jennings, pictured here, and Jessica Herthel.

After an LGBT hate group forced a school to cancel a reading of this book 2 years ago, a movement was launched.

Every year since, readings have been held across the country to increase understanding and to show young people that they are welcomed and loved.

Last year I read this book from the House floor, and today I am proud to join this movement to read it again.

“I Am Jazz.”

For as long as I can remember, my favorite color has been pink. My second favorite color is silver, and my third favorite color is green.

Here are some of the many other things I like to do: dancing, singing, backflips, drawing, soccer, swimming, makeup, and pretending I am a pop star.

Most of all, I love mermaids. Sometimes I even wear a mermaid tail in the pool.

My best friends are Samantha and Casey. We always have fun together. We like high heels and princess gowns or cartwheels and trampolines.

But I am not exactly like Samantha and Casey. I have a girl brain but a boy body. This is called transgender. I was born this way.

When I was very little and my mom would say, “You are such a good boy,” I would say, “No, Mama. Good girl.”

At first my family was confused. They had always thought of me as a boy. As I got a little older, I hardly ever played with trucks or tools or superheroes, only princesses and mermaid costumes. My brothers told me this was girl stuff. I kept right on playing.

My sister says I am always talking to her about my girl thoughts and my girl dreams and how one day I would be a beautiful lady. She would giggle and say, “You are a funny kid.”

Sometimes my parents let me wear my sister’s dresses around the house, but whenever we went out, I had to put on my boy clothes again. That made me mad. Still, I never gave up trying to convince them. Pretending I was a boy felt like telling a lie.

Then one amazing day, everything changed. Mom and Dad took me to meet a new doctor who asked me lots and lots of questions. Afterward, the doctor spoke to my parents, and I heard the word “transgender” for the very first time. That night at bedtime, my parents both hugged me and said, “We understand now. Be who you are. We love you no matter what.”

This made me smile and smile and smile. Mom and Dad told me I could start wearing girl clothes to school and growing my hair long. Then they even let me change my name to Jazz. Being Jazz felt much more like being me. Mom said that being Jazz would make me different from the other kids at school, but that being different is okay. “What is important,” she said, “is that I am happy with who I am.”

Being Jazz caused some of the people to be confused, too, like the teachers at school. At the beginning of the year, they wanted me to use the boys bathroom and play on the boys team in gym class, but that didn’t feel normal to me at all. I was so happy when the teachers changed their minds. I can’t imagine not playing on the same team as Casey and Samantha.

Even today, there are kids who tease me or call me by a boy name or ignore me altogether. This makes me feel crummy. Then I remember that the kids who get to know me usually want to be my friend. They say I am one of the nicest girls at school.

I don’t mind being different. Different is special. I think what matters most is what a person is like inside, and inside I am happy. I am having fun. I am proud. I am Jazz.

A TRULY OUTSTANDING AGENT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. EMMER) for 5 minutes.

Mr. EMMER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Stearns County Corrections Agent Jeremy Gallagher. Mr. Gallagher recently received the Outstanding Agent Award from the Minnesota Association of Community Corrections Act Counties. Jeremy received this award because of his work with victims of domestic violence.

Jeremy has served as a corrections agent in Stearns County for 11 years, 4 of which have been spent as an agent in the county’s Domestic Violence Court.

Being a corrections agent in domestic violence cases can be overwhelming, but not for Jeremy. He has embraced his role to aid and protect Minnesota families. Through his assignment, he has even discovered a passion for helping children overcome the trauma that domestic violence can bring.

Jeremy Gallagher has gone above and beyond his role as a corrections agent. He is so deserving of this award, and he is the first Stearns County agent to receive it.

I applaud Jeremy for his dedication to Minnesota families, and especially for his dedication to our children.

A VICTORIOUS WEEKEND

Mr. EMMER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate an outstanding college student in my district.

Megan Hedstrom is currently in her senior year at St. Cloud State University. Megan has excelled in college as a student and as an athlete. She has a bright future.

Recently, Megan won a Crystal Pillar Award from the Upper Midwest Emmy Chapter of the National Academy of Television Arts and Sciences. She received the award for a piece called “True Grit” that Megan wrote, edited, and produced for the university’s television station.

As if her Crystal Pillar Award was not enough, Megan also pitched a perfect game this spring, leading the St. Cloud Husky softball team to victory over the University of Mary.

Megan excels in the classroom as well. Just this week she was named to the Northern Sun Intercollegiate Spring All-Academic team, which requires a minimum 3.2 GPA or higher.

Megan’s academic success, her success on the softball field, and her chosen career path, deserve recognition and celebration.

Congratulations, Megan. We are proud to have students like you at St. Cloud State University.

A NORMANDY SCHOLAR

Mr. EMMER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate Evan DuFresne and his teacher, Christopher Stewart, of the North Lakes Academy Charter School. Evan has recently been named a Normandy Scholar, and with this, Evan and Mr. Stewart have been chosen to attend the Normandy: Sacrifice

for Freedom Albert H. Small Student and Teacher Institute. They will participate in this prominent program alongside 14 other student and teacher teams from across the United States.

After coming up shy in last year's application, Evan doubled down on his commitment to this project. He resigned from the Civil Air Patrol Cadet Program after 5 dedicated years and even chose to delay his plans to join the Army National Guard. Thankfully, Evan's perseverance and dedication appealed to this year's judges.

The Normandy Scholar Program allows student to learn about World War II at an in-depth level by researching and telling the story of a fallen soldier from their hometown.

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The program also gives them the chance to pay their respects to this hero at the Normandy American Cemetery in Normandy, France.

Congratulations to both Evan and Mr. Stewart for being chosen to participate, and thank you for telling the story of an American hero from the Greatest Generation who paid the ultimate sacrifice. We look forward to hearing more about your educational journey in the months to come.

STILLWATER'S LAST MAN

Mr. EMMER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to stand in support of a local veteran who is now the last surviving member of his World War II veterans club.

Jean L. DeCurtins became the last member of his club when his lifelong friend Robert Kunshier passed away. Both were among the 180 men from the Stillwater area in Washington County, Minnesota, who joined the Minnesota National Guard's 34th Infantry right before World War II.

After the attacks on Pearl Harbor shook the Nation, DeCurtins and the rest of his unit deployed to Europe where they helped defend this Nation and the world. Jean was injured twice during the war and bravely returned to fight each time after recovery.

He returned to Stillwater, Minnesota, in 1944. Many of his friends did not return. The survivors in the area formed the A&D Last Man's Club, which was named after both companies the men belonged to during the war.

Mr. Speaker, men like Jean DeCurtins, and those in the Last Man's Club, bravely fought during World War II. They did so unselfishly and without reservation. We will never forget the courage and sacrifice they displayed during our Nation's and the world's darkest hour, and the world will always be thankful for them.

WELCOMING A STRANGER

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from New York (Ms. CLARKE) for 5 minutes.

Ms. CLARKE of New York. Mr. Speaker, a few days ago, I received a letter from a third grade student at the

Brooklyn Friends School and the Kane Street Synagogue Hebrew School named Elijah.

Elijah wrote: At our synagogue, we learned that welcoming a stranger is an important mitzvah, and I know that my people were immigrants and sometimes refugees trying to find a new home in the USA. So it is important to me that we extend our welcome to refugees from Haiti.

Elijah is right. The people of Haiti have suffered through numerous tragedies over the past few years alone. They have experienced a devastating and catastrophic earthquake, tragic cholera epidemic, ongoing food scarcity crisis, deadly hurricanes, and continued flooding.

For these reasons, the Obama administration designated Haiti for temporary protected status in 2010, and redesignated it four times thereafter. However, Haiti's TPS designation will expire in July if the administration does not act immediately.

That is why I organized with my colleagues of the Congressional Black Caucus and called for DHS Secretary John Kelly to redesignate Haiti for an additional 18 months of TPS.

We also asked DHS to issue a new TPS designation that would include the tens of thousands of Haitians who are in the United States but are not covered by the existing TPS designation.

The continuing humanitarian crisis on the ground in Haiti should make this an easy call. But news reports indicate that the acting head of USCIS, James McCament, is looking for evidence of crimes committed by Haitians to use as a pretext for ending Haiti's TPS designation. Such actions are part of the Trump administration's attempt to depict immigrants as criminals. They are also part of a flagrant effort to obscure the fact that TPS is based on the conditions on the ground in Haiti rather than the actions of some TPS beneficiaries here in the United States.

I call on Director Kelly to ignore these misguided voices and instead listen to people like Elijah. Human decency demands that the Department of Homeland Security extend temporary protected status to all Haitians present in the United States prior to November 4, 2016, as the country continues to rebuild.

CONDEMNING HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS IN CHECHNYA

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN) for 5 minutes.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I am deeply concerned by the rapidly deteriorating human rights situation in Chechnya where hundreds of gay or perceived-to-be gay men have been harassed, have been tortured, and have been killed by Chechen authorities.

On April 1, a Russian independent newspaper first reported on this deten-

tion and disappearance of gay men, which the Chechen leader has continuously denied.

You see, Mr. Speaker, the leader Ramzan refuses to acknowledge that gay men exist in Chechnya, but we know from many credible reports that the Chechen Government has allegedly put these men into camps, and it plans to eliminate its entire gay population by Ramadan, which is May 26.

This is disheartening, to say the least, in an era where the world is moving toward tolerance and equality for all people. To hear about these atrocities being committed is very tragic. The United States should not and must not turn a blind eye to this unwarranted persecution. All individuals, no matter their sexual orientation, their gender identity, their religion, their race, or any other basis deserve the full enjoyment of their God-given rights. These are universal and are for all people to enjoy.

In the wake of these events, I joined several of my colleagues from both sides of the aisle in sending a letter to Secretary of State Rex Tillerson to take swift action and condemn these atrocities which run counter to American values of promoting human rights and freedom and that should guide strategic decisions that we make on U.S. foreign policy.

I was glad to see that the Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor of the Department of State spoke out against the practice of the Chechen authorities and called for the immediate release of the hundreds of detained men being held at these camps.

U.N. Ambassador Nikki Haley must be congratulated, also. She condemned these abuses and raised the issue at the first U.N. Security Council meeting. I look forward to the continued collaboration of these agencies and with my colleagues because we must send a united and clear message that we are against all forms of discrimination and all forms of violence.

Mr. Speaker, we must not forget that Putin has significant influence over what goes on in Chechnya, and, to date, Putin has done nothing to help. This is simply outrageous.

From restrictions on political participation, to the suppression of civil society, to the silencing of religious minorities, to the prohibition of freedom of expression, Russia has a deplorable human rights record. Just over the last few years, the Russian Government has adopted laws that restrict free speech, that restrict free association of LGBT individuals, and Russian agencies threaten the removal of children from their rightful loving homes.

Chechnya's crackdown on the LGBT community, directed by government officials, it is very clear to see that these are not haphazard events. These are state-sponsored violent activities. It is time for Putin to talk to his crony Ramzan and put an end to this barbaric gay purge. No government ought to be