

For-Profit Emerging Company Award, which highlights their contributions to the hop industry and their efforts to develop an experimental hop yard.

Cybermation of Waite Park received the For-Profit Established Company Award for decades of work in digital healthcare technology for seniors. Cybermation has been innovating since 1996.

I also want to recognize the Talahi Community School for receiving the Nonprofit Organization Award for the school's commitment to building Minnesota's premier adaptive playground in St. Cloud.

Finally, I want to recognize Jugaad for also receiving a Nonprofit Organization Award for their Jugaad Leadership Program in St. Cloud that trains members of underrepresented communities with the knowledge and skills to produce grassroots change.

Again, congratulations to all of this year's award winners. I thank them for their innovation and contribution to our communities.

CAPITAL ONE'S GENEROSITY

Mr. EMMER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Capital One and its executive team and employees for their generosity and their commitment to the local communities they serve.

Capital One has generously contributed to the Boys and Girls Club of Central Minnesota to support the organization's mission to enable young people to reach their full potential.

Capital One's \$15,000 grant to fund Project Learn helps advance a focus on equipping kids with coding skills to meet the needs of the future. STEM and tech-related skills are important to the future of our Nation, and Capital One is making a significant investment in our future leaders.

Since 2012, Capital One has donated over \$80,000 to the Boys and Girls Club of Central Minnesota.

Again, I want to thank Capital One for their commitment to the young people of central Minnesota. We are blessed to have them and their team in our community and in the great State of Minnesota.

NEVER GIVE UP

Mr. EMMER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate an amazing constituent of mine for his talent and perseverance. From 2003 to 2008, Mick Schultz from Kimball, Minnesota, was a professional snowmobile racer.

In 2008, while competing at a national snocross race, Mike was in a snowmobile accident that resulted in the loss of his left leg. After such a devastating experience, no one would have thought less of Mike if he stopped competing, but Mike Schultz did not give up. Instead, he was racing again at the national level in less than 8 months. Over the past 10 years, Mike has earned eight gold medals at the X Games in adaptive motocross.

Mike would not allow his accident to keep him from sharing his talent and spirit with the world. Mike's talent, however, is not limited to racing snowmobiles.

In 2010, Mike began snowboarding as research for his company, BioDapt, which develops prosthetic equipment for athletes. This led him to compete as a member of the U.S. Snowboarding team. He is now in his fourth season.

As if all of his other accomplishments are not enough, Mike is now a Kellogg's cereal celebrity. Over the years, immensely talented athletes have graced boxes of Frosted Flakes, and we are proud that this year Mike joins the ranks.

I am honored to congratulate Mike on all of his incredible accomplishments and his recognition by Kellogg's. Mike is proof of what a person can accomplish when he confronts life's challenges head-on. Mike is a winner and an example to us all. We are proud and honored that he is a member of our community.

IMPEACHMENT DISCUSSIONS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas (Mr. AL GREEN) for 5 minutes.

Mr. AL GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I am always grateful to have this preeminent privilege of standing in the well of the Congress of the United States of America.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to announce that three prominent Democrats have asked to meet with me to discuss impeachment.

□ 1030

Mr. Speaker, I will meet with them in my office, and here is what I will say:

I will tell them that impeachment is not about Democrats. It is not about Republicans. I will tell them it is about democracy. It is about government of the people, by the people, for the people. I will tell them that it is about the Republic and that it is about what Franklin said: We have a Republic, if we can keep it.

I will tell them that I refuse to sit on the sidelines while the world is considering one of the greatest issues of our time. I will tell them that I will continue to be a part of this great debate.

I will tell them these words I have heard, but I do not know the origin of. I will tell them that if a man does not keep pace with his companions, perhaps he hears a different drummer. Let him step to the music he hears, however measured, however far away.

Mr. Speaker, I will tell them that tomorrow we will bring Articles of Impeachment to the floor of the Congress of the United States of America for a vote.

NATIONAL MINERS DAY

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

Mr. BYRNE. Mr. Speaker, I rise to commemorate National Miners Day.

National Miners Day is recognized on December 6 each year, and I want to

express my deep appreciation to the hundreds of thousands of men and women who work in our Nation's quarries, dredge operations, and other mine facilities to help build and power our Nation.

These workers do a great deal to extract the materials found in every home, building, road, bridge, and public works project.

U.S. domestic production and use of stone, sand, and gravel, or aggregates, amounted to 2.5 million tons of crushed stone, valued at \$25 billion. The U.S. Mine Safety and Health Administration has reported that, throughout its 40 facilities, almost 3,000 people in my home State of Alabama owe their jobs to aggregates mining.

While performing this critical function, workers in the aggregates sector have helped make workplaces the safest they have ever been. In fact, 2016 marked the 16th consecutive year in which the industry reduced its injury rate from the year-earlier level. The rate stood at the record low level of just 1.95 injuries per 200,000 hours worked.

I applaud the safe practices of the aggregates industry and the hardworking men and women who are helping to continue this positive trend.

As chairman of the House Workforce Protections Subcommittee, I look forward to continuing to work with the Labor Department's Mine Safety and Health Administration to advance smart regulation and preventive enforcement that can help keep the workplace safe.

HONORING THE LIFE OF DR. LAUREL BLACKWELL

Mr. BYRNE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to remember the life of Dr. Laurel Blackwell. Laurel recently passed away after fighting cancer and other medical issues.

Laurel was raised at her childhood farm home in Monticello, Iowa. She obtained an associate's degree from Cottey College in Missouri and a bachelor's degree from the University of Northern Iowa. She later earned her doctorate in administration of higher education from the University of Alabama.

After an early career in K-12 education, she started working in Alabama's community college system. She rose from serving as a tutor to becoming the director of adult education at Wallace Community College in Dothan, Alabama, and the director of workforce development at Southern Union Community College in Opelika, Alabama. Ultimately, she would become the president of Chattahoochee Valley Community College in Phenix City, Alabama.

During my time as chancellor of Alabama's community college system, I grew to know Laurel as a very professional and dependable colleague. I appreciated her honest and direct approach to the issues we faced together.

During her career, she held numerous roles in professional and civic organizations. She was recognized with a Girl

Scout Woman of Achievement award and as the city of Dothan's first ever Community Leader of the Year.

Even though she retired from education, she never stopped working to make the world a better place. She launched Communities of Transformation, a program through the United Methodist Church focused on bringing together people from every segment of society to elevate families.

Suffice it to say, Laurel had a positive impact on so many lives throughout her time on this Earth. Whether it was helping a student at her community college reach their full potential or giving hope to a struggling family, so many people owe their success to Laurel Blackwell.

So, on behalf of Alabama's First Congressional District, I want to share my deepest condolences to Laurel's husband, Fred, and their four children. I hope they can all take comfort in knowing that Laurel will live on in the lives of the countless individuals she touched. She will be sorely missed.

TRIBUTE TO MARINE MAJOR ERIC BURKETT

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

Mr. KELLY of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of one of my constituents, United States Marine Major Eric Burkett, from New Castle, Pennsylvania.

Major Burkett was deployed as a member of the 24th Expeditionary Force in Morocco as an Osprey pilot. On April 11, 2012, he was nearly killed in a plane crash, which took the lives of two of his brothers-in-arms.

After coming home to Walter Reed, he lost one of his legs and continues to recover from his numerous injuries to this day. His wife, Melissa, who also is a former marine, has been by his side from day 1, along with their loving six children.

Major Burkett may never fly again, but already with his recovery he soars high above most of us. It was his spirit of service and patriotism that led him to start a program at Fort Belvoir for adaptive archery for his fellow wounded warriors.

Mr. Speaker, I include in the RECORD a poem penned by Albert Carey Caswell in his honor and in celebration of his new adaptive home, built thanks to the Gary Sinise Foundation.

At this time, I will read an excerpt from this poem:

As his two brothers, angels now up to Heaven
would rise . . .
Coming back home with only his family
upon which to rely . . .
So all by his side . . .
His fine wife, Melissa, and children giving
him the strength to try . . .
As he knew it was time . . .
Time to rebuild his life . . .
Armed with his heart of the strength and
iron will . . .
Giving him the power and courage to nourish
him to instill . . .

The strength to rebuild . . .
Who against all odds our wounded warriors
into that dark night move onward still
. . .

Mr. Speaker, it is people like Major Burkett, whom we celebrate. It is the people who put themselves in danger and harm's way in order to protect the rest of us. I am so proud and humble today to be able to submit this poem in honor of Major Burkett.

OSPREY DE CORPS
(By Albert Carey Caswell)

Osprey
Osprey De Corps
What a magnificent presence oh for sure
And oh what a Osprey De Force
As straight as an arrow heading for
Truer than true into that face of war
To serve and protect
His Country 'Tis of Thee he'll not neglect
To reek havoc upon the enemy a shear train
wreck
All in those magnificent shades of green
Such Strength In Honor seen
Soaring to new his courage convenes
With such impact this United States Marine.
Oh to be a United States Marine
Who in Strength In Honor are seen
Soaring to new heights to intervene
To fight the fight
What a Osprey De Force awesome sight
Who for all us out on his course took flight
Marines with wings,
one of the most impressive of all things
A sheer work of art this human being
Swooping down upon the enemy for the Na-
tion he so loves
A bulls eye,
hitting his mark all in his battle cry
To vanquish an enemy straight into the
heart of he flies
Going from vertical to horizontal as he
will not be denied
In and out of places others dare not to try
Making those boots on the ground realize
That he's got their backs up on high
Who bleeds Marine green all the time
And loves Marines so much he married a Ma-
rine this guy
One of the baddest of the bad upon which
this Nation relies
Who leads with his heart as he sets
his sights on high
Finding his mark
An Osprey De Corps all in his part
Oh what a force
All out on his most heroic course
A United States Marine burning bright,
this force
When, out on a mission crashed as death was
at his side
As his two brothers,
angels now up to Heaven would rise
Coming back home with only his family
upon which to rely
So all by his side
His fine wife Melissa and children giving him
the strength to try
As he knew it was time
Time to rebuild his life
Armed with his heart of the strength and
iron will
Giving him the power and courage to nourish
him to instill
The strength to rebuild
Who against all odds our wounded warriors
into that dark night move onward
still
As he won the battle but lose his leg
Realizing he'd never fly again on that day
When, he looked at his target and then his
options weighted
So setting his sights high out on his way
A Osprey De Corps on his way to recovery
with tear in eye seemed as he prayed

Bulls eye hitting the mark
As soon he was up and out the door
Leaving behind a town called pity for sure
When, to new heights his heart so soared
To Teach Us
To Reach Us
To Beseech Us All The More
Creating his own Hunger Games,
with his great appetite for recovery he hun-
gered for
And the last time I saw Major Burkett,
I had to look up
Because, with his fine heart way above me he
so soars
His wife Melissa he married up for sure
With four beautiful children he's thinks he is
the luckiest guy and can't ask for
more
Because, the families are the unsung heroes
whenever Johnny goes off to war
Who are the ones who must wait and worry
all the more
And when they come home give them such
comfort for their recovery to insure
And where would all these heroes be if it
were not but for all of these?
The families are our unsung heroes each day
our Lord so sees
Leading the way to recovery
Major Burkett all in those shades of green
Is one magnificent Osprey De Force seen
The pride of Pennsylvania for what he's done
and where he's been
Its courageous men like him off to war our
Nation sends
Who help win all those wars upon whom we
depend
For all that we hold sacred and so love and
adore
A one fine Osprey De Corps
Ooo Rah!

STRENGTHENING AMERICA'S AGRICULTURE COMMUNITIES

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

Mr. ARRINGTON. Mr. Speaker, I am proud to represent a rural district in west Texas that is home to 14 million acres of farmland and thousands of hardworking farmers and ranchers. These men and women are feeding and clothing the American people. They are bolstering our economy and they are strengthening our national security.

As a member of the House Agriculture Committee, I am committed to delivering results that are in the best interest not only of west Texans, but all Americans. I am doing that with my neighbor and strong leader of the Ag Committee, MIKE CONAWAY.

As we craft the next farm bill, there are a few priorities that, if achieved, will put our United States farmers and ranchers, and our country as a whole, in the strongest competitive position.

The first is that we must maintain America's food and fiber independence from other countries, which, like energy independence, is a national security imperative.

To achieve this objective, we must maintain a viable and responsible safety net for all commodities, which means the committee must work in a bipartisan way to get cotton back in under title I of the farm bill.

We can never again let the World Trade Organization dictate agriculture policy to the United States.