

HONORING GUENET GITTENS-ROBERTS AS A DISTINGUISHED LEADER IN CENTRAL FLORIDA FOR CARIBBEAN AMERICAN HERITAGE MONTH

**HON. DARREN SOTO**

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, June 18, 2020*

Mr. SOTO. Madam Speaker, Guenet Gittens-Roberts is CEO of GGR Marketing & Public Relations, a company which currently markets and/or produces some of the largest Caribbean Festivals in Orlando including the Caribbean Fusion Festival in Kissimmee, the Orlando Carnival Downtown, and the Caribbean American Heritage Month Festival. She is responsible for developing and directing their communication strategy while also managing the agency's outreach to the advertising, charitable, and business communities. GGR Marketing & Public Relations was formed to develop and execute programs aimed at reaching multicultural communities and niche markets utilizing an effective mixture of relationship marketing, event marketing, and branding through social media and traditional media sources. They offer a broad range of services that include marketing, public relations, branding, special event planning and management, sponsorship and fundraising, business development, and media relations.

Gittens-Roberts is also the publisher of Caribbean American Passport News Magazine, the largest and only Caribbean owned State-wide Newspaper in Florida. Caribbean American Passport is heading into its 10th year in September and covers the people of the English, French and Spanish communities in Florida. Through their publishing arm, they were responsible for the publication of *Misión Boricua*, a Spanish publication designed to raise awareness for the Puerto Rican community to vote in the 2016 election.

As an active member of the community, Gittens-Roberts serves as President of the Caribbean American Chamber of Commerce. She also served as the vice president of the Central Florida Association of Black Journalists and vice president of the Guyanese American Cultural Association of Central Florida in addition to being actively involved in Greater Orlando Cares and United Foundation of Central Florida, two organizations focused on youth mentoring programs.

**RECOGNIZING CINDY O'BOYLE**

**HON. GREG GIANFORTE**

OF MONTANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, June 18, 2020*

Mr. GIANFORTE. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor Cindy O'Boyle of Kalispell for encouraging, empowering, and uplifting women throughout Montana through the Montana Woman Foundation (MWF). Sixteen years ago, Cindy founded MWF and serves as its executive director. The 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization's mission is to help all Montana women reach their full potential through mentorship, workshops, and scholarships the group provides.

Cindy says she knows how important it is for women to support women. The group's

board believes women are stronger together and that programs that help women overcome challenges will ultimately benefit them and their communities.

Each year, MWF generally awards scholarships to women "who are generally non-traditional students or women who are underserved, underprivileged or have dealt with a variety of struggles including but not limited to homelessness or poverty, health issues, learning disabilities, domestic-violence, foster care, single- or teen motherhood."

Any Montana woman, regardless of age or social, economic, or cultural differences, may apply for the scholarship or participate in educational workshops or mentorship program. The goal is always the same: empower women to overcome obstacles, improve themselves, and better their community.

One specific example of success, which is near and dear to Cindy's heart, is a woman MWF helped during its first five years. The woman in her early 60s was married, and her husband worked and provided for them. Unfortunately, he had a stroke that forced him to end his career. The couple were not situated for retirement, and she faced the challenge of finding a good-paying job. To earn what the couple needed, she needed to go back to school. MWF paid for her to get the education she needed, she became an office assistant, and she began providing for the family. Cindy says it's scary to be put in that situation, but the woman's grit and determination brought her success.

This week, the foundation, which received over 250 applications for its 2020 scholarships, will announce the recipients. While MWF usually awards four annual scholarships, it will provide seven scholarships this year to Montana women across our state.

Madam Speaker, for nurturing and encouraging Montana women, helping change their lives, and supporting them in their success, I recognize Cindy O'Boyle of Kalispell for her Spirit of Montana.

**CHUCK NEWSOM**

**HON. DONALD NORCROSS**

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, June 18, 2020*

Mr. NORCROSS. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor and commend the Brigantine, New Jersey resident Chuck Newsom, Timber Creek High School Educator of the Year 2020.

This year we honor Chuck Newsom, a dedicated educator at Timber Creek Regional High School, on his receipt of the 2020 Timber Creek Regional High School Educator of the Year award. In addition to his role as a special education teacher, he serves as football coach, basketball coach, head coach of the girls' volleyball team and is a role model for all his students.

Prior to his career of being a special education teacher at Timber Creek Regional High School, Newsom pursued a degree in law and justice at Glassboro State College. He graduated in 1980 with career aspirations of going into law enforcement but changed course when he received a job offer as a Union Ironworker. After 10 years in the profession, Chuck decided to go back to school and earn a teaching certificate from Rowan University.

He began his career as a special education teacher at Camden and Pennsauken High Schools, where he also served as Assistant Coach for a myriad of different sports teams. After teaching for 13 years for Camden and Pennsauken High Schools, he later moved to Timber Creek Regional High School where he continued to teach students for an additional 13 years.

After more than a decade of inspiring, coaching, and shaping the lives of the students who attend Timber Creek Regional High School, Chuck is recognized as the Educator of the Year. He is beloved amongst his advisors, his pupils, and his teams. The connections he makes, along with his ability to inspire and engage, with all students allows him to excel in his position as a special education teacher.

Madam Speaker, I ask you to join me in honoring Chuck Newsom, of Brigantine, New Jersey, a dedicated public-school educator who continues to inspire hundreds of students throughout all of South Jersey.

HONORING LLOYD PHILLIPS AS A DISTINGUISHED LEADER IN CENTRAL FLORIDA FOR CARIBBEAN AMERICAN HERITAGE MONTH

**HON. DARREN SOTO**

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, June 18, 2020*

Mr. SOTO. Madam Speaker, Lloyd Phillips was born in Guyana and relocated to the United States with his parents and siblings in 1969. He completed his high school education in Brooklyn, New York where his quest for higher learning led him to enroll at Brooklyn College. He attained a bachelor's degree in Economics and then went to Long Island University where he graduated with an MBA in Finance.

Lloyd worked at Barclays Bank before being hired at the number one investment banking firm, Goldman Sachs & Company, where he worked in the Special Accounts Department. Lloyd subsequently worked his way up to Supervising Manager of the Special Accounts Trading Desk.

Lloyd's career at Goldman Sachs ended during an economic downturn and decided to embark on a career change, joining the ranks of the Uniformed Services in New York City. He rose to the rank of Captain before taking an early retirement.

With a young but growing family, Lloyd and his wife Delilah decided to relocate to Florida, so that their children can live in an environment better suited to their needs. The family settled in Kissimmee, where Lloyd is currently President of the Caribbean and Floridian Association. He was also the President of the Commonwealth Alliance Association, Vice-President of the Guyanese-American Cultural Association, President of the Guyanese-American Diaspora United, and Vice-President of the Strafford Park Home-Owners Association. He was also appointed as an Educational Resource Ambassador by the University of Guyana, awarded a Certificate of Special Congressional Recognition, presented by Congressman HAKEEM JEFFRIES for his work with the Guyanese Cultural Association of New York, and recognized by the City Council of

New York with a Certificate of Recognition presented by Council Member Mathieu Eugene.

#### HONORING AUBRI ESTERS

##### HON. AYANNA PRESSLEY

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 18, 2020

Ms. PRESSLEY. Madam Speaker, I rise today to ask the House of Representatives to join me in honoring and celebrating the life of Ms. Aubri Esters, an outspoken and beloved activist.

Aubri was a voice for the unheard. She was unabashed in sharing her story and her lived experiences to advocate for the wellbeing of those most marginalized, including other transgender individuals, people with disabilities, people with substance use disorders, and trauma survivors.

In addition to serving on the Commonwealth of Massachusetts' Harm Reduction Commission, Aubri co-founded the organization SIFMA Now!, a coalition dedicated to building public support for supervised consumption sites and other life-saving harm reduction efforts. Whether on the ground working directly with impacted communities or in the Massachusetts State House advocating for progressive health policies that center those most vulnerable, Aubri was committed to saving lives.

On Thursday, June 11th, our community lost a true activist leader, table shaker and accomplice in the fight for health care justice. Aubri will be missed dearly, but her legacy lives on in the policy she helped to create, in the hearts of her fellow activists, and in the minds of policy makers who she engaged and enlightened.

Madam Speaker, I ask the House of Representatives to join me in recognizing the life of Aubri Esters and her contributions to the Massachusetts 7th Congressional District. We remember Aubri with tremendous gratitude for her life-saving advocacy. May she forever rest in power.

#### HONORING THE LIFE AND LEGACY OF THERESA CARRANO ARGENTO

##### HON. ROSA L. DeLAURO

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 18, 2020

Ms. DeLAURO. Madam Speaker, it is with the heaviest of hearts that I rise today to pay tribute to the life and legacy of one of the pillars of New Haven's Italian-American community and my dear friend, Theresa Carrano Argento. She lived a long, full life and our community will not be the same without her.

One of six children, Theresa grew up in the Wooster Square neighborhood of New Haven. Her father owned a "specialty market," selling imported fruit from California—pears, oranges, and cherries, all individually wrapped in color-coded paper. Her mother was an immigrant from Italy. When the stock market crashed, her father nearly lost the store. Instead of folding as so many others had, her father found work, as did she and her siblings, and her mother was left to run the family business. It

was from these early life lessons that Theresa learned the true strength of family and community.

Theresa dedicated most of her adult life to preserving and celebrating the community and its members' shared Italian heritage. She was a founding member of the Saint Andrew's Ladies Auxiliary, the women's branch of one of New Haven's Italian-American Societies and an organization she led for decades before stepping down only a few short years ago. She was also a dedicated communicant of St. Michael's Church, Connecticut's oldest Italian church, organizing and supporting fundraisers and even serving as its bookkeeper for a time. She worked to revive the Columbus Day celebration in New Haven and was a constant presence at Wooster Square's annual Cherry Blossom Festival. She was a member, and often served in the leadership, of most of the Italian-American clubs and organizations in the community. Theresa understood the importance of preserving and sharing that culture and those traditions with new generations. She was, in a word, remarkable.

Theresa was a matriarch in the Wooster Square community, much like my own mother, Luisa. They were, in fact, great friends and it was a friendship that remained strong until my mother's passing just two years ago. Both Theresa and my mother were forces of nature in their own rights, and when they got together, there was no stopping them. It was at their feet that I learned the importance of community and it is on their shoulders that I stand today. I would not be who I am today without their influence so I will be forever grateful for their guidance and support.

Theresa was an extraordinary friend, mentor, and community leader. I like so many others consider myself fortunate to have known her. She was so much more than a friend—she was family. I am heartbroken at her loss, but I know her memory will live on. I extend my deepest sympathies to Theresa's daughters, Nettie and Francis, as well as her four grandchildren and five great-grandchildren. Throughout her life, she touched the lives of many and hers is a legacy that will continue to inspire both those who knew her and generations to come.

#### HONORING TOMMI PRITCHETT AS A DISTINGUISHED LEADER IN CENTRAL FLORIDA FOR PRIDE MONTH

##### HON. DARREN SOTO

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 18, 2020

Mr. SOTO. Madam Speaker, Tommi Pritchett currently serves as the Director of Development and Kissimmee Program Manager for LGBTQ+ Center Orlando, Incorporated. She is a native of Central Florida, earned her Bachelor of Arts in English at Rollins College, and has received several certificates from the Edyth Bush Institute for Philanthropy and Non-profit Leadership.

Her journey in public service began in 2010 when she volunteered for a local non-profit organization's booth at the Gay Days Expo. She continued as a volunteer with Paws Care for two years as their marketing and events coordinator; to which she attributes her love of

event planning and fundraising. She went on to volunteer and then work for Orlando Fringe, the longest running Fringe festival in the United States, and transitioned to the LGBTQ+ Center in August 2018.

In addition to animals and the LGBTQ+ community, Tommi advocates for the arts, women, and BIPOC, among other underserved and underprivileged communities. She is a member of the Association of Fundraising Professionals Central Florida Chapter and serves on the board of directors for LoveyLoaves Special Needs Rescue and Sanctuary. She is honored to be recognized as an LGBTQ+ Community Leader in Central Florida and is proud to serve such a diverse and deserving community. She owes much of her success to the mentors she has had along her professional journey, as well as the staff, board, and volunteers at The Center, her family and friends, and the great community leaders she feels privileged to work alongside. When she is not busy with her leadership and advocacy responsibilities, she enjoys spending time with her family, dogs, and recently discovered a passion for hydroponic gardening.

#### HONORING THE LIFE OF SAINT PAUL PUBLIC SCHOOLS BOARD CHAIR MARNY XIONG

##### HON. BETTY MCCOLLUM

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 18, 2020

Ms. MCCOLLUM. Madam Speaker, today I rise to honor the life of Ms. Marny Xiong, Chairwoman of the Saint Paul Public Schools Board of Education who passed away from COVID-19 at the age of 31 on Sunday, June 7, 2020. Ms. Xiong was a trailblazing young activist, community leader, and a dedicated advocate for young people and strong public schools. Gender equity and racial justice were the core values that defined her public service.

After receiving her bachelor's degree in political science and African and African-American studies, Ms. Xiong began working in the local nonprofit community. In 2017 she was elected to the Saint Paul Public Schools Board of Education, demonstrating strong advocacy to improve our public schools. She played an important role in building support necessary to pass a bond referendum in 2018 that directed needed additional funding to Saint Paul schools.

When Ms. Xiong became Chairwoman of the Board in January of this year, her leadership abilities became evident as she confronted dual crises of the district's first ever teachers' strike and the COVID-19 pandemic. Ms. Xiong worked respectfully and collaboratively with Superintendent Joe Gothard and labor leaders to reach a successful resolution to the strike in early March. Only a short time later, in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, she helped to steer the district's unprecedented transition to distance learning for more than 37,000 students. It is heartbreaking that this pandemic has now taken one of our community's rising leaders.

Ms. Xiong is survived by her parents, Mr. Zahoua Xiong and See Xiong, and her seven siblings: two sisters and five brothers, as well as two brothers-in-law, a sister-in-law, four nieces and nephews. Marny will be remembered as a caring community organizer, a