

Brittinie teaches culinary arts, one of the most requested courses at Baker County High School. She aims to connect her class lessons to real life and the workforce and strives to teach more than just academics. She is known for impacting not only the lives of her students and their families, but also her community.

Brittinie's love for her students is her reason to maintain high expectations for their excellence in school. Over the course of each year, her students learn how to operate a cafe within the high school, provide meals for the faculty and students, and cater for various community events.

I offer my best wishes to Brittinie for her commitment to helping her students succeed in school and look forward to hearing of her continued good work in the years to come.●

TRIBUTE TO ALLISON JONES

● Mr. RUBIO. Madam President, today I honor Allison Jones, the Bradford County Teacher of the Year at Bradford Middle School in Starke, FL.

Allison's work towards improving her students' testing performance has yielded positive results over the years, collaborating with her colleagues to improve math and writing scores for students.

Allison's goal has always been to help students reach their maximum potential, and she takes every opportunity to celebrate each student's success, no matter how large or small. She is motivated by compassion and believes in establishing and maintaining deep relationships with her students and their families.

Allison teaches sixth grade science at Bradford Middle School and has worked as an educator in Florida for 20 years. She also designs various curricula for the State that is driven not just by data, but also assessments of individual student needs.

I express my deepest gratitude to Allison for her commitment to her students, and I look forward to hearing of her continued success in the years to come.●

TRIBUTE TO AMANDA JONES-CARLSON

● Mr. RUBIO. Madam President, today I recognize Amanda Jones-Carlson, the Gilchrist County Teacher of the Year at Trenton Elementary School in Trenton, FL.

Amanda considers it an absolute honor to be named Teacher of the Year for her school district. She views her students as her inspiration, believing that making a difference in just one of their lives motivates her to be the best teacher she can be.

To her, seeing one of her students grasp a difficult or complex concept is what makes Amanda's job worthwhile. She believes the best part about teaching students is not just the chance to see them learn, but to watch their ex-

citement grow for the entire learning process.

Amanda teaches first grade at Trenton Elementary School and has taught in Gilchrist County for 8 years.

I offer my sincere thanks and appreciation to Amanda for her dedication to her students. I look forward to hearing of her continued success in the coming years.●

TRIBUTE TO DAVID MARTINEZ-COOLEY

● Mr. RUBIO. Madam President, today I am pleased to recognize David Martinez-Cooley, the Pinellas County Teacher of the Year from Leila G. Davis Elementary School in Clearwater, FL.

David is known for finding creative ways of engaging his students to pass on his passion and love for music. He considers himself to be just one of many teachers of the year across Pinellas County who dedicates their time to inspiring their students every day.

David's colleagues are enthralled by his enthusiasm and the drive he brings to his classroom each day. He is viewed as a role model among his peers, and many of his students throughout the years note the positive influence he has implanted in their lives.

David is a music education teacher at Leila G. Davis Elementary School and has taught in Pinellas County for 13 years. He received his master's degrees in music education and mathematics education from the University of Florida. David also serves on the district's textbook adoption committee, helping to select new digital resources for elementary music students. He has also helped in leading other music educators by presenting at district and State training events and assisted in the revision and refinement of the district's grade level key learnings.

I would like to express my sincere thanks and appreciation to David and extend my best wishes on his continued success in the years to come.●

TRIBUTE TO CHEYENNA NOVOTNY

● Mr. RUBIO. Madam President, today I am pleased to honor Cheyenna Novotny, the Escambia County Teacher of the Year at West Florida High School in Pensacola, FL.

Cheyenna teaches chemistry and environmental science at West Florida High School and has been a teacher for 16 years. Outside of the classroom, Cheyenna leads the student environmental club and helped to launch a full-scale recycling program for the entire school last year.

For Cheyenna, it is important to know how her students are learning as they progress throughout the year. Each of her students receives an individual whiteboard to use as they work to solve math or chemistry problems on their own. Having students show their work on the whiteboards helps

them and Cheyenna to see firsthand how well they grasp a concept.

Cheyenna believes in celebrating every learning victory for her students throughout the year, no matter how big or small. Her students view her not only as their teacher, but also as someone who is their friend who works to prepare them for their educational careers. She considers it a privilege to work with her students, to encourage their dreams, and to share their passions.

I express my best wishes and gratitude to Cheyenna, and I look forward to hearing of her continued good work in the years to come.●

TRIBUTE TO ANGELA ROBERTS

● Mr. RUBIO. Madam President, today I am pleased to recognize Angela Roberts, the Martin County Teacher of the Year from Felix A. Williams Elementary School in Stuart, FL.

Angela is a third grade English language arts and social studies teacher at Felix A. Williams Elementary School. She has taught for 28 years, with 21 years in the Martin County School District. She leads workshops during her school's literacy nights, serves as a youth life coach and soloist at her church, moderates as a high school debate team judge, volunteers as a member of the Keep Martin Beautiful beach clean-up crew, and spends her time as an advanced choir parent volunteer for both Jensen Beach and Martin County high schools.

Angela believes that children deserve a champion in their life, and she wholeheartedly embraces this responsibility. Before she works to educate her students' minds, she connects with their hearts, learning who they are individually to design lessons that bring them to the core of her subject matter. She understands that what some students need most is not necessarily what is found in lesson plans, but what is found in a teacher's heart.

Angela knows that educators hold the high honor and responsibility of influencing future generations. Time spent in grade school encompasses a student's most formative years, sometimes spent more with teachers than with parents. In consideration of this, at the beginning of each school year, Angela invites parents to download an app that provides them with access to communicate with the classroom, following the lesson plan alongside students each day.

I thank Angela for all the great work she has done for her students over the years. I extend my best wishes to her and look forward to hearing of her continued good work in the coming years.●

TRIBUTE TO CARI RODRIGUEZ

● Mr. RUBIO. Madam President, today I recognize Cari Rodriguez, the Broward County Teacher of the Year from Harbordale Elementary School in Fort Lauderdale, FL.

Cari believes that the student experience should never be boring. Each day, she works to create a space where students can truly enjoy what they are learning in her classroom. From composing a new song that helps with memorizing multiplication facts, to building igloo prototypes showing a better understanding of life in the Arctic regions, Cari goes to creative lengths to make both teaching and learning fun.

Cari is a literacy coach at Harbordale Elementary and has taught for 21 years. The success of her students serves as her inspiration, and she encourages them to make the learning process fun, not only in her class, but also in their future endeavors.

I extend my best wishes and sincere gratitude to Cari for her dedication to teaching. I look forward to hearing of her continued good work in the years ahead.●

TRIBUTE TO KRISTA STANLEY

● Mr. RUBIO. Madam President, today I honor Krista Stanley, the Okeechobee County Teacher of the year from Yearling Middle School in Okeechobee, FL.

Krista is a sixth grade teacher and has taught at Yearling Middle School for the past 4 years. She serves as the school math representative, a mentor for new teachers, and facilitates professional development focusing on standards based instruction. Krista was previously named the Project One New Teacher of the Year for Okeechobee County in 2016.

Krista believes that all students can learn if they are given the opportunity to do so in the classroom. She is appreciative of her students and cares for them, considering them to be the reason for her success as a teacher.

Throughout the school year, Krista provides her students with the tools they need to be successful and dedicates each day to helping them in any way she can. Reflecting her commitment, in 2019, 86 percent of Krista's students earned a proficient score on the Florida State Assessment.

I extend my best wishes to Krista for her tireless efforts and care she gives to her students. I look forward to hearing of her continued good work in the years to come.●

RECOGNIZING SERGIO'S FAMILY RESTAURANT

● Mr. RUBIO. Madam President, as chairman of the Senate Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship, each week I recognize a small business that exemplifies the American entrepreneurial spirit at the heart of our country. It is my privilege to recognize a family-owned small business known for its community leadership and authentic Cuban cuisine. This week, it is my pleasure to honor Sergio's Family Restaurant of Miami, FL, as the Senate Small Business of the Week.

In 1975, Blanca Cabrera opened what would become Sergio's Family Res-

taurant as a small sandwich shop off of Bird Road in Miami. Equipped with generations of family recipes, Blanca sought to honor her Cuban heritage. Her shop provided employment for several refugees, providing dignified work as they built new lives. She offered a fresh take on Cuban and American cuisine, and her sandwich shop became a local hit.

Today, Sergio's Family Restaurant has expanded to 13 locations in South Florida. Carlos Gazitua, the chief executive officer, is the third generation family member to lead Sergio's. Under his leadership, the business has expanded its community involvement and emphasized healthy living while retaining its signature flavor. Sergio's has been recognized by the Florida Department of Health as the first certified restaurant to take part in the Healthy Happens Here restaurant initiative, incorporating low-calorie versions of traditional Cuban eats on their menu.

At the local and State level and among its industry peers, Sergio's has been recognized for its outstanding cuisine. They were named Best Drive-Thru of 2015 by the Miami New Times, recognized as the 2017 Restaurant of the Year by the South Florida Tourism Professional Awards, and their traditional empanadas were featured in "Florida's Best Cheap Eats" by Travel & Leisure Magazine. Additionally, the city of Miami and Miami-Dade County mayors honored Sergio's with Croqueta Day on October 2, 2018. On this day, Sergio's served its 20 millionth croqueta—croquette.

As a community leader, Sergio's has advocated for several nonprofit organizations and local small businesses. In 2015, Sergio's donated food to a Live Like Bella Childhood Cancer Foundation event. Then-Governor RICK SCOTT recognized Sergio's service in 2017, when they collected and shipped food and supplies to Puerto Rico after Hurricane Maria devastated the island. When Super Bowl LIV was held in Miami in 2020, Sergio's partnered with The Women's Fund of Miami-Dade to raise funds for its mission to create awareness and preventing sex trafficking. Additionally, Carlos has advocated for small business in local and industry events, including the "Bring Small Business Back" initiative.

Like many Floridian small businesses, Sergio's Family Restaurant stepped up to help its community during the coronavirus pandemic. They participated in several social media, radio, and video initiatives encouraging support for local, family-owned small businesses. Partnering with the Miami Heat and the Miami Dade County Public School Superintendent, Sergio's Restaurant provided meals for more than 500 people in the Liberty City area. Sergio's collaborated with Meals for Heroes Miami to feed local healthcare workers and first responders, including donating approximately 1,400 meals to the Miami-Dade Fire

Rescue teams. Additionally, Carlos worked with U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and the Florida Restaurant Lodging Association to provide more than 350,000 reusable masks for hospitality workers in South Florida.

When the U.S. Small Business Administration launched the Paycheck Protection Program, it provided a much needed lifeline to small businesses, including Sergio's Restaurant. The PPP provides forgivable loans to impacted small businesses and non-profits who maintain their payroll during the COVID-19 pandemic. Thanks to a PPP loan, Sergio's was able to keep their employees paid until Miami reopened. Their community leadership and advocacy was recognized by Governor Ron DeSantis who visited Sergio's in early June.

Through their service and leadership, Sergio's Family Restaurant is an outstanding example of how small businesses uplift their communities. I commend their support for local small businesses. Congratulations to Carlos and the entire team at Sergio's restaurant. I look forward to watching your continued growth and success throughout South Florida.●

VERMONT STATE OF THE UNION ESSAY CONTEST FINALISTS

● Mr. SANDERS. Madam President, I ask to have printed in the RECORD some of the finalist essays written by Vermont High School students as part of the 10th annual "State of the Union" essay contest conducted by my office.

The material follows:

MADELYN TRIMPI, WOODSTOCK UNION HIGH SCHOOL, JUNIOR

Plastic is destroying the earth and a federal law to restrict single-use plastics must be developed. Plastic is a huge contributor to climate change and greenhouse gas emissions that are warming the atmosphere. An article called "How Plastics Contribute to Climate Change" by Brooke Bauman from Yale Climate Connections states "plastic originates as fossil fuels and emits greenhouse gasses from cradle to grave." At the beginning of its life cycle, gas and oil are fracked from the ground, then made into plastic releasing harmful pollutants like CO₂ and nitrogen oxide that get stuck in the atmosphere and warm the earth. Along with greenhouse gas emissions, plastic pollutes the ecosystems by simply entering and never leaving. In the same article by Yale, scientists state "plastics can break down into smaller pieces called microplastics through biodegradation or exposure to the sun, heat or water. These microplastics scatter to all corners of the globe and even to the depths of the oceans. Toxic chemicals can bind microplastics and create poison pills that marine animals eat" When a foreign substance enters the ecosystem, it threatens all aspects of the life cycle; Including humans.

Biodiversity is the root of life on earth and when exposed to something like plastic, everything feels an effect. For example, research shows that plastic has entered into the human body most likely through food like fish and other meats. Animals eat the microplastics thinking they are nutrients; we eat the fish, therefore consuming the plastic in them. This can lead to many