

Since its inception, the organization has provided support to over 17,000 survivors of human trafficking, homeless kids, and foster children. To this date, a remarkable 320 “forever families” have been created via adoption. Place of Hope has also helped to generate much-needed awareness for this issue. Over 40,000 community members have been educated about human trafficking under Place of Hope.

Over the years, the organization has expanded its outreach and become a more diverse enterprise. Beginning in 2008, a need for a more robust community foster care program was found. As a result, Homes of Hope was created to help recruit families in the local community to adopt foster children. The Peter and Fern Barsanti Family Life Center was opened in 2010 as another measure to provide therapy and other recreational necessities to the children within the organization’s supervision.

Organizations like Place of Hope are invaluable to making the world a better place for the next generation, particularly those that have endured unimaginable hardship. Children who have been through trafficking, abuse, and neglect have a continuum of support available to them through this terrific project that will continue to do marvelous work for our youth. Designating the month of May as the 20th anniversary of Place of Hope is a necessary step for us to take to help ensure awareness is raised and progress is made.

HONORING KARISSA KRUSE AS  
THE 2020 WOMAN OF THE YEAR

**HON. MIKE THOMPSON**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, March 26, 2021*

Mr. THOMPSON of California. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor Karissa Kruse, whom I have named the 2020 Woman of the Year in Sonoma County, California. Woman of the Year recognizes women who have made important contributions to California’s 5th Congressional District in Arts and Culture, Professional Achievement, Entrepreneurship and Innovation or Community Service.

Born in Sioux Falls, South Dakota, Ms. Kruse grew up surrounded by a loving and supportive family. A University of Pennsylvania alumna, she graduated with a BS in Economics and an MBA in Marketing from the prestigious Wharton School of Business. In pursuit of a warmer climate, she came to Sonoma County shortly after graduating, starting Argot Wines and Karma, an angel investment firm.

Ms. Kruse began her career with the Sonoma County Winegrowers in 2012 as the Director of Marketing before being named President in 2013. The following year, she launched an initiative charting a 5-year path to 100 percent sustainability, an ambitious target that reflects both her decisiveness as a leader and her passion for our environment and farming families. By September of 2019, nearly all of Sonoma County’s vineyards had been certified sustainable, making it the most ecologically friendly wine region in the world. Ms. Kruse continued to build upon the organization’s environmental leadership, establishing an exclusive partnership with the California Land Stewardship Institute to launch a Climate

Adaptation Certification, the first of its kind for agriculture.

Her tenure as President has also coincided with the recent wildfires that have challenged the resilience of the wine community. Ms. Kruse has been instrumental in guiding our agricultural communities through these tumultuous times, re-establishing the Sonoma County Grape Growers Foundation in 2016 to improve the lives of agricultural workers and their families. Over the past two years, the Foundation has provided over \$1 million for wildfire recovery, housing support, and workforce development. These funds have been crucial in supporting the stability of the wine industry, which in turn has been a lynchpin in rebuilding our communities. Moreover, Ms. Kruse is thrilled to have recently married Steve Dutton, a 5th generation Sonoma County farmer, on January 1, 2021. She is honored to be a member of the Dutton family along with Steve and her new stepchildren, Jake and Jordan.

Madam Speaker, Ms. Karissa L. Kruse exemplifies the kind of business leadership that fosters vibrant, cohesive, and prosperous communities. It is therefore fitting and proper that we honor her here today as Sonoma County’s 2020 Woman of the Year.

IN HONOR OF THE LIFE OF HAJJI  
FADWAT “EM CHAWKI”  
HAIDOUS-BAZZI

**HON. DEBBIE DINGELL**

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, March 26, 2021*

Mrs. DINGELL. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor the life of Hajji Fadwat “Em Chawki” Haidous-Bazzi of Dearborn, Michigan who passed away on March 22nd. Her lifetime of service to our community is worthy of commendation.

Hajji was born on March 1, 1938 in Bint Jbeil, Lebanon but made her home in Dearborn, Michigan. In 1957, she married Hajji Kassem Bazzi and in the wake of the Lebanese Civil War in 1975, they left their home country to come to America. Together they raised six children. After leaving her homeland, she worked tirelessly to reunite her children and their families in diaspora.

Known for her tender heart, she dedicated herself to charitable giving, volunteering, and fundraising for people in need in both Lebanon and Michigan, never asking for anything in return. Generous by nature, she was known to shower those she loved in prayer and in song.

A towering figure among those who knew her, Hajji had a commanding presence and an enduring love of family. She and her husband raised a family of forty-seven strong, who adored her infectious spirit and thoughtful humor. She is survived by her husband, her siblings, including Wayne County Commissioner Al Haidous, her grandchildren, including Michigan Solicitor General Fadwa Alawieh Hammoud, children in law, and great-grandchildren.

Madam Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring the life of Hajji Fadwat “Em Chawki” Haidous-Bazzi. She was a loving mother and grandmother, and a friend to many. A pillar of our community and a constant reminder of the importance of family and

charity, she will be deeply missed. Our thoughts are with Mr. Bazzi and his family at this time.

IN RECOGNITION OF VICKY  
BRECHIBIEL

**HON. JOHN JOYCE**

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, March 26, 2021*

Mr. JOYCE of Pennsylvania. Madam Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Vicky Brechbiel on receiving the Client Impact Award from the Greater Chambersburg Chamber of Commerce.

Vicky is a Certified Nursing Assistant at Menno Haven. She has spent 20 years as a CNA caring for her patients. She is dedicated to her patients and consistently goes above and beyond to ensure they receive their favorite foods, wake up at their preferred times, and begin their mornings well. The Client Impact Award is awarded to a person that demonstrates extraordinary efforts to positively impact the lives of their patients. Vicky treats every patient with love and respect, as well as an individualized treatment plan.

Vicky exhibits true dedication, compassion, and professionalism to the residents of Menno Haven. On behalf of Pennsylvania’s 13th District, I congratulate Vicky on this achievement and thank her for her service to our community.

MOURNING THE CONTINUED LOSS  
OF LIFE IN AMERICA TO GUN  
VIOLENCE

**HON. HALEY M. STEVENS**

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, March 26, 2021*

Ms. STEVENS. Madam Speaker, I rise today in response to the exceptional number of lives that have been stolen from American communities just this month to the continued scourge of gun violence in this country.

On March 16th in Georgia, a gunman went on a deadly rampage at three spas in the Atlanta area, murdering eight people. Six of the precious lives lost were women of Asian descent: mothers, sisters, and partners.

On March 20th in Pennsylvania, a gunman opened fire at a party in Philadelphia, killing one and wounding five others.

And on March 22nd in Colorado, a gunman took ten innocent souls at a grocery store in Boulder—one of which was a police officer who arrived to help.

I fear that many have grown numb to the news of violence, death, and dreams unrealized in this country, and to those I plead: see your neighbor as yourself. Protect your fellow Americans. Do not give up on the possibility of a future free from pain and fear of preventable death.

On behalf of the victims of gun violence and their families, we cannot be deterred in our mission to institute basic protections to shield the American people from continual loss. I will not surrender to hopelessness, and neither should my colleagues in this legislative body.

AMERICANS ARE STUBBORNLY UNMOVED BY  
DEATH

(By Gavin Givhan)

The scene looked heartbreakingly familiar: the rumble of tactical vehicles, the swarm of law enforcement officers, the long ribbons of yellow police tape and the eyewitness descriptions thick with residual terror. Monday evening's deadly shooting in Boulder, Colo., which resulted in the deaths of 10 people, including a police officer, was the second mass shooting in a week.

A dreadful normalcy has returned. Muscle memory demands that we lament it—even as all evidence suggests that many of us are unmoved by death. It doesn't cause behavior to change. It doesn't shake people from their moorings at the center of their own universe. Death is not a deterrent.

In the days after a mass shooting, the nation mourns and those who died are named. The hearts of our elected officials have been broken so many times that surely they must be in shards by now. The flags are lowered to half-staff. And the president speaks. Joe Biden, a man who is expert at consoling, did the best that he could to say something true that did not sound like a cliché.

"I even hate to say it because we're saying it so often: My heart goes out. Our hearts go out for the survivors, the—who had to—had to flee for their lives and who hid, terrified, unsure if they would ever see their families again, their friends again," Biden said Tuesday afternoon from the State Dining Room. "The consequences of all this are deeper than I suspect we know. By that, I mean the mental consequences—a feeling of—anyway, it just—we've been through too many of these."

The images from these shootings can be gut-wrenching. In video and still images, people see shellshocked survivors pouring out of the school, the night club and, this time, the grocery store. There's blood in these images, sometimes even the blurred image of one of the deceased. There's nothing sanitized about them. The shooting may happen behind closed doors, but the death is in the open. The terror rises off the survivors like a stench; the sound of fear reverberates.

And still the deaths don't spur action to make the guns harder to get, to make the guns less efficient. The president, some politicians and many activists cry out for "common sense" gun laws to stop the senseless death even as it seems that they are pleading with a country that's engaged in a completely different kind of calculation.

Increasingly it seems that we simply do not care about the other person, that other family, someone else's child. The self is everything. It's freedom and liberty, whims and desires. Community doesn't extend beyond one's front door. Everything else is someone else's concern.

Studies have shown that the human brain can lose the capacity to process death, to absorb the meaning of it, when the numbers of the dead begin to reach staggering levels. We have been told that the heart can go numb in response to such enormity. This is one of the explanations for why people have continued to engage in risky behavior during the coronavirus pandemic even as it has become ever clearer how best to protect our fellow Americans. The end is on the horizon, and if people simply wear a mask, social distance and persevere with patience, we might get there—not all of us, sadly, but most of us.

Yet unmasked revelers crowded onto the streets of Miami Beach. The very real possibility of death has not been a deterrent. The community didn't matter as these partyers and tourists ostensibly shot a different kind of deadly slug into the Florida air.

More than 544,000 deaths in the United States due to the coronavirus have not sent

everyone scurrying to protect their neighbor. To follow common sense recommendations. To center the community instead of the individual.

If that number is too big for people to grapple with, what is the right number? What number is small enough that each death touches the heart and therefore motivates people to act, to be better? Is it 58—the number of people a man killed at a Las Vegas country music festival in 2017? Is it 49—the number killed in a shooting at Orlando's Pulse nightclub in 2016? Or perhaps the motivating number is nine, which accounts for those who were fatally shot in Charleston during a prayer meeting. Is it eight—the number who were killed in Georgia just last week? It surely can't be one because there are singular deadly shootings in communities all too often and still nothing happens. Nothing.

We have not gone numb to death. To "go numb" suggests that once there was feeling, once there was sensitivity. When was that? Perhaps it was back in 1968 when, after the deaths of John F. Kennedy, Martin Luther King Jr. and Robert F. Kennedy, Congress passed gun laws that formed the basis of federal regulation that has been regularly eroded and only occasionally strengthened. We haven't cared for a long time. Not when the dying were schoolchildren, people in the midst of prayer or contented folks just living quiet lives.

HARRIS'S SELF-EVIDENT TRUTH

Crowds gather in the street while a speaker blasts music an hour past curfew in Miami Beach on Sunday. (Daniel A. Varela/Miami Herald/AP)

Today, some in this country argue against gun laws with a ferocity that moves beyond a right to hunt rabbits, or defend oneself against an assailant or one's property in the face of an intruder. We refuse to relinquish the delusion that 21st-century America is a frontier town in which gunplay is a form of justice.

Many insist that the very real possibility of mass deaths does not outweigh a personal inconvenience or the setting aside of a myth. Give up large-capacity magazines. Wear a mask. These deaths matter.

We are not numb to death. We stubbornly, selfishly dismiss it. We shake it off. But there is always an assault that has the capacity to bring an individual low. Some bracing gut punch that stings and startles. The pain might finally register in a way that is deep and lasting. And that person begins to feel something. But that may require death coming directly to their own doorstep, since that's the only one that, for many of us, seems to matter.

Correction: A previous version of this article misstated the year of the shooting at a Las Vegas country music festival. It was in 2017, not 2018.

HONORING ELIZABETH ANN  
HOFFMAN

HON. MIKE THOMPSON

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, March 26, 2021

Mr. THOMPSON of California. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor Elizabeth Ann Hoffman, whom I have named the 2021 Woman of the Year in Contra Costa County, California. Woman of the Year recognizes women who have made important contributions to California's 5th Congressional District in Arts and Culture, Professional Achievement,

Entrepreneurship and Innovation or Community Service.

A California native born in San Leandro and raised in Benicia, Ms. Hoffman attended Sonoma State University for her undergraduate degree and San Jose State University for her graduate education in Social Services. A member of Food Bank of Contra Costa and the Vallejo Chamber of Commerce, Ms. Hoffman has been an active member of our community for many years.

Most notably, Ms. Hoffman serves as the Executive Director for Rebuilding Together Solano County (RTSC), working diligently to improve the lives of low-income families, veterans, seniors, and disabled members of our community. Throughout the years, Ms. Hoffman's contributions to RTSC have resulted in the rehabilitation of over 40 low-income homes and 52 community centers. She has also impressively amassed over 12,000 volunteers for the organization, expanding resources to better the lives of those in need.

Her exceptional commitment to our community has not gone unrecognized. Ms. Hoffman has received numerous public health service awards, including PG&E's Environmental Remediation Sibley Award and the American Red Cross' Community Service Hero Award.

Madam Speaker, Ms. Hoffman has proven herself to be a true asset to the groups she serves. Our community is immeasurably better for all of Ms. Hoffman's contributions and it is therefore fitting and proper that we honor her here today as Contra Costa County's 2021 Woman of the Year.

KENT MCELHATTAN

HON. MICHAEL F. DOYLE

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, March 26, 2021

Mr. MICHAEL F. DOYLE of Pennsylvania. Madam Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Kent McElhattan, a constituent who has dedicated his life and career to safety.

Earlier this month, the National Safety Council (NSC) honored Mr. McElhattan with the prestigious Flame of Life award at the 2020NE Virtual Safety Congress and Expo. This honor has only been given four times in the 107-year history of the National Safety Council, as it is reserved for the most outstanding individuals who have dedicated themselves to building safer workplaces and communities. Mr. McElhattan is a long-time partner to the National Safety Council. He served on the NSC Board of Directors for a decade, including a stint as chairman from 2010 until 2013.

A founder of the Pittsburgh-based Industrial Scientific, Kent worked to build products that protect workers from hazardous conditions around the world. Industrial Scientific specializes in producing Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), some of which has become vital to all of us during the COVID-19 pandemic. Under his leadership, Industrial Scientific was a founding member of the Campbell Institute, which is focused on solving global environmental, health, and safety challenges through research and innovation.

Now CEO and co-founder of another Pittsburgh-based company, Discovery Robotics, Mr. McElhattan continues to strive for worker