

fundraising for the Fallen Hero Memorial, and emceeding Hot Springs' annual Christmas parade for over 25 years and the Veterans Day parade for 17 years.

Families will cherish the memories of Dick's special characterization of Santa Claus, the World's Tallest Leprechaun, and Oktoberfest ambassador in a chicken costume.

Dick's legacy will live on in the memories of Hot Springs residents, and his presence will be sorely missed. My condolences go to Dick's family and many friends as we grieve his passing and celebrate his life.

#### HONORING JIM GULDIN

Mr. WESTERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the work of a fellow Arkansan and Yale forester, Dr. James Guldin, or Jim as his friends call him.

Jim taught at Arkansas' only forestry school, the University of Arkansas at Monticello, for 10 years before joining the United States Forest Service research division, where he made great contributions to our knowledge of forest ecology and management through his applied research and publications over a career that spanned nearly three decades.

Jim worked tirelessly to restore native southern pine ecosystems, illustrating how science-based thinning and prescribed burning are common sense, and to highlight effective tools for a healthy forest providing cleaner air and water as well as abundant wildlife habitat.

I truly believe Dr. Jim Guldin is the world's most knowledgeable person when it comes to shortleaf pine and that his work will live long past the lifespan of a human generation in the forests that benefited from his labor of love.

I have been blessed to know some amazing conservationists in my life, and Jim Guldin is one of them. I wish him a happy retirement and many days ahead catching smallmouth bass in clear mountain streams and spending time where all fosterers are most at home: in the woods.

#### CONGRATULATING BESS BUTLER BRUNSON

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

Mr. CARTER of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Bess Brunson for being named to Georgia Trend's 2021 40 Under 40 class.

Driven by her passion to improve the financial health of others, Bess received her undergraduate degree in business from Virginia Tech. Since returning to Savannah, she has successfully served her community through various positions at The Fiduciary Group.

Beth is the third generation of the Butler family to work at The Fiduciary Group, which was founded in 1970 by her grandfather, Lee Butler. Dedicated to serving others, Bess works tirelessly

to prepare individuals for their life beyond retirement.

Outside of the workplace, Bess is an active volunteer throughout the First District. She serves on the board of the Historic Savannah Foundation's 13th Colony and Savannah Country Day School alumni board. Her dedication to preserving Savannah's history while continuing the legacy of The Fiduciary Group is truly inspiring.

I am honored to recognize Bess for this prestigious accomplishment, and I know she will continue to make a positive impact throughout Georgia's First Congressional District.

#### REMEMBERING AND HONORING CHARLIE WALDROP

Mr. CARTER of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today with a heavy heart to remember and honor one of my pharmacy mentors, Charlie Waldrop of Savannah, Georgia, who sadly passed away on October 20 at the age of 102.

A devoted public servant, Charlie was a World War II veteran, a pharmacist, and a friend to all who knew him.

Charlie was drafted into World War II at the age of 22. He would go on to serve throughout Europe, successfully attaining the rank of major before finishing his military service in 1946.

Discovering his passion for public health, Charlie continued his education at the University of Georgia's College of Pharmacy. Charlie then returned to Savannah, where he would serve his community for the next 40 years as a pharmacist at Crumbley's Pharmacy.

Charlie's life was defined by his extraordinary character, and I am grateful for his lifetime of service to Georgia's First District and our great Nation. I am also thankful for the great example he set for me when I was a pharmacy intern working under Charlie.

My thoughts and prayers go out to his family, friends, and all who knew him during this most difficult time.

#### CONGRATULATING O.C. FOWLER, JR.

Mr. CARTER of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate O.C. Fowler, Jr., of Chatham County for being recognized as Veteran of the Year by the Veterans Council of Chatham County.

Georgia's First Congressional District is home to many of our Nation's veterans who put everything on the line to protect our freedom. So being recognized as Veteran of the Year is an incredible honor.

Mr. Fowler joined the United States Navy in 1967 and flew over 3,300 flight hours in helicopters and fixed-wing aircraft. After seeing how Vietnam veterans were treated after they returned home, Mr. Fowler dedicated his life to ensure that our servicemembers are unconditionally supported.

Among his many lifetime achievements, he helped raise over \$35,000 for local charities, including the Chaplain's Fund at Hunter Army Airfield. He is also an active member of the United States Service Organization, the National Museum of the Mighty

Eighth Air Force, and the Savannah Council of the Navy League.

I can't thank Mr. Fowler enough for his outstanding service to our Nation, and I want to congratulate him again on this wonderful accomplishment.

#### RECOGNIZING AND HONORING DEBORAH RODRIGUEZ GARCIA

Mr. CARTER of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and honor Deborah Rodriguez Garcia for being named to Georgia Trend's 2021 40 Under 40 class.

Deborah graduated from Georgia Southern University with a master's in modern language. This fueled her knowledge and incredible drive, which she is using to make a difference across the globe.

Deborah creates educational opportunities for migrant and refugee communities. She focuses on helping children become more resilient through play-based learning. Thanks to Deborah, refugee children in South Asia find comfort in early learning opportunities through a version of Sesame Street in their native clothing and language. Children in Latin America, South Africa, the Middle East, and Asia have benefited immensely from her passion and experience.

On behalf of the people of the First Congressional District of Georgia, I congratulate Deborah on her nomination to Georgia Trend's 2021 40 under 40 class and offer my appreciation for her continued service and dedication toward children across the world.

#### PHARMACY BENEFIT MANAGER ACCOUNTABILITY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Tennessee (Mrs. HARSHBARGER) for 5 minutes.

Mrs. HARSHBARGER. Mr. Speaker, one of the top concerns for Americans is the high cost of prescription drugs. Congress must do something to lower these prescription drug prices. We know the American people want lower prices, but they don't want to sacrifice access to lifesaving treatments.

Prior to representing the great people of east Tennessee in Congress, I served for 35 years as a community pharmacist, so I know a thing or two about safeguarding patient access to affordable medicines and solving patient problems.

We absolutely need to reform the ways pharmaceutical manufacturers price their products and sometimes manipulate the system. But there is another part of the drug pricing equation that doesn't get nearly as much attention, and that is the role of the pharmacy benefit managers, or PBMs, their lack of transparency, their market dominance, and the effects of their business practices on drug prices and patient choices.

PBMs were created as middlemen to reduce administrative costs for insurers, validate patients' eligibility, administer plan benefits, and negotiate

costs between pharmacies and health plans. But they have morphed into one of the most highly concentrated and least accountable profit centers in the healthcare industry. Over time, these PBMs have been allowed to operate and consolidate their market powers virtually unchecked.

Medicare, Medicaid, and commercial health plans all use PBMs to manage drug benefits. That is more than 260 million American lives.

□ 1100

These pharmacy benefit managers wield enormous power as middlemen on numerous fronts. They choose what drugs are covered and not covered by insurance; they negotiate purchasing deals with drug makers; they determine copays for consumers; they decide which pharmacies are included in prescription plans and which are not; they decide how much pharmacies are reimbursed for the drugs they sell, where, by the way, a lot of pharmacies dispense drugs to a patient, and they are reimbursed less than what they paid for the drug.

In 2020, the top six PBMs handled more than 95 percent of total U.S.-equivalent prescription claims. Curiously, this market power concentration and vertical integration with the insurance carriers was allowed by our Federal Trade Commission over the last 15 years, the very agency whose mission it is to safeguard Americans from concentrated corporate power.

What are the effects on drug spending? Between 2015 and 2018, nearly half of the increase in total brand drug spending went to payers, including PBMs, according to an analysis from Berkeley Research Group.

Such a huge slice of yearly drug spending going to middlemen has catapulted the U.S. PBM market to be valued at more than half a trillion dollars, and that is with a “T”. Analysts see PBMs continuing to prosper in the coming years.

The virtually unchecked powers of PBMs have enabled them to: Number one, charge drug manufacturers hefty rebates for preferred placement on formularies. The higher the list price, the higher the rebates, but no one knows where these rebates go.

Number two is to impose restrictive take-it-or-leave-it contracts with community pharmacists.

Number three is charge community pharmacies outrageous clawbacks or DIR fees, often totally unpredictable, where PBMs claw back or take back moneys they have already reimbursed pharmacies, often weeks or months after a patient transaction. The typical community pharmacy now pays roughly \$81,000 a year in DIR fees, making it all but impossible to set a budget for the future.

These and other business practices happen in relative secrecy with no real oversight. No one is really able to follow the dollars on how and where the money flows; not the payer, not the

pharmacist, and certainly not the patient.

I have introduced bipartisan legislation, the PBM Accountability Study Act, H.R. 1829, which would have the U.S. Government Accountability Office study the roles PBMs play in drug pricing and spending, their market concentrations, and states of competition. My bill also requires GAO to make recommendations on lowering drug costs, improving transparency, and improving competition in the PBM industry. This is a commonsense, bipartisan bill, and I invite all of my colleagues to co-sponsor and help with this important legislation.

I sincerely hope we can work together to include the provisions of this bill and other PBM reforms in any drug-pricing legislation that we consider this year.

#### CONGRATULATING MOHAWK VALLEY COMMUNITY COLLEGE ON ITS 75TH ANNIVERSARY

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

Ms. TENNEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Mohawk Valley Community College on its historic 75th anniversary this year.

MVCC first opened its doors to students in October of 1946. Back then it was known as New York State Institute of Applied Arts and Science. Since those early days, MVCC has grown tremendously and today boasts more than 6,000 full- or part-time students. MVCC was founded on the principle of adapting its programs to fit the needs of our region, and, boy, they have done that.

It has played an important role in developing our workforce and empowering students to achieve their goals and be of service to our community.

MVCC molds students into leaders and continues to be an incredible institution for our community. It is one of the great 11 colleges and universities in New York's 22nd District.

I want to personally thank President Randy VanWagoner for his leadership and wish MVCC the greatest successes over the next 75 years.

I am grateful to MVCC for all they have done, and for being a college near my neighborhood.

#### CONGRATULATING CANASTOTA GIRLS FIELD HOCKEY TEAM

Ms. TENNEY. Mr. Speaker, I would like to recognize the Canastota Girls Field Hockey team, for becoming the New York State section III class C champions after a win this weekend. Way to go girls.

The Canastota Raiders prevailed 3 to 1 against Vernon-Verona-Sherrill in a dramatic battle for the class C championship.

Chance Jaquin, Kory Matteson, and MacKenzie Snyder all scored goals for the Raiders, sealing the victory. The Raiders have now won 11 straight games and will face off against Little Falls for the State playoffs this week.

I am wishing them all the best as they prepare for the championship game this week. I also want to congratulate Vernon-Verona-Sherrill on what I know was a hard-fought season. I wish the best of luck to the girls.

#### HONORING THE LIFE OF MAJEEDAH RAZZAQ

Ms. TENNEY. Mr. Speaker, today, I recognize a Binghamton woman who was a larger than life, a fixture at community events, a staple in the very communities that needed her most, and the adopted grandma of kids who looked up to her for advice through adolescence and well into adulthood.

As a life skills coach, Majeedah Razzaq used her own mix of street psychology with a strong dose of rule enforcement, consistency, and most of all, accountability. In her work with Greater Opportunities for Broome, Ms. Razzaq was a fighter for local issues, someone who encouraged and worked for new investments in local communities, investments in the children who needed it most.

As a staple at the city of Binghamton's Community Development Advisory Committee, Ms. Razzaq had a unique ability to sort through the fluff, then address the real issues. Ms. Razzaq lived an amazing life which, unfortunately, was cut short this past winter by COVID-19.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to please join me and the citizens of Broome County, New York, in remembering and honoring Majeedah Razzaq for her years of community service. Binghamton and the Southern Tier were lucky to have such a beautiful person advocating on their behalf.

May God bless her soul.

#### RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until noon today.

Accordingly (at 11 o'clock and 6 minutes a.m.), the House stood in recess.

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#### AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker at noon.

#### PRAYER

The Chaplain, the Reverend Margaret Grun Kibben, offered the following prayer:

Living God, our souls thirst for You. In this dry and weary land, we look around for something that can sustain us in these times of complexity and frustration, something that will quench our thirst for righteousness and goodwill. But everything we reach for is a mirage.

In this wilderness, we pray that You would remember us, call us, we who are so thirsty, to come to the water that You so generously offer to slake our