

commissioning in 1959, it was considered the largest, most powerful, and most expensive submarine ever built.

The Port of Benton in Richland, Washington, worked with the U.S. Navy to preserve the USS Triton's 75-foot-long sail and conning tower that are on display at the USS Triton Sail Park, to honor submariners and highlight the significance of Triton's impact on the Nuclear Age.

Central Washington is proud to hold this piece of our nation's history, and I am honored to recognize these brave crew members for their commitment and dedication to accomplishing the Operation Sandblast mission, which proved invaluable to the United States and the world during the Cold War.

#### AZITA RAJI OBITUARY

#### HON. JOE WILSON

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, May 11, 2022*

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Madam Speaker, I would like to include in the RECORD the following obituary for Azita Raji.

Azita Raji, a longtime Belvedere resident who served as a U.S. ambassador to Sweden under President Barack Obama, died Feb. 6 of metastatic breast cancer.

Ms. Raji, a major fundraiser for Obama, was appointed to the position in October 2014. However, she wasn't confirmed until February 2016 after a long delay by the Republican-controlled U.S. Senate. She presented her credentials to Sweden's King Carl XVI Gustaf on March 15, 2016, and served until Jan. 20, 2017.

With her confirmation, she became the first female U.S. ambassador to Sweden, as well as the first Iranian-born American to serve as a U.S. ambassador. During her tenure, she was also nominated for the Sue M. Cobb Prize for Exemplary Diplomatic Service, the State Department's highest award for a non-career ambassador.

"The deepest impression Azita made was on the people that had the privilege of knowing her," the U.S. Department of State said in a Feb. 8 statement. "Her loss will be deeply felt by all she touched. . . . She was an inspiring leader, who loved her time in Sweden and the relationships she made."

The statement noted flags at the U.S. Embassy in Sweden would be flown at half-staff for three days in her honor.

Ms. Raji left a career in finance in 2007 to focus on fundraising for Democratic candidates and for Obama's initial presidential campaign.

By 2012, Ms. Raji was serving as national finance vice chair and chair of the Swing State Victory Fund for Obama's campaign. She also served on the national advisory board of the Democratic National Committee and was a member of the Obama for America National Finance Committee from 2008 to 2012.

In 2013, Obama appointed Ms. Raji to serve on the President's Commission on White House Fellows.

Her nomination as ambassador came at a time when Obama had been criticized for naming ambassadors from among the ranks of his fundraisers, freezing out experienced diplomats in favor of those with little international experience or language fluency, though that is a common practice among presidents.

While not a career diplomat, Ms. Raji had more world experience than many of the

non-Foreign Service nominees, having grown up in Iran and Western Europe. In addition to English, she was fluent in French and Persian.

Ms. Raji was born Sept. 29, 1961, in Tehran, Iran, one of two children to Feyed and Parvin Raji. She completed her high school education in Lausanne, Switzerland, where she competed nationally as a downhill skier and chess player before moving to the U.S. when she was 17.

She then attended Barnard College of Columbia University in New York, where she received a bachelor's degree in architecture and French in 1983 and a master of business administration degree in finance in 1991.

She became a U.S. citizen in 1988.

Earlier in her career as an international investment banker, Ms. Raji held senior positions at firms including JP. Morgan & Co., Salomon Brothers and Drexel Burnham Lambert. She had been a member of the Institute for Chartered Financial Analysts since 1991.

She was a member of the Bretton Woods Committee, which supports international finance institutions such as the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund.

Ms. Raji has served as a trustee of the Barnard College Executive Committee, on the advisory board of Columbia Business School's Tamer Center for Social Enterprise and as founding co-chair of the Athena Center for Leadership Studies at Barnard College. She also served on the economic advisory council of the Center for American Progress and as director of the National Partnership for Women & Families. All the organizations benefited from her philanthropy as well.

On July 4, 2016, Ms. Raji was named an honoree of Great Immigrants, an annual recognition by the Carnegie Corporation of New York of inspiring naturalized U.S. citizens who have made notable contributions to the progress of American society.

The same year, when singer-songwriter Bob Dylan was named the recipient of the Nobel Prize for Literature, Ms. Raji read a letter by Dylan, who did not attend the award banquet, to the Nobel Committee on his behalf.

She also was appointed a commissioner of the Smithsonian National Portrait Gallery in 2016.

That same year, she was the first U.S. Ambassador to Sweden to march in the country's Pride Parade. She also was the recipient of the 2017 Ellis Island Medal of Honor and of Barnard College's 2020 Joan Rivers Trailblazer Award.

She and her husband, Gary A. Syman, a retired Goldman Sachs partner, were married in 1992 and had lived in Belvedere since 1996.

In her free time, she enjoyed skiing, swimming, hiking, travel, reading and cooking Persian food for her family.

In addition to her husband, Ms. Raji is survived by a brother, Reza Raji of Menlo Park; two daughters, Gabriella Raji Syman of Belvedere and Elena Raji Syman of New York; three stepdaughters, Kimberly Syman of Lexington, Mass., Stefanie Syman of Brooklyn, NY, and Hillary Syman of Minneapolis, Minn.; and seven grandchildren.

A private memorial service will be held in June. Donations in her memory may be sent to Barnard College, Box AS, 3009 Broadway, New York City; NY 10027; or to the Joy Trust Fund at MarinHealth Foundation, 1350 S. Eliseo Drive #110, Larkspur, CA 94904.

IN HONOR OF THE 100TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION OF DUVALL ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

#### HON. DEBBIE DINGELL

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, May 11, 2022*

Mrs. DINGELL. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize the 100th anniversary of DuVall Elementary School, located in Dearborn, Michigan. DuVall Elementary has been paramount in shaping the minds of young students for a century, and its contributions to our community are worthy of commendation.

The rapid expansion of Ford Motor Company in the early twentieth century attracted eager workers hoping to reap the benefits of the new \$5 work day. These workers traveled to Michigan en masse, bringing their families who settled in towns across Metro Detroit. One neighborhood, known as the Ford Historic Homes District near downtown Dearborn, experienced a rapid expansion which necessitated the creation of a new school. Consequently, Southwestern School opened its doors in 1921. Under Principal Leo DuVall, the school quickly grew to over 300 students. After three decades of leadership, the Board of Education decided to rename the Southwestern School after DuVall to honor his significant accomplishments, and Principal DuVall retired a year later in 1959.

DuVall Elementary School continues to provide invaluable instruction, guidance, and support to students across Dearborn. Remaining a fixture of the community after a century of service underscores its lasting impact and serves as a testament to its role in Dearborn. DuVall Elementary is a school that recognizes the value and abilities of every student and inspires all to achieve greatness both inside and outside the classroom.

Madam Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring DuVall Elementary School as it celebrates 100 years of instruction in Dearborn, Michigan. We are proud of its enduring impact on our community and wish it the best of luck in the years ahead.

#### HONORING LAURA JOSS

#### HON. JARED HUFFMAN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, May 11, 2022*

Mr. HUFFMAN. Madam Speaker, I rise today, with Congresswoman JACKIE SPEIER, in recognition of Laura Joss for her 32 years of exceptional government service with the National Park Service.

Laura has a long history of working for the National Park Service (NPS), beginning as a volunteer at Mesa Verde National Park after earning a Bachelor of Arts in Anthropology from Indiana University and a Master of Arts in History Museum Studies from the State University of New York. Laura proceeded to serve as Superintendent at Arches National Park, Deputy Superintendent of the NPS Southeast Utah Group, Superintendent of both the Fort McHenry National Monument and Historic Shrine and the Hampton National Historic Site in Maryland, and Chief of the Branch of Cultural Resources and Tribal Liaison at Yellowstone National Park. Her commitment to the

agency and the breadth of experience led her to the western region where she served as Deputy Regional Director/Chief of Staff for the NPS Intermountain Region in Lakewood, Colorado, the Associate Regional Director for Resource Stewardship and Research in the Intermountain Regional Office, and as Pacific West Regional Director in San Francisco.

During her tenure as General Superintendent of Golden Gate National Recreation Area, Muir Woods National Monument, and Fort Point National Historic Site, Laura has been a tireless advocate for communities, underserved audiences, and staff. She successfully navigated the challenges of leading these popular units of the National Park Systems and did so during a pandemic. She hosted national and international visits by congressional staff, Washington officials, and international dignitaries, including the Italian President and delegations from Norway and the Ukraine studying the parks as a model for developing their own national park systems. Under Laura's direction, NPS also signed the first sister park agreement with the First Lady of Costa Rica to develop their Isla San Lucas National Park, a twin to the park's Alcatraz Island unit.

In our personal experiences working with Laura, she has been a consummate professional, responsive to community issues, and conducted herself with a professional and diplomatic demeanor. Our national parks and communities have benefited from Laura's transparency, integrity, and deep commitment to the Golden Gate Recreation Area and extended national park system.

Madam Speaker, we respectfully ask that you join us in expressing gratitude to Laura for her enduring commitment to public service and extending heartfelt congratulations on her more than three decades with the National Park Service.

**HONORING DREW HELLENSEN,  
OLYMPIC ATHLETE**

**HON. ANGIE CRAIG**

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, May 11, 2022*

Ms. CRAIG. Madam Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Farmington native Drew Hellenson on his performance at the 2022 Olympic Games in Beijing, which earned the United States Ice Hockey team 5th place.

At only 21 years old, Drew has earned the Hockey East Best Defensive Defenseman, First Team All-Hockey East and Second Team AHCA All-American awards. With countless winning games and titles under his belt, he has proven to all of us that anything can be achieved when you stay committed to your dreams.

On behalf of Minnesota's 2nd Congressional District, I want to congratulate Drew on performing in his first ever Olympic games.

**RECOGNIZING CONGRESSIONAL  
WORKERS' RIGHTS TO ORGANIZE**

**HON. ROBERT C. "BOBBY" SCOTT**

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, May 11, 2022*

Mr. SCOTT of Virginia. Madam Speaker, I rise in support of H. Res. 1096, to ensure that

House staffers have the same fundamental rights to organize and collectively bargain as workers across the Nation. Unions play an essential role in providing higher wages, better benefits, and safer workplaces. For decades, unions workers have consistently enjoyed 10- to 20-percent higher wages than their non-union counterparts. The benefits of union membership are so strong that studies show even the children of union workers enjoy greater economic mobility.

Unions also narrow both the racial wealth gap and the gender pay gap. Union members of color have almost five times the median wealth of their non-union counterparts. Moreover, unions close the gender wage gap almost completely, whereas on average non-union women are paid 78 cents for every dollar paid to non-union men.

Ultimately, unions provide workers with a voice on the job—and this proved to be critical during the pandemic. While the entire economy suffered from massive job losses throughout the pandemic, union workers suffered fewer job losses because they were able to bargain for fewer layoffs and safer workplaces.

As the Chairman of the Committee on Education and Labor, I have led legislation that ensures workers can form and access all the benefits of a union. These rights should also be extended to House staffers.

House staffers are central to moving our country forward. They help constituents find affordable health care coverage and access social security benefits; they ensure Members of Congress can hear directly from the people; and they help draft legislation that protects and strengthens our democracy.

As I have repeatedly said, joining a union is a fundamental right—and that must hold true for House employees, too.

I thank Speaker PELOSI, Leader HOYER, Congresswoman LOFGREN, Congressman LEVIN, and so many others for their leadership on this important issue.

**HONORING ROBERTSON CHARTER  
SCHOOL IN DECATUR, IL**

**HON. RODNEY DAVIS**

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, May 11, 2022*

Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize Robertson Charter School in Decatur, Illinois on their 2A 7th Grade Basketball State Championship.

Decatur Robertson played Normal Metcalf in the State Championship, and while both teams fought well, there was never a doubt that the Wildcats would come out on top. After an almost perfect game, the Wildcats won 38–27.

After a successful regular season and impressive post-season, Decatur Robertson showed that they are a team full of talent and promise. Like others, I am excited to see what they can accomplish next season.

I would like to personally congratulate the coaches and the players of Decatur Robertson for their outstanding season and 2A 7th Grade State Championship. They have certainly made the Decatur area proud. I look forward to seeing them all play in the future and go Wildcats.

APRIL LAMBATOS

**HON. ED PERLMUTTER**

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, May 11, 2022*

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize April Lambatos for receiving the 2021 Young Professional of the Year Award from the Arvada Chamber of Commerce. The Young Professional of the Year Award recognizes an Arvada young professional whose leadership and dedication have positively impacted their community.

April is the co-owner of Footers Catering and Social Capitol Events in Arvada. Under April's leadership, Footers Catering has been recognized as a 'Best Place to Work' by The Denver Post, Colorado Biz Magazine, The Denver Business Journal, and the ICC. April was recognized as a Titan 100, a 40 Under 40 winner by the Denver Business Journal, and a top COO through the DBJ C-Suite awards. In addition to her work at Footers and Social Capitol, April is a founding Board member of the Mile High Young Professionals, is an active Board member for the Cystic Fibrosis Foundation and is currently on the Board for the Denver Public Library Friends Foundation and the International Catering Association.

Congratulations again to April Lambatos on this recognition from the Arvada Chamber of Commerce. I extend my deepest appreciation for her contributions to our community.

**IN RECOGNITION OF DEBORAH  
MERRILL**

**HON. CHRIS PAPPAS**

OF NEW HAMPSHIRE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, May 11, 2022*

Mr. PAPPAS. Madam Speaker, I rise today in recognition of Deborah Merrill's long-standing commitment to higher educational and wish her well as she enters retirement. Deborah's current role as the dean of the Peter T. College of Business and Economics at the University of New Hampshire is no easy task. In this role, Deborah oversees more than 3000 students and supports an incredible faculty team. This retirement is well deserved.

Prior to her work in higher education, Deborah worked for 15 years in international development and research management in Latin America and East Africa. Her commitment to pressing social issues has earned her grants from a variety of organizations, including the Ford Foundation, Rockefeller Foundation, Fulbright, Social Science Research Council, and the Inter-American Foundation.

Deborah has worked to created multiple business and marketing programs for the residents of New Hampshire. These programs include the Center for Business Analytics, the Business in Practice Program, Creation of Voice Z, Changemaker Collaborative, among others. These programs offer educational and research opportunities to further students and residents' knowledge of the business world. Each of her programs has been incredibly successful in preparing students for careers in leadership and business roles.

As public health precautions during the coronavirus pandemic caused many institutions to close their doors to the public for prolonged periods of times, Deborah made sure