

HONORING THE CAREER OF DR.  
ELEZ BIBERAJ

**HON. GERALD E. CONNOLLY**

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, December 12, 2023*

Mr. CONNOLLY. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize Dr. Elez Biberaj, who is retiring after 43 years of service in the news organization Voice of America (VOA).

Voice of America's mission and commitment to the highest journalistic standards have been the central focus of Dr. Biberaj's professional journey. Throughout his career, he's done his very best to uphold the values that have made VOA one of the world's most preeminent and most trusted journalistic organizations. He's had the privilege of serving in various roles, from being a radio broadcaster in the Albanian Service (1980–1982), to Senior Writer/Editor specializing in Soviet and East European Affairs in USIA's Press Division (1982–1986), Chief of the Albanian Service (1986–2004), Managing Editor of the Eurasia Division (2004–2005), and since 2005, Director of the Eurasia Division. He also served as VOA's Acting Director from June to December 2020.

Through Voice of America, Dr. Biberaj witnessed and covered consequential world events. Dr. Biberaj covered the Cold War to the collapse of communism, the rise of democracy in the former Soviet Union and Eastern Europe, the Balkan wars, the integration of East European nations into Euro-Atlantic institutions, Russia's shift towards an authoritarian regime, and more recently, Russia's brutal invasion of Ukraine. He is honored and privileged to have worked alongside so many remarkable colleagues as he advanced the noble mission of delivering accurate and objective news and information to global audiences, telling America's compelling story, and championing its democratic values.

Dr. Biberaj accelerated the Eurasia Division's shift in Voice of America toward engaging digital audiences and harnessing the power of mobile and social platforms. He also worked closely with his counterparts at Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty to create the Current Time network, the first joint VOA/RFE/RL programming brand in the history of U.S. international broadcasting, launched to provide fact-based alternatives to Russian-language disinformation.

Dr. Biberaj's commitment to the fundamental ethos of promoting freedom, democracy and providing independent fact-based reporting serves as a source of hope and a shining beacon of truth for millions of people around the world.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating Dr. Elez Biberaj on his long-standing career as a leader in journalism.

HONORING THE CONTRIBUTIONS  
OF MR. JOHN MCKENZIE

**HON. MARK POCAN**

OF WISCONSIN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, December 12, 2023*

Mr. POCAN. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to recognize my constituent, Mr. John McKenzie, a Wisconsin business owner who plays a sig-

nificant role in the revitalization of Dane County through his generous philanthropy.

Mr. John McKenzie, through his highly successful family business, consistently gives back to his community by maintaining improving, and reinvesting in properties throughout Dane County.

Beyond his obligation to his business, Mr. McKenzie spent years working with the Boys & Girls Clubs of Dane County because of a heartfelt desire to improve the lives of young people, especially those belonging to underrepresented communities.

Mr. McKenzie partnered the Madison Area Builders Association with the Boys & Girls Clubs of Dane County to introduce opportunities and careers in the skilled trades to young people looking to better their lives.

This great idea gained momentum and not long after, with the help of Mr. McKenzie, the National Association of Home Builders and the national Boys and Girls Clubs created their own partnership, extending new opportunities to millions of kids across our Nation.

Mr. McKenzie not only sought to shrink the racial and gender wealth gap, but also to mentor kids on how to save, invest, and build for the next generation. On July 15, 2023, with \$30.4 million dollars' worth of investments and donations, Mr. McKenzie opened the McKenzie Regional Workforce Center, a place where kids of all ages can participate in career introductory programming.

Mr. John McKenzie demonstrates that business-driven organizations and organizations with a social focus can form partnerships that benefit the entirety of their respective communities. For that, I commend him, and I join his friends, family, and colleagues in offering him best wishes and continued success.

IN RECOGNITION OF DAVE  
ABDALLAH

**HON. RASHIDA TLAIB**

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, December 12, 2023*

Ms. TLAIB. Mr. Speaker, today I want to recognize Dearborn Heights Council Chairman Dave Abdallah. Since he was first elected to serve the people of Dearborn Heights in 2015, Mr. Abdallah has been a tireless advocate for every corner of the city.

Before he ever considered a career in public service, Dave Abdallah was an already well-known community member. Mr. Abdallah immigrated to Michigan from Lebanon at the age of ten and started school speaking no English. He worked hard at school and pursued studies in finance before he made his career in real estate, a natural fit for his outgoing and gregarious personality. In addition to his successful real estate career, Mr. Abdallah became involved with numerous community organizations, including Bint Jebel Cultural Center, and Michigan's Commission of Middle Eastern Affairs, which spurred his interest in elected public service.

In his eight years serving as a member of Dearborn Heights' City Council, Mr. Abdallah has strived to give back to the community and make lives better. He has sought to uplift the voices and concerns of the residents he serves and he has worked to strengthen economic development within Dearborn Heights

by attracting businesses to the area. When he isn't helping residents, he is cheering for our Detroit Lions every chance he gets.

Please join me in recognizing Dave Abdallah for his outstanding commitment and service to the people of Dearborn Heights in Michigan's 12th District Strong.

JONATHAN LORANCE

**HON. BRITTANY PETTERSEN**

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, December 12, 2023*

Ms. PETTERSEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Jonathan Lorance for earning the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth Award.

Jonathan has achieved great things, all while overcoming adversity and challenges along the way. Students like Jonathan, who strive to make the most of their education, develop crucial skills and a work ethic that will guide them for the rest of their lives. This award is a testament to Jonathan's hard work, determination, and perseverance at Arvada K-8 School and is clearly just the beginning of a bright and promising future.

It is my honor to congratulate Jonathan Lorance on achieving the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award.

RECOGNIZING DOCTORS  
MAHENDER AND JAYALAKSHMI  
PAMPATI

**HON. MORGAN MCGARVEY**

OF KENTUCKY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, December 12, 2023*

Mr. MCGARVEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor two remarkable physicians, a husband and wife, Mahender and Jayalakshmi Pampati, in recognition of their retirement from the healthcare field after nearly 33 years of dedicated service to the people of Eastern Kentucky.

Drs. Mahender and Jayalakshmi Pampati moved to Hazard, Kentucky in 1990 with a goal of providing high quality care to the underserved communities of Eastern Kentucky. Through their respective careers and the life they built together in Hazard, they became part of the fabric of the community. They raised three kids, Ashwin, Rudra, and Shivani, in Hazard, participating in the local Parent Teacher Association and engaging with their patients beyond their medical practices. For decades, both doctors centered their careers on providing quality care and service to their community.

Dr. Mahender Pampati, born in Hyderabad, India, son of Dr. Kishen and Mrs. Suwarna Pampati, started and grew a radiology practice upon arrival to Hazard. With his partner Dr. Ashok Patel, he built a radiology practice, Hazard Radiology Associates, that served the entire Appalachian Regional Hospital System in addition to Mountain Comprehensive Health Care. Mahender was the first specialty trained neuroradiologist in Eastern Kentucky and facilitated the installation of state-of-the-art CT and MRI equipment for more specialized care.

Mahender also brought the first mobile mammography and MRI services to Eastern Kentucky to ensure all patients had access to adequate imaging and screening services.

Dr. Jayalakshmi Pampati, born in Chennai, India, daughter of Mr. G.C. Krishnamoorthy and Mrs. G.Y. Thilakam, led a successful and patient forward career as the region's only rheumatologist. As one of few female physicians of her generation, she continuously broke barriers throughout her career, from medical school to her practice. She started her own rheumatology practice in Hazard, Kentucky shortly after moving there. Jayalakshmi was the only rheumatologist within a 60-mile radius for her entire career, serving a significant portion of Eastern Kentucky. Jayalakshmi diagnosed and treated several debilitating autoimmune diseases for the first time in the region and treated many of these patients for many decades. Jayalakshmi treated all patients, both insured and uninsured, guaranteeing all patients would be treated and advised on the most cost-effective and quality treatment plan.

Together they broke many firsts. Most significantly, they opened the first after hours clinic in the region in 1996, the Mountain After Hours Clinic (MAHC). MAHC provided a range of care, from primary care services to pediatrics to mental healthcare services. This groundbreaking clinic brought access to healthcare for the many patients who were unable to take off work to receive care during the workday and accepted patients whether they were insured or not.

Dr. Mahender Pampati received his medical degree from Magadh Medical College in 1979, and completed his radiology residency at Wayne State University in Detroit, Michigan in 1987 with a fellowship in neuroradiology from Stony Brook University in New York. Dr. Jayalakshmi Pampati received her medical degree from Madras Medical College in 1981, and completed her residency in internal medicine at Coney Island Hospital in Brooklyn, New York in 1988 with a fellowship in rheumatology from Stony Brook University in New York.

Dr. Mahender and Jayalakshmi Pampati have dedicated their lives and careers to providing specialized, quality, accessible, and affordable healthcare to the people of Eastern Kentucky, and their work has critically improved the healthcare landscape in an under-resourced and underserved part of our state. Mahender and Jayalakshmi Pampati will continue to be stewards of public service through their work with community organizations in Kentucky, the Bluegrass Indo American Civic Society and the Bharatiya Temple and Cultural Center. What a wonderful vocation for a truly special couple. I know their patients, fellow healthcare workers, and colleagues in Eastern Kentucky will miss their service. I wish them all the best in retirement and hope they enjoy time with their children, daughters-in-law, and four grandchildren. I ask that my colleagues here in the United States House of Representatives join me in thanking Dr. Jayalakshmi and Mahender Pampati for their lifelong commitment to serving Kentucky families and communities in need and congratulating them on their well-deserved retirement.

## PERSONAL EXPLANATION

### HON. BRAD R. WENSTRUP

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, December 12, 2023*

Mr. WENSTRUP. Mr. Speaker, on December 11, 2023, I was unable to be in attendance for votes on the House floor due to official Congressional travel. Had I been present, I would have voted YEA on rollcall No. 707, YEA on rollcall No. 708, and YEA on rollcall No. 709.

## HONORING THE LIFE OF NEIL T. FREEMAN

### HON. CHRIS PAPPAS

OF NEW HAMPSHIRE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, December 12, 2023*

Mr. PAPPAS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Neil Thomas Freeman, an Army Veteran and resident of Tilton, New Hampshire, who passed away in November. Neil was a beloved husband, son, and brother, who proudly dedicated his life to public service both in the United States Army and as a civilian federal employee.

Born in Somerville, MA, Neil enlisted in the United States Army shortly after graduating from high school in 1984. Following his military service, Neil was a proud member of the DAV, VFW, and AMVETS. Neil continued to serve his country as a civil servant for over 30 years, working for the United States Postal Service, Veterans Affairs, and United States Customs and Immigration. Most recently, he was a Congressional Liaison in the U.S. Customs and Immigration Service's Manchester Field Office.

Neil was known by his coworkers, friends, and family for being incredibly selfless, patient, and kind. He will be fondly remembered by the communities he touched and those he loved for years to come. His legacy of service, connection, and family will continue to inspire others.

On behalf of the constituents of New Hampshire's First Congressional District, I share my condolences with the Freeman family, including Neil's loving wife, Lisa his son, Cole, and his many nieces, nephews, extended family members, and friends. I would once again like to extend my condolences to the Freeman family and wish them all the very best in this time of grieving.

## JAMES DURAN

### HON. BRITTANY PETTERSEN

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, December 12, 2023*

Ms. PETTERSEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize James Duran for earning the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth Award.

James has achieved great things, all while overcoming adversity and challenges along the way. Students like James, who strive to make the most of their education, develop crucial skills and a work ethic that will guide them

for the rest of their lives. This award is a testament to James's hard work, determination, and perseverance at Jefferson Jr./Sr. High School and is clearly just the beginning of a bright and promising future.

It is my honor to congratulate James Duran on achieving the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award.

## TRIBUTE TO BISHOP SEDGWICK DANIELS

### HON. GWEN MOORE

OF WISCONSIN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, December 12, 2023*

Ms. MOORE of Wisconsin. Mr. Speaker, I rise once again with a heavy heart to extend my condolences to the family and community mourning the passing of the esteemed Bishop Sedgwick Daniels. Bishop Daniels passed away on November 12, 2023, at the age of 64. Having been friends with Bishop Daniels and his family for decades, I personally admired and appreciated his unwavering commitment to both congregation and the greater community.

Bishop Daniels was born in Milwaukee, Wisconsin into the loving union of John and Kathleen Daniels. He was not only a spiritual leader but also an authentic advocate for empowerment, leaving an indelible mark on the Milwaukee area, both physically and spiritually. His dedication to fostering positive change extended beyond the confines of the Church, impacting our community, and reaching global proportions.

As the Pastor and Establishmentarian of the Holy Redeemer Church of God in Christ (COGIC), Bishop Daniels played a pivotal role in our region's spiritual and community development. His visional leadership transformed Holy Redeemer COGIC into a thriving institution, addressing educational and social service needs with a multi-million-dollar impact.

His commitment to youth success manifested through the establishment of educational institutions like Holy Redeemer Christian Academy, Young Coggs William Preparatory Academy, and Katherine T. Daniels University Preparatory Academy. Initiatives such as Trained Pulpit and Trained Pew underscored his dedication to shaping the future of the Milwaukee community.

In 2001, Bishop Daniels was appointed Bishop by Bishop Gilbert E. Patterson and the COGIC General Board, a recognition of his exceptional spiritual leadership. Overseeing the growth of his jurisdiction from 39 congregations to more than 100 churches in Wisconsin and northern Illinois, Bishop Daniels became a beacon of inspiration in steering the spiritual course of the Church. His passing marks the end of an era, and we collectively grieve the loss of a visionary leader and spiritual guide. His leadership was impactful, and his absence will be deeply felt in the community.

Mr. Speaker, Bishop Sedgwick Daniels was a revered member of Milwaukee, the 4th Congressional District, and the entire State of Wisconsin. I commend and sincerely appreciate his contributions as a public servant and am honored to pay tribute to the late Bishop Sedgwick Daniels.