

## HONORING BRAYLON MEADE

**HON. DONALD S. BEYER, JR.**

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, December 15, 2023*

Mr. BEYER. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize an extraordinary constituent of mine, Braylon Meade. Braylon's dedication to athletics, commitment to academics and service to others is an inspiration to our entire community. Kind, positive, and contagious work ethic are just some of the several descriptions of Braylon's outstanding character.

As a student at Washington-Liberty High School Braylon displayed commitment to academics taking all International Baccalaureate classes. Outside of the classroom he dedicated himself as both a football and basketball player for the Generals. One coach remarked, "Braylon went above and beyond to make himself the best athlete that he could be. He was the kind of player that, if you asked him to run through a brick wall, he'd do it and not complain."

Off the court, Braylon served his community by coaching youth sports, organizing a basketball tournament to raise funds for cancer research, and volunteering at a local food pantry.

As a fan, Braylon's dedication to the Maize and Blue was unmatched—ultimately gaining acceptance into the University of Michigan.

As his birthday approaches and we enter the holiday season, I wish Braylon's mother Rose, father Kris, sister Kerry, brother Bryan and countless friends, teammates and classmates peace knowing and feeling the love that surrounds Braylon.

## HONORING MAHARAT RORI PICKER NEISS

**HON. CORI BUSH**

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, December 15, 2023*

Ms. BUSH. Mr. Speaker, St. Louis and I rise to honor Maharat Rori Picker Neiss, Executive Director of the Jewish Community Relations Council of St. Louis for her steadfast advocacy for the people of St. Louis. As Congresswoman for Missouri's First District, I have seen firsthand how her leadership has helped to bring greater understanding and compassion throughout our district and the state of Missouri.

Rori is a passionate advocate for the Jewish community, the LGBTQIA+ community, and for social justice, and she is a trailblazer in her own right. As one of the first graduates of Yeshivat Maharat, a groundbreaking institution training Orthodox Jewish women to be spiritual leaders and halakhic authorities, she has paved the way for others to follow.

Rori also works relentlessly to advance interfaith initiatives by bringing together diverse local and national leaders. She has been a strong advocate and friend to my office as we work to do the most for every person in St. Louis—starting with those who have the greatest need, and we are grateful for her leadership. Missouri's First District is undoubtedly enriched by Rori's service. On behalf of Missouri's First, I thank her for all that she does to strengthen our community.

## HONORING D'ASHLEY COHEN

**HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON**

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, December 15, 2023*

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a Black professional, D'Ashley Cohen.

D'Ashley Cohen is a native of Grenada, MS, and a graduate of Grenada High School. She is the daughter of Darin Cohen and Andrea Cohen. She is the mother of Addison Garner, and the late Madison Garner. She is also the youngest of her siblings.

After graduating high school, she attended South Alabama where she received her bachelor of science in K-6 elementary education and joined the illustrious Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Incorporated, where she served as the leader of the Economic Development Committee. After entering her career in teaching, she pursued her master's degree in curriculum and instruction with an emphasis on reading and language arts.

D'Ashley developed the love for students during her teaching career, which motivated her to pursue her specialist degree in educational administration and supervision.

D'Ashley is currently the owner/founder of Inspire Educational Services, LLC, where she provides educational consulting for struggling schools and tutoring services.

D'Ashley is an English language arts instructional coach, where she specializes in training, co-teaching, and modeling effective implementation of the Mississippi College and Career Readiness Standards, Mississippi Teacher Performance Standards, and Louisiana State Standards.

She is currently pursuing her doctorate in educational leadership at Nova Southeastern University.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing D'Ashley Cohen for her dedication and tenacity to serving her community and desire to be a light that shines even in her dark times.

## HONORING SYLVIA OGRON

**HON. LOIS FRANKEL**

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, December 15, 2023*

Ms. LOIS FRANKEL of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to wish my constituent, Sylvia Ogron, a Happy 100th birthday. Sylvia is the proud mother of four, grandmother of nine, and great-grandmother of 19—the matriarch of a big, beautiful family that is her pride and joy.

Sylvia, once an avid baker and tennis player, has lived in South Florida for decades, where she has enjoyed watching the new generations of her extended family continue to grow.

Always the competitor, Sylvia has lived a long, full life, surrounded by family and friends who love her dearly and cherish every moment spent with her.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in wishing Sylvia a Happy 100th birthday—here's to many more.

## RECOGNIZING NADINE WOODWARD

**HON. CATHY McMORRIS RODGERS**

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, December 15, 2023*

Mrs. RODGERS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Nadine Woodward and thank her for both her dedication and service as the 45th Mayor of Spokane.

Nadine has been a trusted member of our Spokane community since 1990, when she first arrived after earning her degree from the University of Portland. She began her career—and quickly became a household name—working for two of our region's television news stations, KREM and KXLY.

In 2019, after nearly three decades as a broadcast journalist, Nadine decided to step into the political arena and run for public office. In 2020, she was sworn in as mayor and got to work for our city. For 4 years, she worked tirelessly and dedicated herself to making Spokane a better place for people to live, work, and enjoy.

This wasn't always easy. Mayor Woodward took office during the peak of the COVID-19 pandemic, and she quickly proved herself to be the fierce leader we needed in times of uncertainty. She fought to protect individual liberty, get children back in school, and did everything she could to keep businesses open—all while making sure people had access to the health care they needed during an unprecedented time in our nation's history.

Nadine also made it a top priority to support our city's men and women in blue who work around the clock to keep our community safe. She was instrumental in establishing a violent crime task force that empowered law enforcement officers to do their jobs and get dangerous offenders off the streets. She also tackled the homelessness crisis head-on, working hard to clean up Camp Hope, which was at one time the largest homeless encampment in Washington state and a hotbed for drug dealing and other criminal activity.

Leading with compassion on this issue, Mayor Woodward worked side-by-side with shelter organizations to increase capacity by more than 500 beds. But she didn't stop there, instead championing efforts to increase homeownership within our community, working with the city council on the Spokane Housing Action Plan to help increase affordable and accessible housing options for families. The plan, which included new zoning laws to fast-track construction, will have a long-lasting impact by making it easier to create new residential areas that meet Spokane's current and future housing needs.

Perhaps what I'm most grateful to Mayor Woodward for is her commitment to being a steadfast partner in the fight against fentanyl. It has been encouraging to work with her to bring together law enforcement, community leaders, and families in an effort to stop the flow of this deadly poison that is destroying lives and families in our city. Her leadership on this issue has been so important to not only raising awareness, but actually beginning to get these drugs off our streets.

Mr. Speaker, I am grateful for Nadine's committed service to the Spokane community that I am blessed to call home. She has been a tremendous advocate for our city, and as she moves on from her position as mayor, I

ask that my colleagues join me in thanking her for her years of devotion and public service.

HONORING SANDHILLS COMMUNITY COLLEGE STUDENT ATHLETES ON THEIR SUCCESS IN THE CLASSROOM

**HON. RICHARD HUDSON**

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, December 15, 2023*

Mr. HUDSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the student athletes of Sandhills Community College (SCC) on achieving GPAs of high remark.

SCC has a proud history of both academic and athletic excellence and is a regional leader on both fronts. I was proud to see so many SCC student athletes carry on this great tradition.

In particular, I would like to recognize the following members of these teams on their achievement of this honor. Student athletes, Ava Ray, Trinity Ahing of the Women's Golf team, Emma Brown, Lannah Huneycutt, Keke Lawrence, Alyssa Maragelis, Anna Ty Ivey, Jalasia Ray, Mackenzie Swett, Rachel Burley, Olivia Barlowe Britta Martin of the Beach and Court Volleyball teams, Alon Hanani, Isaiah Nelson, Zac Sledge, Sam Stoltz, Kendall Woodriddle, and LeNijel Robinson of the Basketball team, and Logan Hay, Noah Maness, Alex Martin, Liam Harris, Supinat Rvjraran and Ben Read of the Men's Golf team.

Their great success in the classroom is proof that each of them truly embody what it means to be a student athlete. I think I speak for everyone in our community when I say they have made Pinehurst and the whole of Moore County proud.

Mr. Speaker, please join me today in recognizing the SCC Athletics Department for this great achievement and to wish them continued success both on the court and in the classroom.

HONORING CURTIS LACEY

**HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON**

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, December 15, 2023*

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a tenacious and selfless leader, Mr. Curtis Lacey. Curtis has shown dedication to the citizens of Warren County.

Curtis Lacey, tree and brush foreman for the Warren County Road Department, is commended for his lifesaving actions on October 30, 2023. On that afternoon, Lacey approached the scene of a wreck that left Linda Blissett, 76, trapped in her vehicle. He acted quickly, administering lifesaving care until the authorities arrived.

The Warren County Board of Supervisors issued a proclamation commending Lacey for his heroic efforts.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing Curtis Lacey for his passion

and dedication to the City of Vicksburg and Warren County.

RECOGNIZING PRESIDENT  
LYNETTE ZELEZNY

**HON. KEVIN MCCARTHY**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, December 15, 2023*

Mr. MCCARTHY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today, along with my friend and colleague, Congressman DAVID VALADAO, to recognize President Lynette Zelezny on her retirement today as President of California State University, Bakersfield. Over the course of her 35-year career in the education field, President Zelezny has inspired students, professors, and administrators through her passion for improving the academic success of our next generation, especially within the California State University system.

President Zelezny's career with the California State University system started in 1974 with her enrollment in Humboldt State University, where she earned her Bachelor's Degree in Psychology in 1979 and her Master's Degree in Psychology in 1981. Following her completion of a Doctorate in Social Psychology at Claremont Graduate University and an MBA from the Craig School of Business at California State University, Fresno, President Zelezny stayed at Fresno State, serving in a variety of educational and leadership roles. Most notably, President Zelezny served as Chief Academic Officer, Provost and Vice President of Academic Affairs at Fresno State. In 2018, President Zelezny made history when she became the first female President of California State University, Bakersfield.

Over the past five years, under President Zelezny's leadership, California State University, Bakersfield has successfully navigated new challenges and achieved several important milestones. She not only led the university through the unprecedented COVID-19 pandemic but did so with an unwavering commitment to the well-being of students and faculty. One of President Zelezny's top achievements has been developing CSUB's California Energy Research Center into a robust hub for energy research throughout the Central Valley. As Kern County gains and sustains ever more national importance as a hub for energy production, future generations in our region will look back on President Zelezny's initiative with great appreciation.

A true champion of Central Valley education, particularly in Bakersfield, President Zelezny's passion for the community has been a driving force behind her efforts. She recognized the unique challenges and opportunities presented in the region and strengthened the ties between the university and our community.

On behalf of the Central Valley of California, we would like to express our gratitude for President Zelezny's leadership to California State University, Bakersfield and her role in shaping the future careers of countless students. We would like to congratulate President Zelezny on a well-deserved retirement, a successful career in education, and for her many contributions to our community.

HONORING REVEREND DOCTOR  
LUKE TORIAN

**HON. ABIGAIL DAVIS SPANBERGER**

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, December 15, 2023*

Ms. SPANBERGER. Mr. Speaker, I rise to celebrate and honor the Rev. Dr. Luke Torian on his 35-year career in ministry. Dr. Torian has dedicated his life to serving and ministering to others through his work in the church, in the community, and in Virginia's House of Delegates.

A strong believer in the power of education, Dr. Torian graduated with a Bachelor of Arts degree from Winston-Salem State University, followed by a Master of Divinity degree from the School of Theology at Virginia Union University, and finally a Doctor of Ministry degree from the School of Divinity at Howard University.

Throughout his career, Dr. Torian has served in many roles including youth minister, associate pastor, and chaplain. In 1995, he was installed as Pastor of Mount Zion Baptist Church in Dumfries, where he has led a vibrant congregation of more than 4,000 people. He has been a fixture of the community, providing his congregation with support, kindness, and fellowship. Dr. Torian has built a church community that ministers to its congregants through Sunday services, Bible studies, social activities, music and arts, scholarship opportunities, and more.

Dr. Torian's outstanding leadership has been recognized by many over the years. He was awarded the James Floyd Jenkins Pillar of Faith Award by Howard University, a reflection of his dedication to his work and his positive contributions to his community. As a trusted source of knowledge and service, his impact has extended past Prince William County—first with his appointment to the Virginia Board of Counseling by Virginia Governor Mark Warner, and later with his 2009 election to represent the 52nd District in the Virginia House of Delegates.

As a Delegate, Dr. Torian has served his constituents faithfully, advocating to improve education and criminal justice policies in the Commonwealth. In 2020, he was chosen to chair the Virginia House Appropriations Committee—a historic appointment that made him the first African American in Virginia's history to lead the Committee, and a role he will resume in 2024 as he continues his legislative service.

As we look back on his career in the church, Dr. Torian has been a tremendous leader in his community, providing exceptional service and ministry to those in Prince William County and beyond. I am certain that his next chapter will also be guided by his love for service, love for learning, and his faith.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in celebrating and thanking Rev. Dr. Luke Torian, I wish him, his beloved wife Clarice and their daughter Constance, the very best as they prepare for the next step in his career.