

and student interest. These enhancements have facilitated greater student success, as evidenced by an increase in the number of students earning college credit prior to graduation and the number of Cambridge and 1B diplomas earned. Additionally, during his tenure, more students have been able to attain the highest level of Bright Futures Scholarship—making college more affordable for these academic achievers.

I thank Superintendent Browning for his commitment to ensuring that all students have the opportunity to reach their highest potential, and I wish him continued success.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. JOAQUIN CASTRO

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 27, 2023

Mr. CASTRO of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I voted for H. Res. 311 on April 25, 2023, because I support the resolution's general goals to expand normalization agreements between Israel and its neighbors and encourage future cooperation between the United States and Israel on shared economic, security, and civilian priorities.

However, I was disappointed that H. Res. 311 failed to reaffirm bipartisan support for a two-state solution that respects the dignity of both the Israeli and the Palestinian people. As nations around the world confront their own struggles with democracy, H. Res. 311 also was a missed opportunity to emphasize U.S. support for a free and liberal democracy in Israel. I hope future efforts to recognize Yom Ha'atzmaut will fully address these important issues.

ASIAN PACIFIC HERITAGE MONTH

HON. DON BACON

OF NEBRASKA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 27, 2023

Mr. BACON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize six individuals for Asian Pacific Heritage Month for their contributions to the Second Congressional District of Nebraska. All of these individuals mentioned their humble beginnings and their love for America. Each of these honorees have made significant contributions to the District through selfless contributions and hard work to benefit others. By sharing their culture and helping others, they have benefitted all of America.

Nebraska State Senator Rita Sanders, a Philippine American born in Hawaii who resides in Bellevue, has been married to her husband for 25 years. Her grandparents immigrated from the Philippines to Hawaii, where her grandfather worked in the sugar cane industry and her grandmother in the coffee industry. They worked their way up and eventually owned a coffee farm.

Rita's father was born and raised in Hawaii, later joining the United States Army. While on deployment in Germany he met Rita's mother, where they later married and moved to Hawaii.

Senator Sanders is honored to be a member of the U.S. STRATCOM Consultation

Committee, the Offutt Advisory Council and the UNMC Board of Counselors. She served as mayor for the city of Bellevue from 2010 to 2018. While currently serving as the state senator for Nebraska's 45th district, Rita and her husband are commercial real estate developers in their spare time.

As mayor of Bellevue, Senator Sanders worked to return the famed "Bells of Balangiga" to the Philippines. While Filipinos have been one of the United States strongest allies since World War II, the return of the bells had been a friction point in relations with the Philippines.

The return of the bells started with a meeting she had with President Duterte of the Philippines, included a formal ceremony with Secretary of Defense James Mattis in Cheyenne, Wyoming announcing the authorization to return the bells, and ended with a ceremony she attended in Balangiga in East Samar, Philippines. After 117 years since being taken by the United States, they were finally returned home where they rightfully belonged, thanks to the hard work and leadership of Senator Sanders.

Dr. Joanne Li is a native of Hong Kong and became University of Nebraska Omaha's Chancellor in July 2021. She is the first woman of color to serve as UNO chancellor and the first Asian-American in the history of the University of Nebraska System to hold an executive leadership role. Dr. Li has a passion for serving learners of all ages among all social, cultural, and economic backgrounds.

Born and raised in Hong Kong, Dr. Li's parents escaped Communist China as young teenagers. Education was not something her parents could afford for themselves. At a young age, Joanne yearned for a desire to see the world. She enjoyed literature written in different languages and dreamed of being something bigger than herself. Being a rebel at heart, she took a chance to join one of her best friends from Hong Kong and came to the U.S. to start her higher education journey.

Receiving full ride scholarships throughout her higher education journey, Dr. Li graduated with summa cum laude with a major in finance and a minor in economics from Florida State University. Her Ph.D. is also from Florida State University, in Finance with a support area in Econometrics. As a Chartered Financial Analyst, Dr. Li's areas of research interests include corporate governance, executive compensation, banking and investments, and international finance. She has held faculty positions at institutions including Loyola University, Towson University, Wright State University, Florida International University, and UNO.

In addition to her accomplishments as an administrator in higher education, Dr. Li is also a highly engaged leader and scholar who lends her experience to a wide array of causes and organizations including Women in Business (WiBe), the CNBC's Financial Wellness Council, the Higher Learning Commission's (HLC) Board of Trustees; the Board of Directors for the Coalition of Urban and Metropolitan Universities (CUMU); the Board of Directors for Opera Omaha; and the Board of Directors of the Omaha Symphony. She serves as a member of the European Foundation for Management Development (EFMD) Global Network Americas Advisory Board; a founding member of the International Advisory Council of the Lisbon School of Economics and Management in Portugal and the National

Sun Yat-Sen University in Taiwan. Most recently, Dr. Li joined the Federal Reserve Bank of Kansas City's Board of Directors for the Omaha Branch.

The death of his father due to a cardiac event is what drove Indian American Dr. Deepak Gangahar to become a Thoracic and Cardiovascular Surgeon with special emphasis on cardiac surgery. His mother, who had no formal schooling, was his confidant and trusted friend, ensuring Dr. Gangahar never felt lacking in any way.

Dr. Gangahar completed medical school in India and immigrated to America in 1971 for post graduate education in General Surgery. He then pursued a fellowship in Thoracic and Cardiovascular Surgery at the University of Utah, Salt Lake City.

Having grown up in a small town and in an agricultural state, Dr. Gangahar and his wife found shared social values, work ethics and ideal opportunities in Nebraska. Dr. Gangahar and his colleagues cofounded the Nebraska Heart Institute and the Nebraska Heart Hospital in Lincoln, which became the premium group in Mid-West in the field of Adult Thoracic and Cardiovascular diseases from catheterbased interventions to Heart & Lung Transplantation and Mechanical Hearts. Now retired, Dr. Gangahar works with TeamMates, a school based mentoring program founded by Coach Tom and Nancy Osborne. In addition, he enjoys working with new Start-Up companies, primarily in the medical field to make healthcare safer and efficient.

Dr. Gangahar credits who he is today to the value he got from his parents, mentoring from his teachers and elders, and the opportunity of freedom to choose from his country of choice, the United States of America.

Chinese American Hong Zheng came to the United States in 1992 at the age of 19. He opened his first Chinese restaurant in Missouri 1998 and subsequently moved to Omaha in 2000 to start new restaurants and a grocery business. He currently owns seven Asian restaurants and five Asian Chain Supermarkets across the Midwest region.

He has been an active member in Nebraska Chinese Association since 2008 and was elected as Chairman of Board for NCA for four years. He has been an Honorable Chairman since then and currently serves on the Board of Directors for Bellevue University.

Hong says he appreciates the opportunity to live the American dream, especially as he knows how difficult it can be for new immigrants to adapt and thrive in a foreign country. That is why he serves his community—to give back and assist other immigrants and help them succeed.

In 2019, Hong helped raise money for local flood victims and in 2020 he coordinated the donation of over 25,000 masks and PPE to local health clinics and hospitals. He sponsored the One Community Culture Festival in 2019 and 2022 to celebrate culture and diversity. Finally, he has sponsored scholarship programs at Bellevue University for local and international students in need since 2019.

Born and raised in Vietnam during the war, Huong Truong understood the importance of responsibility to her family and helping with household tasks while also attending school 5 kilometers away. She is an avid reader and sports enthusiast who gained a deeper understanding of American people, customs, and history. She was so impressed by the intelligence and emotional deaths of Americans,

which led her to pursue her American dream, arriving in the United States in 2001.

In one year, Huong earned \$42,000 from her job and was able to buy a house and car for her family. She then became the owner of a nail salon and met her husband, Nick. Together they operate King Kong Restaurant and have three daughters and a son.

Huong is very passionate about helping others and volunteering is a personal mission for her. She is currently helping six families who are facing difficult circumstances, including a 107 year old woman who needed assistance with money and medicine. Huong said she feels blessed by God with good health and a kind heart and is grateful to America for giving her the opportunity to live her dream.

Born in North Korea in 1938, Sung Jo and his family fled to South Korea in 1946 to join his father, who had fled a year earlier after facing arrest from Communist police. His father's crime? Giving a speech celebrating the liberation from 35 years of Japanese rule—something we call freedom of speech.

At 21 years old, Sung Jo was drafted by the Korean Army and served for 18 months. He went on to earn a bachelor's degree in English Literature in 1963. He started working for the Holt Adoption Program in Seoul and went to the United States in 1967 and was responsible for bringing orphaned Korean children to their adoptive parents. His family joined him in July 1969, and he became a U.S. citizen in 1974.

Sung Jo started working at Nebraska Machine Production in 1972 and served as Chair of the Korean Association of Nebraska from 1995 to 1996, and as a member of the Board of Directors in 1997. In 2002, he volunteered as an interpreter at the 2002 FIFA World Cup Korea/Japan in South Korea and from 2003 to 2014 he served as the Chair of the Omaha Korean American Senior Group.

In 2005 he became a Lifelong member of the National Korean War Veterans Association and received a citation in 2007 from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs for his services to the Korean American community. He currently serves on the Board of Directors for the Korean War Veterans Association.

Sung Jo wanted to continue to serve as a liaison between the Korean War Veterans Association and Korean American community, so he donated face masks for Korean War veterans who could not leave their homes during the COVID pandemic.

I salute and thank each of these six honorees for their service and dedication to not only Asian Pacific communities and the Second District of Nebraska, but to America.

HONORING VALERIA CANTOR
MÉNDEZ

HON. MIKE THOMPSON

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 27, 2023

Mr. THOMPSON of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Valeria Cantor Méndez, whom I have named the 2023 Climate Crisis Champion for Yolo County because of the important work she has done to address the threat and impacts of climate change on California's 4th Congressional District.

Ms. Méndez was born in Caracas, Venezuela and attended her first two years of high

school at Mount View School in San Jose, Costa Rica. Before her senior year, she moved to Rocklin, California where she completed her final year of high school.

Ms. Méndez has prioritized environmental justice and Indigenous sovereignty throughout her academic career. She studies at the University of California, Davis (UC Davis) and is working towards a bachelor's degree with a major in Community and Regional Development and a minor in Environmental Policy Analysis and Planning. Ms. Méndez utilizes her personal experiences as a student along with her strong interest in environmental justice to raise awareness and generate support for climate action in the UC Davis community.

As the campaign vice-chair for Students Enacting Environmental Defense, Ms. Méndez advocates for environmental justice as an integral value of the University of California system. Ms. Méndez's dedication to climate response inspires others in the UC Davis community as she invites greater engagement on climate action for everyone from the students to the chancellor. Ms. Méndez explores the connections between environmental justice and Indigenous sovereignty by building strong working relationships between faculty and climate-allied student organizations. She also served as a student research assistant with the UC Davis Center for Regional Change, a project that builds community resiliency through environmental sustainability.

Ms. Méndez has a strong interest in combatting the effects of the climate crisis and educating future generations on issues of environmentalism. In addition to her work at the UC Davis, Ms. Méndez educates high school students through the Youth, Plan, Learn, Act Now program about the historical context of environmental justice emphasizing the contributions of Black, Indigenous, and other communities of color. Ms. Méndez is also the hub co-coordinator for Sunrise Movement Davis, a youth empowerment movement with the goal of stopping climate change.

Mr. Speaker, Valeria Cantor Méndez is a dedicated leader in energy and environmental advocacy. Therefore, it is fitting that we honor her here today as Yolo County's 2023 Climate Crisis Champion.

HONORING HM3 RAYMOND
SHOCKLEY

HON. DIANA HARSHBARGER

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 27, 2023

Mrs. HARSHBARGER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor my constituent Hospital Corpsman 3rd Class (HM3) Raymond Austin Shockley from Morristown, Tennessee for his honorable service in the United States Navy as partner of the 50th Anniversary Vietnam War Commemoration.

After basic training in 1964, HM3 Shockley's first duty station was at Bethesda Naval Hospital in Maryland, now known as Walter Reed Military Medical Center, where he provided front line medical services like that of a nurse. In doing so, he met and equally cared for all his fellow service members, even President Lyndon B. Johnson. In 1965 he was transferred to Camp Pendleton in California to further his training as a Marine. Still following a

commitment to serve, he went on to Okinawa, then Vietnam where he aided the wounded and experienced the horrors of war. He returned to San Diego, CA and finished his service on the USS *Sperry* AS 12 named for Elmer Sperry, a Fulton-class submarine tender repair ship. Presently, he continues his lifetime of service as Commander of our local Disabled American Veterans (DAV) Chapter 59 in Morristown.

Further, HM3 Shockley wishes to personally share, "To all the men and women that were a part of my military life, you all will remain my brothers and sister forever."

Join me in thanking HM3 Shockley and letting him know he truly made a difference.

HONORING MAJOR WARREN
SCHWAB FOR HIS DISTIN-
GUISHED MILITARY SERVICE
AND 102ND BIRTHDAY

HON. JACK BERGMAN

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 27, 2023

Mr. BERGMAN. Mr. Speaker, it is my great honor to recognize retired aviator Major Warren Schwab for his distinguished military service and for recently celebrating his 102nd birthday. Flying B-24 Liberators during World War II, Warren valiantly took part in over 20 missions during the largest and deadliest global conflict in history. Upon its conclusion in 1945, he continued his military career by serving in both the Korean War and Vietnam. Warren's commitment to the state of Michigan and to the defense of our Nation has been unwavering and serves as an inspiration to many.

Born in 1921, Major Schwab grew up during the Great Depression and enlisted in the military shortly thereafter. Upon entry into our armed forces, Warren demonstrated exemplary tact and bravery in every mission he was part of. Notably, he led the way on June 6, 1944, by conducting morning bomb raids on enemy positions across the Normandy Coast and Munich. His unparalleled gallantry and commitment to his peers is undeniable and worthy of recognition.

Major Warren Schwab is a living testament to all who have sacrificed in service to our country. Surviving one of World War II's most dangerous positions with some of the highest mortality rates of all enlisted personnel in the war, Major Schwab chose to continue his service to our country and his community. His recent 102nd birthday on February 24th prompts all residents of Michigan's First District to cherish and thank those servicemembers who reflect Mr. Schwab's caliber of devotion and sacrifice. We are blessed as a Nation to have Veterans like Major Warren Schwab.

Mr. Speaker, I am honored to recognize Major Warren Schwab for his service in the U.S. Armed Forces and for his 102nd birthday, celebrated on February 24, 2023. On behalf of Michigan's First District, I extend our utmost respect and gratitude to Major Schwab for his military service, and our congratulations for his recent birthday. I would also like to extend my best wishes to him and his family in their future endeavors.