

HONORING THE DIAMOND
PROJECT, INC.**HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON**

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 12, 2023

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and commemorate the accomplishments and exceptional work of The Diamond Project, Inc. The Diamond Project is a remarkable youth mentoring organization that empowers and uplifts the youth in our community. Founded in June 2017 by Andrea S. Lee.

The Diamond Project emerged as a beacon of hope and inspiration for countless young people. Its mission to cultivate excellence, resilience, and compassion resonates deeply with the core values we hold dear. The Programmatic Points of The Diamond Project are Health and Wellness, Professional Development, Personal Development, Community Service, Empowerment, and Prevention. It focuses on working with pre-teen and teen girls by introducing them to mentors who not only grew up in the same small towns but also graduated from the same schools. Through the organization, the participants are exposed to numerous networking and growth opportunities.

In July 2022, The Diamond Project organized a visit to Washington, DC where they met with female staffers on Capitol Hill. During a private tour of the Chambers of Majority Whip JIM CLYBURN, a truly remarkable experience unfolded as they ventured into the tunnel beneath the chambers. A site of historical importance and a major tour highlight as it was the exact location the British entered the Capitol during the War of 1812.

In February 2023, members of The Diamond Project had the honor of traveling back to Washington to visit The White House, where they were invited to attend a private screening of the movie "Till" alongside the movie cast. Furthermore, they had the privilege of sitting in the front row during President Biden's inspiring speech. On February 25th 2023, The Diamond Project's Mentee of the Year traveled to Los Angeles, CA, to attend the prestigious NAACP Image Awards. In May 2023, The Diamond Project awarded their first high school graduating seniors with \$5,500 in college scholarship funds, helping to ensure these bright and deserving individuals have the means to pursue higher education and continue their journey towards success.

The Diamond Project has organized numerous enlightening workshops that have included influential speakers who have made significant contributions in their respective fields. Notable workshop speakers include Jill Scott, Derrick Johnson—a leader in civil rights advocacy, and Angela Rye.

The Diamond Project's dedication to education, empowerment, exposure, and civic engagement is commendable.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing The Diamond Project, Inc., for their passion and dedication to serving the Mississippi Delta and their admirable desire to positively impact the future of young girls.

RECOGNIZING THE 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF LAKESTATE INDUSTRIES

HON. JACK BERGMAN

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 12, 2023

Mr. BERGMAN. Mr. Speaker, it is my honor to recognize Lakestate Industries for 50 years of continued service to the state of Michigan and for their celebratory anniversary event held on June 28, 2023. Lakestate Industries is the Upper Peninsula's leader in employment and training opportunities for those experiencing intellectual disabilities. Before the establishment of Lakestate Industries in 1969, employment opportunities for individuals with disabilities were severely lacking in Michigan. Their work throughout their impressive history has helped reshape the lives of those they serve, their staff, and the surrounding community.

Acting as a private non-profit organization, the agency has cemented itself as a trustworthy and exemplary source of support for those with disabilities and their families. They have been a voice for the voiceless and will continue to stand in the gap and affect real change by providing life changing services for years to come.

I commend all involved in Lakestate Industries' extensive history of success and cannot wait to see what they have planned in the future. They have helped one of our most vulnerable populations become more independent and flourishing members of society, and I extend my wholehearted appreciation for the organization's exceptional work and selflessness.

Mr. Speaker, it is my honor to recognize Lakestate Industries for 50 years of continued service to Michigan and to offer my congratulations for holding a successful event in celebration of that milestone. On behalf of Michigan's First District, I wish Lakestate Industries, their staff, and the families they serve the best in their future endeavors.

RECOGNIZING CHINO CHIEF OF
POLICE WES SIMMONS**HON. NORMA J. TORRES**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 12, 2023

Mrs. TORRES of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Wes Simmons and his 28 years of public service and dedication to the City of Chino. The calling to be a police officer is an incredibly difficult and important vocation of public service. Those who risk their lives for the good of the community are worthy of the highest respect and appreciation of our district, State, and nation.

Chief Simmons joined the Chino Police Department in 1995 after graduating from the California State University at Fullerton. Throughout his distinguished career, Chief Simmons served as Police Officer, Field Training Officer, SWAT Team Operator, Corporal, Detective, Sergeant, Lieutenant, and Captain. He was appointed as the Chief of Police in July 2019.

Additionally, Chief Simmons graduated with the 255th Session of the FBI National Acad-

emy and Class 60 of California's POST Command College. He has a master's degree in Organizational Management from the University of Phoenix and completed the Harvard Kennedy School's Senior Executives in State and Local Government program.

This July, Chief Simmons is officially retiring. I hope that he gets to rest and enjoy time with his family. We are grateful for his service to our community.

For his outstanding accomplishments, it is my honor to recognize Chief of Police Wes Simmons. His years of civic service and commitment to the city and the people of Chino are worthy of the highest commendation.

HONORING THE LIFE AND SERVICE
OF RORY ANTOINE MICOU**HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON**

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 12, 2023

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life and service of a safety officer and a self-motivated community leader, Rory Antoine Micou. Rory enjoyed a long career of policing, teaching and serving.

Rory's love for all genres of music was cultivated from his great-grandmother, Henrietta Cleggs, his grandmother, Dorothy Micou and his mother, Herdy Micou. His formal education was in the public-school systems, graduating with Honors from John F. Kennedy (JFK) High School in May 1981. While at JFK, Rory played football, was in the marching band, and formed a talented group called The Dynamic Connection (DC Gang). The DC Gang performed throughout the delta and won numerous awards including a radio performance on WDIA radio station in Memphis, TN. His talent as a soloist guided him to an offer of a four-year scholarship at Alcorn. Rory was a member of Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc., and he was also a first lieutenant in the U.S. Army Reserve.

Rory married Cheryl Elaine Sias on July 25, 1992. To this union, one child was born, Alexis.

In 2008, Rory became employed with the Cleveland Police Department as a patrolman and went on to become the school resource officer for the Cleveland School District. Rory was extremely dedicated to his job in the district. He believed in supporting the children, parents and staff. Many people in the community associated him with his animated school crossing duties. Rory retired from the Cleveland Police Department in October 2022 due to health issues. As he battled his health issues, he was strong enough to return to work in the capacity of the school crossing guard (he loved this job). He continued until his health issues would not allow him to. Many residents of the Cleveland area have stated how it brought a smile to their face as they started their workday.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing and honoring the life, legacy, and service of Rory Antoine Micou.

TRIBUTE TO RUSSELL RAYMOND
LOVELL

HON. KEN CALVERT

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 12, 2023

Mr. CALVERT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor and pay tribute to Russell "Russ" Raymond Lovell, who died on Friday, June 2nd, 2023. Russ was a dear friend who dedicated more than 3 decades to working in public safety in Riverside County.

After high school, Russ joined and served in the United States Coast Guard for a number of years. He then took a job working at the California Rehabilitation Center in Norco, where he would work for more than 30 years. He initially began as a Correctional Guard, but eventually migrated into a facilities position and retired as a Stationary Engineer. Russ retired from the California Rehabilitation Center in 1995. After his retirement, I had the pleasure of having Russ work for me.

Russ grew up in Corona and while working locally he met Carol Lynn Nolen in 1952 while working at Caf's Cafe. They eventually married in 1957 and began to grow their family which would ultimately include 3 daughters. Russ and Carol shared a love for animals and travel. They also had a mutual interest in collecting first edition books and would often attend author book signings at bookstores.

Russ is survived by his daughters, Lisa Lovell, and Leanne Spinale and her husband Skip; grandchildren, Jacob Holland and Audrey Spinale; as well as other family members and countless friends. He is preceded in death by his wife Carol, his daughter Lori Holland, and his granddaughter Kelsey Holland. I extend my heartfelt condolences to the Lovell family, his friends, and everyone fortunate enough to know Russ. Although he may be gone, the many contributions Russ made to his community and family will never be forgotten.

RECOGNIZING ROBERT LAMARCHE
FOR 25 YEARS OF SERVICE TO
THE ESCANABA DEPARTMENT
OF PUBLIC SAFETY

HON. JACK BERGMAN

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 12, 2023

Mr. BERGMAN. Mr. Speaker, it is my honor to recognize Robert LaMarche for 25 years of service to the city of Escanaba. Throughout his time with the Escanaba Department of Public Safety, Robert has shown extraordinary commitment and dedication to his community, continually putting the safety and well-being of Escanaba residents above his own.

As Director of the Escanaba Department of Public Safety, Robert has played an integral role in the department's continued success and effectiveness, and his selfless service to the people of Escanaba has left an indelible mark on so many. Since beginning his work in public safety in the late 1990s, Robert has become a familiar and trustworthy face, and his service will continue to have a positive impact for years to come. Our Nation needs more humble, upstanding leaders like Robert who

protect and uplift our communities in the First District, and I cannot thank him—along with every law enforcement officer across our Nation—enough for his profound work in keeping our communities safe.

Mr. Speaker, it is my honor to recognize Robert LaMarche for 25 years of service to the Escanaba Department of Public Safety. His leadership and hard work are greatly appreciated and on behalf of Michigan's First District, I extend my gratitude to Robert, his family, his colleagues, and wish them the best in their future endeavors.

HONORING PAMELA D.C. JUNIOR

HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 12, 2023

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a tenacious and self-motivated leader, Ms. Pamela D.C. Junior. Ms. Junior has shown what can be done through hard work, dedication, and a desire to achieve success.

Pamela D.C. Junior, director of the Two Mississippi Museums in Jackson, MS retired after 35 years of service. Ms. Junior is a Jackson native; Jackson Public Schools product; and a proud graduate of Three Jackson State University, where she received her BS in education, with a minor in special education. In 1990, she joined the National Park Service in Washington, D.C., serving as a park ranger. Nearly a decade later, she returned to Jackson to work for the city's Parks and Recreation Department. In 1999, Ms. Junior was hired as the manager of the Smith Robertson Museum and Cultural Center, where she became co-coordinator of the National Arts Program and acquired on permanent loan the Smithsonian traveling exhibition *Field to Factory: The Afro-American Migration, 1915–1940s*.

In 2017, Ms. Junior was named the inaugural director of the first state-sponsored civil rights museum in the nation, the Mississippi Civil Rights Museum. In 2019, she was promoted to director of the Two Mississippi Museums, where she continued the work of sharing the stories of Mississippi told in the Museum of the Mississippi History and the Mississippi Civil Rights Museums.

Ms. Junior has been honored over the years for both her professional and community work, and received numerous awards, such as the Freedom Rider Award from the Mississippi Freedom 50th Foundation; the For My People Award from the Margaret Walker Center at Jackson State University; the Hometown Hero Award from the Jackson Convention and Visitors Bureau; and the Museum Leadership Award by the Association of African American Museums. She was inducted into the Mississippi Tourism Hall of Fame. Ms. Junior currently serves the community as a board member for Visit Jackson and an advisory board member for the Mississippi Book Festival. She is also a member of the International Women's Forum.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing Ms. Pamela D.C. Junior for her passion and dedication in the field of public history.

RECOGNIZING THE ARREST OF MR.
GAJENDRAKUMAR PONNAMBALAM

HON. JAMIE RASKIN

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 12, 2023

Mr. RASKIN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in solidarity with Mr. Gajendrakumar Ponnambalam, a member of the Parliament of Sri Lanka. Mr. Ponnambalam has recently been subjected to harassment and wrongful detention by Sri Lankan law enforcement. Despite video evidence contradicting the official account and lack of an official arrest warrant, Mr. Ponnambalam was arrested for behaving in an unruly manner towards state intelligence officers during a public meeting. Fortunately, he was released on bail shortly after his arrest.

While I am glad to hear of Mr. Ponnambalam's release, his harassment by Sri Lankan authorities remains highly troubling, and is part of a stream of attacks on minority members of the Sri Lankan parliament. Mr. Ponnambalam is a member of the minority Tamil ethnic group who has advocated for the marginalized and spoken at the United Nations Human Rights Council about the killing of Tamil journalists. Other members of the Sri Lankan parliament have faced harassment because of their activism over the past few months on the destruction of Tamil places of worship, militarization in the Northeast, and other crimes against members of the Tamil ethnic group.

Mr. Speaker, we must stand with the victims of human rights violations in their advocacy for their rights. I hope my colleagues will join me in expressing support for Mr. Ponnambalam and in calling for the Sri Lankan government to commit to democratic values and practices.

BRIGHT FUTURE FOR BULGARIA

HON. JOE WILSON

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 12, 2023

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, the dynamic Republic of Bulgaria is leading the way in energy independence, eliminating intimidation by the war criminal Putin who is sacrificing young Russians to death for his personal gain of money and power.

Prime Minister Nikolai Denkov is a visionary, meeting last week with Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy in Sofia and facilitating Bulgaria selling two Russian-made nuclear reactors and other critical equipment to Ukraine.

It is inspiring that the National Assembly on July 6th voted for Bulgaria to benefit from the sale. This corrects failed efforts from the 1980s of a technically and commercially flawed project, as identified by the Wall Street Journal on July 7th.

"The deal shows how Russia's energy influence in Europe is diminishing fast," said Martin Vladimirov, Director of the Energy Program at the Center for the Study of Democracy in Sofia.

The people of Bulgaria and Ukraine mutually benefit as clearly explained by Assembly Member, Delyan Dobrev "After the start of the