

labor family. She cared deeply for her UFW brothers and sisters, and her commitment to the movement's goals was unwavering. Through strikes, boycotts, marches, and political campaigns, she contributed immensely, to the advancement of farmworker rights.

Born on October 24, 1930, in Calexico, California, to a Yaqui family from Sonora, Mexico, Josefina's warrior spirit was evident from an early age. Despite having no formal education, she taught herself to read and write, demonstrating her determination and resourcefulness. Her encounter with Cesar Chavez in the 1960s in Reedley, Fresno County, was a turning point in her life. From that moment, she became deeply involved with the UFW, learning English and actively participating in organizing efforts. Even a serious injury sustained during an incident in a field did not deter her from her mission.

Josefina's dedication to the UFW extended to the lettuce boycott, organizing events in Chicago and New York. She continued to fast, a powerful form of protest, well into her 80s, despite pleas from her family. Her commitment and activism earned her meetings with prominent figures, including Hilary Clinton, the Kennedys, and President Obama. One of her remarkable contributions was on Cesar Chavez's birthday, March 31, 2021, when Josefina accompanied her great-grandchildren to help First Lady Dr. Jill Biden administer COVID vaccines to farm workers at the movement's historic Forty Acres property near Delano.

Throughout her life, Josefina inspired countless young UFW organizers and personnel. Known for her direct approach, she encouraged workers to take charge of their lives and effect positive change. Her ability to balance patience and urgency left a profound impact on those she mentored. Beyond her public role, Josefina also engaged in caring for UFW staff and leadership children and cooked for Cesar Chavez during his time at the La Paz headquarters in Keene. Her dedication to the cause also extended to her residence at the Paulo Agbayani Retirement Village outside Delano and the Casa Hernandez affordable senior housing neighborhood, both under the auspices of the Cesar Chavez Foundation.

Josefina leaves behind a large and loving family, including her children, grandchildren, great-grandchildren, and great-great-grandchildren. Her democratic union values and, if possible (*Si Se Puede*), attitude have been passed down through 5 generations, continuing the legacy of her tireless efforts for farmworker rights. In honor of Doña Josefina Cervantes Flores, a memorial service will be held to pay tribute to her extraordinary life and unwavering commitment to the UFW. Her contributions to the farm worker movement will forever be remembered and celebrated.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my esteemed colleagues to join me in recognizing and honoring Doña Josefina Cervantes Flores, a true pioneer of the farm worker movement, whose legacy will continue to inspire us all to fight for justice and dignity in the labor community. May her family find comfort in knowing that her contributions have touched the lives of many, leaving an enduring impact on farm workers and communities throughout the nation.

TRIBUTE TO THE MCGROARTY ARTS CENTER

HON. ADAM B. SCHIFF

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, August 11, 2023

Mr. SCHIFF. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the McGroarty Arts Center in Tujunga, California, as it celebrates its centennial anniversary.

The McGroarty Arts Center is named after the late John Steven McGroarty, former Congressman and Poet Laureate of California. Born in 1862, McGroarty moved to the Los Angeles area in 1901, settling in the Verdugo Hills of Tujunga. That same year he began his 40-year career as a journalist and editorial writer for the Los Angeles Times, penning the "Seen from the Green Verdugo Hills" weekly column.

The McGroarty home, known as "Rancho Chupa Rosa," was constructed in 1923 on the surviving foundation of the burned-down house of John and Ida McGroarty. It served as their home during the latter portion of Mr. McGroarty's distinguished career in writing and politics.

Upon Mr. McGroarty's death in 1944, Rancho Chupa Rosa went to his niece, Miss Margaret McHale who sold the property and surrounding acres in 1953 to the City of Los Angeles. The City's Department of Recreation and Parks managed the McGroarty home until 1974, when the supervision was transferred to the Department of Cultural Affairs, a few years after the home was declared a City of Los Angeles Historic-Cultural Monument. Since 1995, when the center was privatized, it has been operated by the non-profit organization, the McGroarty Arts Center in partnership with the City's Department of Cultural Affairs.

A thriving community arts complex, the center offers access to arts and history by providing a variety of creative events, comprehensive arts instruction, and the cultural and historic venue for artists to show their work in a multitude of forms. The McGroarty Arts Center has hosted countless events, workshops, and exhibitions over the years in the beautiful, historic home that is deeply cherished by the members of the community. Events include the annual Ceramics Juried Open Exhibition, the annual Chili Bowl Fest and Art Craft Faire, Hanukkah in the Foothills and Poet Laureate of Sunland Tujunga celebrations, as well as drawing, ceramic, piano, tai chi and watercolor classes.

I ask all Members to join me in honoring McGroarty Arts Center upon the celebration of its Centennial Anniversary.

IN MEMORIAM OF MRS. ZINETTA MARIE NASSIF

HON. DARRELL ISSA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, August 11, 2023

Mr. ISSA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life of Mrs. Zinetta Marie Nassif.

Mrs. Nassif was born on June 3, 1944, and lived an incredible life serving her family, community, and country. She had a passion for her loved ones and a remarkable giving spirit.

Mrs. Nassif was often described as the most fun to be around at a party, as she had a keen sense for bringing people together. Her ability to connect was best exemplified during her tenure abroad with her husband, Ambassador Thomas Nassif.

Mrs. Nassif served alongside her husband, Thomas Nassif, when he was Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary to Morocco. Mrs. Nassif's diplomatic efforts were highly regarded by those she worked with. Her commitment to public service and unwavering support for her husband made her a beloved figure in Morocco and at home in the United States. The Nassifs' legacy of service to their country will always be remembered and admired by those who knew them.

On August 5, 2023, Mrs. Zinetta Marie Nassif passed away at her home in La Jolla, California. Mrs. Nassif left a noteworthy impact across the globe with her servant's heart, and her legacy will continue to inspire future generations of Americans.

TRIBUTE TO YOUNG STAFF MEMBERS FOR THEIR CONTRIBUTIONS ON BEHALF OF THE PEOPLE OF THE 18TH CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT OF TEXAS AND THE UNITED STATES

HON. SHEILA JACKSON LEE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, August 11, 2023

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I am here today to extend my deepest appreciation and profound gratitude to the extraordinary legislative fellows who have graced my office with their unwavering dedication and unyielding commitment.

Members of Congress know well, perhaps better than most, how blessed our Nation is to have in reserve such exceptional young men and women who will go on to become leaders in their local communities, states and the Nation in the areas of business, education, law, government, philanthropy, the arts and culture, and the military.

We know this because we see them and the benefits from their contributions everyday. Many of them work for us in our offices as junior staff members, congressional fellows, or interns and they do amazing work for and on behalf of the constituents we are privileged to represent.

Mr. Speaker, I believe there is no higher calling than the call to serve a cause larger than ourselves.

That is why I ran for public office. I was inspired to serve by so many great public figures that came before me. I was inspired to serve by President Kennedy who said, "Ask not what your country can do for you, ask what you can do for your country," and by the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. who said: "Everybody can be great because anybody can serve. . . . You only need a heart full of grace. A soul generated by love."

By this measure there are several other great young men and women who served as legislative fellows this Spring and Summer in my office. Each day, they exemplified the highest standards of excellence, bringing forth fresh perspectives, innovative ideas, and an unrelenting drive to effect positive change

within our cherished community. Their tireless efforts to address the diverse needs and pressing concerns of our constituents resonate deeply with the values we hold dear.

In the pursuit of serving the constituents of the 18th Congressional District of Texas, their contributions have been nothing short of remarkable.

That is why today I rise to pay tribute to fourteen extraordinary young persons for their service to my constituents of the 18th Congressional District of Texas and to the American people. They are:

Panashé Siachitema, Texas Tech University
Ramanpreet Kaur, Indiana University
Amy Arceo, Texas A&M University
Ainsley Gill, Vanderbilt University
Joel Crawford, Harvard University
Kevin Darmadi, George Washington University

Lindsey O'Neal, Payne International Development Fellowship

Niyonsaba Magnifique, Payne International Development Fellowship

Vanessa Rogers-Wright, Charles B. Rangel International Affairs Program

Wilson Pemboh, Texas Tech University
Alexandra Wilhelm, Pepperdine University
Parker Milligan, Oglethorpe University
J Hardy, Howard University

Carrington Blair, Jackson State University

Mr. Speaker, the energy, intelligence and idealism that these wonderful young people brought to my office and those interning in the offices of my colleagues help keep our democracy vibrant. The insights, skills, and knowledge of the governmental process they gain from their experiences will last a lifetime and prove invaluable to them as they go about making their mark in this world.

Because of people like them the future of our country is bright, and its best days lie ahead. I wish them all well.

RECOGNIZING AND HONORING THE CAREER OF ELIZABETH "BETTI" KUSZAJ

HON. JOE COURTNEY

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, August 11, 2023

Mr. COURTNEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the career of one of northeastern Connecticut's greatest community advocates, Elizabeth "Betti" Kuszaj of Brooklyn, Connecticut. Betti is retiring after over four decades of service as the Northeastern Connecticut Chamber of Commerce's Executive Director. In this role, Betti has earned a reputation as an institution unto herself, working tirelessly during good economic times and bad to keep Connecticut's northeastern region growing, while at the same time maintaining its unique rural appeal as, "the Quiet Corner". Betti's business expertise, knowledge of the people in the region, and well-deserved reputation as an ethical, trustworthy person, will not soon be replaced.

Betti has tackled her professional and personal life with an unmatched vigor—even before her career at the Chamber. Prior to the start of her leadership through the Chamber in 1982, Betti served within the Brooklyn, Connecticut school system having graduated from the University of Connecticut with a degree in

speech pathology. In addition to her service to the students of Brooklyn, Betti worked part-time as a waitress, demonstrating an incredible work ethic that would be a hallmark of her time with the Chamber.

Betti's transition from advocating for the growth of students to the growth of her local business community would completely transform the Northeastern Connecticut Chamber of Commerce. The Chamber's founding roots originate with the once-Brooklyn-Killingly Chamber of Commerce, which then served 70 businesses. Today, it is a regional bulwark in business development. The towns incorporated within its mission have ballooned from two towns to twenty-three. It now supports a community of more than 530 member businesses. By 1991, less than 10 years into Betti's visionary leadership, the change was made official, and the Northeastern Chamber was formally organized out of its predecessor chambers.

After the reorganization, Betti settled very comfortably into the role that many business and government leaders have known and appreciated her for—a tenacious fighter and dependable resource. Cooperation and collaboration have been hallmarks of Betti's time, as she built partnerships across the state and region, always putting the needs of her clientele first. She has served on multiple boards and commissions across northeast Connecticut—from Day Kimball Hospital to Putnam's Rotary Club. There are few places in the Quiet Corner that do not bear the mark of Betti's influence and assistance.

On a personal note, Mr. Speaker, my interactions with Betti began shortly after my election in 2006 when she invited my office to a Chamber Breakfast in Danielson. From my perspective, it was in difficult times that Betti really distinguished herself as a calm, competent and consistent leader. For example, when the U.S. economy was shaken in the wake of the great financial collapse of 2009, or more recently during the shock of the global pandemic which disrupted every sector, private and public in the region. Under Betti's leadership, the Northeastern Chamber became a hub for businesses small and large who needed help obtaining PPE, SBA loans and or information on Employee Retention Tax Credits. There is no question in my mind that due to Betti's efforts, she saved many businesses and countless jobs. In some ways, the pandemic was Betti's "finest hour."

Mr. Speaker, the likes of Betti's long career of consummate service to Northeast Connecticut's business sector will not be witnessed again for a long time. She has passionately sacrificed her time and energy for the betterment of our community. I am deeply thankful for her efforts over these four decades. In her retirement, Betti will spend some much-deserved time with her family, specifically her granddaughter who Betti will be happily babysitting. Although the Quiet Corner is losing a titan through Betti's retirement, we can take solace in the knowledge that she has left the chamber in a position to further flourish under the leadership of her successors. I ask my colleagues to please join me in further etching Betti's legacy.

RECOGNIZING CHIEF T.R. MERICKEL

HON. DAVID G. VALADAO

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, August 11, 2023

Mr. VALADAO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Chief T.R. Merickel for his 26 years of dedicated service to the Kern County Probation Department and congratulate him on his well-earned retirement. Chief Merickel became a resident of the Central Valley as a young man when he began attending California State University, Bakersfield in 1992. Not only did he excel academically during his time in school, but he also was a renowned member of the Roadrunner Wrestling team—even being selected for a two time PAC-10 All-Academic team selection. In 1996, he graduated summa cum laude with degrees in history and religious studies. Following graduation, Chief Merickel began his career with the Kern County Probation Department, where he worked as a Group Counselor in Juvenile Hall. He was quickly promoted to Deputy Probation Officer and worked in Juvenile Supervision, Investigations, and Intake. In 2004, Chief Merickel became a Probation Supervisor and oversaw the Adult and Juvenile Divisions. During his time as Supervisor, he became an expert in sentencing and case law and was responsible for the implementation of the Static Risk and Needs Assessment (SRNA) tool for the Adult Division. Seven years later, Chief Merickel was promoted to Division Director of Adult Services. In this role, he was critical in the implementation of Assembly Bill 109, the Public Safety Realignment Act of 2011, in Kern County. As Director, Chief Merickel was a member of the Community Corrections Partnership and worked with local partners on the bill's implementation to focus on safety, alternative sanctions, and reducing recidivism in Kern County. In 2014, the Kern County Superior Court named Chief Merickel as Chief Probation Officer. Chief Merickel has been committed to the Kern County Probation Department's mission of public safety for decades. His dedication to his colleagues, his work, and his community is a true testament to Chief Merickel's character and leadership. I know that his service to the Department and his commitment to the safety of Kern County will have a lasting impact for years to come.

Mr. Speaker, I ask all my colleagues in the House of Representatives to join me in thanking Chief Merickel for his decades of service to the Central Valley and wishing him a happy and well-deserved retirement.

HONORING THE LIFE OF ROBERT FERNANDES PERRY

HON. JIM COSTA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, August 11, 2023

Mr. COSTA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life of Robert Perry, whose commitment to education has left an indelible mark in his community and the greater San Joaquin Valley.

Born on December 11, 1938, Robert inherited the Portuguese work ethic, ingenuity, and