

RECOGNIZING IRIS BARKETT

HON. BRITTANY PETTERSEN

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, October 11, 2023

Ms. PETTERSEN. Mr. Speaker Pro Tempore, I rise today to recognize Iris Barkett of Cañon City, Colorado for receiving the United States Department of State Benjamin A. Gilman International Scholarship. As part of this prestigious honor, Iris traveled to Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia to study abroad.

U.S. Study Abroad programs are an important component of the federal government's efforts to ensure Americans of all backgrounds have the opportunity to gain global experiences and work across our borders to help address our world's greatest challenges. The Benjamin A. Gilman Scholarship provides exceptional undergraduate students with the opportunity to expand their cultural proficiencies, study critical need languages, and conduct STEM research. The scholarship has empowered over 41,000 individuals with financial need to engage in people-to-people diplomacy and prepare for distinguished careers in public service.

I commend Iris for pursuing an exemplary international education and representing America abroad as a citizen ambassador. This scholarship rightly recognizes a commitment to academic excellence. Mr. Speaker Pro Tempore, it is a privilege to recognize Iris' many accomplishments.

HONORING THE 2023 WOMEN OF THE YEAR: JUNE MEJIAS

HON. JOHN GARAMENDI

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, October 11, 2023

Mr. GARAMENDI. Mr. Speaker Pro Tempore, I rise to recognize the contributions of June Mejias as she is honored as one of California's 8th Congressional District's Women of the Year.

June is a dedicated public servant and active member of the Benicia community. June's advocacy began with her efforts to understand the Crude by Rail issue and educate others on its importance to their region. She went on to serve on the Benicia Campaign Finance Subcommittee and meet with the Benicia Open Government Commission. She has served for many years with the League of Women Voters and would often volunteer to visit high schools and help register eligible students to vote. She was also selected by the City Council to serve for 3 years on the Benicia Parks and Recreation Commission. June continues to engage with all levels of government, advocating for issues that impact not only her, but the community at large. She consistently ensures that her voice and those of her peers continue to be heard. June is a role model of civic engagement for anyone looking to have an impact on the policies that impact them.

On behalf of the people of California's 8th Congressional District, it is my pleasure to honor and recognize June Mejias for her positive contributions to our community.

SUPPORT OF BIPARTISAN RESOLUTION CONDEMNING HAMAS TERRORIST ATTACK

HON. BETTY MCCOLLUM

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, October 11, 2023

Ms. MCCOLLUM. Mr. Speaker Pro Tempore, I rise in support of condemning the outrageous Hamas terrorist attacks that have resulted in the senseless deaths of Israelis, Palestinians, and more than 20 American citizens. Hundreds are missing and many are feared to be held hostage—including women, children, and even infants.

Savagely attacking and killing innocent civilians is never justified. These crimes must be unequivocally condemned as they are clear violations of international human rights law.

Hamas has a singular goal: to destroy Israel. Their attacks were not targeting the military or government; they were perpetrated against Israeli communities for the goal of destruction. Hamas uses fear, terror, and intimidation against Israelis and it uses the same tactics against the Palestinian people, putting targets on the backs of innocent people in Gaza. Nearly half of the population of Gaza are children—most having lived their entire lives under a brutal, devastating blockade that deprives them of basic human necessities and no prospect for a better future.

I have a solemn responsibility as a Member of Congress to shape policy. I have spoken out against governments, extremist groups, those exerting power over marginalized populations—whether they are our enemies, our allies, or within our own nation—and I always speak up for those suffering and in defense of human rights. The October 7 attack by Hamas was a gross violation of human rights. It crossed a red line.

This was a strategic, coordinated, multi-modal attack by Hamas. It leaves deeply concerning questions about what happened in the lead-up to this massacre and what the future holds. Any response must consider the innocent lives at stake. The United States must not choose to escalate conflict with a knee-jerk reaction of providing more weapons for an offensive that will certainly take the lives of more innocent civilians and children. The reports of casualties in Israel and Palestine are stunning, and I fear these numbers will only grow in the coming days.

This attack is not a far-away matter; it is hitting close to home. Mothers, fathers, the young, and the elderly—those near and far—are now living in unimaginable fear while mourning those they have lost. I am hearing from many Jewish constituents and community leaders who are in pain and who have loved ones among the injured, killed, or missing. I stand with them, I mourn with them, and I share their fear of what is to come.

My hope and my dream for the future is for every Israeli child and every Palestinian child to be tucked into bed at night by their parents without fear of bombings and perpetual violence. All people deserve safety and security—and in the wake of this heinous attack, the international community is in agreement that Hamas must be stopped. The only sustainable path forward is one where international human rights and international law are at the forefront and democratic ideals are upheld.

HONORING COMMUNITY HEALTH OUTREACH

HON. AARON BEAN

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, October 11, 2023

Mr. BEAN of Florida. Mr. Speaker Pro Tempore, today I rise to honor an organization in Florida's 4th District that exemplifies the spirit of compassion and service—Community Health Outreach.

For 35 years, they have been the cornerstone of hope for low-income, uninsured families in our northeast Florida community. Their tireless efforts have not only provided critical healthcare but also empowered countless families, including our brave U.S. Military Veterans, to overcome adversity.

Community Health Outreach is not just a healthcare provider; it's a beacon of sustainable change. They've woven a tapestry of support, offering resources, guidance, and a lifeline to those who need it most as they work to build a healthier society.

Mr. Speaker Pro Tempore, I ask that my colleagues in Congress join me in recognizing this milestone and celebrating the unsung heroes within Community Health Outreach and all those they have touched.

May their legacy inspire us to uplift the vulnerable, to strengthen our communities, and to forge a brighter, healthier future for all Americans.

RECOGNIZING JAYLYNN ARMIJO

HON. BRITTANY PETTERSEN

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, October 11, 2023

Ms. PETTERSEN. Mr. Speaker Pro Tempore, I rise today to recognize Jaylynn Armijo of Lakewood, Colorado for receiving the United States Department of State Benjamin A. Gilman International Scholarship. As part of this prestigious honor, Jaylynn traveled to South Korea to study abroad.

U.S. Study Abroad programs are an important component of the federal government's efforts to ensure Americans of all backgrounds have the opportunity to gain global experiences and work across our borders to help address our world's greatest challenges. The Benjamin A. Gilman Scholarship provides exceptional undergraduate students with the opportunity to expand their cultural proficiencies, study critical need languages, and conduct STEM research. The scholarship has empowered over 41,000 individuals with financial need to engage in people-to-people diplomacy and prepare for distinguished careers in public service.

I commend Jaylynn for pursuing an exemplary international education and representing America abroad as a citizen ambassador. This scholarship rightly recognizes a commitment to academic excellence. Mr. Speaker Pro Tempore, it is a privilege to recognize Jaylynn's many accomplishments.

HONORING THE 2023 WOMEN OF
THE YEAR: KAREN FREEMAN

HON. JOHN GARAMENDI

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, October 11, 2023

Mr. GARAMENDI. Mr. Speaker Pro Tempore, I rise today to recognize the contributions of Karen Freeman as she is honored as one of California's 8th Congressional District's Women of the Year.

Karen has spent the last five years establishing herself as a key leader in our community, after completing her studies in Leeds, England. Apart from upholding her duties as a priest at Grace Episcopal Church, she has devoted her time to several causes in the community. Primarily, she hosts regular neighborhood clean ups, an event at the annual National Night Out, and a health fair for the sake of keeping her neighbors and fellow community members informed. Karen has been described as an objective, well-prepared, spirited leader; these attributes are especially exemplified by her work with other local organizations. She works with Epiphany Church in Vacaville to prepare lunch for the unhoused and has led efforts to partner with Fairview Elementary School to provide school supplies, snacks, teacher breakfasts, and more. Her leadership, extensive acts of service, and immense contributions to the community are just some examples of how Karen continues to make a lasting impact in our district.

On behalf of the people of California's 8th Congressional District, it is my pleasure to honor and recognize Karen Freeman for her positive contributions to our community.

HONORING THE LIFE AND
CONTRIBUTIONS OF LUCY MORGAN

HON. KATHY CASTOR

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, October 11, 2023

Ms. CASTOR of Florida. Mr. Speaker Pro Tempore, I rise today in celebration of the life of Lucy Morgan, a relentless journalist and advocate for the truth who passed away on Wednesday, September 20, 2023, at the age of 82. Lucy Morgan worked to ensure that Florida lived up to its moniker the "Sunshine State" in the halls of power through public records, public meetings and "government in the sunshine." She helped hold powerful leaders accountable through news coverage of courthouses and the state capitol and by shining a light on corruption.

Lucy was born in Memphis, Tennessee on October 11, 1940, and grew up in Hattiesburg, Mississippi. At the age of 25, she moved to Crystal River, Florida. She was an avid reader and found herself visiting the library often. A local librarian noticed her passionate approach and provided a recommendation that eventually landed her a job as a local correspondent, marking her first step towards a lifelong career of uncovering the truth.

Her striking questions and fearless approach to journalism gained Lucy the recognition as a trustworthy and authentic reporter. She provided in-depth writings and updates from all corners of Florida. For nearly five dec-

ades, Lucy pursued the truth, keeping Florida lawmakers, lobbyists and public officials in check.

She gained national recognition in 1973 while working for the then St. Petersburg Times. While investigating corruption in Dade City, Lucy was charged with contempt of court and sentenced to a total of eight months in jail for refusing to name her sources of information. Her appeal to the case reached the Florida Supreme Court, in a victory not just for her freedom, but the ethical standards of journalism and the First Amendment of the Constitution. Though she regretted the notoriety the case brought to her and the paper, she acknowledged that it did lead to more people to trust her with sensitive information.

A decade later, her veracity and righteous reporting on Pasco County Sheriff John Short revealed his department's corruption and led to his removal from office by voters. Lucy's efforts were recognized in 1985 with the Pulitzer Prize for a distinguished example of investigative reporting within a newspaper's area of circulation by an individual or team, along with her colleague Jack Reed. Furthermore, this investigation and recognition catapulted her to the bureau chief position in Tallahassee for the St. Petersburg Times, a role she held for 20 years.

During her time as an investigative journalist for the St. Petersburg Times, now known as the Tampa Bay Times, Lucy informed Florida residents about corrupt office holders, sexual assault cases, drug smuggling and many more topics that required the trust of the community for information. Her approach was admired by colleagues and her pioneering experience served as role model to many young journalists. She extended her mentorship to many in the newsroom, especially women navigating challenging stories and their own career paths.

Lucy's lasting legacy in journalism extends to the people she mentored. She was a trailblazer, and her work broke the gender barrier built in the male dominated field, paving the way for women in journalism. Lucy nurtured and encouraged younger colleagues, teaching them how to be fearless and encouraging them to be bold. Her mentorship extended far beyond the newsroom, she guided colleagues in matters such as career changes, motherhood and more.

"She was one of the most fearless humans I think I have ever known," said Katie Schardl, one of Lucy's former colleagues. Among those who she mentored are reporters, editors and writers who now work for national newspapers such as The New York Times, The Washington Post and POLITICO. Carrie O'Brien remembers her as "a role model, a surrogate mother and a fiercely loyal advocate," further adding that "She [Lucy] took incredible joy and satisfaction in her reporters' triumphs. As much as she delighted in a good scoop, she loved it even more when it was one of her protégés doing the digging."

Lucy married Richard Morgan, also of the St. Petersburg Times who is one of her biggest fans and a husband ahead of his time. His abiding love and steadfast support and admiration to Lucy made him an advocate of her work. Lucy is survived by her husband, Richard, their children and grandchildren to whom I give my deepest sympathies.

Mr. Speaker Pro Tempore, I would like to express my sincere condolences to Lucy's family and friends. She will be remembered for

her commitment to exposing the truth, holding public officials accountable and embracing the highest ethical standards of journalism. Her service, sacrifice and legacy must never be forgotten. Florida is grateful for her contributions and the legacy she leaves.

RECOGNIZING CITLALLI CUMPLIDO

HON. BRITTANY PETTERSEN

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, October 11, 2023

Ms. PETTERSEN. Mr. Speaker Pro Tempore, I rise today to recognize Citlalli Cumplido of Denver, Colorado for receiving the United States Department of State Benjamin A. Gilman International Scholarship. As part of this prestigious honor, Citlalli traveled to the Czech Republic to study abroad.

U.S. Study Abroad programs are an important component of the federal government's efforts to ensure Americans of all backgrounds have the opportunity to gain global experiences and work across our borders to help address our world's greatest challenges. The Benjamin A. Gilman Scholarship provides exceptional undergraduate students with the opportunity to expand their cultural proficiencies, study critical need languages, and conduct STEM research. The scholarship has empowered over 41,000 individuals with financial need to engage in people-to-people diplomacy and prepare for distinguished careers in public service.

I commend Citlalli for pursuing an exemplary international education and representing America abroad as a citizen ambassador. This scholarship rightly recognizes a commitment to academic excellence. Mr. Speaker Pro Tempore, it is a privilege to recognize Citlalli's many accomplishments.

HONORING THE LIFE AND LEGACY
OF MICHAEL "MICKEY" O'KEEFE

HON. LORI TRAHAN

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, October 11, 2023

Mrs. TRAHAN. Mr. Speaker Pro Tempore, I rise today to honor the tremendous contributions, service, and legacy of Sergeant Michael "Mickey" O'Keefe, a retired Lowell Police Sergeant, United States Army Veteran, boxer, and Lowell legend who left an immeasurable impact on those who knew and loved him. He passed away peacefully on September 14, 2023.

Mickey was born in the City of Lowell in 1948. He attended Lowell High School where he met the love of his life, Donna, and the pair were married for 54 years. Together, they proudly raised their four sons, Shaun, Timothy, Brian, and Keith.

After high school graduation, Mickey proudly served his country in the United States Army, embarked on a successful boxing career, and joined the Lowell Fire Department for a short period of time before landing at the Lowell Police Department where his decorated career spanned three decades. During his thirty-four years at the Department, Mickey climbed the ranks and ultimately earned the title of Sergeant. His fellow police officers respected him