

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

because of his integrity, leadership, and steadfast dedication to his team and the community they protected. Over the span of his career, Mickey was honored with several medals that reflected his heroic actions while wearing the badge. But staying true to his character, he would always humbly give credit to the people who worked alongside him rather than take it for himself.

Throughout his life, Mickey had a passion for fitness, specifically boxing. During his boxing career, he won countless matches, notably, a Silver Mittens and a Golden Gloves championship. But Mickey's real passion would lie in mentoring young people in Lowell. He knew the impact boxing had on him when he was young and dedicated himself to training young boxers, most notably "Irish" Mickey Ward. The devotion he showed to the sport and to the young people he trained was recognized by the Golden Gloves of America, which awarded him with a Lifetime Achievement Award.

Mickey was a fixture in the boxing community. "Irish" Mickey Ward credited him as the person who reignited his love for boxing and wouldn't allow him to quit. Mickey helped him train and win the World Boxing Union's Intercontinental light welterweight title in 1996. Because of Ward's remarkable career, Mark Walberg approached Mickey to play himself in the 2010 movie, "The Fighter", and from then on amongst his family he was dubbed "Hollywood Gramps". Throughout it all, Mickey remained the same down-to-earth person he had always been.

Mickey's love for the City of Lowell was unmatched. He and Donna were always looking for ways to contribute to their community. They welcomed anyone who was in need to their house with open arms and in turn touched countless lives throughout the years. They passed these traits of kindness, respect, and sense of community to their children and grandchildren. The Lowell community was fortunate enough to have had Mickey in their corner for so many years and he will be deeply missed.

Mickey O'Keefe will be remembered for his love for his family and friends, his kindness to those around him, his distinguished professional career, and his immense impact on the City of Lowell. My heart goes out to his loving wife, Donna, his four sons, Shaun, Timothy, Brian, and Keith, and the entire O'Keefe family during this difficult time. Mickey's legacy will live on through his loving family and all who had the honor of knowing him.

#### HONORING JEFFERSON COLLEGE'S 60TH ANNIVERSARY

##### HON. BLAINE LUETKEMEYER

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, October 11, 2023*

Mr. LUETKEMEYER. Mr. Speaker Pro Tempore, I rise today to recognize Jefferson College located in Jefferson County in Missouri, as the community celebrates its 60th anniversary this year.

The Community College District of Jefferson County was approved by voters on April 2, 1963. Senator Earl Blackwell of Hillsboro sponsored Senate Bill Number Seven, which made possible the formation and financing of

public junior colleges in Missouri. Jefferson became the second junior college district in Missouri to be approved.

Seventeen months later, the first courses were offered at Hillsboro High School with 14 faculty members and 303 students. Jefferson College moved into its first permanent building on the Hillsboro campus in September of 1965 and held its first commencement in June of 1966, where 31 graduates received associate degrees.

In 1967, Jefferson College became the first community college in Missouri to be designated as an area vocational school. Today, in addition to the Hillsboro campus, the college has sites in Arnold and Imperial. Over 3,500 full and part-time students span 25 different fields of study, including education, nursing, and the liberal arts.

Mr. Speaker Pro Tempore, please join me in wishing the community of Jefferson College a well-deserved congratulations on their 60th anniversary.

#### RECOGNIZING JUSTINE THOMAS

##### 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 Justine Thomas of Westminster, Colorado for receiving the United States Department of State Benjamin A. Gilman International Scholarship. As part of this prestigious honor, Justine traveled to Cyprus 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 Justine 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 Justine's many accomplishments.

#### HONORING THE 2023 WOMEN OF THE YEAR: KATRINKA RUK

##### 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 Katrinka Ruk as she is honored as one of California's 8th Congressional District's Women of the Year.

Katrinka is a dedicated and passionate leader who has touched the lives of countless

members of her community. Katrinka is described as a Bay Area native who has made a career out of improving the lives of working people. Professionally, she spent years working in the field of human resources as an HR Director for Geyser Peak and a global pharmaceutical company, and Regional HR Director for TriNet where she supported the growth of startups into thriving organizations. Katrinka has also helped grow the economy of Contra Costa County by serving for 20 years as director for the West Contra Costa Council of Business and Industries. Katrinka has also extensively given her time as a board member for Canine Guardian Assistance Dogs, an organization connecting fully trained service dogs with veterans who suffer from PTSD. She also served on the East Bay Board of the YMCA where she supported social programs and reviewed potential grants for the organization. Katrinka's years of work and volunteerism will be felt throughout Contra Costa County for years to come.

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

#### HONORING THE CAREER OF DEBORAH MONAHAN

##### HON. JOE COURTNEY

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, October 11, 2023*

Mr. COURTNEY. Mr. Speaker Pro Tempore, I rise today to commend and honor Deborah "Deb" Monahan, of Norwich, Connecticut, on her retirement as the Executive Director of Thames Valley Community Council for Community Action. At the helm of TVCCA, Deb has led a crusade of over half-century, a personal mission to uplift the lives of those most vulnerable in southeast Connecticut. The impact of her tenure is of titanic proportions. Whether you go neighborhood by neighborhood or town-by-town, it is impossible to traverse New London County without finding some person or organization that has not been touched by Deb's kind and giving spirit. Her stewardship as Executive Director and CEO will be sorely missed and impossible to replace.

In 1973, Deb graduated with a bachelor's degree in childhood and family relations, setting the stage for her future of community service. Deb's degree was quickly put to use when, upon graduating, she was approached by TVCCA to serve as a case aid for early childhood issues. Little did she know at the time, she would transform and personify TVCCA's mission from the start of her career to finish. Soon thereafter, Deb found herself working in the agency's grants office where she continued a bottom-up journey of understanding the organization's innerworkings, a rare perspective that caused Deb to become such an effective, respected and well-rounded leader.

By 1976, Deb found herself in a leadership position as TVCCA's Women, Infants, and Children Program Director, where she worked with various external partners to provide effective support for those in need. In 1977, she became the assistant to then-Executive Director Gunderman and was named associate director in 1986. Her competence and dedication to the mission were properly recognized