

the ways in which Chinese culture has enhanced the American way of life, celebrating decades of contributions to Michigan's communities and economy. I thank Detroit and its community members for their commitment to hosting the Chinese American Culture and Arts Festival, and we are excited to see how the festival will continue to educate and unite the community.

HONORING THE NAPA COUNTY HISPANIC NETWORK

HON. MIKE THOMPSON

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, October 18, 2024

Mr. THOMPSON of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Napa County Hispanic Network for the occasion of their 40th anniversary.

As the oldest Latino nonprofit organization in Napa County, the Napa County Hispanic Network seeks to develop the Napa County Latino community through political and economic empowerment, pursuit of education, and social advocacy. The network was established in 1983 by a group of local professionals seeing a gap in access to services for the Spanish-speaking community. In addition to emphasizing collaboration, voluntary civil service, and the value of cultural heritage for Latino communities, the network raises critical funds for Napa County students in their pursuit of higher education.

With a mission of closing the opportunity gap for Napa County's Latino students financial needs, the Napa County Hispanic Network has worked tirelessly to increase access to financial support and scholarship services for graduating high school students in our district. Since its founding, the network has distributed over \$500,000 of academic scholarships to more than 700 Napa County students, with the organization increasing their annual impact each year.

Higher education in the United States has always been heralded as the road to career success and fulfillment for our children. By providing students from our county with scholarship funds that empower that pathway, the network has performed an incredible service to our community.

In 2024, the Napa County Hispanic Network awarded \$41,000 in the form of \$1,000 to \$2,500 scholarships through seven different programs, the largest contributions for a single year to date. As college costs have risen over the years, the network has increased its level of support to help parents navigate the growing financial challenges of sending their children to college and university. The impact of assisting children's journeys through education will benefit students and their families for generations to come.

Mr. Speaker, through academic scholarships and community contributions, the Napa County Hispanic Network has spent an impactful 40 years striving to cultivate the next generation of Latino community leaders in Napa County. This invaluable mission is central to the health and preservation of our community, as well as the prosperity of our children. For the terrific work the network has done, we honor them here today.

CELEBRATING SARA DENTON'S 100TH BIRTHDAY

HON. DINA TITUS

OF NEVADA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, October 18, 2024

Ms. TITUS. Mr. Speaker, I rise to celebrate the 100th birthday of Sara Denton, a close friend and trailblazer in Nevada politics. Sara Pittard Denton was born on November 12, 1924, in Paducah, Kentucky.

In 1943, during her first year in college at Southern Illinois University, the U.S. Army Signal Corps, the forerunner to Military Intelligence, recruited her to work as a "Code Girl" in Washington, D.C. at the height of World War II. There she met Ralph Denton, a young U.S. Army lieutenant from Caliente, Nevada, who was attending law school under the patronage of U.S. Senator Pat McCarran. They married in 1949 and after Ralph's graduation, the newlyweds moved to Nevada where for 75 years Sara volunteered in numerous state and national political campaigns while also rearing their three children: renown author Sally, Dr. Scott Denton, and Judge Mark Denton.

Following her participation in U.S. Senator Howard Cannon's successful 1976 campaign, Sara was hired as his Administrative Assistant, her first and only paid position in Nevada politics.

In recent decades, Sara has been instrumental in other Nevada campaigns, including presidential candidates Bill Clinton, Barack Obama, Hillary Clinton, Joe Biden, and Kamala Harris. In addition to her political work, Sara has been involved in numerous community and charitable organizations, including the 1964 founding of Boulder City's Art in the Park, the largest juried art festival in the Southwest with proceeds going towards the Boulder City Hospital Foundation.

The State of Nevada has benefitted tremendously from her work. She is greatly respected, highly admired, and deeply loved by so many. I join my fellow Nevadans in wishing her a Happy One-Hundredth Birthday.

HONORING THE LIFE OF SAM HAMRA OF SPRINGFIELD, MISSOURI

HON. ERIC BURLISON

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, October 18, 2024

Mr. BURLISON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate the life and legacy of Mr. Sam Hamra of Springfield, Missouri. He was 92 years old when he recently passed away.

Mr. Hamra was the founder and chairman of Hamra Enterprises, which owns and operates 156 restaurants and other projects across Missouri and the United States. These include locations for Wendy's, Panera Bread, Noodles & Company, and more. He opened the first Wendy's in Springfield in 1976, and the rest is history.

Sam Hamra grew up in Steele, Missouri, as the son of Lebanese immigrants. He graduated from the University of Missouri with business and law degrees. He served as an officer in the U.S. Army, where he was appointed as U.S. Civilian Aide to the Secretary

of the Army for Western Missouri. He later served as the attorney for the city of Nixa, Missouri, where he helped build the city's electric distribution system. He also advocated for funding to expand transportation arteries connecting Branson to Springfield, as well as expanding a major thoroughfare in the city of Springfield.

Mr. Hamra was active in his community. He was a founding member of OakStar Bank, charter president of the Rotary Club of Springfield Southeast, and a member of the foundation board for Ozarks Technical Community College, which also houses the Sam and June Hamra Family Library. The Sam F. Hamra Center for Justice also was named for his work organizing and serving as the first board chairman of Legal Services of Southern Missouri, which serves 43 southern Missouri counties. He and his wife, June, also donated the funds to purchase the land for the Kitchen Homeless Family Shelter on the O'Reilly Campus.

Sam Hamra was a community builder who made an impact on so many aspects of Springfield. He will be greatly missed, but his legacy will live on.

HONORING DARCEL STEVENS AS A DISTINGUISHED LEADER IN CENTRAL FLORIDA FOR PRIDE MONTH

HON. DARREN SOTO

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, October 18, 2024

Mr. SOTO. Mr. Speaker, Darcel Stevens is an individual with a diverse range of accomplishments and experiences. Not only is he a graduate of the esteemed University of Florida and a proud U.S. Army veteran, but he/she is also a talented comedian, a dedicated political-social activist, and the recent organizer of the impactful "THE DRAG QUEEN'S MARCH 2023," a statewide mobilization of over 540 drag queens and their allies from across Florida to the state's Capitol, protesting against discriminatory anti-drag queen legislation, FLSB-1438.

Recognized for outstanding contributions to the community, Darcel has received numerous prestigious certificates and community service awards, including the Orlando Come Out With Pride Award, the Chuck Hummer Award, the Orlando Social Justice Award, Watermark Orlando's Most Outstanding People Honors, the 2023 Naples Pride Award, and the 2023 Rainbow Awards for Outstanding Community Service.

In the competitive realm of drag, Darcel has proven herself. She has emerged victorious in several regional, state, and national competitions, including the titles of Miss National at Large, Miss Continental Plus, and Miss FL Universo Latina. She is also the reigning Miss FL Babalu International 2024.

Professionally, Darcel excels as Harmony Healthcare's marketing-outreach coordinator, with a passion for providing valuable health services to marginalized communities. Darcel showcases his exceptional skills utilizing diverse marketing strategies while building valuable community partnerships.

However, it is during the weekends that her unique talents shine through as she takes the

stage across the nation and Florida, captivating audiences with mesmerizing performances and quick-witted improvisational repertoire.

Beyond the glitz and glamour, Darcel Stevens is a remarkable individual with a heart of gold known for her brassy and complicated persona, but behind the scenes, a true gem. Always ready to lend a helping hand to those in need, generously giving time and resources to support numerous charitable causes. Her unique combination of humor, complexity, and unwavering kindness leaves a lasting impression on all who cross his or her fabulous path. "Let us be vigilant but not afraid!"

RECOGNIZING HAWAII REPRESENTATIVE SCOTT SAIKI FOR RECEIVING THE ACHIEVEMENT IN ADVOCACY AWARD FROM THE HEALTHCARE ASSOCIATION OF HAWAII

HON. JILL N. TOKUDA

OF HAWAII

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, October 18, 2024

Ms. TOKUDA. Mr. Speaker, it is my honor and privilege to recognize Speaker Scott Saiki of the Hawaii State House of Representatives, a distinguished legislator and this year's recipient of the Achievement in Advocacy award from the Healthcare Association of Hawaii.

Throughout his 20 years in the Hawaii State Legislature, Speaker Saiki has championed access to care, especially for the underserved and most vulnerable in Hawaii. His commitment to care included support for innovative ideas to grow our healthcare workforce, training local talent for critical positions. Never one to shy away from difficult issues, he also led efforts to give our families the power to make some of the most personal decisions in their lifetimes.

As Speaker of the Hawaii House of Representatives, he also helped lead Hawaii through a global pandemic. His work was instrumental in protecting residents by setting up vaccination sites, testing, and metrics for the eventual reopening of our State. His leadership, including in spearheading the House Select Committee on COVID-19 Economic and Financial Preparedness, ensured our State could successfully make it through a worldwide public health emergency.

Speaker Saiki's unflagging dedication and commitment to others is an inspiration to many, and I am pleased to join the Healthcare Association of Hawaii in celebrating his many accomplishments. Congratulations and mahalo to Speaker Saiki for all his contributions to the people and the State of Hawaii.

HONORING WOMEN OF THE YEAR,
BARBARA AKORO

HON. JOHN GARAMENDI

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, October 18, 2024

Mr. GARAMENDI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the contributions of Barbara Akoro as she is honored as one of California's 8th Congressional District's Women of the

Year. Ms. Akoro leads her life with resilience and compassion. After the tragic loss of her children's father, she raised her two children with remarkable strength and determination.

In addition to her family responsibilities, Ms. Akoro has achieved significant academic milestones, earning degrees in chemistry and forensic chemistry, and she will soon complete her doctorate in public health. She has worked as a laboratory scientist and caregiver and has interned with the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent, focusing on climate change as a public health environmental specialist.

Driven by her passion for helping others, Ms. Akoro co-founded TishZeeLCC, a home care agency dedicated to ensuring individuals can live healthy lives. As a member of Rivertown Community Church in Antioch, her faith and values guide her purpose. Ms. Akoro's commitment to making a meaningful difference is truly an inspiration to our community. On behalf of the people of California's 8th Congressional District, I am proud to recognize Barbara Akoro for her invaluable contributions to our community.

RECOGNIZING JULY 2024
CONSTITUENT OF THE MONTH

HON. MIKE LEVIN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, October 18, 2024

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. Speaker, it is my great honor to recognize public servant and owner of local restaurant Captain Keno's, Gerry Sova from Encinitas, as my Constituent of the Month for July 2024.

Mr. Sova is a generous local leader who has dedicated his life to making his fellow community members feel accepted. For the past 54 years, Gerry has worked to ensure that Captain Keno's could accommodate anyone who wanted a safe space to eat, drink, and simply feel welcome.

Over the years, Mr. Sova has fed thousands of local firefighters, nonprofit groups, and customers during special holiday meals—regardless of whether they could afford to pay or not.

With Captain Keno's set to permanently close at the end of August, it is my honor to recognize Gerry for his selfless dedication to giving back to others. He is an inspiring member of our community whose work and commitment over the past five decades is truly admirable, and I'm proud to honor Gerry Sova as my July 2024 Constituent of the Month.

RECOGNIZING LEONA AVE MIDDLE
SCHOOL IN SHADYSIDE, OHIO, AS
A 2024 BLUE RIBBON SCHOOL

HON. MICHAEL A. RULLI

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, October 18, 2024

Mr. RULLI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate the success of Leona Ave Middle School in Shadyside, Ohio, as they were recognized as a National Blue Ribbon School for 2024. I thank the Shadyside Local School District and their determined, compassionate, and caring staff for guiding students to success.

I am proud to be able to honor Leona Ave Middle School for their exceptional work as upstanding academic leaders in the community.

The teachers and faculty not only strive for students to achieve their academic goals but are also invested in the well-being of each student. The educators of this district devote excessive amounts of their time and energy to the success of their learners because they understand the great impact it will have on the students' lives and the advancement of their region.

I want to acknowledge and thank the Shadyside Local School District's gifted teachers and staff for their dedication to the prosperity of Ohio's youth.

I ask my colleagues in the United States House of Representatives to join me in recognizing these honorable leaders, pillars of Leona Ave Middle School in Shadyside, Ohio, as we congratulate them on their accomplishments and their contributions to the community. These admirable citizens illustrate the preeminent standard of the Ohio educators I am proud to represent. May their work continue to be a blessing to our industrious Nation.

CELEBRATING THE 50TH ANNIVERSARY
OF UNILAND DEVELOPMENT
COMPANY

HON. TIMOTHY M. KENNEDY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, October 18, 2024

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and celebrate the 50th anniversary of Uniland Development Company. Uniland Development was founded in a single warehouse in Tonawanda, New York, by Carl J. Montante and Nancy R. Dobson in 1974. Since then Uniland has grown into the largest commercial real estate developer in western New York, changing the face of Buffalo and western New York through passion and dedication.

Uniland's success stems from a steadfast focus on improving the community. With a talented team of over 200 associates, the company has consistently delivered solutions for businesses throughout the region, helping to spur economic development and growth. Their guiding principles of integrity, professionalism, excellence, innovation, customer focus, and teamwork are not just words; they are the foundation upon which Uniland has built its legacy.

Over the past five decades, Uniland has transformed the landscape of western New York with remarkable projects that have enhanced our communities. From the early days at 260 Wales Avenue to the expansive CrossPoint Business Park, Uniland has continually set the standard for commercial real estate. Their developments have created thousands of jobs and revitalized neighborhoods, ensuring that both businesses and communities thrive.

Notable milestones, such as the transformation of the Elm-Oak corridor in Buffalo and the iconic Avant mixed-use redevelopment, showcase Uniland's commitment to innovation and community improvement. Their ongoing work in residential rentals and their