

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

dedication to socially responsible initiatives speak volumes about their mission to build better communities.

Congratulations to Carl Montante, Nancy Dobson, and the entire Uniland team on this extraordinary 50-year journey. Your unwavering commitment to excellence and community enhancement has made a lasting impact on western New York.

HONORING THE CALISTOGA LIBRARY

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 the Calistoga Library, as it celebrates its 100th year in service to the Calistoga community.

The Calistoga Library has consistently provided our community with education and entertainment catered to all ages, but most important for our youth. The library's role of informing children in fun and innovative ways has continually inspired a love for learning from one generation to the next. Cultivating a safe environment for individuals who seek knowledge, Calistoga's library contributes to the lifelong passion for learning that so many of us hold dear.

The Calistoga Library has a rich history in our community. The library traces its origins back to the 1880s, when the property was rented for just \$3.00 a month. Thanks to the early 20th century efforts of the Calistoga Civics Club, which fundraised for a permanent building to be established for the library, the building we know today as the Calistoga Library was completed in 1924 for \$20,000.

Decades of hard work by library staff have seen the library grow from the once rented room above the police station with a handful of paperbacks, to a community center that distributes games, puzzles, and e-books. The library's services, such as rentals and publicly accessible computers, have adapted with the ever-changing technological advancements of the modern era, displaying the dynamic nature and dedication of countless employees over the years.

In addition to offering an outstanding variety of materials to the people of Calistoga, the library has partnered with public and private agencies to assist in improving lives and the quality of our community. In collaborating with schools, government agencies, and numerous local businesses over the years, the library has acted as a forum for events that the whole town enjoys. The past 100 years have tested the resilience of Calistoga: wildfires, social unrest, even pandemics. With the help of incredible institutions such as the library, our town has navigated one crisis after another and remains stronger than ever.

Mr. Speaker, the Calistoga Library has evolved from small beginnings into a beloved institution deserving of our recognition for its 100 years of service to all whom love to learn. Over the decades, the building and organization has become a staple of our town. Years of quality service to our community have em-

bedded the library as a core aspect of the town. Without it, Calistoga would not be the same. As such, it is fitting and proper that it be honored on this terrific anniversary as we look forward to the next 100 years of meaningful education and civil service.

HONORING CLINTON MCCrackEN 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, Clinton McCracken has dedicated much of his life to teaching and advocating for teachers and LGBTQ+ students. In 2022, Clinton was named National Teacher of the Year by MSA. He has been a teacher for 24 years and is honored to serve as the president of the Orange County Classroom Teachers Association—the teacher's union for the eighth-largest school district in the country.

In 2004, Clinton and his [now] husband, Mike Palmateer, along with three other same-sex couples, sought marriage licenses at the Orange County courthouse. After being denied, they held a public commitment ceremony in downtown Orlando to bring attention to the injustice of marriage inequality. In 2011, Clinton mobilized the community to lobby the school board to add "sexual orientation and gender identity/expression" to the non-discrimination policy and add domestic partner benefits. In 2019, Clinton lobbied the board to designate October as LGBTQ+ Awareness/History Month.

Clinton has received numerous awards for his teaching and advocacy in education, including Equality Florida's Voice for Equality Award, the FEA Human and Civil Rights Award, and the ASN Emerging Leader Award. In 2021, Clinton was recognized by the Orlando Sentinel as one of "10 people who make Orlando a better place to live." He has been interviewed by CNN, NPR, TIME, The Guardian, The Washington Post, Rolling Stone, and numerous local news affiliates. Clinton serves on the AFT Teachers Program and Policy Council, AFT LGBTQ+ Task Force, FEA Government Relations Committee, and Human and Civil Rights Committee.

Clinton graduated from Truman State in 1996 with a BFA in art. He began teaching art in 2001 for OCPS and received an MA in art education from the University of Central Florida. During his free time, Clinton loves drawing with oil pastels and spending time with his best friend and husband, Mike.

RECOGNIZING NOVEMBER 2023 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 veteran and Oceanside

resident Dr. Jack Morgan as my November 2023 Constituent of the Month.

Jack is a hero of our Nation, serving as a naval gunnery officer aboard the battleship USS *South Dakota* (BB-57) at the close of WWII, aboard the Navy cruiser USS *Saint Paul* (CA-73) during the Korean War, and as a Navy and Marine Corps medic during the Vietnam War. After retiring from military service, Dr. Morgan has dedicated himself to increasing educational support to veterans by founding a scholarship program that awards funding to veterans at California colleges and universities.

I am honored to recognize veterans, like Jack, who served our country with pride and now give back to their fellow veterans. He is a courageous and inspiring community leader, and I'm proud to recognize Dr. Jack Morgan as my November 2023 Constituent of the Month.

HONORING WOMEN OF THE YEAR, RUTHIE ABELSON OLIVAS

HON. JOHN GARAMENDI

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, October 18, 2024

Mr. GARAMENDI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Ruthie Abelson Olivas as one of California's 8th Congressional District's Women of the Year. Ms. Olivas has made an indelible mark on West Contra Costa County through her tireless volunteer work and leadership in multiple organizations. As a board member of the Greater Richmond Interfaith Program, she addresses the needs of our most vulnerable populations.

As Vice Treasurer and Violet Richardson Scholarship Chair for the Soroptimist of El Cerrito, she skillfully manages financial responsibilities while championing educational opportunities for young women. Ms. Olivas' dedication extends to her service as Secretary of the West County Forum and as a board member for the Bay Area Girls Club and the California Association of Realtors. At the Contra Costa Association of Realtors, she serves as a Trustee for the Scholarship Foundation, where she has significantly increased both the number of applications and the diversity of recipients.

As Vice Chair of the Local Government Relations Committee, she advocates for policies that best support our community's needs. Beyond these roles, Ms. Olivas is an active participant in various local committees, including the Richmond Rotary and the Galileo Club of Richmond, where she spearheads fundraising initiatives to support local projects. Her efforts resonate deeply throughout our community, inspiring many to get involved and make a difference. On behalf of the people of California's 8th Congressional District, I am proud to honor Ruthie Abelson Olivas for her remarkable contributions to our community.