

creation in 2015 on behalf of San Mateo County's 27,000 veterans and their family members. Coinciding with Veterans Day, Warren and the Commission initiated the annual Veterans Recognition Luncheon to honor individuals and organizations for their work in supporting veterans. Warren is immensely proud of the Commission's work, partnering with the County's Veteran Service Office, to improve the lives of veterans in our community. Due to his ongoing efforts and dedication, the San Mateo County Veterans Commission presented Warren with the Lifetime Achievement Award at its 2024 luncheon.

His wife, Maria Diaz-Slocum, and their two sons and families have supported and embraced Warren's passion for family, public service, technology, and history. They have made their home in Redwood City for more than 30 years, their sons were educated in the public school system, and his wife served as an elected Trustee of the Redwood City School District. Their shared love for our community has provided Warren a bedrock from which to move forward with a bold vision on how to make things better for others.

Warren's priority from day one was always to improve the lives of the residents of District 4 and San Mateo County with a particular focus on the most vulnerable. He is a respected and admired regional leader with a proven record on social equity, affordable housing, transportation, and economic empowerment for all residents in our community. The effectiveness of a leader can be judged by their lasting impact. By that measure, Warren has excelled as he leaves San Mateo County in a better place.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to please join me in congratulating Warren Slocum for an exemplary record of service to the County of San Mateo, commending him for his tireless dedication of time and talent, and wishing him all the best in the years ahead.

TRIBUTE TO MY STAFF

HON. ADAM B. SCHIFF

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 3, 2024

Mr. SCHIFF. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor eight members of my staff—Patrick Boland, Mary Hovagimian, Tim Hysom, Qiao Li, Colleen Oinuma, Ann Peifer, Margarita Piñon-Gutierrez, and Teresa Lamb Simpson—who have each spent more than a decade serving the House of Representatives and constituents in the great state of California.

PATRICK BOLAND

Patrick Boland, my current Chief of Staff, is a proud son of California's 30th Congressional District, growing up in Pasadena and attending Loyola High School. After graduating from Colby College, Patrick worked in communications roles on Capitol Hill for Senator Dianne Feinstein, Senator CHARLES SCHUMER, Rep. Scott Murphy (D-NY) and Rep. ANNA ESHOO (D-CA). He also worked on the campaigns of Rep. RAUL RUIZ (D-CA) and Rep. MARK TAKANO (D-CA).

Patrick joined my team in 2012, serving as Communications Director and a senior advisor for both my personal office and the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence. In his role as a spokesman and speechwriter,

and director of the war room, during the first impeachment inquiry, Patrick's intellect, pragmatism, and dedication were crucial to the impeachment team's presentation of our case to the House, the Senate, and the American people.

Since 2021, Patrick has served as my Chief of Staff, playing an integral role in my transition back to the Judiciary Committee. Through his leadership, Patrick has fostered a collaborative, inclusive, and results-oriented culture in my personal office. Additionally, he has mentored countless junior staffers and brought them under his wing as they begin their careers on Capitol Hill, always advocating for those he believes deserve a spot on Capitol Hill and a chance to work in public service.

Patrick also worked as a Senior Advisor for my Senate campaign, helping oversee our political, communications, policy and paid media operations. His contributions and strategic vision on the trail were crucial to both our successful statewide campaign and to our support of numerous California incumbents and challengers who prevailed this November.

Patrick is married to Jill, a Senior Policy Advisor to Sen. JACK REED (D-RI), with whom he has a one-year-old daughter Riley.

Patrick is truly gifted at his job, holding an intimate understanding of the media as an enterprise and a business rivaling that of any other professional on Capitol Hill. He brings leadership, levity, and political acumen to my office every single day, and I am looking forward to seeing all that we will accomplish together as we continue our service to the state of California.

MARY HOVAGIMIAN

Born in Burbank, California, Mary Hovagimian attended St. Mary's Richard Tufenkian Preschool & Kindergarten and Rose and Alex Pilibos Armenian School. She continued her education at the University of Southern California Annenberg School for Communication and Journalism, graduating Cum Laude in 2009 with a bachelor's degree in communication.

Mary was determined to delve into a career where she could give back to the community and make a meaningful difference in people's lives. When a career counselor at the University of Southern California shared with Mary that my office was seeking a District Representative, she did not hesitate to apply. In this capacity, Mary has devotedly served the constituents of my district, helped organize community outreach events, served as a liaison between constituents and my office, and directed Armenian American outreach. Mary has been recognized for her work in the community and received the 2014 Woman in Government Award from the Armenian American Chamber of Commerce.

I have proudly represented one of the largest Armenian American communities in the United States, and Mary's Armenian-speaking skills in both Eastern and Western Armenian, a skill she credits to her family and education, have proven essential throughout the years. She has helped many constituents who have needed translation assistance. In 2013, Mary also helped me speak this beautiful language when I decided to deliver my remarks in commemoration of the 98th Anniversary of the Armenian Genocide in Armenian on the House Floor. And no matter the issue facing the community, Mary navigates it with tact and skill unparalleled.

Mary leads the effort on the annual Women of the Year nominations, which recognizes remarkable women from California's 30th Congressional District. Each year, she works tirelessly to acknowledge individuals who have made significant contributions to their communities through civic engagement, community service, and leadership in their respective fields.

During her time with my office, I have had the opportunity to see Mary excel balancing her responsibilities in my office while working toward her master's degree in leadership, which she obtained in 2021 from the University of Southern California Sol Price School of Public Policy. She brought what she learned inside the classroom back to my office to champion the needs of the community. Mary is deeply committed to her family and community, one of the many reasons that she has excelled at public service.

I'm excited that she will continue to make a significant contribution to our team's success in the U.S. Senate. Her deep understanding of the Armenian community and her unwavering commitment to constituents will undoubtedly be an invaluable asset to the team.

TIM HYSOM

Tim Hysom has spent over twenty years on Capitol Hill, serving a number of members in a variety of roles. A graduate of Dominican University, Tim began his Congressional career in the district office of Rep. David E. Skaggs (D-CO). After some time in the private sector, he joined my D.C. team as a Legislative Assistant in 2003. In this role, Tim advised me on my work on the Judiciary Committee. He also played an integral role in bringing my office into the 21st Century, completely overhauling my office's online presence and building and managing our constituent database. He also developed my office's strategic communications through emerging mediums, such as online town hall meetings, tele-town halls, and video conferencing.

After five years with the Congressional Management Foundation, where he advised Members on how to effectively correspond with constituents, Tim rejoined my team as our Deputy District Director. As the boundaries of my district shifted, he created a strategic plan for community outreach for different communities and geographic areas to reach our new constituents. He also advised me on key transportation, entertainment industry, and political issues in our district.

After two years in this role, Tim moved back to Washington, D.C., to serve as Chief of Staff to Rep. Alan Lowenthal (D-CA) from 2013 to 2021. Building a congressional office from scratch is no easy feat, but Tim made it seem easy—leading to a successful House career for Rep. Lowenthal. After stints as Chief of Staff with Rep. JAKE AUCHINCLOSS (D-MA) and as a House Shared Financial and Human Resource Administrator, Tim joined my team for a third time, as a senior advisor assisting me and my team in the conclusion of my tenure in the House and launching my Senate office.

Throughout his career, Tim has proven his versatility as a leader in policymaking, project and human resource management, and constituent service skills. He has also mentored many junior staffers finding their way on Capitol Hill. His contributions to this institution have been immense, and I am excited knowing that I will continue to have his guidance and wisdom on my Senate team.

QIAO LI

Qiao Li, a graduate of UC Berkeley, first entered public service while working for Los Angeles City Councilmember Tom LaBonge, a public servant of the highest order who guided the paths of so many in our community, including Qiao. She began with my office in 2011 as a District Representative. In 2013, Qiao took a brief detour to pursue a Master's degree in Global and International Studies from the University of California at Santa Barbara.

In 2019, she rejoined our team, applying her knowledge to casework to better serve the community. In her role as a casework manager, she is the first point of contact for constituents who need assistance with federal agencies. It is not always an easy job, but Qiao's smile and dedication to helping individuals never wavers. Not a week goes by when I do not receive thanks for a constituent she has assisted in their casework with the IRS, VA, State Department, BCIS, or other federal agencies.

Qiao addresses a wide range of issues and serves as the bridge between constituents and the federal government, helping them to navigate complex processes to ensure they receive the services and benefits they are entitled to.

Outside of her role in the office, she is an active member of the community. For six summers, she coordinated the YUNASA Summer Camp for Gifted Kids. During her 11 years in public service, Qiao has been an invaluable part of the team, and I am so grateful that she will continue to leverage her expertise in all areas of casework to make a significant impact for people across the state of California in the United States Senate. Her kind spirit and unwavering commitment to public service will undoubtedly benefit our team and the state as a whole.

COLLEEN OINUMA

Colleen Oinuma is a graduate of UC Berkeley, where she earned her B.S. in Environmental Science and actively participated in student government. Before taking her current role, she worked for a research unit studying MRI spectroscopy to help diagnose neurological conditions such as Alzheimer's, addiction and traumatic brain injury.

Colleen joined my district team in 2011 and has covered a variety of issue areas, including the Environment, Energy, Rim of the Valley, and Space. Because of her work on the Rim of the Valley, we have been able to make progress in securing and protecting nearly a hundred thousand acres in the Southern California region for future generations. Colleen also manages all aspects of my schedule for California and played a crucial role in our successful statewide campaign for Senate, serving as director of scheduling and advance. Her strategic vision and critical thinking made the gears of a large campaign run, and we could not have done it without her.

Outside of the office, she served on the board of OCA-Greater Los Angeles, a nonprofit dedicated to advancing the social, political, and economic well-being of Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders. Colleen has also served as the Co-Director of the Asian Pacific American Legislative Staff Network. In this role, she took great pride in mentoring Asian American and Pacific Islander staff members. Because of her mentorship, countless individuals have entered and stayed in public serv-

ice, leaving a lasting impact that will be felt for years to come.

Colleen is married to David, and is a mom of three, Madeline, Hannah and Quinten along with her dog Austin.

I am looking forward to her joining my United States Senate office, where she will serve as Deputy State Director. Her leadership and strategic vision will ensure I am able to serve all Californians.

ANN PEIFER

Ann Peifer began her career in public service as an intern for an Orange County State Senator while obtaining her B.A. in Social Ecology from UC Irvine in 1981. After serving in that office over ten years as a caseworker, field representative and ultimately district manager, she subsequently moved to the State Board of Equalization, State Assembly, and the City of Long Beach before re-joining the State Senate as my District Coordinator in 1997.

Ann was the first person I hired when I was elected to public office. We met at an IHOP in Burbank and discussed how to establish my first district office and build out our staff. Her ambition, political acuity, and wealth of knowledge as a lifelong Californian and public servant prompted me to make Ann my District Director. After four years in my State Senate office, Ann moved with me to the House of Representatives, where she has served as my District Director ever since.

As the longest-serving member of my staff, I owe Ann a debt of gratitude for building my constituent service operation and providing direction to our constituent services that is rooted in an authentic desire to help others and a dedication to public service that is unmatched.

Under Ann's leadership, our staff has brought compassion, diligence, empathy, and a high level of professionalism to our constituents through casework and community engagement. Ann cares deeply for her staff and the nearly 750,000 constituents of California's 30th District. Her dedication to public service is underscored by the sheer volume of cases my staff has undertaken: Under Ann's leadership throughout my time in the CA State Legislature and House of Representatives, my office has resolved 36,000 cases for our constituents.

Ann has been with me every step of the way—from the 21st State Senate District, to the 27th, 29th, 28th and now 30th Congressional District. I am grateful for her continuing service as my State Director in the United States Senate.

MARGARITA PIÑON-GUTIERREZ

Margarita Piñon-Gutierrez was born in Harbor City, California, and was raised in San Pedro. She attended Mary Star of the Sea High School in San Pedro and Los Angeles Harbor College in Wilmington. Prior to joining my office, she worked for UnidosUS, formerly known as the National Council of La Raza, the largest Latino nonprofit advocacy organization in the country, before moving into a life of public service to work for Lieutenant Governor Leo McCarthy, Rep. Esteban E. Torres (D-CA), and Rep. Hilda L. Solis (D-CA). Margarita also served as Administrative Assistant to several deans at San Pedro High School.

Margarita has been a Caseworker on my team since 2007. I first met Margarita when I attended an event at Steven's Steak House and Seafood in Commerce, California, and I was deeply impressed with her dedication to

the needs of Californians. Throughout her time with my office, she has handled casework involving the Social Security Administration, U.S. Department of State, Office of Workers' Compensation Programs, Office of Personnel Management, U.S. Navy, U.S. Army, U.S. Marine Corps, U.S. Coast Guard, U.S. Air Force, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, Federal Bureau of Prisons, Department of Housing and Urban Development, Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, U.S. Department of Education and the Internal Revenue Service.

Margarita has provided translation services in Spanish to the constituents of my district and has served as a liaison to the community, attending numerous events of various organizations including the Glendale Latino Association and Adelante Latinos. Her warmth and dedication shines through every interaction she has with constituents, who are often navigating life-changing events.

Margarita resides with her husband, Dennis, her brother, Luis Piñon, Jr., and her beloved dogs, Riley, Belle, Samantha and Lulu.

Her passion for ensuring constituents have access to the services and resources they need drives her day-to-day work. I am grateful for her incredible expertise in navigating casework with a large range of federal agencies, and I look forward to seeing this commitment to service deployed in the United States Senate for the entire state of California.

TERESA LAMB SIMPSON

Teresa Lamb Simpson is a part of a third generation born and raised in Pasadena, California. She took an interest in politics at an early age, as her grandfather served on the local school board and her mother was a volunteer who often took Teresa and her siblings to work on political campaigns. Teresa has worked in a variety of fields, including nonprofits, law firms, restaurants, and retail management. Fighting the widespread aerial spraying of the insecticide malathion in Southern California in the late 1980s launched her into a career in politics.

Teresa and I met during my earlier State Assembly campaign and crossed paths again in 1996 when she came on board to work as the Volunteer Coordinator for my successful State Senate campaign. After the election, she joined my staff as a District Representative in 1997 and continued on to work on my House staff in 2001. Teresa has a true passion for helping people, serving as an exemplary community liaison between my constituents and me. She covered the geographic areas of Atwater Village, Echo Park, Elysian Valley, Los Feliz, Pasadena, Shadow Hills, Silver Lake, Sunland and Tujunga. In addition to her work as a liaison and invaluable relationship-builder, she organized my Congressional Art Competition for high school students for many years, trained and helped manage our office interns, coordinated several community outreach events and provided guidance to my constituents on various issues.

Outside of her role in my office, Teresa is a pillar of the community. She was the co-coordinator of the Children's Village at the Arroyo Seco Earth Day Festival and served on the board of the United Nations Association, Pasadena Chapter, the executive boards of the Pasadena Police Activities League and the Pasadena Police Foundation, on the City of Pasadena's Commission on the Status of Women and on the City's Library Commission. She also volunteered with the Junior League

of Pasadena, Planned Parenthood Pasadena and San Gabriel Valley, and the YWCA Glendale and Pasadena. Currently, she is a co-founder and board member of the San Rafael Library Associates and active in local political organizations. For her community involvement, Teresa has been the recipient of the Rosemary Children's Services Golden Star Award, the Pasadena Police Chiefs Special Award for Excellence, the Democrat of the Year Award and THE Magazine's 50 Fabulous Women Over 50 Award.

Married in 2002, Teresa and her husband, James Simpson, live in their hometown of Pasadena, California.

Teresa will be joining me in the United States Senate, and I am grateful that she will continue her outstanding public service to my constituents throughout the State of California.

In my twenty-three years in Congress, I have learned the important lesson that every member is only as good as their staff, and seldom as good as that. We could not do our jobs for our constituents without them and their labors, and my staff have been laser-focused on providing the highest level of service for the great people of Southern California. They have also fostered a phenomenal culture in both the district and D.C., one which has attracted and retained so many other brilliant and dedicated public servants through the years. These eight—who have each served more than ten years in the U.S. House—are some of the most dedicated, selfless, and talented individuals I have ever met, and I have been truly blessed to have them alongside me in serving our constituents in Burbank, Glendale, Hollywood, Pasadena and beyond.

I also want to thank my other staff who will be coming with me to the U.S. Senate for their dedication, their public service, and their amazing intellect. I am so thankful that Danielle Fulfs, Marisol Samayoa, Kaitlyn Kelly, Jamie Thompson, Kyle Abrams, Dahvi Cohen, Manning Turkheimer, Colin Kruse, Mohamad Almouazen, Maddie Barry, Christina Beros, and Jackson Boaz will also be joining me in the U.S. Senate.

I owe each of these dedicated staffers my utmost gratitude, and I am looking forward to seeing all they will accomplish in the next chapter of our service to the people of California.

RECOGNIZING CONGRESSIONAL PATRIOT AWARD RECIPIENT LISA BLOOMER

HON. PAT FALLON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 3, 2024

Mr. FALLON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Mrs. Lisa Bloomer of Frisco, Texas, and present her with the Congressional Patriot Award. Lisa has dedicated herself to faithfully serving our community.

Lisa was born in Abilene, Texas, and grew up in Plano. She attended Plano Senior High School and graduated from the University of North Texas in 1991 with a bachelor's degree and master's degree in tax accounting. In the following year, Lisa became a Certified Public Accountant and went on to work as an accountant for various businesses and healthcare firms for over three decades. She

also launched her very own accounting practice in 1999 along with her father, which she still operates today.

In addition to providing dependable tax services, Lisa has been involved in many community service initiatives across North Texas. From 2019 to 2023, she served as the President of the Plano East Rotary Club, where she oversaw the development of the Plano Flags of Honor program. This program recognizes veterans and first responders each year for their selfless service and sacrifices to our community. Moreover, Lisa led the charge to preserve the City of Plano's annual 4th of July and Christmas parades. Upon hearing they would be discontinued, she highlighted the importance and value that these signature events brought to families and children. As a result, Lisa was able to successfully advocate for their restoration. I am proud to recognize Lisa today for her outstanding work in supporting our community members and ensuring our veterans and first responders received the recognition they deserve. I know she will continue to make a positive impact in our community for many years to come.

It is an honor to bestow Lisa with the Patriot Award for her exceptional service to the people of North Texas and I thank her for all she has done.

RECOGNIZING JAMES D. RODRIGUEZ

HON. MARK TAKANO

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 3, 2024

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Speaker, today I recognize the service of James D. Rodriguez, the U.S. Department of Labor's Assistant Secretary for Veterans' Employment and Training Service (VETS). The Assistant Secretary has been a critical resource for the House Veterans' Affairs Committee, and we all owe him our gratitude for his life of public service.

Mr. Rodriguez enlisted in the United States Marine Corps in 1988. Over the course of his 21-year career in the USMC, Mr. Rodriguez deployed several times, including as part of Operation Desert Storm and Operation Enduring Freedom.

Mr. Rodriguez's post-military career has centered around supporting our Nation's Veterans. After separating from the USMC, he entered the private sector, spearheading Government Relations initiatives with companies like BAE systems and Deloitte. While at BAE, Mr. Rodriguez served as a liaison for the White House Joining Forces initiative while developing a program to hire Veteran employees. The program ultimately led to the hiring of more than 1,500 Veterans.

In 2014, Mr. Rodriguez transitioned to a new role at the Department of Defense, serving as the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense, Office of Warrior Care Policy. Here, he developed a strategic roadmap to align business processes and procedures for WCP while working alongside international partners to enhance warrior care.

In his current role with DOL, Mr. Rodriguez is responsible for preparing America's veterans, service members and their spouses for meaningful careers. During his tenure with DOL, he expanded DOL VETS' Vision state-

ment to be inclusive of our reserve & Guard components and Military Spouses while aligning with the White House's Defense Industrial Base strategy to address critical labor shortages. He further served as the Department's Designee for the United States Interagency Council on Homelessness and co-chaired for the White House's taskforce on suicide prevention.

For his efforts supporting Veterans and labor initiatives, Mr. Rodriguez recently received the University of Maryland's Global Campus' 2024 Distinguished Alumnus Award, the highest alumni award granted at UMGC.

Beyond his professional accolades, Mr. Rodriguez is a proud father to two daughters, Courtney and Casey Rodriguez, and a husband to Vanessa Rodriguez—who is also a Marine Veteran.

I ask my colleagues to join me in paying tribute to Mr. Rodriguez for his outstanding professional achievements and his dedicated service to our Nation and its Veterans.

CONGRATULATING CHRISTIN SUTTER

HON. GREG LOPEZ

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 3, 2024

Mr. LOPEZ. Mr. Speaker, Colorado high school women's volleyball coach Christin Sutter was recently awarded Coach of the Year from the Colorado High School Athletics Association. This award is presented to Christin for the significant improvements to Merino High School's volleyball program she has brought about over the past few years. Her dedication to her team and the women's volleyball program at Wiggins High and CHSAA is an inspiration to all.

Every student deserves the opportunity to compete in sports. Coaches like Christin make that possible by coaching their players towards success on and off the court, teaching them skills like discipline, teamwork, and work ethic that will benefit them for years to come.

It is my distinct privilege as the United States Representative of the 4th District of Colorado, to congratulate Christin for her hard work in achieving this award, and for improving Merino High School's women's volleyball team. Her dedication to the development of Colorado athletics cannot be understated, and I encourage Christin to continue cultivating the best women's volleyball program at Merino High for the betterment of her players and women's volleyball throughout Colorado.

HONORING PAUL AND EILEEN MUELLER

HON. DEBBIE LESKO

OF ARIZONA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 3, 2024

Mrs. LESKO. Mr. Speaker, it is an honor to recognize Paul and Eileen Mueller for their years of service to our Nation, state, and community.

I have known Paul and Eileen Mueller for years. They are great, loving people that work hard to preserve the principles that have made our Nation great.