

youth population, Bangladesh is emerging as a leader, building on its rich history. With more transformative innovation, the country is developing adaptation strategies to combat the climate crisis with leadership in protecting the environment and strengthening its climate resilience.

Mr. Speaker, please join me in celebrating Bangladesh Victory Day as we acknowledge and celebrate the sacrifices made by countless brave souls and citizens who fought for a future of justice and sovereignty. Let us also take this moment to recognize the vibrant Bangladeshi-American community throughout our country. Their dedication to cultural contributions enriches our Nation, and we are all the better for it.

RECOGNIZING REVEREND KEVIN
MOUANOUTOUA

HON. VINCE FONG

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, December 16, 2024

Mr. FONG. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the pastoral life of Reverend Kevin Mouanoutoua of the Lao Evangelical Church of Fresno.

Reverend Kevin dedicated his life to serving the Central Valley of California, serving as Pastor of the Lao Evangelical Churches of Tulare, Porterville, and Fresno, where he taught about God's love and grace to many faithful congregations. He also spent decades as a social worker for the Fresno County Department of Social Services' Child Protective Services. Reverend Kevin has served as a strong leader to his congregations and someone who represents the compassion of Christ in both his words and actions.

On behalf of my constituents in the Central Valley of California, I would like to congratulate Reverend Kevin Mouanoutoua on his decades of devoted service to faith and to others. As he enters this exciting new chapter in his life, I thank him for his many contributions to our community.

CELEBRATING WILLIAMSON COUNTY EMS DIRECTOR MIKE
KNIPSTEIN

HON. JOHN R. CARTER

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, December 16, 2024

Mr. CARTER of Texas. Mr. Speaker, it is my distinct honor to recognize Williamson County EMS Director Mike Knipstein for his exemplary 30-year career of service to residents. A career of such longevity and impact is truly commendable and deserving of recognition. Throughout his tenure, Director Knipstein has demonstrated unwavering dedication to public safety and healthcare, leaving a lasting legacy of excellence and compassionate service to the community.

Mike began his career as a paramedic in 1994 and has earned the Williamson County EMS Paramedic of the Year award twice for his exceptional care. Following his promotion to Lieutenant, he pioneered the creation of a medical continuing education program that re-

mains instrumental in training medics and first responders today.

From 2003 to 2014, as a Commander, Mike shaped the department's future through professional development initiatives, infection control management, and strategic growth planning. As Division Commander of EMS Operations, he introduced budgetary tracking measures that improved overtime cost management.

In 2015, Mike became Deputy Director, leading Williamson County EMS to achieve and maintain accreditation from the Commission on Accreditation of Ambulance Services, the EMS industry's "gold standard." Since 2016, as Director, he has enhanced services by securing stable funding for the Community Health Paramedic Program, implementing innovative safety policies, and ensuring resource readiness during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Director Knipstein's leadership has profoundly elevated EMS services and improved countless lives in Williamson County. On behalf of the United States House of Representatives, I extend my deepest gratitude for his remarkable service and wish him continued success.

HONORING THE LIFE OF FORMER
PENNSYLVANIA STATE REPRESENTATIVE
ISABELLA V. FITZGERALD

HON. DWIGHT EVANS

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, December 16, 2024

Mr. EVANS. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to honor the extraordinary life and enduring legacy of Former Pennsylvania State Representative Isabella V. Fitzgerald, a beloved leader, trailblazer, and pillar of the Northwest Philadelphia community. Affectionately known as "Izzy," Representative Fitzgerald departed this earthly life peacefully on December 6, 2024, leaving a legacy of service, compassion, and transformative impact.

In 2017, Representative Fitzgerald made history as the first African American woman elected to serve as State Representative for the 203rd Legislative District, a role she held with distinction for three terms. During her tenure, she championed many issues, including public safety, small business development, community revitalization, and healthcare access. Her dedication to her community is exemplified by her efforts to modernize public spaces, her creation of the Community Angel Awards to honor unsung heroes, and her revival of Super Saturday, a celebration of Northwest Philadelphia neighborhoods.

Representative Fitzgerald's legislative accomplishments included sponsoring House Bill 579, which improved insurance coverage for breast imaging and was signed into law by Governor Tom Wolf in 2020. Her advocacy for affordable housing, health care, and education reflected her deep commitment to addressing the challenges faced by families in her community. A staunch supporter of public engagement, she fostered partnerships with local law enforcement and organized events such as National Night Out to promote community safety.

Even in retirement, Representative Fitzgerald's dedication to her neighbors and

community never waned. She continued to organize grassroots efforts, advocate for breast cancer awareness, and provide mentorship to countless individuals.

Beyond her professional achievements, Isabella Fitzgerald was a devoted mother, grandmother, great-grandmother, and friend.

In recognition of her incredible contributions, the intersection of Stenton Avenue and Washington Lane in Philadelphia was renamed "Isabella Fitzgerald Way" on December 15, 2024—a fitting tribute to a woman who dedicated her life to uplifting her community.

HONORING THE LEADERSHIP OF
PHIL BADDOUR

HON. WILEY NICKEL

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, December 16, 2024

Mr. NICKEL. Mr. Speaker, today, I rise to honor Phil Baddour, a distinguished North Carolinian whose career has been defined by a commitment to public service, advocacy, and leadership.

Phil Baddour served in the North Carolina House of Representatives from 1993 to 2002, representing the 11th district with integrity and dedication. As House Democratic Leader for two terms, he was a key voice in shaping policy that benefited working families across our state. His leadership extended beyond the General Assembly, as he chaired the Clean Water Management Trust Fund, working tirelessly to preserve North Carolina's natural resources for future generations.

A lifelong resident of Goldsboro, Phil has spent more than fifty years practicing law in his hometown, advocating for justice and fairness. His contributions to the legal profession are profound, having served as President of the North Carolina Advocates for Justice, one of our state's leading groups of attorneys. His dedication to public service is reflected in his leadership roles with the North Carolina Economic Development Board, the Board of Transportation, and the Commission for the Future of the Courts in North Carolina.

Beyond his work in the legal and public policy arenas, Phil Baddour has also served his country. He retired as a Colonel in the North Carolina National Guard, where he provided distinguished leadership as Staff Judge Advocate.

Please join me in recognizing Phil Baddour for his lifetime of service, his commitment to justice, and his profound contributions to the people of North Carolina.

HONORING LEROY SOMMER

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, December 16, 2024

Mr. GRAVES of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, it is my privilege to recognize and commend Mr. Leroy Sommer, the Airport Manager of College Park Airport in College Park, Maryland, on his retirement after a decade of exemplary service to the aviation community.

For the past ten years, Mr. Sommer has led one of our Nation's most historic airports with

remarkable dedication and skill. College Park Airport, known as the world's oldest continuously operating airport, is a cornerstone of aviation history and a symbol of the ingenuity and perseverance of the early pioneers of flight. Under Mr. Sommer's capable leadership, the airport has continued to thrive, serving as both a vital resource for general aviation and a living monument to our Nation's rich aviation heritage.

Mr. Sommer's unwavering commitment to safety, operational excellence, and community engagement has been instrumental in the airport's success. His tireless efforts have ensured that College Park Airport remains a beacon for aviation enthusiasts and a trusted partner to the local community.

Throughout his tenure, Mr. Sommer has built strong relationships with residents, businesses, government agencies, and the aviation industry. These partnerships reflect his exceptional leadership and his dedication to fostering collaboration and trust—qualities that are vital to maintaining the strength and vitality of our Nation's aviation infrastructure.

As Mr. Sommer transitions into this well-deserved next chapter, we honor his significant contributions to aviation and to College Park Airport's enduring legacy. His stewardship of this historic landmark has preserved its place in history while ensuring its relevance for generations to come.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in thanking Mr. Leroy Sommer for his service and in wishing him all the best in his retirement. His legacy will be felt for years to come, and he will always have a place among the great stewards of aviation history.

RECOGNIZING THE COLORADO SCHOOL OF MINES CROSS COUNTRY TEAM

HON. BRITTANY PETTERSEN

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, December 16, 2024

Ms. PETTERSEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the Colorado School of Mines Men's Cross Country Team for winning their fourth NCAA Division II National Championship.

Over the past ten years, the Orediggers have dominated Division II Athletics. This season, they won the team title in every race and six out of seven runners earned All-American honors. The championship race was especially impressive, with three runners finishing in the top ten. This team, made up of Logan Bocovich, Loic Scomparin, Ethan Grolnic, Paul Knight, Dawson Gunn, Jeremiah Vaille, and Max Bonenger, showed the very best in competitiveness that the Colorado School of Mines Athletic Department has to offer.

This achievement was earned by the commitment of the runners, support from students, guidance from Athletic Director David Hansburg, and the coaching of Chris Siemers. Their Division II championship title, cements Colorado School of Mines's reputation as an academic and athletic powerhouse in Colorado and across the country.

On behalf of the people of Colorado's Seventh Congressional District, it is my honor to congratulate the Orediggers on their successful season.

RECOGNIZING DICK LUNDY'S SERVICE TO HIS COMMUNITY

HON. DEBBIE DINGELL

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, December 16, 2024

Mrs. DINGELL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Dick Lundy, a resident of Dexter, Michigan, who is retiring after 45 years on the Dexter School Board. His decades of service to his community and its children are worthy of commendation.

Dick earned a degree in electrical engineering from the University of Michigan and started his own business, Control-O-Matic, later COM Inc., in 1972. He served as its President and CEO until it was sold in 1999.

Dick was first elected to the Dexter School Board in 1979, the first of eleven elections that he would win. He also spent 40 years as Treasurer and another four as Vice President. During his time on the board, he has seen a plethora of changes, from Michigan's shift to per-student state funding in 1994 or the introduction of computers and every new technology since. This also includes the successful passage of half a dozen school bonds, the construction of multiple new buildings and development of the school campus, and the hiring of seven superintendents and two interim superintendents, in addition to the vast financial oversight of the district. Both of his children as well as three grand-children have graduated from Dexter Schools, and two great-grandchildren are currently enrolled.

Outside of his time on the Dexter School Board, Dick has served on the board of many local nonprofits, including the Washtenaw United Way, the Ann Arbor Hands-On Museum, the Dexter United Methodist Church, and Emergent Health Partners. In addition, Dick has served on the Dexter Downtown Development Authority and the Local Development Finance Authority which created the Dexter Business and Research Park. He also worked with the nonprofit Michigan From the Heart, where he's assisted in connecting University of Michigan student athletes with patients at C.S. Mott Children's Hospital.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me today in celebrating Dick Lundy and his 45 years of service to the Dexter community. The future of Dexter is much brighter because of Dick's hard work. We wish him the best in retirement and thank him for all he has done.

CELEBRATING JOHNNY 5 V2.0'S ACHIEVEMENT IN INTERNATIONAL ROBOTICS COMPETITIONS

HON. BILL FOSTER

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, December 16, 2024

Mr. FOSTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Sawyer Rinn and Tristan Souza, of Johnny 5 v2.0, a robotics team from the 11th District of Illinois, on their recent achievements in representing the United States at two international competitions.

In November, Sawyer and Tristan earned 5th place at the World Robot Olympiad (WRO) International Finals, competing against 100

teams from 90 countries. Their success was the result of their exceptional engineering, problem-solving, and innovation skills, which enabled them to design and program a robot capable of completing complex tasks. Additionally, in October, the team placed 1st at the World Robotics Olympiad Americas Open in Puerto Rico, where they competed against 25 teams from 17 countries.

Coach William Wong of Naperville leads the team. He is the founder of Chasewood Learning, which has produced multiple national robotics champions. His programs inspire children to develop STEM skills and pursue related careers. Sawyer Rinn, 12, from Geneva, Illinois, in his third year of robotics, won the 2022 WRO National Championship and placed 27th at the WRO International Finals. Tristan Souza, 12, from Hinsdale, Illinois, in his second year, reached the FIRST LEGO League state finals in 2022. Both aspire to study engineering at top universities.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud to have outstanding students and mentors in my district who drive innovation and promote STEM career pathways. Please join me in congratulating Sawyer Rinn, Tristan Souza, and Coach William Wong on their impressive achievements.

RECOGNIZING THE 2024 WASHINGTON REGIONAL ALCOHOL PROGRAM LAW ENFORCEMENT AWARDS OF EXCELLENCE RECIPIENTS

HON. GERALD E. CONNOLLY

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, December 16, 2024

Mr. CONNOLLY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the Washington Regional Alcohol Program (WRAP) and to congratulate the recipients of the 27th Annual Law Enforcement Awards of Excellence for Impaired Driving Prevention.

Founded in 1982, WRAP is an award-winning, public-private coalition formed to fight drunk driving, drugged driving, and underage drinking in the Washington, D.C., metropolitan region. Through educational and innovative public outreach programs, WRAP is credited with keeping local alcohol-related death rates consistently below the national average. Its programs educate students and the general public on the dangers of alcohol and drugs, particularly driving while under the influence. Through the WRAP Holiday SoberRide program, individuals who are impaired can request a free cab ride home. Since SoberRide was launched in 1991, over 80,000 safe rides have been provided in the Washington Metropolitan area, preventing potential accidents and deaths.

Since 1997, WRAP has sponsored an annual Law Enforcement Awards Ceremony to honor local law enforcement professionals who have gone above and beyond the call of duty in the fight against drunk driving. It is my honor to include in the RECORD the names of the 2024 Law Enforcement Awards of Excellence for Impaired Driving Prevention recipients:

City of Falls Church Police Department: Sergeant Matthew Parker and Private First Class Matthew Aguiniga