

most recently the Kearny Board of Education. Currently, he is the President and Educational Management Consultant with HRS Management Services.

In addition to serving as an adjunct faculty member at Kean University and Seton Hall University, Councilman Smith was an Associate Vice President for Administration and Finance at Kean University and an aide to New Jersey State Senator Robert Martin. Prior to being elected as a Councilman in 2017, he was a member of the Piscataway Board of Adjustment, the Jefferson Township Planning Board, and served as the President of the Jefferson Township Board of Education. Additionally, he currently serves as a Chairman of the Lake Hopatcong Commission.

A U.S. Army veteran, Councilman Smith received an honorable discharge after serving from 1954 to 1956. His dedication to his community and country is reflected in his civic activities and professional memberships, including leadership roles with the Association of School Business Officials International and the New Jersey Association of School Business Officials.

Councilman Smith's lifelong dedication to service and leadership has left an indelible mark on the community.

I want to express my gratitude to Councilman Smith for his decades of service and for the countless ways he has enriched the lives of others, and I wish him the best for a well-earned and restful retirement.

HONORING ANDRE PIERRE

HON. FEDERICA S. WILSON

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, December 20, 2024

Ms. WILSON of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor the outstanding service of Andre Pierre, my former intern who served with distinction and dedicated his time to serving the people of Florida's 24th Congressional District. Andre is currently a student at Florida International University, where he focuses on International Business and serves as the Vice-President of the Real Estate Club. I am proud to highlight Andre's remarkable contributions, particularly in foreign policy and Haiti. His work in this area has been instrumental in shaping policy discussions and providing valuable insights into the complex challenges facing Haiti. In my office, Andre has shown great dedication, immersing himself in the legislative process, especially in transportation and infrastructure. He has also worked closely with the Caucus on the Commission of the Social Status of Black Men and Boys, demonstrating his commitment to addressing critical issues impacting communities. Andre has emerged as a true leader on the Hill, uniting individuals from diverse backgrounds to foster a more inclusive and collaborative culture.

I wish Andre all the best as he continues his academic journey, which I am certain will be filled with success.

On behalf of Florida's 24th Congressional District, I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring Andre for his commitment and service.

HONORING THE BREVARD HIGH SCHOOL CROSS-COUNTRY TEAM

HON. CHUCK EDWARDS

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, December 20, 2024

Mr. EDWARDS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the Brevard High School boys' cross-country team for winning the 2A state championship. This is the Brevard "Blue Devils" second 2A state championship in a row and third in the last four years, solidifying their dominant status as a dynasty.

The Brevard High School girls' cross-country team placed 7th at the state cross country meet.

Congratulations to the Blue Devils. Their continued success is a testament to countless hours of training, hard work, and a genuine passion for running.

They have made Western North Carolina proud.

May the future bring many more years of success as we continue to celebrate the legacy of your exceptional cross-country program.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. ELEANOR HOLMES NORTON

OF DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, December 20, 2024

Ms. PELOSI. Mr. Speaker, I missed votes due to recovery from a hip replacement surgery after sustaining an injury during a bipartisan Congressional delegation trip to Luxembourg to mark the 80th anniversary of the Battle of the Bulge. Had I been present, I would have voted NAY on Roll Call No. 516.

HONORING ROBERT SENA

HON. FEDERICA S. WILSON

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, December 20, 2024

Ms. WILSON of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor the outstanding service of Robert Sena, my intern who served with distinction in my office and dedicated his time to serving the people of Florida's 24th Congressional District.

Robert, a graduate of Rollins College, brought his background and enthusiasm for communications and civic engagement. His service in my office has been instrumental to the constituents of Florida's 24th Congressional District as well as the state of Florida. Robert's hard work and dedication were highlighted in his outstanding skills for sharing the functions of the federal government with a wide audience.

I applaud Robert's passion for civic involvement and his plan to educate the youth on the importance of local-level government.

Robert leaves a legacy of hard work and dedication. I do not doubt that the next step in his journey will be filled with continued success.

On behalf of Florida's 24th Congressional District, I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring Robert Sena for his commitment and service.

HONORING MAJOR MICHELLE QUINTERO

HON. CHUCK EDWARDS

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, December 20, 2024

Mr. EDWARDS. Mr. Speaker, it is with great sadness that I rise today to honor Major Michelle Quintero of the Madison County Sheriff's Office who was killed as Hurricane Helene hit Western North Carolina on September 27.

As director of operations at the Madison County Detention Center, which includes Madison Juvenile Detention Center, Michelle was known for her positive influence on inmates and as a source of comfort and strength for young people.

Michelle's family and friends described her as a second mother to juvenile inmates, employees, and members of her community, even bringing juvenile inmates Christmas presents, making sure no one felt left out. On the morning of Friday, September 27, in the midst of Helene's destruction, Michelle thought only of serving others and attempted to get to work from her home in Yancey County.

Michelle was quickly surrounded by the rising flood waters after going outside to enter her car and became caught in the current; Michelle's neighbor, Chris Robinson, jumped into the flood water and made attempts to save Michelle's life but she was fatally injured by the falling trees and waves of debris in the water. Michelle was 48 years old. Michelle made a lasting impact on the law enforcement community and on those who were lucky enough to know her.

The Division of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention of the North Carolina Department of Public Safety posthumously awarded Michelle the Raising the Bar award, for her lifetime of public service and going above and beyond to help create better outcomes for incarcerated youth.

Michelle spent nearly 18 years working at the sheriff's office and came from a family dedicated to public service. Michelle leaves behind the love of her life and husband, Isaac Quintero; daughter, Ashlyn Quintero; son, Isaac Quintero; and many extended family members.

I thank Michelle for her contributions to Western North Carolina and for the positive influence and safe environment she provided for youth in her care.

I offer my deepest condolences to the Quintero family. I will continue to keep them and their loved ones in my thoughts and prayers. Michelle will be remembered for her lifetime of service and in every life she touched.

RECOGNIZING MARK R. BAKER

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, December 20, 2024

Mr. GRAVES of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, it is my privilege to recognize Mark R. Baker, who is retiring after more than a decade of distinguished service as the President and Chief Executive Officer of the Aircraft Owners and Pilots Association.

Mark's leadership in support of the general aviation community has been invaluable to hundreds of thousands of pilots and aircraft owners and the endeavors they support through flight. His unwavering commitment to promoting and protecting the freedom to fly—a freedom truly unique to the United States—has helped facilitate the wide range of general aviation flight missions, including business, disaster relief, philanthropy, and personal transportation.

Mark has been the most impactful leader in AOPA's 85-year history, serving as a tireless and effective advocate for general aviation. He has consistently provided legislators and regulators with valuable insights on important issues such as medical certification reform, strengthening our national network of airports, aviation and education career opportunities for youth, advancing flight deck technology, ensuring fair and transparent pricing for pilots, and improving aviation safety. Among the important legislation he has helped shape is the very first general aviation title in an FAA reauthorization bill, setting an important precedent for the future.

Mark's passion for aviation began as a child growing up in Minnesota, when he and his younger brothers, Scott and Jim, rode their bicycles to the local airport to watch airplanes and take penny-a-pound airplane rides. He took a ground school class in high school and earned his private pilot certificate soon after. Flight instructor Waldo Anderson, who is now 90 years old and still flying, mentored and inspired Mark as he worked to earn additional pilot certificates and ratings.

As a teenager just starting college, Mark found additional mentors in his employers, Knox Lumber founders Don DeCoster, Larry Platt, and Mel Maurer. The World War II veterans quickly recognized Mark's strong work ethic, which he learned from parents Ralph and Bev. Taking him under their wing, the trio soon taught Mark the ins and outs of retail lumber, laying the groundwork for his future business success in the home improvement industry.

After leaving Knox, Mark held leadership roles with Payless Cashways, Scotty's, and Home Base before joining Home Depot in that company's formative years. While at Home Depot, Mark held numerous executive positions, including Chief Operating Officer, and continued to build deep and lasting relationships throughout the home improvement vendor and real estate communities, helping to drive large-scale growth for his company and the industry. He even used his flying skills, and both personal and business aircraft, to help identify locations for hundreds of new stores nationwide.

Mark has held numerous other influential positions, including Chief Operating Officer at Scotts Miracle-Gro Company, President and Chief Executive Officer at outdoor outfitter Gander Mountain, and Chief Executive Officer at Orchard Supply Hardware.

Recognizing the important role of mentors in his own life, Mark has generously mentored hundreds of pilots, providing access to aircraft, instructors, and opportunities to fly, as well as sharing the wisdom he has gained in more than 10,000 hours at the controls. In that same spirit, he launched the You Can Fly program at AOPA, which has so far provided free aviation STEM curriculum to more than 100,000 high school students nationwide.

Mark's commitment to creating opportunities for young people is matched only by his commitment to his family, including his wife JoAnn; his four children, Lindsay, Kristine, Shannon, and Andrew; his sons-in-law Pete and Alex; and his eight grandchildren.

As Mark prepares to retire from AOPA, I wish him well in all his endeavors and thank him for his service to the aviation community and the Nation. I am confident he will continue to mentor the next generation of aviators as a passionate and influential advocate for GA.

HONORING PINYI WANG

HON. FEDERICA S. WILSON

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, December 20, 2024

Ms. WILSON of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor the outstanding service of Pinyi Wang, my fellow who served with distinction in my office and dedicated her time to serving the people of Florida's 24th Congressional District.

Pinyi is currently working on her Ph.D. in the Educational Leadership and Policy program at the University of Florida. I am proud to say that Pinyi has shown great dedication and passion for education and has devoted her time in my office to advance education policy forward.

It was obvious that Pinyi was ready to meet the challenge of contributing to the field of education. Her commitment to closing the opportunity gap across race, ethnicity, and gender became apparent with her work in addressing the inequalities found in the use of Artificial Intelligence in educational spaces. Furthermore, she has contributed significantly to moving my One School, One Nurse Act along the legislative process.

Pinyi's intellect, kindness, and hard work will always be remembered. I wish Pinyi all the best as she continues her doctoral studies in education equity and equality both domestically and internationally. I am certain that the next step in her journey will be filled with much success.

On behalf of Florida's 24th Congressional District, I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring Pinyi Wang for her commitment and service.

HONORING ASHEVILLE HIGH SCHOOL BOYS AND GIRLS INDIVIDUAL CROSS COUNTRY

HON. CHUCK EDWARDS

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, December 20, 2024

Mr. EDWARDS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Michael Haskin and Sofi Alexander, the boys and girls individual cross country winners of North Carolina's 4A state championship race, both belonging to Asheville High School.

Asheville High senior Michael Haskin ran his second fastest time of the season in a neck and neck race to win the boys individual 4A championship.

In the girls individual 4A race, junior Sofi Alexander took home first place for the Ashe-

ville High Cougars. Sofi is the first Cougar to win a girls cross country state championship.

Both runners, Michael and Sofi, won their races by less than two seconds, a testament to the determination of both athletes and the highly competitive fields.

On behalf of all of Western North Carolina, congratulations to Michael and Sofi.

HIGHLIGHTING THE CAREER OF SYLVIA GÓMEZ

HON. JENNIFFER GONZÁLEZ-COLÓN

OF PUERTO RICO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, December 20, 2024

Mrs. GONZÁLEZ-COLÓN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the achievements and contributions of Puerto Rican broadcast journalist and news anchor Sylvia Gómez, after a career spanning over fifty years.

Sylvia Gómez was a pioneer in broadcast journalism in Puerto Rico, starting in this field at a time when the opportunities for women had barely begun to become available. She was able to find valuable mentors among seasoned figures and prove herself in the field and on the air, soon establishing herself in reporting, interviewing, and anchoring as part of the news teams in the San Juan media market.

She has since been a constant presence in Puerto Rico TV screens, starting in public television and making her way through our major news outlets becoming an anchorwoman and a lead investigative reporter, eventually leading to a 44-year career at Telemundo WKAQ-TV.

Her reporting on environmental issues helped set the standard for such coverage and earned her numerous recognitions inside and outside the industry, with over 15 awards from press organizations, including a Silver Circle Emmy awarded by the Suncoast Chapter of the National Academy of Television Arts and Sciences in 2022.

I also want to highlight her principled fight against age discrimination by media employers, an issue that disproportionately impacts women in this field. Her stand on this subject bore witness to her integrity, strength and courage, and will certainly lead to a better workplace for many in the future. She has been an example to be followed, showing how one can and should continue fighting for your rights and the rights of others.

Sylvia is now moving on to enjoy a different stage of her life. I know she will continue to be a valuable member of Puerto Rico's community, and today I applaud her outstanding work, thank her for her commitment to what she saw as right and true to keep us informed, and wish her all the best moving forward.

HONORING DELANEY JANE CALLAHAN

HON. FEDERICA S. WILSON

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, December 20, 2024

Ms. WILSON of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor the outstanding service of Delaney Jane Callahan, my intern who has served with