

YMCA in Citrus County, his multifaceted involvement across various sectors demonstrates his dedication to making his community a better place for its residents. Gerry's work as a community champion continues to earn him the admiration of his fellow citizens and the well-deserved recognition.

It is clear that Mr. Mulligan has made a profoundly positive impact on our community, and I am grateful for his service.

HONORING SILVESTER TATUM

HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 9, 2024

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate the accomplishments of Command Sergeant Major Silvester Tatum, retiring from Mississippi Army National Guard with over 42 years of military service. A devoted husband and father, he has spent his entire career working parallel business and army professions, serving as the embodiment of a Citizen-Soldier. He has executed a lifetime of achievements in education, military discipline and training, assignments, commands, and missions that are remarkable and historical.

Command Sergeant Major (CSM) Tatum is decorated with the Legion of Merit, the Combat Infantry Badge, and many other awards and honors. He served in many tactical, operational, and strategic assignments, including two overseas combat tours to the Middle East. His career culminated with his selection as the first African American Senior Enlisted Leader of the Mississippi National Guard on 1 April 2021. In this role, CSM Tatum has faithfully and impartially discharged the unique duties of his assignment with excellence. CSM Tatum serves as the principal advisor to the Adjutant General of Mississippi on all matters pertaining to providing a ready enlisted force, health of the force, and enlisted professional development of more than 13,000 Citizen Soldiers, Airmen, State employees, and federal technicians. Areas of focus are to ensure the force is equipped and trained to respond to any contingency, natural or manmade.

From Rolling Fork, Mississippi, Tatum enlisted in the Mississippi National Guard in 1981, has served as one of the most influential senior enlisted leaders our ranks have ever witnessed, maintaining the highest standards during the most dynamic and complex times in history. CSM Tatum is a true American hero and a proud Mississippian who always placed the needs of others before his own; I am immensely grateful for his dedication to our country and to the State of Mississippi.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing Command Sergeant Major Silvester Tatum for his dedication to serve the state of Mississippi and his country.

COMMEMORATING THE 325TH ANNIVERSARY OF VAISAKHI AND THE LEGACY OF GURU GOBIND SINGH JI

HON. THOMAS R. SUOZZI

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 9, 2024

Mr. SUOZZI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commemorate the 325th anniversary of Vaisakhi on April 13, 2024, and the legacy of Guru Gobind Singh Ji, who espoused the values that we as Americans cherish, including liberty, equality, and religious freedom.

Guru Gobind Singh Ji founded the Khalsa community in 1699, and its sole purpose has been upholding the dignity and human rights of everyone, regardless of their nationality, race, religion, or social status. Sikhism teaches that all human beings are inter-connected as one human family, with one Creator who lives through everyone. Sikhism also teaches that every person has innate dignity and deserves to be treated with respect and kindness. Guru Gobind Singh Ji taught that the highest form of worship is to love and care for humanity. For this reason, the Khalsa community cares for God's creation without any distinction.

Guru Gobind Singh Ji preached his belief in pluralism and freedom of conscience during a time of religious intolerance. He lived by a maxim that captures one of Voltaire's philosophies. "I disapprove of what you say, but I will defend to the death your right to say it." His father, Guru Teg Bahadur Ji, adhered to the same principles and was even executed because he protested the government's forced removal of the Janeu, the sacred thread. Even though as a Sikh, Guru Teg Bahadur Ji himself did not believe in wearing the Janeu, he protested for the right of Hindus to wear it. He was executed because he refused to give up this principle when given an ultimatum by the intolerant monarchy of his time.

Guru Gobind Singh Ji followed in the footsteps of his father and promoted interfaith dialogue. Not only would Guru Gobind Singh Ji build Sikh Gurudwaras, but he also built Muslim Mosques and Hindu Mandirs. When asked which religion he felt is the most excellent, Guru Gobind Singh Ji would respond "Just as my faith is the most excellent for me, yours is the most excellent for you." He taught that religious labels do not matter in God's eyes.

Guru Gobind Singh Ji was also a major proponent of education and women's rights. He was an intellectual who authored many influential works and poetry that is still read today. Much of his poetry is included in the Sikh prayers. He encouraged people of all identities and backgrounds to study, which was very rare at the time. Women were given the equal rights to become soldiers in the Khalsa army, which was an army comprised completely of volunteers. According to Sikh writer Bhai Vir Singh Ji, Guru Gobind Singh Ji taught that "it is a sin to be cruel, but it is a bigger sin to tolerate cruelty." This was during a time where being religious meant that you left society to primarily focus on meditation. Guru Gobind Singh Ji taught abandoning a suffering world in the name of religion is selfishness disguised as prayer. He preached that religiosity meant fighting against cruelty and uplifting the downtrodden.

Regarding issues of war and peace, the Khalsa army adhered to a humanitarian code fostered by the Guru Gobind Singh Ji. They were outnumbered in every battle they fought, yet their spirit was unmatched. Wars were only fought for human rights. Battles were often fought to rescue young girls who were kept as slaves and forced to leave their religion. Sikhs would make sure to not only give food, water, and first aid to their soldiers but also to enemy soldiers. No land was ever conquered, no loot taken, and no prisoners of war were ever caught. Additionally, all the Khalsa army arrows had gold on them. This was to make sure that if an enemy soldier was injured, they could afford treatment, and if they died their family was not left penniless. Guru Gobind Singh Ji's own sons fought on the front lines of the battlefield. All four of his sons gave their lives fighting. His younger two sons were captured and executed at age 7 and 9, along with his elderly mother. Guru Gobind Singh Ji and the Khalsa army sacrificed everything in the name of freedom.

When a Sikh decides to become a part of the Khalsa community they go through the baptism ceremony called the Amrit Sanchar. They vow to serve humanity and fight for social justice. They also give up all ties to caste. Guru Gobind Singh fought against the caste system because he believed it undermined the principle of unconditional human equality. The Khalsa of yesterday fought as soldiers on the battlefield. The Khalsa of today fights for justice as teachers, doctors, lawyers, and political activists. They are very much a part of the American fabric and embody the spirit of freedom.

The Khalsa community serves humanity in their Gurudwaras, the Sikh place of worship. Gurudwaras feed thousands a day in their free kitchens called "langars." This practice was founded on the belief that no human should ever go hungry. These community kitchens are places where people from all cultures and religions are welcome to eat for free. The community has taken the concept of selfless service to great heights and continues to provide free humanitarian aid in natural disasters all around the world. By creating the Khalsa, Guru Gobind Singh Ji broke all barriers and united the human race, as one family. Today, the Third Congressional District of New York joins the Sikh community in celebrating Khalsa Sajna Diwas and honors the contributions that Sikhs have made to the District and the Nation.

HONORING THERESA SULLIVAN FOR RECEIVING THE MALCOLM BALDRIGE QUALITY AWARD

HON. DAN NEWHOUSE

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 9, 2024

Mr. NEWHOUSE. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to honor Theresa Sullivan, the CEO of Samaritan Healthcare in Moses Lake, Washington for winning a Malcolm Baldrige Quality Award for healthcare. The Baldrige Quality Award is the highest formal recognition given by the President of the United States for performance excellence.

Samaritan Healthcare is a hospital that provides vital services for our rural communities

in Central Washington. There, Theresa has fostered a community focused on providing exemplary care through patient, provider, and staff satisfaction. Prior to her leadership at Samaritan, she served on various executive boards for hospitals in Washington State where she shared her exemplary standards for leadership and management.

I am honored to represent Theresa, and sincerely thank her for her work providing critical healthcare services to the constituents of the Fourth District of Washington and for inspiring innovation in the healthcare field.

HONORING THE MISSISSIPPI CENTER FOR CULTURAL PRODUCTION

HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 9, 2024

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the Mississippi Center for Cultural Production. The organization has gone beyond the call of duty to ensure that rural communities in Mississippi are taken care of and their stories are told.

The Mississippi Center for Cultural Production, also known as "Sipp Culture," is an approach and resource for cultivating thriving communities. Based in the rural South, Sipp Culture is honoring the history and building the future of rural Hinds County, especially in the Town of Utica, MS.

Sipp Culture supports community development from the ground up through cultural production focused on self-determination and agency designed by them and for them. The organization believes that history, culture, and food affirm our individual and collective humanity. Their goal is to strengthen the local food system, advance health equity, and support rural artistic voices—while activating the power of story—all to promote the legacy and vision of Utica, MS.

At the core of it all is the unwavering belief that gathering and sharing local stories is the best way to support safe and thriving communities for the future. Honoring growth, story, and imagination is an approach that can cultivate healthy and equitable places everywhere. For Sipp Culture, it all starts in Utica. I firmly believe the work Sipp Culture has done for the communities in Hinds County can be a model for what should be done for rural communities all across the United States of America.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing The Mississippi Center for Cultural Production for their service to the citizens of Mississippi.

RECOGNIZING DR. THEODORE FOTOPoulos

HON. GUS M. BILIRAKIS

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 9, 2024

Mr. BILIRAKIS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and honor the unique contributions of one of my constituents, Dr. Theodore Fotopoulos who has partnered with CARES

Senior Health Clinic to treat its dermatology patients for more than ten years. These healthcare providers treat all skin conditions, including skin cancers. Their work has often been lifesaving.

Dr. Fotopoulos and his colleagues who volunteer to serve this vulnerable population are making a profound impact on the lives of the patients they serve. Each of these volunteers have servant hearts, and their dedication to our community is impressive. It is said that a society can be judged by how well it treats its most vulnerable citizens. These medical professionals go above and beyond to ensure none of the patients seeking help at CARES Senior Center fall through the cracks.

It is clear that Dr. Fotopoulos and his fellow volunteers have made a profoundly positive impact on our community, and I am grateful for their service.

CONGRATULATING DR. MARCUS SCOTT IV

HON. EARL L. "BUDDY" CARTER

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 9, 2024

Mr. CARTER of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Dr. Marcus Scott IV.

Dr. Scott has been nominated as one of the finalists for the Georgia Association of Secondary School Principal's Principal of the Year award. Dr. Scott earned a B.S. in middle school education from Armstrong Atlantic State University. He later earned a master's degree in school administration from Cambridge College.

During his 22 years of service, he has worked as an educator and administrator in Liberty, Glynn, and Chatham County. Out of these 22 years, he has spent 18 years in an administrative role.

Currently, Dr. Scott works as the principal of Lee Roy Myers Middle School in Savannah. He is also a radio host, a youth group president, and a Liberty County school board member. He has helped lead new efforts in improving the performance of students with the school receiving accolades for remarkable improvement.

Dr. Scott congratulates his colleagues on helping him receive such an honor, and we all wish him the best of luck when the finalist for Principal of the Year is selected.

RECOGNIZING MAURA CURRAN

HON. WILLIAM R. KEATING

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 9, 2024

Mr. KEATING. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Maura Curran as she concludes her service on the Scituate Select Board. For over two decades, Maura Curran has served as a pillar of the Scituate community, serving on the Scituate School Committee, the Advisory Committee, and for the past decade, on the Select Board. Maura's parents, the late Samuel and Mary Cavanaugh Cashman, instilled in their daughter to never hesitate to stand up for her beliefs as long as she was respectful in her disagreements. Maura has pointed to this

as the greatest lesson she learned from her parents, and the people of Scituate have benefited greatly from this guiding principle throughout her service to their town.

A tireless advocate for the Scituate Public Schools, Maura stepped up and successfully ran for a position on the School Committee in 2005. Throughout her term on the School Committee, Maura worked with her colleagues to maintain the quality of education in Scituate in the face of economic challenges.

As her tenure on the School Committee came to a close, Maura once again stepped up to serve the town on the Advisory Committee, working countless evenings to ensure that Town Meeting attendees were adequately prepared for Annual and Special Town Meetings.

In 2014, Maura was elected to fill an unexpired term on what was then known as the Board of Selectmen. For the first time in twelve years there was a woman on the Board. By the end of the decade, the Board was renamed the Select Board by Town Meeting and its members were majority female for the first time in history.

Under Maura's leadership on the Select Board, Scituate built a new public safety building, senior center, athletic field complex, and the Gates Middle School. Additionally, the town renovated its library and saw significant investments in replacing and improving water and sewer infrastructure.

Not seeking re-election this spring, Maura will step down from the Select Board after ten years of dedicated service. However, the work that Maura accomplished during her time on the Scituate Select Board, School Committee, and Advisory Board will leave a lasting impact for many years to come. The Town of Scituate has benefited greatly from the sacrifices made by Maura, her husband Sean, and their daughters Lindsay and Samantha, as they worked around her attendance at Monday night School Committee meetings, Tuesday night Select Board meetings, and Thursday night Advisory Committee meetings.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud to honor Maura Curran, and I ask that my colleagues join me in recognizing her steadfast commitment to public service and the people of Scituate.

HONORING THE LIFE OF LIEUTENANT COMMANDER ISSAC L. BELTON

HON. SHARICE DAVIDS

OF KANSAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 9, 2024

Ms. DAVIDS of Kansas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life of Lieutenant Commander Issac L. Belton. Throughout his distinguished career, LCDR Belton demonstrated exceptional leadership and a tireless devotion to the defense of his Nation. His expertise and dedication were instrumental in shaping the next generation of naval personnel and ensuring the readiness of our forces.

LCDR Belton's service to our country began with his enlistment in the United States Navy in 1988 following his high school graduation from Rosa Fort High School in Tunica, Mississippi. He served aboard various commands, including the USS *Raleigh*, USS *Donald B. Beary*, and USS *Eisenhower*, where he developed his skills as a Boiler Technician.