

RECOGNIZING THE SERVICE OF
MASTER SERGEANT STEVEN D.
PARKER

HON. ANDREW OGLES

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, April 12, 2024

Mr. OGLES. Mr. Speaker, it is with great pride that I recognize Master Sergeant Steven D. Parker, who is retiring from the 218th Intelligence Surveillance and Reconnaissance Group (ISRG) of the Tennessee Air National Guard.

Master Sergeant Steven D. Parker began his military career over forty years ago on March 12, 1984. He honorably served the Tennessee Air National Guard as a C-130 Aircraft Mechanic for 28 years and an Administrative Craftsman for 12 years. His deployments include time in Tabuk, Minhad, and at Bagram Air Base to support Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom. He later served in Baghdad supporting Operation Inherent Resolve as an Administration Craftsman.

Master Sergeant Parker's exemplary service and dedication to his country has twice earned him the 218 ISRG Senior Non-Commissioned Officer Quarterly Award. He also serves as the Sergeant at Arms at American Legion Post 141 in Tennessee, where he champions patriotism and community engagement, something which he commits to himself by volunteering in his community.

I urge my colleagues to join me in thanking Master Sergeant Parker for his service to his country and in wishing him good luck as he retires.

RECOGNIZING FRANK RENDA

HON. BETH VAN DUYNÉ

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, April 12, 2024

Ms. VAN DUYNÉ. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate a great American success story that has taken place in the 24th Congressional District that I represent in North Texas. As a member of the House Small Business Committee who represents countless job creators with growing businesses, I appreciate the role of our small business owners in creating opportunity and prosperity for North Texans. I rise to recognize one such company, Southland Holdings in Grapevine, Texas, which recently realized the American dream, starting as a family business and recently reaching the milestone of becoming publicly traded on the New York Stock Exchange. Oscar and Rudy Renda, Sr., and their three other brothers, along with their parents, immigrated to the United States from Italy in 1956. Sponsored by their uncle, Ernie Renda, a Pearl Harbor survivor and construction veteran, Ernie tirelessly worked to bring his family to America. The Renda brothers grew up influenced by their Uncle Ernie's strong work ethic and a profound passion for construction. Oscar embarked on his career as a high school coach and history teacher but always harbored a deep passion for construction instilled by Uncle Ernie. In 1974, he realized his dream by founding Oscar Renda Contracting (ORC). A

year later, his brother Rudy joined him, and they began building small-diameter water and wastewater pipelines across the Dallas/Fort Worth metropolis, employing former high school students as their initial crew, many of whom remain with the company today.

Over the next few years, ORC refined its expertise in constructing large-diameter water and wastewater conveyance pipelines and treatment plants. Much of the company's early experience centered around building projects for the City of Dallas. From this local experience, the company gradually expanded its operations with larger and more complex projects across Texas and neighboring states. Through these years, the next generation led by Frank and Rudy Renda gained invaluable experience working alongside skilled crew members from an early age. During their college years at Texas Tech University, Frank and Rudy crossed paths with Tim Winn, which further led to a discovery of shared goals, values, and aspirations that have been the foundation of Southland's success.

Frank, Rudy, and Tim assumed control of the company in 1999, and the following year, entered a joint venture with Southland Contracting, established by Charlie Griffith in 1981. Charlie's unfortunate and premature death led Frank, Tim, Rudy, and Clay, Charlie's son, to assume leadership of the company, and in 2002, Oscar Renda Contracting acquired Southland Contracting. Their shared vision, unwavering commitment, and steadfast principles motivated them to establish Southland Holdings in 2006. Frank Renda assumed the role of CEO, while Rudy Renda and Tim Winn became co COO's. This strategic move laid the groundwork for the company's remarkable growth in the following decade. In the coming years, Southland Holdings welcomed Mole Constructors, Johnson Brothers Corporation, and American Bridge Company into the Southland Holdings family. This family of companies has accomplished remarkable feats in various sectors, including connecting the United States through transportation projects, establishing water pipelines and treatment facilities to transport water across vast regions, tunneling through challenging geological conditions, and contributing to the construction of some of the nation's most iconic structural landmarks.

Once again, Frank, Rudy, and Tim achieved an ambitious goal, with Southland becoming publicly traded on the New York Stock Exchange under the ticker symbol SLND. On March 2, 2023, the three of them had the honor of ringing the bell at the NYSE, just a few miles away from where Frank and Rudy's ancestors immigrated into the country at Ellis Island. Frank remarked, "Amidst the ringing of the bell and the applause, I couldn't help but feel a profound sense of gratitude, not only for myself and my partners, but also for our dedicated employees and our family that paved the way to this momentous occasion."

Today, Southland boasts nearly 3,000 employees across North America and the Bahamas. They have performed work in seven countries and thirty-eight states, generating approximately \$1.2 billion in annual revenue. Frank expressed gratitude for the journey, emphasizing that it was only possible through hard work, dedication, sacrifice, and trust. The Southland family is building a construction legacy, carrying forward the values of the generations that came before them, and that is just the beginning of the Southland story.

HONORING NAM PHAM

HON. ZOE LOFGREN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, April 12, 2024

Ms. LOFGREN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the dedicated work and leadership of Mr. Nam Pham in service of improving the lives of immigrant families in our community in Santa Clara County. Mr. Pham passed away in March 2024.

Mr. Nam Pham was born in 1955 in Saigon, Vietnam. In 1983, he arrived in Malaysia as a political refugee after escaping Vietnam by boat. He eventually arrived in Rhode Island in 1984 and settled in California the following year. He has been a resident of Santa Clara County for four decades.

During his 40 years in our community, Mr. Pham produced hundreds of magazines, documentaries, and audio records to preserve Vietnamese history and culture in the United States in service of future.

Since 2001, Mr. Pham served as Director of the Immigrant Resettlement & Cultural Center, Inc. (IRCC) and had extensive experience in our community of working with the Vietnamese immigrant population. He oversaw IRCC operations, including personnel, finance, as well as funded volunteer programs. IRCC was the very first community-based organization in Santa Clara County offering education and social services to the Vietnamese community.

Since 2015, Mr. Pham helped host the "Thank You, America" annual event where Vietnamese Americans express gratitude and appreciation to the United States for rescuing them at sea and providing them a new home. Through IRCC and Dan Sinh Media, which he created, and which broadcasted programs nationwide through The Overseas Vietnam Radio Network, Mr. Pham worked to develop a health information network to help meet the health needs of Vietnamese Americans in our community.

Mr. Speaker, I commend Mr. Nam Pham's commitment to bettering the lives of immigrants in our diverse, thriving community. His legacy in our community lives on through his projects. We have been lucky to have him, and he will be missed.

HONORING THE CAREER OF CHIEF
ANTHONY "TONY" SACCONÉ

HON. JOE COURTNEY

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, April 12, 2024

Mr. COURTNEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and honor a long time, career first responder from Eastern Connecticut, Chief Anthony "Tony" Saccone. Chief Saccone has diligently served and protected his hometown, Ledyard Connecticut, specifically Ledyard's village of Gales Ferry. On Saturday April 13, 2024, Tony will be honored at a retirement celebration by his family, department colleagues and friends, recognizing his talented, faithful adherence to duty.

Chief Saccone was born and raised in Greenbush N.Y. where he attended and graduated Watervliet High School. He was brought up in a large, loving family by his father who

worked as a lineman, and his mother who stayed home to care for Tony and his six siblings. After graduation he volunteered to serve his country in the U.S. Navy and was assigned to serve on a destroyer based at Norfolk, VA. After an honorable discharge, he pursued further education and acquired an associate degree in Fire Science and Technology. He married his wife, Noreen, in 1987 and moved to Ledyard where they raised four children. His time in the naval service and his training in fire science, led Tony to pursue a career as a firefighter at the Submarine Base fire department. Unsurprisingly, he took to the task, and he continued to work at the Submarine Base as a firefighter for over 20 years. Mr. Speaker, the mission of the subbase department is very specialized, given the highly complex and value of A large fleet of fast attack submarines homeported there. Tony handled that portfolio with highest degree of professionalism and proficiency it required. Not one to settle for just that task, Saccone took it upon himself to take a second job at the Gales Ferry Fire Company, where he also excelled and has since tirelessly served his community up to this day.

Chief Saccone's involvement in both fire departments extended beyond the details of his job description. He rapidly accelerated through the ranks and became the Fire Captain at the U.S. Naval Submarine Base and Chief of the Gales Ferry Fire Company. His leadership skills are exhibited in his character; as Captain and Chief of these departments, he prioritized mutual trust, respect, and communication between him and the crews. He led by example, expecting the same excellence of his team as of himself. His organizational skill proved to be an asset when Chief Saccone managed a \$250,000 budget for Gales Ferry and balanced it each year since beginning his position as Chief in 2008. It is through the leadership of Saccone that Gales Ferry and the Submarine Base Fire crews can provide high quality service to their communities.

As a natural leader, Chief Saccone recognized his potential to extend his service to his community and town from a political position. He was voted to the Ledyard Town Council, where he fearlessly advocated for the community as a whole and the Gales Ferry Fire Department. I had the honor to get to know Chief Saccone when he and I, from 2011 to 2021, worked together to advance the bipartisan Fire Police Fairness Act. Through his tireless advocacy alongside my office, Chief Saccone witnessed the signing of this bill by President Biden on November 18, 2021 at the White House in Washington, DC. From 2017 to 2018, Chief Saccone and I began that legislative journey to extend police officers' death benefits to fire police officers. This legislation will ensure all firefighters' families get federal survivor benefits after serious injury or fatality. His passion and knowledge of the challenges first responders face were essential to secure successful passage of this law—even in the midst of a highly polarized Congress. This was a resounding bipartisan victory that reflected Americans' endless support for first responders.

It was also a pleasure and honor for Chief Saccone to accompany me at President Biden's State of the Union Address in 2022. He is the true example of a selfless leader, someone who expects nothing more of others than the best, while expecting even more from

himself. He raises others, is a team player, and an individual of incalculable quality. Chief Saccone's involvement in his community and country reflects his commitment to American democratic values For the sake of America, I hope that citizens see Chief Saccone's story and continue his legacy as unswaying champions of American democracy. Chief Saccone's newly found free-time will undoubtedly be dedicated towards his wife Noreen; four children, Anthony Jr., Julia, Lucas, and Emilie; and his children's respective families. I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing Chief Saccone's career.

HONORING THE CASS CITY JUNIOR CITIZEN OF THE YEAR

HON. LISA C. McCLAIN

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, April 12, 2024

Mrs. McCLAIN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Trysten Gruber, Jr., the Junior Cass City Citizen of the Year, whose exceptional academic record, dedication to community service, and outstanding leadership in athletics are complemented by his remarkable character and commitment to personal development.

Trysten's academic journey is marked by a consistent record of high honors, demonstrating his commitment to excellence. His engagement in community initiatives, such as organizing blood drives and participating in environmental cleanups, showcases his strong sense of civic responsibility and desire to contribute positively to our community.

In athletics, Trysten has proven himself as a natural leader, serving as the football team captain and earning accolades including the Golden Helmet Award and First Team All-State honors. His achievements in wrestling and track further underscore his athletic ability and dedication.

Beyond the realm of sports, Trysten's involvement with the Boy Scouts of America, peer mentoring, and the National Honor Society highlight his well-rounded talents and his unwavering commitment to personal growth and community service. His attainment of the Eagle Scout rank and active participation in the National Honor Society are a testament to his exemplary character and leadership skills.

Today, we celebrate not just Trysten Gruber, Jr.'s past accomplishments but also the potential he embodies for future success and positive impact. His journey serves as a powerful reminder of the values that strengthen and enrich our community and nation, and I am proud that he was selected as the Cass City Junior Citizen of the Year.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. EARL L. "BUDDY" CARTER

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, April 12, 2024

Mr. CARTER of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I was unavoidably detained. Had I been present, I would have voted YEA on Roll Call No. 105, and YEA on Roll Call No. 106.

HONORING SANDY SEARS

HON. FEDERICA S. WILSON

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, April 12, 2024

Ms. WILSON of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Sandra "Sandy" Sears, an outstanding leader in the Greater Miami community.

Ms. Sears received a master's degree in management in 1975 from Northwestern University, Magna Cum Laude. In 2007, she attended the Wharton School CEO Program for Health Care Leadership.

Ms. Sears is a retired senior executive in the Jackson Health System. She served for 39 years in senior level leadership, retiring as the Senior Vice President and Chief Administrative Officer of Jackson North Medical Center. Ms. Sears developed the affiliation agreement between Jackson North and the FIU Herbert Wertheim College of Medicine, which distinguishes Jackson North as an academic community hospital. Ms. Sears is now continuing her commitment to public service in the capacity of Special Advisor, U.S. Congressional House of Representatives.

Ms. Sears serves with various organizations, including the Miami Alumnae chapter of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Incorporated, and she serves as a member in the Miami-Biscayne Bay chapter of the Links Incorporated. She is also a member of the executive committee of the Vice Provost's Council at Florida International University which is a community relations board on the Biscayne Bay Campus.

Ms. Sears is the recipient of numerous awards, including the Black Heritage Planning Pillars Award for her contributions to the upward mobility of the African-American community throughout the years. She has been named one of the "Outstanding Black Leaders in Dade County," recognized for outstanding community services and leadership by a number of agencies such as Dade County Black Affairs, King of Clubs Greater Miami, Miami-Dade County Health Department, recognized as Outstanding Woman of Distinction and Caring, recognized as One of South Florida's Most Accomplished in Health Care, recognized as an Outstanding Pioneer in Health Care, and in 2013, she was named one of South Florida's Top 50 Most Powerful Business Leaders by Legacy Magazine.

Mr. Speaker, please join me in honoring Ms. Sears for all she has achieved. She exemplifies the high quality of volunteerism and civic leadership that we aspire to instill across the country.

HONORING J. McCAULEY BROWN

HON. ANDY BARR

OF KENTUCKY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, April 12, 2024

Mr. BARR. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a special Kentuckian, J. McCauley (Mac) Brown. Mac lives in Louisville, Kentucky.

Mr. Brown earned a bachelor's degree from Georgetown University and a Master of Business Administration from George Washington University. While he was in college, he worked