

Administration and obtained his Juris Doctor from the University of Texas in 1970. Since then, Peter has continuously engaged in civil trial law and maintains several office locations across Grayson County. He is also board certified in Family Law and licensed to practice before the US Supreme Court. In 1984, former Governor Mark White appointed Peter to serve as a life member of the Uniform Law Commission to help clarify state statutory law.

Throughout his extensive legal career, Peter has continued to be actively involved in numerous charitable organizations to benefit students and individuals in need. He is a current Trustee for the Austin College Board and was the former Director of the Denison and Sherman Chambers of Commerce. Moreover, he previously served in leadership roles for Grayson United Way, Grayson Salvation Army, and Boy Scouts of America. A devoted man of faith, Peter attends the St. Patrick's Catholic Church in Denison with his wife, Kathleen, I am proud to recognize Peter today for his lifelong commitment to uphold the rule of law and fight for justice.

It is an honor to bestow Peter with the Patriot Award for his exceptional service to the people of North Texas.

RECOGNIZING ANTHONY ABURTO

HON. BRITTANY PETTERSEN

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 30, 2024

Ms. PETTERSEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Anthony Aburto for earning the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth Award.

Anthony has overcome many challenges along his journey to success, demonstrating perseverance at every step. Students who strive to make the most of their education, like Anthony, develop crucial skills and a work ethic that will guide them for the rest of their lives. This award is a testament to Anthony's hard work, determination, and perseverance at Jefferson Jr./Sr. High School and is clearly just the beginning of a bright and promising future.

It is my honor to congratulate Anthony Aburto on achieving the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth Award.

RECOGNIZING NEIR'S TAVERN

HON. NYDIA M. VELÁZQUEZ

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 30, 2024

Ms. VELÁZQUEZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and celebrate Neir's Tavern, a beloved establishment located in the heart of Woodhaven, Queens. From its inception in 1829, Neir's Tavern has contributed to New York City's rich cultural history. Today, I am marking the momentous occasion of Neir's Tavern receiving the Queensmark Historical Designation award from the Queens Historical Society of New York.

This designation is not only meaningful for the Woodhaven, Queens community, it also highlights the significant contributions of Loycent Gordon, the current owner of Neir's

Tavern. A public servant who dedicated more than two decades as a New York City firefighter and was one of the first African American Lieutenant's in the FDNY Hazmat Division.

In 2009, he courageously stepped up and purchased the establishment when it was set to shutter its doors. Loycent is the embodiment of the American dream, immigrating at the age of 10 from the island of Jamaica to Jamaica, Queens. His business acumen and sense of community has contributed greatly to the social, cultural, and economic fabric of Woodhaven.

As we commemorate this milestone in the history of Neir's Tavern, let us reaffirm our commitment to preserving and celebrating the cultural landmarks that make our communities unique as well as the small businesses that are the backbone of our economy.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to join me in congratulating Neir's Tavern on its well-deserved Queensmark historical designation and in wishing Loycent Gordon many more years of success.

RECOGNIZING RANDAL MESSER

HON. MATT GAETZ

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 30, 2024

Mr. GAETZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize Mr. Randal Messer as the 2023–2024 Walton County Educational Support Professional of the Year. For the past thirty-three years, Mr. Messer has served the Walton County School District with exceptional passion and an unwavering commitment to serving others.

In Northwest Florida, we are fortunate to have some of the best educational support professionals in the Nation. It is recognized that the position of Paraprofessional can be taxing but can also be so rewarding. Mr. Messer performs his many duties without question or hesitation and does so with enthusiasm and a commitment to cultivate a safe and healthy school environment.

Mr. Messer is revered by his Principal and colleagues for his positive attitude and willingness to go above and beyond the scope of his job duties. He is often asked for input to adjust or problem solve at his school. He selflessly considers the needs of both students and staff because of the immense pride he has for his school.

Mr. Messer's support and outreach extend far beyond the walls of the school. He is always willing to help wherever assistance is needed. Mr. Messer has displayed dedicated teamwork by providing staff and students with technology support and is always willing to lend a helping hand. I commend him for his steadfast willingness to serve as an example for those that matter most, the students and youth of our Nation.

For all his admirable contributions, I am truly proud to have Mr. Randal Messer as a constituent in Florida's First Congressional District.

Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the United States Congress, I am privileged to recognize Mr. Randal Messer for his accomplishments and his commitment to excellence, professionalism, innovation, and collaboration in the Walton County School District. I thank him for

his service and wish him all the best for continued success.

RECOGNIZING KRISTIE SEARS

HON. GUS M. BILIRAKIS

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 30, 2024

Mr. BILIRAKIS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and honor the unique contributions of one of my constituents, Kristie Sears of Bomhoff Law Firm, who is an outstanding volunteer with the Boys & Girls Club of Hernando County. Kristie's dedication, passion, and unwavering commitment to the Club and its mission has left a lasting imprint on the lives of those she works with. Her tireless efforts have positively impacted the organization and community, serving as an inspiration for others to follow her lead.

Part of what makes our country so great is the willingness of ordinary Americans to go above and beyond to selflessly give back to others. Volunteerism is one of the cornerstones of our society and part of the fabric that unites us.

It is clear that Ms. Sears has made a profoundly positive impact on our community, and I am grateful for her service.

CONGRESSIONAL PATRIOT AWARD FOR LARRY PHILLIPS

HON. PAT FALLON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 30, 2024

Mr. FALLON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Judge Lawrence "Larry" Phillips of Sherman, Texas, and present him with the Congressional Patriot Award. Judge Phillips currently serves the 59th District Court in Grayson County, and he has dedicated himself to serving and uplifting our community.

A graduate of Baylor University, Judge Phillips attended law school at the University of Houston. In 2003, he was elected to serve in the Texas House of Representatives for the 62nd District, a position he held for over fifteen years. While in the legislature, Judge Phillips chaired numerous committees and served in leadership positions for the Southern Legislative Conference, the Council of State Governments, and the Red River Boundary Commission.

In 2019, Judge Phillips won a special election to serve on the 59th District Court after being appointed by Governor Greg Abbott to fill a vacancy in the previous year. He presides over felony criminal, civil, family, and juvenile matters, including the STAR Recovery Court program. Additionally, Judge Phillips conducts judicial oversight through his positions as Administrative Judge and Chair of the Bail Bond Board. He is the current President of the Texas Association of Specialty Courts and the former President of the Federal Eastern District of Texas Bar Association. Judge Phillips is a devoted man of faith, and he attends the Post Oak Fellowship Church in Sherman with his wonderful wife Robin. He enjoys serving in their children's church ministry, traveling, gardening, and spending time

with his grandchildren. I commend Judge Phillips for his commitment to upholding the rule of law and improving the world around us.

It is an honor to bestow Judge Phillips with the Patriot Award for his exceptional service to the people of North Texas.

RECOGNIZING CHETAN SHEELY

HON. BRITTANY PETERSEN

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 30, 2024

Ms. PETERSEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Chetan Sheely for earning the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth Award.

Chetan has overcome many challenges along his journey to success, demonstrating perseverance at every step. Students who strive to make the most of their education, like Chetan, develop crucial skills and a work ethic that will guide them for the rest of their lives. This award is a testament to Chetan's hard work, determination, and perseverance at Drake Middle School and is clearly just the beginning of a bright and promising future.

It is my honor to congratulate Chetan Sheely on achieving the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth Award.

HONORING SAMMY MCDOWELL

HON. ILHAN OMAR

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 30, 2024

Ms. OMAR. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life of Sammy McDowell, who was a community leader, restaurateur, and friend to all.

Sammy grew up in Minneapolis and was a fixture in the community throughout his life. He worked in food service for many years before starting his own catering service and restaurant. His flagship restaurant, Sammy's Avenue Eatery opened in 2012 on West Broadway Avenue in North Minneapolis. Not only has Sammy's served delicious food for over a decade, it has also become an important gathering place for the community. He had recently expanded and began operating a Sammy's Avenue Eatery pop-up in Saint Paul, in a space which features Black-owned businesses. Even as a business owner, Sammy never compromised his generosity towards others and always went the extra mile to check on the wellbeing of his friends, as well as his customers. Sammy's passion for his community was contagious, and I know that the spaces he created will continue to be sources of friendship, inspiration, and comfort.

Sammy was also a well known devoted member of Shiloh Temple and sang in the choir there for many years. He was worshiping among loved ones at Shiloh just before his death. He had a hand in many things throughout the community, and was always a familiar face at events around the city. This past week, a balloon release was held in several U.S. cities to celebrate Sammy's life. These nationwide celebrations are a testament to Sammy's admirable ability to make an impression on those around him. His company will be dearly

missed by those who had the privilege to know him.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in celebrating the incredibly full life of Sammy McDowell and recognizing his accomplishments in entrepreneurship and community-building, and his immeasurable impact on the people and city of Minneapolis.

RECOGNIZING RYDER GASTON

HON. GUS M. BILIRAKIS

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 30, 2024

Mr. BILIRAKIS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and honor the unique contributions made to our community by one of my constituents, Mr. Ryder Gaston. Mr. Gaston has spent his life serving our country and his community. He opened a non-profit, Cryoeze22, in New Port Richey, which serves military, veterans, law enforcement, first responders, and their families. Cryoeze22 utilizes holistic, scientific-based therapies. He and his family also work closely with each client to connect them with needed services in the community. He is committed to being part of the solution to help reduce suicide, depression, PTSD and an array of other health issues that often negatively impact our nation's heroes.

Part of what makes our country so great is the willingness of ordinary Americans to go above and beyond to selflessly give back to others. Volunteerism is one of the cornerstones of our society and part of the fabric that unites us.

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

CONGRESSIONAL PATRIOT AWARD
FOR MARK RUSSELL

HON. PAT FALLON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 30, 2024

Mr. FALLON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Mr. Mark Russell of Sherman, Texas, and present him with the Congressional Patriot Award. Mark has dedicated himself to serving and uplifting our community.

Mark is a graduate of the Hobe Sound Bible College in Florida, where he received a bachelor's degree in educational administration in 1970. He began working at the Wright-Patterson AFB Medical Center's Radiation Oncology facility that same year while completing post-graduate studies. Mark later received his Master of Science in Radiological Physics from Ohio State University and a Master of Health Administration from Washington University. Throughout his extensive career, he has published numerous studies on the topic of oncology and worked diligently to bring us one step closer to defeating cancer. From 2007 to 2012, Mark served as the Director for Physics and Technology Services at the Moffitt Cancer Center in Florida.

When he retired in 2013, Mark continued to make an impact on our community in many different ways. He actively volunteers for the Grayson County Republican Party and is a

member of the Conservative Men's Club of Texoma. Additionally, Mark works closely with the Southwest Conference of the Bible Methodist Church and devotes himself to strengthening his faith, family, and love of country. In his free time, he enjoys reading, learning history, woodworking, and flying. In fact, Mark is a licensed commercial pilot and a former certified flight instructor. I am proud of the work he has accomplished for our community, and I am sure he will continue to make a positive impact on the world around us.

It is an honor to bestow Mark with the Patriot Award for his exceptional service to our Nation and the people of North Texas.

RECOGNIZING MIGUEL AGUAYO

HON. BRITTANY PETERSEN

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 30, 2024

Ms. PETERSEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Miguel Aguayo for earning the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth Award.

Miguel has overcome many challenges along his journey to success, demonstrating perseverance at every step. Students who strive to make the most of their education, like Miguel, develop crucial skills and a work ethic that will guide them for the rest of their lives. This award is a testament to Miguel's hard work, determination, and perseverance at Jefferson Jr./Sr. High School and is clearly just the beginning of a bright and promising future.

It is my honor to congratulate Miguel Aguayo on achieving the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth Award.

HONORING AND COMMENDING WILLIAM SAMUEL ON HIS RETIREMENT

HON. DONALD NORCROSS

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 30, 2024

Mr. NORCROSS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today along with my colleagues, Representatives MARK POCAN, STEVEN HORSFORD and DEBBIE DINGELL, to honor and commend William Samuel on his retirement.

On April 30, 2024, William Samuel retired as the Director of Government Affairs at the American Federation of Labor and Congress of Industrial Organizations (AFL-CIO), and from his position as Chair of the AFL-CIO's Legislative Committee.

Mr. Samuel has dedicated his life to fighting for America's workers. He started his career as a legislative representative for the National Treasury Employees Union and the American Federation of Government Employees. Later, Mr. Samuel worked as the chief lobbyist at the United Mine Workers of America for 11 years, where he led the successful campaign to win passage of federal legislation guaranteeing lifetime health benefits to more than two hundred thousand retired miners and their dependents.

Mr. Samuel continued his career fighting to improve the lives of America's working class in the Clinton Administration, serving as Associate Deputy Secretary of Labor, then as a