

Guard Sector San Juan. The change-of-command ceremony is a military tradition representing a formal transfer of authority and responsibility from one commanding officer to another. The assumption of command is one of the most significant appointments in the career of a commissioned officer, as it demonstrates their great responsibility to lead and serve.

Captain Rodríguez is a native of Ponce, Puerto Rico. He enlisted in the Coast Guard in 1994 and graduated from Officer Candidate School in 1998. Captain Rodríguez holds a bachelor's degree in criminal Justice from the Interamerican University of Puerto Rico, a master's degree in international public policy from Johns Hopkins University, and a master of science degree in hemispheric defense and security from the Inter-American Defense College. Captain Rodríguez is also an Auxiliary Colonel in the Puerto Rico Police Department.

Prior to assuming command of Sector San Juan, Captain Rodríguez served as Deputy Director of International Affairs and Foreign Policy Advisor to the Commandant of the Coast Guard. Previously he worked as Deputy Commander at Sector Key West, where he oversaw all Coast Guard missions in the Florida Keys. He was also appointed Deputy Chief of Enforcement at the Seventh Coast Guard District, as well as Operational Plans, Policy, and International Engagement Section Chief, and Sector Miami Command Center Chief, among other important leadership roles. He also served onboard CGC COURAGEOUS and CGC VIGILANT.

Captain Rodríguez's work has been crucial to accomplish the U.S. Coast Guard's missions in Latin America, the Caribbean, Mexico, Florida and Puerto Rico. He is married to Mrs. Glory Ann Acevedo, and together are the proud parents of Jesús Javier Rodríguez.

Mr. Speaker, Captain Rodríguez's military career is outstanding, and I am confident that the U.S. Coast Guard Sector San Juan will continue to excel under his able leadership. I ask my colleagues to join me in commending Captain Luis J. Rodríguez for his dedicated career of service and wishing Sector San Juan many years of success.

HONORING ARMANDO "CURTIS" HIERRO AS A DISTINGUISHED LEADER IN CENTRAL FLORIDA FOR CARIBBEAN HERITAGE MONTH

HON. DARREN SOTO

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 18, 2024

Mr. SOTO. Mr. Speaker, Armando "Curtis" Hierro is a 36-year-old Cuban-American. He is the national field director for the Communications Workers of America with years of experience organizing for workers and human rights in Florida.

Curtis has a Bachelor of Arts in History from the University of Central Florida and a certificate in leadership, organizing, and action from the Harvard Kennedy School.

Organizing is a deeply held passion for Curtis. Curtis was born in Miami, Florida, into a

single-mother household where his family faced immense economic challenges, poverty, and homelessness. Through a strong work ethic, a belief in the power of community, and a commitment to education passed on by his mother and grandmother, he was able to be the first person in his family to attend and graduate college. While at the University of Central Florida, Curtis organized students to stand up for campus custodial staff in contract fights and support immigrant workers from the Coalition of Immokalee Workers.

From 2012 to 2016, Curtis was a founding member and the first field director for the organization Dream Defenders—a community organization in Florida led by young people of color building power and organizing local and statewide campaigns to address issues of poverty, for-profit prisons, and accountable policing. Moving on to the Central Florida AFL-CIO as organizing director, Curtis led the AFL-CIO's efforts to directly support the contract fight for fair wages by Disney workers represented by Unite Here and helped organize workers forming their union for the first time with the Communications Workers of America. Additionally, Curtis co-led the fight to make Orlando the first city in the southeast United States to adopt a Trust Act to safeguard immigrant communities in 2018.

Curtis now focuses his efforts on supporting CWA members in Florida and across the country in developing their leadership and taking action to build worker power.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. PRAMILA JAYAPAL

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 18, 2024

Ms. JAYAPAL. Mr. Speaker, I missed Roll Call votes 261, 262, 263, 264, 265, 266, 267, 268, 269, 270, 271, 272, 273, 274, and 275 on June 13, 2024, due to illness. Had I been present, my votes would have been:

Nay on Roll Call No. 261; Nay on Roll Call No. 262; Nay on Roll Call No. 263; Yea on Roll Call No. 264; Nay on Roll Call No. 265; Nay on Roll Call No. 266; Nay on Roll Call No. 267; Nay on Roll Call No. 268; Nay on Roll Call No. 269; Nay on Roll Call No. 270; Nay on Roll Call No. 271; Nay on Roll Call No. 272; Nay on Roll Call No. 273; Nay on Roll Call No. 274; and Nay on Roll Call No. 275.

HONORING MARIA ANTONIA "TOÑITA" CAY

HON. NYDIA M. VELÁZQUEZ

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 18, 2024

Ms. VELÁZQUEZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor and celebrate Maria Antonia "Toñita" Cay and the 50th year anniversary of the Caribbean Social Club, which stands as the oldest Puerto Rican-owned Latino social club in Williamsburg, Brooklyn. She has been featured in numerous media outlets, publications, and a

documentary. In the past years, notable artists, filmmakers, and musicians have visited Toñita's Caribbean Social Club to experience the unique essence of the rich Latino heritage it now represents.

Toñita, as she is affectionately known, was born on May 10, 1940, in Junco, Puerto Rico. She is the second oldest of nine siblings. In 1956, during the significant migration of Puerto Ricans to New York City, her family settled in the Lower East Side when she was fifteen years old. Several years later, she moved to Williamsburg, where there was an established and growing Puerto Rican community and employment opportunities in the needlework factories that were part of New York's bustling garment industry. In addition to working as factory seamstress, Toñita began designing, sewing, and selling dresses from her home. This home-based business showcased her skills and helped support her and fulfill her dream of owning the building she lived in as a tenant. This established a foothold in her community and laid the foundation for the incorporation of her Caribbean baseball team and club in 1973 at 244 Grand Street in Brooklyn. Her courage and perseverance defied the societal norms of the time.

Today, Toñita is one of Los Sures Williamsburg's Puerto Rican 'Pioneras' and the last women-owned social club. At a time when Puerto Ricans and Latinos were politically invisible in Williamsburg, Toñita helped elevate our presence and cultural identity by establishing the Caribbean Baseball teams, which gathered hundreds of players and their families weekly. Players and their families were proud of Roberto Clemente and wanted to emanate his game. Toñita's grit contributed to more Latino, and women owned social clubs and baseball leagues. During the 1970's and 1980's, the Southside of Williamsburg was flushed with gathering social clubs for baseball and dominoes. In the 1990's, the rising cost of rent and excessive demand on licensing by the city imposed significant hardship for many social clubs including Toñita's. However, she demonstrated remarkable resilience. Her determination was particularly evident when she took on City Hall and won, securing the club's place in the community even as Mayor Rudy Giuliani's administration cracked down on various venues.

Toñita's victory was an achievement. Today, her continued legacy of community support remains steadfast. During the COVID-19 pandemic, she utilized the Caribbean Social Club to provide no cost essential assistance and home cooked meals to her neighbors and all who visited. The Caribbean Social Club is not only home to Puerto Ricans, but also welcoming place for a melting pot of different backgrounds, cultures and professions, reflecting Toñita's inclusive and welcoming spirit. Maria Antonia Cay and the Caribbean Social Club is the embodiment of the American dream. Her business acumen and sense of community has contributed greatly to the social and cultural fabric of the Los Sures community in Williamsburg.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to join me in congratulating Maria Antonia Cay and the Caribbean Social Club on this special 50th Year Anniversary.

HONORING CHERYL REID-PAYNE
AS A DISTINGUISHED LEADER IN
CENTRAL FLORIDA FOR CARIB-
BEAN HERITAGE MONTH

HON. DARREN SOTO

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 18, 2024

Mr. SOTO. Mr. Speaker, Cheryl Reid-Payne was born on the beautiful island of Barbados, immigrated to London, England, and eventually moved to New York. There, she pursued a career in the medical field and obtained her certification as a nursing assistant.

After over 20 years of living in New York, she moved to Central Florida in 2002 and continued her passion for helping people by working at several nursing facilities. Cheryl, a champion of serving the community, also sought opportunities to do so by becoming a member of the CFAFCC, NAFCC, NAACP, and the Caribbean and Floridian Association, known as CAFA. She has been an active member of CAFA for the past 23 years serving in many capacities, such as chaplain, corresponding secretary, and co-chair of the Service Activities/Education Committee, for which she is currently the sole chairperson. In this capacity, Cheryl enjoys planning, shopping, and delivering Christmas giveaways to residents at Central Florida nursing facilities. During Thanksgiving, she also hands out turkeys at several locations in Kissimmee to families in need. At CAFA's biggest annual community event, Caribbean Fusion, held in Kissimmee, you can find her by the medical tent taking blood pressure as she is also on CAFA's Medical Committee as a nursing assistant.

Additionally, Cheryl and her team fundraise for and provide college scholarships at CAFA's yearly scholarship awards ceremony to Osceola County high school students with impeccable GPA scores. Students also receive special gift bags, which Cheryl shops for and donates to the students with great pleasure.

Keeping in line with her passion and love for children, Cheryl officially opened Cheryl's Daycare, which was opened in the Poinciana area for 18 years. Beyond Cheryl's social and professional endeavors, she finds comfort in serving as an usher at her local church in Poinciana.

It has been and remains her honor to serve the community and she looks forward to continuing to do so with passion and care, with a goal of becoming a member of the Chamber of Commerce. Currently, she is happy being a wife and mother of four children and five grandchildren.

HONORING THE SERVICE OF ERIC
VOLTA

HON. MARK DeSAULNIER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 18, 2024

Mr. DESAULNIER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Eric Volta as he retires from his role as Superintendent of the Liberty Union High School District.

Eric grew up in the Santa Clara Valley and graduated from Santa Clara High School. He

went on to attend Stanford University, playing on Stanford's football team all four years of university and graduating with his BA in history. Throughout his career, Eric has worked tirelessly to support students and expand educational opportunities throughout the Bay Area. He worked in the Santa Clara Unified School District (SCUSD) teaching 9th through 12th graders and went on to serve as Vice Principal of Santa Clara High School.

Eric and his family moved to Brentwood, California in 2000 and Eric joined the Liberty Union High School District (LUHSD). During his time with LUHSD, Eric served as assistant principal, high school principal, and Assistant Superintendent of Human Resources. He was promoted to Superintendent in 2011 where he has worked to support students and families. Eric has received a number of accolades for his work as an educator, receiving the ACSA's Superintendent of the Year for Region VI Award, the California Interscholastic Federation Distinguished Services Award, and the California Department of Education's Principal Award. Additionally, he served on the California School Boards Association Superintendents Advisory Council and is a current board member of the California High School Coalition.

Eric is retiring from his position as superintendent after 13 years of dedicated service. Please join me in thanking Eric for his many contributions to the Liberty Union High School District and wishing him well as he begins his new role as superintendent of the Mountain View Los Altos Union High School District.

HONORING ISMAEL RIVERA AS A
DISTINGUISHED LEADER IN CEN-
TRAL FLORIDA FOR CARIBBEAN
HERITAGE MONTH

HON. DARREN SOTO

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 18, 2024

Mr. SOTO. Mr. Speaker, Ismael Rivera is a senior organizer for the International Amalgamated Transit Union. He assists transit workers in learning the importance of joining a union among all the great benefits the union brings. He organizes the unorganized workers throughout Central Florida who are looking for a voice. Ismael served as vice president of ATU Local 1596 in Orlando and then was later voted in to become the first Latino president of the local. In 2013, Ismael established the ATU Latino Caucus, where he organized Latino workers in the workplace to be a voice for the Latino community at large as well as in the workplace. Ismael served as the southeast representative for the ATU International Latino Caucus from 2013 to 2016 and then became the ATU International Latino Caucus president from 2016 to 2024.

Ismael was a bus operator for 27 years from 1997 to 2004. He started his career in transit as a bus operator in New York City. Ismael then moved to Central Florida in January 2004 and continued his career as a bus operator with the Central Florida Regional Transit Authority for the past 20 years.

In 2017, after Hurricane Maria hit the Island of Puerto Rico, Ismael shipped a 53-foot container filled with food, water, and necessities for the people on the southern part of the is-

land—a small town in the mountains called Tibes. This was made possible with the assistance of ATU International who paid for the shipping of the container.

Ismael served on the Central Labor Council in Central Florida from 2013 to 2024. Ismael represents ATU on the national board for the Labor Council for Latin American Advancement. On this board, he engages with members dealing with immigration issues in the workplace and abroad. Ismael and his wife, Maira, have been married for 36 years and have three children, Jose, Christina, and Daniel, as well as 12 precious grandchildren.

RECOGNIZING MR. JIM WALLACE

HON. SANFORD D. BISHOP, JR.

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 18, 2024

Mr. BISHOP of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, it is my honor and pleasure to extend my personal congratulations and best wishes to an exceptional community leader and outstanding citizen, Mr. Jim Wallace, on his retirement as a distinguished news anchor at WALB News 10 in Albany, Georgia. Jim's final day on-air will be June 26, 2024, and a party honoring his retirement and career will be held on June 18, 2024, in Albany, Georgia.

Born and raised in North Georgia, Jim Wallace attended Towers High School in Decatur, Georgia, and graduated from the University of Georgia in 1976 with a degree in Broadcast Journalism.

For over four decades, Jim has been a dependable and well-respected leader in Southwest Georgia. He has built quite an impressive career, which began in November 1976 when he joined WALB News 10, serving in both news and sports. He has served as a weekend Sports Anchor and Reporter, then as Sports Director. In September 2001, he began anchoring the evening newscasts, and in December 2016, Jim's hard work and talent landed him the Lead Anchor role in the evenings.

Throughout his career, Jim has accumulated numerous accolades. He has won the prestigious Georgia AP Sportscenter of the Year and Georgia AP Sports Reporter of the Year award on two separate occasions. Jim is also a Georgia AP Sports Photographer of Year award winner and holds numerous United Press International Sportscentering Awards. Along with his professional achievements, Jim also dutifully volunteers as a Sunday School teacher and youth volunteer at First United Methodist Church.

Jim has accomplished much throughout his life, but none of it would have been possible without the Grace of God and the love and support of his wife, Tracy, and their two children, Jake and Shelly.

Sir Winston Churchill often said "You make your living by what you get, you make your life by what you give." Southwest Georgia is a better place because Jim Wallace gave his time and talents to keep our communities informed about the world around them. Jim's passion and dedication to the news, as well as his broadcasting expertise, are unparalleled, but his heart for helping others is what has made his life's work truly special.

On a personal note, it has been a pleasure working with Jim during my time in public office. Over the years, Jim and I have sat down