

2003 to 2007 and served as a member of its environmental task force, promoting energy efficiency across all County departments. A naturally helpful and supportive person, Gloria first started working with the Westside Housing Organization in 2011 at the request of a friend in need, as there was a vacancy on the board. The rest is history.

Gloria's passion for community service and volunteerism eventually earned her the title of Executive Director of the Westside Housing Organization, which was founded on these very principles in 1973. The group began as Kansas City neighbors joined forces to save their communities from degradation and destruction, forming a local non-profit development group now known as the Westside Housing Organization. With over four decades of experience, growth, and appreciation, the Westside Housing Organization prides itself on working, "at the intersection of home, health, energy, and equity." It not only builds new housing in Kansas City, but also provides essential repair and restoration efforts to citizens who are unable to afford these costs.

Though it has expanded far beyond a small group of neighbors repairing homes, the Westside Housing Organization has maintained the neighborly sentiment that founded the organization so long ago thanks to Gloria's diligent leadership. Gloria has brought far more than remodeled roofs, pristine paint, or functioning furnaces to disadvantaged neighborhoods—she also brings care and dignity to the people she serves. It is through Gloria that the houses and residences the Westside Housing Organization works on become homes and communities.

Gloria's impact on communities is as wide-reaching as it is essential. Beginning with her work for Jackson County, Gloria has worked tirelessly to address ongoing climate concerns and their harsh impact on housing for underprivileged populations. She constantly advocates for sustainability and environmentally friendly housing initiatives, saving lower-income households major costs. Her push for climate sustainability extends beyond her job requirements. Only a year into her role as Executive Director, the Westside Housing Organization was granted with a "Green Designation" from NeighborWorks America for being committed to sustainability. Gloria also serves as Commissioner of the Mayor's Energy Task Force, promoting environmental consciousness throughout the city.

Gloria pours her heart and soul into bettering the lives of Kansas Citians—whether that be in or out of the professional sphere. In her free time, she serves as a mentor for young Latino students in the University of Missouri-Kansas City's Avanzado program and is an active member and Community Leader of the Christ Community Church. Her record of relentless service reminds me of Hebrews 13:16—"And do not forget to do good and to share with others, for with such sacrifices God is pleased." Gloria continues to serve as a shining example of helping others in need, and I am filled with pride at her commitment to service.

With Gloria's devotion to the people of Kansas City, I cannot think of a more deserving recipient of the 2024 MARC Regional Leadership Award. Recipients of this award have embodied excellence and made meaningful contributions to the Greater Kansas City region. As a former recipient of this award, I am in-

credibly pleased to have Ms. Ortiz-Fisher join the cohort of those who have been granted this honor for their leadership and service, and I am honored to share this award with her. May this achievement express the profound appreciation the people of Kansas City, including myself, have for her. Gloria is truly a neighbor for all Kansas Citians and will continue to have a remarkable living legacy in this city—one that will be felt for generations.

RECOGNIZING DONNA M. CHIERA

HON. FRANK PALLONE, JR.

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 25, 2024

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, I use today to congratulate Donna M. Chiera on her retirement as President of the American Federation of Teachers New Jersey (AFTNJ). Ms. Chiera has dedicated over 40 years of service to the education field and her contributions and accomplishments are truly deserving of this body's recognition.

As President of AFTNJ, Donna Chiera brought a wealth of knowledge and experience to the position. She worked as a special education teacher and resource room teacher for the Perth Amboy Public School District for more than 30 years until her retirement from teaching in 2011. Furthermore, Ms. Chiera also served as president of the local union, Perth Amboy Federation of Teachers, from 1991 until 2013, as well as AFTNJ executive vice president for grades pre-K through 12. Her long-standing involvement with AFT and her tenure as an educator exemplify Ms. Chiera's commitment to serve and advance New Jersey's teachers and students.

Representing the interests of 30,000 members of AFTNJ, Ms. Chiera has been an active member of AFT national, chairing the Teachers program and policy council, serving on subcommittees, and participating in both the National and New Jersey Teacher of the Year selection.

In addition to her leadership of AFTNJ, Ms. Chiera is Vice President of the New Jersey State AFL-CIO Executive Board and previously served as Vice President of the Middlesex-Somerset County Central Labor Council, Education Chair of Perth Amboy's Strategic Planning Task Force, and Education Co-Chair for New Jersey Governor Phil Murphy's transition committee.

Mr. Speaker, please Join me in leading this body in acknowledgement of the contributions of Donna Chiera. She has tirelessly devoted her time to New Jersey's education and labor communities, and I am honored to recognize her today.

CELEBRATING THE 10TH ANNIVERSARY OF OPEN BUFFALO

HON. TIMOTHY M. KENNEDY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 25, 2024

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate the 10th Anniversary of Open Buffalo and the remarkable work they do to make our community a more just, equitable place for all.

Founded in 2014, Open Buffalo is a non-profit organization dedicated to advancing racial, economic, and ecological justice. Open Buffalo works to make Western New York a community free from discrimination and poverty by prioritizing long-term solutions to address systemic inequities. Through all of its actions, Open Buffalo leads with the values of empathy, accountability, collaboration, and restorative justice.

Open Buffalo's work takes place through two main avenues—leadership development and advocacy. They help to create Buffalo's next generation of skilled changemakers, hosting leadership trainings to empower our youth to make a positive difference in our community. Further, Open Buffalo has increased civic engagement in our community by giving individuals the platform to voice their own opinions and ideas.

Since Open Buffalo's founding, they have been a key advocate in social justice-based change, making a tangible impact on the lives of Western New Yorkers. Today, I wish to highlight their newest project, the Open Buffalo Ecology Center. The creation of the "Eco Center" will provide 10 acres of community green space on the East Side of Buffalo. Open Buffalo will host recreational activities and educational events for all in the community to participate in.

For 10 years, Open Buffalo has conducted the grassroots work to make our community a more equitable place for everyone. Please join me in congratulating Open Buffalo on their 10th Anniversary and thanking them for their remarkable service.

RECOGNIZING MAJOR RUSSELL BARTHOLOW FOR 17 YEARS OF DEDICATED SERVICE TO OUR COUNTRY

HON. MIKE FLOOD

OF NEBRASKA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 25, 2024

Mr. FLOOD. Mr. Speaker, today, I want to recognize Major Russell Bartholow for his 17 years of service with the Nebraska Army National Guard.

Russell Bartholow joined the Nebraska Army National Guard in 2007, motivated to do something for our country and for this world.

In 2008, he was sent to Afghanistan, where he spent 22 months serving as the head of a five-person "Effects Cell." He was responsible for developing and conducting civil-military projects in the nine northern Afghanistan provinces. His team completed 31 projects, including providing innocent children with clothes, food and toys.

Major Bartholow always went above and beyond what was asked of him. When he saw the innocent children, he worked hard to find them a safe place to play. He was able to negotiate with Afghan businessmen and elders to raise over \$200,000 in funding for a park. This park included a soccer field, basketball court and merry-go-rounds and provided an oasis of hope and safety for the kids affected by war.

His heart for service and dedication to the children and civilians are further seen in his being awarded the Bronze Star Medal for his coordination of \$12 million in funding for roads, schools and clinics.

After his time in Afghanistan, Bartholow was promoted to Captain. In 2018, he was promoted to the rank of Major in the Nebraska Army National Guard.

During his years of service, Major Bartholow has also been awarded the Combat Action Badge and the Army Achievement Medal.

Major Russell Bartholow will be retiring in June 2024.

On behalf of the First District of Nebraska, I thank Major Bartholow for his service and extend best wishes on his retirement.

HONORING JACKIE HUNLEY

HON. JAKE LaTURNER

OF KANSAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 25, 2024

Mr. LATURNER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in appreciation for a member of my staff for her dedicated service to the people of Kansas. Jackie Hunley began in my office in October of 2021 and since then has dedicated her time, energy, and expertise to improving the lives of the people of the Second Congressional District. From serving as a legislative

correspondent and ensuring we provide thoughtful replies to each constituent letter to shaping our office's appropriations process as my legislative director, Jackie has made our office better with her quick wit, work ethic, and desire to serve others.

Jackie has become an adopted Kansan during her time with our team, not least because she met her husband, Chance—a fellow Southeast Kansan, while serving on our staff. While we will miss her as she has moved on to serve her own home state of Iowa, I extend my deepest gratitude for her time of service to myself and my constituents and look forward to seeing her excel in her new role.