

was not achieved overnight. As a youth, Mandela developed his passion for organizing in school, leading movements against racial discrimination and cultivating relationships between White and Black activists. Mandela's unwavering commitment to justice and equality led to his 27-year imprisonment as well to being the first democratically-elected president in South Africa.

Although much of Mandela's work toward justice is in South Africa, his story parallels civil rights struggles in America, both past and present. For example, Chicago continues to experience the impact of deliberate racial redlining from the past. Housing discrimination, such as redlining, led to segregation in Chicago, lower property values in minority communities, lower-funded schools, and systemic inequalities.

We should remember Mandela for his revolutionary acts against systemic injustice and his ability to unite people to dismantle oppressive institutions. Challenging the status quo and pursuing freedom for all has never been easy; it wasn't easy for the Montgomery Bus Boycott protesters fighting segregation nor was it easy for Mandela. It isn't easy now as our country faces the choice between democracy or dictatorship. However, the desire to live in a more just and equal society spurs our fight despite the trials and tribulations we must face. Celebrating Nelson Mandela International Day inspires our collective effort to advance equality that will bring about the change we seek.

HONORING JOHN H. ALDRIDGE

HON. MIKE THOMPSON

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 24, 2024

Mr. THOMPSON of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor John H. Aldridge, an esteemed member of our community. Mr. Aldridge is being honored for his outstanding service and unwavering dedication to advancing the programs of The American Legion in California.

Mr. Aldridge was born in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, where he graduated from Benjamin Franklin High School. He married his wife, Karen Scott, in Sacramento in 1995 and relocated to Fairfield, California within one year. Mr. Aldridge is a graduate of the National Legion College and served in the United States Air Force for 20 years.

Mr. Aldridge's career in the military is truly commendable. Upon his enlistment in 1974, he worked as a Fuels Specialist for six years. Mr. Aldridge then cross-trained and began his career as an Air Passenger Specialist. Following his technical training at Sheppard Air Force Base, he was assigned to Travis Air Force Base Military Airlift Command. During his 20-year career in the United States Air Force, Mr. Aldridge has been stationed across the globe at several other locations. Our country is safer because of the courage and sacrifice Mr. Aldridge has shown throughout his long career.

After retiring from the military in 1994, Mr. Aldridge began work for Aquasis Services Inc. where he worked as a Quality Assurance Inspector for a government air transportation contract. Shortly after, he was promoted to

Station Manager. His dedication to serving his community both in and out of uniform is honorable.

Even after his military retirement, Mr. Aldridge continued to serve his country. In 1996, he returned to Travis Air Force Base to manage an Air Terminal Security contract, before being employed by the Department of Defense. He retired from government civilian employment in 2016.

Mr. Aldridge is a lifetime member of the American Legion, serving with distinction in various roles, including Commander and Adjutant for Post 182, Commander and Chaplain for the "Mighty" 5th District, and Department Chaplain for four terms. He later transferred his Legion membership to Yountville Veterans Home Post 306 to support members there with Legion programs and projects. We are grateful for his leadership in our community.

Mr. Speaker, we thank Mr. Aldridge for his dedicated service to our military and our Napa County community. Therefore, it is fitting and proper that we honor him here today.

HONORING DRU RIDDLE

HON. KAY GRANGER

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 24, 2024

Ms. GRANGER. Mr. Speaker, today I pay tribute to Dru Riddle, PhD, DNP, CRNA, FAAN. Dr. Riddle will soon complete his year as national president of the American Association of Nurse Anesthesiology (AANA). I am proud that Dr. Riddle was elected as the 2023–2024 president of this prestigious healthcare organization.

Certified Registered Nurse Anesthetists (CRNAs) are advanced practice registered nurses who administer more than 50 million anesthetics to patients each year. They work in every setting in which anesthesia is delivered including hospital surgical suites, obstetrical delivery rooms, ambulatory surgical centers, and the offices of dentists, podiatrists, and specialty surgeons. They also provide acute and chronic pain management services to patients in need of such care. CRNAs provide anesthesia for all types of surgical cases and are the sole anesthesia providers in many rural hospitals. CRNAs have full practice authority in the Army, Navy, and Air Force and are the predominant provider of anesthesia on forward surgical teams and in combat support hospitals.

As an AANA member for 14 years, Dr. Riddle has contributed greatly to the healthcare community in the Fort Worth area and nationwide. Dr. Riddle is an associate professor of Professional Practice and director of Clinical Education at Texas Christian University School of Nurse Anesthesia.

He also serves as the Director of the Center for Translational Research. A JBI Center of Excellence and Co-Chair of the Cochrane U.S. Network. Dr. Riddle's research interest included evidence-based healthcare, pharmacogenomics, and genetic implications for anesthesia care. Additionally, Dr. Riddle has spoken nationally and internationally on evidence-based healthcare, systematic review strategies, and various clinical anesthesia topics.

In addition to his research and teaching roles, Dr. Riddle maintains an active clinical

anesthesia practice through NorthStar Anesthesia. He was inducted as a Fellow in the American Academy of Nursing in 2018.

Dr. Riddle earned his PhD from Medical University of South Carolina in Charleston, a Doctor of Nursing Practice degree from Texas Christian University in Fort Worth, a Master of Science in Nursing degree from Old Dominion University in Norfolk, and a Bachelor of Science in Nursing degree from Virginia Commonwealth University in Richmond.

During his AANA presidency, Dr. Riddle has been a prominent advocate for the patients and practice of nurse anesthesia before federal agencies and members of Congress. He has worked tirelessly to promote anesthesia patient safety and the value of CRNAs to our healthcare system. Dr. Riddle has advocated to eliminate burdensome regulations for CRNAs, to have CRNAs recognized as full practice providers in the Veterans Health Administration, and to address underlying causes of surprise billing such as provider discrimination.

I extend my sincere congratulations to Dr. Riddle today on a job well done. His service to AANA and to his patients, and his commitment to safe, quality anesthesia care nationwide, are highly commendable. I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing Dr. Riddle's notable career and outstanding achievements.

HONORING MITCHELL SMITH

HON. LUCY McBATH

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 24, 2024

Mrs. MCBATH. Mr. Speaker, I am proud to celebrate the career of Mitchell Smith and commend him for his many years of service in support of working families in this country and to the men and women of the United Auto Workers (UAW) Region 8.

While working as a maintenance electrician at Ford Motor Company in 1986, Mitchell Smith joined the UAW Local 882 in Atlanta, GA. Just one year later, he was elected a member of the skilled trades committee by his coworkers. For the next 12 years, he served on that committee and as a member of the unit bargaining committee. In further recognition of his capability and leadership, Local 882 elected him building chairperson from 2002 to 2005.

In 2005, Smith was appointed by UAW President Ron Gettelfinger to the position of International representative assigned to Region 8, where he serviced local unions throughout the south. He then served as assistant director of the union's Transnational Department, aiding employees working at Japanese, South Korean, and German original equipment manufacturers and German parts suppliers in the United States. At the 37th Constitutional Convention in June of 2018, he was elected director of UAW Region 8. For over five years, he served the entire Southeast with distinction, working on behalf of auto workers from Tennessee, Kentucky, Virginia, West Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Mississippi, Alabama, Georgia, Florida, the District of Columbia, Maryland, Delaware and the following counties in Pennsylvania: Franklin, Cumberland, Adams, and York.

During his many decades of loyal membership and service to the UAW, Mitchell Smith

demonstrated a strong commitment to the responsibilities of citizenship, being politically active and involved in various Democratic campaigns in Georgia. Outside of his work organizing, Mitchell and his wife Charmaine raised three children: Lacie, Tyler, and Emily. They are the proud grandparents of Hampton, Tobi, and Scout. A man of faith, Mitchell also serves as a lay pastor for Grace Community Fellowship Church.

Through it all, Mitchell truly kept his focus on the membership. After a long and highly successful career fighting to improve working conditions and protect and expand the rights of American workers on the job, it is my distinct honor and privilege to join those who are celebrating the service and leadership of Mitchell Smith—a true champion of working families. Congratulations to Mitchell and I hope he keeps enjoying retirement.

RECOGNIZING THE ACHIEVEMENTS OF DIYA BALAGOPAL

HON. PAT FALLON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 24, 2024

Mr. FALLON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Ms. Diya Balagopal of Frisco, Texas, for her outstanding community service and advocacy for wildlife and environmental conservation.

Ms. Balagopal is currently a student at Reedy High School in Frisco, and she serves as the President of the Nature's Nurturers Club. As part of Project Green Schools, she created a project titled Preserve the Prairie, which seeks to increase community engagement and involvement in conservation efforts of the endangered Blackland Prairie ecosystem. Through Preserve the Prairie, Ms. Balagopal led the campaign to inform Texans about the importance of the Blackland Prairie and distributed thousands of seeds balls. This has resulted in over 5,000 native Blackland Prairie plants being restored to their natural habitat.

For her exceptional efforts, Ms. Balagopal has been recognized by Jeff Cheney, the Mayor of Frisco, and presented with the prestigious Green Difference Award at the Department of Energy. The Green Difference Award honors extraordinary students who have made significant contributions to environmental conservation initiatives. I am proud of the work Ms. Balagopal has accomplished, and I'm confident she will continue to make a positive impact on the world around us.

I have requested the United States flag be flown over our Nation's Capitol in recognition of Ms. Balagopal's leadership and excellence. I wish her the best of luck and continued success in the new school year.

HONORING CHIEF BRAD RASMUSSEN

HON. MIKE THOMPSON

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 24, 2024

Mr. THOMPSON of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Chief Brad Rasmussen,

an esteemed member of our community. Chief Rasmussen is being honored today for his outstanding service in his career in law enforcement.

Chief Rasmussen was born in 1969 in Yreka, California to his parents Dave and Connie Rasmussen. He is a graduate of the College of the Redwoods where he completed a two-year administration of justice program. Chief Rasmussen and his wife of 33 years, Karyn, have two daughters: Stephanie and Savannah. Stephanie is currently a doctor at Bellevue Hospital in New York City while Savannah is a board-certified behavior analyst in the Bay Area.

Chief Rasmussen's 35 years of service with the City of Lakeport Police Department are commendable. He started his career in 1989 as a Reserve Officer with the Department. In 1991, he was promoted to Patrol Officer in 1991, Sergeant in 2000, Lieutenant in 2006 and Chief in 2010, a position he has held for the last 14 years. Over the course of his extensive career with the Lakeport Police Department, Chief Rasmussen held various other assignments. From 1994 to 1997, he was a part of the Narcotics Task Force where he spent 3 years doing undercover work. Then, from 1999 to 2000, Chief Rasmussen was on detective assignment where he worked major cases on crimes against persons and property.

Since the beginning of his career, Chief Rasmussen has worked to support our community. He has been a leader in many organizations, some of which include the Lion's Club, where he is the current president, the Kiwanis Club, where he spent two years as president and Lakeport Police Association where he was a previous president. He also enhanced community-oriented policing in Lakeport by starting the Neighborhood Watch program and initiated National Night Out. Chief Rasmussen's service to our community will not end with his retirement as he has been elected by the people to serve on the Lake County Board of Supervisors starting in January 2025.

For the past 35 years, Chief Rasmussen has given countless hours to serving our community that have not gone unnoticed. He has dedicated his life to our Lake County community over the duration of his long and storied career. We are thankful for his service and wish Chief Rasmussen a wonderful retirement.

Mr. Speaker, we thank Chief Brad Rasmussen for his dedicated service in law enforcement and our broader Lake County community. Therefore, it is fitting and proper that we honor him here today.

CELEBRATING THE TOWN OF ROCKLAND'S 150TH ANNIVERSARY

HON. WILLIAM R. KEATING

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 24, 2024

Mr. KEATING. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of the Town of Rockland as it celebrates its 150th anniversary.

Originally part of the neighboring Town of Abington, Rockland was first settled by the Europeans in 1673. Before the settlers came to Massachusetts, the region that would later be known as Old Abington was first named

Manamooskeagin by Native Americans local to Southeastern Massachusetts.

The Town of Rockland was incorporated on March 9, 1874, after separating from the Town of Abington. Rockland got its name from the area's rocky geography that would later be critical to the town's growing industry and economy. Rockland's topography made it less conducive for farming but ideal for mills and manufacturing. Early in the town's history, Rockland was a major lumber producer for local shipyards along the North River. Later, during the Civil War, Rockland saw an economic boom due to the town's growing shoe industry. Rockland's shoe production reached its peak in 1865, when 2,800 men and women were working to produce millions of dollars' worth of shoes. It is believed that Rockland's factories provided shoes for half of the Union Army during the Civil War.

Known for its strong manufacturing history as well as its extensive involvement in lumber and sawmills, Rockland continued to experience industrial development through the 1900s, but production declined during the Great Depression. However, Rockland saw significant growth following World War II, and the town's population nearly doubled throughout the 1950s.

Today, Rockland is home to nearly 18,000 residents as well as the Rockland Trust Company, one of the 100 largest banks in the U.S. Although the former mills and industrial buildings are no longer used for manufacturing, they have found a new purpose. The vacant buildings have been revitalized by a growing community of artists in Rockland and the buildings now serve as a meeting place and creative space for local artists to come together.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud to celebrate the 150th anniversary of the Town of Rockland, and I ask my colleagues to join me in acknowledging the important role that the Town of Rockland has played in our country's history and wishing the town and its residents the best of luck in the years to come.

COMMEMORATING BLACK WOMEN'S EQUAL PAY DAY

HON. DANNY K. DAVIS

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 24, 2024

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, as we approach National Black Women's Equal Pay Day on July 27th, I wish to take a moment to recognize the valuable work that Black and African American women in the United States have done to make this country what it is today and to reaffirm the importance of paying them—and everyone fairly regardless of race, ethnicity, gender, or disability.

Black women are an essential part of our Nation's fabric and workforce—hard workers who spur our Nation's economic growth despite experiencing barriers to equity and discrimination, which are compounded by the color of their skin as well as their gender.

A primary goal of Black Women's Equal Pay Day is to raise awareness about the gender pay gap that limits the economic mobility of Black women. Goldman Sachs research as part of its Black Womenomics initiative makes clear the multiple ways Black women experience these economic gaps: the wage gap between Black and White women increased from