

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

RECOGNIZING DR. KATHRINE B. SWANSON FOR HER ACHIEVEMENTS WITH METROPOLITAN COMMUNITY COLLEGE LONGVIEW CAMPUS

HON. EMANUEL CLEAVER

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, August 20, 2024

Mr. CLEAVER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today with immense, everlasting gratitude in recognition of the long and fruitful career of Dr. Kathrine B. Swanson, the outgoing president of Metropolitan Community College's (MCC) Longview campus. Dr. Swanson has dedicated over 40 years of her life to service in higher education, demonstrating a lifelong commitment to student success that has benefitted MCC-Longview and Missouri's Fifth Congressional District as a whole. Today, I invite us all to take a moment to reflect on Dr. Swanson's contributions to her community in honor of her well-earned retirement.

Dr. Swanson's journey as a professional in higher education takes us across the country. She first received her bachelor's degree in business management from Northern Michigan University, going on to complete a master's in adult and higher education from Montana State University. Lastly, she earned her doctorate in higher education administration from the University of North Texas. Dr. Swanson has dedicated the majority of her career to working in community colleges, being firm in her conviction that quality education should not be unattainable for underserved communities. Before arriving at MCC, she served as the associate dean of students at Collin County Community College in McKinney, Texas, and in several leadership positions, including vice president for student affairs, at Montgomery County Community College in Blue Bell, Pennsylvania. Through a lifetime of such distinguished service, Dr. Swanson has clearly showcased her commitment to bettering her community through education.

Dr. Swanson came to the Fifth Congressional District in 2015 when she was hired as vice chancellor for student success and engagement at MCC. In this role, she worked tirelessly to increase student civic engagement outside the classroom, expand financial aid for students in need, and support a promising young generation of new leaders for our community. Dr. Swanson quickly took an active role in strengthening the community herself, working frequently with local chambers of commerce, economic development councils, and community partners, and even serving on the boards of Saint Luke's East Hospital and Lee's Summit Creates, a local nonprofit working to promote community art. Such involvement demonstrates Dr. Swanson's dedication not just to MCC-Longview, but also to the broader citizenry of Missouri's Fifth Congressional District.

Dr. Swanson's tireless work in service of her college and community has been recognized

and rewarded by both students and staff. On August 1, 2021, she was appointed the president of MCC's Longview campus, while continuing to serve in her role as vice chancellor for student success and engagement until June of 2023. To cap off her already distinguished career, student leaders at MCC-Longview elected to honor Dr. Swanson with Phi Theta Kapa International Honor Society's prestigious Lifetime Achievement Award in April 2024. This honor, one worthy of being bestowed upon Dr. Swanson, is reserved for those few college leaders who have gone above and beyond to support student success initiatives and rear the newest cohort of leaders for our society.

Education is the cornerstone of the American experience. It enables students to support themselves and ultimately support their community as they rise to answer the call of leadership to live out a constantly evolving, perpetually improving society. Without education, none of this advancement would be possible, and without college leaders like Dr. Swanson, there would be no education. Mr. Speaker, please join me in congratulating Dr. Kathrine B. Swanson on an immensely successful and deeply fulfilling career in service to MCC-Longview, the people of Missouri's Fifth Congressional District, and beyond.

HONORING BLAKE FUHRMAN FOR HIS DISTINGUISHED SERVICE AND COMMITMENT TO MONTANA VETERANS

HON. MATTHEW M. ROSENDALE, SR.

OF MONTANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, August 20, 2024

Mr. ROSENDALE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor and recognize Blake Fuhrman, a man whose life exemplifies dedication to our country and fellow veterans. Blake's journey is a testament to his resilience, leadership, and enduring acts of service.

From an early age, Blake's love for our Nation inspired him to serve with distinction as an Army Ranger in the 3rd Ranger Battalion. During his time in the military, Blake was faced with the harsh realities of war by completing three deployments to Afghanistan. His admirable service in these dangerous and challenging environments forged a resilience that would inspire others as well.

Like many veterans, Blake first had difficulty adjusting to civilian life after serving in the military. But soon after, he found a new mission that would enable him to keep helping others. Blake became a Survival, Evasion, Resistance, and Escape (S.E.R.E) instructor, where he taught critical survival tactics and knowledge to military members and organizations across the Nation. His work as a S.E.R.E instructor which allowed him to give back to the military community, ensuring that others would be prepared to face the challenges he had once encountered.

Blake's commitment to service extended well beyond our military. Later in his life, he took on the role of Senior Director of Clinical Operations Support at RiverStone Health, Yellowstone County, Montana's Community Health Center. In this capacity, Blake was responsible for regulatory compliance, quality improvement, and a wide array of direct and supportive services. His leadership and dedication were instrumental in enhancing the health and well-being of the community.

In 2019, Blake further demonstrated his commitment to his fellow veterans by founding the Veterans Navigation Network (VNN). This organization, which stemmed from Blake's passion for supporting veterans, aims to meet the transition needs of every Montana veteran. Through one-on-one resource counseling, case management, peer mentorship, and a variety of other services, VNN has made a profound impact on the lives of Montana's veterans. Since its start, VNN has directly assisted over 850 veterans, connecting them with critical resources such as healthcare, behavioral health services, legal assistance, and much more.

Under Blake's leadership, VNN has also become the lead agency for the Eastern Montana Veteran Service Provider Network, a coalition of government agencies, non-profits, and faith-based organizations dedicated to assisting veterans and their families. His efforts have been recognized through his involvement in the Suicide Prevention Coalition of Yellowstone Valley, the Montana Governor's Challenge to End Veteran Suicide, and the Montana Behavioral Health Advisory Council Veterans Subcommittee. Blake Fuhrman's contributions to our nation's heroes have not gone and will not go unnoticed.

Beyond his professional achievements, Blake is a devoted husband to his wife, Alissa, and a loving father to their three children. It is an honor to recognize Blake Fuhrman for his remarkable service to our Nation and his continued dedication to improving the lives of veterans and communities throughout the Treasure State. His leadership, compassion, and tireless efforts serve as an inspiration to us all.

HONORING THE 150TH ANNIVERSARY OF HARRISON SCHOOL DISTRICT 2, OF COLORADO SPRINGS

HON. DOUG LAMBORN

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, August 20, 2024

Mr. LAMBORN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate the 150th Anniversary of Harrison School District 2 in El Paso County, Colorado. Established two years before Colorado became a state, Harrison School District 2 has faithfully served our community, our families, and our youth. Its mission is to equip students with the knowledge, skills, attitudes, and behaviors to personally succeed and contribute to the common good.

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.

Harrison School District 2 was founded by four homesteading families—Bates, Lewis, Allen, and Beaver—to educate their children. The early investment from these families laid the groundwork for a district that now serves over 13,000 students across 23 schools. This past year, the superintendent of Harrison School District 2, Dr. Wendy Birhanzel, was named Colorado Superintendent of the Year by the Colorado Association of School Executives for the district's high achievement and innovative approaches to education.

As the first district in Colorado to put student representatives on the Board of Education, Harrison D2 prioritizes students and their families. An open enrollment policy allows youth to enroll in any of D2's nine elementary schools, four K–8 schools, one K–12 online school, two middle schools, two high schools, one career readiness academy, International Baccalaureate program, home school program, or three charter school systems. The district's culturally and linguistically diverse education has received local and national awards, and an Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID) program is available from elementary to high school.

Harrison School District 2 believes that socioeconomic status should not be a barrier to educational opportunity, and this commitment extends beyond K–12. Through the D2 promise, graduates from any high school in the district can receive a free two-year college education at Pikes Peak State College, inclusive of tuition, fees, books, and academic support. Harrison School District 2 also serves community members by offering free adult Basic Education, a General Educational Development (GED) class, and English as Second Language classes. Harrison D2's career-connected learning approach is reimagining education to produce the skilled workforce that the Pikes Peak region needs.

Education is one of the most important pillars of our society today and Harrison School District 2 stands out as an exemplary partner in providing a high level of education to the El Paso County community. Mr. Speaker, I ask that my colleagues in Congress join me in celebrating Harrison School District 2 for its service to our community for 150 years and into the future.

RECOGNIZING MELISSA KRAAI

HON. BRITTANY PETTERSEN

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, August 20, 2024

Ms. PETTERSEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Melissa Kraai of Arvada, Colorado for winning the Arvada Economic Development Association's 2024 Chris Adams Community Spirit Award. Each year, this award honors an Arvada resident who defines and shapes the community's character through their work and engagement.

In 2009, Ms. Kraai founded SustainAbility in Arvada, Colorado, after noticing her community lacked a center to process hard-to-recycle household goods. Taking the initiative to improve her community, she decided to open a facility that recycles items that most municipal recycling facilities are unable to process and otherwise end up in landfills, such as styrofoam, paint, and electronics.

Ms. Kraai is also dedicated to creating a diverse, equitable workforce, especially for Coloradans with intellectual and developmental disabilities. Since SustainAbility first opened, Ms. Kraai has made it her mission to address un- and under-employment among disabled Coloradans by creating quality, meaningful jobs for her employees, a majority of whom are disabled. After successfully starting the Arvada facility, Ms. Kraai expanded operations to the nearby cities of Broomfield and Westminster, allowing thousands of more Coloradans to recycle their household products.

On behalf of the people of Colorado's Seventh Congressional District, it is my honor to congratulate Melissa Kraai for winning the Chris Adams Community Spirit Award and thank her for her contributions to the Arvada community.

RECOGNIZING MRS. KRISTY LYNN CAESAR

HON. DAVID G. VALADAO

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, August 20, 2024

Mr. VALADAO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Mrs. Kristy Lynn Caesar as she is awarded the title of 2024 Tulare County Teacher of the Year by the Tulare County Office of Education.

Mrs. Caesar received her undergraduate degree and teaching certification from National Louis University and her master's degree from Walden University. Mrs. Caesar's career with the Lindsay Unified School District began at the Reinventing Schools Coalition, where she helped implement a learner-centered environment. In 2012, Mrs. Caesar accepted a full-time offer from the Lindsay Unified School District to teach kindergarten and help advance the district's vision and strategic design.

Throughout her career, Mrs. Caesar has been dedicated to educational innovation, helping to improve the district's standard of education. Mrs. Caesar has been steadfast in her commitment to the educational outcomes of all students in the Lindsay community. She has collaborated with other school districts to share her expertise and help elevate the quality of education for their students. Mrs. Caesar has also dedicated her time to improving the lives of students outside of the classroom as a board member of the Dollars for Scholars and the Lindsay High School Booster Club.

This year, Mrs. Caesar is being recognized for her significant contributions to Lincoln Elementary School and the district as the Tulare County Teacher of the Year. This award is a true testament to her dedication and leadership to students for more than 20 years as an educator. It is because of the commitment of teachers in the Lindsay Unified School District like Mrs. Caesar that students in the Central Valley community flourish, and I want to thank her for creating a learning environment that helps our youth become the best they can be.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues in the House of Representatives to join me in celebrating Mrs. Kristy Lynn Caesar as she is awarded the title of 2024 Tulare County Teacher of the Year. Her commitment to the educational outcomes of all students in Tulare County will be felt for generations to come.

SIERJIE LASH NAMED OHIO'S 13TH DISTRICT CHAMPION OF THE WEEK

HON. EMILIA STRONG SYKES

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, August 20, 2024

Mrs. SYKES. Mr. Speaker, today, I recognize Sierjie Lash as Ohio's 13th Congressional District Champion of the Week.

Lash is a trailblazing Akron firefighter, who has recently been promoted to district chief. Lash will be the first woman in the near 200-year history of the Akron Fire Department to hold this position.

In her 21-year career with the department, she is not a stranger to firsts. In 2022, she was promoted to captain, becoming the first woman to hold that rank in the department.

Lash's ascent to district chief position is a testament to over two decades of unwavering dedication to excellence, personal growth, and leadership development.

At first, Lash was hesitant to join the Akron Fire Department. However, her peers continued to encourage her to apply. Lash joined the department with the expectation that she would focus on being the best paramedic she could be.

To her surprise, she learned that Akron Fire Department employees are expected to be trained as both a paramedic and a firefighter. Lash went through the fire academy as the only woman in her class. Throughout the next few years, she fell in love with the job.

As Lash has risen through the ranks, she has seen the number of female firefighters grow from just 6 women to 32. Her career and new title as district chief unequivocally demonstrates that firefighting is a profession for women as much as it is for men.

Lash acts as a mentor and advocate for women in the department. She encourages other women to seek out leadership training and run for leadership positions.

Lash's historic career and unwavering commitment to excellence exemplify the very spirit that makes OH 13 the Birthplace of Champions.

I thank District Chief Sierjie Lash, for her dedication to her field and the amazing work she does. We are so proud of her.

RECOGNIZING DR. TIMOTHY MURPHY

HON. TIMOTHY M. KENNEDY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, August 20, 2024

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Dr. Timothy Murphy, who is being awarded the University at Buffalo President's Medal. A dedicated and visionary leader, Dr. Murphy has significantly contributed to the advancement of medical science and the wellbeing of the Western New York community.

First presented in 1990, the University at Buffalo President's Medal recognizes individuals who have demonstrated outstanding leadership, achievements, and contributions to the University at Buffalo community. This year, Dr. Murphy has earned the distinguished honor for