

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

his exceptional leadership and transformative impact at the Jacobs School of Medicine and Biomedical Sciences.

Dr. Murphy is an internationally recognized expert in respiratory infectious diseases, specializing in otitis media (ear infections) in children and lower respiratory tract infections in adults with chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD). His groundbreaking work has identified causes of bacterial infections and developed vaccinations and intervention strategies to prevent and treat these illnesses.

Additionally, in 2015, Dr. Murphy founded the University at Buffalo's Clinical and Translational Science Institute (CTSI) with support from the National Institute of Health. Under Dr. Murphy's leadership, the CTSI has spearheaded efforts to improve health care and reduce health disparities in Western New York. Dr. Murphy and the CTSI team have enhanced education for clinical research, advanced data science, and increased university partnerships with community organizations.

For twelve years, Dr. Murphy has directed the Ruth L. Kirschstein NRSA Short-Term Institutional Research Training Grant to address the national shortage of clinical scientists. This vital program introduces medical and pharmacy students to careers as clinical scientists through structured research and professional development training. Dr. Murphy has prioritized recruiting individuals from underrepresented communities to help rebuild the biomedical research workforce.

As a SUNY Distinguished Professor and Senior Associate Dean for Clinical and Translational Research, Dr. Murphy is a pillar of the University at Buffalo Department of Medicine's academic community. With 230 publications and 13 patents and chapters in medical textbooks, Dr. Murphy's work has played a pivotal role in preventing and treating respiratory tract bacterial diseases.

Please join me in congratulating Dr. Timothy Murphy on receiving the University at Buffalo President's Medal and thanking him for his commitment to making our community a healthier place.

RECOGNIZING PIPER ELECTRIC

HON. BRITTANY PETTERSEN

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, August 20, 2024

Ms. PETTERSEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Piper Electric of Arvada, Colorado for winning the Arvada Economic Development Association's 2024 Outstanding Large Business Award. Each year, this award honors a local company who brings job growth, economic investment, and innovation to the Arvada business community.

Since 1983, Piper Electric has provided electrical services ranging from wiring updates and installation in residential homes to electrical construction and maintenance projects in commercial sites throughout Arvada and Jefferson County. As Piper Electric continues to expand, they remain committed to serving the Colorado community. Ongoing projects such as the expansion of their headquarters or their partnering with a national electrical group to increase their resources and job-capabilities, highlight the company's mission of providing high-quality jobs and services for families throughout our state.

On behalf of the people of Colorado's Seventh Congressional District, it is my honor to congratulate Piper Electric for receiving the Outstanding Large Business Award and for their passionate work within Arvada, Colorado.

HONORING COACH CAROLYN WRIGHT

HON. SANFORD D. BISHOP, JR.

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, August 20, 2024

Mr. BISHOP of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a loving wife, seasoned educator, legendary coach, and dear friend of long-standing, Coach Carolyn Wright. An event to celebrate her remarkable coaching career was held on Saturday, August 10, 2024, at The Perfect Place in Columbus, Georgia. Coach Wright will be retiring after 45 years of dedicated service to education and athletics.

The genesis of the life of Coach Wright began in Tuskegee, Alabama. She is a product of the Tuskegee Institute High School, graduating from there in 1974. Coach Wright furthered her education in 1978 when she graduated from Alabama State University in 1978 earning a BS Degree in Physical Education/Special Education. Coach Wright went on to receive a master's degree in Specific Learning Disabilities in 1981 also from Alabama State.

Her career in education began at St. Jude Home for Children in Montgomery, Alabama. She also taught special education students at Hancock Central in Sparta, Georgia from 1978 to 79 and learning disability students at Stanhope Elmore High School Millbrook, Alabama from 1979 to 91. She spent her summers honing her education and coaching skills by working with the Upward Bound Program and the National Sports Youth Program at Alabama State University from 1979 through 1985. Her legendary coaching career began in 1986 at McIntyre Junior High School where she coached basketball, softball, track, volleyball, and bowling. She left that position in 1991.

In 1991, she became the head coach at Central High School. She helped to guide the Lady Red Devils to four Final Four appearances, 12 appearances in the sweet sixteen, nine appearances in the Elite Eight, and 18 State tournament appearances overall. Her teams won 11 area championships while she amassed an overall record of 597–375 in 32 overall seasons at the helm. Her amazing career only produced four losing seasons as she was named bi-city coach of the year on several occasions. She was awarded the Sports Vision Legacy Award in 2018–19.

Her legacy extended beyond basketball, as she was instrumental in starting a volleyball program in the Phenix City Schools. She coached Volleyball at Central High School for sixteen years, winning more than 200 games. Her volleyball teams reached the Super Regional Tourney in 2014 for the first time in school history. She also served as the girls' head track coach and the boys' assistant track coach from 1992 through 2007. Coach Wright helped to guide 14 individual girls and relay teams to state titles. Overall, she coached more than 30 boys and girls state champions. Because of her commitment to excellence,

Coach Wright is largely responsible for over 200 athletes obtaining scholarships to colleges and universities.

Leaving behind a stellar career and legacy at Central, Coach Wright is now the Athletic Director and Head Girls Varsity Basketball Coach and Physical Education Instructor at Johnson Abernathy Graetz High School. During her tenure at Johnson Abernathy, Coach Wright was blessed to enter the 600-win club. Coach Tom Landry once said that "A coach is someone who tells you what you don't want to hear, who has to see what you don't want to see so you can be who you always knew you could be." For over four decades, Coach Carolyn Wright has been helping young people from all walks of life to become who they always knew they could become.

Coach Wright has spent 45 years in the teaching profession and has distinguished herself as a leader and mentor to those coming behind her. She was the chair of the Health and Physical Education Department at Central and the Freshman Academy from 1991 to 2003. She served as the Assistant Athletics Director from 2009 to 2021. Coach Wright served on the AHSAA Strategic Planning Committee in 2016. And because of her commitment to excellence, she was chosen as the Phenix City Public Schools Secondary Teacher of the Year in 2014–15.

She has accomplished much in her life but none of it would have been possible without the love and grace of God and the support of her husband, Coach Bobby Wright who is a Hall of Fame basketball coach in his own right. This amazing couple is the only husband-wife duo to be inducted into the Alabama Sports Hall of Fame. Between the two of them, they have amassed 1,227 wins and a winning percentage of .680, the highest winning percentage of any husband-wife duo in the history of the State of Alabama.

But even with all of this, Coach Wright has found time to be a faithful servant of God as a member of the Saint John African Methodist Episcopal Church where she serves as a member of the Steward Board. She has also been a dedicated member of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc since 1976 and is currently an active member of the Gamma Tau Omega Chapter.

On a personal note, both Coach Wrights have been dear friends to my wife Vivian and me for many years. We are both thankful for their friendship, support and counsel over the years.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join my wife Vivian, and me in honoring Coach Carolyn Wright for her lifetime of service to God, her community, and humankind. May God continue to rain down blessings upon her, her family, her community and all the young people whose lives she will influence in the days, weeks and months ahead. We wish her the very best as she moves on to the next chapter of her remarkable life.

HONORING THE LIFE OF KENNETH LEE FREEMAN

HON. DOUG LaMALFA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, August 20, 2024

Mr. LaMALFA. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor the life of Kenneth Lee Freeman of Marysville,