

Ted Kennedy would be a high watermark for most Senate careers, but Kaaren would go on to work for Senator John Kerry at the height of his Senate career and follow him onto his Presidential campaign. After the heart-breaking loss of 2004, she would embark on a new adventure: the post-Mickey Drexler Gap.

But the siren call of the Senate beckoned, and Kaaren returned not long after leaving the Presidential campaign trail, this time to work for Senator SHELDON WHITEHOUSE before returning home to Senator Kerry's office.

A glutton for punishment, she would go on to work campaigns again—this time for Senator ELIZABETH WARREN, including on her 2020 Presidential run, a campaign that will be remembered for the enthusiasm it inspired.

Fortunately for me, she became one of my very first hires when I was elected to the Senate. You can imagine how fortunate I felt that someone with her experience would help us stand up the office.

And now, almost 4 years later, Kaaren is the rock we have built that office on. It is hard to imagine the office without her. She is everyone's first stop when they hit a wall and have no idea what to do next. She is the one who makes the seemingly impossible, possible—the person who laughs at the idiosyncrasies of Senate rules and finds joy working around them. She is kind to everyone she meets, always generous with her time to help staff figure out their next career move or how to fix whatever problem has them stumped. Maybe that is also what makes her resolve so impressive. I pity anyone who sees in her kindness a person who rolls over in the face of a challenge.

For our office—and I suspect for every office she has served—she has always been exactly what our office needed her to be. From a trusted adviser present at the creation, to acting chief when we needed a steady hand.

I don't know what Kaaren will do next, but I know we haven't yet seen the height of her career. We wish her the absolute best and miss her already.

#### ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

##### TRIBUTE TO NORTHSIDE AND SOUTHSIDE HIGH SCHOOL CLASSES OF 1966

• Mr. BOOZMAN. Mr. President, I rise today to recognize a special occasion in my hometown of Fort Smith, AR: the 58th class reunion of Northside and Southside High School's class of 1966.

This event marks the first time these two rival high schools have come together to celebrate the anniversary of their graduation. Since many of the graduates had been schoolmates at various Fort Smith elementary and junior high schools, it is appropriate that they share the celebration of their high school graduation. It should be noted

that the class of 1966 was the first to graduate from Southside High School.

As a proud Northside Grizzly myself, who was only a few years behind them, I saw the impact both schools' graduates had in our community then and in the years since. Sadly, many of the class of 1966 are no longer with us. Through the deep connection of shared experiences, these men and women come together again to remember those who have gone before and to reconnect with those remaining.

Many things helped bond Fort Smith's youth during this period, including new music that became poetry and played an important part in high school life. Motown produced anthems and dance tunes that are still requested today.

In 1966, the average new home price was \$14,200. A new car cost just \$2,600. Gasoline was 52 cents per gallon. The first episode of "Star Trek" was broadcast. The miniskirt became a fashion standard, changing the way young women would dress for the remainder of the decade. Ford and Chevrolet introduced the Mustang and Camaro muscle cars.

But 1966 was a year marked by sharp contrasts. The United States had more than 500,000 troops in Vietnam; the Black Panther Party was forming; and China initiated its Cultural Revolution. The Civil Rights movement, led by Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., continued to press for equality and justice for all Americans.

Closer to home, 1966 was also the year that five Black students successfully integrated Fort Smith high schools. These students forever transformed Northside athletics and helped demonstrate the important lesson that our society is stabilized, not destroyed, when everyone enjoys the same rights.

Certainly, every senior year is unique. The Fort Smith classes of 1966 shared a year of experience and observation. Led by their families and teachers, they have gone on to establish lives and families, contributing their own measure to our collective society. I am proud to mark their 58th class reunion as part of the U.S. CONGRESSIONAL RECORD.●

##### TRIBUTE TO GENE POWELL

• Mr. CASSIDY. Mr. President, I rise to pay tribute to Gene Powell, who has served the Louisiana constituents of Shreveport, LA. Since September of 1976, Gene Powell has donated over 1,900 blood platelet products in over 700 donation visits. As a U.S. Air Force veteran and 90 years of age, I raise the actions of Gene Powell as selflessness.

Today, Gene Powell carries forward his Lifetime Achievement Award by LifeShare Blood Center. His actions ensure improving the lives of countless individuals and service to his community, by publicly honoring him.

Thank you to Gene Powell, a veteran and community serviceman; his service will never be forgotten.●

##### TRIBUTE TO ROGER W. JENKINS

• Mr. COTTON. Mr. President, I rise today to celebrate the career of Roger W. Jenkins as he prepares to retire after 11 years as CEO of Murphy Oil Corporation, an oil and natural gas company whose history extends back to the early 1900s in El Dorado, AR.

Roger began his career with Texaco but moved to Murphy Oil as a drilling manager in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, in 2001. In 2007, he was named senior vice president of North America and elected CEO in 2013. Roger was a skilled manager and operator, helping reposition Murphy Oil as a leading producer in the Gulf of Mexico, while solidifying its financial strength.

Roger Jenkins has made extraordinary contributions to south Arkansas, stewarding Murphy Oil's "El Dorado Promise," a generous scholarship program for the graduating high school students of El Dorado, AR. Murphy also recently donated \$10 million to build new dorms and a baseball stadium at South Arkansas College.

Roger has long provided outstanding leadership on the boards of the American Petroleum Institute, National Petroleum Council, and LSU Foundation. He has been recognized as LSU's Alumnus of the Year in 2016 and as the EY Entrepreneur of the Year, Gulf South Region, in 2023. He and his wife Jill have multiple scholarship programs in their own name for veterinarians and engineering students. Roger also serves his community through Catholic Charities USA and United Way.

Thank you, Roger, for your extraordinary contributions to the State of Arkansas and American energy security. Best wishes for a well-earned and enjoyable retirement.●

##### TRIBUTE TO MASTER GUNNERY SERGEANT JAY COTA

• Mr. DAINES. Mr. President, today I have the distinct honor of recognizing U.S. Marine Corps MGySgt Jay Cota for his heroism and 30 years of dedicated service to our Nation.

Cota, who lives in Musselshell County, first began his career in the Marine Corps in 1979 when he graduated boot camp, eager and willing for what lay ahead. His first duty station was in Kaneohe Bay, HI, and just a few months later, he engaged in two western Pacific deployments which took him to many ports from the Philippines, Hong Kong, Thailand, Africa, Australia, Guam, Sri Lanka, and beyond.

Cota was then transferred to Fargo, ND, in 1982, where he gave the ASVAB test to recruits as he worked to build up the manpower within the Marine Corps. Three years later, he was assigned to Camp Lejeune, NC, where he oversaw classified materials. In 1989, Cota was headed to his next assignment, splitting time between Rochester, MN, and Fargo, ND, continuing his work to recruit new applicants. In

1993, he went on to be stationed at Camp Courtney in Okinawa, Japan, serving as administrative chief, and in 1996, he transferred to Belton, MO, where he helped marines reenlist and transition back to civilian life.

Most notable were Cota's duties that he assumed in 1999 when he was tasked with ensuring color guards for any fallen marine, past or present, in the entire midwest. In 2002, he transferred to 29 Palms, CA, where he led 200 marines and was promoted to the highest enlisted Marine Corps rank, master gunnery sergeant, having received his pin from his mother. Cota was transferred to his final duty station in 2005 to Marine Forces Pacific near Pearl Harbor, HI, until he eventually retired in 2009.

On and off the battlefield, Cota stood boldly on his convictions, and he proudly proclaims his faith in Jesus and his love for his wife Janice, who always supported him and took care of the homefront in his absence. The words in Psalm 145:18 ring true, "The Lord is near to all who call on him, to all who call on him in truth."

It is my distinct honor to recognize U.S. Marine Corps MGySgt Jay Cota for his distinguished 30-year record of putting service to others over himself. Montana is lucky to call you one of its own. Thank you for your service, Jay, from a grateful U.S. Senator. You make Montana proud.●

#### TRIBUTE TO CHIEF MASTER SERGEANT JOSEPH KUZARA

● Mr. DAINES. Mr. President, today I have the distinct honor of recognizing U.S. Air Force CMSgt Joseph "Kim" Kuzara for 36 years of military service to the United States of America.

Kuzara, who calls Roundup, MT, home, first began his military career when he enlisted in the U.S. Air Force in 1966 during the buildup of the Vietnam war. He was promptly stationed to Strategic Air Command's 11th Strategic Aerospace Wing headquarters at Altus Air Force Base in Oklahoma. Kuzara would spend 4 years of Active-Duty service assessing wing training activities and ensuring readiness for wartime missions. He flew on several airborne alert missions that typically lasted 24 hours and also required him to necessitate aerial refueling of the bombers.

During the Vietnam war, Kuzara's time flying on missions resulted in his vertebrae in his lower back being crushed. Ready to take a step back from the bloodshed he witnessed and even photographed as part of his duties, Kuzara returned home to Roundup after discharging from Active Duty. He then joined the Air National Guard unit stationed at the Great Falls International Airport and quickly moved up the ranks as a technical sergeant and was extended the invitation to join the Montana Adjutant General's staff.

Kuzara's time with the "State Staff," as the Montana Adjutant General's team is generally referred to,

meant overseeing all Army and Air National Guard units throughout the State and any efforts they may be involved with. From fighting wildfires, providing support at State facilities during strikes and shortages, assisting homeland security efforts, organizing and narrating airshows, to providing key assistance with an equipment conversion that earned him the Army Commendation Medal, Kuzara served his State and country every chance he got. He was eventually promoted to master and then chief master sergeant, a fitting tribute to his unrelenting dedication to service.

While Kuzara's storied military career is certainly one of valor that deserves our Nation's thanks, he remains a humble man who feels that his brothers and sisters who did not return home from battle are the ones who deserve America's gratitude. Kim, from a grateful U.S. Senator, I want to offer my sincerest thanks. Thank you for taking the oath to serve, your willingness to bear the weight of constant readiness, and your commitment to paying the ultimate sacrifice if duty required. Your service to the United States helped protect our Nation's peace and resolve, and I pray that God blesses you.

It is my distinct honor to recognize U.S. Air Force CMSgt Joseph "Kim" Kuzara for his selfless service to our country. You make Montana proud.●

#### RECOGNIZING SERGEANT BLUFF EYECARE

● Ms. ERNST. Mr. President, as ranking member of the Senate Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship, each week I recognize an outstanding Iowa small business that exemplifies the American entrepreneurial spirit. For Veterans Day and National Veterans Small Business Week, it is my privilege to recognize Sergeant Bluff EyeCare of Sergeant Bluff, IA, as the veteran-owned Small Business of the Week.

Dr. Ben Uhl has served our great country for more than 24 years. He joined Iowa State University's Army ROTC Program and went on to serve Active Duty in the U.S. Army as a Patriot Missile officer during Operation Enduring Freedom and Operation Iraqi Freedom. Upon returning home, Ben pursued a degree in optometry at the University of Houston and graduated in 2008. Ben continued his service in the U.S. Army Reserves and deployed to Afghanistan from 2010 to 2011. Following his deployment, Ben returned home to Sioux City and joined the Iowa Air National Guard's 185th Air Refueling Wing in 2013. He received a promotion to full colonel in February 2024 and is currently serving at Joint Forces Headquarters at Camp Dodge.

Sergeant Bluff EyeCare first opened its doors in 2007, and Dr. Uhl joined the business in 2008 before eventually purchasing it in 2014. He immediately took action by expanding the business and

increasing its community involvement. He acquired a stand-alone building and invested in high-tech optometry equipment. The company offers primary care, glasses and contacts, as well as medical optometry for all ages. Sergeant Bluff EyeCare has expanded to five locations across Iowa and Nebraska, with 35 staff members, including 6 doctors, dedicated to providing high-quality optometric care.

Dr. Uhl and his wife Sarah have made it a priority to support their community. Together, they started the Ben Uhl and Sarah Murray Family Scholarship Fund to support educational advancement in the community. In addition, they have worked to support the Siouxland Freedom Park's annual fundraiser, as well as the Siouxland Humane Society, the Gospel Mission food pantry, and autism awareness initiatives. In 2012, the Iowa Optometric Association named Ben the Young Optometrist of the Year. The following year, the Northwest AEA presented Ben and the Sergeant Bluff EyeCare team with the "Friends of Preschool" award for their dedication to providing vision screenings to schools across Iowa. In 2019, the 185th Medical Group selected Ben as Officer of the Year. Almost every year since 2016, the University of Houston's Cougar 100 Award list has recognized Ben and Sergeant Bluff EyeCare among one of the top 100 grossing alumni-owned businesses. Next year, Sergeant Bluff EyeCare will celebrate its 18th anniversary.

Sergeant Bluff EyeCare has become an integral part of the Woodbury County community through its quality care and dedication to supporting Iowa's communities. I want to thank Dr. Ben Uhl, his wife Sarah, and their family for all their work and sacrifices in service to our country. Dr. Uhl's dedication to both his country and community is inspirational. I look forward to seeing their continued growth and success in Iowa.●

#### HONORING KEVIN MELVIN GROSSHEIM

● Ms. KLOBUCHAR. Mr. President, today we honor Park Ranger Kevin Melvin Grossheim of Kabetogama, MN. His bravery and decades of service to Voyageurs National Park were unparalleled. Ranger Grossheim was a devoted law enforcement officer and emergency services volunteer whose actions exemplified heroism.

On October 6, 2024, Ranger Grossheim courageously responded to a distress call on Namakan Lake, rescuing a family of three stranded near Birch Cove Island. Tragically, Ranger Grossheim lost his life when his boat capsized in the high winds and rough waters.

Ranger Grossheim was a pillar of the community and a longtime park ranger, beginning his career with the National Park Service in Colorado and his law enforcement career in Boston. After working in the Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore for 5 years, he