

collaboration between the school district, local industries, governing agencies and workforce leaders. This partnership ensures there is alignment between the needs of employers and industry leaders to the school districts CTE program, strengthening the talent pipeline and highlighting employment opportunities within the community. As an example, Hernando Schools was an early adopter of the Space Academy initiative led by Space Florida. As an advocate for this exciting and novel initiative, in 2024, HCSD was one of 22 school districts named a Space Academy District to grow Space Industry momentum in Hernando County.

A significant milestone for the expansion of Career and Technical Education was the opening of the Wilton Simpson Technical College, the first postsecondary site in the county. Wilton Simpson Technical College or "STC" will provide the community with access to advanced technical training and certification programs, expanding postsecondary educational opportunities in needed workforce industries. Through the use of voter approved millage funds, Hernando Schools demonstrates a commitment to ensuring this new facility is outfitted with cutting-edge resources to enhance a variety of programs.

The vision of the Hernando School District is to "grow our own" by providing educational pathways that lead to stable, rewarding, and local careers. We embrace our role and are honored to serve as a driving force for creating a healthy community through quality workforce education, strong partnerships with local leaders and as a proponent of forward-thinking industry initiatives that will position Hernando County as a lifelong home for residents. Hernando County is well positioned to be a place where education, industry, and community work hand-in-hand to create lasting success.

HONORING TEXAS-24 HOMETOWN  
HERO DR. RAMESH SHARMA

### HON. BETH VAN DUYNÉ

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, February 14, 2025*

Ms. VAN DUYNÉ. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor our Texas-24 Hometown Hero, Dr. Ramesh Sharma of Fort Worth. At 85 years old, Dr. Sharma is a shining example that age is merely a number. Raised in India, he earned his degree in mechanical engineering from the Indian Institute of Technology before joining the civilian Indian naval forces. He completed several years of service before immigrating to the U.S. and settling in Fort Worth in 1986. Working as a stress engineer at various nuclear power plants, Dr. Sharma was driven by a desire to provide his children with the best educational opportunities.

Upon retirement, he set his sights on his next goal: continuing his education. In 2014, he completed his master's degree in mechanical engineering at the University of Texas at Arlington. Taking classes one by one over the next decade, he earned his Ph.D. in Mathematics, an incredible feat he attributes to the unwavering support of his family and professors. At his graduation, a touching moment unfolded as his son, who also earned his doctorate, assisted him in donning his graduation

robes. Dr. Sharma aims to mentor students and give back to our community.

Dr. Sharma's determination in the pursuit of knowledge is an inspiration to North Texans and I congratulate him on his incredible achievement.

TRIBUTE TO A BALTIMORE TV  
ICON: THE LATE REVEREND DR.  
TIMOTHY LAMAR TOOTEN, SR.

### HON. KWEISI MFUME

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, February 14, 2025*

Mr. MFUME. Mr. Speaker, I rise to pay tribute to a dear friend, a loving family man, an inspiring educator, a devout pastor, an accomplished writer, an award-winning journalist, and a person of the highest caliber—the late Reverend Dr. Timothy Lamar Tooten, Sr.

Dr. Tim Tooten was not a native son of Baltimore, but we embraced him as one of our own. He gravitated towards journalism as a child, interviewing his middle school classmates using a pencil as a microphone. Tim's course in life was set in high school, when a teacher asked him to record a Public Service Announcement for the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), urging voter registration—and he fell in love with the sound of his voice on the air.

He continued broadcasting as a student at Florida State University. His career began in earnest when he was chosen for a competitive internship with the American Federation of Television and Radio Artists, spending a year in Washington, D.C. learning his trade.

His next stop was Huntington, West Virginia, where he spent five years working for WSAZ-TV. In Huntington, he met the love of his life, Charleen Dawson Tooten, and they would spend the next 40 years together in blissful matrimony.

After his time in Huntington was done, Tim moved his family to Baltimore, working as a reporter at WMAR-2 for just over a year. Following this chapter at WMAR-2, he began selling insurance to support his family while continuing to do freelance journalism. This freelance work led to his hiring at WBAL-TV, the station that he called home for 35 years.

At WBAL-TV, Dr. Tooten was the station's only education reporter, and he gradually became one of Baltimore's most recognized faces and most trusted voices. He was especially beloved by the children of the Baltimore area, who knew that the snow day wasn't official until they heard it from Tim.

Dr. Tooten's voice was respected not only by the people of Baltimore, but also by his journalistic colleagues. He was immensely proud of his work on the documentary Africa's Maryland, wherein he traveled to Liberia to explore that country's historical connections to our state. This documentary was lauded by the press, earning a regional Emmy as well as the National Headliner Award Best of Show and the National Edward R. Murrow Award. His documentary East is East, chronicling life growing up as a Black man on Maryland's Eastern Shore, earned him another National Headliner Award, and in 2024, Dr. Tooten was inducted into the Emmy Silver Circle Hall of Fame, recognizing his 25 years of significant contributions to the broadcasting industry.

Dr. Tim Tooten was a man who wore many hats. He was passionate about education, providing mentorship to young Black men at Perry Hall High School and dispensing wisdom in his broadcasting classes at Loyola University Maryland. He furthered his own education, earning degrees in theology and ministry while working full time and raising a family.

Rev. Dr. Tooten organized his own church, Harvest Christian Ministries, and devoted himself to spreading the good word in his retirement. He served on the board of the Maryland Bible Society, and in 2017, he penned a book, *Leading by Example: A Parental Guide to Teaching and Modeling Christian Faith at Home*, which married his twin joys of teaching and preaching.

Though Tim was taken from us far too soon, I find comfort in knowing that the Lord has called him home for a purpose greater than we can understand. I take heart in the knowledge that he awaits his loved ones in the Kingdom of Heaven, basking in the glory of the Almighty.

HONORING TEXAS-24 HOMETOWN  
HERO ST. ANN MAGI MINISTRY

### HON. BETH VAN DUYNÉ

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, February 14, 2025*

Ms. VAN DUYNÉ. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor our Texas-24 Hometown Hero, St. Ann Magi Ministry in Coppell. More than 30 years ago, St. Ann Catholic Parish began its Magi Ministry, giving 100 gifts to those who would have otherwise gone without. Over the years, the ministry has grown to be one of the most important parts of the parish's Christmas season. More than 3,400 children, seniors, seminarians, and families received Christmas gifts this year thanks to the generosity of parishioners.

Beginning the weekend before Thanksgiving, parish members can choose an ornament from a tree around the church. Each ornament contains a gift request from a child in the St. Ann community, residents of Hillcrest and Ewing Houses, as well as children from Blessed Sacrament. The volunteers at Magi Ministry collect, sort, and wrap the gifts before individually delivering them to their recipients.

My heartfelt thanks go out to St. Ann volunteers for spreading Christmas love and cheer throughout our community. They are a shining example of what makes North Texas great.

HONORING AFRICAN AMERICANS  
IN LABOR DURING BLACK HIS-  
TORY MONTH

### HON. FRANK J. MRVAN

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, February 14, 2025*

Mr. MRVAN. Mr. Speaker, it is with great respect and sincere admiration that I rise to celebrate Black History Month and its 2025 theme—African Americans and Labor. This year's theme reflects on the struggles and triumphs of the African American community in the workforce who have fought and continue

to fight for equal and fair labor opportunities, practices, and legislation.

Throughout the history of the United States, African Americans have endured extremely disparaging and harsh labor conditions including slavery, economic inequality, and discrimination. In the fight to create change in the labor system, many courageous people have worked tirelessly to protect, advance, and empower the African American workforce through activism, community building, and labor unions. Due to these efforts, America has seen significant positive change to its values and belief systems, and the effort continues today. The foundation of our great nation is reliant upon the advancement of a strong workforce, one that provides opportunities and economic stability for all people.

I would like to take this time to honor a couple of the many dedicated leaders in Northwest Indiana who work diligently to support economic equality and labor opportunity for the African American community and for all people throughout the region and beyond. Arvella Greenlaw is a member of the United Steelworkers Local Union 6787 and the Women of Steel District 7 Coordinator. Throughout her career, Arvella has organized and developed community service projects and led volunteer efforts with the Women of Steel and numerous other organizations. For her dedication to union members in the fight for employment opportunity and equality, Arvella Greenlaw is to be highly commended. Joree Richards is an IBEW International Representative for the Sixth District. Throughout his career, Joree has held many noteworthy positions and leadership roles. Through his work with the Indiana Plan, a pre-apprenticeship program endorsed by the Indiana State Building Trades, he leads efforts to support workers by providing them the skills and knowledge needed to prosper in the construction and building trades. Among the many great initiatives of the Indiana Plan, the organization works to promote the recruitment of women and minorities to the trades and to place candidates in construction jobs at a training rate. For his outstanding leadership and unwavering commitment to providing workers with pathways to stable and rewarding careers, he is worthy of the highest praise.

Mr. Speaker, I ask you and my other distinguished colleagues to join me in celebrating Black History Month and recognizing the dedication and contributions of Arvella Greenlaw, Joree Richards, and so many other extraordinary members of the African American community who continue to fight for safe working conditions, living wages, and growth opportunities in the workforce.

HONORING TEXAS-24 HOMETOWN  
HERO COMMUNITIES IN SCHOOLS  
DALLAS REGION

**HON. BETH VAN DUYNÉ**

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, February 14, 2025*

Ms. VAN DUYNÉ. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor our Texas-24 Hometown Hero, Communities in Schools Dallas Region. A local nonprofit founded in 1985, Communities in Schools supports North Texas children on the Texas Education Agency's "at-risk" list

through academic and mental health intervention as well as social services. The organization is working to improve outcomes for K-12 children in school and at home by removing barriers to success.

As the winter weather moved into North Texas, CIS Dallas began their annual Holiday Drive to keep students warm, healthy, and ready to learn. With the help of community members, the organization collected coats, gloves, blankets, hygiene products, and other essentials to deliver directly to students in need. In 2024, the nonprofit was able to assist 10,000 North Texas students.

I thank Communities in Schools of the Dallas Region for going above and beyond to support at-risk students in our community.

RECOGNIZING DAVID GUINDON'S 27  
YEARS OF SERVICE TO SANDY'S  
BEEF & ALE

**HON. BRIAN K. FITZPATRICK**

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, February 14, 2025*

Mr. FITZPATRICK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize an outstanding constituent from my district, David Guindon of Levittown, who is retiring after 27 years of quality customer service to our community at Sandy's Beef & Ale in Langhorne, PA.

Before becoming a co-owner, David was a regular patron at Sandy's Beef & Ale. It came as no surprise when in 1997, Dave Guindon and his former business partner, Bill Clark, purchased the establishment. In 2002, just five years later, David's wife Jane bought Bill's shares and together they worked tirelessly to maintain the legacy of Sandy's Beef & Ale while continuing to build on its reputation as a beloved community establishment. Under their leadership, Sandy's Beef & Ale quickly became a cornerstone of the Langhorne community.

David's dedication to our community was a driving force of the restaurant. He ensured that Sandy's Beef & Ale was a gathering place to support charitable organizations such as the Lower Bucks Family YMCA, the Middletown Athletics Association, and the American Cancer Society. Sandy's became more than just a place to get food and drinks; it became a place for neighbors to come together and make a difference in our community.

As David enters this new chapter of life, I want to take a moment to thank him for his years of hard work and his unwavering dedication to our community. On behalf of the residents of Pennsylvania's 1st Congressional District, I extend my warmest congratulations to David on his retirement.

HONORING TEXAS-24 HOMETOWN  
HERO MEALS ON WHEELS OF  
TARRANT COUNTY

**HON. BETH VAN DUYNÉ**

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, February 14, 2025*

Ms. VAN DUYNÉ. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor our Texas-24 Hometown Hero, Meals on Wheels of Tarrant County. Since 1973, the

organization has been helping some of North Texas' most vulnerable citizens. By providing home-delivered meals, professional case management, and other necessary services or items, the organization helps homebound, elderly, and disabled individuals to remain living independently. In addition to delivering over 1 million meals each year, the organization holds an annual Silver Santa Campaign to help spread holiday cheer.

The holiday initiative involves collecting and distributing gifts to the citizens they serve daily. Committed case managers compile wish lists from Tarrant County's most vulnerable and isolated residents. With the help of community donations and volunteers, they strive to fulfill these wishes, personally delivering gifts to recipients' homes. This year, 800 homebound individuals were "adopted" and received special surprises to brighten their holiday season.

I'm grateful to Wheels on Meals of Tarrant County for their year-round work and going the extra mile during the holiday season to bring cheer and comfort to members of our community.

HONORING MAYOR SCOTT LUND

**HON. ILHAN OMAR**

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, February 14, 2025*

Ms. OMAR. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the distinguished career of Scott Lund, the former Mayor of Fridley. He recently retired after nearly five decades of dedicated service to his community. Throughout his tenure, Mayor Lund has been a devoted leader, guiding the city to become a safe, vibrant, and welcoming place to live. His leadership has been instrumental in advancing numerous projects that have contributed to the city's growth and development.

Mayor Lund moved to Fridley in 1979 and became involved in the community out of a commitment to giving back to others. He married his wife, Cindy, in 1976, and they have three children and four grandchildren. Mayor Lund has owned his own manufactured home sales and service business for 48 years. Elected to office in 2000, and continuously re-elected by the residents of Fridley, he has worked tirelessly as an advocate for residents.

Those who worked closely with Mayor Lund admired his commitment to public service and his unwavering dedication to all of his fellow neighbors in Fridley. He has always been active in the community, engaging with residents, listening to their concerns, and advocating for their needs. Mayor Lund's hands-on approach to leadership has truly set him apart as a public servant.

Under his leadership, Fridley has experienced transformative change. One of Mayor Lund's most significant contributions was his emphasis on environmental stewardship. He championed the redevelopment of the Northern Stacks industrial campus, a project that revitalized a vital city area, cleaned up soil contamination, and reduced pollution. Additionally, Mayor Lund spearheaded a \$30 million initiative to improve the city's park system, ensuring Fridley remains a beautiful and livable community for generations.

Mayor Scott Lund embodies excellence, integrity, and leadership. His long and impactful