

1959 as a teacher at Palm Avenue School in Wasco, California. He would achieve his first leadership role as Maple Elementary School District's Superintendent and later join the Kern County Superintendent of Schools Office in 1971. As the 18th Superintendent of Schools for Kern County from 1986 to 1999, Dr. Blanton's leadership made our community's schools stronger, safer, and more modern.

During his life, Dr. Blanton introduced educational policies and programs that continue to benefit children and families in Kern County and across California. He was instrumental in creating alternative education programs which have achieved reduced dropout rates and continue to provide countless students with a second chance to succeed. Dr. Blanton also championed new programs to accommodate physically disabled students and provide internet connectivity to the many rural districts in Kern County. A leader who believed in giving his students and teachers every resource they would need to succeed, it is nearly impossible to find a school in Kern County that does not owe Dr. Blanton a great debt of gratitude. One of his most enduring contributions was the development of the Self-Insured Schools of California, which provides comprehensive insurance policies to schools across California and now the largest public school health pool in the United States. His foresight in establishing this initiative continues to provide affordable and comprehensive healthcare for thousands of educators and their families. He also helped revitalize the heart of the Kern community by both relocating the Kern County Superintendent of Schools office to downtown Bakersfield and also establishing Downtown Elementary School to serve the children of Bakersfield's downtown workers.

Dr. Blanton is preceded in death by his wife Yvonne, whom he was married to for sixty-four years and is survived by his daughter Shelley, son Timothy, and six grandchildren.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to join me as I express our gratitude to Dr. Kelly Blanton for his lasting contributions to our community and state. His legacy will be upheld through the lives of the children he inspired, the educators he empowered, and the communities he enriched.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. JIMMY GOMEZ

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 14, 2025

Mr. GOMEZ. Mr. Speaker, on January 13, 2025, I was not recorded on Roll Call Votes No. 8 and No. 9. Had I been present, I would have voted "YEA" on Roll Call Votes No. 8 and No. 9.

HONORING TEXAS-24 HOMETOWN HERO TINA WASHINGTON

HON. BETH VAN DUYNE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 14, 2025

Ms. VAN DUYNE. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor our Texas-24 Hometown Hero, Tina

Washington. As director of the Fort Worth non-profit Above the Clouds-Texas, Tina is making a remarkable impact by providing free arts education to North Texas children aged 5-17. Her organization is dedicated to supporting financially insecure families through classes like classical ballet, hip-hop and drama, along with the requisite equipment, like ballet shoes and tutus.

Tina and her team at Above the Clouds-Texas, are helping to instill self-discipline, self-control, and higher self-esteem in our youth. The mentorship and growth opportunities help steer young North Texans away from negative influences, empowering them to dream big and work hard to achieve goals.

I commend Tina's steadfast dedication to uplifting families by enriching the lives of North Texas children through the creative arts.

TRIBUTE TO KENTUCKY STATE SENATOR DENISE HARPER ANGEL

HON. MORGAN MCGARVEY

OF KENTUCKY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 14, 2025

Mr. MCGARVEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Kentucky State Senator Denise Harper Angel in recognition of her remarkable 49 years of public service, including 36 years as an elected official.

As a trailblazer and devoted public servant, Senator Harper Angel has demonstrated an exceptional commitment to the well-being of Kentucky's most vulnerable populations. From her historic election as the first woman to serve as Jefferson County Property Valuation Administrator to her distinguished tenure in the Kentucky State Senate, her career has been defined by advocacy, leadership, and meaningful action.

Senator Harper Angel has been instrumental in advancing critical legislation to protect children, seniors, and individuals with disabilities, including the creation of the Kentucky Golden Alert Program, the passage of the SAFE Act, and initiatives addressing youth suicide and sexual violence. Her dedication to justice, accountability, and victim support has left a lasting impact on the Commonwealth of Kentucky.

Through her tireless service on numerous legislative committees, her efforts have strengthened Kentucky's communities, supported victims of crime, and enhanced public safety. Senator Harper Angel's steadfast leadership, from improving forensic processes to increasing compensation for victims, has set a standard of excellence and compassion for public service.

Mr. Speaker, Senator Denise Harper Angel's legacy is a testament to the power of servant leadership, and her work will inspire future generations. I ask that the House of Representatives join me in recognizing her unwavering dedication and relentless commitment to protecting and supporting our Commonwealth's most vulnerable populations and congratulating her on her retirement.

RECOGNIZING BRUCE MCPHERSON FOR HIS DEDICATION AND COMMITMENT TO THE PEOPLE AND STATE OF CALIFORNIA

HON. JIMMY PANETTA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 14, 2025

Mr. PANETTA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Bruce McPherson for his tireless dedication to not only public service but to the people of California. Mr. McPherson was nominated to be the 30th Secretary of State for California and was previously an Assemblyman and a State Senator. However, his career did not begin with politics.

Mr. McPherson was born and raised in Santa Cruz, California. He attended Santa Cruz High and then went on to study at California Polytechnic State University San Luis Obispo. After graduation he worked for the Santa Cruz Sentinel starting as a reporter and eventually rising to the position of editor, after being inspired by his father, Mr. McPherson began his career in public service.

Mr. McPherson was first elected to the California State Assembly in 1993, representing the Monterey Bay region, and later serving two terms in the California State Senate. In both the Assembly and the Senate Mr. McPherson was committed to bipartisanship, often working across the aisle with elected Democrats. In 2005 Mr. McPherson was nominated to replace the former Secretary of State. He was confirmed unanimously by both Democratic-controlled houses of the California State Legislature. As Secretary of State Mr. McPherson oversaw a 500-person department with five offices across the state which managed the state's election system.

Following his time as Secretary of State, Mr. McPherson returned home with the aim of replacing the Fifth District's County supervisor. In 2013 he began his 12-year stint as county supervisor. During this time California underwent the COVID-19 pandemic, the CZU fires, and atmospheric river disasters. His biggest achievement, in his opinion, was the establishment of Central Coast Community Energy, a clean-energy provider that now covers the five counties of the central coast of California.

His time as a public servant has been the highlight of his career. After stepping down from the dais for the final time Mr. McPherson plans to spend more time with his wife of 55 years, Mary, as well as his daughter, son-in-law, and two grandchildren.

HONORING TEXAS-24 HOMETOWN HEROES BRETT ROBERSON AND COREY RATTAN

HON. BETH VAN DUYNE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 14, 2025

Ms. VAN DUYNE. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor our Texas-24 Hometown Heroes, Southlake Officers Brett Roberson and Corey Rattan who have gone above and beyond to serve North Texas students. As first responders, the selfless duo from Carroll ISD have embodied the spirit of North Texas' School Resource Officer (SRO) community through

their dedication to ensuring safe school environments.

The Southlake Kiwanis presented the officers with the distinguished Heart of Service Award in recognition of their efforts to improving the lives of children. After receiving nominations from community members, the Southlake Kiwanis also recognized Officer Roberson of Carroll Middle School as 2023

SRO of the Year and Officer Rattan of Carroll Senior High School as 2024 SRO of the Year.

The Carroll Middle School administration did not fall short in praising Officer Roberson for her profound impact on the school community, highlighting her support on all ends, spanning personal and emergency needs. In the same spirit, Carroll Senior High School principal Christina Benhoff applauded Officer Rattan as

a jack of all trades who serves not only as a mentor but also as a friend and role model to students.

I'm grateful for our North Texas law enforcement community, especially SROs Roberson and Rattan, who are instrumental in keeping our schools safe and supporting students.