

strategist, certified crisis communicator, and former news anchor, she is the founder and CEO of Eleven 11 Communications—a public relations firm rooted in the values of service, inclusion, and impact.

Maria Isabel's career began in media at an early age, with a passion for using her voice to inform and uplift. She made history as the first Latina to anchor a solo evening newscast in Central Florida, serving as anchor of Telemundo's *Noticiero Telemundo Orlando* at 6 p.m. and 11 p.m. Her work in broadcast journalism gave visibility to stories that were too often overlooked—highlighting the struggles, achievements, and resilience of Florida's Latino communities.

Determined to shape narratives from beyond the anchor desk, Maria Isabel launched Eleven 11 Communications, where she has spent over a decade helping public agencies, corporations, and elected officials develop inclusive strategies that reach and reflect the communities they serve. Her portfolio spans civic engagement, health equity, crisis response, and culturally relevant outreach campaigns. Following Hurricane Maria, she became a leading voice for displaced Puerto Ricans, using media and advocacy to connect families with life-saving resources.

She has been named "Ignitor of the Year" by the Hispanic Chamber of Commerce and recognized by the University of Puerto Rico—her alma mater—as one of its most distinguished communications alumni. She has served on several influential boards, including the City of Orlando Municipal Planning Board and the Adult Literacy League, and currently sits on the boards of United Arts and the Elle Collective at Seminole State College, where she champions women-owned businesses and the next generation of leaders of color.

Based in Central Florida, Maria Isabel continues to lead with vision and heart. Her work centers Latino voices in the public conversation, not only ensuring they are heard, but that they help shape the future. A trusted strategist, changemaker, and proud Puerto Rican, Maria Isabel Sanquircó is building a more informed, inclusive, and empowered community—one story at a time.

CELEBRATING LITERACY KC'S
40TH ANNIVERSARY

HON. EMANUEL CLEAVER

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, June 20, 2025

Mr. CLEAVER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Literacy KC, Kansas City's only adult-focused literacy organization, for their exceptional work challenging illiteracy in Missouri's Fifth Congressional District. For forty years, Literacy KC has ceaselessly pursued its mission of promoting literacy for all and has empowered thousands of low-literate individuals through the organization's direct services, advocacy work, and community collaboration initiatives.

Literacy KC was born out of a passion for community engagement and mutual support. In 1985, a group of volunteers led by Catherine Mathews perceived a need for adult literacy services and took the initiative to form a small, literacy tutoring group. Initially, with only a handful of students, the organization worked

out of the basement at Country Club Congregational Church and relied solely on volunteer labor. Mathews affiliated the organization with the National Laubach Literacy Council, which gave the fledgling group access to curriculum and materials. Mathews and her team of unpaid instructors called themselves the Kansas City Laubach Literacy Council before changing their name to Literacy KC.

What began as an ambitious dream eventually became a reality, with the organization hiring an executive director and full-time staff as classroom sizes swelled and funding was secured. Literacy KC has advocated tirelessly for adult education programs since its inception, working to acknowledge and address the barriers low-literate adults face in the workforce and in daily life. Whether via direct service programs or advocacy efforts, Literacy KC seeks to address the consequences of low literacy—including an increased likelihood of poverty, incarceration, and health problems—for the 225,000 adults in the Kansas City area that are classified as low-literate.

Literacy education provides innumerable benefits, both to individuals and to our society at large. Greater literacy rates are correlated with higher levels of economic output, improved health outcomes, heightened civic participation, and decreased crime levels. Beyond practical considerations, the ability to read opens a portal of knowledge, discovery, and imagination that can transport readers across time, throughout space, and beyond reality. Literacy KC does not just focus on the downstream consequences of illiteracy, but works with thousands of students each year to tap into the wellspring of opportunities that literacy provides, empowering learners with the tools needed to improve their own lives.

Mr. Speaker, please join me in celebrating the work that Literacy KC has done to improve literacy rates throughout Missouri's Fifth Congressional District. Since 1985, Literacy KC has offered hope to people in challenging situations and acted as a springboard for individuals that receive their services, propelling them to new heights. Whether helping students obtain their GEDs, study for citizenship exams, or pursue job-specific certifications, their services have left an indelible mark on our community, bringing great meaning, fulfillment, and empowerment to the lives of thousands. As we mark Literacy KC's 40th anniversary this year, I am proud to commemorate their work and champion their mission of literacy for all.

HONORING ROBERTO SMITH AS A
DISTINGUISHED LEADER IN CENTRAL
FLORIDA FOR CARIBBEAN
HERITAGE MONTH

HON. DARREN SOTO

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, June 20, 2025

Mr. SOTO. Mr. Speaker, Roberto Smith has dedicated his career to advancing technology and improving lives within the community. With over two decades of experience in the information technology field, Roberto has been a driving force in implementing modern, secure, and efficient technological solutions.

Since beginning his IT career in 2001, Roberto has earned industry certifications in

computer networking and systems engineering, solidifying his expertise in designing, managing, and optimizing IT infrastructures. In 2012, he joined the City of St. Cloud as a network engineer, where his dedication and technical acumen led to his promotion to network manager and later, IT director.

As IT director, Roberto has spearheaded numerous initiatives that have enhanced the city's technological landscape. Under his leadership, the implementation of Microsoft 365 has provided city employees with robust collaboration tools, improving efficiency and communication across departments. The adoption of Cloud-based Phone System has modernized the city's communication systems, ensuring seamless connectivity for residents and city staff alike.

Recognizing the importance of cybersecurity in an increasingly digital world, Roberto has successfully introduced Multifactor Authentication (MFA) and Zero Trust Network frameworks to safeguard city systems and protect sensitive data. These innovations have strengthened cybersecurity measures, ensuring that residents' information remains secure while allowing for safer, more resilient digital services.

Roberto's vision extends beyond technology—it is rooted in a commitment to empowering the community through innovation. His work has streamlined city operations, enhanced digital accessibility for residents, and reinforced security in public services. His dedication to improving lives through technology exemplifies the values celebrated during Caribbean American Heritage Month, making him a deserving honoree recognized for his outstanding contributions.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. ABRAHAM J. HAMADEH

OF ARIZONA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, June 20, 2025

Mr. HAMADEH of Arizona. Mr. Speaker, due to attending a funeral, I was unable to be present for Roll Call No. 156 on H.R. 2966, the American Entrepreneurs First Act.

Had I been present, I would have voted YEA on Roll Call No. 156—H.R. 2966, American Entrepreneurs First Act.

HONORING ABISMAEL ABREU AS A
DISTINGUISHED LEADER IN CENTRAL
FLORIDA FOR CARIBBEAN
HERITAGE MONTH

HON. DARREN SOTO

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, June 20, 2025

Mr. SOTO. Mr. Speaker, Abismael Abreu is a public servant, community leader, and proud Osceola County resident who has dedicated his career to building a stronger, more connected Central Florida.

Originally from the Dominican Republic, Mr. Abreu arrived in Osceola County at the age of 14. A graduate of Osceola High School, he has grown from a young immigrant student into a trusted leader in local government, demonstrating that with opportunity, hard work,

and service to the community, anything is possible.

Mr. Abreu currently serves as the strategic initiatives administrator in the City Manager's Office for the City of St. Cloud. In this capacity, he manages the City's Strategic Planning Program, oversees critical interdepartmental initiatives, and leads high-priority projects aligned with the City's long-term goals. His leadership has resulted in over \$20 million in new infrastructure projects focused on public safety and parks, as well as the successful ac-

quisition of \$2 million in grant funding for essential stormwater improvements.

Throughout his career in municipal government, Mr. Abreu has championed innovation, efficiency, and transparency. He was instrumental in launching St. Cloud's Strategic Performance Management Program, streamlining business permitting processes, and expanding access to digital services for residents and entrepreneurs. Mr. Abreu holds a Master of Public Administration and a Bachelor of Arts in Political Science from the University of Central Florida. He is also a graduate of Leadership

Osceola and a Certified Public Manager candidate.

In addition to his professional work, he serves on the Board of Directors for the Osceola County Council on Aging and holds active membership in the International City/County Management Association, the Florida City/County Management Association, and the American Planning Association. Mr. Abreu exemplifies public service grounded in community, accountability, and forward-looking leadership.