

RECOGNIZING THE 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF AN HISTORIC ATHLETIC ACHIEVEMENT IN THE HISTORY OF THE LOUISIANA HIGH SCHOOL ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION (LHSAA)

HON. TROY A. CARTER

OF LOUISIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 10, 2025

Mr. CARTER of Louisiana. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to humbly honor and celebrate the heroic accomplishment of the Saint Augustine High School 1975 Football Team, proudly located in Louisiana's 2nd Congressional District, of which I represent in Louisiana.

From 1951, its first year as a Catholic high school in New Orleans, through the mid-1960s, St. Augustine excelled in three major varsity sports: football, basketball and track and field. But the school, opened under the administration of New Orleans Archbishop Joseph Francis Rummel, was relegated to competing in the Louisiana Interscholastic Athletic and Literary Organization (LIALO) during the closing era of segregation.

Its principal, Josephite Father Robert Grant, wanted more for his athletes. He wanted them to compete against the city's other Catholic schools, who were members of the Louisiana High School Athletic Association. His first attempt came in 1962 when Father Grant wrote to the principals of the five schools—Jesuit, St. Aloysius, Holy Cross, De La Salle and Redemptorist—asking them to compete against St. Aug on an interscholastic sports level. He thought that would be possible because the Archdiocese of New Orleans had already desegregated its elementary schools.

No one accepted the invitation. But there was one reply, by De La Salle principal, Christian Brother Cassian. It was painfully blunt: "Father, personally, I am not one to rush into situations which may not be to my advantage and to those associated with me. For years, I have refused to play certain high school teams on the basis that there was nothing to gain by such competition. This is how I feel about your request to play De La Salle. Time may change my attitude."

Mr. Clarence Jupiter, who would go on to become a top administrator at Xavier University, championed the cause by asking why St. Augustine and Xavier Preparatory, which competed in major boys' sports, were not allowed to play their white Catholic counterparts? These institutions developed All-Americans and future pros and perform exceptionally well. Yet the fans never saw these schools compete against the other five. On the surface, little was happening to change the situation, but Father Grant was tirelessly working behind the scenes.

In June 1964, Fr. Grant notified Archbishop John Cody that he would seek admittance to the LHSAA, to establish athletic relations with the other Catholic high schools in the archdiocese. He also notified those schools of his plan, asking them to include St. Aug on their basketball, baseball and track and field schedules for the 1964–65 school year.

Father Grant had no delusions that LHSAA Commissioner T.H. "Muddy" Waters would greet his request with open arms. And he was right. Jesuit principal Father C.J. Stallworth, who had served on the LHSAA executive

committee for seven years, said he would do what he could to assist St. Augustine, but added it would be helpful to him to have Sister Madalena of Xavier Prep also apply for admission to bolster his request.

Father Grant faced resistance from other Catholic schools, whose coaches set the athletic schedules. The Catholic League coaches ignored the two LIALO schools when they set the schedules for 1964–65. The CYO tournament and Knights of Columbus track meet also kept their events segregated.

At the January 1965 annual meeting, the LHSAA denied St. Augustine's membership request but amended its constitution to allow LHSAA and LIALO schools to compete against each other.

A year later, Rummel, Shaw and Cor Jesu were admitted by a two-thirds vote of LHSAA principals; St. Aug was not. Although the local Catholic school principals voted to admit the school into their district by a 5–3 count, the vote of LHSAA principals numbered 11 years, 185 days. The rest is history.

St. Augustine gained entry through a federal court suit in 1966, the CYO allowed St. Augustine and Xavier Prep to compete in its tournament, and the Knights of Columbus ceased running its annual track and field meet.

On Friday, December 12, 1975, in Strawberry Stadium, located on the campus of Southeastern Louisiana in Hammond, Louisiana, the Saint Augustine High School Purple Knights achieved their first state title in the Louisiana High School Athletic Association (LHSAA)—the all-white athletic league that St. Aug integrated through winning a Federal Court case in 1967.

St. Augustine has won state championships in football, basketball and track over the years. Xavier Prep became an all-girls school a few years after joining the LHSAA.

The LIALO became a defunct organization in 1969. Its members joined the LHSAA. Almost every high school in the LHSAA has a mixed enrollment.

Team Roster Included: Virgil Alexis, Michael Ben, Winston Burns, Ken Cobette, Gary Craddock, Oyd Craddock, Charles Cross, Donald Davis, Kurt Davis, Travis Duroncelet, Joseph Evans, Greg Fernandez, Bernard Gaines, Zachary Gaston, Henry Gibson, Derek Gray, Raymond Gray, Marty Griffin, Richard Harleaux, Louis Holmes, Arthur Hunter, Harold Jackson, Walter Lain, Sidney Lawrence, Thaddeus Lee, Stephen McNair, Michael Moody, Keith Moore, Elliot Muhammad (Boisdore), Louis Oubre, Larry Parker, Tyrone Parker, Burnell Quinn, Eric Richard, Victor Richard, Michael Roussell, Tyrone Smith, Gary Washington, Christopher Willard, Alan Williams, Wydell Williams, Rynell Wilson.

Deceased Team Members: Joseph Broussard, Nathaniel Dorsey, John Doucette, Alan Florent, Percy Gibson, Arthur Hagan, Byron Honore, Ronnie James, Jerome Mazique, Alvin Reed, George Robertson, Daryl Smith, Renard Smith, Brian Thompson, Fredrick Thornton.

Coaching Staff: Ronald Arceneaux, Anthony Biagas, Eddie Flint, Daryl McConduit (Deceased), Anthony Simmons (Deceased), Otis Washington—Head Coach (Deceased).

PURPLE KNIGHT DISTRICT & STATE PLAYOFF RECORD

George Washington Carver, 33–0
John McDonogh, 21–0
Joseph S. Clark, 51–0
Jesuit 35–7
Archbishop Rummel, 19–6

Holy Cross, 41–7
DeLaSalle, 33–0
Chalmette, 34–0
Archbishop Shaw, 26–0
Brother Martin, 7–0

STATE PLAYOFFS

George Washington Carver **, 29–8
West Jefferson **, 14–6
South Lafourche, 20–7
Sulphur, 11–10
Covington, 35–13

** First 2 high school games held in the LA Superdome—40k in attendance

The team's historic 15–0 season record not only affirmed St. Aug could excel, but it could dominate in the face of adversity. The team's performance both uplifted the high school and the entire Black community in New Orleans and around the state. The team was ranked No. 1 all season, was first in LHSAA to achieve 15–0 record, and first to play in the Louisiana Superdome. For the season, the team outscored opponents 409 points to 64 points and held opponents scoreless in 7 games. That year, eleven (11) team members received football scholarships to Division 1 Universities. Currently, over 30 athletes have advanced to the National Football League, the largest total than any high school in the United States of America.

Law and Hope are the names of the streets between which St. Augustine High School has been located for 74 years. More appropriate symbols would be difficult to find as so much of this school speaks of Divine Providence. I congratulate the St. Augustine High School Purple Knights, the 1975 Championship Football Team, and those that continue the mission of the Josephite Fathers and Brothers. Rise Sons of the Gold and Purple.

COMMEMORATING THE REDEDICATION OF THE EBENEZER BAPTIST CHURCH

HON. STEPHEN F. LYNCH

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 10, 2025

Mr. LYNCH. Mr. Speaker, it is my honor to rise today to commemorate the rededication of the new church edifice the Ebenezer Baptist Church in Boston, Massachusetts. Today, we also celebrate as they embark on a new journey, under the direction of Reverend Carl B. Thompson, to continue their legacy of ministry in the Town of Abington. I join with the church community in welcoming the Reverend Dr. Jonathan McReynolds to Massachusetts as we mark this momentous occasion in the church's history.

While the Ebenezer Baptist Church was formally recognized in 1871, the church's history began years earlier. Former slaves from the Brandon Plantation in Prince Georges County, Virginia, arrived at Long Wharf in Boston on September 15, 1847. Initially, group meetings for song and prayer service were held in the kitchen of Mrs. Martha Jones. In subsequent years in a hall at 1060 Washington Street, children gathered for Sunday school and adults learned reading, writing and "good citizenship." Mrs. Jones' kitchen prayer services transformed into Sunday evening preaching services with Reverend Randolph, the church's first pastor and founder.

Since its inception, the church has served not only as a house of worship, but also as a

central hub where Boston's Black community gather for organizing and education. Generations of congregants have joined together over the decades for worship and fellowship, deepening their personal Christian commitment and call to civic action.

Despite the uncertainty during and since the COVID-19 Pandemic in 2020, the unwavering faith of its congregants and leadership carried the church through four years of temporary locations. In Abington, Massachusetts, the Ebenezer Baptist Church has found its way home.

It has been Reverend Thompson's steadfast leadership, vision and heart that have led the church community through these sometimes difficult and emotional transitions. As noted in his biography, Reverend Thompson "is truly an added blessing to the life and ministry of the Ebenezer Baptist Church."

Mr. Speaker, it is my honor to recognize the impact and legacy of the Ebenezer Baptist Church, as an African American congregation, as the church expands its roots into the Town of Abington and surrounding communities. I ask that my colleagues in Congress and friends throughout Massachusetts join me in wishing the church much success in all its new endeavors.

**RECOGNIZING MR. JOHN MODDIE
ON HIS 100TH BIRTHDAY AND
FOR HIS SERVICE WITH THE
590TH FIELD ARTILLERY**

HON. JACK BERGMAN

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 10, 2025

Mr. BERGMAN. Mr. Speaker, it is my distinct honor to recognize Mr. John Moddie on his 100th birthday and to commend him for his valiant service with the United States Army as a member of the 590th Field Artillery Battalion, 106th Infantry Division during World War II.

At just 18 years old, while working as a stock clerk at Peterson Boat Works in Sturgeon Bay, Wisconsin, Mr. Moddie answered the call to serve his country by enlisting in the U.S. Army. Following basic training at Camp Roberts, California, he was assigned to B Battery of the 590th Field Artillery Battalion, 106th Infantry Division at Camp Atterbury, Indiana. Excelling in his training on the 105 mm Howitzer, Mr. Moddie set sail for England to prepare for deployment to the Western Front.

On the morning of November 30, 1944, Mr. Moddie and his battalion crossed the English Channel to Le Havre, France, where they awaited orders to move up the Seine River into Germany to take part in what would become the Battle of the Bulge—the second-most deadly battle of the war for American troops. On December 19, 1944, he was captured by German forces and held at Stalag 9B in Bad Orb, Germany, as a prisoner of war. Despite enduring extreme conditions and losing nearly half his body weight, he survived until liberation by Allied forces on April 2, 1945.

Mr. Speaker, Mr. Moddie's life is a testament to courage, sacrifice, and patriotism. Let us honor him for his extraordinary service to our Nation, his devotion to his fellow servicemembers, and his steadfast commitment to family and community. On behalf of Michigan's 1st Congressional District, I wish

him a joyous 100th birthday and extend the gratitude of a Nation, he so bravely served.

**RECOGNIZING THE WORK OF
ROBERT PHILLIPS**

HON. JASMINE CROCKETT

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 10, 2025

Ms. CROCKETT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor an exceptional member of our community, Mr. Robert Phillips, the recipient of D Magazine's Volunteer of the Year Award.

For more than two decades, Mr. Phillips has dedicated thousands of hours to serving low-income families through the Ferguson Road Initiative's Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) Program. His unwavering commitment to accurate, free tax preparation has made him a cornerstone of this vital effort—and a source of immense pride for our district.

As both a tax preparer and site coordinator at two VITA locations, Mr. Phillips has helped thousands of individuals and families navigate the tax system—even during the height of the COVID-19 pandemic, when many other sites were forced to close. Thanks to his dedication, and that of fellow volunteers, the program has completed over 17,900 tax returns, returned more than \$3.3 million to the community, and saved taxpayers an estimated \$300,000 in fees.

Mr. Phillips' selfless service and steadfast leadership have helped ensure financial stability for countless Dallas residents. He has also mentored and supported fellow volunteers, strengthening the very fabric of our community.

I am deeply grateful for Robert's contributions and proud to represent him in Congress. I congratulate him on this well-deserved recognition and wish him continued success in all his endeavors.

**RECOGNIZING COLORADO STATE
CHAMPIONS, THE GRAND MESA
LITTLE LEAGUE SENIOR ALL-
STARS**

HON. JEFF HURD

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 10, 2025

Mr. HURD of Colorado. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize a remarkable group of young men and their coaches from Western Colorado, the Grand Mesa Senior All Stars baseball team.

This summer, these players, ages 14 to 16, won the Colorado Senior Little League State Championship in Grand Junction. They went on to compete in California for the regional title against some of the best teams in the West, proudly representing Colorado with grit and determination.

The team brings together players from across our district, including Grand Junction, Clifton, Palisade, Parachute, and Rifle. They first captured the district championship and then fought their way through the state finals, defeating two tough Denver-area teams to claim back-to-back state titles—their third in just four years.

Their success is built not only on talent but also on the dedication of their coaches, the support of their families, and the spirit of their communities. I am proud of these young men and honored to celebrate the Grand Mesa Senior All Stars for the way they represented the Western Slope and the State of Colorado.

**CONGRATULATING THE TOMLINS,
THE 2025 OKALOOSA COUNTY
FARM FAMILY OF THE YEAR**

HON. JIMMY PATRONIS

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 10, 2025

Mr. PATRONIS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the Tomlin family of Crestview, Florida, who have been named the 2025 Okaloosa County Outstanding Farm Family of the Year. This recognition is part of the Okaloosa County Farm Bureau's 75th Annual Membership Meeting, a gathering that celebrates the strength of our agricultural community.

Cory and Jennifer Tomlin, together with their children Harper, Hadley, and Haylyn, represent the very best of Florida agriculture. Their family has carried forward a proud legacy of fanning that began in 1982 when Jennifer's grandfather, Mr. Joe Bundrick, established their beekeeping operation. Today, with the guidance of Mr. Bundrick and the leadership of Jennifer's father, Ken, the Tomlins manage about 400 hives annually. Their farm produces honey, provides pollinator services, and serves the community through both wholesale and retail operations, including a storefront offering honey and beekeeping supplies.

The Tomlin family's dedication goes well beyond their farm. Jennifer serves as the Children's Ministry Leader at Dorcas Baptist Church, Harper is an active 4-H member, and every member of the family contributes to the success of their agricultural operation. Together, they exemplify the values of faith, family, and stewardship that sustain rural communities across America.

Four generations have worked this farm, and the Tomlins are committed to ensuring it continues for generations to come. Their story reflects not only the resilience of farm families in Northwest Florida but also the essential role of agriculture in our Nation's future.

On behalf of the United States Congress, I commend the Tomlin family for their outstanding contributions to agriculture and community life. They are most deserving of this year's recognition as the Okaloosa County Farm Family of the Year.

**CONGRATULATING SOUTH DAKOTA'S
AIR NATIONAL GUARD'S
114TH FIGHTER WING**

HON. DUSTY JOHNSON

OF SOUTH DAKOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 10, 2025

Mr. JOHNSON of South Dakota. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the South Dakota Air National Guard's 114th Fighter Wing, which recently received three top national honors at the National Guard Association of the