

longtime member of the Knights of Columbus and the St. Patrick's Men's Club.

He devoted over four decades to LULAC serving as District 14 director and president of Council No. 12, co-founding the Señor Internacional program, and creating the "Lo Mejor de lo Nuestro" award.

His dedication to youth and education earned him recognition from schools, civic organizations, and his peers, including honors such as "Tejano Achiever," Rotary's "Service Above Self," the Laredo Bar Association's Liberty Bell Award, and the title of "Tiger Legend."

He also gave 44 years of service to the Laredo International Fair and Exposition, where he was named "Rancher of the Year," and was appointed by Governors Dolph Briscoe, Ann Richards, and George W. Bush to the South Texas Workforce Commission.

He loved ranching at the family's Santa Teresa Ranch in Ramireño, where he spent his spare time.

Judge Martinez retired in 2014, and in recognition of his lifetime of service, Webb County named the Precinct Four Justice Center in his honor.

His legacy will be remembered in the youth programs he created, the civic institutions he strengthened, and the countless lives he touched.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in celebrating the life of Judge Oscar O. Martinez, Sr.—a devoted husband, father, veteran, public servant, and proud Laredoan who leaves behind a legacy of service above self.

#### HONORING RAFAEL MONTEIRO AS A DISTINGUISHED LEADER IN CENTRAL FLORIDA FOR HIS PANIC HERITAGE MONTH

##### HON. DARREN SOTO

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, September 26, 2025*

Mr. SOTO. Mr. Speaker, Rafael Monteiro is a C-level executive and entrepreneur with extensive experience in business development and management in the media and entertainment industry.

Monteiro also served as an executive at Discovery Networks in Miami and as the general manager of a full-service advertising agency, which serviced the multicultural market. He is also one of the pioneers of pan-regional media advertising and sales consolidation in the U.S.

In 2000, Monteiro joined Terra Networks USA (NASDAQ: TRRA) and helped evangelize digital media and advertising automation in the U.S. Hispanic market. In 2007, Rafael ventured into entrepreneurship and founded Hola Networks and HOD, successfully introducing an automated digital ad network model that enabled Fortune 500 companies to efficiently enhance targeting and diversity in their marketing strategies and streaming content distribution.

Rafael Monteiro also served as the president of the Digital Media Committee at the Advertising Agency Association (AHAA) and as a board member/CDO of Amcor Media.

#### CELEBRATING THE 75TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE BUFFALO (NY) CHAPTER OF THE LINKS, INC.

##### HON. TIMOTHY M. KENNEDY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, September 26, 2025*

Mr. KENNEDY of New York. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize the Buffalo, New York Chapter of The Links, Inc., which is proudly celebrating its seventy-fifth anniversary. Established in 1945 by Ms. Margaret Russell Hawkins and Ms. Sarah Strickland Scott, The Links, Inc. is a national, not-for-profit civic sorority organization dedicated to serving communities both locally and globally. With nearly 300 chapters across the United States and internationally, The Links, Inc. proudly includes 17,000 members who continuously work together to create a lasting impact on our society.

Organized in Buffalo, New York, on May 26, 1950, as the fourteenth chapter of The Links, Inc., the Buffalo Chapter members have been dedicated to improving the community throughout Western New York. For seven and a half decades, Buffalo Chapter members have focused their support on addressing the critical needs of underserved communities and serving a pivotal role in the fight for racial and social justice.

As they celebrate their seventy-fifth anniversary, providing a valuable opportunity to strengthen connections and further their mission—"Built on Purpose, Bonded by Friendship, Driven by Service"—they honor the legacies of those who came before them, cultivate long-lasting friendships, and inspire future generations to lead with unwavering dedication to their community.

Mr. Speaker, it is an honor to recognize the members of the Buffalo, New York Chapter of The Links, Inc. for their outstanding commitment to friendship, service, legacy, and community enrichment. Their work has touched countless lives, and we are all the better for it.

#### HONORING MRS. AROOSTINE SHESTON AND MR. NAM NGUYEN

##### HON. EUGENE SIMON VINDMAN

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, September 26, 2025*

Mr. VINDMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate Mrs. Aroostine Sheston and her student, Nam Nguyen, of Brooke Point High School in Stafford County, Virginia, for their outstanding participation in the 2025 Young People's Continental Congress.

Mrs. Sheston and Mr. Nguyen were among only 56 distinguished teachers and students from across the nation who were selected to participate in this extraordinary program. In commemoration of the 250th anniversary of the First Continental Congress, the Carpenters' Company, which preserves and stewards historic Carpenters' Hall in Philadelphia, launched this initiative to engage young people and educators around our country to understand the history and meaning of our nation's founding.

In July 2025, delegates from 28 states gathered at Carpenters' Hall, just as the Founders

did to deliberate, debate, and reflect on the ideals of our democracy. Over the course of six days, Mrs. Sheston and Mr. Nguyen immersed themselves in historic sites, participated in rigorous discussions, and joined their peers in drafting their own "Declaration of Aspirations." This declaration, written in the spirit of the Continental Congress, speaks powerfully to the hopes and commitments of a new generation of leaders.

The Young People's Continental Congress is a National Partner Program of America250, developed in partnership with National History Day. Delegates, such as Mrs. Sheston and Mr. Nguyen, were chosen through a highly competitive process, beginning their work months in advance with virtual seminars and assignments before convening in person. Their dedication to this process reflects the vitality of civic learning and the enduring importance of the democratic experiment they studied.

I am especially proud of Mrs. Sheston and Mr. Nguyen for representing Virginia with skill, passion, and integrity. They embody the best of Brooke Point High School, the Stafford County community, and the Commonwealth. With their commitment to scholarship and civic engagement, they remind us that the legacy of 1776 continues to inspire and guide future generations.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating Mrs. Aroostine Sheston and Mr. Nam Nguyen for their remarkable achievement and in celebrating the Young People's Continental Congress, which so fittingly carries forward the spirit of America's founding into our nation's 250th anniversary commemoration.

#### RECOGNIZING THE ECUMENICAL PATRIARCH OF CONSTANTINOPLE

##### HON. PAUL TONKO

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, September 26, 2025*

Mr. TONKO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize The Ecumenical Patriarch of Constantinople, His All Holiness Bartholomew, who was recently selected for the revered Templeton Prize by the John Templeton Foundation. The Foundation recognizes pioneers of scientific and spiritual insight for their contributions to human well-being and spiritual prosperity. Previous award recipients include Mother Teresa, Archbishop Desmond Tutu, and Nelson Mandela. On behalf of New York's 20th Congressional District, I congratulate His All Holiness Bartholomew on receiving this great honor.

He is the spiritual leader, and the Primus inter Pares—First among Equals—of Orthodox Christianity worldwide, a Church of 300 million people. Named as one of the world's most influential people by Time Magazine, His All Holiness is an exemplary leader who seeks to build bridges across different religions. He works tirelessly to bring together Christians, Jews, and Muslims for the purpose of advancing greater cooperation and mutual understanding. An advocate for peace, His All Holiness has called for an end to the hostilities between Ukraine and Russia.

He is known worldwide as the "Green Patriarch" as he makes conscious efforts to support clean air legislation. I feel grateful that His

All Holiness uses his authority to raise environmental awareness, and I'm proud to stand beside him to create sustainable future together. On behalf of my constituents and my colleagues here in Washington, I thank His All Holiness for his bravery, guidance, and testimony. I hope that his visit will bring us together in the spirit of service and encourage us to live with humility, fairness, and compassion.

CONGRATULATING MS. MARYAM AZARION ON HER RETIREMENT AFTER MORE THAN 25 YEARS OF FEDERAL SERVICE

### HON. JAMIE RASKIN

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, September 26, 2025

Mr. RASKIN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a dedicated public servant. Ms. Maryam Azarion has given over 26 years of her career to serving our Nation's veterans and advancing scientific innovation across the federal government.

Maryam began her career as a microbiologist and inventor before finding her way to the law and federal service. She has dedicated her professional life to making government a force for good, one that drives progress and innovation and provides exceptional care to our Nation's veterans.

For nearly 20 years at the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), Maryam brought her expertise in science and the law to the VA's senior leadership. As a Staff Attorney for the VA's Office of General Counsel, Maryam was in charge of giving legal advice about research agreements, intellectual property licensing and smart phone application submissions.

After her first five years at the VA, Maryam saw an emerging need to create a legal team devoted to health research and innovation. Maryam was entrusted with the responsibility of nurturing the VA's first Specialty Team Advising Research (STAR), which she led with distinction from 2012 until her retirement this year. Her leadership at STAR has improved the quality of life for our Nation's veterans, spurred health care business development and encouraged innovation across our government.

Medical innovations are only lifesaving and life-changing if new technology and treatments can reach hospitals and clinics and if the veterans who need care can afford them. Maryam's vision and expertise helped facilitate the transfer of technologies developed within federal agencies to public, private and non-profit partners.

Maryam developed her expertise in technology transfer after beginning her career as a microbiologist and researcher at the U.S. Army Medical Research Institute of Infectious Diseases. Discovering a passion for technology transfer and a talent for the intersection of science and the law, she lent her expertise to the U.S. Army Medical Research and Materiel Command and the Naval Research Laboratory.

A Marylander to her bones, Maryam prepared for this remarkable career at the Free State's world class colleges and universities. She's earned degrees at the University of Maryland-College Park, Hood College, and the

University of Baltimore School of Law. On behalf of a grateful Nation and the residents of Maryland's beautiful 8th District, I wish Maryam Azarion nothing but the best as she begins a new chapter in her life after her decades of federal service.

CELEBRATING THE 90TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE COLORED MUSICIANS CLUB

### HON. TIMOTHY M. KENNEDY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, September 26, 2025

Mr. KENNEDY of New York. Mr. Speaker, I rise to celebrate the 90th Anniversary of the Colored Musicians Club, a historic beacon of light and entertainment in Buffalo, New York. As we honor this momentous occasion, may we reflect on the club's incredible history, its unwavering commitment to spreading African-American musical culture, and the transformative impact it has had on the lives of countless individuals throughout Western New York and across the globe.

Chartered on May 14, 1935, the Colored Musicians Club incorporated space for musicians to practice, rehearse and perform. The club, separate from their union, Local 533, gave members the opportunity to have a place to call their own in Buffalo, New York. Nearly six and half decades later, the Colored Musicians Club was designated a preservation site, and today, remains as the only operating African-American musicians club within the United States.

As the organization celebrates its ninetieth anniversary, providing a valuable opportunity to strengthen connections and further their mission "to stimulate its members to greater musical expression; to encourage and develop a fuller appreciation of music on the part of its members and the public; and generally to unite its members in the bonds of friendship, good fellowship and mutual understanding," they honor the legacies of members who came before them, cultivate long-lasting friendships, and inspire future generations of musicians to play and lead with unwavering dedication to their craft; ensuring that the spirit of music lives on through every note they play.

Mr. Speaker, as we celebrate ninety years of African-American musical culture, let us honor the countless musicians and guests who have been touched by the musical selections of those who performed. Congratulations to the Colored Musicians Club on this significant milestone. Their unwavering dedication to community members and visitors throughout Western New York will be seen, felt, and heard for generations to come, and we are all the better for it.

HONORING ISRAEL MARTIN AS A DISTINGUISHED LEADER IN CENTRAL FLORIDA FOR HISPANIC HERITAGE MONTH

### HON. DARREN SOTO

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, September 26, 2025

Mr. SOTO. Mr. Speaker, Israel Martin is originally from Cuba, but now lives and serves

in the United States. He lives with his wife, Dody, with whom he has been married for 28 years. They have three children: Daniel, Claudia, and Helem. All three are married, and they have two granddaughters who are half-Cuban and half-Venezuelan, as well as one grandson who is also half-Cuban and half-Venezuelan.

In Cuba, Israel served as a pastor, Christian leader, and educator. He was the academic dean of the Baptist Theological Seminary of Havana, the oldest Evangelical seminary in the country, and founder and president of the Cuban School of Evangelical Studies (ECETE), the last seminary established in Cuba that was legally recognized. In the United States, he serves as pastor of the Hispanic Ministry of First Baptist Orlando, a mega-church of the Southern Baptist Convention, and as president of the Baptist University of Florida in Spanish. He also teaches doctoral-level classes at Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Dallas Theological Seminary, and Florida Christian University.

Israel obtained an engineering degree from ISPJAE in Havana and a bachelor's degree in theology and pastoral ministry from the Baptist Theological Seminary of Havana. He also pursued master's studies in Cuba and Guatemala. Finally, he is currently working on the dissertation phase of his third doctorate, a Ph.D. in Bible Exposition at Liberty University. Previously, he had obtained a Ph.D. in Theological Education at SETECA and a D.Min. in Hispanic Ministry Leadership at DTS.

Israel's favorite hobbies are reading and watching good movies. He also enjoys spending time with his family and home life.

HONORING JACKIE THOMAS, ALYSSA STYLES, AND MAKAYLA THOMAS

### HON. CHUCK EDWARDS

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, September 26, 2025

Mr. EDWARDS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Yancey County residents Jackie Thomas, Alyssa Styles, and Makayla Thomas for their extraordinary service and selfless dedication in the devastating aftermath of Hurricane Helene.

When disaster struck and resources were scarce, Jackie, Director of Yancey County Senior Center stepped forward. Under his leadership, the Senior Center became a hub for first responders working around the clock across the county. Recognizing the urgent need, Jackie organized meal preparation and distribution directly from the center, ensuring that our first responders had the strength and sustenance to continue their lifesaving work.

In the days that followed, Makayla and Alyssa arrived at the Senior Center seeking supplies. Seeing the effort underway, they immediately volunteered to help. Together, this small but determined team worked 18-hour days preparing meals, coordinating supplies, and supporting both first responders and neighbors in need. Their service was essential to the emergency response and serves as a shining example of the resilience and generosity that defines Yancey County.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in expressing our deep gratitude to Jackie,