

HONORING CRAIG MOORE AS A DISTINGUISHED LEADER IN CENTRAL FLORIDA FOR BLACK HISTORY MONTH

HON. DARREN SOTO

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 17, 2026

Mr. SOTO. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor Craig Moore. He serves as Chief Executive Officer of AdventHealth Kissimmee, providing executive leadership for one of Osceola County's largest and most vital health care campuses serving residents across Florida's 9th Congressional District. Guided by AdventHealth's faith-based mission to extend the healing ministry of Christ, Moore is committed to ensuring access to compassionate, high-quality, whole-person care for the communities he serves.

Moore brings more than 30 years of experience within AdventHealth, a nonprofit health care system dedicated to caring for the whole person—body, mind, and spirit. He began his career with the organization while still in high school and has since served in a wide range of clinical and operational leadership roles across acute care, home health, outpatient, and hospital operations. Prior to becoming CEO, he served as Chief Operating Officer at AdventHealth Kissimmee, guiding the campus through a period of growth and transformation. Under Moore's leadership, the campus undertook a multiyear expansion totaling more than \$100 million in investment to enhance access and readiness for patients across Osceola County. In addition, these efforts expanded specialty services, enhanced facilities, and added off-site emergency care, while also creating new jobs for local residents. Together, these initiatives contributed to improving patient safety, quality outcomes, and a stronger care experience for families across the county.

Beyond the hospital campus, Moore is actively engaged in the Osceola County community. He serves on the board of the Osceola Council on Aging, supporting programs that promote independence, dignity, and access to services for older adults. He is known for a listening-first leadership approach guided by the principle, "Seek first to understand, then to be understood," emphasizing collaboration with caregivers, physicians, and community partners.

Moore holds bachelor's and master's degrees in physical therapy from Andrews University and an MBA from the University of Central Florida.

HONORING DENIELLE BARNHARDT AS A DISTINGUISHED LEADER IN CENTRAL FLORIDA FOR BLACK HISTORY MONTH

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Mr. SOTO. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor Denielle Barnhardt, a pastor, educator, and arts advocate whose work has significantly impacted families and students throughout Osceola County and Florida's 9th Congressional District.

She is the co-founder and senior pastor of The Way Worship Church, where she leads alongside her husband, Jaquan, with a family-centered pastoral model that views the family as the prototype for the church and community life. Together, they are raising four beautiful children.

In 2013, Barnhardt founded Mrs. B's Music and Performing Arts Training, and since 2017, she has worked intentionally to expand access to high-quality arts education across Osceola and Orange Counties. Through seasons of growth and challenge, including the COVID-19 pandemic, she used the arts to keep families connected, students engaged, and communities resilient. Her efforts have led to the establishment of musical theater programs in schools and community settings, as well as strategic partnerships that connect children to quality arts programs and educational pathways through preparation and mentorship.

Barnhardt has also served as a startup consultant, strategist, and curriculum developer for multiple private and micro-schools in Osceola County, helping to launch and strengthen innovative educational models rooted in excellence and community need. She currently serves as a PAX coordinator, facilitating and overseeing cultural exchange initiatives that promote global understanding among students in the United States and abroad. She recently launched The Hall Institute, a Bible college focused on theological education and leadership formation.

With a background in the arts, Barnhardt received arts education from primary school through high school and has performed on world-renowned stages, including Radio City Music Hall, Broadway, and other major venues. Combined with her foundation in general education and a Master of Divinity in Church History, she bridges creative formation, historical theology, and pastoral leadership with rare interdisciplinary depth.

She will soon step into the Navy Reserve Chaplaincy, expanding her service to support service members and their families, and continuing her commitment to faith, education, and community leadership in Central Florida.

RECOGNIZING REBECCA SAWYER SMITH

HON. BRITTANY PETTERSEN

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 17, 2026

Ms. PETTERSEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to thank Rebecca Sawyer Smith of Lakewood, Colorado for her 38 years of service within the Department of Veterans Affairs and congratulate her on her retirement.

Rebecca began her federal government career as a graduate student at The George Washington University in Washington, D.C., when she joined the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs. Over the course of nearly four decades, she served in a variety of roles within the VA, including Public Affairs Officer, Coach, and member of the Public Contact Team. Her career took her to communities on both coasts and throughout the central United States before concluding in Lakewood, Colorado, where she retired at the end of 2025.

Throughout her distinguished career, Rebecca dedicated herself to serving those who

have served our country. She worked tirelessly to ensure veterans received the benefits and services they earned, providing both in-person and virtual benefits counseling. She also partnered closely with veteran service organizations and nonprofit groups to help veterans navigate and access the support available to them.

Even in retirement, Rebecca continues her commitment to veterans in her community by volunteering with arts organizations that offer programs for veterans, further demonstrating her lifelong devotion to public service.

On behalf of the people of Colorado's 7th Congressional District, it is my honor to thank Rebecca Sawyer Smith for her 38 years of service with the VA and to congratulate her on her retirement.

HONORING DR. CHUNDRAL. EVENS AS A DISTINGUISHED LEADER IN CENTRAL FLORIDA FOR BLACK HISTORY MONTH

HON. DARREN SOTO

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 17, 2026

Mr. SOTO. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor Dr. Chundra L. Evens, a distinguished educational leader, pastor, and community advocate whose career reflects a deep commitment to excellence, service, and transformative leadership.

After serving five years as the principal of Osceola County School for the Arts, she made history in March 2020 as the first African American appointed to the position of Assistant Superintendent in the High School Division of the School District of Osceola County in Kissimmee, Florida. A highly credentialed educator, Dr. Evens is certified in K-12 and holds specialized certifications in Exceptional Student Education, ESOL, Reading, Educational Leadership, and School Principal. Her professional journey is enriched by earlier experience in correctional probation and the performing arts.

She attended Florida A&M University as a member of the Marching 100 and later earned a bachelor's in political science from the University of Central Florida. She completed both her master's and Doctor of Education in educational leadership at National Louis University. Dr. Evens has received numerous prestigious recognitions, including the Harvard University Extension School Strategic Leadership Program and the National Institute for School Leadership Executive Development Program. Her honors include the Florida Department of Education Outstanding Assistant Principal Achievement Award; Secondary Literacy Administrator of the Year; Distinguished Minority Educator of the Year at both St. Cloud Middle and Zenith High; New Beginnings Education Center Teacher of the Year and SAC Distinguished Service Award; Council for Exceptional Children Middle School Teacher of the Year and Outstanding Rookie Teacher of the Year; and the district's Distinguished Minority Runner-Up Educator of the Year. She was also the first principal in the district to achieve Best and Brightest recognition and was named the 2019 Principal of the Year by Osceola Visionaries, Inc.

Guided by her faith and inspired by Nelson Mandela's belief in education as a powerful

tool for change, Dr. Evens actively serves her community as a Girl Scouts troop leader, volunteer with Give Kids the World, member of Tau Beta Sigma, and member of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc.

A lifelong servant-leader within the church, she was ordained in December 2023 and now serves as senior co-pastor of Trinity Church Sebring Campus alongside her husband of nearly 30 years, Pastor Roderick L. Evens.

HONORING JUSTIN CLOUD AS A
DISTINGUISHED LEADER IN CEN-
TRAL FLORIDA FOR BLACK HIS-
TORY MONTH

HON. DARREN SOTO

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 17, 2026

Mr. SOTO. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor Justin Cloud, a distinguished community leader, chief engineer, and nonprofit executive whose work has significantly advanced education, workforce development, and youth empowerment across Central Florida.

He currently serves as the executive director and founder of The Cloud Family Foundation, a Florida-based nonprofit organization dedicated to preparing students for successful careers through academic enrichment, mentorship, and exposure to STEM and professional pathways. Under his leadership, the foundation has launched and expanded several impactful initiatives, including the Level-Up Brother Program, an immersive cohort-based experience designed to equip high school young men with life skills, career readiness training, mentorship, and college exposure. What began as a single-day event in Central Florida has grown into a multi-week program serving students across multiple Florida counties. The foundation also administers annual scholarships, teacher grants, and community-based educational programs that directly support Florida students and educators.

In addition to his philanthropic work, Mr. Cloud serves as a chief engineer, bringing extensive experience supporting advanced technology and national defense programs while remaining deeply committed to community service within Florida. He actively leverages his professional expertise to build bridges between industry, education, and community organizations throughout the state.

Mr. Cloud is also the president of a Florida-based alumni chapter of Phi Beta Sigma Fraternity, Inc., where he has led initiatives focused on scholarship fundraising, civic engagement, and service projects benefiting underserved communities across Florida.

Through his leadership, service, and dedication, Justin E. Cloud continues to make a lasting impact on Florida's communities by empowering the next generation and expanding access to opportunity.

HONORING MR. LADARA ROYAL AS
A DISTINGUISHED LEADER IN
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Mr. SOTO. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor Mr. Ladara Royal, a proven, zealous leader and an accomplished urban educator, facilitator, and clinician. He is committed to driving transformative, innovative change that advances educators and students of color through equitable public-school policies and practices.

Royal's work centers on urban education, educator activism, and expanding opportunities for underserved and under-resourced students. His impact is evidenced by a consistent record of increasing the number of students from these communities who matriculate into the Nation's most competitive colleges and universities.

A dedicated advocate for educational equity, Royal has demonstrated his leadership and community commitment by speaking before the Florida State Senate and House of Representatives on multiple occasions to champion improvements in public education. Royal also serves as secretary of the Orange County Classroom Teachers Association—the official educators' union representing teachers across Orange County, Florida—and as chairman of the OCCTA Fund for Children and Public Education. In these roles, he works tirelessly to support and help advance the appointment of public officials who are committed to strengthening and protecting public education.

His expertise and advocacy have been recognized across numerous media platforms, including local news and radio, Bloomberg, CNN, ABC World News, TIME, and the Guardian. He has served as a guest panelist for the Florida State NAACP Freedom to Read Town Hall and the Transformative Justice Coalition, and as a featured panelist at the 52nd Annual Congressional Black Caucus Foundation Legislative Conference for the session entitled "The Courage to Teach." This event was presented in collaboration with the White House Initiative on Advancing Educational Equity, Excellence, and Economic Opportunity for Black Americans, the American Federation of Teachers, and the National Education Association. In 2025, Royal was also honored as a recipient of the FOX 35 Care Force recognition, celebrating his exceptional work as a high school, college, and career specialist, as well as the profound impact he continues to make on the lives of his students.

HONORING DR. NYKOWANNA HAR-
RIS SLOAN AS A DISTINGUISHED
LEADER IN CENTRAL FLORIDA
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IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 17, 2026

Mr. SOTO. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor Dr. Nykowanna Harris Sloan. With nearly three decades of dedicated service in education, Dr. Nykowanna Harris Sloan is a steadfast advo-

cate for equity, empowerment, and excellence. Her professional journey reflects an enduring commitment to student achievement, youth development, and dismantling systemic barriers that disproportionately affect underserved and historically marginalized Central Florida communities. A recognized champion of restorative practices and culturally responsive education, Dr. Sloan's leadership has transformed school cultures and expanded opportunities for countless students.

Beyond the classroom, Dr. Sloan is a devoted servant leader with decades of consistent community engagement focused on uplifting and empowering the African American community. She holds active leadership roles in numerous civic and service organizations and has received multiple awards and accolades. Her memberships range from her beloved Orange County, Florida, Alumnae Chapter of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Incorporated, to several national and local organizations. In each capacity, she serves not merely as a member but as a strategist, organizer, and advocate for meaningful progress.

As a licensed and ordained minister with over 25 years of experience, Dr. Sloan is deeply committed to spiritual growth and holistic development. Her ministry bridges faith and lived experience, offering guidance marked by humility, conviction, and grace. Through preaching, teaching, and pastoral care, she has led many toward healing, purpose, and renewed faith.

At the heart of Dr. Sloan's life is her family. A devoted mother and grandmother, she views her children and grandchildren as both her greatest joy and her sacred responsibility in building a better tomorrow. Guided by a generational vision, she leads with love, intention, and unwavering purpose.

Across education, ministry, and civic leadership, Dr. Sloan remains anchored in the belief that service is not merely an act, but a calling—one she continues to fulfill with integrity, influence, and lasting impact.

HONORING PASTOR JOHNNY M.
MCKINNIE AS A DISTINGUISHED
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Tuesday, February 17, 2026

Mr. SOTO. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor Pastor Johnny M. McKinnie, a quiet and devoted servant of God with a deep love for the Lord and a strong commitment to preaching, teaching, and community service. He is married to Lady Earline C. McKinnie, and together they are blessed with four children who serve in ministry.

His background reflects a lifelong dedication to faith and leadership. Pastor McKinnie earned a Bachelor of Science in Biology from Bethune-Cookman University, a Master of Arts in Christian Education from North Florida Baptist Theological Seminary, and a Certificate in Expository Preaching from E.K. Bailey Ministries. He honorably served in the United States Army as a flight control specialist and later spent 23 years in the telecommunications industry before entering full-time pastoral ministry.