

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 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 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 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 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 HARRIS SLOAN 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. 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 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 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.

He served three years as pastor of Sweet Hope Missionary Baptist Church in Live Oak, Florida, eight years at Jerusalem Missionary Baptist Church in Jacksonville, and has faithfully led St. Luke Missionary Baptist Church in Kissimmee, Florida, for more than 24 years.

At St. Luke, Pastor McKinnie strengthened Christian education by restructuring the Sunday School and Youth Ministries, establishing a weekly Sunday School Forum, New Members Orientation, leadership training for Dea-

cons and Deaconesses, and expanding the Women's Ministry. He also introduced youth evangelism training to promote leadership, social engagement, and spiritual growth among young people. Under his leadership, the church expanded its infrastructure and acquired seven duplexes to provide housing for low-income families. He further expanded community outreach by collaborating with the Council on Aging in Kissimmee, Florida, to

support social, educational, and advocacy initiatives for seniors.

Pastor McKinnie has served in leadership roles within multiple Baptist associations, including 10 years as third vice-moderator of the First South Florida Baptist Association, served as the Chaplain for Osceola County School Board, is a lifetime member of the NAACP, received many prestigious awards, and is the son of Mr. S. H. McKinnie and the late Mrs. Chelcie McKinnie of Campbellton, Florida.