

RECOGNIZING ST. JOHN THE  
APOSTLE CATHOLIC SCHOOL

**HON. BETH VAN DUYNÉ**

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, March 12, 2026*

Ms. VAN DUYNÉ. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the students and faculty of St. John the Apostle Catholic School in North Richland Hills, Texas for their participation in our 2026 Valentines for Veterans program.

Through this initiative, students created more than 35 Valentine's Day cards for veterans in our North Texas community, sharing encouragement, appreciation, and heartfelt support with those who have served. Their commitment to honoring our heroes helped make this project a tremendous success, contributing to over 1,800 Valentine's Day cards received by our office.

This outpouring of kindness reflects the deep gratitude for our veterans that remains strong throughout North Texas.

The creativity and compassion demonstrated by these students are a testament to the caring spirit present throughout their school. I commend them for their generosity and community involvement and thank them for helping make this year's Valentines for Veterans program so meaningful. It is an honor to represent them in Texas' 24th District.

CONGRATULATING WESTWOOD  
HIGH SCHOOL

**HON. JOE WILSON**

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, March 12, 2026*

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, I am grateful to recognize Blythewood's Westwood High School boys' basketball team, "The Redhawks," as they defeated Greenville High School in the 2026 Class 5A Division II South Carolina High School League (SCHSL) State Championship. This marks the first basketball State Championship in team history.

The game was played on March 5, 2026, at Colonial Life Arena in Columbia, where Westwood celebrated a 67–55 win. The win finished off their record at 25–3 for the season.

The Westwood High team includes players Jayden Crews, Cylan McLeod, Quentin McGill, Jayven McClain, D'Marcus Thomas, Daytron Cockfield, Bryson Hardy, Desmond Grant, AJ Veal, Jesse Omeire, Jahlil Jenkins, Tristen Hudson, Jaylen Donaldson, Ariel Huell, and Chase Marshall. Alongside the players are talented coaches Trent Robinson and DeMonte Jacobs, as well as Statistician, Jessie Townsend.

On behalf of all South Carolinians, I congratulate the Westwood High Redhawks on this impressive achievement and I wish them the best of luck as they defend their title in the upcoming season. This victory of the Westwood High Redhawks is well-deserved for the team, coaches, families, and community for all their hard work and support, making their dream come true.

HONORING THE MIAMI CHAPTER  
OF JACK AND JILL OF AMERICA,  
INC.

**HON. FREDERICA S. WILSON**

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, March 12, 2026*

Ms. WILSON of Florida. Mr. Speaker, from the 24th district of the great state of Florida, I rise today to recognize the Miami Chapter of Jack and Jill of America, Inc., on the occasion of their 60th anniversary of leadership, service, and cultural awareness. I include in the RECORD the following Proclamation:

Whereas, the Miami Chapter of Jack and Jill of America, Inc. has been a cornerstone of leadership, service, and cultural awareness throughout Miami-Dade County for the past 60 years, fostering the growth and development of African American children and their families; and

Whereas, since its founding in 1964 under the leadership of Geraldine Arrington, the Miami Chapter has grown to represent 47 families and 71 children, aged 2 to 19 years old, with a mission to stimulate and implement the educational growth of Jack and Jill children through the organized efforts of their parents; and

Whereas, the Miami Chapter has been actively involved in public service, hosting regional and national conferences, implementing impactful programs, and supporting critical social causes, including partnerships with organizations like the NAACP and initiatives addressing community needs; and

Whereas, the chapter's legacy includes decades of leadership development for its youth, extensive community outreach projects, and active participation in national programs of Jack and Jill of America, Inc., embodying its mission to nurture future leaders; and

Whereas, nationally, Jack and Jill of America, Inc., founded in 1938, encompasses 271 chapters and more than 50,000 family members dedicated to advancing opportunities for African American children, fostering cultural pride, and promoting community service; and

Whereas, the Miami Chapter continues to build on its proud legacy under the current leadership of President Anetra Poindexter, culminating in the celebration of its 60th Diamond Anniversary during the 2024–2025 program year; and Now, therefore, be it

*Resolved*, That I, Frederica S. Wilson, a member of the United States House of Representatives, representing the 24th Congressional District of Florida, recognize that the Miami Chapter of Jack and Jill of America, Inc. is commended for 60 years of exemplary service and leadership in our community. We honor the chapter's commitment to enriching lives, empowering families, and cultivating a brighter future for all.

RECOGNIZING CENTRAL HIGH  
SCHOOL

**HON. BETH VAN DUYNÉ**

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, March 12, 2026*

Ms. VAN DUYNÉ. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the students and faculty of Central High School in Keller, Texas for their participation in our 2026 Valentines for Veterans program.

Through this initiative, Student Council members created more than 55 Valentine's

Day cards for veterans in our North Texas community, sharing encouragement, appreciation, and heartfelt support with those who have served. Their commitment to honoring our heroes helped make this project a tremendous success, contributing to over 1,800 Valentine's Day cards received by our office.

This outpouring of kindness reflects the deep gratitude for our veterans that remains strong throughout North Texas.

The creativity and compassion demonstrated by these students are a testament to the caring spirit present throughout their school. I commend them for their generosity and community involvement and thank them for helping make this year's Valentines for Veterans program so meaningful. It is an honor to represent them in Texas' 24th District.

RECOGNIZING MENTAL HEALTH  
AMERICA OF LANCASTER COUNTY  
FOR 70 YEARS OF SERVICE

**HON. LLOYD SMUCKER**

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, March 12, 2026*

Mr. SMUCKER. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor and recognize Mental Health America of Lancaster County for reaching a milestone 70 years of service.

This 70-year anniversary marks the foundation of the Mental Health Association of Lancaster County in 1956, after the Community Service Association, the Visiting Nurse Association, Lancaster Medical Group, representatives from nearby schools and courts, and the Psychology Department at Franklin & Marshall College collaborated to establish a mental health clinic. The purpose was twofold: to provide accessible mental health care, and to promote public understanding of mental illnesses.

The organization became an independent affiliate of Mental Health America in 1977 and changed their name to Mental Health America of Lancaster County in 2007. They provide peer advocacy services, assist those dealing with financial barriers to care, educate the public on mental health, and much more. These programs are made possible through the generous Lancaster community, which has provided financial support, volunteer efforts, and partnership.

Mental wellness affects everyone, and Mental Health America of Lancaster County has long played an important role in supporting the wellbeing of our community. As the organization celebrates its 70th anniversary, I extend my appreciation to its leaders and staff for their dedicated service and lasting contributions to Lancaster County. I wish them another 70 years of continued success.

RECOGNIZING GRAPEVINE FAITH  
CHRISTIAN SCHOOL

**HON. BETH VAN DUYNÉ**

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, March 12, 2026*

Ms. VAN DUYNÉ. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the students and faculty of

Grapevine Faith Christian School in Grapevine, Texas for their participation in our 2026 Valentines for Veterans program.

Through this initiative, students created more than 130 Valentine’s Day cards for veterans in our North Texas community, sharing encouragement, appreciation, and heartfelt support with those who have served. Their commitment to honoring our heroes helped make this project a tremendous success, contributing to over 1,800 Valentine’s Day cards received by our office.

This outpouring of kindness reflects the deep gratitude for our veterans that remains strong throughout North Texas.

The creativity and compassion demonstrated by these students are a testament to the caring spirit present throughout their school. I commend them for their generosity and community involvement and thank them for helping make this year’s Valentines for Veterans program so meaningful. It is an honor to represent them in Texas’ 24th District.

HONORING RAVI PATEL

**HON. JOE WILSON**

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, March 12, 2026*

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, I will always cherish my association as attorney and friend of Ravindra (Ravi) Patel. Assisting him incorporate SREE Hotels, Inc., I saw firsthand his phenomenal business acumen and integrity.

In the best Indian-American tradition, coming to America with limited resources, he has built one of America’s most successful hotel hospitality enterprises providing countless Americans entry-level jobs for fulfilling lives. Indian-Americans now own a majority of hotels across America with the 6 million Indian Americans having a per capita income twice that of other American communities.

Our family will forever remember his infectious smile and words and deeds of encouragement. I will never forget as I began a campaign for State Senate his \$100 check delivered at the Governor’s House Hotel restaurant in Columbia as the initial deposit for my successful campaign account.

I include in the RECORD the following tribute to Ravi that has been published by the Asian American Hotel Owners Association:

ATLANTA (January 21, 2026)—AAHOA extends condolences following the passing of Ravi Patel, who served as AAHOA Chairman from 1992-93. Ravi was a founding member of the association and the Chairman of Charlotte-based SREE Hotels.

The AAHOA family is deeply saddened by the loss of a true visionary and a foundational pillar of our association,’ said AAHOA Chairman Kamalesh (KP) Patel. ‘Ravi was not just a leader; he was an architect of this organization. During his tenure as Chairman, he took a formative idea and gave it a home—literally and figuratively—by drafting our bylaws and establishing our first headquarters. His transition from chemical engineering to hospitality is a testament to the American Dream, and his legacy lives on in the 30-plus hotels he built and the thousands of hoteliers he inspired.

Ravi’s journey in the hospitality industry began in 1980 with the acquisition of a roadside motel in Florence, SC. Drawing on his engineering background, he renovated and repositioned the property as an EconoLodge, turning it into a success that became the cornerstone of SREE Hotels, which he co-founded with Chandra Patel.

As Chairman from 1992-1993, Ravi’s leadership was instrumental in the association’s infancy. He focused on providing hoteliers with the tools to gain professional expertise in ownership and management, ensuring that the next generation of Asian American owners had a seat at the table.

A native of Nadi, Fiji Islands, Ravi studied chemistry and physics at Saint Xavier’s College before earning his bachelor’s degree in chemical engineering from Auburn University. Before his legendary career in hospitality, he served as an engineer for Good-year. His analytical mind and entrepreneurial spirit helped SREE Hotels grow into a premier management and development group, partnering with global brands including Marriott, Hilton, and IHG.

“Ravi’s commitment to education and his ‘do-it-yourself’ work ethic defined the early spirit of AAHOA,” added AAHOA President & CEO Laura Lee Blake. “He believed that through knowledge and unity, our community could achieve anything. He was a mentor to so many and will be deeply missed. We extend our prayers and deepest condolences to his wife, his children, and the entire SREE Hotels family.”

Ravi lived in Charlotte, NC, where he remained active as SREE’s Chairman and a

cherished mentor to many in the industry. His contributions to the hospitality landscape of the Southeast and his service to AAHOA will be remembered for generations to come.

RECOGNIZING CAPTAIN K. TODD DEARING

**HON. BETH VAN DUYN**

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, March 12, 2026*

Ms. VAN DUYN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor and recognize the remarkable career of Captain K. Todd Dearing of the Grapevine Police Department as he retires after 35 years of dedicated service to North Texas.

Captain Dearing began his public safety career in 1991 as a dispatcher and security officer with the University of North Texas. In 1992, he joined the Grapevine Police Department, where he served in numerous roles throughout his career, including Patrol Officer, Corporal, Sergeant, Lieutenant, before becoming Captain in 2018. His leadership and commitment to public safety helped strengthen the department and our North Texas community.

During his tenure, Captain Dearing helped launch the department’s Police Explorers program, mentoring local youth interested in careers in law enforcement, and pioneered the Grapevine Volunteers in Police Service (VIPS) program, which continues to support the department through thousands of volunteer hours each year. In 2021, he was appointed to lead the department’s Management Services Division, where he played an important role in shaping the department’s operations. As a Master Peace Officer, Captain Dearing holds a Master of Criminal Justice from Tarleton State University and has completed nearly 3,300 hours of professional training throughout his distinguished career.

Captain K. Todd Dearing’s service to law enforcement and our community has left a lasting impact. As he enters his next chapter, I extend my best wishes to him for a well-deserved retirement.