

of California, Berkeley, and Howard University, and later as the eighth president of Morgan State University. Over the course of his distinguished career, he authored and co-authored numerous books, research papers, and academic publications. Even after retirement, he continued to mentor and teach, earning many awards and honors in recognition of his contributions.

Mr. Speaker, Dr. Billingsley has dedicated his life's work as a sociologist to advocating for Black families. On the occasion of his 100th birthday, it is only fitting that we celebrate his extraordinary legacy and years of service.

COMMEMORATING THE JOHNSON  
FAMILY AND THE WEEKLY  
CHALLENGER

**HON. KATHY CASTOR**

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, March 19, 2026*

Ms. CASTOR of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise today during Black History Month to commemorate the Johnson family and The Weekly Challenger, an unwavering pillar of journalism that has kept our Tampa Bay area neighbors connected with uplifting local stories. Their dedication to preserving the Black community shapes a legacy for generations to come.

The Weekly Challenger origin story starts with Mr. Cleveland Johnson, Jr. who was born in Thomasville, Georgia, but always considered himself a St. Petersburg native after his family moved to the area in the early 1930s. He attended Davis Elementary and Gibbs High School, was later drafted into the U.S. Army, and then met and married his wife, Ethel, in 1958. In the early years of their marriage, Mr. Johnson searched for his calling and held down many jobs to provide for his growing family. He found his purpose through friend and mentor, M.C. Fountain, who owned Fountain Printers on 16th Street South. Mr. Johnson started selling advertisements for Fountain's Weekly Advertiser in 1964.

By 1967, The Weekly Challenger was founded, and Mr. Johnson led with the intent to reshape the way journalism was circulated in St. Petersburg by creating a platform to highlight and uplift the Black community. "If you want to read about Black people doing something bad, pick up the St. Pete Times, but if you want to read about Black people doing something positive, pick up a Challenger." The Weekly Challenger served not only as a news source but also as a vital historical record, sharing stories often overlooked by mainstream newspapers. The Johnsons were quite a team, raised three children, while Ethel worked various jobs and assisted Mr. Johnson with The Weekly Challenger.

Under Mr. Johnson's leadership, The Weekly Challenger grew from a modest publication into a robust community newspaper. The pages expanded to include color photography, full-page advertisements, and an array of stories reflecting the local Black community. With its continued success, demand led the newspaper to expand its distribution from St. Petersburg to Tampa, Clearwater, and other surrounding areas. It is evident that this success is rooted in the Johnson family's commitment and in The Weekly Challenger's praise and celebration of the local community.

Mr. Johnson passed away on July 29, 2001, and his family stepped in to continue commemorating Black history and culture in Pinellas County. The Johnsons left a cherished memory of compassion, community empowerment, and entrepreneurship rooted in the heart of St. Petersburg.

Mr. Speaker, I am honored to recognize the outstanding leadership and service for six decades that The Weekly Challenger and the Johnson family have shown to the community. The Weekly Challenger remains a cornerstone of the community and will carry forward with the narrative of "making history together."

RECOGNIZING CARL AND CARLA  
HABERLAND

**HON. GUS M. BILIRAKIS**

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, March 19, 2026*

Mr. BILIRAKIS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize two extraordinary members of our community, Carl and Carla Haberland, whose unwavering commitment to volunteerism has left a lasting imprint on Brooksville Main Street and the families we serve. In every thriving downtown, there are individuals who quietly and consistently step forward to do the work that makes celebration and community possible. Carl and Carla Haberland are those individuals for Brooksville. Their dedication goes far beyond attendance at events they invest their time, energy, and heart into ensuring our community traditions not only continue, but flourish. What truly sets Carl and Carla apart is their spirit of service, especially evident during the holiday season. Each year, as Brooksville transforms into a winter wonderland, their fingerprints are on every detail. From helping assemble the towering 40-foot Christmas tree to assisting with the installation of large rooftop decorations, they embrace the physically demanding work that brings magic to our downtown. These efforts are no small undertaking. They require long hours, heavy lifting, climbing heights, and meticulous coordination. Yet Carl and Carla approach every task with enthusiasm and purpose, working side-by-side with fellow volunteers simply because they care deeply about the joy these decorations bring to families throughout our community.

Their service is not motivated by recognition or applause. It is driven by love for their town and a desire to create cherished memories for children and adults alike. Because of their dedication, generations of families have experienced the wonder of a beautifully decorated downtown during the most meaningful time of the year. Carl and Carla Haberland exemplify what it means to be true community builders. They remind us that the strength of a town lies not only in its buildings and businesses, but in the generosity and teamwork of the people who call it home. Brooksville is brighter—quite literally—because of their efforts.

It is my privilege to honor Carl and Carla Haberland for their extraordinary volunteerism and their steadfast commitment to bringing joy and unity to our community and recognize them as 2026 Heroes Among Us for Florida's 12th Congressional District.

RECOGNIZING FRAN WEISBERG

**HON. JOSEPH D. MORELLE**

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, March 19, 2026*

Mr. MORELLE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today during Women's History Month to recognize a remarkable and impactful leader from Rochester, New York: Fran Weisberg.

Throughout her distinguished career, Fran has demonstrated an unwavering commitment to public service, dedicating her professional life to addressing some of our most pressing challenges, including poverty, public health, and the evolving needs of nonprofit organizations. Her leadership has strengthened institutions and improved the lives of countless individuals and families across the Greater Rochester region.

Fran served with distinction as President and Chief Executive Officer of United Way of Greater Rochester, where she led the organization to unprecedented success, including record-breaking fundraising campaigns in support of critical community programs. Prior to her tenure at United Way, she served as Executive Director for the Finger Lakes Health Systems Agency, fostering meaningful collaboration among healthcare providers, businesses, and community leaders to advance regional health outcomes. She also led Lifespan of Greater Rochester for a decade, transforming it into a robust organization dedicated to serving older adults and their caregivers. Through these roles, she has touched countless lives and made profound impacts on members of our community.

In addition to her remarkable professional accomplishments, Fran has made lasting contributions to the civic and political fabric of our region. She has served as Chair of the Monroe County Democratic Committee, and played a pivotal role in managing one of the most notable congressional campaigns in our area as Campaign Manager for the late Congresswoman Louise Slaughter.

Mr. Speaker, it is with great admiration and deep appreciation that I recognize my dear friend, Fran Weisberg, for her exceptional career and enduring contributions to the Rochester community. As we celebrate Women's History Month, it is only fitting that we recognize extraordinary local women who have gone above and beyond to better our community. Fran's legacy of leadership, compassion, and service continues to inspire us all, and her work will continue to benefit our region for years to come.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

**HON. MIKE CAREY**

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, March 19, 2026*

Mr. CAREY. Mr. Speaker, I missed votes in order to attend the dignified transfer of six fallen U.S. servicemembers.

Had I been present, I would have voted NAY on Roll Call No. 92; YEA on Roll Call No. 93; YEA on Roll Call No. 94; and YEA on Roll Call No. 95.

CELEBRATING SOUTH LAKES HIGH SCHOOL'S 2025–2026 FRESHMEN BASKETBALL SEASONS

**HON. JAMES R. WALKINSHAW**

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, March 19, 2026*

Mr. WALKINSHAW. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate the South Lakes High School Freshmen Girls and Boys Basketball teams for their remarkable achievements during the 2025–2026 basketball season.

The South Lakes Freshmen Girls Basketball team completed an outstanding season with a record of 14–2, setting a new milestone as the winningest freshmen girls team in South Lakes High School history. Their success reflects the passion, teamwork, and determination displayed by these student-athletes throughout the season.

The South Lakes Freshmen Boys Basketball team also delivered an extraordinary season, finishing with an impressive record of 15–0–1. The team's undefeated season will stand as a benchmark for future South Lakes teams.

These accomplishments would not have been possible without the leadership, mentorship, and dedication of the coaches and volunteers who support these teams. I commend the entire coaching staff, parents, and the many individuals who give their time and energy to help these young athletes develop their skills, build character, and learn the value of teamwork.

The success of these teams is a source of great pride for South Lakes High School and the broader Fairfax community. Their achievements serve as an inspiration to fellow students and demonstrate the value of hard work and perseverance.

I am honored to represent a district that is home to such exceptional student-athletes. I commend them for the dedication they have displayed to their school and teams. Their accomplishments both on and off the court continue to make our district proud.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating the South Lakes High School Freshmen Boys and Girls Basketball teams on their exceptional 2025–2026 seasons and in wishing these talented student-athletes continued success in the years ahead, both on and off the basketball court.

CELEBRATING THE LIFE AND LEGACY OF GWENDOLYN HENDERSON

**HON. KATHY CASTOR**

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, March 19, 2026*

Ms. CASTOR of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise today during Black History Month to celebrate the life and legacy of Gwendolyn Henderson—educator, business owner, Tampa City Councilwoman, daughter of West Tampa, and champion of Black history.

The daughter of the late Asbury Henderson, a Korean War veteran, and the late Gladys Austin Henderson, Gwen was born and raised in Tampa, Florida, growing up in the working-class neighborhood of Carver City. She at-

tended Roland Park Elementary, Morgan Woods Elementary, West Tampa Junior High School, and Pierce Junior High School. She later earned a bachelor's degree in business administration from the Florida Agricultural & Mechanical University (FAMU), and a master's degree in education as well as education specialist's and higher education leadership degree from St. Leo University. She has also been a proud member of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority since 1994.

From Carver City to West Tampa, and then to Tampa Heights for 30 years, she was poised to serve as a well-grounded Member of Tampa City Council with a big heart for East Tampa neighbors especially. However, her true love and passion was education. Whether to her "favorite daughter" Ariel, or to the countless Hillsborough County students she was able to touch throughout her career as a teacher and mentor. Gwen started her educational career at Sligh Middle School but later transferred to Jefferson High School where she spent 25 years of her teaching career and embodied the Dragon Spirit—"Once a Dragon, Always a Dragon."

Gwen put incredible effort into ensuring that her students had all the opportunities to grow available to them. She implemented efforts at Jefferson High School that helped showcase her students' academic achievements and talents such as the Mr. and Miss Jefferson Scholarship Pageant, the Naturally Aware Proud and Strong (NAPS) Girl Empowerment Organization where she led by example and empowered young girls to become leaders in their communities, and the Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCU) Club, where she challenged students to consider other alternatives for higher learning and become more proud of their heritage and culture. Very shortly before passing, Gwen had launched a local, lively HBCU celebration to send-off Hillsborough County students on their way to Black colleges and universities.

After decades of being an educator, mentor, and inspiration to our young neighbors in Hillsborough County, Gwen was elected to the Tampa City Council in 2023 to represent District 5. In the City Council, Gwen continued to expand efforts she worked on as a community activist for decades.

Committed to restoring a Black-owned bookstore in the heart of Tampa, Gwen fulfilled a lifelong dream and founded the Black English Bookstore to curate reading options that represented the voice and culture of the Black community in Tampa and across all of America. Like a good book, Gwen brought comfort and community to neighbors across Tampa, while teaching us about ourselves, our culture, and our collective history. Her commitment to preserving and investing in Black-owned businesses was a pillar of her community advocacy. Her love for her hometown was evident in every action she took—from championing affordable housing and public safety to standing up for seniors and small businesses, and even supporting students and parents with free laptops when the COVID–19 pandemic forced remote learning. Gwen fought for the hopes and dreams of her community, including continuing the advocacy of rebuilding and expansion of the Fair Oaks Recreation Center in East Tampa.

Gwendolyn died too soon in 2025—but her legacy lives on in all the hearts of the people she inspired throughout her life. Her life is a

testimony of honoring Black history, Black culture, and Black lives. She is survived by her daughter Ariel Amirah Danley, her siblings, her nieces and nephews.

Mr. Speaker, on behalf of my Tampa Bay Area neighbors, I commend Gwendolyn Henderson for a life dedicated to public service, the preservation of Black history, and a love for the City of Tampa and its community.

RECOGNIZING KATIE HENRY

**HON. GUS M. BILIRAKIS**

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, March 19, 2026*

Mr. BILIRAKIS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize an extraordinary member of our community, Katie Henry. Katie is a true Hero Among Us whose generosity, leadership, and compassion have made a lasting impact on the Hernando County Family YMCA and the community they serve. Her support of the YMCA has always been rooted in a genuine desire to help others and ensure that everyone, regardless of financial circumstances, has access to programs, resources, and opportunities that improve their quality of life. Katie has been a strong advocate for their mission, actively supporting fundraising efforts that allow the YMCA to provide scholarships and financial assistance to individuals and families in need. Through her dedication, countless community members have been able to participate in programs that promote youth development, healthy living, and meaningful connection, opportunities that might not have been possible without her involvement and support. What truly sets Katie apart is her selflessness. She gives her time, energy, and talents without expectation of recognition or reward, leading by example and inspiring others to do the same. Her ability to bring people together around a shared purpose has strengthened our organization and reinforced the importance of community-driven impact. Although she does not currently serve in a formal leadership role, Katie continues to support the YMCA and its mission through her actions and advocacy. Her ongoing commitment reflects a deep belief in service and in the power of community to lift one another up.

Katie Henry embodies the spirit of a Hero Among Us. Through her generosity, quiet leadership, and unwavering commitment to helping others, she has made a meaningful and lasting difference in the lives of those connected to the Hernando County Family YMCA. It is clear that Ms. Katie Henry has made an extraordinary and deeply positive impact on countless lives, and I am profoundly grateful for her dedication and service.

It is my distinct privilege to recognize her as 2026 Hero Among Us for Florida's 12th Congressional District.

CELEBRATING BRAIN AWARENESS WEEK

**HON. MIKE THOMPSON**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, March 19, 2026*

Mr. THOMPSON of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise to celebrate March 16th through March 20th as Brain Awareness Week.