

HONORING THE LIFE AND LEGACY
OF JOHN W. PETERSON

HON. JAMES R. WALKINSHAW
OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Tuesday, April 21, 2026

Mr. WALKINSHAW. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the life and legacy of John W. Peterson, a dedicated conservation leader whose lifelong commitment to protecting our Nation's soil and water resources left a lasting impact on Virginia and communities across the country.

John Peterson served with distinction as a professional with the United States Department of Agriculture's Soil Conservation Service, now known as the Natural Resources Conservation Service. He later continued his service as a locally elected director of the Northern Virginia Soil and Water Conservation District in Fairfax County, where he worked to advance conservation efforts and support responsible stewardship of our natural resources.

Throughout his career, John played an important role in shaping conservation policy and strengthening partnerships among local, state, and federal conservation organizations. He served as Virginia's representative to the National Association of Conservation Districts Board of Directors and contributed to numerous national initiatives related to conservation policy, water resources, and farm legislation.

John also helped support efforts that led to the enactment of the Small Watershed Rehabilitation Act of 2000, legislation that provided critical support for the rehabilitation of aging flood control dams maintained by conservation districts throughout the Nation.

Beyond his policy and leadership work, John contributed to the professional advancement of the conservation field. He helped pioneer the certification program for Professionals in Erosion and Sediment Control and remained actively engaged with organizations committed to strengthening conservation practice and education.

In recognition of his leadership and service, John received numerous honors, including the Wilkinson Award from the Virginia Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts and induction into the National Association of Conservation Districts Southeast Region Conservation Hall of Fame.

Mr. Speaker, John Peterson's dedication to conservation, public service, and the protection of our natural resources leaves a meaningful and lasting legacy for future generations. I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring his life and recognizing the many contributions he made to conservation efforts in Virginia and across the United States.

RECOGNIZING WONDERFUL
COLLEGE PREP ACADEMY

HON. DAVID G. VALADAO
OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Tuesday, April 21, 2026

Mr. VALADAO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Wonderful College Prep Academy for its outstanding commitment to leadership, innovation, and equity in educating the next

generation of leaders in Delano and across the Central Valley.

Founded in 2009 by Lynda and Stewart Resnick, the academy's two state-of-the-art TK-12 public charter schools have served more than 2,400 students in Lost Hills and Delano. Through a strong focus on academic excellence, health and wellness, and dedication to its educators, the academy is preparing students to succeed in higher education, the workforce, and in life. Notably, a significant portion of students have graduated with associate degrees and met college entrance requirements, an extraordinary achievement that reflects the school's high standards and student-centered approach.

Wonderful College Prep Academy fosters not only academic success but also a deep sense of community and lifelong skills. Beyond its traditional pathways, its programs teach students the importance of agriculture, provide comprehensive health services, and inspire families to lead healthier lives.

The academy's recognition as the 2026 California Charter Schools Association Charter School of the Year is a testament to its unwavering commitment to academic excellence and student success. Additionally, the Hart Vision Equity and Innovation Award recognizes the academy's steadfast advocacy to ensure the success of all students, including those from historically underserved communities.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues in the House of Representatives to join me in congratulating Wonderful College Prep Academy on its outstanding accomplishments and years of service to the community of Delano and California's Central Valley.

RECOGNIZING ANDREW KUANG

HON. BRENDAN F. BOYLE
OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Tuesday, April 21, 2026

Mr. BOYLE of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the winner of the Congressional App Challenge for Pennsylvania's 2nd Congressional District, Andrew Kuang. Andrew is a sophomore at the Arts Academy at Benjamin Rush High School in Northeast Philadelphia.

Andrew's app, NotificationBot, is a powerful automation tool for Discord, designed to take the repetitive workload off server moderators and administrators. It allows for customizable, automated announcements and notifications in Discord, freeing up moderators and administrators to focus instead on fostering their communities and engaging with their servers. Andrew's tremendous app contributes to solving an issue for the countless Discord moderators that are responsible for maintaining online communities enjoyed by about 90 million active daily users.

As the Representative of Pennsylvania's 2nd Congressional District, I am always pleased to support initiatives that showcase the creativity and ingenuity of students from every neighborhood of the City of Philadelphia. In that light, I am proud to showcase Andrew's achievements.

I hope Andrew takes great pride in his success and continues to use his talents to inspire change and innovation. I again congratulate him on this achievement, and hope that

this moment serves to motivate him to continue to work toward a better future.

Mr. Speaker, I find it altogether fitting that the U.S. House of Representatives congratulates Andrew and recognizes the great ingenuity and creativity of his app.

HONORING THE LIFE AND LEGACY
OF CAPTAIN GARY S. TOMCZIK

HON. ANGIE CRAIG

OF MINNESOTA
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Tuesday, April 21, 2026

Ms. CRAIG. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life and service of Captain Gary S. Tomczik, United States Army-Aviation, who passed away on March 20, 2026.

Captain Tomczik was originally from St. Cloud, Minnesota, and graduated from St. Cloud Cathedral High School. While attending St. John's University in Collegeville, Minnesota, he was accepted into the ROTC Aviation program and began flying lessons in St. Cloud and St. Paul. In 1967, he was commissioned as Second Lieutenant, and attended Helicopter Flight School at Ft. Rucker, Alabama. Shortly after, he was sent to Vietnam for his first tour of duty. During this tour, he served with distinction as he conducted airlift missions transporting troops and supplies into and out from theater, engaged in medical evacuation missions for injured troops, and flew numerous night missions.

During his second tour in Vietnam, he served as the executive officer in his unit, directly assisting the unit commander, and oversaw the maintenance and repair of aircraft. This role required him to test choppers before their return to combat, a particularly risky task. Despite the danger, Captain Tomczik served his country with courage and conviction.

Following his tours in Vietnam, he served as an instructor to new pilots at Ft. Rucker. As an instructor, Captain Tomczik took the safety of his students very seriously and worked tirelessly to ensure they had the tools and training they needed to succeed. Captain Tomczik was unwavering in his dedication to serving his Nation and instilled in his students their responsibility to always put the American people first in the performance of their duties.

Captain Tomczik's courage and skill during his service were recognized with numerous Army commendations, including the Bronze Star, the Vietnam Campaign Medal with 60-device, the Vietnam Service Medal, three Army Overseas Service bars, the Army Aviator Badge, and the National Defense Service Medal.

Following his service in Vietnam and at Ft. Rucker, Captain Tomczik continued his work with helicopters for Petroleum Helicopters, Inc. His career took him all over the world, before he and his wife of 53 years, Hilary, settled in Santa Barbara, California.

I offer my deepest condolences to Captain Tomczik's family—his wife, Hilary, his sons Graham and Damien, and his siblings Ron, Janet, Mel, and Patrick. I want to thank him and his fellow veterans, including his three brothers, for their service to our country.

RECOGNIZING PASTOR DARRON
CARMON

HON. GREGORY F. MURPHY

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 21, 2026

Mr. MURPHY. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to recognize an outstanding community leader in Eastern North Carolina, Pastor Darron Carmon. Pastor Cannon will be recognized this weekend by his congregation and the community for his devotion to his faith and community.

After being raised as a pastor's son, Pastor Carmon's journey took a pivotal turn when a wrongful conviction at the age of nineteen led him to spend eight years in prison. During this time, he devoted countless hours to studying and praying, eventually becoming the chaplain's assistant. In this role, he counseled fellow inmates from all backgrounds and oversaw church services seven nights a week. Upon his release, he transitioned seamlessly into a role as an assistant pastor. Building on eleven years of service, Pastor Carmon later founded Rebuild Christian Center Church in Winterville, North Carolina.

As head pastor, his dedication to the community has shown through food drives, Christmas gift distribution programs, and even providing a single mother with a car. Additionally, he continues his work in correctional facilities by ministering to inmates at several local institutions. However, some of his most important works come through Sikono Mentoring, one of his two non-profits. At Sikono, Pastor Carmon leads a group providing father figures to young boys and girls who do not have active fathers in their lives. The group organizes activities and trips, and attends special events, ensuring that kids in their community are supported and guided as they grow into future leaders.

Mr. Speaker, please join me in recognizing Pastor Darron Carmon for his continued selfless work in his community.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. EARL L. "BUDDY" CARTER

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 21, 2026

Mr. CARTER of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, had I been present, I would have voted YEA on Roll Call No. 122.

HONORING THE LIFE AND LEGACY
OF LADY FANNIE LEE "MOTHA"
BANKS

HON. LOIS FRANKEL

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 21, 2026

Ms. LOIS FRANKEL of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life and legacy of

Lady Fannie Lee "Motha" Banks, who passed away earlier this month at the age of 90. A devoted wife and ministry partner, she served her community faithfully alongside her husband, Bishop Sylvester Banks, Sr., for over 70 years. Together, they established The Bible Church of God, Inc. in Boynton Beach, Florida. She was a spiritual mother to 24 churches across the United States, including many in Florida's Palm Beach County, and served as a National Mother for over eight years. Her impact was deeply felt throughout Boynton Beach and Delray Beach, where her life and service touched countless lives.

The last of sixteen children, she was also the devoted mother of fourteen. Her remarkable legacy lives on through more than 160 descendants—grandchildren, great-grandchildren, and great-great-grandchildren—as well as a host of church members, extended family, and dear friends whose lives she touched.

One of her most cherished gifts was her ability to make each person feel uniquely seen and valued—even in a crowded room. She was instrumental to Mr. Banks, Sr.'s many accomplishments, including the honor of receiving the Key to the City of Boynton Beach. An entrepreneur at heart, she owned a successful soul food restaurant in Boynton Beach and later operated a beloved bakery and pastry business, earning admiration and loyal support from customers across the country.

The legacy of Lady Fannie Lee "Motha" Banks will forever live on in the hearts she touched, the lives she nurtured, and the faith she so powerfully demonstrated. Her love, wisdom, and unwavering devotion to family and her church will continue to inspire generations to come.

Please join me in honoring the memory of Lady Banks for her extraordinary contributions to countless communities and her enduring impact. May her memory be a blessing.

RECOGNIZING APRIL AS
SARCOIDOSIS AWARENESS MONTH

HON. DANNY K. DAVIS

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 21, 2026

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the month of April as Sarcoidosis Awareness Month.

Sarcoidosis is a rare inflammatory disease characterized by the formation of granulomas—tiny clumps of inflammatory cells—in one or more organs of the body. When the immune system goes into overdrive and too many of these clump's form, they can interfere with an organ's structure and function. When left unchecked, chronic inflammation can lead to fibrosis, which is the permanent scarring of organ tissue. This disorder affects the lungs in approximately 90 percent of cases, but it can affect almost any organ in the body.

Despite increasing advances in research, sarcoidosis remains difficult to diagnose with limited treatment options and no known cure. Sarcoidosis is considered chronic in people whose disease remains active for more than 2 to 5 years; in this population sarcoidosis can be debilitating and life-threatening. It is estimated that the prevalence of sarcoidosis in the U.S. ranges between 150,000 and 200,000 with an estimated 1.2 million individuals with sarcoidosis worldwide.

I am proud to have the Foundation for Sarcoidosis Research (FSR) based in my district, in the city of Chicago. I have had the chance to meet wonderful patient advocates and hear their stories. FSR is committed to advancing pivotal research and improving the lives of all impacted by sarcoidosis and has funded over 10 million dollars to support academic research to better understand the cause, mechanisms of progression, and the effective and efficient path to better patient outcomes.

Over the past couple of years, I worked with FSR to address a lack of clarity from the Department of Labor regarding whether or not clinical trial participation was a permissible use of leave under the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA). Like other chronic and rare disease patient populations, clinical trial access is critically important for patients with sarcoidosis, as there is no cure and there is a lack of treatment options. When requesting time off to participate in clinical trials, some patients have been denied as HR departments have not interpreted clinical trial participation as a permissible use of leave under FMLA. I, along with other Congress members and leading stakeholder organizations such as FSR, reached out to the DOL to get this clarification. Fortunately, the DOL responded confirming that they interpret clinical trial participation, when medically necessary, is a permissible use of leave under FMLA. It further clarified that both patients and caregivers are guaranteed job protection under FMLA, when meeting the necessary requirements and choosing to participate in clinical trials. This effort extends beyond sarcoidosis and extends to all those seeking to participate in clinical trials. I am now working to spread awareness of this finding, so employers, employees, HR departments, and patients are aware of proper use of leave under FMLA.

Last year, I was able to join in celebrating the 25th Anniversary of the establishment of the Foundation for Sarcoidosis Research. In celebration of this accomplishment and years of innovation, empowerment and progress, I call on my colleagues to recognize the goals and ideals of Sarcoidosis Awareness Month by supporting federal activities that improve the lives of patients impacted by Sarcoidosis, and to raise awareness and shine a light on the 1.2 million people living with Sarcoidosis.