

Logan, and Kalen was visible in every warm story she told. She was a guardian to nieces and nephews, a trusted confidante to friends, and a pillar for a community that came to depend upon her steady hand and fearless voice.

Professionally, Mayor Haywood was a relentless advocate for equity. As a senior paralegal and later a self-employed practitioner specializing in Social Security disability cases, she stood with those denied a fair chance. She helped open the first Black law firm in Camilla, forging a path for justice where there had been barriers. In the NAACP, in voter drives, in fundraising for families shattered by tragedy, and in campaigns for fairness in city employment, Mayor Haywood's leadership moved people to action and moved systems toward justice.

In 2007, history was made as she became the first woman and the first African American elected mayor of Camilla. She wore both distinctions not as trophies but as responsibilities—to ensure transparency, accountability, and equal opportunity for every resident. Her term as mayor, and her continued civic engagement afterward, changed the civic fabric of Camilla for the better. In 2024, the city rightfully honored her by dedicating the Honorable Mary Jo Haywood Council Chambers, a testament to a life that taught us how public service should be practiced.

Mayor Haywood's work reached beyond policy: she was a keeper of memory. For years, she maintained a quiet vigil remembering the victims of the 1868 Camilla Massacre, refusing to let their names be lost to time. She championed the legacy of Georgia B. "Miss Bea" Williams, ensuring that the midwife who delivered thousands—in an era of segregation and exclusion—received the recognition and dignity she deserved.

Her honors were many, yet she remained the same humble servant who believed that the truest measure of life is how it is devoted to others. From induction into the Southern Rural Black Women's Hall of Fame to recognition as a Woman of Distinction by the Georgia NAACP, she accepted accolades with gratitude and returned them to her community through continued work and mentorship.

Today we mourn a devoted daughter, mother, grandmother, aunt, friend, and stateswoman. We grieve the passing of a woman who taught us that persistence, faith, and love are powerful forces for change. We give thanks for the guidance she offered, the doors she opened, and the lives she touched.

Her extended family, and the people of Camilla who called her mayor and mentor, should know that their loss is felt across Georgia and beyond. We join them in sorrow, and we pledge to carry forward the values she embodied: service without hesitation, courage in the face of injustice, and an unshakable belief in the dignity of every person.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues in the U.S. House of Representatives to join my wife, Vivian, and me, along with the more than 765,000 people of Georgia's 2nd Congressional District in honoring the life and legacy of Mayor Mary Jo Haywood. Mary Jo Haywood believed, as she lived, that God had a plan. By that grace and by her work, she became what she was called to be—a leader who opened pathways for others to follow. May her memory be a blessing, and may her life continue to inspire us to build communities of fairness, compassion, and opportunity.

RECOGNIZING OFFICER CHASE SAWYER

HON. VIRGINIA FOXX

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 30, 2026

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize Officer Chase Sawyer of the City of King Police Department who retired on April 29, 2026, after six and a half years of service.

In 2022, Officer Sawyer sustained injuries in the line of duty while conducting a traffic stop in the early hours of the morning.

By the grace of God, and through the prayers of his colleagues, family, friends, neighbors, and community, he survived and has made positive strides in his recovery.

Mr. Speaker, every day, the men and women of law enforcement put their lives on the line to defend their communities, confront criminality, and protect broader civil society.

We are all immensely blessed that they keep watch over us in all hours of the day and night. We are eternally grateful for Sawyer's service and sacrifice. May God bless him as he enters retirement.

CELEBRATING THE GRAND OPENING OF SOUTHSIDE EAST LAKE STREET CLINIC

HON. ILHAN OMAR

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 30, 2026

Ms. OMAR. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate the grand opening of Southside Community Health Service's state-of-the-art facility, Southside East Lake Street Clinic.

Southside Community Health Services is a Federally Qualified Health Center that provides affordable health care to all, regardless of ability to pay. Founded in 1971, Southside has a 55-year history of serving the diverse community of South Minneapolis and nearby communities. Over that time, they have earned national recognition as a top-performing community health center and, in 2025, were further recognized for exceptional patient outcomes. These awards reflect Southside's strong record of delivering high-quality care and an ongoing commitment to improving health outcomes for individuals and families.

Building on this foundation, the new East Lake Clinic will serve thousands more patients and bring all primary care services under one roof. Designed with a trauma-informed, healing-centered approach, Southside East Lake Street Clinic reflects collaboration between patients, providers, and the community. The new space will provide more exam rooms and the option for evening and weekend hours to better meet patients' needs. The space will also include additional services such as X-ray and mammography, as well as a flexible community area.

Southside remains grounded in a mission to improve healthcare access and outcomes by delivering high-quality care, reducing barriers, and supporting healthier communities. I ask my colleagues to join me in celebrating the grand opening of Southside East Lake Street Clinic and the expanded access to high-quality care it symbolizes.

CELEBRATING 100 YEARS OF BAKER YOUTH CLUB

HON. RUDY YAKYM III

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 30, 2026

Mr. YAKYM. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Baker Youth Club of Warsaw, Indiana, on its 100th anniversary.

Founded in 1926 by East Coast banker and Rotary Club member Bramwell Baker, the club began with a simple challenge: match a \$1,000 donation and a Boys Club would be born. What started with comic books and a peach basket in the upstairs of a downtown Warsaw hardware store has grown into one of Kosciusko County's most vital institutions for young people.

For a century, Baker Youth Club has been guided by just four directors, each of whom grew up in the very club they would one day lead. Current Executive Director Tracy Furnivall has served for 23 years, growing the organization's budget from \$90,000 to nearly \$800,000. Today, the club serves up to 160 children each afternoon, with second- and third-generation families coming through its doors.

Perhaps no story better captures Baker Youth Club's mission than that of Director Robert "Coach" Lichtenwalter, who joined the Boys Club at age 10 as an alternative to juvenile detention and went on to serve as a member, staff, and director for 77 years. That is not just dedication. That is transformation.

Baker Youth Club's centennial is a testament to Warsaw and Kosciusko County, a community that has sustained this organization through the Great Depression, multiple wars, a recession, and a global pandemic, and has never stopped showing up for its kids.

I congratulate Baker Youth Club on 100 years of service.

HONORING THE FONDO DE AYUDA SOCIAL DEL LEONISMO DISTRICT 51-E, INC.

HON. PABLO JOSÉ HERNÁNDEZ

OF PUERTO RICO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 30, 2026

Mr. HERNÁNDEZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and honor the Fondo de Ayuda Social del Leonismo, District 51-E, Inc. (FASL), an independent nonprofit organization that has provided sustained and meaningful assistance throughout Puerto Rico for 46 years.

Founded in 1979 by Guillermo Irizarry Rubio (1916 to 2017), the organization was established with a clear and enduring mission: to provide direct, responsible, and compassionate support to individuals and families facing urgent social and economic needs, particularly children and youth.

Mr. Irizarry Rubio served in the United States Army and later as Secretary of State of the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico from 1966 to 1969, carrying out the constitutional functions of Lieutenant Governor, and as Director of the Puerto Rico Budget Bureau. Following his distinguished public service, he continued serving the people of Puerto Rico through

civic leadership within Lions Clubs International, where he later served as District Governor of District 51-E. The values that guided his life—discipline, sensitivity to the needs of others, and a deep respect for education and service—remain reflected in the mission of the organization.

For more than four decades, the Fondo de Ayuda Social del Leonismo has served children, youth, and families throughout Puerto Rico, responding to needs related to disaster relief, rehabilitation services, and housing assistance. To date, the organization has disbursed more than \$500,000 indirect aid throughout the island.

Beyond immediate assistance, the organization is distinguished by its commitment to sustained, long-term support. It has accompanied students from their early school years through the completion of their university studies, helping remove barriers and expand opportunities for those most in need.

The Fondo de Ayuda Social del Leonismo is recognized by Lions District 51-E and by Lions Clubs International as a permanent service initiative of Lionism, while maintaining its distinct identity as an independent nonprofit organization.

Mr. Speaker, the Fondo de Ayuda Social del Leonismo represents the very best of community-based service: sustained commitment, responsible stewardship, and an unwavering dedication to improving the lives of others.

I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing the Fondo de Ayuda Social del Leonismo for its 46 years of exemplary service and to commend its continued work on behalf of the people of Puerto Rico.

RECOGNIZING HARTFORD HOSPITAL'S NEW FACILITY

HON. JOHN B. LARSON

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 30, 2026

Mr. LARSON of Connecticut. Mr. Speaker, during this weeks Ways and Means Committee hearing, I had the opportunity to speak about Jeff Flaks, President and Chief Executive officer of Hartford HealthCare. During this hearing, I said:

"I want to note the CEO of Hartford Hospital, in my home state, Jeff Flaks. This is a CEO who goes out in the winter and finds people that are homeless, sleeping under bridges, etc., and brings them back to the only place that they will have refuge and care."

Jeff is an extraordinarily leader in the healthcare industry and I am proud to have him working in my district. I include in the RECORD an article from the Hartford Courant about Hartford Hospital's new facility. This tower will be on the cutting edge of medicine and will ensure that residents of Central Connecticut continue to get first rate care. I thank the team at Hartford Healthcare for their work to make this plan a reality.

CT HOSPITAL'S \$950M TOWER IS A WHOPPER, 'MOST ADVANCED' IN NATION. WHAT IT WILL LOOK LIKE AND WHEN.

(By Kenneth R. Gosselin)

A \$1 billion-plus investment in Hartford Hospital over the next decade is spurring an unprecedented building boom not seen in the hospital's 172-year history—with its center-

piece now coming squarely into focus: a \$950 million in-patient and surgical tower that will not only give the hospital a more prominent place in the city's skyline but, hospital leaders say, among hospitals across the country.

The tower, expected to open in 2031, will rise 14 stories, double the height of the next tallest building on the 70-acre campus.

The tower will be built on a one-acre patch now used for valet parking near the corner of Seymour and Jefferson streets, its half a million square feet of space so massive that the upper floors will need to be built out over the top of the neighboring Jefferson Building.

Construction on the tower is expected to begin next year and will include 216 private-room patient beds—increasingly sought for hospital stays—20 surgical areas organized around recovery rooms and specialties by floor, all outfitted with cutting-edge technology.

"So this is a massive investment in the future of Hartford Hospital," said Jeffrey A. Flaks, president and chief executive of Hartford HealthCare, the parent of Hartford Hospital and seven others in Connecticut. "And this building will be the most advanced, most sophisticated hospital building anywhere in the country."

Hartford HealthCare's plans to spend more than \$1 billion over a decade at Hartford Hospital have been well-known since at least the end of 2024, with a new, in-patient tower considered a significant part of those plans. But the specifics weren't disclosed until now, as financing is falling into place.

The reshaping of the hospital's campus seeks to strike a balance among lifting the hospital's national profile, providing more efficiently for the health care needs of the local community and recognizing the reality of an aging population that needs increasingly sophisticated care.

The hospital's \$1 billion-plus plan also includes other major projects, some already in construction.

The projects include a much-needed expansion of the hospital's emergency department; a Hartford HealthCare-Go Health urgent care center with more services than is typical; and a 1,600-space parking garage that is part of a larger "arrival center" with a restaurant and conference space for up to 500.

The hospital also intends to launch the redevelopment of three historic structures at the northeast corner of Washington and Jefferson streets later this year. The project will anchor a growing presence of community clinic space in historic structures along the north side of Jefferson Street.

"This is a generational moment for us," Flaks said. "This will position us for decades to come."

Flaks comments on the details of the new tower came in an interview with The Courant prior to a public announcement Saturday at Hartford HealthCare's annual Black & Red Gala fundraiser, the hospital's largest of the year.

The in-patient tower has been part of the hospital planning since at least 2021 when an \$80 million addition to the Bliss Building was completed, adding critical care space.

The addition came on the heels of the 2016 opening of the \$150 million Bone & Joint Institute orthopedic center. Both projects helped reshape not only the hospital's expanding capabilities but were intended to project a modern image of a destination for increasingly sophisticated health care.

In addition to new technology, the planned tower will increase the percentage of overall private rooms from the hospital's current 60% to about 80%, hospital officials said. The hospital now has 867 patient beds.

Flaks said the projects will be financed primarily through bond funding supported by

the corporation's endowment and other philanthropic gifts.

'A VARIETY OF OPTIONS'

The expansion and reorganization of the hospital's emergency department comes as it annually treats about 110,000 patients, a number that is forecast to grow in the coming years, hospital officials said.

The department already is seeing a severe space crunch, with some patients routinely seen in hallways. According to hospital officials, the emergency department has 108 rooms and averages 305 patients a day.

Cheryl Ficara, the president of Hartford Hospital, said plans call for an expansion into the adjacent Conklin Building into space where as many as 30 beds will be set aside for patients who are "under observation."

"And why that's so important is because many of the people that come into the emergency department, probably, I would say only 25 to 28% are admitted," Ficara said. "The rest are on observation and will be transitioning back out." The exact number of beds that will be added has yet to be determined.

The entrance to the emergency department also is getting a makeover, with separate entrances being created for walk-in patients and those transported by ambulance, Ficara said.

In addition, the hospital expects to open in June a Hartford HealthCare-Go Health urgent-care clinic in the recently-acquired former Girl Scouts of Connecticut headquarters at the corner of Washington Street and Retreat Avenue.

The urgent care center is seen as relieving some of the pressure on the emergency department, giving patients another option when they don't necessarily need emergency department care.

The clinic, expected to open in June, will offer expanded services such as the opportunity for blood work and more sophisticated imaging not typically available at the hospital's other urgent care locations. "We're working with the community very closely to be able to educate them on the variety of options," Ficara said.

ARRIVAL CENTER

The new parking garage—running the length of the south side of Jefferson Street between Washington and Seymour streets—will add about 1,000 new spaces to help ease a longstanding parking crunch at the hospital.

Built in two phases on the site of a now-demolished garage and a former gas station, it is expected to gradually open beginning in 2027. The valet service also will be based in the garage.

The garage also will anchor what the hospital describes as an arrival center.

The venue also will include a restaurant on Seymour Street and a conference center located near the corner Washington and Jefferson streets.

The conference center is expected to accommodate up to 500 people—a size that has the potential to attract national meetings and bring more visitors to the city of Hartford, Flaks said.

"So this is all part of that broader strategy to really have Hartford Hospital be magnetic, to be a destination for research, teaching, innovation, clinical discovery," Flaks said. "And it just adds another piece of the puzzle that we need to be able to elevate and be competitive with anyone across the country to host meetings of this scale. So we're very excited about that."

The parking garage will be connected to the new tower via a skywalk that will lead to the tower's two-story lobby, the new main entrance to the hospital.