

HONORING THE 200TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE LOWVILLE VILLAGE BRAND

HON. ELISE M. STEFANIK

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, June 29, 2026

Ms. STEFANIK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the 200th anniversary of the founding of Lowville Village Band.

Originally known as the Union Band upon its formation in 1826 the founding members began a tradition of playing music in the local park. The band changed names several times it is first 100 years reflecting the instruments they played, the Union Band reformed as the Lowville Saxhorn Band in 1856. During this time the band would perform all over Northern New York and even into Canada. These performances were part of parades, festivals, and private parties as well as sometimes on steamboats. During the Civil War their performances dwindled as other duties called members away but following the war they reformed as the Lowville Cornet Band before a local philanthropist, Francis K. Leonard donated silver instruments to the band along with other generous donations leading them to rebrand as the Leonard Silver Cornet Band. Four years later they chose to rename themselves the Lowville Cornet & Orchestra Band.

Over the years the band has been led by extremely talented musicians, including Franklin A. Thompson, who had previously played with the United States Marine Corps Band and Buffalo Bill Wild West Show Band; Luther Askin, who helped found the New York State School Music Association and Lowville Academy Band, and Perl Johnson, who served in World War I as a member of the American Expeditionary Force and led field music for the 310th Infantry Regiment.

In the 1930s the band officially became the Lowville Village Band, the name it has held ever since. Today, the band's ensemble consists of approximately 50 brass, woodwind, and percussion musicians who range in age from 14 to 80. The band hosts a very popular summer concert series where they play marches and patriotic music from the past at the Lowville Veterans Memorial Park.

On behalf of New York's 21st District, I recognize the Lowville Village Band for 200 years of bringing music to the Village of Lowville and communities across our region.

HONORING 200 YEARS OF SERVICE BY UNITED STATES ARMY GARRISON FORT HAMILTON

HON. NICOLE MALLIOTAKIS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, June 29, 2026

Ms. MALLIOTAKIS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and honor the bicentennial anniversary of United States Army Garrison Fort Hamilton, a historic institution in my district that has served our Nation with distinction for 200 years and remains an enduring symbol of patriotism, military readiness, and public service.

The grounds of Fort Hamilton hold a profound connection to the founding of our Na-

tion. During the American Revolutionary War, the site served as a strategic defense position overlooking the Narrows. On July 4, 1776, an American battery located there, then known as the Narrows Fort, fired upon the British warship HMS Asia in defense of New York Harbor. Just weeks later, British forces landed at Gravesend Beach and Denyse's Wharf, on what is now the footprint of Fort Hamilton, launching the campaign that culminated in the Battle of Brooklyn, the first major battle fought after the signing of the Declaration of Independence and the largest troop engagement of the Revolutionary War.

Recognizing the strategic importance of the location, the United States Government laid the cornerstone for Fort Hamilton on June 11, 1825. Named in honor of Alexander Hamilton, our Nation's first Secretary of the Treasury, and designed by renowned military engineer Simon Bernard, the fort was completed in 1831. Today, it stands as the fourth-oldest active military installation in the United States.

For two centuries, Fort Hamilton has faithfully served our Nation. During the Civil War, it functioned as a critical Union fortification and training center. In both World War I and World War II, the installation played a vital role as an embarkation and separation center for American service members deploying overseas and returning home.

In recognition of its historical significance, Fort Hamilton was designated a Historic Landmark on the National Register of Historic Places in 1974. Its rich legacy is preserved through the Harbor Defense Museum, the only Army museum in New York City, which safeguards and showcases artifacts spanning from the American Revolution through World War II.

Today, Fort Hamilton remains the only active-duty military installation in New York City. It provides critical operational, logistical, and community support to more than 50,000 veterans, retirees, active-duty service members, and their families. The installation has repeatedly answered the call to support civil authorities during times of crisis, including following the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, during Hurricane Sandy, and throughout the COVID-19 pandemic.

The year 2025 marked Fort Hamilton's 200th anniversary—a remarkable milestone that coincides with the United States Army's 250th birthday and serves as a bridge to our Nation's semiquincentennial in 2026. This celebration offers an opportunity to reflect upon the generation of soldiers, civilian employees, veterans, and military families whose dedication and sacrifice have strengthened both our local communities and our country.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring United States Army Garrison Fort Hamilton for 200 years of unwavering service to New York and the United States of America. May its proud legacy continue for generations to come.

CELEBRATING 25 YEARS OF ISLAMIC RESOURCE GROUP

HON. ILHAN OMAR

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, June 29, 2026

Ms. OMAR. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Islamic Resource Group on the occasion of its 25th anniversary.

Islamic Resource Group (IRG) was founded on June 19, 2001, as a nonprofit educational outreach organization committed to building bridges of understanding between Minnesota Muslims and the broader Minnesota community. For 25 years, Islamic Resource Group has served Minnesota through educational resources, community dialogue, mosque visits, professional development, interfaith engagement, public programs, and media outreach that promote religious literacy, mutual understanding, and respect.

Since its founding, Islamic Resource Group has delivered over 8,000 educational presentations to over half a million Minnesotans in face-to-face settings. Its work has reached schools, businesses, government agencies, houses of worship, and community organizations across Minnesota and beyond. IRG has worked closely with educators and school districts, including through a long-standing presence at the Education Minnesota Professional Conference since 2002. Its interfaith initiatives have connected hundreds of faith communities with Minnesota Muslims and strengthened relationships among neighbors of many religious and cultural backgrounds. I am deeply grateful for the crucial work IRG has done to combat rising Islamophobia and build interfaith communities.

IRG's Minnesota Muslim Experience Project and Tracks in the Snow Exhibit have helped tell the stories of Minnesota Muslims and expand public understanding of a community that has long contributed to the life and history of this great state. Through its annual Building Bridges Awards, IRG has honored Minnesotans whose work advances understanding, justice, service, and relationship building across communities.

As Islamic Resource Group marks 25 years of service, I would like to recognize its important contribution to religious literacy, interfaith understanding, public education, and civic life in Minnesota. Please join me in congratulating Islamic Resource Group, its leaders, staff, volunteers, speakers, partners, and supporters on this milestone anniversary, and in thanking them for their continued work building bridges of understanding across Minnesota.

HONORING DR. ALOMA THERESA INGRAM AS A DISTINGUISHED LEADER IN CENTRAL FLORIDA FOR CARIBBEAN HERITAGE MONTH

HON. DARREN SOTO

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, June 29, 2026

Mr. SOTO. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor Dr. Aloma Theresa Ingram as a Distinguished Leader in Central Florida for Caribbean Heritage Month. Dr. Aloma Theresa Ingram, a native of Kingston, Jamaica, is a naturalized citizen of the United States and a visionary leader with a remarkable track record in early childhood education.

Her passion for nurturing young minds led her to attain a director credential in Early Childhood Education and become an eminent specialist and trainer-facilitator in the field.

An ardent advocate for global education, Dr. Ingram holds prestigious titles as an Honorary Queen Mother in the Paramount Palace in the

Eastern Region of Ghana, West Africa, and as a Queen with the Numidoria Kingdom for Africans in the Diaspora. Her commitment to peace and education is further demonstrated through her roles as a Peace Ambassador and Consulate of Education with the Numidoria Kingdom's Embassy.

Beyond her educational endeavors, Dr. Ingram is a multitasking entrepreneur, excelling as a cosmetologist/trainer, restaurant manager/owner, and beauty spa owner/operator. Her diverse skill set also extends to program directing, as she serves as a church director for the seniors' program, praise dance, and drama.

Dr. Ingram's impact transcends borders as she has authored influential works and holds a key position as a Jamaica Red Cross Society Council member. Her dedication to the well-being of others is further evident through her role as a guidance counselor, minister, motivational speaker, mother and advocate.

HONORING THE LAKE CHAMPLAIN RESEARCH INSTITUTE

HON. ELISE M. STEFANIK

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, June 29, 2026

Ms. STEFANIK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the Lake Champlain Research Institute in the Center for Earth and Environmental Science at SUNY Plattsburgh on the dedication of its new research vessel, the R/V Leptodora.

The Leptodora replaces LCRI's longtime research vessel, the Gruending, which has served researchers on Lake Champlain for more than three decades. This state-of-the-art vessel will expand the Institute's ability to conduct cutting-edge research, support student training, and advance our understanding of Lake Champlain. Under the leadership of Dr. Timothy Mihuc, the Institute has built a reputation for scientific excellence through investments in modern laboratory equipment, advanced field instruments, and innovative monitoring technologies that provide critical data on the health of Lake Champlain.

The Leptodora was made possible through a strong partnership with the Great Lakes Fishery Commission, which provided \$750,000 toward construction of the custom-built vessel, along with additional support for a multi-year deep-lake ecology research initiative. The new vessel will play a central role in that project, enabling scientists and students to collect data more efficiently and safely while expanding research opportunities on the lake. The Commission's continued investment reflects its longstanding commitment to scientific research, fisheries management, and environmental stewardship throughout the region.

Named after Leptodora kindtii, a transparent zooplankton species found in Lake Champlain and an important component of the lake's food web, the vessel symbolizes the Institute's mission to better understand and protect the complex ecosystems that sustain the lake. Through research conducted aboard the Leptodora, SUNY Plattsburgh students will gain invaluable hands-on experience while contributing to the scientific knowledge needed to preserve Lake Champlain for future generations.

On behalf of New York's 21st District, I extend my sincere gratitude to the Lake Champlain Research Institute, the Great Lakes Fishery Commission, Dr. Mihuc and his team, and all of the partners whose dedication and support have made this important achievement possible. Their work strengthens the North Country, advances freshwater science, and helps ensure the long-term health and preservation of Lake Champlain.

HONORING ARTHUR JAMES REDDICK ON HIS 100TH BIRTHDAY

HON. THOMAS R. SUOZZI

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, June 29, 2026

Mr. SUOZZI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Arthur James Reddick on the occasion of his 100th birthday.

Arthur is a member of the Greatest Generation. On June 26, 1926, he was born in Jersey City, New Jersey to Alice and William Reddick. Arthur served in the Army Air Corps, a predecessor to the U.S. Air Force from July 1944 to August 1946 where he earned five medals. Following his discharge from service, Arthur returned to New Jersey to launch a long career in business, including employment with American Home Products, General Foods and ultimately running his own business—Promotion Designers and Manufacturing.

Arthur and his wife Susan moved to Glen Head, New York in 1990 and became parishioners at St. Patrick's Church in Glen Cove. They spent many years in Sarasota, Florida but returned to the North Shore, settling in Glen Cove in 2017.

As Arthur celebrates this milestone birthday, I want to thank him for his service to our country and for defending the values we hold so dear. The deeds and sacrifices made by the Greatest Generation, including by Arthur, will be remembered with gratitude for generations to come. I thank Arthur and wish him a happy birthday.

HONORING BELINDA ORTIZ KIRKEGARD AS A DISTINGUISHED LEADER IN CENTRAL FLORIDA FOR CARIBBEAN HER- ITAGE MONTH

HON. DARREN SOTO

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, June 29, 2026

Mr. SOTO. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor Belinda Ortiz Kirkegard as a Distinguished Leader in Central Florida for Caribbean Heritage Month. Belinda Ortiz Kirkegard is president of the National Entrepreneur Center (NEC), an internationally recognized entrepreneurial support organization serving Central Florida's small business community. She holds a Master of Public Administration from Troy University, a Bachelor of Arts in Political Science and Public Administration from the University of Central Florida, and is a Certified Economic Development Finance Professional.

Ms. Kirkegard has dedicated more than three decades to advancing economic development, entrepreneurship, and community en-

gagement throughout Florida. Prior to joining the NEC in 2023, she served as economic development director for the City of Kissimmee, where she established and led the city's economic development program. During her tenure, she helped attract more than \$50 million in private investment, developed strategic initiatives focused on healthcare and aerospace industry growth, and contributed to projects that expanded the city's tax base and strengthened regional economic competitiveness.

Earlier in her career, Ms. Kirkegard served in leadership roles with Orange County government, the Central Florida Hotel & Lodging Association, and statewide public affairs initiatives. She is recognized for building collaborative partnerships among business, government, nonprofit, and community stakeholders to achieve measurable economic and community outcomes.

Ms. Kirkegard currently serves on the Valencia College District Board of Trustees and the AdventHealth Central Florida Division Board. She previously served on the Greater Orlando Aviation Authority Board, including as treasurer, and has held leadership positions with numerous business, economic development, healthcare, and civic organizations throughout Central Florida.

Her professional achievements have earned numerous recognitions, including Orlando Magazine's 2026 Woman of the Year, the Orlando Business Journal's Women Who Mean Business Award, Florida Trend's "People to Know" designation, and the Orlando Magic and Florida Blue Small Business Champion Award. Through her leadership, Ms. Kirkegard has helped expand opportunities for entrepreneurs, strengthen regional economic development efforts, and advance community prosperity across Florida.

HONORING ELLIE COHEN

HON. JARED HUFFMAN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, June 29, 2026

Mr. HUFFMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Ellie Cohen on the occasion of her retirement from The Climate Center (The Center) and to honor her decades of visionary leadership.

Under her leadership as chief executive officer, The Climate Center helped catalyze California's status as a global leader in addressing the climate crisis. Ellie played an integral role in advancing policies to modernize our electric grid and prioritize nature-based climate solutions, broadening the organization's impact, deepening its policy engagement, and building coalitions across sectors to meet the scale of the climate crisis. The Center was helped in efforts to reform and extend California's signature climate program to further reduce greenhouse gas emissions. She also expanded The Center's public education role: convening their annual California Climate Policy Summit, hosting dozens of webinars, producing policy briefs, and engaging lawmakers at global climate meetings to elevate California's leadership. Her work and accomplishments at The Center will shape policy and environmental outcomes for generations to come.

Prior to joining The Climate Center, Ellie spent nearly two decades as President and