He held his bachelor's and master's degrees from Albany State University, and he would go on to earn his doctorate from Valdosta State.

Dr. Parker took him under his wing. And Dr. Griswold rose—department chairman, dean of academic affairs, vice president for academic affairs, executive vice president—every rung of it, at the same institution, for 18 years.

When the college lost its president without warning, Albany Tech did not have to look outside for somebody to carry it. He was already there. On November 1, 2022, Dr. Emmett L. Griswold became the sixth president of Albany Technical College, standing on the foundation laid by his mentor and his friend.

Mr. Speaker, that is what 65 years of an institution actually looks like. Not a building. Not a seal. A man who taught, mentored, and believed in another man—who then took up the same work and kept the doors open for the next one.

Those doors, Mr. Speaker, have never asked a single student what their father did for a living. They have opened for the single mother working nights. For the man laid off at 45 who had to start over. For the young person nobody expected anything from, who is today a lineman, a nurse, a welder, a diesel technician, a logistics specialist—who owns a home, pays taxes, and raises children who will never know what it was to go without.

That is the harvest of 65 years in Southwest Georgia.

Therefore, Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating Albany Technical College on sixty-fiye years of service, in commending President Emmett L. Griswold, his faculty, his staff, and his Board of Directors, in honoring the memory of Dr. Anthony O. Parker and all who led before him, and in wishing this great institution many more years of transforming lives across Southwest Georgia.

HONORING CONSUL OF MEXICO, MAXAIRA BALTAZAR

HON. J. LUIS CORREA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, September 14, 2026

Mr. CORREA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Consul of Mexico, Maxaira Baltazar, for her 20 years of leadership and experience in consular affairs and bilateral relations.

Maxaira first began her career in Del Rio, Texas, where served as Consul for Protection and Legal Affairs, later being assigned to serve as Consul of Mexico for the Mexican Embassy in the Czech Republic.

Upon her return to the United States in 2015, Maxaira completed a specialization in U.S. Legal Studies at The University of New Mexico's School of Law. Always striving for more, she went on to collaborate with the Federal Public Defender's Office and the criminal, family, and child legal divisions of New Mexico's Second Judicial District Court.

As part of her specialization, she went on to develop guidelines for ways to assist nationals in child custody-related matters.

Throughout her career, Maxaira has served the U.S. Department of State, where she took part in a U.S.-Mexico Consular Exchange program dedicated to providing international assistance for Mexican nationals during the tumultuous suspension of travel period caused by the COVID–19 pandemic, drafting guidance for Mexican missions abroad during times of crisis.

Most recently, Maxaira has served as Counselor for House Affairs in the Congressional Relations Office at the Mexican Embassy in the U.S. Now, Maxaira has assumed her current post as Consul of Mexico in Santa Ana, serving the Mexican-American communities in my home District and beyond.

I ask my colleagues to join me in commending Maxaira for her 20 years of dedicated leadership and experience. We thank Maxaira for all that she does to protect, inform, and inspire our Nation's Mexican-American communities.

RECOGNIZING ABIGAIL ROTH, GRADES 6 THROUGH 8 WINNER OF WISCONSIN'S 6TH CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT 2026 STUDENT ESSAY CONTEST

HON. GLENN GROTHMAN

OF WISCONSIN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, September 14, 2026

Mr. GROTHMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Abigail Roth, the winner of the sixth through eighth grade division of my 2026 Student Essay Contest, and to commend this outstanding young person from Wisconsin's 6th Congressional District for her thoughtful reflections on our country and system of government.

Abigail, a seventh-grade student at Neenah Middle School, was selected as the winner for her essay on the importance of an informed and educated citizenry, strong communities, civic engagement, and the ability of Americans to work together to improve our country.

I am proud to recognize Abigail for the time, effort, and thought she put into her essay. Her work demonstrates an appreciation for the responsibilities of citizenship and the principles that have helped make our nation strong. I congratulate her on this achievement and am pleased to include in the RECORD her winning essay:

ABIGAIL ROTH—NEENAH MIDDLE SCHOOL, 7TH GRADE

I believe America's strength comes from our nation's ability to grow and move forward with the engagement and attention of the citizens. To realize America's strength, the citizens must be well informed and educated. Those citizens create communities that generate trust between their neighbors to influence policy. When those communities unite, America has a system in place to change the fate of our governmental system for the better. This system can create long lasting change in America, improving the country for future generations.

In order for America to grow and move forward, the public must be well informed and well educated. Everyone that has the right to vote should have access to education. Education creates a solid base of knowledge and skills necessary to promote individual civic responsibility. Civic responsibility is important because it leads to engagement with our country, necessary for a strong democracy and nation. Without the ability to read the ballot, how can we expect anyone to be engaged with democratic process? Next, having a well informed public that knows what is going on in the nation is very important. It's not enough that citizens can read, it is that they do read, and learn about issues in their government that they care about. With robust information, a well informed public enlivens democracy to grow and move forward, because people can make better decisions about what is happening in their country. To have a well informed public, reliable sources of information must be available. Newspapers, news channels, and government reports that adhere to standards which promote reliability and trustworthiness are valuable. These information sources create an environment where good faith debate and discussion can occur. America's strength is tied to its citizen's ability to constructively debate the issues of the moment.

Secondly, America derives strength from the trust built through engaged communities. When citizens are engaged with the issues that are affecting their community they can unite and come together to improve. When a community solves a problem they build trust by talking to each other and working together to fix the problem. People get involved in their community by joining events, talking to neighbors and joining clubs in their community. Anything that requires multiple people to interact in a community creates familiarity and trust. The government especially requires familiarity and trust from its constituents. As people work with each other to address issues in their community, those same people grow to become influential parts of the government. Whether they submit public comments, letters to their representatives or running for local office, these people exert influence on governance that leads to improvement. This process of well-informed, and educated citizens engaging with the issues of their community keeps growing until a chain of trust bonds every person. America derives strength from the trust through communities that come together and unite.

Lastly, we have built a system of government that can improve upon itself. When we have a well informed and well educated public we can create good ideas. These good ideas will be tested by the community through discussion and debate to identify and refine them into great ideas. Then those great ideas will be carried up from local to state to federal politicians who can deploy them to help the nation. An example of this is the 19th amendment that gave women the right to vote. Over the span of about 70 years, the idea of women's suffrage spread grew from novel, to good, to great, until finally being ratified in 1920. In other forms of government, like the British monarchy from which the USA revolted, citizens' ideas take a back seat to what the leader wants. But in this nation we have created a system where things can change and be better.

Overall, America's strength comes from a public being well informed. That public must belong to communities that create trust and generate great ideas. Those great ideas then inform the governmental system that adapts to become better. To make America stronger, citizens must obtain good education, keep themselves well informed, build community to discuss and debate how America can improve, and engage in the political process to see their ideas come into law. America's strength will improve if we work together to ensure that all citizens can partake in this country's growth.

HONORING EBENEZER BAPTIST CHURCH

HON. CLEO FIELDS

OF LOUISIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, September 14, 2026

Mr. FIELDS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to acknowledge Ebenezer Baptist Church of South Baton Rouge, Louisiana, a congregation whose beginnings date back to November 12, 1926, when a group of devout Christians met at the home of Sister Louvenia Green to establish a place of worship. The late Reverend Johnny Banks, one of the organizers, was elected as the church's first pastor. Ebenezer Baptist Church was formally incorporated on July 30, 1931, and Reverend Banks served faithfully until his passing in 1960. Leadership continued under Reverend Johnny Cyrus, who served until his death in that same year, followed briefly by Reverend Joseph Martin, assistant pastor, until the election of Reverend John H. Thomas, II, who guided the church forward until July 1971.

In August 1971, Reverend Q.T. Ellis was elected pastor, with Reverend Lemmie Washington serving as assistant pastor. Following Reverend Washington's death, Reverend Alex Banks assumed the role of assistant pastor. Under Reverend Ellis's leadership, the church progressed spiritually and structurally. In 1985, a major addition was completed including a pastor's study, secretary's office, dressing rooms, restrooms, a dining and kitchen facility, and expanded parking. After Reverend Ellis's resignation in May 1988, Reverend Banks served briefly as interim pastor until Reverend Ellis was re-elected in March 1989. Weekly Bible study was instituted as a core part of Ebenezer's spiritual development. Reverend Banks later became pastor of Christ Land Baptist Church, and Reverend William Armstead was elected assistant pastor.

On May 7, 2000, Reverend Q.T. Ellis became Pastor Emeritus, and Reverend Ronald A. Sutton was elected pastor. Under Reverend Sutton's leadership, the church developed its motto, mission, and vision statement, and the membership increased through Baptism and Christian Experience. In 2002, the church's name was changed to Ebenezer Baptist Church of South Baton Rouge. Reverend Sutton proposed remodeling the sanctuary, and construction began in January 2004, resulting in a new sanctuary, pews, organ, electronic piano, updated sound system, and additional parking. During construction, Greater Mt. Gideon Baptist Church and Greater Pleasant Green Baptist Church graciously opened their doors for worship and Bible study. By June 12, 2004, Ebenezer returned to its newly renovated home. In subsequent years, properties were purchased and improved along Carolina Street and Missouri Street as part of continued campus development.

Mr. Speaker, Ebenezer Baptist Church of South Baton Rouge continues to stand as a pillar of service, faith, and community engagement. In January 2025, the church implemented its 'Community Conversation' series addressing gun violence, education, domestic violence, voting, and economic development. In April and May 2025, Ebenezer hosted COPE training to strengthen community empathy and engagement. In January 2026, the church hosted a three-month Community Trauma Awareness Summit addressing mental health, stress, anxiety, depression, and suicide. On November 15, 2026, Ebenezer Baptist Church will celebrate its 100th Centennial Anniversary—giving honor to God for the abundant spiritual and financial blessings bestowed upon the congregation. I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing Ebenezer Baptist Church of South Baton Rouge for a century of faith, resilience, and devotion to carrying out the purpose of the Church as the light of the world and the salt of the earth.

RECOGNIZING JD CAMACHO RODRIGUEZ

HON. BRITTANY PETTERSEN

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, September 14, 2026

Ms. PETTERSEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize JD Camacho Rodriguez for earning the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth Award.

JD has overcome many challenges along his journey to success, demonstrating perseverance at every step. Students who strive to make the most of their education, like JD, develop crucial skills and a work ethic that will guide them for the rest of their lives. This award is a testament to JD's hard work, determination, and perseverance at Jefferson Jr/Sr High School and is clearly just the beginning of a bright and promising future.

It is my honor to congratulate JD Camacho Rodriguez on achieving the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth Award.

HONORING THE 75TH ANNIVERSARY OF PHELPS HEALTH

HON. JASON SMITH

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, September 14, 2026

Mr. SMITH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the 75th anniversary of Phelps Health —one of Southeast Missouri's oldest rural hospitals—and its commitment to serving the people of Missouri's 8th Congressional District.

Phelps Health was opened in 1951 as Phelps County Memorial Hospital, serving over 30 patients in just the first three days. What started as a small, 63-bed facility now boasts cutting-edge technology, ever-expanding services, and partnerships with facilities across the state.

For the past 75 years, Phelps Health and its staff have shown their devotion to the people of Phelps County, acting as examples of innovation, compassion, and service. This dedication is shown through their mission to reimagine rural healthcare and create lasting solutions to consistent challenges.

As Phelps Health celebrates this remarkable milestone, it looks to the next 75 years of prioritizing modernization and innovation. The staff and volunteers of this facility have shown time and time again how valuable a dedication to selfless service can be to a community. Their mission is simple: provide high-quality, accessible healthcare through empathy, hard work, and a devotion to helping folks in this region.

It is an honor and a privilege to recognize Phelps Health on this historic anniversary, and I ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating the staff, volunteers, and community members who have made this historic moment possible.

HONORING THE 150TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE LEWIS BEAR COMPANY

HON. JIMMY PATRONIS

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, September 14, 2026

Mr. PATRONIS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize a true Northwest Florida institution, The Lewis Bear Company, which is celebrating 150 years of serving Northwest Florida.

For generations, the Bear family has been part of the fabric of the Panhandle. In 1876, Lewis Bear, opened a small grocery and chandlery shop on South Palafox Street. What he started 150 years ago has grown into a family business that continues to serve Northwest Florida today. That kind of longevity does not happen by accident. It takes hard work and a commitment to the community you call home.

The Lewis Bear Company has grown and changed with Northwest Florida, but it has never lost sight of its roots. Today, five generations later, the company employs hundreds of Floridians and serves thousands of businesses throughout the region.

But the Bear family's legacy is about much more than business. They have consistently given their time, resources, and energy to organizations across our community, helping make Northwest Florida a better place.

As someone who is proud to serve Northwest Florida, I know how much companies like Lewis Bear mean to our region. They are a reminder that when a family builds a business, they are not just building something for themselves, they are building something for the community and for the generations that follow.

For 150 years, the Lewis Bear Company has been a part of the story of Northwest Florida. I congratulate the Bear family and everyone who has been part of this incredible legacy on this remarkable milestone. I look forward to seeing the Lewis Bear Company continue its tradition of serving our community for generations to come.

CELEBRATING THE 30TH ORDINATION ANNIVERSARY OF FATHER JIMMY DRENNAN

HON. JOAQUIN CASTRO

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, September 14, 2026

Mr. CASTRO of Texas. Mr. Speaker, today I rise in celebration of the 30th Anniversary of the Ordination of Father Jimmy Drennan. A leader guided by grace, hope and compassion. Father Jimmy's commitment to service embodies an unyielding dedication to ensuring the spiritual growth of our San Antonio community.

Father Jimmy's life of service has taken many roles throughout his life. As a student at