

Educationally, Pastor Thomas graduated cum laude from Crichton College in Memphis, Tennessee with a bachelor of science degree in biblical studies and is currently a candidate for the masters of divinity degree. He has also been awarded a doctor of divinity degree from St. Thomas Christian College in Jacksonville, FL. Pastor Thomas was selected from among 300 clergy nationally to participate in, and has completed the first Graduate School of Theological Studies Special intensive at Harvard Divinity School in Cambridge, MA in September, 2005 and Yale School of Divinity in September, 2006.

Pastor Thomas has accomplished many tasks on the local and national level. He is the founder and CEO of Grace Community Development Corporation and Grace for Living Ministries International and currently serves as Vice-Chairman of the Board of Directors for the Marchell Foundation, a regional scholarship granting foundation. In July of 1998, he was appointed and installed as the District Overseer for the West Tennessee Full Gospel Baptist Church Fellowship. Apostolically, he serves as the overseer of True Praise & Worship International Church in Raleigh, NC and Fresh Anointing Christian Fellowship Church in Clarksville, MS. He is a member and chapter officer of Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity, Inc. He's very active in our community in Memphis, Tennessee. He is married to Minister Antonia R. Thomas, who serves alongside him in the ministry. And even possibly more important than his congregation, Pastor Thomas has two children. One is Private First Class Reginald Cleveland, who has been serving this Chamber for the past 4 years as an officer with the Capitol Police. His daughter Joshlyn Thomas is a student at Craigmont Middle School in Memphis.

Generations are changed because of his passion for mentoring youth, empowering the saints and serving as a spiritual father for Pastors. Through the ministry of Pastor Thomas, people are discovering their destinies. His favorite Scripture is Psalms 37:4—"Delight thyself also in the Lord and he will give you the desires of your heart."

I appreciate Pastor Thomas serving the United States House of Representatives as our pastor this morning.

PAYING TRIBUTE TO DAYNA LYNN
AHERN

HON. JON C. PORTER

OF NEVADA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 13, 2008

Mr. PORTER. Madam Speaker, I rise to honor the life and memory of my friend Dayna Lynn Ahern, whose passion for life was an inspiration.

Dayna was a native of Las Vegas who was a student of fashion merchandising at the Fashion Institute in Las Vegas, Nevada. Prior to enrolling in the Fashion Institute, Dayna had earned an Associates Degree from the prestigious Le Cordon Blue College of Culinary Arts in Las Vegas.

Among Dayna's many passions was traveling and music. These dual talents provided her with a number of unique opportunities, such as performing for the Pope at the Vatican and traveling with her high school choir to

perform at various locals in Europe. Dayna was also an active member of her Church, and had a strong sense of spirituality.

Madam Speaker, I am proud to honor the life and legacy of my friend Dayna. On March 30, 2006, Dayna passed away but her enthusiasm and passion for life will serve as an inspiration for all who knew her. She will be greatly missed, but her legacy as a caring and motivated individual will live on.

RECOGNIZING CHARLES CITY,
IOWA POLICE DEPARTMENT INVESTIGATOR TODD SMITH AND MASON CITY POLICE OFFICER STEVE KLEMAS

HON. TOM LATHAM

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 13, 2008

Mr. LATHAM. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize Charles City, Iowa Police Department Investigator Todd Smith and Mason City Police Officer Steve Klemas as recipients of The Sullivan Brothers' Award of Valor for saving another's life by risking their own.

The Sullivan Brothers' Award of Valor Program was established in 1977 to recognize peace officers and firefighters, who while serving in an official capacity, distinguished themselves by performing a heroic act while fully aware of a threat to his/her personal safety. The strict nomination process includes background investigations, and the final determination is made by the Governor of Iowa.

On June 18, 2007, Officer Klemas and Investigator Smith responded to a request by the Wright County sheriff to assist in an armed stand-off that occurred after the office attempted to serve a committal order on an individual. After failed negotiations, two rounds of tear gas, and a five-hour stand-off, Officer Klemas and Investigator Smith led a team of eight into the house. Investigator Smith served as the shield person, and was shot at three times as Officer Klemas fired on the individual to subdue him and take him into custody.

Investigator Smith and Officer Klemas' bravery goes above and beyond what we are asked of as citizens of this country. Their courage illustrates the compassion of Iowans; willing to risk their own lives for the safety of our fellow citizens. For this I offer them my utmost congratulations and thanks.

I commend Officer Steve Klemas and Investigator Todd Smith for their bravery. I am honored to represent them in Congress and I wish them the best in their future endeavors.

CONNOR KONZ ENDURES FIJI

HON. TED POE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 13, 2008

Mr. POE. Madam Speaker, I would like to recognize a young constituent of the Second Congressional District, Mr. Connor Konz, for his participation in the Discovery Kids Channel competition Endurance Fiji.

Connor is a 15-year-old sophomore at Atascocita High School in Humble, Texas. He was selected in June of this year as a participant after submitting a five-minute video de-

scribing himself and how he spends his free time.

The game consists of teams collecting 13 pyramid pieces which are essential inner qualities to complete the Pyramid of Endurance. They are Strength, Heart, Courage, Perseverance, Luck, Trust, Leadership, Discipline, Knowledge, Commitment, Teamwork, Ingenuity and Friendship. The first team to collect all 13 pieces wins the game. The teams earn pieces by winning physical and mental competitions.

Connor and his mother, Debbie Konz, were flown to Fiji on Aug. 12. After arriving, he was taken by boat from the airport to an island hotel and from there to another island for the competition.

By no means was this tropical island competition a Sunday picnic or vacation for Connor. He was without all of the daily teenage essentials such as no cell phone, MP3 player or digital camera the entire time he was on the island. He slept in a sleeping bag, in a bamboo hut with a thatched roof and no air conditioning. Connor said that the worst part of the experience was no electricity or indoor plumbing.

The teens also faced isolation by sleeping on a separate island away from their parents and didn't get to see them again until they were kicked off the show for losing a competition.

Connor had to use his physical and mental abilities to overcome the obstacles and challenges in the competition. It was an experience that pushed him farther than he thought he could go and resulted in lifelong friendships with the contestants.

Connor not only represented his family in the competition but Humble, Texas as well. I salute Connor Konz for ending it in Fiji.

And that's just the way it is.

CONGRATULATING THE DENTON
COUNTY TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY

HON. MICHAEL C. BURGESS

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 13, 2008

Mr. BURGESS. Madam Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the Denton County Transportation Authority (DCTA) of Lewisville, Texas. The DCTA was recently awarded a Federal Transit Administration Ridership Award.

The Federal Transit Administration Ridership Awards honor and acknowledge the industry's commitment to excellence. The recipients of the Ridership Award are transit systems that have substantially increased their ridership since 2003 through a variety of techniques and innovations. The DCTA is one of four agencies being recognized that service an area with a population between 200,000 and 1 million people.

The Denton County Transportation Authority is a synchronized county transit agency that provides a wide variety of local services to Denton and surrounding communities, as well as a commuter service to downtown Dallas. The DCTA has strong relationship with the community. In 2005, the DCTA took over the daily operational and management responsibility of the campus shuttle service for the University of North Texas. The DCTA and the