

roles—she is truly multitalented. For instance, she served on the Montrose Chamber of Commerce, where she eventually led the organization as president. Her outreach and influence extends far beyond her professional life, too. Since 1980, she has been an active member of the Altrusa Club, a community service organization in Montrose. She has selflessly helped guide the club in multiple roles, most notably as president in 1986.

Mr. Speaker, I am honored to recognize Mary's track record as a reliable public leader. She has given decades of her life in pursuit of improving local government and her community.

A TRIBUTE TO MAJOR GENERAL
VANG PAO

HON. JIM COSTA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 26, 2011

Mr. COSTA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today with my colleagues Mr. CARDOZA, Ms. BORDALLO and Mr. KISSEL to honor the memory of Major General Vang Pao of Fresno, California, who passed away Thursday January 6th after a battle with pneumonia.

Major General Vang Pao led the Royal Lao Army during the Secret War in Laos, fighting against the People's Army of Vietnam in cooperation with the Central Intelligence Agency and United States military forces. Bravely leading thousands of soldiers in a guerilla war against communism, Vang Pao became a hero, due to his leadership and dedication.

Growing up in the Xiengkhuang province, Vang Pao became interested in military service early in life. He left his family farm as a teenager to join the French Military in defense of his fellow Hmong as the Japanese invaded, and began a historic military career. At the end of World War II, and the departure of the Japanese, Vang Pao was recruited as an officer in the First Indochina War to fight the Viet Minh.

As he rose within the Royal Lao Army, Vang Pao was heralded for his valor and dedication and was the only ethnic Hmong to attain the rank of General in the Royal Lao Army. In the early 1960's, when the CIA recruited Hmong men in Laos to join a guerilla unit during the Vietnam War, Vang Pao was chosen to be the commander. As his Hmong soldiers rescued downed American pilots from enemy territories and defended American outposts in Laos, he gained a reputation for being a disciplined, honorable leader.

The Hmong soldiers also attacked many North Vietnamese convoys that were using the Ho Chi Minh trail from North Vietnam into South Vietnam. By attacking these supply routes, thousands of U.S. soldiers' lives were saved in South Vietnam. Vang Pao and the Royal Lao Army valiantly fought for their cause throughout the entire Secret War.

Immigrating to the United States in May of 1975, Major General Vang Pao was instrumental in negotiating the resettlement of thousands of his fellow Hmong. Vang Pao continued his leadership after his exit from military service. He was active in fostering U.S.-Laos relations, and combating human rights abuses abroad, as well as serving as an icon and mentor to the Hmong-American community. A

widely respected figure, General Vang Pao was a constant feature at Hmong-American events and celebrations nationwide.

Major General Vang Pao is survived by his widow, Mrs. May Song Vang, 25 children, 68 grandchildren, 17 great grandchildren and numerous friends and community members.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join Mr. CARDOZA, Ms. BORDALLO, Mr. KISSEL and myself in honoring the life of Major General Vang Pao as we offer our condolences to his family and celebrate his memory and service to our country.

DR. S.K. RAO MUSUNURU

HON. GUS M. BILIRAKIS

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 26, 2011

Mr. BILIRAKIS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Dr. S.K. Rao Musunuru who will be recognized at the Community Aging and Retirement Services (CARES) Annual Benefit on February 5, 2011, for his continued philanthropic commitment to our community.

He began his formal study of medicine in 1968, but what is most noteworthy is his ability to couple his medical expertise with community involvement—enhancing the knowledge base, furthering the medical profession, and ensuring that local needs are met. While Dr. Musunuru boasts numerous memberships in nationally and internationally acclaimed organizations, including the American Medical Association, the International Society of Heart Transplantation, and the Society of Critical Medicine, he is still mindful of the medical needs in his own backyard.

He was instrumental in transforming a 50-bed rural hospital into a 290-bed Heart Institute, meriting recognition for its high standard of care. During his tenure as Chairman of the Board for Pasco Hernando Community College, the college had a 100 percent increase in nursing enrollment, and he has been vocal in his teachings of "proper prevention and prompt intervention, so that people can live longer and stronger."

Dr. Musunuru's involvement in the community certainly does not go unrecognized. He recently became the recipient of the 2010 Outstanding Physician Award and, for the second consecutive year, received Rotary International's highest honor, the Paul Harris Fellowship recognition. While his accomplishments and awards are extensive to list, words cannot adequately acclaim Dr. Musunuru achievements. The lives he has impacted are countless, and I applaud him for his resolve to use his talents to meet the growing needs of the community and the larger medical profession.

TED VALERIO TRIBUTE

HON. SCOTT R. TIPTON

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 26, 2011

Mr. TIPTON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Detective Ted Valerio of Montrose, Colorado. The Montrose Police Department recently awarded him the Employee of the Year for 2010, as well as a Merit Citation.

Detective Valerio was hired on April 30, 2001. Since then, his superiors and coworkers have recognized him as a respected individual of exceptional character and integrity. Detective Valerio has taken the lead and solved a number of important felony cases in the past decade and continues to prove himself an asset on the force. Aside from his responsibilities as a detective, he administers pre-hire polygraph exams for all police department employees—he is the second polygraph examiner to ever work in the Montrose Police Department. Detective Valerio also serves on the Montrose Special Weapons and Tactics team (SWAT), which carries a great risk of personal injury.

Mr. Speaker, Detective Valerio is consummate law enforcement professional and I am proud to congratulate him on his recent awards. I would also like to thank him and the countless other officers who continue to serve their communities.

IN RECOGNITION OF MELVIN E.
FERRO

HON. JOHN GARAMENDI

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 26, 2011

Mr. GARAMENDI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of Corporal Melvin E. Ferro, who is retiring after more than 28 years of law enforcement service to the City of Fairfield. As his colleagues, friends and family gather together to celebrate the next chapter of his life, I ask all of my colleagues to join me in saluting this outstanding public servant and defender of peace and safety.

Mel started his law enforcement career when he was hired as a Police Officer with the Fairfield Police Department on March 19, 1982. As an officer, he worked in various capacities including Patrol, Investigations, and Field Training. He earned awards for his performance, including Police Officer of the Year for 1994, and twice he was named Police Officer of the Quarter—June through October 2000 and again for July through December 2007. Mel served as a Field Training Officer beginning in 1995 and was later promoted to Police Corporal on December 31, 1999.

One of Mel's most significant contributions to the Fairfield Police Department has been his expertise in investigating and solving major crimes. His knowledge and memory pertaining to the activity and association of criminals in the area was a resource for the entire Police Department. He took community-orientated policing to a new level because he made an effort to learn where criminals lived in Fairfield, and he tracked their travel and associates. Additionally, as a trainer of fellow police officers, he taught what most police officers rarely develop—the craft of being a police officer.

Mel was a valued employee and leader in the Fairfield Police Department. His commitment to the community was unwavering. He was a loyal representative of the law enforcement community and admired amongst his peers for his hard work, dedication and positive work ethic.

Mr. Speaker, I am truly honored to pay tribute to this dedicated public servant. I ask all of my colleagues to join with me in wishing Melvin E. Ferro continued success and happiness in all of his future endeavors.