

Captain Biggs' personal decorations include the Legion of Merit, Defense Meritorious Service Medal, Meritorious Service Medal with one gold star, Navy Commendation Medal with three gold stars, Army Commendation Medal, Navy Achievement Medal and various service related awards and campaign ribbons.

Captain Biggs is married to the former Marina Reese. The Biggs' have four children; Justin, Eric, Juliana, and Joshua.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring Captain Kristian P. Biggs for his thirty years of service to our country. Captain Biggs has demonstrated a deep commitment to the security of our nation. His exemplary career is a testament to the level of dedication exhibited among our men and women in the armed forces. I would like to personally wish him the best of luck in his future endeavors.

NATIONAL MARFAN AWARENESS MONTH

HON. STEVE ISRAEL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 28, 2013

Mr. ISRAEL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today on behalf of the hundreds of thousands of Americans affected by Marfan syndrome and related heritable connective tissue disorders across the country.

As February marks National Marfan Awareness Month, it is important to raise awareness to this rare genetic condition. About 1 in 10,000 Americans carries a genetic mutation that impacts connective tissue throughout the entire body. Patients often have disproportionately long limbs, a protruding or indented chest bone, curved spine, and loose joints. However, these are not what most concern Marfan syndrome patients. Internal organs have connective tissue and in Marfan patients the aorta, the large artery that carries blood away from the heart, is weakened and prone to enlargement and potentially fatal rupture.

This year marks the 30th anniversary of the enactment of the Orphan Drug Act. While we have made great strides in addressing rare conditions since the Orphan Drug Act first became law, we must not lose sight of the work that still needs to be done. Patients with Marfan syndrome and related disorders rely on us to provide investment in critical research activities so that treatment options can be improved and, most importantly, so that cures can be found.

I am proud to represent the nation's foremost organization working to support the Marfan community, the National Marfan Foundation, based in Port Washington, New York. The Foundation was founded in 1981 by Priscilla Ciccariello, and since then the Foundation has worked to improve the lives of those affected by Marfan syndrome and related disorders by promoting research, raising awareness, and providing support to those afflicted with Marfan.

I urge my colleagues to join me in recognizing National Marfan Awareness Month. I look forward to working with colleagues from both sides of the aisle to make critical investments in medical research and treatment to save the lives of people across the United States.

RECOGNIZING COOK COUNTY SPELLING BEE CHAMPION ALIA ABIAD

HON. DANIEL LIPINSKI

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 28, 2013

Mr. LIPINSKI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Alia Abiad, winner of the Cook County Spelling Bee.

Alia Abiad is a 7th Grader at McClure Junior High School, and a resident of my hometown of Western Springs, IL. In addition to being a skilled tennis player and violinist for the Chicago Youth Symphony Orchestra, her recent performances in local Spelling Bees have demonstrated that she is an extremely dedicated and talented young woman.

Alia diligently practices her spelling independently and with her parents every day. She also gains her edge by reading books intended for an audience well beyond her age.

Alia initially won the title of best speller at McClure Junior High, and then went on to win the Cook County Regional Spelling Bee. In these competitions she maintained a perfect record, spelling every word correctly. Alia will be representing her school and her peers at the Scripps National Spelling Bee in Washington, DC this upcoming May.

This victory is a reminder of how preparation, practice, and perseverance produce solid results, even when facing difficult challenges. I call on all my colleagues to join me in congratulating Alia Abiad for her tremendous accomplishment.

RECOGNIZING SUSAN RIGBY AS THE 2014 ESCAMBIA COUNTY, FLORIDA TEACHER OF THE YEAR

HON. JEFF MILLER

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 28, 2013

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Mrs. Susan Rigby as the 2014 Escambia County, Florida Teacher of the Year. Mrs. Rigby has been an inspiration to her students, her colleagues, and our community; and I am honored to recognize her success and achievements.

In 1983, Mrs. Rigby graduated from the University of West Florida with a bachelor's degree in Business Management, and in 2005 she earned a master's degree from the University of West Florida in Clinical Teaching and Special Education. However, Mrs. Rigby's passion for teaching began well before 2005. Since 1989, Mrs. Rigby has served the students and community of Northwest Florida, both in the Escambia County and Santa Rosa County school districts. Mrs. Rigby initially served an ESE Teacher Assistant and Substitute Teacher for the Escambia County School District from 1989 to 1999. Since then, she has served twice as an ESE Teacher for Pine Forest High School, Math Teacher for Navarre High School, and is currently the an Algebra 1A Co-Teacher at Pine Forest High School.

The superb quality and effectiveness of the schools in Northwest Florida can no doubt be

credited to educators like Susan Rigby. Mrs. Rigby understands the invaluable role teachers play in the lives of their students, and she possesses an unwavering commitment and fervor. She is an exemplary teacher who believes encouraging her students to reach their highest potential is most crucial to the learning experience. The enthusiasm demonstrated by Mrs. Rigby's students is truly a testament to her dedication and desire to see her students achieve both in and out of the classroom.

Aside from her involvement at Pine Forest High School, Mrs. Rigby dedicates her time to various community events such as Relay for Life, We Believe in Children 5K, as well as projects that benefit underprivileged classrooms. Mrs. Rigby's efforts and devotion have not gone unnoticed, and she has been honored for her years of teaching secondary education. In 2004, she was awarded the University of West Florida, Outstanding College of Education Student. She was also the recipient of the Pine Forest High School Teacher of the Year, as well as the Walmart Selection Teacher of the Year in 2005.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud to recognize Mrs. Susan Rigby as the 2014 Escambia County Teacher of the Year. My wife Vicki joins me in congratulating Mrs. Rigby, and we wish her all the best for continued success.

THE GREEN MOUNTAIN LOOKOUT HERITAGE PROTECTION ACT

HON. SUZAN K. DELBENE

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 28, 2013

Ms. DELBENE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to introduce the Green Mountain Lookout Heritage Protection Act, along with my colleague Congressman LARSEN. Green Mountain Lookout, located in the Glacier Peak Wilderness, was built in 1933 as a Civilian Conservation Corps project. During the Second World War, the lookout was used to detect fires and to spot enemy aircraft. It is no surprise that with such a rich history, the Green Mountain Lookout is listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

Unfortunately, severe weather caused the Green Mountain Lookout to fall into disrepair, and the U.S. Forest Service began taking steps to preserve the historic structure for future generations. However, a group based out of Montana filed a lawsuit against the Forest Service for using machinery in order to conduct repairs, and a U.S. District Court ordered the Forest Service to remove the lookout. This legislation would protect the Green Mountain Lookout, one of the few surviving fire lookouts in the West, by allowing critical maintenance while keeping this iconic structure in its original home.

The Green Mountain Lookout represents a significant piece of the Pacific Northwest's history and it deserves to be protected for outdoor enthusiasts to enjoy today and in the years to come. I urge my colleagues to preserve a part of our Nation's history by supporting this bill.