

Greek Orthodox priest would visit periodically to perform required services such as marriages, baptisms, and funerals. The infrequent visits by the priest prompted several individuals to consider establishing a church. In 1923, "The Greek Community of Fresno" was incorporated, and a priest from San Francisco began to visit regularly.

The first St. George Greek Orthodox Church was built in "Greek Town," where most of the Greek families had settled. The building served the Greek community for 50 years, and still stands today.

When World War II ended, families grew and began to move into other areas of Fresno. Businesses were expanding throughout the city, and a new church was built in 1955. In the years that followed, many new traditions such as the Greek Food Festival started. Not only is the festival an annual fundraiser for the church, but residents from all over the Central Valley attend the celebration so they can enjoy dancing, food, and rich Greek culture.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing the 90th Year Anniversary of the St. George Greek Orthodox Church. Their mission to provide an infinite amount of faith, hope, and love to the public is highly respected and praised.

#### RECOGNIZING OF THE ACHIEVEMENT WEEK BANQUET FOR THE PI LAMBDA LAMBDA CHAPTER OF THE OMEGA PSI PHI FRATERNITY, INC.

**HON. GERALD E. CONNOLLY**

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, November 21, 2013*

Mr. CONNOLLY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the Achievement Week Banquet for the Pi Lambda Lambda Chapter of the Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc. The chapter includes the communities of Prince William County, the City of Manassas, the City of Manassas Park and Stafford County.

The Omega Psi Phi Fraternity was founded on Friday evening, November 17, 1911 by three Howard University undergraduate students, Edgar A. Love, Oscar J. Cooper, and Frank Coleman, and their faculty adviser, Professor Ernest E. Just. Together they laid the foundation of an organization based on the core principles of manhood, scholarship, perseverance and uplift. For one hundred years, the membership has upheld a strong tradition of friendship and civic engagement.

At this year's Annual Achievement Week Banquet, the Pi Lambda Lambda Chapter honors the Achievement Week Award recipients. These awards are given to the men and women who, through their character and actions, preserve Omega Psi Phi's four founding principles. I congratulate the following individuals on being awarded these honors:

The Citizen of the Year Award: Congressman GERALD E. CONNOLLY

The Colonel Charles Young Military Leadership Award: Brother Colonel Drefus Lane

Omega Man of the Year: Brother Albert Woods

Founders Award: Brother Dr. Bryon Cherry, Sr.

Basileus Awards: Brother Lee Bennett, Jr. and Brother Erik Noel

Special Basileus Award: Leonard and Susie Gillespie and Gregory Scroggins: K2 Restaurant and Lounge

Mr. Speaker, I ask that my colleagues join me in conveying our appreciation for years of civic service by the Pi Lambda Lambda Chapter of the Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc. It is civic groups like the Pi Lambda Lambda Chapter that define the character of our communities and give measure to our generosity of spirit.

#### SHARING STORIES IN SUPPORT OF COMPREHENSIVE IMMIGRATION REFORM

**HON. JOE GARCIA**

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, November 21, 2013*

Mr. GARCIA. Mr. Speaker, the following are stories of individuals affected by our nation's broken immigration system:

Story 1: I have been in this country for five years. I came from my country, Honduras, because I was a victim of domestic violence from my father. When I reported the abuses I was in danger because there were gangs that threatened me, and I was very scared. I was able to leave my country with no problems, thank God. I sought the opportunity to continue studying but I was asked for papers and they required me to have legal status. I waited for the Dream Act because, at the time, I was hearing a lot of talk about it. But, unfortunately, I didn't qualify for deferred action. I got desperate because I didn't want to spend much time without continuing my studies. A friend of mine suggested I go to Canada. When I was crossing through Buffalo, six immigration officials stopped me and treated me very badly. I told them that I was not a criminal and asked them not to treat me like that. I didn't resist, behave violently, or do anything for them to treat me like that. They made me feel like the worst person in this country, just because I didn't have documents. I just wanted the opportunity to continue my studies and I wanted for them to help me. I entered a jail with criminals, with women I had never seen in my life, that scared me just by looking at them. I could not sleep, could not eat in peace. I just kept thinking that at any moment there could be violence. Thank God my fiancé's family and church members raised the money to pay \$10,000, and now I'm waiting for the court because I have been given a deportation order. I don't want to continue living in the shadows. We are not criminals. We are people with dreams, with the same heart, the same blood that runs through our veins. We are people just like the citizens here. We are also part of this country, this is our home. Despite everything I've always considered it my home because I'm thankful I am here and that I'm still alive. If I would have stay in my country I would've died a long time ago. I only ask for immigration reform to take place soon, because the future of so many people is at stake. Update: Her deportation order has been postponed until 2014. Her child is due in September of 2013.

Story 2. I support a roadmap to citizenship, as a woman that came to this country 18 years ago and that have been through some hard times. Thank the Lord, today I am a U.S. citizen, and my children are U.S.-born citizens. I support a roadmap to citizenship for all the people that are suffering, that don't have a driver's license, that don't have documents and are afraid to lose their

families. I have an uncle who I adore and who is always afraid just with the thought that he could be deported one day, that's why I say yes to a roadmap to citizenship for all the people who are contributing to this country.

Story 3: I say yes to citizenship. I am Cuban, even though I was not [undocumented] when I came to this country I understand the need for the sisters and brother that are undocumented. I just heard the stories and what people feel when they have to drive, these are honest men and women that come to this country to give everything for their life. This is the land where honey and milk flow we are all immigrants and we need citizenship. Every person that does not have a criminal record should have citizenship. All those honest men and women, parents, grandparents, children without documents to go to school and who are getting behind because of not having their documents.

Respond, Obama, and all members of Congress. We say yes to citizenship. I am involved even though I am already a citizen. We have to support our brothers and sisters in the name of Jesus. May God bless and grant them with great wisdom. In the name of Jesus.

Story 4: I came to the United States in 1991. I planned to stay here for three years to finish my law degree. In 1994 I had an accident. That was my first battle. One can face many injustices in this country. I was denied medical attention at a hospital in Michigan. I did not have money, and since I wasn't covered by insurance I had to leave.

I stayed in the state of Michigan with this issue until February 1995. Then I moved to New York. In New York I was diagnosed with a torn knee ligament (MCL) on my right knee. The cost of the surgery was \$65,000. Therefore, I didn't have any other option than to go to Mexico. I had the surgery done after six months. I suffered a lot. Can you imagine? My right knee meniscus and ligaments were torn and the pain was unbearable. The hospital's policy of no discrimination posted on the walls in big bold letters is completely false.

I had another accident in 2006 here in Immokalee, Florida. The lawyers of Azteca Supermarket tried to blackmail me with threats of calling immigration and many other threats of this kind. Then, I basically dropped the case after writing a letter to the judge in which I called the lawyers cannibals and the fact that they were lawyers didn't mean I couldn't press charges against them. The lawyers of Azteca Supermarket dropped the case as well.

I have witnessed situations in which workers have been hit by their employers. In fact, I have experienced that same situation myself. When I was living in New York, I used to work at a store where a [Korean] hit me. I have witnessed many injustices in this country. We need comprehensive immigration reform so that employers stop abusing undocumented workers. Today I am diabetic, perhaps because I didn't get treatment on time. After my first accident I went through a period of depression and much suffering, watching how apathetic people were. I didn't comprehend how even though I was working, the hospitals here in United States wouldn't treat me. I was contributing to the economy of this country and the hospitals denied me the right to medical attention. There are many things I would like talk about, but time is short. I'd like to talk to Congress. I'd like to talk to the members of the House of Representatives and the Senate, and I'd like to tell them myself why it is important to have immigration reform.

If we are contributing to this economy on a daily basis with our work and sweat, it is inhumane deny us medical attention, education and the opportunity to prepare ourselves to be better. I want to reiterate that

is very important to pass comprehensive immigration reform.

Story 5: Hello. I'm from Argentina, but I've been in the United States for 12 years. I am very appreciative of this country because it has opened doors for us, because we came from Argentina where things are really bad. Please, we need immigration reform, a path to citizenship, because we don't have driver's licenses, we don't have health insurance, and we don't have anything to help us stay safe in this country. We want to stay here, we're not going to leave, and for that I say yes to urgent immigration reform, yes to fast citizenship. I'm a 63-year-old grandmother, and I've worked a lot in Miami, but now we can't work nor do anything because we don't have papers. My daughter is unemployed because she doesn't have papers. She is 23 years old and doesn't have papers. I have married children, but they are married to undocumented people, not to people with papers. Please, we need urgent immigration reform.

Story 6: I want to say yes to citizenship because I believe, just like me, so many good people have come to work in this country, to help and contribute to the economy. I have been living here for 15 years. I am a person like any other, and I believe and think that citizenship is necessary because we have earned it with our work and the sweat on our foreheads, and it would help us so much because we face too much discrimination in our jobs. They rob us, pay us low wages, and there has to be an end. Also, I'd like to say that if there is citizenship or a bill, it would be a great help to the economy of this country and I'd also like to say thank you to all of you for doing all of this, for making us a part of this huge force, and of course, yes to citizenship.

Story 7: I am supporting immigration reform for citizenship. I am in this country illegally. I want to be a citizen so that I can contribute to this nation. Thank you very much.

Story 8: It's been six years since I came from Mexico. I came to this country because the situation in Mexico is very critical. There's a lot of crime, you know. There are so many criminals who kill like it's nothing. There's no work. I say yes to immigration reform so that we can be American citizens. I also consider this country like my own, and I say yes to reform.

Story 9: I am a native of Jalisco, Mexico, and I was born in 1969. I'm from a rural area in Jalisco. I came to the United States when I was 14 years old. I worked in a farm in Homestead, which opened opportunities for me in this country and I received my residency in '86. Now I am working with the University of Miami, and I volunteer with the Florida Farmers Association. The Association made me President of the Board of Directors, and now I am telling them that we can help reform our immigration system and asking them to support immigration reform if they can. This is what I'm doing for the immigrant community living in the country. Above all else, I am also asking that all the states in the United States approve driver's licenses because, independently of whether reform happens or not, people will come to this country with papers, they will overstay their visas, and stay undocumented. I am asking for reform for the immigrants that come to this country.

Story 10: For me, it is very important that some kind of reform takes place because it is very difficult for us to stay here in this country with all the problems from the police regarding driver's licenses and without the benefits that everyone else gets. Many Americans consider us to be below them simply because we don't have papers, because we have no way to defend ourselves, because we are treated by the police, and all that. We

should have so many more benefits so that we can hold a job. It is very difficult to keep a job without papers. I would like for undocumented immigrants to be okay in the United States like everyone else that has papers, for us to be okay with the law, because it is very difficult for me.

Story 11: I am a farm worker, mainly working on farms picking oranges. I've had many jobs: picking apples, working with tobacco, and doing a lot of other agricultural work. Another thing, I am a citizen. My parents were in Texas when I was born. They worked there after they came from Mexico and they were undocumented. My relatives and I were born therein Texas during the World War, and the United States was fighting. This country needed a lot of manpower, so they let a lot of undocumented people in to work here because they needed to sustain the jobs here so that the country would survive. Because of this, there were many undocumented people here. When the war finished, the excuse they gave was that because the soldiers were returning here, they didn't need undocumented workers, so there were raids to return all the undocumented people and the families that had these groupings, including American citizens, and they sent us back to our countries. That happened when I was a child. Now the same thing is repeating but with a different excuse—now it's the economy, that's why they're sending them back to their countries. This thing is that people who are not from here are returning, they're returning to their families, their children, who are American citizens. Sometimes they deport the father or the mother or a few times both, and the kids stay separated from their parents. In this country it is presumed that families should be together, but for undocumented people, we're not given what everyone says we should have. What I'm saying here is that we have been living in this country for many, many years, so we need to do something. There needs to be reform to the existing immigration laws. We need to fight for immigration reform that can fix the existing problems, so that they can classify undocumented people who are here and unite families so that all the injustices that are occurring can stop. If you don't have a license, you're a criminal and they deport you. They separate families, and the kids are the ones that suffer. Now that President Obama was reelected, there a lot of possibility for immigration reform, but what do we have to do? We need to unite to achieve just reform in a way that everyone, or the majority, can qualify to receive their documents and can be here legally.

Story 12: More than anything for me, I'd like them to give us the chance to visit our families and to be able to move, for work if not for anything else. We hope that there will be something that benefits all of us, not just me, but for everyone that needs it. I've been in the country for 12 years and until now we've been doing well, but because we don't have licenses, we can't go anywhere easily. But, as far as work and everything else we are all well, thank God.

Story 13: I'm from Puerto Rico, and I live in Miami. I joined the caravan [organized by the Florida Immigrant Coalition to support immigration reform] because since I arrived in this country, I knew something was not right. There's a community of 11 million people that work hard for their country, this country, my country, but my country is punishing them. These people aren't criminals. I've met so many of them through the caravan and they are farmworkers—maybe they're kicking them out because of that, because they're not engineers, or doctors—but these are the people that put my breakfast on the table every morning.

Like I said, I'm from Miami, and all I have to do is go to the grocery store and buy some oranges. But I've met a lot of people that get up when the sun comes out, go to bed when the sun goes down, and on top of paying them so little, the city is trying to kick them out. When I was in school, I was taught the word "democracy." My teacher taught me that in a democracy, as long as you do right, things will turn out right for you. And I'm seeing a lot of people that are doing things right but things are going right simply because they came from another place. Like I said earlier, it really hurts me to see someone from Mexico, or Peru, from wherever, that the department of immigration, local police, the federal government, sometimes President Obama, sometimes Republicans, sometimes Democrats treat them like less. I'm Puerto Rican, I'm an American citizen, and I am nothing better than these people. These people are so humble and work hard just like me, and this is what brings me to causes like this one. I met a young man who's Mexican who's hanging out with us, he has four children, he's incredibly humble, and he's a hard worker. The only crime he's done is to wake up every morning, go home every night, and put food on the table. That's his only crime, to put food on the table, to feed his kids who are U.S. citizens. Four kids that if they were to deport their dad, the kids would end up orphans. And it seems to me the government doesn't have an interest in more orphaned kids, the Department of Children and Families isn't asking for more orphans. You would think the government would want less.

Story 14: I am here as a volunteer in the movement because, well, right now I personally work with immigrant families and see the destruction that exists in families, separating and deporting parents, including citizens who have children born here and those children are still suffering the consequences. And, personally, I have a daughter in Mexico and one in California. My daughter who is in California is illegal as well, unfortunately. And my daughter who is in Mexico does not have the same opportunities as my daughter here. I haven't seen my daughter or her family in 18 years. My grandchildren in California do not know my grandchildren in Mexico, and it is a very great sadness that I carry. Every time I look at the separated families, even though it hasn't affected me directly if, for example, my son or my husband were the deported, the fact that my daughters have not seen each other for so many years, that my grandchildren will not know each other each other—it hurts. I see so many families dealing with this type of separation in my daily work. These families ask me for help because they know I can help them with transportation, translation, or filling out paperwork. But unfortunately I cannot do much for them, even though I wholeheartedly want to. I do what I can but others can do more. I am in this caravan hoping that immigration reform can benefit all families, including mine.

## PERSONAL EXPLANATION

### HON. BILL SHUSTER

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 21, 2013

Mr. SHUSTER. Mr. Speaker on rollcall No. 598, I was not present for the vote due to a family emergency.

Had I been present, I would have voted "nay."