

orders of a Babylonian tyrant to bow down and worship his golden idol. Like his namesake, James Harris would not submit to an unjust system.

From his early teens, he aspired to play quarterback in the National Football League—a position that no African American had ever been allowed to play for more than a handful of snaps. In setting this goal, Harris challenged bigotry, stereotypes and the status quo. At the time, it was taken as fact in both college and pro football that Black athletes did not possess the necessary intelligence, leadership, and character to play quarterback. Shack shattered the vile myth.

Inspired by the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s "I Have A Dream" speech, Harris persisted in pursuing his own dream. After a record-setting career at Carroll High School in Monroe, he went to Grambling State University and was coached by the legendary Eddie Robinson. Coach Robinson shared James Harris's goal of breaking the color barrier at quarterback in the NFL. And Robinson had recruited him for that very reason.

James Harris had an illustrious career at Grambling. He led the Tigers to three conference titles, set numerous passing records, was selected MVP of the 1967 Orange Blossom Classic, and was chosen the nation's outstanding player in 1968 by the Washington Pigs Club. Despite these achievements, he was not invited to any post-season all-star games and he was not selected in the NFL draft until the eighth round.

James Harris did not give up. He would not be forced into changing positions to receiver or defensive back, as had so many promising African Americans before him. He was determined to play quarterback. Every night during training camp as a rookie, he called Eddie Robinson for advice and moral support.

He ultimately won the starting job, and opened the 1969 NFL season as the Buffalo Bills' starting quarterback. It was the first of many "firsts" in his career. During three pivotal years with the Los Angeles Rams in the mid-1970s, James Harris led the team twice to the NFC title game, led the conference twice in passing efficiency, was chosen MVP of the Pro Bowl, and was voted captain by his teammates.

From 1969 through 1977, Harris was virtually the only African American quarterback to be a starter. He endured hate mail and death threats. He also bore the hopes of an entire people. As Eddie Robinson had once told him: "You have to make it. Otherwise, people will say you sent us your best and he wasn't good enough."

By being much more than good enough, James Harris opened the door of opportunity for African American quarterbacks to follow, from Doug Williams and Warren Moon to Russell Wilson and Robert Griffin III.

But Harris' legacy did not end when he walked off the playing field. He went on to become a prominent NFL executive for the New York Jets, Baltimore Ravens, Jacksonville Jaguars, and currently the Detroit Lions. As such, Harris has helped to pave the way for other African American coaches and general managers whose success demonstrates the power and promise of diversity and inclusion.

So it is an honor to recognize and applaud the accomplishments of James Harris. Dr. King once called himself a "drum major for freedom." We might call James Harris, the

barrier-breaking quarterback, a field general for racial equality.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. BARBARA LEE

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 12, 2013

Ms. LEE of California. Mr. Speaker, I was not present for rollcall votes 630–636. Had I been present, I would have voted "yes" on rollcall 630, "yes" on rollcall 631, "no" on rollcall 632, "yes" on rollcall 633, "yes" on rollcall 634, "yes" on rollcall 635, and "yes" on rollcall 636.

RECOGNIZING SCOTT NISHIOKI

HON. JIM COSTA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 12, 2013

Mr. COSTA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Scott Nishioki, who has served as a valued member of my staff for the past nine years. Scott joined my staff during the beginning of my first term in Congress, and he has made a real difference. This month, Scott will be leaving my staff to find other ways to serve our nation beyond the walls of Congress. Scott's years of service to the people of Central California, spanning from Kern County to Merced County, deserve to be commended.

A Sanger native, Scott grew up in the heart of the San Joaquin Valley and graduated from Sanger High School before becoming a Bulldog at California State University, Fresno. He earned his Bachelor's degree in 1976, and shortly thereafter began to pursue a career in public service that led him from California to Washington, DC.

In his 31 years in Washington, Scott has done it all. As an aide to Congressman Rick Lehman (D-Fresno), Scott wrote the Truth in Savings Act, legislation that protects consumers and encourages healthy financial savings. Following his service with Congressman Lehman, Scott held a number of important positions within the telecommunications industry, the U.S. Department of Commerce, and the American Bankers Association. As a result of his years of service, Scott understands and appreciates the inner workings of this city better than anyone else.

Scott's true value is his ability to focus on what really matters. Spending a lifetime in DC can sometimes leave you blinded by partisanship, ambition, or money, but Scott has never forgotten why he left his home and moved to Washington in the first place. He moved here to solve problems and make a difference for the people of the San Joaquin Valley and the nation. And, that is exactly what he has done.

In addition to his legislative achievements, Scott made a difference by mentoring every member of my staff and several others both on and off Capitol Hill. For years, Scott has calmly helped my staff navigate personal and professional pressures. Together our staff has achieved a great deal both as members of Team Costa and in their professional lives after their service in my office.

Michael Doyle, reporter in the Washington bureau of McClatchy newspapers, may have

said it best: "Scott hits the trifecta. He's smart, candid and funny. I have always been able to trust his insight and his judgment. I will miss him; Congress will be a lesser place without him."

Mr. Speaker, it is with great pleasure and pride that I recognize Mr. Nishioki today for his many contributions to not only my Congressional office, but the entirety of the San Joaquin Valley. He is truly a son of the Valley, and the place we both call home is better for his many years of service. It has truly been an honor to work with him over the years and I wish him the best of luck in his next adventure.

IN HONOR OF THE 15TH ANNUAL MONTEREY COWBOY POETRY AND MUSIC FESTIVAL

HON. SAM FARR

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 12, 2013

Mr. FARR. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the 15th Annual Monterey Cowboy Poetry and Music Festival. The Monterey Cowboy Poetry and Music Festival is a non-profit organization composed of a group of volunteers who love cowboy poetry, western music, cowboy movies and western art and gear. The volunteers work tirelessly to bring us the, "Cowboy Way of Life" and its most talented musicians, poets and artisans to our region. I have a short poem by Monterey County resident, Wendy Brichnan, to read which captures the essence of this award-winning event.

A GLANCE AT THE MONTEREY COWBOY POETRY & MUSIC FESTIVAL

From the Land of the proud California Vaqueros
set in beautiful Monterey, the first capital of California

a modest festival has, for the past 15 years,
celebrated the legendary Cowboy Way.

Through cowboy poetry, through cowboy songs,
through cowboy crafts and artifacts of the past,
the Monterey Cowboy Poetry & Music Festival
has shared important values that all should recall.

Honesty, Integrity, Friendship and Loyalty
Courage, Hard Work, and Dedication.
Collaboration, Teamwork, and Honor.

The Cowboy Code of Ethics is one to admire.
Founded by former Monterey police chief,
Gary Brown

this special Cowboy Festival has shared highlights
of the Western Heritage that Monterey County
residents remember with pride.

Mike Beck, Monterey native musician and horse trainer
and visiting Western singers such as
Juni Fisher, Dave Stamey, Don Edwards
and others charm all ages with their prowess.

Their clever and moving songs celebrating the
spirit of the cowboy and cowgirls—
through hundreds of years, and thousands of miles,
and spark our imagination and pride.

They bring the world of the cowboy alive
with imagery that tugs at our hearts and minds