

Rodriguez, age 38, of Aguadilla, Puerto Rico. These three brave soldiers were laid to rest entirely too soon. These three soldiers will be remembered for their achievements and their dedication to our country.

Americans are becoming all too familiar with tragedy of this magnitude, but it does not change the immense heartache and pain that comes with the loss of some of our nation's finest. A horrible tragedy such as this highlights the importance of serving our soldiers both while at war and during the difficult transition back into normal life. Worse is that it comes in the wake of another terrible incident at Fort Hood that occurred just five years prior. We must be able to wholly understand the challenges that our soldiers face in a time of such stringent and demanding operational tempos.

I extend my thoughts and prayers to the families of those that were lost on April 2, and offer my deepest condolences and hopes for the sixteen others that were injured in the shooting.

The men and women of Fort Hood are true American heroes. They deserve our greatest honors for the sacrifices they make every single day, within and beyond our borders. It must be our duty to always remember those that we have lost and we must be forever dedicated to preventing tragedies like these from ever happening again.

Mr. Speaker, I ask the House to observe a moment of silence in honor of the three fallen soldiers, Sergeant First Class Ferguson, Sergeant Owens, and Staff Sergeant Lazaney-Rodriguez.

#### RECOGNIZING DENNIS CARDOZA FOR HIS SERVICE

**HON. JIM COSTA**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, April 28, 2014*

Mr. COSTA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize my friend and former colleague, Dennis Cardoza. Dennis served as the U.S. Congressman for the 18th Congressional District of California. He has truly led a life dedicated to public service, and his efforts deserve to be commended.

Dennis grew up in Atwater, California where he attended Atwater High School followed by California State University, Stanislaus. He later transferred to the University of Maryland College Park where he earned his Bachelor of Arts Degree in 1982. He was the first member of his family to graduate college. Dennis' first taste of public service came in 1979 when he spent a summer in college interning on Capitol Hill.

After graduation, Dennis returned to the San Joaquin Valley where he ran a successful small business and served as a city councilman for Merced and Atwater. In 1996, he was elected to the California State Assembly where he served as Chairman of the Rules Committee and cofounder of the Moderate Democratic Caucus.

In 2002, Dennis was elected to his first term in Congress. He had many legislative accomplishments that truly made a difference in his

district. Dennis was an unwavering advocate for issues impacting Valley residents such as water, agriculture, unemployment, and poverty. Dennis lobbied to bring Secretary of the Interior, Ken Salazar and Secretary of Agriculture, Tom Vilsack to the Central Valley. Their visit influenced the decision by the Department of Agriculture to declare Merced, Stanislaus, and San Joaquin counties as natural disaster areas. Also, Dennis was an active member of the Blue Dog Coalition. He proudly cosponsored H.R. 2166 the "Fiscal Honesty and Accountability Act of 2009" to extend Pay-As-You-Go spending through 2014 in order to strengthen Congress' commitment to fiscal responsibility and accountability. In 2007 Dennis joined the House Rules Committee where he assisted the victims of the Valley's home foreclosure crisis by securing language in H.R. 1728, the "Mortgage Reform and Anti-Predatory Lending Act", that established a federal database to track foreclosures across the country. In the 110th and 111th Congresses, Dennis served as Chairman of the House Agriculture Committee's Subcommittee on Horticulture and Organic Agriculture, which had a prominent role in the formation of the 2007 Farm Bill.

Dennis believes that one of our greatest responsibilities as a society is to leave our nation a better place for our children and grandchildren. Dennis worked diligently to ensure that the University of California's 10th campus would be in Merced, California. In addition, one of Dennis' proudest legislative accomplishments was the language he introduced in the "Fostering Connections to Success and Increasing Adoptions Act", which ensures that children in the foster care system receive necessary medical attention until the age of 21. Dennis has been an advocate on behalf of children and adoption not just as a legislator but also as a parent, raising two adopted children in addition to his one biological daughter.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing the leadership and public service of Dennis Cardoza. His contributions to the Central Valley, the State of California, and the future generations of this nation ennobled this body of Congress with his presence.

#### EQUAL PAY DAY

**HON. YVETTE D. CLARKE**

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, April 28, 2014*

Ms. CLARKE of New York. Mr. Speaker, I stand before you today outraged and baffled that we are in the 21st century and still have to have an Equal Pay Day. Equal Pay Day symbolizes when, more than three months into the year, women's wages finally catch up to what men were paid in the previous year.

Why this is still being debated when the Equal Pay Act was passed 51 years ago is crazy.

How can we as a nation begin to justify unequal pay simply because you are a man and I am a woman? Why does my gender diminish my value to the workforce?

I, and all women, am not asking for any more than what we deserve for being productive, valuable employees.

Today, in 2014, women earn 77 cents for every dollar that a man earns. This is outrageous. It gets even worse for women of color. Black women only earn 64 percent and Hispanic women, even less, just 53 percent of what white men earn. I am appalled by this, and so are the American people. Not only does my gender decrease my pay, but my race does as well.

According to the American Association of University Women, African-American and Hispanic women are paid less than their white peers even when they have the same educational background.

There are a record number of women in the workplace and two-thirds of women are the primary or co-bread winner in their families. Consider the position that the American family, our economy and our nation would be in if we all agreed that women should have equal pay for equal work. Our President said it best, "When women succeed, America succeeds."

Women are losing money every year and every hour due to the pay gap. It is time to close the loopholes in the Equal Pay Act.

I urge Speaker BOEHNER to bring H.R. 377 the Paycheck Fairness Act to the floor.

#### HONORING CARROLLTON-FARMERS BRANCH ISD, GRAPEVINE- COLLEYVILLE ISD, AND HURST- EULESS-BEDFORD ISD FOR THE DISTINCTION OF "BEST COMMU- NITIES FOR MUSIC EDUCATION"

**HON. KENNY MARCHANT**

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, April 28, 2014*

Mr. MARCHANT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of three school districts in the 24th District of Texas, Carrollton-Farmers Branch ISD, Grapevine-Colleyville ISD, and Hurst-Euleless-Bedford ISD, that have recently been designated to receive the prestigious honor of "Best Communities for Music Education" by the National Association of Music Merchants (NAMM) Foundation.

The "Best Communities for Music Education" is a program that celebrates communities in America who support access to music education as part of their core curriculum. Each school district involved filled out a survey that answered detailed questions about funding, graduation requirements, music class participation, instruction time, facilities, support for the music program, and community music-making programs. This year, with over 2,000 school districts nominated, 376 were awarded this designation, of which I am incredibly honored to have three of those in the 24th District of Texas. This award recognizes the commitment of these school administrations, community leaders, teachers, and parents who believe in music education and are working to ensure that it is part of a complete education for children.

Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the 24th Congressional District of Texas, I ask all my distinguished colleagues to join me in honoring this recognition from the NAAM Foundation for the Carrollton-Farmers Branch, Grapevine-Colleyville, and Hurst-Euleless-Bedford Independent School Districts.