

On behalf of the residents of the Twenty-Second Congressional District of Texas, congratulations again to Dr. Vern and Ms. Downey for receiving the John and Suanne Roueche Excellence Award.

TRIBUTE TO DR. SAMIR SALIBA

HON. H. MORGAN GRIFFITH

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 16, 2015

Mr. GRIFFITH. Mr. Speaker, I submit these remarks in order to extend my sincere congratulations and gratitude to Dr. Samir Saliba on his remarkable 51 years as a full-time faculty member at the College. He has had many titles and jobs in his 51 years at Emory, but from my time as a student I fondly remember him as 'Dean Saliba.'

More importantly, I recall the positive influence Dean Saliba had on me. I am confident he has similarly impacted countless people he came across over the years, whether in Virginia or wherever he has been.

Dean Saliba's influence at Emory and Henry, of course, is immeasurable, as he established the Political Science Department and implemented additional, remarkable visions as chair of the Division of Social Sciences, Dean of Faculty, advisor for the pre-law program, and director of the Center for International Studies. I commend him on these accomplishments, and on his numerous awards and accolades, including the 2014 William and Martha DeFriece Award.

Dean Saliba will soon be taking a well-deserved sabbatical, following his decades of hard work instructing young people and improving the Emory brand not just across the Commonwealth, but across the country. It is my hope that he enjoys this time, and returns refreshed to work on a memoir of his years at Emory and Henry.

I am honored to officially congratulate Dr. Saliba, pay tribute to his legacy, and thank him for all he has done for the Emory and Henry family.

TRIBUTE TO THE ATHLETES OF SAINTS JOHN NEUMANN AND MARIA GORETTI CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL VARSITY GIRLS' BASKETBALL TEAM

HON. ROBERT A. BRADY

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 16, 2015

Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the extremely talented Saints John Neumann and Maria Goretti High School Girls' Varsity Basketball Team of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. They have achieved the consensus recognition as the Number 1-ranked and National Championship girls' basket-

ball team in the United States of America, and won the Pennsylvania State Championship (PIAA Class AA), Philadelphia City Championship (PIAA District 12), and the Philadelphia Catholic League Championship.

The Lady Saints put on a dominant performance in their state championship game against the Seton-LaSalle Rebels of Pittsburgh, with a commanding victory of 79–34 to become Pennsylvania State Champions. Not only did they finish their unprecedented season a perfect 30–0, but they've also been recognized as the "Team of the Year" by the Philadelphia Inquirer for the Philadelphia and Southeastern Pennsylvania region.

These talented young women were mentored throughout the season by former head coach Letty Santarelli, who was a star-player at Immaculata University, and were led by Head Coach Andrea Peterson. Following this remarkable season, Coach Peterson has been named the Top High School Girls' Basketball Coach in the United States, winning the Naismith National Coach of the Year Award.

I ask you and my distinguished colleagues to join me in congratulating this team on an outstanding season.

IN RECOGNITION OF THE REVEREND JAMES R. EDWARDS

HON. SANFORD D. BISHOP, JR.

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 16, 2015

Mr. BISHOP of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor an outstanding Man of God who has been a longstanding source of inspiration, spiritual guidance, and moral leadership to the people of Southwest Georgia, the Reverend James R. Edwards. Rev. Edwards is retiring after pastoring the New Salem Missionary Baptist Church in Baconton, Georgia for almost twenty years. His friends, family, and church community will honor him at a celebration event on Saturday, April 18, 2015 in Camilla, Georgia.

An Arkansas native, Rev. Edwards began his ministry at Wayland Baptist University in Plainview, Texas, where he earned degrees in Business Administration and Christian Education.

From there, Rev. Edwards was drafted into the United States Marine Corps and began his active duty career on November 17, 1969 in Parris Island, South Carolina. He served our nation honorably for over thirty years both within the United States and overseas. He was promoted from private to warrant officer, and retired on May 31, 2000 with the rank of Major. He is decorated with the Navy Achievement Medal, the Meritorious Service Medal, and the Legion of Merit.

Following his calling, Rev. Edwards dedicated a significant portion of his time to ministry while in the Marines and afterward. He was ordained a deacon at Christian Valley

Missionary Baptist Church in North Chicago, Illinois in 1978. From November 1980 to June 1982, he served as deacon and Sunday School teacher at Marshall Chapel Missionary Baptist Church in Midway Park, North Carolina. He then served as deacon and president of brotherhood for Second Missionary Baptist Church in Oceanside, California. While at the City of Refuge Christian Church in Waipahu, Hawaii, he accepted his calling into the ministry, preaching his initial sermon on Thanksgiving Day in 1985. He was ordained at the Springfield Missionary Baptist Church in Hawkinsville, Georgia in April 1989.

Rev. Edwards served as associate pastor at Mt. Carmel Missionary Baptist Church in Dale, South Carolina and Grace Christian Church in Kaneohe, Hawaii. He served as pastor at Camp Smith Chapel in Honolulu, Hawaii, New Jerusalem Missionary Baptist Church in Plainview, Texas, and Summerhill Missionary Baptist Church in Pelham, Georgia.

The Second Congressional District of Georgia gained a compassionate and able leader when Rev. Edwards arrived in Albany, Georgia in September 1995. Throughout his pastoral career, always seeking to improve the craft of Christian ministry and discipleship, Rev. Edwards has served on numerous community boards, and as chairman of Faith Community Outreach and the Putney District Union; vice president of the Second District of the General Missionary Baptist Convention of Georgia, Inc.; president of the Mitchell County Ministerial Alliance and Baconton Community Group of Churches; chaplain at the Jimmy Autry State Prison; and CEO of the Southwest Georgia Community House of Hope. And even still, while being the lead member in all of these ministries and organizations, he was also a member of the NAACP, National Naval Officers Association, Montford Point Marine Association, American Red Cross, Southern Leadership Conference, Blacks in Government, and Leadership Albany.

Mr. Speaker, Reverend Edwards is a man of integrity who exudes the genuine principles and values of Christian discipleship. A charismatic evangelical leader and pioneer, his spiritual zeal is both infectious and highly contagious. Under his leadership, New Salem Missionary Baptist Church has stood as a beacon of light in our community, serving as a voice for the voiceless and guide for the lost by spreading the ministry and the good news of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

Along with his extensive church community, Rev. Edwards is surrounded by the love and support of his family—his wife, Ethel Louise Sheffield, and their five children, sixteen grandchildren, and one great-grandchild.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me today in thanking Reverend James R. Edwards for more than thirty years of dedicated service to our nation, twenty wonderful years of changing South Georgia for the better, and a lifetime of selfless service to God, the church and to humankind.