

## DECADES OF COMPASSION

**HON. PETE OLSON**

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, July 8, 2015*

Mr. OLSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Mrs. Avadele Short of Katy, Texas for receiving an Award of Distinction for her 34 years of dedicated service to the Memorial Hermann Katy Hospital.

Mrs. Short and her husband were two of the founders of the Memorial Hermann Katy Volunteer Auxiliary when the hospital opened its doors in 1981. Since then, Mrs. Short has given more than 9,000 hours of her time to the Katy community and is the only remaining original member of the Auxiliary. With her help, the volunteer program has expanded from 45 original members to 145 members today. Now 91, Mrs. Short still volunteers twice a week and brings smiles to all the patients and the entire hospital staff. Hospital staff and patients alike agree, it would not be the same place without her care and compassion.

On behalf of the Twenty-Second Congressional District of Texas, congratulations again to Mrs. Avadele Short for more than three decades of volunteer service to the Memorial Hermann Katy Hospital. Thank you for all that you have done for our community.

## CONGRATULATING MADDY PETICOLAS

**HON. RODNEY DAVIS**

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, July 8, 2015*

Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate my constituent, Maddy Peticolas of Godfrey, Illinois, on achieving the Congressional Award Silver Medal.

The Congressional Award recognizes individuals for excellence in four areas: voluntary public service, personal development, physical fitness, and expedition. During her time at Principia High School, Maddy participated in a number of activities that helped to improve her community.

Maddy spent over two hundred hours volunteering at a local day camp, staffing events and led hikes for children. She also grew in her faith of Christian Science by reading "Prose Works", written by Mary Baker Eddy, a founder of the Church of Christ, Scientist. Additionally, as a ukulele player, Maddy worked to improve her memorization and sight reading skills.

She also spent many hours playing for her club soccer team, and began running to increase speed and confidence as a player. She climbed a 14,000 foot mountain and completed a ropes course during her time on a yurt campground where she was also in charge of meals.

In all these things, Maddy demonstrated determination in improving both herself and her community. Whether it was through volunteering, personal development, physical fitness, or expedition, Maddy impacted the lives of many and I am proud to represent individuals like her in my district.

Congratulations on earning the Congressional Award Silver Medal, Maddy.

HONORING MR. JOSÉ DUEÑAS

**HON. BARBARA LEE**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, July 8, 2015*

Ms. LEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the extraordinary life of Mr. José Dueñas, former President and CEO of the Alameda County Hispanic Chamber of Commerce. Known throughout the Bay Area as a fervent Latino community leader, Mr. Dueñas has left an undeniable mark on our community. With his passing on June 20, 2015, we look to honor the outstanding quality of his life's work.

Born in Mexico City, Mexico on February 24, 1952, Mr. Dueñas was raised in Oakland, California where he graduated from Fremont High School. He later attended California State University, Hayward and St. Mary's College of California. Upon receiving his Bachelor's Degree in Engineering, Mr. Dueñas went on to pursue a career in public service to develop and promote opportunities for the greater Bay Area community.

During the earlier stages of his professional career, Mr. Dueñas' determination and hard work led him to become a senior manager for the Port of Oakland, the fourth largest port in North America. Shortly after, he was chosen to lead the Bay Area World Trade Center as Chief Executive Officer where he coordinated trade missions to over 40 different countries.

Afterwards, the Alameda County Hispanic Chamber of Commerce (ACHCC) hired Mr. Dueñas to represent and provide assistance to over 18,000 Hispanic owned firms. As President and Chief Executive Officer at ACHCC, he led the charge of building a sustainable economic and financial foundation for Latino businesses to grow and prosper in the Bay Area. During his tenure, he also helped create a Latino Political Action Committee to help promote Latino candidates and address key issues facing the Latino community and communities of color.

Furthermore, Mr. Dueñas also ran his own company, Global 8 Partners, which focuses on international trade, government affairs and Hispanic business marketing. He is survived by his two children, Nicolas and Annalisa, three sisters and one brother.

I will always remember José's resiliency, his charisma, and passion for serving his community. Some of my most memorable moments with José were traveling to Mexico and Africa on the trade missions he helped organize. He truly understood the importance of international trade to the Bay Area, and he shared his knowledge with policy makers and the private sector to help spur economic growth and create jobs. His larger than life spirit will live forever and will continue to give us hope for the future. I will be forever grateful for his wise counsel and friendship.

Today, California's 13th Congressional District salutes an outstanding individual and leader, Mr. José Dueñas. Mr. Dueñas' contributions have truly impacted countless lives throughout the Bay Area. I join all of Mr. Dueñas' loved ones in celebrating his incredible life and offer my most sincere condolences.

PEARLAND ISD SECONDARY  
TEACHER OF THE YEAR—MELISSA  
WARD

**HON. PETE OLSON**

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, July 8, 2015*

Mr. OLSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Melissa Ward of Pearland's Dawson High School for being named Pearland Independent School District's 2015 Secondary Teacher of the Year.

Ms. Ward has always had a gift and talent for teaching. After receiving degrees in both sociology and psychology, she sought a career where she could help people and found a passion for teaching. In addition to her classroom excellence, Ms. Ward also coaches girls' cross country, track and field, and basketball. She often takes time out of her day to attend her students' cheer, band, or sporting events. She has also implemented the Student Training in Teacher Leadership Program, which provides mentoring for students who are considering teaching for a career at Dawson High School. Her dedication to Dawson High School doesn't stop.

On behalf of the Twenty-Second Congressional District of Texas, congratulations again to Melissa Ward for winning the Pearland Independent School District's 2015 Secondary Teacher of the Year Award.

HONORING THE COUNTY OF  
NAPA'S IF GIVEN A CHANCE  
PROGRAM

**HON. MIKE THOMPSON**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, July 8, 2015*

Mr. THOMPSON of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the valuable and tremendous work of the Napa County organization, If Given A Chance. For two decades, this group has provided scholarships and resilient high school graduates to overcome extraordinary challenges and troubled pasts.

Since 1995, the If Given A Chance program has provided young people that have faced tremendous difficulties the opportunity to continue their education after high school and gain the work experience they need to succeed. With support from local businesses and philanthropic organizations, the program awards more than \$100,000 in scholarships, and graduates have gone on to get Masters and Ph.D. degrees at schools such as UCLA, UC Davis, and Stanford University.

If Given A Chance has supported hundreds of Napa Valley students in their efforts to pursue college and vocational education. The remarkable young people that participate in If Given a Chance have overcome gang affiliation, addiction, injury, abuse and disease, and this program provides them the opportunity to make a better life for themselves and their families. If Given A Chance is a testament to the significant and positive impact young people can have on their communities, and a true demonstration of the qualities that make our country great.

Many have worked tirelessly to ensure the success of If Given A Chance, and none