

Born in Belfast, County Antrim, Sean joined the Irish republican movement at age 11. He was arrested and imprisoned several times by British security forces, starting at age 12, but was never found guilty. In 1978, Amnesty International cited Sean's cause as one of the five most serious cases of torture in Northern Ireland. Following his release from prison, he met and married Philomena Devine, and the two immigrated to New York in 1983. Shortly after relocating, Sean was detained at the behest of the British government. As a Member of Congress, I heard about Sean's case, and knew that if he were to be deported his life would be at grave risk. I decided to get involved on Sean's behalf, and we soon became fast friends. After our prolonged and hard fought legal battle, the Mackin family won a landmark decision. His wife and daughter became the first Irish women to be granted political asylum in the United States, and Sean's deportation order was denied as he would go on to become an American citizen. He has been very involved in the Irish peace process and has worked with elected officials in Washington D.C. promoting peace and justice in Northern Ireland.

Sean is also a cofounder and chairman of the New York Irish Center known for its outstanding services to the senior Irish generation and suicide prevention assistance for the Irish community. In 2014, Sean was honored by the Irish Lobby for Immigration Reform for his work on behalf of undocumented Irish.

Of course, Sean's true love is his family. He and Philomena have three children, Jennifer, Sean Og and Ciaran, and four grandchildren, Gavin, Tyan, Ella and Pierce. They all live in Eastchester, NY.

This year, Sean will serve as Grand Marshal for the EIASC's 13th Annual Eastchester St. Patrick's Day Parade. I cannot think of a more fitting Grand Marshal. Congratulations to my friend Sean Mackin on receiving this wonderful honor.

HONORING THE LIFE OF AMEDEO
"ARMIE" MEROLLA

HON. JAMES R. LANGEVIN

OF RHODE ISLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 3, 2017

Mr. LANGEVIN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life and memory of General Amedeo "Armie" Merolla—a dedicated patriot, a passionate legal mind, a community leader in Rhode Island, and someone who I was proud to call a dear friend.

Armie Merolla was a man of service in every aspect of his life. He spent much of his time giving back to his community, serving his state and his country with distinction.

Armie's time in uniform began when he enlisted in the United States Marine Corps while still a student at Brown University. After graduating in 1951, he enlisted in the Rhode Island Army National Guard (RIARNG) and received a direct commission as a First Lieutenant in the Judge Advocate General Corps. His long and distinguished military career included posts in the Military Police, JAG, Field Artillery, and Military Intelligence, during which he earned numerous decorations, such as the Legion of Merit, the Meritorious Service Medal, and the Rhode Island Cross for Valor. Among

his commissions with RIARNG, he served as State Inspector General, State Staff Judge Advocate, Brigadier General, and Assistant Adjutant General and Deputy Commanding General—Army. In his retirement, he was appointed as Commander of the Rhode Island State Defense Force and attained the honorary rank of Major General in the Rhode Island Militia.

As an attorney, Armie experienced great success and took on many roles after receiving his J.D. from Harvard Law School in 1954. At the time of his passing, he was a senior managing partner at Merolla, Accetturo & Lough, where he practiced alongside two of his children, Katherine and Steven. He served as Judge Advocate General and Assistant Providence City Solicitor, and contributed his legal expertise to the Rhode Island Secretary of State, the Rhode Island Public Buildings Authority, and the Director of the Rhode Island Department of Administration. The Rhode Island Supreme Court appointed him to the Alternate Dispute Resolution Task Force, the Rules of Evidence Committee, the Committee for Admission to the Bar, and the Committee on Clerkships. Armie also held leadership positions in several legal associations, including the Rhode Island Trial Lawyers Association.

In his community, Armie demonstrated an even deeper commitment to others. He was a Chairman of the Warwick School Committee, Chairman of the Warwick Bicentennial Committee, President of the Boys and Girls Clubs of Warwick, trustee of his church, president of the alumni association of his class at Brown, Commodore and Perpetual Member of the East Greenwich Yacht Club, and Co-Founder of Warwick Figure Skaters. He also held leadership positions in local chapters of the United Way, the Knights of Columbus, the Catholic Charities Fund, and John F. Kennedy's 1960 presidential campaign.

Armie devoted himself to a large and loving family, and is survived by his wife, Norma, his brother, John, his four children, Katherine, Julie, Sandra, and Steven, nine grandchildren, four nieces, one nephew, and seven grandnieces and grandnephews.

It is an honor to remember Armie on the Floor today, just as it was to consider him a trusted friend and advisor. He made a difference, and he will truly be missed.

REMEMBERING STAFF SERGEANT
CHRISTOPHER W. SWANSON

HON. STENY H. HOYER

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 3, 2017

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to speak about a very special event taking place next week in my district.

Maryland's Fifth District lost a number of brave and extraordinary military personnel since 2001 in Iraq and Afghanistan or in support of our operations there. One of them was U.S. Army Staff Sergeant Christopher W. Swanson of Rose Haven, in Anne Arundel County, who fell in action on July 22, 2006, in Iraq's Anbar Province. Staff Sergeant Swanson gave his life to save his fellow soldiers when insurgents ambushed their patrol. He had been serving there with the 2nd Battalion, 6th Infantry Regiment, 1st Armored Division.

On Friday, May 12, family, friends, neighbors, and state and local officials will gather in Edgewater, Maryland, to rededicate the South River Bridge in Staff Sergeant Swanson's memory, a moving tribute to a young man from our area who lived by the highest ideals of our country and made the ultimate sacrifice under our nation's flag. His parents, Kelly and Gary Swanson, and his brother Kenny and his family, will be on hand to witness the renaming of the four-lane bridge, which connects southern Anne Arundel County with the state capital of Annapolis across the South River—a major thoroughfare serving commuters and commerce in the area. While so many in Rose Haven and its surrounding communities have known for years about what Staff Sergeant Swanson did for our country, now thousands of Marylanders will pass by the sign each day bearing his name and noting his extraordinary service and sacrifice. I hope they will take a moment each time to remember him and all those who were killed in action wearing our nation's uniform.

Staff Sergeant Swanson was proud of his roots in Southern Maryland. He graduated from Southern High School in 1999, where he had been captain of its soccer team, and enlisted that summer in the U.S. Army. It just made sense to him to serve, particularly given that both of his parents worked in law enforcement. Throughout his youth, he had often volunteered with the First Baptist Church in Upper Marlboro to go on service missions to Florida, Ohio, and West Virginia to help communities in need. At school, he gave his time to help out in the administrative office, and his teachers and peers alike saw him as a natural leader. It surprised no one at all that Staff Sergeant Swanson was on his third tour of duty in Iraq when, after being injured by an improvised explosive device, he insisted on going back into combat with his fellow soldiers instead of taking medical leave. As soon as his wound was stitched and he was given permission, he was right back with his unit, on the front lines.

It was less than two weeks later that Staff Sergeant Swanson was killed in action. He had served with distinction in Kosovo as an Army paratrooper and was later among those who participated in the initial stages of Operation Iraqi Freedom. Now, he rests among heroes in Arlington National Cemetery. His parents and brother launched a service organization in his memory, the SSG Christopher W. Swanson Support Charity for Veterans and their Families, which, among other projects, funds scholarships for the children of local fallen, wounded, or active duty soldiers to attend summer camp.

I hope my colleagues will join me in remembering Staff Sergeant Christopher W. Swanson, in thanking his Gold Star family for their sacrifice and charity work in tribute to him, and in paying tribute to all those from Maryland and across the country who gave their lives in service to our nation.

IN RECOGNITION OF MRS.
CHAMPE'S 3RD GRADE CLASS

HON. DAVID A. TROTT

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 3, 2017

Mr. TROTT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the bright young artists in Mrs.