

that she is leaving office and hope she will return to offer Brisbane her skills and talents in addressing the issues facing her beloved city. I have no doubt that Lori will continue to make enormous contributions to any effort she undertakes.

HONORING THE ACHIEVEMENTS OF
CITALLI ORTIZ AS THE 2017 WOMEN'S
YOUTH WORLD CHAMPION

HON. RAUL RUIZ

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 14, 2017

Mr. RUIZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor the determination, perseverance, and accomplishments of Citalli Ortiz, a young constituent who became the first female boxer in the Coachella Valley to win the gold medal for Team USA in the 2017 Women's Youth World Championships.

Citalli is a Coachella Valley High School student with an inspiring commitment and passion for boxing. Her dedication to giving her all in the ring has led her to become the first female boxer from Coachella Valley Boxing Club gym to achieve such high recognition.

She began boxing when she was a little girl, inspired by her father, Alex Ortiz, and her older sister, who was also a boxer. Her training started when a couple of boys were teasing and punching Citalli. Her father saw this and took the opportunity to teach her how to use some boxing moves for self-defense, including the "one-two" move. Citalli defended herself successfully against the boys, and decided to become a boxer, following in her sister's footsteps.

Citalli's road to success hasn't always been easy. In the beginning, trainers did not want to work with her due to her weight. As a result, her father decided to become her trainer and empowered her to fight for her dreams. After long hours of training in the gym, Citalli achieved her first victory at the age of 12 at the Desert Showdown.

Citalli brings agility and strength to the ring in every fight. She has won medals and beat national champions at the 2016 USA Junior and Youth Boxing Championships in Nevada, the 2016 USA Boxing Junior Olympic, and the Prep National and Youth Open Championships in Texas. Citalli is also the 2016 Oxnard National PAL Champion, 3x Desert Showdown Champion, and the 2015 Gene Lewis Champion. To this day, she remains undefeated.

Throughout her 8 years in boxing, Citalli has witnessed a large gender disparity in the ring. She is committed to become a professional boxer so she can represent women in boxing. Citalli's greatest inspirations are female professional boxers such as Cecilia Braekhus and Hannah Gabriel. Her goal is to represent USA at the 2020 Olympics in Tokyo.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud to recognize Citalli Ortiz. On behalf of California's 36th Congressional District, I commend her accomplishments and passion for boxing. I look forward to her many more victories in the ring.

RECOGNIZING RETIRED UNITED
STATES AIR FORCE CAPTAIN NA-
THAN NELSON

HON. MATT GAETZ

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 14, 2017

Mr. GAETZ. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to recognize a true American hero and patriot.

Captain Nelson, USAF, Retired, enlisted in the military in 2006. After 4 years of enlisted service, Nelson applied to Officer Training School with the encouragement of his commanding officer. He attended Officer Training School in Montgomery, Alabama in 2011, followed by Intelligence Officer Training at Goodfellow AFB in San Angelo, TX.

Once Nelson finished training there, he was assigned to Joint Base Lewis-McChord as the Director of Intelligence for the 22nd Special Tactics Squadron.

Nelson was serving on his third tour in Afghanistan as the Special Tactics Intelligence, Surveillance, and Reconnaissance liaison. While assisting a combat controller assigned to a 7th Special Forces Group ODA, Nelson was hit by a 107mm rocket and suffered a spinal cord injury from the blast.

In addition to that injury, Nelson also suffered severe shrapnel wounds, multiple spinal fractures, severe tissue damage to his left ankle, collapsed lungs, major shrapnel damage to his torso and lower extremities, and severely bruised organs. He also underwent a massive blood transfusion and tracheotomy, and suffered numerous other injuries.

Nelson spent 18 months in physical therapy, underwent 9 surgeries, and 46 units of blood. His injuries left him paralyzed from the chest down.

Nelson served 9 years honorably in the USAF and retired in November of 2015.

For his service to the country, Nelson received the Meritorious Service Medal, Purple Heart, Air Force Commendation Medal, Army Commendation Medal, and the Army Achievement Medal, among many others.

Nelson has not let his injuries dampen his tenacious spirit or hinder him from continuing to serve his country. He currently holds a Bachelor of Arts Degree in Intelligence Studies, and an MBA in Finance. Nelson also helps countless veterans and active duty members by serving as my Deputy Director of Military Affairs for Florida's First Congressional District. His guidance and expertise is an invaluable asset to me and my team. His determination, bravery, and fortitude are an inspiration to all who are blessed to know and work with him.

To honor his great sacrifice for our country, Nelson will be gifted a mortgage-free home from nonprofit Building Homes for Heroes, an organization that builds and modifies homes to gift mortgage-free to wounded veterans and their families. Nelson, his wife Jennifer, and their daughter Eva will be welcomed into their new home for the very first time in Santa Rosa Beach, FL.

I would like to extend my gratitude to Nate and his family for all they've sacrificed for their country and their community.

Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the United States Congress, I am privileged to recognize and honor Nathan Nelson, Jen, and Eva, and congratulate them on their well-deserved, new home.

RECOGNIZING THE LIFE AND
SERVICE OF RUTH BANCROFT

HON. MARK DeSAULNIER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 14, 2017

Mr. DESAULNIER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the life and service of Ruth Bancroft, renowned expert on drought-tolerant plants, founder of the Ruth Bancroft Garden, and resident of Walnut Creek.

Ruth had a keen intellect and an insatiable curiosity about plants and nature. She collected and categorized seashells and planted flower gardens around the home she shared with her husband and three children on the Bancroft property.

With the help of the New York-based Garden Conservancy, the Bancroft family formed the nonprofit Ruth Bancroft Garden on Bancroft Road which is protected by a conservation easement. It opened to the public in the early 1990s. In August, the garden broke ground on a visitor and education center with space for events and classes as well as offices for staff. Ruth worked in the garden every day until she was 97 years old.

Ruth was an inspiration and a friend. She was a stalwart in the Contra Costa community and we shared a passion for conservation and the environment. She passed away on November 26, 2017 at the age of 109. She is survived by her children Peter Bancroft, Nina Dickerson and Kathy Hidalgo and four grandchildren. Her friend, family, and our community will miss her dearly.

CONGRATULATING ROCK ISLAND,
ILLINOIS FOR BEING NAMED A
PROJECT WINNER FOR THE 2017
GOVERNOR'S HOMETOWN AWARD

HON. CHERI BUSTOS

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 14, 2017

Mrs. BUSTOS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Rock Island, Illinois for being named a project winner for the 2017 Governor's Hometown Award due to its outstanding Kids Invested in Natural Growth (KING) Program.

The Kids Invested in Natural Growth Program is provided by the Martin Luther King Center. The program provides a variety of activities for youth ages 6 through 18, including homework help, sports and recreation, service learning, mentoring, life skills, and character development. The program's goal is to provide safe and enriching activities and encourage academic success. The Kids Invested in Natural Growth Program reaches approximately 1,200 kids each year. Thirty-five dedicated volunteers make the yearlong commitments to the sports component. An additional 15 volunteers are involved in the afterschool and summer programs.

The generous and caring volunteers and leaders of the Kids Invested in Natural Growth (KING) Program in the City of Rock Island make me especially proud to serve Illinois' 17th Congressional District.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to again formally congratulate Rock Island, Illinois for being