

Texas educators for their extraordinary work and dedication. There is no doubt that they have touched the lives of students in Frisco, Waynesboro, and beyond.

VETERAN OF THE MONTH—PAUL ANDERT

**HON. KEVIN HERN**

OF OKLAHOMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, April 18, 2019*

Mr. KEVIN HERN of Oklahoma. Madam Speaker, I rise today to share the work and life of my April Veteran of the Month, Tulsa's Paul Andert.

Mr. Andert, a World War II veteran and Tulsa icon, has devoted the recent years of his life to telling his story to keep alive the memories of the men and women who fought and bravely served our country.

He's lent his wisdom to countless student groups, veterans organizations and churches around the country. He appeared on Glenn Beck, authored the book "Unless You Have Been There," about his war experience, and was an advisor on the 2014 World War II film *Fury*.

Mr. Andert dropped out of school at the age of 17, lying about his age in order to join the army. By the time the United States joined World War II, he was leading his own infantry platoon. Mr. Andert led by example, knowing that he could not ask his soldiers to do anything he wouldn't do himself.

Spending three years on the frontlines of the war, Mr. Andert had enough near misses with death to fill a book—one he plans to write.

At 96 years old, Mr. Andert is still running full steam ahead, pressing forward with his mission to share the stories of those who protected our country.

I am grateful for the sacrifices Mr. Andert made to serve our country, and the work he does to preserve the memory of his fellow veterans. Tulsa, and all of America, is better off because of his dedication.

IN RECOGNITION OF LAUREL BLACKETT MIRANDA

**HON. JACKIE SPEIER**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, April 18, 2019*

Ms. SPEIER. Madam Speaker, I rise to honor Laurel Miranda who is receiving the Citizen of the Year and Community Care Award from the Associated Parents' Group of Hillsborough for her tireless work improving the lives of children of all abilities.

For twelve years, Laurel was instrumental in shaping the Hillsborough City Student District Special Education Program to include parent representation, field trips and a science overnight. It is an inclusive educational experience with opportunities on par with the General Education Program. In addition, she was active in all other aspects of school life, including the parent group boards at South and Crocker schools and Art in Action. She served as president of both the Hillsborough Schools Foundation and the Associated Parents' Group of Hillsborough.

Laurel's intelligence, thoughtfulness, generosity and practicality have earned her the admiration and respect of teachers, staff, parents and students alike. She knows how to get things done.

In her advocacy for children of all abilities, she co-founded Special Kids Parents Group of Hillsborough and was president for three years. The group worked collaboratively with the superintendent, the school board, the Hillsborough Schools Foundation, and APG to provide a welcoming, supportive school and community environment for families with children of all abilities. They helped launch three annual signature events: Special Kids Parents Group Kick-Off Coffee, High School Night for Parents of Special Learners, and 5th Grade Transition Coffee for Parents of Special Learners. They improved recreational opportunities with Hillsborough Recreation. And they represented HCSD to San Mateo County SELPA to share ideas and strategies across school districts. In short, Special Kids Parents Group could not have been a more effective advocate.

Originally from Columbus, Ohio, Laurel came to California and attended Miramonte High School in Orinda. While working as a camp counselor at John's Hopkins Center for Talented Youth in 1987, she met her husband Steve Miranda. In 1990, Laurel earned her BA in Quantitative Economics and English from Stanford University and in 1997, she earned her JD/MBA from UC Berkeley.

Laurel and Steve were married at Stanford Memorial Church in 1993. She had a successful career at Oracle, Wells Fargo, and Charles Schwab. In 2000, with the birth of Robert Miranda, Laurel fully devoted her time to family, advocacy for children and school activities. Isabel Miranda was born three years later and diagnosed with a rare form of epilepsy at the age of eight months. There wasn't a group Laurel wasn't involved in or a board she didn't serve on. Advocacy and community engagement are part of her DNA. In her current role as a board member of CuriOdyssey, she is promoting exclusive hours and programming for kids with special needs and their families.

Madam Speaker, I ask the members of the House of Representatives to rise with me to recognize the long-lasting contributions Laurel Miranda has made to the Hillsborough City School District. She is a remarkable community leader who is effecting change in everything she touches.

IN RECOGNITION OF KIM FRANKSON, JESS JOHNSON, AND LAURIE ORTEL OF ASHLEY ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

**HON. MICHAEL C. BURGESS**

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, April 18, 2019*

Mr. BURGESS. Madam Speaker, I rise alongside Rep. VAN TAYLOR and Rep. BEN CLINE to honor Kim Frankson, Jess Johnson, and Laurie Ortel of Ashley Elementary School in the Frisco Independent School District. At the end of last year, these North Texas school administrators used quick thinking and teamwork to help save a life 1,200 miles away.

In December 2018, Ashley Elementary School principal Kim Frankson, assistant prin-

cipal Laurie Ortel, and counselor Jess Johnson received a concerning message from a student via the STOPit app, an online platform designed to allow students and parents to send anonymous reports of bullying to school officials.

The North Texas educators soon discovered that the student was in Waynesboro, Virginia—more than 1,000 miles from Frisco—and sprang into action. As Laurie Ortel said in an interview with the Dallas Morning News: "We didn't know her, but in that moment, she became ours."

In spite of the distance, Jess Johnson began communicating with the student, who was threatening suicide, on the STOPit app. At the same time, Kim Frankson and Laurie Ortel attempted to contact the Waynesboro Police Department and administrators at the student's school, which already had closed for winter break. Thanks to the efforts of the North Texas teachers, local authorities in Virginia were able to locate the endangered teenager and provide lifesaving assistance.

Thankfully, the student's message for help reached the right people.

On February 14, 2019, the Dallas Morning News published an article telling their story. In recognition of their lifesaving efforts, Kim Frankson, Laurie Ortel, and Jess Johnson were honored at the Frisco ISD board meeting on April 8, 2019. They were presented the inaugural Helping Hands Life Saver Award from the makers of the STOPit mobile app, and have received well-earned praise from Americans in North Texas, Virginia, and around the country.

As Members of Congress representing Frisco, Texas and Waynesboro, Virginia, we extend our sincere gratitude to these North Texas educators for their extraordinary work and dedication. There is no doubt that they have touched the lives of students in Frisco, Waynesboro, and beyond.

CHLOE WILLIAMS AND ELLA BRALLIER

**HON. ED PERLMUTTER**

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, April 18, 2019*

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize and applaud students Chloe Williams and Ella Brallier for earning the Best in Show Award for their creative and unique mobile application (app) as part of the 2019 Congressional App Challenge.

As first-time participants in the challenge, this team from the Northglenn STEM Launch School built an app titled "Safe Space" to a safe portal and resources for youth all over the world to assist with LGBTQ, teen pregnancy, eating disorders and other issues facing students today. The students of STEM Launch School spent countless hours and used numerous tools to learn about coding, further advancing their STEM education. Each team built their app in less than three months which shows their perseverance and dedication to this challenge and exemplifies the character and determination the faculty instills in the students at the school.

I extend my deepest congratulations to these students for their hard work on this project. I am certain these students will exhibit