

IN HONOR OF G. ROLAND VELA,
PH.D.

HON. MICHAEL C. BURGESS

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 13, 2019

Mr. BURGESS. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor the contributions of G. Roland Vela, Ph.D. to the City of Denton and the academic community. Dr. Vela is a retired professor at the University of North Texas, where he served as one of the first Latino faculty members. At UNT, he authored 75 scientific papers and books regarding Texas History. This history-maker also blazed trails as the first Hispanic member of the Denton City Council and one of the country's first Mexican-American Microbiologists. In honor of Dr. Vela's distinguished achievements, the City of Denton dedicated the G. Roland Vela Athletic Complex on May 26, 2019.

Dr. Vela was raised in San Antonio, Texas. During World War II, he joined the Texas State Guard at age fifteen and convinced his parents to sign release papers that would allow him to enlist in the U.S. Navy at just seventeen. Though the war concluded before he was assigned to a ship, the young Texan dedicated the following year of his life to the Navy in peacetime.

Following his honorable discharge from the Navy, Dr. Vela attended San Antonio Junior College. After transferring to the University of Texas at Austin, he took multiple jobs to support himself before graduating with a degree in bacteriology. In 1951, he received a scholarship for his master's degree in bacteriology, which he completed in just one year, followed by a doctorate in microbiology and biochemistry in 1963.

Dr. Vela later began a 35-year tenure as a professor at the University of North Texas in Denton, where he taught undergraduate and graduate courses in microbiology. He was chosen to be part of the American Academy of Microbiology and was named the Associate Dean of Science and Technology in the College of Art and Sciences. During his tenure at UNT, Dr. Vela oversaw the research of numerous students and mentored 20 doctoral students before retiring in 2000.

In addition to his many professional accomplishments, Dr. Vela is a public servant. He was the first Hispanic member elected to the Denton City Council, and has served on the Texas Municipal Power Agency Board of Directors as well as numerous boards and commissions.

The G. Roland Vela Athletic Complex is a fitting tribute to this remarkable North Texan. I join Dr. Vela's family, friends, colleagues, and students in celebrating this well-deserved honor.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. BILLY LONG

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 13, 2019

Mr. LONG. Madam Speaker, on Monday, June 10, 2019, I was unable to vote on any legislative measures due to travel complications. Had I been present, I would have voted the following:

(Roll No. 242) H.R. 542—Supporting Research and Development for First Responders Act, had I been present I would have voted yes.

(Roll No. 243) H.R. 2539—Strengthening Local Transportation Security Capabilities Act, had I been present I would have voted yes.

(Roll No. 244) H.R. 2590—DHS Overseas Personnel Enhancement Act, had I been present I would have voted yes.

RECOGNIZING KIMBERLEE BURKS

HON. ERIC SWALWELL

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 13, 2019

Mr. SWALWELL of California. Madam Speaker, I rise to recognize the life of Kimberlee Allen Burks, on the occasion of her unexpected passing on Thursday, May 30, 2019.

Kimberlee's roots in Hayward ran deep. She was born at our very own St. Rose Hospital in January 1967. She enjoyed spending her childhood at our local landmarks, like Kennedy Park and then returned to settle in Hayward in 2015.

For the homeless populations in Hayward and Alameda County, Kimberlee was a champion. She modeled what a person could do for themselves and for other people. Regardless of whether you recently lost your job, had become a victim of the ever-increasing cost of housing in the Bay Area, or were struggling with an addiction, Kimberlee saw you as a human being first.

The Downtown Streets Team is where Kimberlee found the support that fostered her spirit for advocacy. She started as a peer advocate and peer leader where she introduced the group and its goals to those in search of support, work-experience, and secure housing in our community.

In addition to her work with the Downtown Streets Team, Kimberlee found community at Community Resources for Independent Living (CRIL), where she served as a housing search coordinator. There she served two vulnerable communities that she held dear, the homeless and the disabled through the coordination of housing search workshops.

Kimberlee volunteered throughout Hayward and Alameda County to raise awareness and restore dignity to our homeless population. Whenever she made a gain of her own in life, she was always looking for a way to help someone else.

In 2017, she came to Washington, D.C. and visited my office to represent and advocate for the needs of Alameda County's Healthcare for the Homeless program. Just days before she passed away, Kimberlee was in Sacramento with CRIL and other advocates seeking support for measures that would provide secure and stable housing and medical care for those with disabilities and older adults without access to other forms of insurance coverage.

Kimberlee led by doing. She was a force for good, and she is gone far too soon. She is survived by her mother, Barbara, and her two sons, Austin and Preston. They have my deepest condolences.

HONORING THE LIFE OF
CHRISTOPHER KELLY RAPP

HON. ABIGAIL DAVIS SPANBERGER

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 13, 2019

Ms. SPANBERGER. Madam Speaker, it is with great sadness today that I rise to honor the life of Mr. Christopher Kelly Rapp, a husband, son, musician, and public servant from Virginia's 7th Congressional District whose life was taken too early on May 31 of this year.

Friends and colleagues describe Mr. Rapp as empathetic, honest, and helpful. As a public works employee for Virginia Beach, Stafford, and Powhatan, he dedicated much of his working career to improving the lives of those around him. A man of deep faith, Mr. Rapp was also a devoted volunteer. In fact, he was scheduled to volunteer at an event to help the less fortunate on June 5th—an event which he was never able to attend.

In addition to his commitment to service, Mr. Rapp was known for the true and abiding love he possessed for his wife, Bessie. When they met, she was a travel agent and he wanted to travel the world. As husband and wife, they spent 24 years traveling it together. This abiding love also led to Mr. Rapp embracing his wife's culture by becoming an active member of Kultura Filipino. Through this group, he learned Filipino dances, empowered Pinoy children by teaching them about Filipino culture, and made his home a central location for all types of cultural communities from the Tidewater to Central Virginia.

Chris loved the experiences of life and was a life-long learner. Whether it was buying a Tagalog dictionary on his wedding day, starting piano lessons in his mid-50s, or avidly writing short stories, he capitalized on every second of life. He was renowned for his passionate performances on the bagpipe and served as a member of Greater Richmond Pipes & Drums, as well as Tidewater Pipes & Drums. These bands remember him for his love for music and eagerness to share his sound with the community.

I am heartbroken by the death of Mr. Rapp during the senseless shooting at the Virginia Beach Municipal Center. While I know that I can offer no true consolation, I offer my prayers and heartfelt sympathy to Mr. Rapp's wife, parents, family, and friends.

Madam Speaker, please join me today in commemorating the life of Mr. Christopher Kelly Rapp.

HONORING BOB COFFIN

HON. DINA TITUS

OF NEVADA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 13, 2019

Ms. TITUS. Madam Speaker, I rise to recognize Las Vegas Councilman Bob Coffin on the occasion of his retirement from political life. Councilman Bob Coffin was elected to represent Las Vegas Ward 3 on Tuesday, June 7, 2011, and was sworn into office on Wednesday, July 6, 2011. Councilman Coffin has deep roots in downtown Las Vegas, having been a resident in and around Ward 3 for more than 60 years and now lives less than a mile from his boyhood home.

Councilman Coffin's commitment to Southern Nevada can be seen through his decades of public service. He was first elected in 1982 to the Nevada Assembly, where he served for two terms. He continued his public service in the Nevada State Senate, where he served until 2011. During that period, he served on many influential committees as a ranking member of the powerful Senate Finance Committee as well as chairman of the Taxation Committee. On these committees he fought to balance budgets and cut unnecessary government spending. Fiscal responsibility continued to be a priority as he served Ward 3 along with ensuring public safety, cleaning up older neighborhoods, and attracting new development.

During his childhood in Las Vegas, Councilman Coffin developed a passion for two things—his Mexican-American heritage and the sport of golf. His ancestral family emigrated to Southern California from Mexico, and he saw firsthand the discrimination his mother faced as a young woman. Accordingly, the Councilman has spent much of his career fighting this injustice. He has traveled to Central America to monitor elections and to help children and families. He has also been a longtime active member in the Latin Chamber of Commerce.

Bob remained in Southern Nevada as a young man attending Bishop Gorman High School and the University of Nevada Las Vegas, where he earned an accounting degree. He went on to serve his country in the United States Army and later ran a successful insurance business. While concentrating on his studies at UNLV, Bob continued to focus on his favorite pastime, golf, and was named the Nevada Amateur Golf Champion at the age of 27.

Councilman Coffin has been recognized for his community service, receiving dozens of awards during his career. Most recently, he was named Person of the Year by the Southern Nevada Chapter of the Professional Golfers Association and received the Charles Dick Medal of Honor Award from the United States National Guard. He has twice been honored by the Latin Chamber of Commerce with its Hispanic Citizen Award and Public Service Award.

He continues his commitment to the public by serving on a number of boards and commissions, including the Board of the Las Vegas Golf Hall of Fame, Chief Local Elected Officials Consortium, Commission for the Las Vegas Centennial, Debt Management Commission, Southern Nevada Regional Planning Coalition, and the Southern Nevada Water Authority.

Bob is also a dear friend who paid my very first filing fee when I ran for the Nevada Senate in 1988. I have looked to him over the years for advice, support, and encouragement. I am also close to his lovely wife, Mary Hausch and look forward to spending quality time with them in their retirement. Bob has left an incredible legacy and all Nevadans owe him a great debt of gratitude.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. JOHN KATKO

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 13, 2019

Mr. KATKO. Madam Speaker, on the legislative day of June 12, 2019, on roll call number 283, I voted no when I intended to vote yea.

BLACK HISTORY HONOREE: ANNA M. PINELLAS

HON. DARREN SOTO

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 13, 2019

Mr. SOTO. Madam Speaker, I rise to honor Mrs. Anna M. Pinellas.

Anna M. Pinellas moved to join her husband, Louis C. Pinellas, Sr., in his hometown of Kissimmee, FL in 1981, after having worked in local government in Washington, Maryland, and Virginia.

Having knowledge in securing funds for various projects, she was hired by the City of Kissimmee and was able to secure grants for the infrastructure around Osceola Square Mall, the paving of Hill Street, and John Young Parkway. The first of those grants being \$750,000.

She was also hired by Osceola County Government to secure federal funds for projects which included bringing Head Start back to Osceola County, refurbishing the Old Courthouse, and the establishment of a Salary Plan for Osceola County employees.

One of her primary goals was to pursue the establishment of the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. holiday in the city of Kissimmee, City of St. Cloud, Osceola County and the School Board. Thirty-four years ago, Pinellas founded Osceola Visionaries Inc., a non-profit corporation devoted to honoring and celebrating Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. before the holiday was observed.

Today, Pinellas continues to honor Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. by hosting their annual banquet and holding programs for the Central Florida community.

HONORING MRS. ANTONIETTA
"TONI" HERNANDEZ-SERNA

HON. JOAQUIN CASTRO

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 13, 2019

Mr. CASTRO of Texas. Madam Speaker, it is with great pride that I rise today in honor of Mrs. Antonietta "Toni" Hernandez-Serna whose commitment to our hometown of San Antonio is one to be admired. Today marks the beginning of her retirement after over 20 years of public service; throughout which her passion for improving her community remained unchanged.

Toni was born on April 20, 1954 in San Antonio, Texas to union leaders Louisa and Jesus Hernandez and is the oldest of six siblings—Yolanda, Jesse, David, Hector, and Roland. Louisa's community activism is reflected in Toni's work as a community organizer.

Upon receiving a Bachelor of Arts in Sociology from Texas State University, Toni found her calling as an organizer while serving as a Field Representative with the American Federation of Labor and Congress of Industrial Organizations (AFL-CIO) where she led the implementation of their national policies.

Fulfilling a desire to return home, Toni transferred from Colorado with her husband of now 28 years, Joe Serna, and their daughter, Selina Rocha, to take on a position as the Political and Community Director with the Service Employees International Union. Throughout the years, she worked to elect numerous candidates into local office who empowered workers' rights. In 2007, she served as Outreach Coordinator for Texas State Representative Mike Villarreal, and later became District Director in 2010.

In 2013, Toni's journey lead her to Texas' 20th Congressional District where she served as my Outreach and District Director. I have seen firsthand her dedication and persistence to serve our community. Her tireless efforts combined with a true passion for public service is nothing short of extraordinary. With this in mind, Toni is a remarkable role model to Selina Rocha; her nephew, Jesse Rene Hernandez; and grandmother to Charlotte Rocha, and to all of us in the San Antonio community.

Madam Speaker, Mrs. Antonietta "Toni" Hernandez-Serna has played a tremendous part in moving Texas 20th forward. I thank Toni for her many years of service and steadfast commitment to our hometown. I am proud to have served the people of Texas 20th with you.

HONORING THE MEMORY OF
LLOYD TATUM

HON. HAROLD ROGERS

OF KENTUCKY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 13, 2019

Mr. ROGERS of Kentucky. Madam Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to the memory of my mentor and dear friend, the honorable Lloyd Tatum of Henderson, Tennessee, who succumbed to cancer at the age of 93.

Given the profound honor of eulogizing Lloyd, I include in the RECORD the following sentiments from my remarks in recognition of a life of such great scope and consequence:

Lloyd inspired all of us with his example of truthfulness, hard work, wit, adoration to family and friends, fairness, and morality. He inspired me to choose law as a career and became my mentor.

Lloyd's nickname was "Happy," as humor was a mainstay in his life. He truly enjoyed things funny and his hearty laugh was infectious. His easy-going personality, though, camouflaged a very serious and determined hard worker—from his days as a crewman on the B-24 Liberator of Superfortress at the end of World War II; to a stint as an FBI agent; to a mini-career in movies; to a great career as a highly respected and successful practicing attorney in all of West Tennessee; to 10 years as a distinguished appellate justice in Tennessee's Court of Criminal Appeals.

I first met Lloyd while a teenager in my hometown of Monticello, Kentucky. He came to southern Kentucky to clear the titles for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers as they were beginning to create Lake Cumberland,