

During Apollo, Chris Kraft soon rose to the position of deputy director of the Manned Spacecraft Center, now known as Johnson Space Center, which I proudly represent, and in 1972 was promoted to serve as the Center director.

Before Dr. Kraft's retirement in 1982, he contributed to a myriad of other projects, including Skylab and the first space shuttle missions.

While our space program continues to grow by leaps and bounds and our hands and hearts reach outward for Mars, we should remember the man on whose shoulders we stand and the great debt owed not only by NASA and our Nation, but also by our entire planet, to this incredible individual. Mr. Speaker, I thank Dr. Kraft for his service to our country, "flight."

RECOGNIZING THE LIFE AND SERVICE OF JAMES HUSTON MURPHY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. LOUDERMILK) for 5 minutes.

Mr. LOUDERMILK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of the life and service of Mr. James Huston Murphy.

James is a 94-year-old decorated World War II veteran as well as a native of the 11th Congressional District in Georgia.

Jim graduated from Lanier High School for Boys in 1942 and was an officer in the school's ROTC program, where he was preparing for a career as an officer in the U.S. military. The ROTC program is where Jim learned valuable lessons that would serve him down the road during the war.

In the fall of 1942, Jim enrolled at Georgia Tech, in Atlanta, with the hope of receiving an Army officer's commission through Tech's senior ROTC program. At that time, the United States was 4 years into World War II; and at the urging of Army recruiters, Jim and most of his fellow ROTC classmates enlisted in the Reserves because the military wanted them to complete college and officer training before going to Active Duty.

However, that idea was short-lived, because in March of 1943, President Franklin D. Roosevelt called Jim's ROTC class and others across the Nation into immediate Active Duty. They were needed as ground troop replacements, and at that time, Jim was barely 18 years old.

In the spring of 1943, Jim reported to Fort McPherson in Atlanta, where he faced many challenges, but nothing more daunting than passing the military standard eye exam. And I know you are thinking: How difficult is an eye exam? Well, for Jim it was nearly impossible because Jim was blind in his left eye from birth.

This disability would disqualify Jim from serving in the military, but Jim was not going to let that stop him from serving his country. He believed that

service was his duty, and after playing a few hand tricks during the exam, he passed.

In March of 1944, Jim was entered to Camp Howze near Gainesville, Texas, to join the 103rd Infantry Division. The division was embroiled in intensive combat training, and since Jim had already received some artillery training, he was assigned to Battery C of the 928th Field Artillery Battalion, a 105-millimeter howitzer unit.

They trained long and hard, knowing they were headed for war. They learned the mission of artillery to support advancing infantry ground forces in combat and how to bracket your target area by trial and error. Jim's job was to be the forward observer radio operator when they were in combat and a jeep driver when the battery was moving forward.

Only a few months had passed since Jim was assigned to the 103rd Infantry Division before he was aboard the USS *Monticello* heading for the war.

The trip across the Atlantic was anything but luxurious. The military had packed the ship like "a can of sardines," as Jim put it; and the 2-week voyage was full of severe storms and indescribable seasickness, and a fear of being torpedoed always loomed in the back of their minds.

After arriving in France, it would not take long for Jim's combat unit to see their first action, and it occurred while they approached the Vosges Mountains in northeastern France. One of Jim's forward observer team was killed by rifle fire in the small town of Barr, which meant that Jim and the other member had to carry on the job a man short. For this, they were later awarded the Bronze Star.

Jim survived the record winter that enveloped northern France, Belgium, and Germany during the war, but he did not leave unscathed. On Christmas night 1944, after finishing a warm meal, Jim became very sick while single-handedly manning a forward outpost only 200 yards from German soldiers. The pain became so intense that he had to be transported to a field hospital, and doctors determined he had a bad case of appendicitis.

While Jim was lying in the hospital bed after appendix surgery, the Battle of the Bulge was just getting underway, and Jim realized his battery desperately need him. Going against doctors' orders, Jim put on his uniform, left the hospital, and hitched a ride back to his battery. The rest of Jim's unit was amazed he came back, and in the meantime, his battery commander had learned he was blind in one eye. Jim was nominated for the Silver Star, but Jim refused, as he felt any citation earned should go to the entire battery, not just him.

Germany surrendered in May of 1945, marking the end of the war effort in Europe, but the war was still raging in the Pacific, and that is where Jim was sent. However, before Jim got there, the atomic bombs were dropped on Hir-

oshima and Nagasaki, and World War II was soon over.

In Jim's own words: "My contributions to World War II, from enlistment to discharge, was 2 years, 11 months, and 14 days of my youth, including 9 months in combat. For this I am proud and have no regrets. I did not have to go to the war, but I believed it was my duty, and I wanted to go."

Jim will be the first to tell you his story is like so many others who fought in Europe during World War II, but in reading his memoirs, his selflessness, his duty to his country and fellow soldiers was quite exemplary.

Mr. Speaker, Georgia's 11th Congressional District and the United States House of Representatives thanks Jim. We thank him for his service to our Nation and his sacrifice for our freedoms.

WE CANNOT GIVE UP ON THE GUATEMALAN PEOPLE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from California (Mrs. TORRES) for 5 minutes.

Mrs. TORRES of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today as the first person born in Guatemala to serve in the United States House of Representatives.

I know the Guatemalan people have lived through many difficult times, and I know this because I was born there during the civil war. My parents made the heartbreaking decision to send me to live with my uncle in the United States when I was a little girl.

But through it all, the people of Guatemala have not given up. They have continued to work to make a better life for their children and for their children's children. They have worked for justice, for democracy, and they have won important victories.

In 1996, the efforts of the Guatemalan people ended the civil war; and in 2007, their search for justice led to the creation of the International Commission Against Impunity in Guatemala, an innovative institution whose mission was to help rid the country of corruption and organized crime. Working with brave Guatemalan judges and prosecutors, CICIG made real progress in improving Guatemala's justice system.

Then, in 2015, Guatemalans of all ages and political stripes took to the streets to call for the resignation of massively corrupt President Otto Perez Molina, and they won.

The long struggle of the Guatemalan people has led to a country that is safer and more just. The country's problems are far from resolved, but progress has been made.

Today Guatemala is at a crossroads. CICIG has, unfortunately, been forced out, and the country is in the middle of an election season, but many Guatemalans fear that the current government will be replaced by a new government that is just as corrupt as the current and the previous ones.

So many Guatemalans feel like they are alone, and some are losing hope,