

Mr. RUIZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor and in memory of Chauncey Lee Veatch III.

Chauncey was a natural leader with an incredible passion for life, education, and helping others. He was a tremendous educator, a lieutenant colonel in the United States Army, National Teacher of the Year, and a mentor to so many in the Coachella Valley.

It was a high privilege to call him my friend.

Chauncey personally inspired me, encouraged me, and guided me as well as my friend and current assembly member, Eduardo Garcia, and Riverside County Supervisor Manny Perez and many students and teachers from the Coachella Valley.

Chauncey was exceptionally brilliant. His brother, Gregory, said, even in middle school, his teachers knew he was smarter than they were.

He paired his unique intelligence and gifts with an extraordinary work ethic. He studied history at the University of the Pacific in Stockton, where he was inspired by the civil rights work of Cesar Chavez, and helped register voters as a United Farm Workers volunteer.

After college, he went on to the University of Notre Dame, where he obtained his juris doctor degree. Chauncey then served in the U.S. Army Infantry and the Medical Service Corps for over 20 years, retiring in 1995 as a lieutenant colonel.

After retiring from the Army, Chauncey began his service as an educator at John Kelley Elementary School in Thermal, California, later becoming a teacher at my alma mater, Coachella Valley High School. Coachella Valley Unified School District was fortunate to have such a devoted and fine man.

As a teacher, he was renowned for his ability to present complex material to his students in simple, understandable ways and to mentor each of them on an individual basis, helping them to achieve their fullest potential.

Later in life, Chauncey served on The Desert Sun newspaper's editorial board for more than 7 years. In 2010, he co-led the Coachella Valley Healthcare Initiative with me, bringing together the community to address the healthcare access crisis in our disadvantaged and underserved communities.

In each of his endeavors, he gave everything he had. In a word, Chauncey's life was full: full of joy, full of generosity, and full of love. He saw the best in people.

Not only that, he drew out the best in people. He saw in others what they did not see in themselves, and he would not rest until he helped them achieve what he knew they were capable of. In fact, a lot of people are where they are today because their paths crossed with Chauncey's.

He helped many of his students achieve their dreams of becoming a teacher. Serving disadvantaged students, he also helped many become the

first in their generation to go to college, even helping them get into good schools and elite schools like Notre Dame and Harvard.

His leadership was in his acts, his words, and his presence. He showed people the way. His brother called him a builder of dreams. I call him an architect of goodness whose deep commitment and mentorship to his students turned barriers into opportunities, disadvantages into strengths, and transformed our communities for generations to come.

Our world has lost a light, our community has lost a leader, and I have lost a mentor and a close friend. Today I mourn with his family and celebrate his full life, knowing that he was a good man, an outstanding citizen, and a veteran whose impact will live on in our communities. My wife, Monica, and I will miss him very much.

#### THANK YOU TO PA-15 CONSTITUENTS

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

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to highlight several of my constituents who have gone out of their way to make a positive impact during the coronavirus pandemic.

Over the past few months, it has been easy to feel surrounded by nothing but negative news. In an effort to highlight the good news that we weren't seeing enough of, I started a social media campaign called PA-15 Cares. PA-15 Cares highlights all of the volunteers who have gone above and beyond during this pandemic to lend a helping hand, to help their neighbors in need, and to brighten the spirits of all those impacted by COVID-19. Today, Mr. Speaker, I would like to share a few examples of those who rose to the occasion during this pandemic.

Many chose to make masks for frontline workers, including high school student Morgan McConnell of Cambria County. While her school was closed, Morgan made good use of her time and made more than 500 masks in just the first week. It is her way of helping others, and she has given many of the masks to local hospital employees free of charge.

Selfless small business owners, even those who may be struggling financially as a result of the pandemic, have stopped to ask: How can I help?

Rick Ardini, owner of Rik-N-Nik's restaurant in Ebensburg, has provided countless meals for those out of work, children, the elderly, and anyone else who needed them. He also gave great advice: "Talk to each other, learn about each other, spend some time, and play some games. Be a family. Slow life down."

Another small business which also happens to be in Ebensburg has been providing a critical service for the first

responders. SERVPRO partnered with the Dauntless Volunteer Fire Department to provide free cleaning and sanitation services for emergency response vehicles.

The Girl Scouts of Western Pennsylvania have also stepped up to give back to their community. They have started a Hometown Heroes program to give free cookies to frontline workers, including medical professionals, first responders, nursing home staff, the Army National Guard, and more.

Lastly, I would like to highlight Samantha Schrecengost of Punxsutawney. Samantha, a Senior Corps volunteer, and the folks at Community Action started a Phone-A-Friend program for seniors. Due to COVID-19, many elderly Americans have been cut off from loved ones, and isolation can take a mental and emotional toll. Volunteers of the Phone-A-Friend program call seniors two to three times a week to check in, see how they can be helpful, and just share a few minutes of friendly conversation with our seniors.

Mr. Speaker, I am encouraged to see how the communities in my district have come together in such an unprecedented time of crisis to find a way to support one another.

#### SALUTING EARLY EDUCATORS AND CHILDCARE WORKERS

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

Mrs. TRAHAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise to salute the early educators and childcare workers who have sacrificed so much for our children and their parents across the Nation throughout this pandemic.

As a working mom, I know how critical they are to our families and to our economy. The fact is, had our childcare workers not done their part, many other essential workers like our nurses, firefighters, police officers, postal workers, food service and sanitation employees, and grocery workers could not have done theirs.

The COVID-19 pandemic has demonstrated what we have known to be true all along, that our childcare workforce is essential. That is why I was proud to cast my vote yesterday for the Child Care Is Essential Act. The House advanced bold legislation to ensure that our childcare workforce has the support it needs to operate childcare centers safely.

I would like to commend my colleagues, Representatives ROSA DELAUNO, BOBBY SCOTT, and KATHERINE CLARK, for their leadership on this critical issue.

The fact is, even before the pandemic, enrolling an infant or toddler in a quality childcare program could be enormously expensive. Frankly, there was inadequate support to make those programs fit in the household budgets for many families.

The GAO found that, on average, just 1 out of every 10 children who are eligible for Federal childcare subsidies actually received them. Moreover, 1 in 10 parents have reported being demoted, transferred, or fired due to childcare problems.

Overall, inadequate childcare costs our economy nearly \$60 billion, annually. Meanwhile, we are leaving money on the table. For every dollar invested in quality early childhood programs, we get a \$7 return on our investment.

As challenging as it has been over the years for parents to find affordable childcare, COVID has massively compounded the problem. It has demanded even more of our childcare workforce, while stretching budgets to the absolute limit.

In the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, some childcare centers have had to turn parents away in order to make the necessary public health accommodations, such as reducing class size. A childcare center in the city of Lawrence went from serving 715 children pre-COVID to 360, a nearly 50 percent reduction. What is more, 97 percent of the households with children in that program were eligible for subsidies.

What is a parent to do when they can't afford to miss work but also has no childcare support?

It is long past time for America to assist them by investing in reliable, affordable, high-quality childcare.

Each day we hear praise for our essential workers, and they deserve every word of it. They have been keeping us safe for months while risking their own lives. It is obvious that thank-yous will no longer cut it. The least we can do is guarantee that they aren't left penniless due to the cost of childcare.

If we are going to show our commitment to workers and to families, the Child Care Is Essential Act should advance through the upper Chamber without delay.

#### HONORING ANITA MONOIAN

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

Mr. NEWHOUSE. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor the career of Anita Monoian, the president and CEO of Yakima Neighborhood Health Services, who announced her retirement after 41 years of tireless service and advocacy.

At a time when community health is of the utmost importance, it is a privilege to honor an individual who has spent her life's work advocating for the care and well-being of the people of Yakima Valley.

Anita describes her career's work as a labor of love. With that labor, Anita expanded the scope of Yakima Neighborhood Health Services from a single clinic to 10 clinics across the Yakima Valley, reaching 92,000 patients, annually.

Anita's voice has influenced State and Federal healthcare policy through

her work on the board of the National Association of Community Health Centers and the Washington Association of Community and Migrant Health Centers.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud to recognize Anita's legacy of improving healthcare in central Washington, and I urge my colleagues to join in me in congratulating her on an impactful career of service.

#### RECOGNIZING DR. JAMES IRWIN

Mr. NEWHOUSE. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize the life of one of central Washington's American heroes, James Irwin.

Dr. James Irwin served as chief of surgery at the U.S. Navy Hospital in Oak Harbor, Washington. Following his service, Dr. Irwin treated patients in north central Washington for 13 years before opening a medical practice in Moses Lake. He was named chief medical officer of Samaritan Healthcare and was an original member of the Moses Lake Medical Team.

He and his wife, Frances, were active members in their church and spent many years on medical missions across Africa, where he provided surgical services and shared his knowledge with local doctors.

At age 62, Dr. Irwin, once again, answered his country's call. He deployed to Iraq as a naval surgeon before retiring as a captain in 2004 with over 40 years of military service.

In central Washington, Dr. Irwin was known for his kind attitude toward the patients he cared for. To his fellow brothers in arms, he was known as a hero. He passed away on June 30, but he has left a lasting legacy of providing care wherever it was needed.

Mr. Speaker, my prayers go out to his family and loved ones, and I urge my colleagues to join me in honoring Dr. Irwin's life and service to our country.

#### REMEMBERING BRAD FISHER OF KENNEWICK, WASHINGTON

Mr. NEWHOUSE. Mr. Speaker, Brad Fisher of Kennewick was a friend, a businessman, and a passionate advocate for the Tri-Cities community.

A devoted husband, father, grandfather, and dedicated community leader, Brad found endless ways to serve others. Over the years, he served as a Rotarian, a city council member, the mayor of Kennewick, and a member of numerous community service boards.

One of Brad's many contributions to his community was his role as a fierce champion of local governance. He helped spearhead the reconveyance effort in the Tri-Cities to return thousands of acres of river shore land from the Federal Government and placed it back into the hands of the local community. His work is not yet complete, but I look forward to continuing his advocacy in accomplishing this effort to improve our community.

Mr. Speaker, Brad Fisher is an example of the engaged and selfless citizenship that we should all strive to emulate. May his family and our commu-

nity continue to be blessed by his memory, and may he rest in peace.

□ 0930

#### INTRODUCING THE BLUE PACIFIC ACT

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

Mr. CASE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 7797, the Boosting Long-Term U.S. Engagement in the Pacific Act, also known as the BLUE Pacific Act.

I am proud to have introduced this bill, together with my colleagues, Congressmen AMI BERA, TED YOHO, BRAD SHERMAN, and DON YOUNG, as well as other members of our Congressional Pacific Islands Caucus.

Scattered across the vast waters of the Pacific, from Hawaii to Rapa Nui to Palau, and New Caledonia, are countless isles and atolls that constitute what we know as the Pacific Islands and their subregions of Melanesia, Micronesia, and Polynesia. The collective land and maritime exclusive economic zones of the Pacific Islands cover more of the Earth's surface than the land areas of China and Russia combined. These islands are home to diverse and dynamic cultures and people on the front lines of climate change and facing significant challenges to long-term sustainable development.

The United States is not some remote power in this integral part of our world. For two centuries plus, we have been, and today we are, a Pacific nation. We have jurisdictions of our own among the family of Pacific Islands, including my home State of Hawaii. We have longstanding ties with all of the Pacific Islands, be they independent nations, countries in free association, or territories of our friends and allies.

Countless Americans died to liberate our Pacific neighbors in storied battles, including Tarawa, Peleliu, Guadalcanal, and more, during the Second World War.

In my own district is the National Memorial Cemetery of the Pacific, the final resting place of so many of these warriors. Our foreign policy in the Pacific Islands is driven by this deep historical relationship and the shared interests and values built by decades of consistent but quiet engagement.

Over the past 20 years alone, the United States has provided over \$5 billion in assistance for the region. In just the past decade, multiple administrations and Congresses have heightened our engagement in the Pacific Islands as we have focused our attention increasingly in the Indo-Pacific region.

Reflecting this renewed attention to the Pacific Islands, last year I joined several of my colleagues in cofounding our first-ever, bipartisan Congressional Pacific Islands Caucus. We are dedicated to promoting greater understanding of this region and advocating for a sound United States foreign policy in the Pacific Islands that advances our shared interests and values.