

Brad Stroup, Nashville, TN; John D. Risvold, Naperville, IL; Carol Warren, Davis, CA; Thomas McNeil, Lake Worth, FL; Vatsala Vadapalli, Stamford, CT; Jean Colgan, Fort Lauderdale, FL; Mary Delellis, Colorado Springs, CO; Gina Marie Di Dio, Boynton Beach, FL; Tonee Gardner, Columbus, OH; Chelsea, Brookings, SD.

Kimberly M Trew, Waterford, CT; Jessica McGinley, Bethlehem, PA; Adam Bettino, Torrance, CA; Kim VanCuren, Buffalo, NY; Natalie Rojas, Richmond, VA; Joseph P. Rio, Boca Raton, FL; Linda Rigsby, Gaithersburg, MD.

HONORING SPC. VANESSA
GUILLEN

HON. SYLVIA R. GARCIA

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, August 14, 2020

Ms. GARCIA of Texas. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor my constituent, Specialist (Spc.) Vanessa Guillén—a daughter, a sister, and a beloved member of the Southeast Houston community. She was a beautiful, talented, and intelligent 20-year old Latina soldier who tragically went missing on April 22, 2020 after she was brutally murdered by another soldier at Fort Hood.

Spc. Vanessa Guillén was born on September 30, 1999 to her loving parents Rogelio and Gloria Guillén, and was one of six brothers and sisters. Her father Rogelio likes to recount the story of how Vanessa dreamed of joining the U.S. Army since she was 12 years old. She would often tell him, “Papá yo me quiero inscribir en el Army. I want to enlist in the Army.” She felt a deep sense of love for America and the Army represented an opportunity for a better life—her shot at achieving the American Dream. She worked really hard towards this goal and in 2018 she graduated in the top 15 percent of her class from César E. Chávez High School where she loved playing soccer. Shortly after her graduation, Vanessa fulfilled her dream to serve our country by enlisting in the Army where she was trained as a 91F, small arms/artillery repairer.

Unfortunately, her dream turned into a true nightmare. Before her murder and disappearance, Vanessa confided in her family that she felt unsafe at Fort Hood due to experiences with sexual harassment. She did not file a report out of fear of retaliation. The Army failed her and the Guillén family, and all those responsible for this failure must be held responsible.

Vanessa did not deserve to die the way she did, and her story has hit so many of us in our hearts, especially in the Latino community of Houston. We mourn with the Guillén family because Vanessa was one of us. So many of us have sisters, daughters, nieces, cousins, and friends who could have easily been Vanessa because so many Latinas have answered the call to serve our country.

Unfortunately, Vanessa’s story is not unique. In response to this case, current and former Latina servicemembers have demonstrated incredible bravery in sharing their experiences with sexual harassment and assault in the military. Their stories reinforce the troubling reality that too often female servicemembers do not report their sexual trauma because they fear how their chain of command will respond. This is not only wrong,

but Vanessa’s story has galvanized efforts across the country to put an end to a culture that perpetuates sexual assault and harassment in the military. We must seize this opportunity to ensure this never happens again to another soldier or their family.

Madam Speaker, the Guillén family, current and former female servicemembers, and everyone in the Houston region, myself included, ask that we make sure that what happened to Vanessa Guillén never happens again, so not one more family has to suffer like the Guilléns have.

We want justice for Vanessa Guillén. Nosotros queremos justicia para Vanessa Guillén.

TO RECOGNIZE EVA BENEDICT
UPON RECEIVING THE NEW
YORK STATE SENATE 2020
WOMEN OF DISTINCTION HONOR

HON. TOM REED

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, August 14, 2020

Mr. REED. Madam Speaker, today I rise to recognize Eva Benedict upon her receiving the New York State Senate 2020 Women of Distinction Honor.

Eva Benedict has served the Wellsville community for almost forty years in healthcare, starting as a Critical Care Staff Nurse in 1981 at Jones Memorial Hospital. She held various positions in administration and management and was ultimately appointed as President and Chief Executive Officer in 2007.

In 2015, Eva was instrumental in the hospital’s affiliation with the University of Rochester Medical Center. To this day, she serves both Jones Memorial and the University as a member of the affiliate leadership team.

In 2018, her leadership earned the 2018 Grassroots Champion Award from the American Hospital Association in partnership with the Healthcare Association of New York State. Throughout her years at the hospital, Eva has dedicated her time and energy to helping this rural hospital navigate through difficult areas, providing the best medical services possible and giving community members reliable, trusted care that they need.

During my time in office, I have appreciated building a trusted relationship with Eva and I have greatly valued her expertise in the healthcare field. My office has regularly called on her for honest, educated feedback, and we continue to rely on her for that today.

Given the above, I ask that this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations and join me to recognize Eva Benedict upon her receiving the New York State Senate 2020 Women of Distinction Honor.

HONORING NEIGHBORS IN NEED
OF SERVICES (NINOS), INC.

HON. FILEMON VELA

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, August 14, 2020

Mr. VELA. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor the Neighbors In Need of Services (NINOS), Inc. as the organization celebrates 30 years of service to the community.

Since its foundation in August 1990, NINOS Head Start and Early Head Start programs have ensured that low-income South Texas families have access to needed educational, medical, and nutritional support for children from birth to four years old. In addition to preparing children to begin pre-school, NINOS provides pre- and post-natal education to expectant mothers.

The NINOS mission statement is “Creating a brighter future for the children and la familia.” In the past 30 years NINOS has served approximately 50,000 children, an incredible accomplishment that no doubt has had a lasting impact for these children and their families. This organization and its dedicated staff help the next generation of Rio Grande Valley residents reach their potential by ensuring that every child, regardless of economic status, has access to the resources that will help them succeed in school and beyond.

I am proud of NINOS and the contributions they have made to the Rio Grande Valley for the past 30 years. I look forward to seeing how they continue to help our community grow stronger.

Madam Speaker, I ask my colleagues in the U.S. House of Representatives to join me and the people of the 34th District of Texas in honoring an organization that is committed to the selfless and important work of educating our children and ensuring families have the help and support they need to thrive. NINOS serves as an outstanding example of how we all should serve our neighbors and community.

INTRODUCTION OF THE STEM
EDUCATOR AWARDS EQUITY ACT

HON. GREGORIO KILI CAMACHO
SABLAN

OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, August 14, 2020

Mr. SABLAN. Madam Speaker, today, I introduce the STEM Educator Awards Equity Act to ensure educators from the Northern Mariana Islands, Virgin Islands, Guam, and American Samoa are represented in the annual Presidential Awards for Excellence in Math and Science Teaching.

Established by Congress in 1983, the Presidential Award is the highest recognition that an elementary or secondary school mathematics or science teacher may receive in the United States. Over 4,800 teachers have been recognized for their contributions in the classroom and to their profession.

Unlike the fifty States, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico and Department of Defense schools, each of which may recognize a STEM educator, no more than two awards in total can go to teachers from the four insular areas: the Northern Mariana Islands, the Virgin Islands, Guam, and American Samoa. This limitation has resulted in many years in which no teacher from one of those four areas is selected. No teacher from the Marianas, for instance, was selected this year. And this lack of recognition defeats the purpose of the program, which is to inspire excellence within each area and provide a role model for other