

TRIBUTE TO RYAN PATTON

**HON. MELISSA A. HART**

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, February 8, 2006*

Ms. HART. Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate and welcome home Ryan Patton from Iraq.

Sergeant Ryan Patton has returned home after spending a year serving his country patrolling the streets of Baghdad. Sergeant Patton was part of the 458 Engineers Unit of the U.S. Army Reserve, and found out he was going to be deployed to Iraq in November 2003. After months of training Sergeant Patton left for Iraq in March 2004. Sergeant Patton left his wife and two young children to defend his country.

Sergeant Patton has returned to his family life, and his old job as the assistant manager at #1 Cochran's Collision Center in Monroeville, Pennsylvania.

I ask my colleagues in the United States House of Representatives to join me in honoring Sergeant Ryan Patton for all of his work and dedication to defending our country. It is an honor to represent the Fourth Congressional District of Pennsylvania and a pleasure to salute such a dedicated soldier like Sergeant Patton.

IN RECOGNITION OF 150TH ANNIVERSARY OF AUBURN UNIVERSITY, AUBURN, ALABAMA

**HON. MIKE ROGERS**

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, February 8, 2006*

Mr. ROGERS of Alabama. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Auburn University on its Sesquicentennial Celebration. On February 1, 1856, then-Governor of Alabama, John Winston, signed a charter that established the East Alabama Male College, a small, private male liberal arts college. One hundred fifty years later, Auburn University has become one of the pre-eminent research universities in the South, and most certainly one of our state's most proud and cherished institutions of higher learning.

The University was founded on a three-part mission: instruction, research and outreach. Auburn maintains this mission to this day, boasting an enrollment of over 23,000 students and employing a highly talented faculty of over 1,200. Many of its 13 schools are ranked among our nation's best, and its athletic program certainly is cause for celebration for thousands and thousands of fans and alumni every year.

I am honored today to congratulate Auburn University on its first 150 years, and am proud and humbled for the opportunity to represent its students, faculty and administrators here in the House of Representatives. I thank the House for joining me for this important occasion, and wish Auburn all the best in its next 150 years, here in the "loveliest village on the plains." War Eagle!

IN HONOR AND REMEMBRANCE OF DR. CARMELITA A. THOMAS, PRESIDENT OF TRI-C WEST

**HON. DENNIS J. KUCINICH**

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, February 8, 2006*

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor and remembrance of Dr. Carmelita Thomas, beloved wife, mother, grandmother, sister and friend. Dr. Thomas leaves behind a remarkable legacy of leadership, accomplishment and activism on behalf of higher education and throughout our Cleveland community.

Dr. Thomas was born and raised in northern Italy. Her family emigrated to Cleveland when she was a high school senior, yet she quickly overcame the challenges of a new culture and language and graduated with her class from Warrensville Heights High School. With a steady focus on academic achievement, Dr. Thomas earned several bachelors, masters and doctoral degrees from the University of California at Los Angeles. After many years in leadership roles at the Los Angeles Community College District, Dr. Thomas brought her passion, knowledge, expertise and energy to Cleveland, where she served as the President of Cuyahoga Community College, Western Campus, where 12,000 students enroll each semester. Dr. Thomas was respected and admired by colleagues and leaders in both the public and private sectors. Her unwavering focus on improving the College is reflected throughout the Campus. Because of her direction, Tri-C's Western Campus is now a training center for digital technology for visual communication and also includes cutting-edge medical technology used to train health care professionals, such as electroneuro technology and diagnostic sonography.

Dr. Thomas' commitment to others extended beyond the campus of Tri-C. Her boundless energy and commitment to making a positive difference is evidenced within her activism and volunteer service on many local boards and organizations, including her service as a member of the Board of Trustees at St. John Westshore Hospital; the Parma Area Chamber of Commerce; the American Council on Education; and the American Council for International and Intercultural Educational Organizations. Dr. Thomas' personal interests mirrored the passion and energy she committed to her profession, and ranged in scope from travel, to cooking, to the classical arts.

Mr. Speaker and Colleagues, please join me in honor and remembrance of Dr. Carmelita A. Thomas. I offer my deepest condolences to her husband of 45 years, James E. Thomas; to her daughters, Sondra and Sonia; to her sons-in-law, Timothy and Jim; to her grandsons, Jeremy and Bradley; to her brothers and sisters; and to her extended family members and many friends. Her numerous accomplishments, marked by personal and professional integrity, served to make a positive difference in all areas of higher education throughout the Western Campus of Tri-C and throughout our entire community, and she will be remembered always.

HAPPY NEW YEAR TO THE ORGANIZATION OF CHINESE AMERICANS

**HON. MELISSA A. HART**

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, February 8, 2006*

Ms. HART. Mr. Speaker, I would like to wish the membership of the Organization of Chinese Americans a healthy and happy New Year for the year 4704, the year of the Dog.

The New Year is a time for reflection and thanksgiving for the joys of life and loved ones and I am thankful for the richness that this organization brings to my region. Chinese Americans have made great contributions of western Pennsylvania and to our nation as a whole and I am very honored for this opportunity to wish them the best year yet in 4704.

I ask my colleagues in the United States House of Representatives to join me in wishing the members of the organization of Chinese Americans a very happy and prosperous New Year.

IN RECOGNITION OF LAURA STEELE

**HON. MIKE ROGERS**

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, February 8, 2006*

Mr. ROGERS of Alabama. Mr. Speaker, it is my honor to pay tribute to Miss Laura Steele, an Auburn University student who recently led an effort to change the University's "Holiday Tree" back to its more traditional name, "Christmas Tree."

In December of 2005, Miss Steele took issue with an attempt to rename the school's traditional tree. In a widely publicized initiative, Steele, a senator-at-large and Chairwoman of the Auburn College of Republicans, introduced a resolution before the Student Government Association calling for the more traditional "Christmas Tree" name to be restored for use at Auburn.

Her campaign gathered hundreds of signatures in support of the effort, and led to more than 20,000 calls of support to student leaders. She garnered the support of our state legislators, Governor Riley, and influential leaders across our state and around the world. I was delighted to see her resolution adopted, and am pleased that next year Auburn's tree will once again be known as its Christmas Tree.

We are indeed proud of Miss Steele. Her efforts to recognize and promote the true meaning of Christmas here at Auburn should serve as a reminder for us all that our belief in the Almighty is one of the core strengths of our nation. I applaud her efforts, and congratulate her for her leadership, her courage, and abiding faith.

## TRIBUTE TO HARRY LESTER

**HON. SANDER M. LEVIN**

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, February 8, 2006*

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the career of Harry Lester upon his retirement as the Director of District 2 of the United Steelworkers of America.

Mr. Lester has dedicated his life's work to the well-being and safety of steelworkers. The son of a West Virginia coal miner, who was tragically lost in a mining accident, Mr. Lester grew up to be a leading advocate for protecting the rights of steelworkers through the creation and preservation of decent wages, health benefits, workplace safety regulations, and education opportunities.

Mr. Lester began his career as an engineer with the McLouth Steel Corporation in Trenton, Michigan, in 1954 and rose to national attention in the 1980s for his leading role in the fight to save the company from bankruptcy and to preserve the jobs of its 3,600 steelworkers. As the USWA District Director and a member of the McLouth Steel Board of Directors, Mr. Lester orchestrated in 1988 the largest employee stock buyout of the time. While the company ultimately closed its doors in 1994, he has never ceased in his efforts to preserve the United States' steel industry and to provide for the rights of USWA members.

Notably, Mr. Lester engineered a Voluntary Employee Benefit Association plan and negotiated Cooperative Partnership Agreements between USWA members and National Steel Corporation. As steel companies consolidated, Mr. Lester worked at the negotiating table to guarantee that these protections were not lost. The language he ensured in these negotiations for workplace health and safety was recognized by the Supreme Court as the standard for workers. He has extended his championing of workers' rights into negotiations with Dow Chemical, National Standard, Quanax, and DSC, Ltd.

In addition to his commitment to his fellow workers, Mr. Lester has been a vigorous citizen of Michigan and is deeply committed to improving education and health in the State of Michigan. He and his wife established the Harry E. & Mary E. Lester Scholarship Fund for Steelworker Children to provide scholarship opportunities for the children of steelworkers in District Two. He was appointed by three governors to serve on the Huron-Clinton Metropolitan Authority's Board of Commissioners and serves as a board member to many distinguished organizations, including the United Way of Michigan, the Michigan State AFL-CIO Board, the National Kidney Foundation of Michigan, and the Greater Detroit-Area Health Council. Mr. Lester initiated and co-chairs the Annual Downriver Community Prayer Breakfast in Southgate, Michigan, and holds the rank of "Ambassador" for the Detroit Muslim Temple of the Shrine. Recently, Mr. Lester was granted an Honorary Doctorate Degree in Humanities from Michigan State University.

Harry Lester often stood at the intersection of workers' rights and public policy. He understood that federal trade policy, and especially unfair trade practices of other nations, dramatically impacted the industry in which he worked and he was tireless in his efforts to impact change in Washington, DC. He also un-

derstood the real impact of federal policies on workers and their families when it came to retirement security, pensions and health care. He was passionate and articulate both in terms of impacting legislation, and informing his membership of the importance of those policies on their work and family life.

Mr. Speaker, I have been privileged over the years to work with Harry Lester, to observe his leadership and to call him a friend, I ask my colleagues to join me in paying tribute to Harry Lester for his decades of tireless and effective service to our Nation's workers.

## TRIBUTE TO ALYSSA IMLER

**HON. MELISSA A. HART**

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, February 8, 2006*

Ms. HART. Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate Alyssa Imler, a teacher at Our Lady of the Most Blessed Sacrament in Harrison, for her 2006 Disney Teacher of the Year Award nomination.

Imler has a unique method of teaching which keeps the students engaged in learning. She was nominated for this award anonymously by one of her students. If Imler is among the 40 Teacher of the Year honorees, she will be flown to Los Angeles for a red-carpet recognition ceremony. The honorees and their principals will participate in a week long educators conference. Honorees will also receive \$10,000 while their schools will receive \$5,000.

I ask my colleagues in the United States House of Representatives to join me in congratulating Alyssa Imler and her 2006 Disney Teacher of the Year Award nomination. It is an honor to represent the Fourth Congressional District of Pennsylvania and a pleasure to salute such a dedicated individual such as Alyssa Imler.

## VIOLA GEORGIAN BALESTRERI

**HON. SAM FARR**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, February 8, 2006*

Mr. FARR. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life of Viola Georgian Balestreri, who passed away on January 25, 2006 in Carmel, California, at the age of 92. Viola was born on September 19, 1913 in Brooklyn, New York to Amelia and Aniello Crispo and was the only girl among 11 brothers—a special child, indeed! After the death of her husband Vincent Balestreri, whom she married in 1938, she moved to Carmel in 1957. She taught at Junipero Serra School for many years while raising her two children, to whom she was devoted.

Viola was a strong woman who never criticized or said a harsh word about anyone. She was eternally optimistic and grateful for her family and the blessings in her life. She was a loving mother, mother-in-law, grandmother, sister and friend.

Her son, Ted Balestreri, owner of the famed Sardine Factory restaurant in Monterey, has been a good friend of mine and I grieve with him over the loss of his mother. I wish to ex-

tend my deepest sympathies to Ted and the entire Balestreri family on the loss of this beloved woman.

## HONORING THE LIFE AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS OF CORETTA SCOTT KING

SPEECH OF

**HON. CHAKA FATTAH**

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, January 31, 2006*

Mr. FATTAH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay homage to Coretta Scott King, a great leader in the movement for civil and human rights on the occasion of her passing.

Known first as the wife of Dr. Martin Luther King, Mrs. King's commitment to the struggle for all people continued throughout her life. Attending Antioch College in Yellow Springs, Ohio, Coretta Scott King earned a Bachelor's Degree in music and education, skills she used to organize Freedom Concerts to benefit the Southern Christian Leadership Conference. Serving as a delegate from Women Strike for Peace at a 1962 Disarmament Conference in Geneva, Switzerland, Mrs. King demonstrated her commitment to working for peace and justice worldwide.

Following the tragic murder of her husband, Coretta Scott King committed herself to promoting Dr. King's principles of nonviolence and social justice. First, in establishing the King Center for Nonviolent Social Change, which has trained tens of thousands of people in the philosophy and methods of Dr. King, she has been able to preserve and further his legacy. Second, she served as chair of the Martin Luther King Jr. Federal Holiday Commission and worked for the national recognition of Dr. King's birthday.

In addition to working for the recognition of her husband's legacy, Mrs. King was always a tireless advocate for the abolition of Apartheid in South Africa, women and children's rights, gay and lesbian dignity, full employment and ecological sanity. In recognition of this work, Coretta Scott King has lead goodwill missions across the globe consulting with world leaders. In addition, the American Library Association has awarded Coretta Scott King Awards to more than 175 books written or illustrated by African Americans that promote understanding and appreciation for all cultures and demonstrate commitment to equality and justice.

Surely the passing of Coretta Scott King is a great loss to this Nation and the world. Mrs. King demonstrated a resilience and commitment to the ideals of equality and justice that has been matched by few and we all owe her a debt of gratitude.

## TRIBUTE TO THE SISTERS OF ST. EMMA ON THEIR 75TH ANNIVERSARY

**HON. MELISSA A. HART**

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, February 8, 2006*

Ms. HART. Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate the Sisters of