

There are so many people in my community who have lost their jobs and are facing extremely tough times. For taxpayer dollars to go towards bonuses for individuals who have played a key role in our economic downturn is simply unacceptable.

HONORING THE DAMAS DE  
BLANCO (THE LADIES IN WHITE)

**HON. MARIO DIAZ-BALART**

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, March 18, 2009*

Mr. MARIO DIAZ-BALART of Florida. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor the Damas de Blanco (the Ladies in White) a peaceful pro-democracy group of women in Cuba dedicated to creating awareness of the political realities, human rights violations and lack of basic freedoms on the island.

Today marks the 6th anniversary of the Black Spring in Cuba, in which 75 human rights activists, independent journalists, librarians, economists and pro-democracy leaders were jailed for simply expressing their opposition to the lack of political freedoms on the island. All were unfairly sentenced to an average of 25 years in Castro's gulag and 55 still languish there today.

The Damas de Blanco consists of the wives, mothers, daughters, sisters and nieces of these 75 dissidents. The group came together soon after the crackdown. Each day, these courageous women protest the imprisonment of their loved ones, call for their immediate release and the release of all political prisoners in Cuba, and seek to draw international attention to the lack of basic freedoms on the island. They wear white to symbolize innocence and purity, attend mass each Sunday, and walk through the streets of Cuba in peaceful protest.

The group has been internationally recognized and in 2005 was awarded the Sakharov Prize for Freedom of Thought, alongside Reporters Without Borders and human rights lawyer Hauwa Ibrahim, by the European Parliament. Members of Damas de Blanco were banned from attending the award ceremony in France by the Cuban regime.

The Damas de Blanco are a voice for the hundreds of political prisoners in Cuba and those who live in the shadows of oppression. With unprecedented courage and bravery, they take to the streets each day and risk their own lives in order to draw attention to the harsh realities in Cuba. As we celebrate Women's History Month, I ask you to join me in honoring the Damas de Blanco, remembering the 75 jailed dissidents of the Black Spring in Cuba and all of Cuba's political prisoners, and standing in solidarity with the Cuban people.

IN RECOGNITION OF THE  
PANPAPHIAN ASSOCIATION OF  
AMERICA ON THE OCCASION OF  
ITS ANNUAL DINNER-DANCE

**HON. CAROLYN B. MALONEY**

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, March 18, 2009*

Mrs. MALONEY. Madam Speaker, I rise to pay tribute to the PanPaphian Association of

America. Founded more than two decades ago by Hellenic Cypriot Americans of Paphian ancestry, it has carried out its vital educational, cultural, charitable, and humanitarian mission while promoting peace, unity, and understanding on Cyprus.

The Association is holding the 8th Annual Evagoras Pallikarides Award of Merit dinner-dance this month. The Evagoras Pallikarides Award is being presented to Panicos Papanicolaou. Born and raised in Nicosia, he came to the U.S. after serving in the Cypriot National Guard. He earned Bachelor of Science and Masters degrees at the New Jersey Institute of Technology (NJIT), then obtained a research position there, developing technology for the cleanup of toxic soil. A principal of JF Contracting, a Brooklyn construction and engineering firm, he is affiliated with the American Society of Civil Engineers, the National Society of Professional Engineers, and the Civil Engineering Honor Society. The Supreme President of the Cyprus Federation of America, Vice President of the Cyprus Children's Fund, and an Archon of the Ecumenical Patriarchate, he also serves on the Greek Orthodox Archdiocesan Council, the Advisory Board of Queens College, and as a supporter of St. Basil's Academy, the Albert Dorman Honors College at NJIT, and the Harvard School of Public Health. Prior to becoming the Federation's Supreme President, he was Chairman of the Justice for Cyprus Committee. A recipient of the Ellis Island Medal of Honor, he was the 1995 Bronx Businessman of the Year. He is devoted to his wife, Nasia, and his daughters, Elizabeth and Elena.

The PanPaphian Association is awarding the Distinguished Fellow Cyprian Award to Elena Maroulleti. Born on Cyprus in Nicosia, she grew up in Famagusta before immigrating to the U.S., where she founded "The Vraka," a folk-dancing group that later became the Cypriot Emigrants Cultural Association. Under her leadership, it mounted live performances relating to Cypriot folklore, culture, theater, dance, and music. She is an accomplished journalist, having served on the main production team of ABC News for more than twenty years. After volunteering her time as a host of radio programs pertaining to Cyprus and Greece for five years, she founded AKTINA Productions, a non-profit cultural and educational organization dedicated to the promotion and preservation of the Hellenic cultural heritage through radio, television, live performances, and other media. It sponsors AKTINA FM, a bilingual radio show, and AKTINA TV, an English language show, which reach audiences of hundreds of thousands. Both programs focus on Hellenes' rich cultural heritage as well as news and current events in Cyprus, Greece, and America. In 2002, Ms. Maroulleti was awarded the "Women of Achievement Pace Setter Award" by the New York City Council Speaker Peter F. Vallone, Sr. She is the founder and President of the Ethnic Broadcasters Action Committee, which represents all ethnic broadcaster-produced programs on WNYE, New York City's publicly owned television station. She is happily married to Tom Stouras and devoted to Caroline Ioannou, her daughter from a previous marriage.

The Member of the Year Award will be given to Mr. Nicos Paphitis, who was born in Morfou, Cyprus. While serving as an officer in the Cyprian military police, he played profes-

sional soccer with the team Keravnos Strovolou. He came to the U.S. in 1983, earned a Bachelor of Science degree in accounting from the City University of New York, and returned to Cyprus to work for Laiki Bank until 1998, when he was returned to New York to become the Bank's chief representative. Currently a Business Development Manager with Piraeus Bank and a 2nd Vice-President of the Cyprus Federation, he is devoted to the Hellenic American community and institutions like Saint Demetrios School and the American Hellenic Educational Progressive Association, as well as his wife, Evie, and his children, Andreas and Marilena.

Madam Speaker, I ask that my distinguished colleagues rise to join me in paying tribute to the PanPaphian Association of America and its 2009 honorees.

CELEBRATING PROCTER & GAMBLE  
MANUFACTURING COMPANY'S 40TH BIRTHDAY IN  
CENTRAL LOUISIANA

**HON. RODNEY ALEXANDER**

OF LOUISIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, March 18, 2009*

Mr. ALEXANDER. Madam Speaker, I am proud to honor the Procter & Gamble Manufacturing Company in Pineville as it celebrates its 40th birthday in Central Louisiana.

In July 1969, Procter & Gamble Manufacturing Co. first began operations in the area on a 112 acre site about seven miles north of Alexandria/Pineville. Originally built to supply synthetic dry powder detergents, the Procter & Gamble Alexandria plant was just one of 12 plants in operation in the United States at the time.

Through the years, the Procter & Gamble Manufacturing Co. has consolidated their business down to two dry laundry sites, and is now shipping to more than half of the U.S. from the Louisiana location.

In 2005, the company announced the expansion of this particular plant site to manufacture both dry and liquid detergents, essentially doubling the size of the facility. This dynamic growth required an investment of over \$220 million and added more than 185 permanent employees.

Today the plant retains approximately 400 direct contract employees, in addition to an average of 1,200 indirect staff. The company credits these individuals as its greatest asset.

The Procter & Gamble Manufacturing Co. has an impressive track record of success in Central Louisiana. I am confident the remarkable progression of this plant will continue to provide great opportunities for the residents of this area.

It is with deep appreciation for this plant's many contributions to the 5th Congressional District that I commend the Procter & Gamble Manufacturing Co.

I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring the 40th birthday of the Procter & Gamble Manufacturing Co. in Pineville as it continues its faithful commitment to building not only a stronger Louisiana, but a stronger national economy.