

amendment “would not make the District of Columbia a state” and did not grant “home-rule” to the District. Home rule, a milestone allowing for democratic self-government, did not come until 1973. Originally paired with a number of unrelated amendments in the Senate, what became the 23rd Amendment passed the House by voice vote on June 14, 1960 and the Senate agreed to the bill two days later. Fifty years ago today, March 29, 1961, Ohio became the 38th state to ratify the amendment, and it was officially declared to have been ratified as the 23rd Amendment five days later.

Unfortunately, the District of Columbia today remains the only capital in a democratic nation where citizens are denied a vote in the nation’s representative body of government. Today, we can only hope that the decision of Congress to support the presidential and vice presidential votes for D.C. citizens will lead the way to votes in the Congress of the United States itself.

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HONORING THE ST. PAUL BRANCH  
OF THE AMERICAN ASSOCIATION  
OF UNIVERSITY WOMEN ON THE  
OCCASION OF ITS 100TH ANNI-  
VERSARY

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**HON. BETTY McCOLLUM**

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, March 30, 2011*

Ms. McCOLLUM. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the Saint Paul Branch of the American Association of University Women (AAUW) on the occasion of its 100th anniversary. For the past century, the St. Paul Branch of the AAUW has fulfilled a noble mission to advance equity for women and girls through advocacy, education, philanthropy and research.

As a non-profit education advocacy organization, one of its major successes has been the creation of a trust providing college scholarships to young women. Each year, the trust awards approximately \$60,000 in scholarships to deserving high school graduates, and one-time scholarship funds to women returning to college to complete a degree. Scholarship recipients reflect the growing ethnic, religious and racial diversity of our community.

Through its Scholarship Trust and nationwide network affiliation with the AAUW, the St. Paul Branch has made a positive impact for many young women and girls by advancing social, economic and education equity. More women and girls are being empowered to seize opportunities that otherwise would have been impossible.

The work of AAUW St. Paul Branch is commendable and it deserves to be celebrated. In honor of its 100th Anniversary and its mission to provide education opportunity for young women and girls, I am pleased to submit this statement for the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD.

A TRIBUTE IN HONOR OF ONEIDA  
“MOTHER” BRANCH

**HON. ANNA G. ESHOO**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, March 30, 2011*

Ms. ESHOO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the long and loving life of Oneida “Mother” Branch, the heart and soul of the East Palo Alto, California, community, who died in her home on March 22, 2011. For 92 years, Mother Branch put the “active” in activist, devoting her life to her family, her church, and her community.

Born in New Orleans, Mother Branch moved to East Palo Alto half a century ago to start a church with her late husband, the Reverend James Branch. After helping to start St. John Missionary Baptist Church, Mother Branch taught Sunday school and founded a sewing club, attending services until just a month before she died. Widely known and respected for her prodigious knowledge of church history and her willingness to help others, Mother Branch was a deeply religious woman who was revered by the entire community.

But Mother Branch’s charity was not confined to church. “Mother was a little lady with a massive heart,” Paul Nyberg, Publisher of the Los Altos Town Crier, once said. “She was an unabashed Christian reaching out to help everyone in need.” In the 1970’s, Mother Branch established the East Palo Alto Community Center to provide food, comfort, and support to those in need. For decades, she dispensed canned food, blankets, and clothing—as well as uproarious stories and sage advice—to the people of East Palo Alto, working especially hard to promote education and the dignity of women.

Even while she performed her good works, Mother Branch experienced a series of difficult setbacks. The first Community Center office burned down just before Thanksgiving of 1977, and a flood later destroyed her second office. Mother Branch kept aiding her community, spending what little money she had on temporary storage units and continuing to distribute supplies from her own home—which burned down as well. Motivated by a heroic desire to help, even as a stroke at the age of 86 kept her in the hospital for only two days, she went back to work. “No one should suffer,” she would say.

A constant whirlwind of wisdom and affection, Mother Branch always seemed younger than her years . . . which was in fact the opposite. Over the course of resolving a mortgage issue in 2007, Mother Branch discovered that she was actually three years older than she’d thought. But the aid she gave was ageless, touching generations of East Palo Alto residents. Over the years, she would proudly observe, “I have seen people stand on their own feet.” This was perhaps her greatest quality, her ability to strengthen and sustain the lives of those around her. She lived her faith daily, and recognized the godliness in every human being.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in extending our deepest condolences to Mother Branch’s children: Erwin Babney, Whitney Babney, and Nate Branch, her grandchildren, and great-grandchildren, as well as all the residents of East Palo Alto. Mother Branch was deeply rooted in her community,

nourishing everyone she met with her light, love, and laughter. I’m proud to have known such a caring and extraordinary matriarch and distinguished citizen of our community and our country.

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RECOGNIZING MR. JAMES BISHIR  
AS THE 2011 HURLBURT AFA  
CHAPTER 398 MIDDLE SCHOOL  
TEACHER OF THE YEAR

**HON. JEFF MILLER**

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, March 30, 2011*

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Mr. James Bishir as the 2011 Hurlburt AFA Chapter 398 Middle School Teacher of the Year.

Mr. Bishir, an Integrated Science teacher at Woodham Middle School, began teaching nine years ago. His dedication and professionalism are exemplified by his efforts leading extracurricular activities aimed at developing the skills to ensure that students are prepared to succeed after graduation. All of Mr. Bishir’s students benefit greatly from his assiduous work ethic and his dedication to teaching them before, during and after school.

Three years ago, Mr. Bishir began heading Woodham’s robotics program. Through countless hours of hard work, he and his robotics team of 58 members designed and built a robot. This year, their robot qualified, for the second time in three years, to compete at a national robotics championship at Auburn University. At the championship event, his team was the second highest ranking middle school. In just a short three-year period, he has shown students that not only can learning come in any form, but that their hard work and effort yield positive results.

In his capacity as the Project Based Learning Group Facilitator, Mr. Bishir serves as a mentor for eight other instructors at Woodham Middle School. Through his leadership, Mr. Bishir assists the group in using technology to incorporate project based learning in the classroom. Mr. Bishir goes above and beyond the call of duty to engage his students and work with his colleagues to facilitate innovative learning projects. His commitment to excellence leads to success in and out of the classroom and has earned him recognition as the 2011 Hurlburt AFA Chapter 398 Middle School Teacher of the Year.

Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the United States Congress, I am proud to recognize Mr. Bishir for his accomplishments. My wife Vicki joins me in congratulating Mr. James Bishir, and we wish him all the best.

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HONORING REVEREND LUCIUS  
WALKER, JR.

**HON. BARBARA LEE**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, March 30, 2011*

Ms. LEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the extraordinary life of Rev. Lucius Walker, Jr. The founding director of the new Interreligious Foundation for Community Organization (IFCO), and a steadfast advocate for civil