

passionately. We will miss her leadership, courage, and dedication, and wish her all the best as she retires from active duty service to our great nation.

A TRIBUTE TO DRIAN JUAREZ—
28TH CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT
WOMAN OF THE YEAR

HON. ADAM B. SCHIFF

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, March 14, 2014

Mr. SCHIFF. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of Women's History Month. Each year, we pay special tribute to the contributions and sacrifices made by our nation's women. It is an honor to pay homage to outstanding women who are making a difference in my Congressional District. I would like to recognize a remarkable woman, Drian Juarez of Hollywood.

Born in Juarez, Mexico and raised by her grandmother, a five-year-old Ms. Juarez joined her mother in the United States after her grandmother's passing.

Ms. Juarez's artistic talents were noticed early on by many of her teachers. She entered a Los Angeles Times art contest, won, and was awarded with art lessons throughout middle school. With these art lessons, Ms. Juarez was able to build a portfolio and gain entry into the Los Angeles County High School for the Arts. Upon graduation, she was accepted to Otis College of Art and Design, where she attained a Bachelor's Degree in Fine Art.

In 2005, Ms. Juarez was shot in the face at a Halloween event and lost sight in her right eye. After this tragic incident, Ms. Juarez decided to make a change in her life. For the first time, she connected with Los Angeles transgender support groups and increased her involvement in local events and activism. She became a member of the West Hollywood Transgender Task Force, which is now known as the West Hollywood Transgender Advisory Board, and also became a member of the Transgender Service Provider Network. In 2009, Ms. Juarez was invited to become a member of the Transgender Law Center's Transgender Leadership Council and the Transgender Economic Development Initiative.

For the past 6 years, Ms. Juarez has served as Program Manager of the Transgender Economic Empowerment Project (TEEP) at the Legal Services Department of the L.A. Gay & Lesbian Center. She has demonstrated remarkable entrepreneurial skills and passion for empowering clients who are struggling with immigration, employment, and race issues due to their gender identity.

TEEP, in conjunction with Trans-Unity Pride, held its first job fair in 2008. Since then, TEEP has collaborated with the West Hollywood Chamber of Commerce on a yearly job fair. As part of this job fair, Ms. Juarez has provided Gender and Sexual Diversity in the Workplace trainings to human resources professionals and employers. Ms. Juarez has presented over 400 transgender cultural competency trainings to thousands of people, including at conferences sponsored by the Transgender Service Provider Network and the HIV Drug & Alcohol Task Force, LA Youth at Work, the City of L.A. Career Fair, Women's Resource & Job Fair, Trans Action/Friends Community

Center, among others. In addition to all of her accomplishments, Ms. Juarez designed a plaque with an inscribed poem for the City of West Hollywood, which was dedicated in 2009 during the Transgender Day of Remembrance, a day to memorialize those who were killed due to anti-transgender hatred and prejudice.

I ask all Members to join me in honoring an exceptional woman of California's 28th Congressional District, Drian Juarez.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. ALLYSON Y. SCHWARTZ

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, March 14, 2014

Ms. SCHWARTZ. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall No. 117, I was unable to attend. Had I been present, I would have voted "yes."

HONORING THE 2014 ACADEMY
NOMINEES OF THE 11TH CON-
GRESSIONAL DISTRICT OF NEW
JERSEY

HON. RODNEY P. FRELINGHUYSEN

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, March 14, 2014

Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN. Mr. Speaker, every year, more high school seniors from the 11th Congressional District trade in varsity jackets for navy pea coats, Air Force flight suits, and Army brass buckles than most other districts in the country. But this is nothing new—our area has repeatedly sent an above average portion of its sons and daughters to the nation's military academies for decades.

This fact should not come as a surprise. The educational excellence of area schools is well known and has long been a magnet for families looking for the best environment in which to raise their children. Our graduates are skilled not only in mathematics, science, and social studies, but also have solid backgrounds in sports, debate teams, and other extracurricular activities. This diverse upbringing makes military academy recruiters sit up and take note—indeed, many recruiters know our towns and schools by name.

Since the 1830's, Members of Congress have enjoyed meeting, talking with, and nominating these superb young people to our military academies. But how did this process evolve? In 1843, when West Point was the sole academy, Congress ratified the nominating process and became directly involved in the makeup of our military's leadership. This was not an act of an imperial Congress bent on controlling every aspect of Government. Rather, the procedure still used today was, and is, a further check and balance in our democracy. It was originally designed to weaken and divide political coloration in the officer corps, provide geographical balance to our armed services, and to make the officer corps more resilient to unfettered nepotism and handicapped European armies.

In 1854, Representative Gerritt Smith of New York added a new component to the academy nomination process—the academy review board. This was the first time a Member of Congress appointed prominent citizens

from his district to screen applicants and assist with the serious duty of nominating candidates for academy admission. Today, I am honored to continue this wise tradition in my service to the 11th Congressional District.

The Academy Review Board is composed of six local citizens who have shown exemplary service to New Jersey, to their communities, and to the continued excellence of education in our area—many are veterans. Though from diverse backgrounds and professions, they all share a common dedication that the best qualified and motivated graduates attend our academies. And, as true for most volunteer panels, their service goes largely unnoticed.

I would like to take a moment to recognize these men and women and thank them publicly for participating in this important panel. Being on the board requires hard work and an objective mind. Members have the responsibility of interviewing upwards of 50 outstanding high school seniors every year in the academy review process.

The nomination process follows a general timetable. High school seniors mail personal information directly to the Military Academy, the Naval Academy, the Air Force Academy, and the Merchant Marine Academy once they become interested in attending. Information includes academic achievement, college entry test scores, and other activities. At this time, they also inform my office of their desire to be nominated.

The academies then assess the applicants, rank them based on the data supplied, and return the files to my office with their notations. In late November, our Academy Review Board interviews all of the applicants over the course of 2 days. They assess a student's qualifications and analyze character, desire to serve, and other talents that may be hidden on paper.

This year the board interviewed over 40 applicants. The Board's recommendations were then forwarded to the academies by January 31, where recruiters reviewed files and notified applicants and my office of their final decision on admission.

As these highly motivated and talented young men and women go through the academy nominating process, never let us forget the sacrifice they are preparing to make: to defend our country and protect our citizens. This holds especially true at a time when our nation is fighting the war against terrorism. Whether it is in Afghanistan or other hot spots around the world, no doubt we are constantly reminded that wars are fought by the young. And, while our military missions are both important and dangerous, it is reassuring to know that we continue to put America's best and brightest in command.

ACADEMY NOMINEES FOR 2014, 11TH DISTRICT
CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

AIR FORCE ACADEMY

Justin M. Blumas, Roseland, West Essex H.S.

Jennifer E. Lam, Boonton, Air Force Academy Prep

Sean M. Lyons, Morristown, Morristown H.S.

Angela E. Martone, Lincoln Park, Trinity Christian H.S.

Michael J. Predojevic, Woodland Park, Passaic Valley H.S.

MERCHANT MARINE ACADEMY

Justin C. Corio, Bloomfield, Bloomfield H.S.

Clay C. Dundas, Sparta, Massachusetts Maritime Academy