

stand against their crimes. If we are serious about rejecting their deeds, perhaps their governments, and other governments, will become more serious as well.

SHANNA PEEPLES OF AMARILLO  
NAMED 2015 NATIONAL TEACHER  
OF THE YEAR

### HON. MAC THORBERRY

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, April 30, 2015*

Mr. THORBERRY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor one of my constituents, Shanna Peeples, who has been named the 2015 National Teacher of the Year by the Council of Chief State School Officers. She is the first Texas teacher to win the award since 1957.

Ms. Peeples is a high school English teacher at Palo Duro High School in Amarillo, Texas. She graduated from West Texas A&M University in 1997. After working as a disc jockey, medical assistant, pet sitter, and journalist at the Amarillo Globe-News covering education, the mother of three children began teaching 12 years ago.

Ms. Peeples was exposed to alcoholism, domestic violence, and poverty as a child. Those hardships help her empathize with her students, 85 percent of whom live below the poverty line and many having fled violent homelands from around the world. Just as her teachers made school her safe place where she could escape her fears through reading and writing, Ms. Peeples strives to give her students a sense of belonging. She wants them to know she is invested in their lives and in their futures. So much so, that she has had to help refugee parents who wanted their children to work rather than go to school understand the importance of education.

In addition to serving as the chair of her English department, she is a mentor and instructional coach for other teachers at her school. As she travels the nation over the next year, she plans to emphasize effective teaching methods for students in poverty or facing extreme challenges.

Ms. Peeples is the type of educator all parents want teaching our children. She is a shining example of the best of her profession. The fact that she has already been recognized as the Teacher of the Year for Texas and has now become the Teacher of the Year for the entire country makes everyone in our area—and especially our teachers and school systems—very proud.

RECOGNIZING SOUTH SEATTLE  
COLLEGE STUDENT, DAVID YAMA

### HON. JIM McDERMOTT

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, April 30, 2015*

Mr. McDERMOTT. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to offer special recognition to David Yama, a South Seattle College student from the great state of Washington. Mr. Yama received national attention for his exemplary character in and out of the classroom.

As a member of the All-Washington Academic team, David was named a “New Cen-

tury Scholar” which is given to the top-community college scholar in each state. From there, David landed the top spot on the All-USA academic team, made up of the top-20 community college students from across the country. On April 20, 2015 the National Honor Society, Phi Theta Kappa, held a celebration to recognize David and his All-USA teammates in San Antonio, Texas. Of the top 20 in the nation, David was selected as the sole recipient of PTK’s David R. Pierce Scholarship and served as the speaker at the event where he shared his story of tragedy and triumph. Days later, his success was further recognized with a Jack Kent Cooke Foundation Scholarship—awarded to the nation’s top community college students to complete their bachelor’s degree at a four-year college or university.

Growing up in Ocean Shores, a small coastal city in Washington, David and his family—which includes his four siblings—lived in a one-bedroom hotel. David struggled in school and his parents were told that he needed behavioral drugs. Unfortunately, or perhaps fortunately, his parents could not afford that type of medication for David. After receiving straight F’s, David dropped out of high school at the age of 14. One year later, David set sail—quite literally. After convincing his mother and the captain of the *Lady Washington*, he volunteered on a sailing trip to California. From there he worked on other ships and as David put it, jumped from “one dead-end job to another.”

At the age of 27, David came to the realization that an education was the key to a life of stability and greener pastures. As a West Seattle resident, David started taking prep classes to receive his GED at his local community college, South Seattle College.

With the encouragement of his GED instructor, Jane Harness, David quickly began to rebuild his confidence and his scores improved. As Jane put it, “this little switch turned on for him, and he became really determined.”

So determined, in fact, that after David earned his GED he continued his academic pursuits and will be earning an associate degree this spring. From there, David will continue his studies earning a bachelor’s degree and ultimately a Ph.D. in bio engineering.

In addition to holding a 3.96 GPA, David volunteers his time as a tutor and an environmentalist cleaning up West Seattle’s Duwamish River. He is quick to give credit to South Seattle College as the key to his success as he told the Seattle Times: “Once I started here—the environment was right, it was a 180 from what I thought I was capable of,” Yama said.

His academic achievements have been recognized in USA Today, Seattle’s NBC Affiliate (KING 5) and on the front page of the Seattle Times.

David’s story is one of inspiration and determination. He is just one of many students who have had to overcome seemingly impossible odds but met those challenges head-on and came out on top. He is living proof that the power of hope, determination and the human spirit are alive and well in this country. I’m proud that South Seattle College and David Yama are from the District that I represent. Please join me in recognizing their success.

ENERGY AND WATER DEVELOPMENT AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2016

SPEECH OF

### HON. SCOTT PERRY

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, April 29, 2015*

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 2028) making appropriations for energy and water development and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2016, and for other purposes.

Mr. PERRY. Mr. Chair, I’d like to thank the Appropriations Committee and the Chairman for acting to impose greater discipline on the Nuclear Regulatory Commission.

We know that the future of nuclear power in the United States depends on having a credible nuclear safety regulator, and depends on the industry continuing to perform at a high level of safety. We feel strongly that the agency must continue its core mission of protecting public health and safety, but NRC must do so in a manner that does not add to the economic headwinds the industry faces.

I support the Committee’s direction to require the NRC’s rulemaking process to be Commission-driven in order to provide greater discipline, transparency, efficiency, and accountability.

THE EVENTS IN BALTIMORE

### HON. JAMES E. CLYBURN

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, April 30, 2015*

Mr. CLYBURN. Mr. Speaker, I want to join my friend and chair of the Congressional Black Caucus, G.K. BUTTERFIELD, in offering condolences to the parents and family members of Freddie Gray.

I also want to say to Ms. Toya Graham that I feel and can appreciate her anguish and the pain that she showed the world a few days ago.

I want to say to her son, Michael that I have also felt his pain and anguish, having been on the receiving end of such discipline from my mother. But I want to say to him that he can rest assured that the love of his mother, her passion for his future, will pay great dividends if he continues to show the deference to her love and affection and her concern that he showed several days ago when he was the object of her frustrations.

Mr. Speaker, responding to the situation in Baltimore several days ago, President Obama said: “We can’t just leave this to the police. I think there are Police Departments that have to do some soul-searching. I think there are some communities that have to do some soul-searching.”

But, he went on to say: “I think we, as a country, have to do some soul-searching.” I want to join President Obama in calling for the country to do some soul-searching.

Let’s take a look at just a few of the institutions of learning in the Baltimore Community.

I would like to call attention to one school, Frederick Douglass High School, a school that