

The University of North Georgia seeks to improve the quality of life for residents of the North Georgia region. They do this through excellence in academic performance, student research, student leadership, service learning, and study abroad programs. Additionally, the University of North Georgia is a premier senior military college and one of only six federally designated senior military colleges in the nation.

The Honors Program at UNG cultivates a community of engaged and academically motivated students who uphold the values of service and integrity, demonstrate global awareness, and exhibit strong leadership skills. Evidence of the program's success is exhibited by some of their outstanding alumni. One example among many is Sara Brubaker, class of 2010. Sara completed her Doctorate of Physical Therapy in 2013 and was one of just twelve physical therapists chosen for employment by the U.S. Navy. She now serves at the rank of Lieutenant as the Rehabilitation Department Head at the Naval Hospital in Beaufort, SC.

I am proud to recognize the accomplishments of Sara and other accomplished students and alumni of the University of North Georgia and to commend the University's successful honors program.

HONORING PRINCIPAL CHIEF  
MICHELL HICKS

**HON. MARK MEADOWS**

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, September 17, 2015*

Mr. MEADOWS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Principal Chief Michell Hicks of the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians, who is retiring on September 26, 2015. I am proud to call Chief Hicks a good friend and thank him for his dedicated service as Principal Chief.

After graduating from Western Carolina University, Chief Hicks served for twelve years as the Principal Chief for the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians, and prior to that served eight years as the Chief Finance Officer for the Eastern Band. During his tenure as Principal Chief, Chief Hicks was instrumental in the completion of several vital service facilities, such as the Shawn Blanton Emergency Operations Center, the Snowbird Youth Center, the new Justice Center and Jail, and a new Cherokee Hospital, scheduled to open in October of this year.

Additionally, Chief Hicks spearheaded many educational efforts in the region. He developed and implemented a reading program for kindergarten children in the region, he oversaw the development of a financial literacy program for Cherokee youth, and he helped rekindle an interest in the Cherokee language by including it as required curriculum at Cherokee schools.

Chief Hicks is known by his friends as a kind, compassionate man who, while cherishing the old Cherokee traditions, is a visionary for a better future for his people. His tremendous passion and vision earned him the Tribal Leader of the Year Award from the Native American Finance Officers Association.

The exemplary leadership and vision of Chief Hicks is something that all of us can admire and respect. As such, I am proud to

honor Principal Chief Michell Hicks on his faithful service to the people of Cherokee and congratulate him on his retirement.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

**HON. TOM COLE**

OF OKLAHOMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, September 17, 2015*

Mr. COLE. Mr. Speaker, I was unavoidably detained and not present for Roll Call vote number 495. Had I been present, I would have voted "YEA" on H.R. 1214, the National Forest Small Tracts Amendments Act.

CELEBRATING THE HISPANIC HERITAGE MONTH AND THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF THE LATINO COMMUNITY

**HON. CHARLES B. RANGEL**

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, September 17, 2015*

Mr. RANGEL. Mr. Speaker, since 1968, America celebrates the National Hispanic Heritage Month from September 15th to October 15th, 2015, to recognize the legacy of those whose ancestors came from Latin America and Spain. The beginning of the National Hispanic Heritage Month is very important because it is also the anniversary of independence for some Central American countries such as: Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, and El Salvador. Also, Mexico and Chile celebrate their independence days on September 16th and September 18th respectively.

We are fortunate to have in our district so many dedicated community leaders and organizations, such as CUNY Dominican Studies Institute, Dominican American National Roundtable, Hispanic Federation, Dominican Women Development Center, Mirabal Sisters Cultural and Community Center, Dominican Medical Association DMA, National Dominican Women Caucus, Dominican Bar Association, Latino Leadership Institute, East Harlem Preservation, Inc., Falu Foundation, El Museo del Barrio, Little Sisters of the Assumption Family Health Service, East Harlem Council for Community Improvement, Inc., Friendly Hands Ministry, VIDA Family Services, Inc., N.E.R.V.E., Inc., Teatro Moderno Puertorriqueno, Inc., Casabe Houses Development Fund, Company, Inc., Julia de Burgos Cultural Center, Latino Justice PRLDEF, Hispanic Federation, La Casa de la Herencia Cultural Puertorriquena, Borikén Health Center, Nuevo Caribe Democratic Club of El Barrio and Cataño Gardens and the Association of Progressive Dominicans, working tirelessly to improve the lives of people living in East Harlem, Inwood, Washington Heights and the Bronx. Pioneers such as Secretary Thomas Pérez, America's first Cabinet Secretary of Dominican descent and Justice Sonia Sotomayor who is of Puerto Rican descent and is the country's first Hispanic to be appointed to the Supreme Court, are not only role models for youths in our congressional district, but also symbols of the American Dream. They remind us that willingness to strive can help us to achieve great success, not only for ourselves but for America as a country.

Like all Americans, Latino families aspire to own a home, save for their children's higher education, and put aside enough money for a secure retirement. We need comprehensive immigration reform that will fix our broken system and allow millions of aspiring Americans to come out of the shadows. Every day we delay the issue of immigration reform is another day that our economy, our businesses, and our families lose out. I will continue to fight for comprehensive immigration reform and for the policies that will strengthen the Latino community and expand their opportunities to achieve the American Dream.

The United States of America is greater, thanks to the contributions of the Latino community, which is 55.4 million strong, and continues to grow and make a great impact throughout our country. Happy Hispanic Heritage Month.

IN HONOR OF BETTY HARDY

**HON. KEVIN BRADY**

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, September 17, 2015*

Mr. BRADY of Texas. Mr. Speaker, residents in Montgomery County are blessed to have non-profit organizations that provide a true safety net for struggling families and individuals.

One of those organizations is the Montgomery County Food Bank which has been helping families since 1985.

This food bank is an integral part of our community today because a group of individuals led by Betty Hardy saw a need and found a way to fill that need by partnering with other agencies.

Betty Hardy has put others first as long as any of us have known her. She is a blessing to our community. She went from helping people on the crisis hotline to ensuring families in need had a meal on the table.

Betty's passion to put others first is what led her to bring together several like-minded friends each week to organize and create food pantries, food drives and deliveries.

Out of her commitment—and her garage, trunk and backseat—grew the program we know as the Montgomery County Food Bank.

From the food bank's initial one-room office space this program has grown to service countless families.

The Food Bank went from serving nearly 18,000 meals in the first year to 400,000 annual meals just a short decade later.

In 2007, the food bank opened its first official warehouse with the help of a community development grant. Today, the food bank operates out of a 60,000 square foot facility that distributes several million pounds of food every year. They coordinate with a network of approximately 50 food pantries, soup kitchens, senior centers and other agencies to provide fresh produce, meat and non-perishables to more than 32,000 people each month.

Betty's dream of helping Montgomery County residents weather a crisis has evolved into the sixth largest food bank in Texas.

Betty Hardy is proof that one person's determination, dedication and willingness to roll up her sleeves can have a far reaching impact on individuals and families who need to know there is hope and support in their community.