to the hungry in the area. In the 40 years since its creation, it has become the largest food pantry network in Iowa, with 11 sites in the Des Moines metropolitan area, including sites in the Des Moines Independent School District, helping to feed 34,000 people annually. The Des Moines Area Religious Council Food Pantry Network is comprised of 128 member congregations representing a number of different faiths. These willing volunteers provide food and service hours. The Des Moines Area Religious Council Food Pantry Network also receives generous assistance from individuals, businesses, and non-member congregations.

Mr. Speaker, I commend The Des Moines Area Religious Council Food Pantry Network on their 40 years and thank them for providing such an important service. I ask that my colleagues in the United States House of Representatives join me in congratulating the Des Moines Area Religious Council Food Pantry Network and in wishing them nothing but continued success.

FORT BEND COUNTY HISTORICAL COMMISSION WINS DISTINGUISHED SERVICE AWARD

HON. PETE OLSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 27, 2016

Mr. OLSON. Mr. Speaker, I would like to congratulate the Fort Bend County Historical Commissioners for winning the Texas Historical Commission Distinguished Service Award.

The Commission is comprised of volunteer historians and preservationists appointed by the Fort Bend County Commissioners Court to protect Texas history, culture and education throughout the state. Volunteers have dedicated over 480,000 hours to recognizing, protecting and transcribing various parts of Texas history so future Texans can continue to learn the heritage of our great state.

On behalf of the Twenty-Second Congressional District of Texas, congratulations again to the Fort Bend County Historical Commissioners for winning the THC Distinguished Service Award. We appreciate your continued efforts to preserve the history that has made Texas so great.

TRIBUTE TO AGGIE AND RON DAVIS

HON. DAVID YOUNG

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 27, 2016

Mr. YOUNG of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate Aggie and Ron Davis of Des Moines, Iowa, on their 70th wedding anniversary.

Their lifelong commitment to each other and their family truly embodies Iowa values. As they reflect on their 70th anniversary, may their commitment grow even stronger as they continue to love, cherish, and honor one another for years to come.

Mr. Speaker, I commend this great couple on their 70th year together and I wish them many more. I ask that my colleagues in the United States House of Representatives join me in congratulating them on this momentous occasion.

VETERANS-SPECIFIC EDUCATION FOR TOMORROW'S MEDICAL DOCTORS (VET MD) ACT

HON. MARCY KAPTUR

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 27, 2016

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to introduce a bill that addresses two problems: the disparity in access to clinical observation experiences for pre-medical school students and the severe shortage of physicians at VA hospitals. By creating a pre-med observation (shadowing) program within the VA, we both expand access to medical observation opportunities, particularly for underrepresented populations such as minority or rural-based students, and expose America's future doctors to the Veteran health system, increasing awareness of job opportunities within the VA.

When applying to medical school, students who have spent time observing, or shadowing, physicians in a clinical setting have an advantage both with admissions and in deciding on a future specialty. It is recommended applicants have more than 40 hours of observational experience to be competitive. Opportunities to observe however are limited and vary widely between universities and hospitals.

Students who are from, or attend schools in rural areas, who are from low economic status, or whose families lack connections within the medical community often find it harder to attain observation hours and are disadvantaged in medical school admissions, contributing to the lack of diversity in our medical professions. Universities and hospitals with organized pre-med experience or clinician observation programs report having a significantly more diversified participation pool than those who rely purely on personal connections to attain observation opportunities.

On the medical side, the VA is chronically short physicians. In fact, more than 5,100 additional physicians are needed across the VA system as of August 2015, and annually they recruit for over 41,000 positions throughout their medical facilities. This leads to increased wait times and decreased patient care. To fill these positions, the VA must compete with private hospitals that often are able to make more lucrative offers to prospective hires.

By incorporating an organized clinician observation program into the VA, future physicians will be exposed to the unique problems of U.S. veteran healthcare and the VA will create a pool of potential medical professional recruits. Early exposure will encourage future participation either as veteran physicians themselves or advocates within the community. The VA will simultaneously be helping the next generation of physicians gain valuable experience and addressing their physician shortage problem.

TRIBUTE TO DONNA LEE AND DON BUCH

HON. DAVID YOUNG

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 27, 2016

Mr. YOUNG of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate Donna Lee and Don Buch of Grimes, Iowa, as they celebrate their 65th wedding anniversary.

Donna Lee and Don were married in Clarinda on August 12, 1951. Their lifelong commitment to each other and their family truly embodies Iowa values. As they reflect on their 65th anniversary, may their commitment grow even stronger as they continue to love, cherish, and honor one another for years to come.

Mr. Speaker, I commend this lovely couple on their 65 years of life together and I wish them many more. I ask that my colleagues in the United States House of Representatives join me in congratulating them on this momentous occasion.

RECOGNIZING THE EFFORTS OF LONNIE BUNCH, THE FOUNDING DIRECTOR OF THE SMITHSONIAN NATIONAL MUSEUM OF AFRICAN AMERICAN HISTORY AND CULTURE

HON. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 27, 2016

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Lonnie G. Bunch III; a great educator and American historian who's relentless and dedicated work led to the opening of the Smithsonian National Museum of African American History and Culture on the national mall this past weekend.

From a young age, Lonnie has cared about the stories of those who are anonymous. The experience of a four-year-old Lonnie with his grandfather looking at a photo of unidentified African-American schoolchildren in a book left him wanting to learn their stories. The curiosity inspired by hearing his neighbors speak Sicilian urged him to understand the history that led groups of immigrants to populate his neighborhood in New Jersey.

These experiences as a child helped shape the distinguished career Mr. Bunch would have as an author, educator and curator at various institutions. While serving as president at the Chicago Historical Society, Mr. Bunch was approached by the Smithsonian Institute to be the founding director of the National Museum of African American History and Culture. Mr. Bunch spent the next decade traveling around the world raising the $270 million needed to open the museum while also leading the charge in opening seven different exhibits related to African American history and culture in the Smithsonian National Museum of American History. Mr. Bunch is also responsible for establishing a daylong workshop program designed to identify and preserve items of historical significance.

Through his career endeavors culminating in the opening of the Smithsonian National Museum of African American History and Culture,