

Mrs. Santa Anna has been recognized as the most reliable volunteer by two of the most active Senior Citizens' Clubs in the region, the Abraham Lincoln Club and John F. Kennedy Club. In 2006 she was elected by over four hundred seniors to serve in two of the most coveted positions on the Board of Directors for each Club. She has been recognized as the "voice of the seniors" by personally leading and shepherding voter registration drives and absentee ballot campaigns for the elderly.

Mrs. Santa Anna, as a Cuban-American, has a strong passion for social justice issues, which empowers her to advocate on behalf of the elderly and the disenfranchised within her community. She was recently appointed to represent the City's Senior Citizens Advisory Committee as a member of the Seniors Grievance Committee, which addresses difficult and contentious issues for five senior citizens clubs in Santa Fe Springs. According to Santa Fe Springs City Councilmember, Luis M. Gonzalez, "Her amazing mental agility and high physical energy combined with her passionate spirit provide for a truly engaged community gatekeeper who keeps our elected officials on the edge of their seats."

Most importantly, Mrs. Santa Anna (lovingly known as "Fina") embodies the characteristics of a highly respected community leader. She is humble, lovable, and spirited. She is a passionate engine that mobilizes seniors, families, and elected officials for the betterment of Santa Fe Springs.

Madam Speaker, I proudly ask you to join me, her family, friends, and community in honoring Josephine Santa Anna for her service in and contributions to the City of Santa Fe Springs.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. LUIS V. GUTIERREZ

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 14, 2007

Mr. GUTIERREZ. Madam Speaker, I was on official leave of absence June 12 and 13, 2007, due to a health matter in my family. I would like the record to show that, had I been present, I would have voted "yea" on rollcall votes 451, 452, 453, 456 and 457 and "no" on rollcall votes 454, 455, 458, 459, 460, 461, 462, 463, 464, and 465.

PAYING TRIBUTE TO THE HENDERSON NEVADA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

HON. JON C. PORTER

OF NEVADA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 14, 2007

Mr. PORTER. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor the Henderson, Nevada, Chamber of Commerce. The Henderson Nevada Chamber of Commerce has been serving the Henderson community as a private, non-profit voluntary organization since 1945. They are committed to the civic, commercial and industrial growth and development of Henderson. Much of the area's economic success is a direct result of the hard work and dedication of the Chamber.

The members of the Henderson Chamber of Commerce divided themselves into issue committees in order to prepare according to their predominant interests. The following are the committees and those who are leading those committees: Kristine Shattuck—Transportation; D.J. Allen and Francine Mayfield—Education; Scot Muelrath and Bob Unger—Water; David Chavez—Taxes; Ben Brown; and John Holman—Bureau of Land Management; Charles Perry—Homeland Security; Arnold Lopez and Rick Smith—Yucca Mountain; David Dahan—Health Care; and Laird Sanders—Small Business Administration. In addition, Karen Marshall, Alice Martz, Diane Holman, Gayle Rogers, and Richard are contributing to the weeklong event.

Madam Speaker, I am proud to honor The Henderson Chamber of Commerce. I would like to personally thank all of those participating for taking time out of their busy schedules to meet with Members of Congress as well as members of the Administration for the Inaugural Henderson on the Hill.

HONORING THE LIFE OF TECHNICAL SERGEANT RYAN BALMER OF MISHAWAKA, INDIANA

HON. JOE DONNELLY

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 14, 2007

Mr. DONNELLY. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor the sacrifice of Technical Sergeant Ryan Balmer, native son of Mishawaka, Indiana, who died on June 5, 2007 while proudly serving his nation in Kirkuk, Iraq. Ryan risked everything in service to America, and for that we are eternally grateful.

Ryan was stationed at Hill Air Force base in Utah where he lived with his wife, Danielle and their two children Anthony and Gabby. His family, including his mother, Patricia Balmer, was anticipating his scheduled arrival home five days later when they were informed of his death. Danielle had made posters, buttons and banners to welcome Ryan home and had planned to line the road to their home with American flags. She also made a shirt for Gabby that read, "My daddy's finally home."

However, when Danielle saw the uniformed Air Force officers, including Ryan's saddened commanding officer, arrive at her work, she learned he was not coming home. Danielle said, "He died doing what he loved."

Shortly after graduation from Mishawaka High School, Ryan joined the Air Force where he became part of the Office of Special Investigations. His mission was to help identify, investigate and neutralize criminal, terrorist and espionage threats, one of the most dangerous assignments in today's Air Force. At the time of his death, he was serving as a liaison between Iraqi police and U.S. military officials in Kirkuk.

Ryan was killed when the vehicle in which he was riding, the first of a three vehicle convoy, was hit by an improvised explosive device. His commander, General Dana Simmons, called him a "warrior" who made the ultimate sacrifice in his brave performance of duty.

It is my somber duty to honor and remember Ryan and a life cut tragically short. I am saddened by the loss to his family, our com-

munity and our country. We were all blessed by his presence and diminished by his passing.

IN RECOGNITION OF DR. BARBARA CHRISTEN, DISTINGUISHED EDUCATOR AND FOUNDER OF "FUTURES AND OPTIONS"

HON. CAROLYN B. MALONEY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 14, 2007

Mrs. MALONEY of New York. Madam Speaker, I rise to pay tribute to Dr. Barbara L. Christen, an extraordinary leader and teacher. Her passionate commitment to excellence in education has inspired countless students and colleagues to realize their dreams. Dr. Christen's remarkable career is being celebrated this month at a reception hosted by Futures and Options, Inc., an outstanding program that provides New York City high schoolers worthwhile opportunities for paid, supervised internships in the business world.

Dr. Christen embarked upon her distinguished career by teaching English in New York City's public high schools. In 1970, she was named Assistant Principal for English at the High School of Art and Design on Manhattan's East Side. Five years later she became the founding Principal of the Murry Bergtraum High School for Business Careers in Lower Manhattan and launched its internationally acclaimed "magnet" program to prepare students for both college admission and entry into the workforce.

As the principal at Bergtraum over the course of a decade and a half, Dr. Christen oversaw the education of a student body of 3,000, one of the largest high schools in our Nation's biggest city. As the educational leader of the first American high school with a dual program preparing students both for college admission and for entry into the business world, Dr. Christen presided over Bergtraum's rapidly expanding application pool while managing a complex educational enterprise during New York City's dire fiscal crisis.

Working with the Downtown-Lower Manhattan Association, Dr. Christen became a pioneer in establishing public-private partnerships, thereby immeasurably benefitting the school she led as well as its students and teachers. She established a highly successful educational model, introduced an innovative business curriculum, initiated the first high school computer science business program, and secured internships for all Bergtraum students. Dr. Christen thus forged a unique learning experience for her students, one that melded a rigorous and stimulating academic curriculum with exciting opportunities to gain invaluable experience in the business world by working in Lower Manhattan's world-famous business and financial districts.

Following her retirement from New York City's public school system, Dr. Christen continued to put her flair for innovation and enterprise to work helping others achieve their full potential. As the Vice President for Workforce Development at the Alliance for Downtown New York, she created the Futures and Options, Inc. (FAO) paid internship program that was subsequently cited by the U.S. Department of Labor as a model project. Since then,