

HONORING THE MEMORY OF
JASON ANTHONY VAZQUEZ

HON. RAHM EMANUEL

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, November 19, 2008

Mr. EMANUEL. Madam Speaker, I rise today in honor of a constituent who gave his life in service to our country. Staff Sergeant Jason Anthony Vazquez, a member of the 2nd Battalion 122nd Field Artillery, died in support of Operation Enduring Freedom in Gerdia Seria, Afghanistan on September 17, 2008.

Jason was taken from us too soon, but although he was only 24 years old, he had a profound effect on members of his family, community, and workplace.

Jason was engaged to Genevieve Gonzalez, who remembers with joy the time they shared and the future they planned together. While her future will not be as she thought, she gains strength from the relationship they built and the values he imparted. To honor Jason, Genevieve has helped raise money to provide care packages and cards to the troops serving in Jason's unit.

As an officer with Cook County's Department of Corrections, Jason always left an impression with his optimism, energy and cheerfulness. To honor his memory, the Department has created the Jason A. Vazquez Leadership Award to be given to the most deserving Training Academy graduate each year.

Jason's many aunts, uncles and cousins gained strength from the joy he shared with each of them. His grandparents, Francisco and Leonor Vazquez, cherish the time Jason spent playing catch in the front yard as a young boy, helping with errands as he grew stronger, and sharing stories and wisdom as he grew into a man. His brother and sister, Jose Jr. and Janice, take comfort in the memory of his love of music, his passion for basketball, and his place in the center of any party or gathering. His parents, Jose and Lisa, take pride in the son who grew from a popular and fun-loving Schurz High School '02 classmate to the dedicated young man who wore the uniform of this country, and made the ultimate sacrifice for us.

Madam Speaker, I am honored to pay tribute to this young man, and I am humbled by his service and his sacrifice. I ask that we remember Jason and his family and friends in our thoughts and prayers, and that we honor him and the rest of the men and women who have given their lives in service to our country.

HONORING DEACON HENRY
WILFORD ELLIOTT, SR.

HON. BARBARA LEE

OF CALIFORNIA

Wednesday, November 19, 2008

Ms. LEE. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor the extraordinary life of Deacon Henry Wilford Elliott, Sr. A dedicated educator and family man, Henry tirelessly devoted his life to his community and used his many talents in the service of others. He passed away on November 3, 2008. Although we have said goodbye to our dear friend, his spirit will live on in our hearts through the love he shared with us.

Born on May 20, 1917, in Vian, Oklahoma, Henry was the child of Frank Van Elliott and

Beatrice Johnson Elliott. A small and loving family, the Elliots had only one other child, Henry's brother Othello, who preceded him in death.

After graduating from Manual Training High School, Henry went on to college attending the Tuskegee Institute and Langston University, respectively. While in college, Henry joined the Alpha Phi Alpha fraternity in 1935 and was a founding member of the Kappa Omicron Lambda chapter. He graduated from Langston in 1938 and went on to teach high school for several years in Wagoner and Tahlassee, Oklahoma.

Henry, known as Hank to his family and loved ones, served in the military for 21 years. By the time he retired he had earned the rank of captain. On January 11, 1943, Henry married the love of his life, Lydia Marie Pitts, in Porter, Oklahoma. This inspiring union would last almost 66 years, until Henry's passing.

During the first years of their marriage, Henry and Lydia traveled extensively, living overseas in Japan and Germany as well as several States throughout the United States while Henry completed his service in the military. Their first child, Henry, Jr., was born in 1952 in Alaska. Their second child, Terence Todd, was born in Okinawa, Japan, in 1957. The family eventually settled in Richmond, California, in 1963. In love with their new home State, Henry and Lydia remained in California from that point forward. They become true Californians and contributed to their local communities with an uncompromising level of compassion and selflessness.

Henry was a devoted educator and taught for many years in the Vallejo school district. He retired as a junior high school principal in 1978, served on the school board for 8 years, and was elected board president. Throughout this time and after his retirement, Henry was relentlessly devoted to his community of Vallejo, his church, and services and organizations committed to assisting those most in need and improving opportunities for people of color.

He served in numerous capacities and board positions, including the Vallejo Neighborhood Housing Association and the Adkins Project, of which he was a founding member. He served on the boards of Vallejo's Fighting Back Partnership and Meals on Wheels, and was a member of the Masonic Lodge Firma Chapter, the Omega Boys and Girls Club, the Pan Hellenic Council and the Solano County Juvenile Justice Board. Henry was also a past Patron of the Eastern Star, Princess Zorah Chapter #70 and a lifetime member of Veterans of Foreign Wars and the NAACP.

Henry's life spanned across the most influential, politically dynamic, and hard-fought social justice moments in our Nation's history. Henry Wilford Elliott, Sr., worked hard for everything in his life and did so with a calm and elegance often unmatched. The values that Henry developed early in his life—those of education, faith in God, and community service—would remain with him throughout the nine decades he witnessed. He was known as a hardworking and respected man who was cherished by all who knew him.

On a personal note, I have had the privilege to have known Henry since I was 2 years old. He is the godfather of my sister, Beverly, and has been a loving part of my extended family. As a young girl, I fondly remember babysitting for Henry and Lydia. They were skilled and

adoring parents and I often marveled at their unmistakable love for one another and their children. He was a very close friend of my family, and we will all miss him tremendously.

On behalf of California's Ninth Congressional District, I would like to extend my deepest condolences to the family and friends of Deacon Henry Elliott, Sr., especially to his wife, Lydia, his loving children, Henry, Jr. and Terence, his daughters-in-law Sabrina and Amanda, his granddaughters Hasana, Karinda, Nyeri and Imani, his sisters-in-law Vonja Johnson, Velma McCann and Laura McCann, and his brother in-law, Floyd Pitts, as well as a host of nieces, nephews, cousins, and others whom Henry dearly loved. Thank you for sharing this kind spirit with us. May his soul rest in peace.

HONORING TOM GOODWIN

HON. JIM COSTA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, November 19, 2008

Mr. COSTA. Madam Speaker, I rise today along with Congressman RADANOVICH, to congratulate Tom Goodwin upon his induction into the Fresno Athletic Hall of Fame. Mr. Goodwin will be honored at the 50th anniversary enshrinement dinner of the Fresno Athletic Hall of Fame on Thursday, November 6, 2008.

Tom Goodwin excelled at every level of baseball which was highlighted by 14 years in the major leagues. He was so fast that he turned groundballs hit to the left side into infield singles, which excited both teammates and fans, and frustrated opponents. After starting at Central High School in Fresno, California, he energized Bob Bennett's California State University, Fresno, teams for 3 seasons, topped by the 1989 campaign when he was named an All-American, the Big West Conference Player of the Year and the Bulldog's Male Athlete of the Year. A year earlier, Mr. Goodwin played in the College World Series and experienced Olympic glory as a center fielder on the gold-medal-winning U.S. team in Seoul. He left California State University, Fresno, as a two-time NCAA stolen-base champion. He was the Bulldog's career stolen-base leader with 164 and is among the school's Top 10 in many season, and career, offensive categories.

Drafted in the first round by the Los Angeles Dodgers, Mr. Goodwin reached the major leagues in just his second season and became a regular in 1995 with the Kansas City Royals; hitting .288, with 50 stolen bases. He would go on to steal 50 or more bases during 4 seasons, with a high of 66 during one season. He finished his career with a total of 360 stolen bases. His career batting average is .268, with 636 runs and 284 runs batted in. Mr. Goodwin's handling of the bat and commitment to winning is illustrated by twice leading the American League in sacrifice bunts. He played in 7 postseasons with the Texas Rangers, Chicago Cubs and reached the World Series in 2002 with the Giants.

Madam Speaker, we rise today to commend and congratulate Tom Goodwin upon his achievements and induction into the Fresno Athletic Hall of Fame. I invite my colleagues to join me in wishing Mr. Goodwin congratulations on his many accomplishments.