

TRIBUTE TO YOUNG STAFF MEMBERS FOR THEIR CONTRIBUTIONS ON BEHALF OF THE PEOPLE OF THE 18TH CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT OF TEXAS AND THE UNITED STATES

HON. SHEILA JACKSON LEE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 3, 2015

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, as Members of Congress we know well, perhaps better than most, how blessed our nation is to have in reserve such exceptional young men and women who will go on to become leaders in their local communities, states, and the nation in the areas of business, education, government, philanthropy, the arts and culture, and the military.

We know this because we see them and benefit from their contributions every day. Many of them work for us in our offices as junior staff members, congressional fellows, or interns and they do amazing work for and on behalf of the constituents we are privileged to represent.

Mr. Speaker, I believe there is no higher calling than the call to serve a cause larger than ourselves. That is why I ran for public office. I was inspired to serve by President Kennedy who said, "Ask not what your country can do for you, ask what you can do for your country," and by the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. who said: "Everybody can be great because anybody can serve. . . . You only need a heart full of grace. A soul generated by love."

By this measure, there are several other great young men and women who served as volunteers this year in my offices. They may toil in obscurity but their contributions to the constituents we serve are deeply appreciated. That is why today I rise to pay tribute to six extraordinary young persons for their service to my constituents in the 18th Congressional District of Texas and to the American people. They are: Erin Wallace from Texas Tech University; Tyler Ford from North Carolina State University; Brandon Jester from Georgia Southern University; Benjamin Warheit from University of California at Santa Barbara; Talha Jilani from Sidwell Friends School; and Asad Moten from Harvard University and the F. Edward Hébert School of Medicine at the Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences.

Mr. Speaker, the energy, intelligence, and idealism these wonderful young people brought to my office and those interning in the offices of my colleagues help keep our democracy vibrant. The insights, skills, and knowledge of the governmental process they gain from their experiences will last a lifetime and prove invaluable to them as they go about making their mark in this world.

Because of persons like them the future of our country is bright and its best days lie ahead. I wish them all well.

Mr. Speaker, I am grateful that such thoughtful committed young men and women can be found working in my office, those of my colleagues, and in every community in America. Their good works will keep America great, good, and forever young.

PROMOTING HEALTHY CHILDREN

HON. PETE OLSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 3, 2015

Mr. OLSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise to congratulate Harmony Science Academy in Katy, Texas for winning the It's Time Texas (ITT) Growing Healthy Schools campaign.

The Growing Healthy Schools campaign helps organize and fundraise for projects to improve health and wellness in the school's community. For their project, Harmony Science Academy chose to construct a new soccer field to encourage everybody to get outside and get moving. Of the 17 participating schools, Harmony Science was selected to receive \$10,000 to complete their project. What an incredible accomplishment for the entire school community.

On behalf of the Twenty-Second Congressional District of Texas, congratulations again to Harmony Science Academy for promoting healthy living. We're ready to get out on the field and play.

CONGRATULATING MISS ERICKA WHEELER ON HER SELECTION AS A RHODES SCHOLAR

HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 3, 2015

Mr. THOMPSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor an extraordinary young scholar, Miss Ericka Wheeler. Ericka is currently a senior at Millsap College majoring in English and History with plans to become a physician after watching her grandfather suffer from Alzheimer's disease.

Ericka wrote a thesis tracking how police brutality and race have been treated in fiction since the 1930s. She attended Greenwood High School for two years, followed by her junior and senior year at the Mississippi School of Math and Science in Columbus.

Her journeys so far have taken her from Mississippi to Cambodia and Cuba. Her next stop will be England, as a Rhodes Scholar. She is the first African-American woman from Mississippi to claim the prestigious honor and has been chosen as one of 32 U.S. men and women who will enter Oxford University next fall for postgraduate study. Ericka, who plans to attend medical school later, said she will study medical anthropology.

Millsap's President Robert Pearigen said Wheeler's devotion to Mississippi's Delta region is part of what makes her special. "She encountered some of the greatest poverty and starkest racial divisions found in the developed world," Pearigen said in a statement. "She is bound to the place by a sense of duty but is motivated to care for it by a love for its people."

Ericka said she was inspired to become a physician after watching her grandfather suffer from Alzheimer's disease. Since his death, she's worked with other Alzheimer's patients to record their life stories, producing documents for their families.

Wheeler credited the impetus for her application to history Professor Robert McElvaine.

As a student of McElvaine, Wheeler traveled to Vietnam and Cambodia after her freshman year and to Cuba after her sophomore year. "I remember him saying the chances weren't very great at all, but it would be a good process to go through," Wheeler said. "They didn't want to get my hopes up."

I urge Miss Wheeler to continue to break barriers and strive for academic excellence.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing Miss Ericka Wheeler for her dedication to serving others and scholastic achievement.

IN RECOGNITION OF THE CAREER AND CONTRIBUTIONS OF ISMAEL AHMED

HON. DEBBIE DINGELL

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 3, 2015

Mrs. DINGELL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Ismael Ahmed for his extraordinary career in service to our community. Ish, as he is known by friends, family and colleagues, has enriched the lives of so many in our region through his tireless, collaborative efforts for understanding and civil rights.

Born in 1947 in New York, Ish and his family moved to the Detroit area when he was six. After graduating from Dearborn's Fordson High School, he set off to explore the world, working as a deck hand on freighters. Eventually Ish returned to Dearborn, where he gained employment at the Ford Rouge plant and worked his way through college, first at Henry Ford Community College, then graduating from University of Michigan Dearborn. After his graduation, Ish became involved in his community, organizing workers and seeking justice in his community.

In 1971, along with a dedicated group of volunteers and activists, Ish co-founded ACCESS the Arab Community Center for Economic and Social Services in a storefront in Dearborn's south end, to help assist the Arab immigrant population as they adapted to life in the U.S. In 1983, he was appointed as Executive Director of ACCESS and worked diligently on its programming and growth. Today, ACCESS is the largest Arab American human services nonprofit in the country, serving nearly 900,000 people through more than 100 programs aimed at supporting economic, health, social, and educational needs. For this reason among others, Ish is recognized as a national Arab American and civil rights leader committed to ending hatred and bigotry and seeking justice for all Americans.

In 2007, Governor Jennifer Granholm appointed Ish as the director of the Michigan Department of Human Services, where he successfully led the state's second largest department for three years. As Department of Human Services' director, he served on the Michigan State Housing Development Authority board and the Early Childhood Investment Corporation executive committee. In 2011, Ish returned to the University of Michigan Dearborn and has served as the Senior Advisor to the Chancellor and Associate Provost for Metropolitan Impact. In this role, Ish has built bridges and made major positive impacts in our region.

Ish has also generously given his time and support to a wide array of Southeast Michigan