

HONORING CHICAGO ASTRONAUT  
JOAN HIGGINBOTHAM

**HON. RAHM EMANUEL**

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, December 7, 2006*

Mr. EMANUEL. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to honor Astronaut Joan Higginbotham. Higginbotham is a member of the crew on the Space Shuttle *Discovery* that is scheduled to launch tonight from NASA's Kennedy Space Center. Additionally, she is a fellow Chicagoan, and I wish her the best of luck as she prepares for her first mission, STS 116.

Higginbotham graduated from Chicago's Whitney Young High School in 1982, and Southern Illinois University at Carbondale in 1987. She will be the third African-American woman aboard a NASA mission, and she and her fellow astronaut Robert Curbeam will make history this week on STS 116, the first Space Shuttle mission with two African-American astronauts.

Higginbotham previously worked as a payload engineer at the John F. Kennedy Space Center while also earning two master's degrees from the Florida Institute of Technology.

As a mission specialist on board *Discovery*, Higginbotham's responsibilities will include a complete rewiring of the International Space Station's power supply. She will also have the responsibility of operating the robotic arm to deploy several satellites and to direct payload transfers.

Higginbotham will be joined by Mission Commander Mark Polansky, as well as Robert Curbeam Sunita Williams, Nicholas Patrick, William Oefelein, and Christer Fuglesang from the European Space Agency, who is the first Swedish astronaut.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing my fellow Chicagoan as well as her fellow astronauts, and to wish them all the best on their launch tonight and their 12-day mission.

HONORING MARILYN W. GROUNDS

**HON. RUSH D. HOLT**

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, December 7, 2006*

Mr. HOLT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Marilyn W. Grounds for over 10 years of extraordinary service on the board of the Planned Parenthood Association of the Mercer Area.

Ms. Grounds is best described as a "professional volunteer." Active in her children's schools and the community, she was at first focused in serving the arts community. It was the great fortune of the Planned Parenthood Association of the Mercer Area to have her join their board in 1995.

The Planned Parenthood Association of the Mercer Area provides comprehensive reproductive health care which contributes to both individual well being and community stability. These services are provided in settings which preserve and protect the essential privacy and rights of each individual. The organization ad-

vocates public policies which guarantee these rights and ensure the understanding of the individual and societal implications of human sexuality. The Planned Parenthood Association encourages research and the advancement of technology in reproductive health care and the understanding of inherent bioethical, behavioral, and societal implications. In addition, the agency employs trained educators who conduct extensive community outreach and educational programs, offering comprehensive, age-appropriate sex education and health programs to thousands of New Jersey residents every year. Everyone is welcome, regardless of race, age, income, sexual orientation, or disability. Fees are based on the ability to pay and no one is turned away.

First as board vice president in 1997, then as board chair, Ms. Grounds successfully led the PPAMA through several managerial transitions. She has had leadership roles on Development, Finance, Facilities, Personnel, and Public Affairs Committees. She was an incentive for the board to re-evaluate its own role in the organization. A modest, exceptionally organized woman, Ms. Grounds excels at "the big picture," keeping the board cohesive and efficient, while recruiting extraordinary leaders.

Ms. Grounds is a phenomenal fundraiser. Through both Annual and Capital Campaigns, she has made possible the improvement of services offered to clients, and during her tenure the number of patients treated has significantly increased. This is no small task. The annual budget of the PPAMA is about \$2.8 million, making possible the service of about 15,000 clients per year.

Ms. Grounds has been an editor, writer, fundraiser extraordinaire, and tireless worker for the Planned Parenthood Association of the Mercer Area. She leaves a legacy of fund raising skill, governance expertise, and strong board leadership that benefits not only the organization, but also the individual, community, and State.

Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the entire 12th district of New Jersey, I ask you and my colleagues to join me in thanking Marilyn W. Grounds for her service on the board of the Planned Parenthood Association of the Mercer Area.

POLISH AMERICAN MONTH

**HON. RAHM EMANUEL**

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, December 7, 2006*

Mr. EMANUEL. Mr. Speaker, this month I proudly join the thousands of Polish-Americans living in Chicago in a national celebration of Polish history, culture, and pride during Polish American Heritage Month.

Celebrated in October, Polish American Heritage Month includes General Pulaski Memorial Day, which honors the American Revolutionary War patriot Casimir Pulaski. In 1777, General Pulaski attended his first meeting with Benjamin Franklin, to champion the freedom of the American people. This early partnership has been mirrored by the present-day alliance between Poland and the United States.

Polish-Americans have made strong contributions to American culture in virtually every

field, including literature, technology, and music. My hometown of Chicago has more people of Polish descent than any other city outside of Poland. I am dedicated to continuing the strong record of cultural and economic ties between our two nations.

The United States is grateful to Poland for its friendship and commitment to the democratic ideals of liberty and human rights. Poland has also proven to be a strong ally of the United States, assisting in global efforts to combat terrorism, and providing troops and resources for Operation Iraqi Freedom.

Mr. Speaker, I am honored to join the citizens of my district, as well as those of Polish descent around the country in recognizing, remembering, and celebrating Polish American Month.

REMEMBERING SYDNEY TALLY

**HON. TOM DAVIS**

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, December 7, 2006*

Mr. TOM DAVIS of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in remembrance of Sydney Tally for her tireless commitment to better the lives of active duty servicemembers, retirees, veterans, and above all their families through a distinguished career with the National Military Family Association.

Widely known and beloved in military circles, this Air Force daughter and Navy spouse trained as a nurse and pursued her specialty in public health nursing before becoming a full time mother and volunteer after the birth of her first child. Among many service endeavors, she freely devoted her time serving as teaching assistant, Brownie and Girl Scout leader, Red Cross pediatric nurse, and president of four naval officers' wives clubs.

In 1983, she joined the NMFA government relations staff and served as vice president of the department from 1987 to 1990 before rising to the position of first paid professional staff member and director. She also sat on the NMFA's board of governors until her recent passing. Mrs. Tally used her leverage through this organization to benefit military families everywhere. Her focus on the military family drove her in creating the Military Coalition. Women, infants, and children found nourishment after her advocacy secured legislation for an overseas nutrition program targeted specifically for military families.

Mrs. Tally received numerous awards and recognitions for her altruistic work, including the Military Coalition's Award of Merit, a Certificate of Appreciation from the Defense Commissary Agency, 1993 Defense Transition Services Award from the University of Central Florida, and recognition of her outstanding citizenship by the Military Chaplains Association.

Mr. Speaker, in closing, I would like to thank Mrs. Tally for her life's work and continuing legacy that brought forth significant awareness of the needs of military families. I call upon my colleagues to join me in recognizing her accomplishments, and in sharing our condolences with her family and friends.