

worthy of his unflinching optimism—let us work together a little harder, get along a little better, and spend the few precious moments we are allotted bringing all Americans freedom to live a healthy life.

Happy birthday, my friend, and God bless you.

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HONORING ANN LAM WONG AND SHARON DRAVVORN, RECIPIENTS OF THE MILKEN NATIONAL EDUCATOR AWARDS

**HON. GERALD E. CONNOLLY**

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, February 22, 2010*

Mr. CONNOLLY of Virginia. Madam Speaker, I rise to recognize Ann Lam Wong and Sharon Dravvorn, recipients of 2009 Milken Family Foundation National Educator Awards. The Milken Foundation honors teachers, principals, and specialists throughout America with \$25,000 individual awards. Criteria for individual awards include exceptional education talent based on student results in the classroom, educational accomplishments outside of the classroom, and professional leadership. All of the recipients of the awards will attend the Milken Educator Forum in Los Angeles, Calif., in May.

Ann Lam Wong is a biology teacher at West Springfield High School in Springfield, VA. She teaches several sections of biology, and 100 percent of her students passed the Virginia Standards of Learning tests in biology with 68 percent passing at an advanced level. Wong also teaches AP biology, where 75 percent of her students passed the AP examination with a score of 3 or higher.

In addition to teaching biology, Wong mentors students who are having a hard time transitioning to high school. She started an AP summer academy, which increased AP enrollment requests at West Springfield High School by 27 percent. Wong also is the advisor for her students' Asian American Student Association.

Sharon Dravvorn teaches 9th and 10th grade mathematics at Woodbridge High School in Woodbridge, VA. Dravvorn incorporates a broad range of tools in her classroom, including the use of classical music, logic games, and visual aids. She focuses on teaching students that failed their 8th grade Standards of Learning exams. Ninety-five percent of those students who have received additional instruction from Dravvorn went on to pass their exams.

Along with teaching mathematics, Dravvorn is a role model for other teachers in the area. She mentors fellow teachers, leads a book club for teachers, and teaches training courses for her peers.

Madam Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring Ann Lam Wong and Sharon Dravvorn as examples of outstanding educators through their exceptional work in and outside of the classroom. They are role models for both their students and other teachers.

170TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE AVENUE L MISSIONARY BAPTIST CHURCH IN GALVESTON, TEXAS

**HON. RON PAUL**

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, February 22, 2010*

Mr. PAUL. Madam Speaker, February 28th marks the 170th anniversary of the Avenue L Missionary Baptist Church in Galveston, Texas. The Avenue L Missionary Baptist Church will commemorate this anniversary with a series of events through this month, including a grand parade and old fashioned picnic on February 20th.

One of the oldest black churches in Texas, Avenue L Baptist is the mother church of African-American worship in the entire state of Texas. Texas Avenue L Baptist began as the Colored Baptist Church, a congregation organized by Reverend James Hutchinson to serve Galveston's slave population. In 1855, First Baptist trustees Gail Borden, Jr., John S. Sydnor, and Reverend Huckins purchased land from the Galveston City Company for use by the congregation of Colored Baptist's successor, the African Baptist Church. After the Civil War, the property was formally deeded to the African Baptist Church, who where reorganized under Reverend Israel S. Campbell as the First Regular Missionary Baptist Church in 1867. The church adopted the name Avenue L Missionary Baptist in 1903.

In 1916, construction of the present brick church building commenced. Many fund-raising activities where undertaken by the people of Galveston to raise the funds for the church. The new structure included art glass windowpanes, a furnace to supply steam heat, and a baptizing pool. A pipe organ was installed in 1921. Reverend H.M. Williams spoke for all of his congregants when he said "Our Church is a most beautiful one." Today, almost ninety years later, Avenue L Missionary Baptist remains a most beautiful church.

In 1973 work began on renovations, including the additions of air-conditioning, and central heating. In 1977, the Church's stained glass windows where refurbished and covered with a protective shield. Reverend R.E. McKeen, who served as pastor of Avenue L Missionary Baptist, during the renovation also began broadcasting sermons on local radio.

Among the prominent pastors who have served at Avenue L Missionary Baptist Church are Reverend H.M. Williams, who served as moderator of the Lincoln District Baptist Association and led the rebuilding of the church after the hurricane of 1900 and the Reverend G.L. Price who served as President of the National Baptist Convention of American and the Mary Allen College. Reverend Andrew Walker Berry, who served as Pastor from 1985 to 1990 was a noted composer and prolific writer of prospectuses and pamphlets. Reverend Berry also has over 100 gospel songs published through his company "Musico."

The Avenue L Missionary Baptists Church remains a pillar of the Galveston Community. Every Sunday hundreds gather in the church for services. In addition, Avenue L Missionary serves the Galveston community with a variety of missionaries including the Young Adult

Christian League, the Logos Bible Class, Midweek prayer and Bible study, the General Mission, Jr. Melodic Messengers, and the Young Adult Ushers. I am pleased to congratulate the Avenue L Missionary Baptist on its 140th anniversary, and wish for its continued success in serving the people of Galveston.

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HONORING THE LUNAR NEW YEAR—THE YEAR OF THE TIGER

**HON. DANNY K. DAVIS**

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, February 22, 2010*

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Madam Speaker, I rise today to join with the millions of Asian-Americans who are celebrating the Lunar New Year and welcoming year 4708, the Year of the Tiger. The origin of Lunar New Year is centuries old and is the most important celebration in the Lunar Calendar. It is also recognized as the Spring Festival. The celebrations traditionally last for 15 days and provide an opportunity to give thanks for one's blessings, celebrate family, resolve arguments, and prepare the community to embark on a new year with hope and charity.

In Chicago, the Lunar New Year was celebrated on February 14, 2010 with the 27th annual Chinese Lunar New Year celebration in Chicago's Chinatown, which I am proud to say resides in my Congressional District. Approximately 40,000 Chicagoans enjoy a Chinese heritage. Restaurants celebrated the holiday by serving special dishes, and thousands of people attend multiple events to commemorate and cherish the traditions of the New Year.

Every year, thousands of Asian-Americans will gather with their families and friends to enjoy the New Year festivities and the company of loved ones. The New Year offers a time for sweeping away misfortune and welcoming the New Year with hopes of prosperity and good luck. We should all take advantage of the opportunity to explore and share in this treasured tradition with family and friends. Embracing this tradition honors the richness of our diversity as Americans.

I congratulate the Asian-American community for their successes and thank them for their contributions to our country this past year. And I wish you all a very happy, healthy, and prosperous New Year. I wish all a Gong Hay Fat Choy.

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RECOGNIZING THE 2010 CHINESE LUNAR NEW YEAR CELEBRATION SPONSORED BY THE ASIAN COMMUNITY SERVICE CENTER IN VIRGINIA

**HON. GERALD E. CONNOLLY**

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, February 22, 2010*

Mr. CONNOLLY of Virginia. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize the celebration of Chinese New Year. This year marks the 4,708th year in the Chinese Lunar calendar.