

run in cooperation with the University of Alabama at Birmingham, invites students with visual impairments to submit artwork for our annual Christmas card. The breadth of the creativity is inspiring and Donna has always worked to encourage an excellent level of participation by students and their schools.

Donna's concern for young people has extended beyond work to her civic and volunteer activities. She has provided service as President of the Alabama PTA Board of Directors, a National PTA Board Director, a member of the Mayor's Education Committee, past president of the Vestavia Hills City School Foundation, and member of the A+ Foundation Board. Donna's many other community contributions include her service on the Board of the American Village Citizenship Trust, VIP for United Cerebral Palsy, and her involvement with Leadership Vestavia Hills and Leadership Alabama.

Donna would be the first to say that she has been blessed with a supportive and loving family which includes her husband of 46 years, George, three grown children, and five grandchildren with a sixth soon on the way.

For her service to the residents of the Sixth District and especially the young people who will be the future leaders in our communities, Donna Williams is well-deserving of this recognition and I extend my heartfelt gratitude to her for her loyalty and friendship.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. ALLYSON Y. SCHWARTZ

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 12, 2013

Ms. SCHWARTZ. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall No. 630, I was unable to be present for H.R. 3521. Had I been present, I would have voted "yes".

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. RICHARD B. NUGENT

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 12, 2013

Mr. NUGENT. Mr. Speaker, due to inclement weather on December 10th, my flight was cancelled and I was unable to vote on H.R. 3521 Dept. of VA Major Medical Facility Lease and H.R. 1402 VA Expiring Authorities Extension. Had I been able to be present, I would have voted for both pieces of legislation. I applaud the passage of these resolutions which will positively benefit our nation's veterans.

TRIBUTE TO JAMES "SHACK" HARRIS, A BARRIER-BREAKING PIONEER IN THE NATIONAL FOOTBALL LEAGUE

HON. CEDRIC L. RICHMOND

OF LOUISIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 12, 2013

Mr. RICHMOND. Mr. Speaker, I rise today along with my fellow colleagues Rep. JIM CLY-

BURN (SC-06), Rep. KAREN BASS (CA-37), Rep. CORRIE BROWN (FL-05), Rep. JOHN CONYERS (MI-13), Rep. ELIJAH CUMMINGS (MD-07), Rep. CHRIS COLLINS (NY-27), Rep. SUSAN DAVIS (CA-53), Rep. BRIAN HIGGINS (NY-26), Rep. JOHN LEWIS (GA-05), Rep. VANCE McALLISTER (LA-05), Rep. GARY PETERS (MI-14), and Rep. JON RUNYAN (NJ-03) to pay tribute to James "Shack" Harris, in this year marking the fiftieth anniversary of the March on Washington. Like such pioneers as Paul Robeson, Joe Louis, and Jackie Robinson, James Harris applied his brilliant talent and steadfast determination as an athlete to advance the cause of racial equality in America.

James Harris was born and raised in Monroe, Louisiana, during some of the harshest years of segregation when a policy of "massive resistance" against court rulings and federal laws denied equal rights for Black citizens. Racial inequality pervaded football fields as much as buses, hotels and lunch counters in the South.

But the Reverend Nashall Harris, James' father, gave his son an appropriate nickname: "Shack," after the Old Testament's Meshach, one of the three ancient Jews who refused the orders of a Babylonian tyrant to bow down and worship his golden idol. Like his namesake, James Harris would not submit to an unjust system.

From his early teens, he aspired to play quarterback in the National Football League—a position that no African American had ever been allowed to play for more than a handful of snaps. In setting this goal, Harris challenged bigotry, stereotypes and the status quo. At the time, it was taken as fact in both college and pro football that Black athletes did not possess the necessary intelligence, leadership, and character to play quarterback. Shack shattered the vile myth.

Inspired by the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s "I Have A Dream" speech, Harris persisted in pursuing his own dream. After a record-setting career at Carroll High School in Monroe, he went to Grambling State University and was coached by the legendary Eddie Robinson. Coach Robinson shared James Harris's goal of breaking the color barrier at quarterback in the NFL. And Robinson had recruited him for that very reason.

James Harris had an illustrious career at Grambling. He led the Tigers to three conference titles, set numerous passing records, was selected MVP of the 1967 Orange Blossom Classic, and was chosen the nation's outstanding player in 1968 by the Washington Pigs Club. Despite these achievements, he was not invited to any post-season all-star games and he was not selected in the NFL draft until the eighth round.

James Harris did not give up. He would not be forced into changing positions to receiver or defensive back, as had so many promising African Americans before him. He was determined to play quarterback. Every night during training camp as a rookie, he called Eddie Robinson for advice and moral support.

He ultimately won the starting job, and opened the 1969 NFL season as the Buffalo Bills' starting quarterback. It was the first of many "firsts" in his career. During three pivotal years with the Los Angeles Rams in the

mid-1970s, James Harris led the team twice to the NFC title game, led the conference twice in passing efficiency, was chosen MVP of the Pro Bowl, and was voted captain by his teammates.

From 1969 through 1977, Harris was virtually the only African American quarterback to be a starter. He endured hate mail and death threats. He also bore the hopes of an entire people. As Eddie Robinson had once told him: "You have to make it. Otherwise, people will say you sent us your best and he wasn't good enough."

By being much more than good enough, James Harris opened the door of opportunity for African American quarterbacks to follow, from Doug Williams and Warren Moon to Russell Wilson and Robert Griffin III.

But Harris' legacy did not end when he walked off the playing field. He went on to become a prominent NFL executive for the New York Jets, Baltimore Ravens, Jacksonville Jaguars, and currently the Detroit Lions. As such, Harris has helped to pave the way for other African American coaches and general managers whose success demonstrates the power and promise of diversity and inclusion.

So it is an honor to recognize and applaud the accomplishments of James Harris. Dr. King once called himself a "drum major for freedom." We might call James Harris, the barrier-breaking quarterback, a field general for racial equality.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. BARBARA LEE

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 12, 2013

Ms. LEE of California. Mr. Speaker, I was not present for rollcall votes 630-636. Had I been present, I would have voted "yes" on rollcall 630, "yes" on rollcall 631, "no" on rollcall 632, "yes" on rollcall 633, "yes" on rollcall 634, "yes" on rollcall 635, and "yes" on rollcall 636.

RECOGNIZING SCOTT NISHIOKI

HON. JIM COSTA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 12, 2013

Mr. COSTA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Scott Nishioki, who has served as a valued member of my staff for the past nine years. Scott joined my staff during the beginning of my first term in Congress, and he has made a real difference. This month, Scott will be leaving my staff to find other ways to serve our nation beyond the walls of Congress. Scott's years of service to the people of Central California, spanning from Kern County to Merced County, deserve to be commended.

A Sanger native, Scott grew up in the heart of the San Joaquin Valley and graduated from Sanger High School before becoming a Bulldog at California State University, Fresno. He earned his Bachelor's degree in 1976, and shortly thereafter began to pursue a career in