

BETH HASSETT, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, WEAVE—ED STOUT MEMORIAL AWARD FOR OUTSTANDING VICTIM ADVOCACY

**HON. TED POE**

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, April 20, 2016*

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, the bipartisan Congressional Victims' Rights Caucus (VRC) advocates for the silent voices of crime victims. During its 10 year existence, the VRC has taken the lead in protecting programs that provide critical support for victim services throughout the nation, including the Victims of Crime Act (VOCA), Violence Against Women Act (VAWA), and the Trafficking Victims Protection Reauthorization Act (TVPPA). Each year the members of the caucus join together to honor outstanding individuals who have given their time and service to helping victims. This year marks the 10th anniversary of the Caucus.

On behalf of Congressman COSTA (CA) and myself, we are honored to present Sacramento resident Beth Hassett with the Ed Stout Memorial Award. Nominated by Congresswoman DORIS MATSUI of the 6th Congressional District of California, Beth is incredibly deserving of this award. The award honors the memory of Ed Stout, the Director of Aid for Victims of Crime of St. Louis, MO, one of the nation's three oldest victim assistance organizations—who died in 2005 following a 30 plus year career of inspiring crime victims and those who serve them. The honoree is a professional or volunteer whose efforts directly benefit victims and survivors of crime.

Beth has been an outspoken and effective champion for women and children in Sacramento through her leadership as the Executive Director at WEAVE. Beth leads a team of advocates who share a common goal of creating a community that does not tolerate domestic violence and sexual assault and offers victims the support they need to be safe and thrive. Established in 1978, WEAVE is Sacramento's oldest and most comprehensive domestic violence agency and sole Rape Crisis Center. The agency provides in-person and telephone support to more than 12,000 survivors each year.

For 23 years, Beth has worked tirelessly to improve the quality of life in the Sacramento Region. Beth has been an active volunteer in our community, received several community leadership awards, and served as the Governor's appointee to the statewide Domestic Violence Advisory Committee from 2010 through 2015. She has made it her mission to educate our community and spread the word about violence prevention and intervention. Her leadership on behalf of survivors has made such a difference in Sacramento. She could not be more deserving of the Ed Stout Memorial Award for Outstanding Victim Advocacy.

And that is just the way it is.

HONORING THE THOMPSON-CLEMONS POST NUMBER 200

**HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON**

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, April 20, 2016*

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor The Thompson-Clemons Post Number 200 of Greenwood, Mississippi.

The Thompson-Clemons Post Number 200 of Greenwood, Mississippi was the first African American Post established in the State of Mississippi and came about due to the perseverance of eighteen determined Black Veterans of World War I and World War II in the Mississippi Delta.

These veterans attempted to join Keeler-Hamrick-Gillespie Post Number 29 which refused them membership. Given that this was the 1940s and Mississippi being a segregationist state, Post Number 29 could not get a majority vote of its members to allow black veterans to join their post.

The eighteen black veterans filed a petition to start a new post and presented it to the Mississippi Department of the American Legion. Mr. Solomon N. Dickerson, a black veteran, postal worker and co-worker of Mr. Author H. Ritcher, the Adjutant of Post Number 29, worked to get the petition through the District. It was due to their vigorous and persistent correspondence to the District and the Mississippi Department of the American Legion that they were allowed to form a separate post if they could find a sponsor.

Keesler-Hamrick-Gillespie Post Number 29 agreed to serve as a sponsor to assist Thompson-Clemons Post Number 200 in getting the temporary charter, paving the way for other charters to be granted to other black veteran's groups throughout the state of Mississippi.

Originally, the post was called the Mississippi Delta Post Number 200. Mr. L.H. Threadgill, principal of Stone Street High School, a veteran of World War II, proposed that the post be named after two former students of Stone Street High School, that were killed in action during WWII. The motion carried and the name was adopted. Thompson-Clemons Post Number 200 was granted a permanent charter on July 28, 1949, becoming the first Black post in the State of Mississippi. The first Post Commander was Mr. Solomon N. Dickerson.

Mr. L.H. Threadgill and others in the community were instrumental in purchasing the property, obtaining a deed, and getting a building to establish a post headquarters where it is still located today.

The Thompson-Clemons Post Number 200 of Greenwood, Mississippi has a distinct track record of encouragement to veterans with issues, be they be from serving abroad; in combat situations or statewide service. Issues range from transportation to Regional Office and VA Hospital for medical disability claims, educational and skill training, housing and other activities including establishing collaborative partnerships with community organizations to provide emergency services such as utilities, homes for the homeless, counseling and assistance in understanding the myriad of services provided by the VA.

The VA community activities include sponsorship of little league baseball teams, voter

education classes, veterans day celebration, adopt a school program, donations to needy families, Boys State Program and the National American Legion Oratorical Contest, where candidates sponsored by Post Number 200, have won the Mississippi State Championship four times, and three out of the past four years.

Leadership activities include a weekly live call in radio talk program aired on WGNL 104.3 FM in Greenwood, Mississippi where veterans can actually dial up and talk about issues that affect them and their community. Partnering with organizations such as the National Association of the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), Greenwood Voters League, Mississippi Valley State University and other community based groups that advocate for social justice.

Thompson-Clemons Post Number 200 is well integrated into the fabric and culture of the Mississippi Delta and should be recognized as a Post that has the interest of our service men, their families and community at heart.

The American Legion Post Number 200 is moving forward to continue the legacy of those early veterans who honorably served their country and had the vision that through the American Legion and its core principles, they could continue to protect and build an America and Mississippi.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing a remarkable organization, The Thompson-Clemons Post Number 200, for its dedication to serving our veterans and giving back to the African American community.

IN SPECIAL RECOGNITION OF THOMAS KOIZUMI ON HIS OFFER OF APPOINTMENT TO THE UNITED STATES MILITARY ACADEMY

**HON. ROBERT E. LATTA**

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, April 20, 2016*

Mr. LATTA. Mr. Speaker, it is my great pleasure to pay special tribute to an outstanding student from Ohio's Fifth Congressional District. I am pleased to announce that Thomas Koizumi of Findlay, Ohio has been offered an appointment to the United States Military Academy in West Point, New York.

Thomas' offer of appointment poises him to attend the United States Military Academy this fall with the incoming Class of 2020. Attending one of our nation's military academies not only offers the opportunity to serve our country but also guarantees a world-class education, while undertaking one of the most challenging and rewarding experiences of their lives.

Thomas brings an enormous amount of leadership, service, and dedication to the incoming Class of 2020. While attending Liberty-Benton High School in Findlay, Ohio, Thomas earned top student of class awards, was a member of the National Honor Society, and was ranked first in his class.

Throughout high school, Thomas was a member of his school's cross country team, serving as its captain and earning his varsity letter. Thomas was also active and excelled in gymnastics and Kendo. I am confident that Thomas will carry the lessons of his student

and athletic leadership to the Military Academy.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating Thomas Koizumi on the offer of his appointment to the United States Military Academy. Our service academies offer the finest military training and education available. I am positive that Thomas will excel during his career at the Military Academy, and I ask my colleagues to join me in extending their best wishes to him as he begins his service to our Nation.

#### TRIBUTE TO ALEX THOMSEN

### HON. DAVID YOUNG

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, April 20, 2016*

Mr. YOUNG of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate Alex Thomsen of Underwood High School for winning the Class 1A, 126-pound bracket at the Iowa High School Athletic Association State Wrestling tournament on February 20, 2016.

Iowa has a long and proud history of strong wrestling programs, producing college and Olympic champions for years. Winning two state championships back to back is the culmination of years of hard work and commitment, not only on the part of Mr. Thomsen, but also his parents, his family and coaches.

Mr. Speaker, the example set by Alex demonstrates the rewards of hard work, dedication, and perseverance. I am honored to represent him and his family in the United States Congress. I ask that all of my colleagues in the United States House of Representatives join me in congratulating Alex on competing in this rigorous competition and wishing him continued success in his education and high school wrestling career.

#### CRIMINAL JUSTICE AND PRE-LAW PROGRAMS AT CARL WUNSCHER SR. HIGH SCHOOL

### HON. TED POE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, April 20, 2016*

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, on February 22, 2016, the Criminal Justice and Pre-Law Programs at Carl Wunsch Sr. High School, a Career Academy operating within my district, were selected for Advance Career Technical Education's (CTE) 2016 Excellence in Action Award in the Law Career Cluster. The following day, Harris County Sheriff Ron Hickman visited the campus Law Enforcement Explorers meeting to evaluate the programs and congratulate and encourage the students. Exemplary programs such as these cannot go unnoticed; Advance CTE understands this, which is why they honor and award programs who meet their high standards.

Advance CTE's Excellence in Action Award recognizes programs who "show a true progression from secondary to postsecondary education, provide meaningful work-based learning opportunities, and have a substantial and evidence-based impact on student achievement and success." Each program chosen for recognition is honored in an award

ceremony, in an active blog series, in a monthly Congressional newsletter, and in the 2015 Celebrating Innovations in Career Technical Education ceremony at the White House. Carl Wunsch Sr. High School's Criminal Justice and Pre-Law programs are deserving of all of these honors, but the programs wouldn't be where they are without the instructors who cultivated them.

Great programs reflect the experience and leadership of the instructors who run them. This could not be truer for Curtis Doss who heads up the Criminal Justice program and Mary Scherzer who directs the Pre-Law program. Mr. Doss has over 25 years of law enforcement experience serving in a myriad of roles. His career stretches as a U.S. Marshall, 8 years as a member of SWAT, as a member of the honor guard, as OIC of the national fugitive recovery unit, and as an undercover agent.

Instructors and programs like this develop our young men and women into competent, experienced graduates ready for their careers. Our criminal justice system is well served to have graduates of Carl Wunsch Sr. High operating within its ranks. It makes me proud to represent students and instructors who conduct themselves with such distinction.

And that is just the way it is.

#### IN SPECIAL RECOGNITION OF JAMES RENEAU, JR. ON HIS OFFER OF APPOINTMENT TO THE UNITED STATES NAVAL ACADEMY

### HON. ROBERT E. LATTA

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, April 20, 2016*

Mr. LATTA. Mr. Speaker, it is my great pleasure to pay special tribute to an outstanding student from Ohio's Fifth Congressional District. I am pleased to announce that James Reneau, Jr. of Findlay, Ohio has been offered an appointment to the United States Naval Academy in Annapolis, Maryland.

James' offer of appointment poises him to attend the United States Naval Academy this fall with the incoming Class of 2020. Attending one of our nation's military academies not only offers the opportunity to serve our country but also guarantees a world-class education, while undertaking one of the most challenging and rewarding experiences of their lives.

James brings an enormous amount of leadership, service, and dedication to the incoming Class of 2020. While attending Findlay High School in Findlay, Ohio, James was a member of the National Honor Society, the Distinguished Honor Roll and a Scholar Athlete.

Throughout high school, James was a member of his school's football and track teams, serving as his teams' captain. He also volunteered with community youth sports teams and Special Olympics. I am confident that James will carry the lessons of his student and athletic leadership to the Naval Academy.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating James Reneau, Jr. on the offer of his appointment to the United States Naval Academy. Our service academies offer the finest military training and education available. I am positive that James will excel during his career at the Naval Academy, and I ask

my colleagues to join me in extending their best wishes to him as he begins his service to our Nation.

#### THE VIRGINIA WOMEN'S INSTITUTE FOR LEADERSHIP (VWIL) AT MARY BALDWIN COLLEGE

### HON. BOB GOODLATTE

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, April 20, 2016*

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Speaker, the Sixth Congressional District of Virginia is home to a number of first-rate educational institutions. The Virginia Women's Institute for Leadership (VWIL) at Mary Baldwin College in Staunton, Va., is no exception. In addition to rigorous academic standards and leadership training, VWIL is the only all-female corps of cadets in the nation.

VWIL has been developing women leaders for 20 years through its elite program. Opened in 1995, VWIL is a public-private partnership with the Commonwealth of Virginia and Mary Baldwin College. This four-year program integrates academics, fitness, leadership development, ethics, and military training. Following graduation, VWIL cadets have the opportunity to receive a commission into any branch of the United States military.

The mission of VWIL over the past 20 years has been to prepare and develop women to become active and engaged leaders in the military, public service, and private sector. This is a mission they have lived up to today. VWIL demands that cadets achieve their highest level of performance, and that is seen clearly in the caliber of graduates produced by the program. To date, 382 women have graduated from the VWIL program. This community of alumnae has gone on to seek higher education as well as careers in a variety of fields, including government and management. Additionally, 130 graduates have been commissioned into military service. A VWIL alumna also made the ultimate sacrifice for our country. USAF 1Lt Sarah K. Small, a member of VWIL's Class of 2002, was killed in the line of duty in 2005 and is interred at Arlington National Cemetery.

On Friday, April 22, VWIL will hold a 20th Anniversary Parade and Awards Ceremony to commemorate the history and achievements of the Institute, honor the program's alumnae, and celebrate the future. I congratulate Brigadier General Teresa Djuric (USAF, Ret.), Commandant of Cadets, as well as faculty and staff, current cadets, and alumnae on this milestone. I wish VWIL many more years of success in developing future leaders.

#### IN RECOGNITION OF PATRICK J. SOLANO, RECIPIENT OF THE PENNSYLVANIA SOCIETY DISTINGUISHED CITIZEN OF THE COMMONWEALTH AWARD

### HON. MATT CARTWRIGHT

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, April 20, 2016*

Mr. CARTWRIGHT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Patrick J. Solano, who will receive the Distinguished Citizen of the Commonwealth Award on April 22, 2016 during the