

Glen High School, Maria received her Bachelor's Degree in Public Administration, with an emphasis in Criminal Justice, from National University in San Diego, California.

Maria met her future husband, Mr. Roman Benitez, while attending National University. They married soon after her graduation. At the time, Roman was an officer in the United States Navy. Because of his military service, they have been able to live in a variety of places including San Diego, Monterrey, and Japan.

Mrs. Benitez and her husband moved to Lemoore, California in 2007 with both taking positions at Lemoore Naval Air Station. Maria was hired as a Human Resource Assistant, eventually becoming a Work and Family Life Consultant. In this role, she aided military families through transitions, career searches, professional development, and financial counseling. Mrs. Benitez is also a small business owner, running an esthetician business in Hanford, California.

Maria became a member of my Congressional Team this year, serving as Staff Assistant in my Hanford, California Office. She quickly proved herself to be an invaluable asset, overseeing the daily operations of my district office. This included the production of tens of thousands of congressional certificates and management of the internship program. Maria also presented awards on my behalf at events in Kings County, representing the team's values with poise and professionalism. She was known for her ability to provide the highest level of service to my constituents, aiding hundreds of people with their various concerns.

Maria was also instrumental in the planning and implementation of the 21st Congressional District's 2018 Military Academy Nominations. With responsibilities ranging from informational events to potential nominee interviews, Maria proved herself to be a strong communicator to high school students and educators. She generated high interest throughout the community and aided multiple students with nominations to the academies. Her effectiveness in constituent service combined with her powerful ability to connect with people made Maria an invaluable member of my team and a true public servant to the people of California's Central Valley.

Outside work, Maria enjoys spending quality time with her husband. They remain active in local community organizations and are known as active volunteers. They also enjoy traveling. Their favorite trips are visits with their two beloved children, Alexandra and Roman Jr.

This January, Mrs. Benitez will be moving onto new ventures. Knowing Maria, her character and work ethic, I have no doubt she will continue to achieve many great things. Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues in the United States House of Representatives to join me in commending Maria Lourdes Benitez for her public service to the people of the Central Valley and wishing her the very best in this next chapter of her life.

TRIBUTE TO THE LIFE OF DUANE
CHAPMAN

HON. MARK DeSAULNIER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 20, 2018

Mr. DeSAULNIER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commemorate the life of Duane Chapman, a longtime resident of Richmond, CA. Duane was a dedicated volunteer for the Richmond Police Department and a passionate advocate for youth, the LGBTQ+ community, and our homeless population.

Duane began his career of service as a nurse and homeless outreach specialist for Contra Costa County. It was in this role that he formed a deep partnership with the Richmond Police Department and decided to volunteer his time working on crime prevention and raising community awareness of the realities of police work.

Duane demonstrated his passion for serving others through his leadership and participation in important community boards and programs. He served as Chair of both the Human Relations Commission and the Contra Costa County Mental Health Commission. Duane also participated in the Road to the Future Foster Care Youth Conference and the Richmond Police Activities League Scholarship Program.

In addition, Duane was a tireless advocate for the LGBTQ+ community. In 2014, he co-founded the Richmond Rainbow Pride, an organization that encouraged its members to advocate for the interest of their community and to promote their visibility in Richmond.

With his passing, Duane leaves behind a legacy as an ally for marginalized communities.

TRIBUTE TO GARY FRIEDMAN

HON. KEVIN McCARTHY

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 20, 2018

Mr. McCARTHY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of Judge Gary T. Friedman. Judge Friedman retired this year following 35 years of judicial excellence on the Kern County Superior Court.

Born and raised in Bakersfield, California, Judge Friedman's future in law was foreshadowed by his keen interest in watching his father, an oilman, negotiate with attorneys for the family business. He found the idea of helping people to resolve disputes compelling, and committed himself to his studies at Garces Memorial High School and later Bakersfield College while concurrently working for both his father's oil company as well as shepherding on his family's farm. Upon completing his studies at Bakersfield College, Judge Friedman furthered his education at the University of California, Santa Barbara and later earned his law degree at the University of California, Berkeley. After passing the bar exam, he served as a deputy district attorney, worked in various civil law firms, and became the first federal magistrate judge in Kern County before serving on the Superior Court.

Over his career, Judge Friedman heard a number of cases, many of which stretched on for months. In fact, he bears the unique dis-

tingtion of presiding over the longest gang trial in Kern County history. Other cases he heard encompassed the worst of humanity—criminal cases that inflicted incredible and lasting trauma to victims and their families. Yet through each trial he presided over, Judge Friedman made everyone in his courtroom feel comfortable in even the tensest of moments, using genuine kindness and a gentle sense of self-deprecating humor to keep litigants and witnesses at ease. Judge Friedman treated each person who entered his courtroom with all the dignity and respect owed to them in the court of law and was as tenacious as he was ethical in his dogged pursuit of the equal administration of law and justice. These qualities are all the hallmarks of a great judge, and perhaps even moreso, all the hallmarks of a great person.

There are not many judges like Judge Gary Friedman, and while it is the County's loss to see him leave his post on the Superior Court, it comforts me to know that he plans to transition to practicing civil law and will remain a fixture in the Kern County legal community. I have had the privilege of getting to know Gary and his wife, Gloria, over the years as members of Bakersfield Downtown Rotary, and I am looking forward to many more spirited conversations about his days, as he puts it, "toiling in the vineyards of justice" for years to come. As he embarks on this new adventure, I wish Judge Friedman all the best and thank him for his immense work in service to our community.

CONGRATULATING MITRE CORPORATION ON ITS 60TH ANNIVERSARY

HON. DONALD S. BEYER, JR.

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 20, 2018

Mr. BEYER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate The MITRE Corporation on its 60th anniversary this year.

MITRE is a not-for-profit corporation whose mission is to solve problems for a safer world. The company operates seven federally-funded research and development centers, each of which is sponsored by one or more federal agencies. MITRE works in the public interest, free from commercial conflicts of interest. The company's roughly 8,700 employees are located at its two primary locations in McLean, Virginia and Bedford, Massachusetts, as well as at other sites across the country and overseas. MITRE's employees support their federal sponsors across a full spectrum of analysis, planning and concept development; research and development; engineering; and systems acquisition work. They focus on some of the most challenging technical problems facing our nation—work that requires intimate knowledge of their federal sponsors' operating landscapes, demands objective analysis, and often involves sensitive or proprietary government and industry data.

MITRE has made immense contributions to our nation's security and safety over the last 60 years. I congratulate its leadership and staff and wish them many more years of success.