

persuading the Board of Supervisors to withdraw investments in South Africa. Many in the community rallied around the church, contributing time and money to the repairs and later to the building of a new church.

Reverend Coffee always persevered in his vision of a society where everyone could realize his or her full potential. With love and an open heart, he acted on his principles. With the support and assistance of his wife Vivian, his family, and his many friends made over the years, he worked inclusively to break down the barriers between races and promote the greater good.

He was particularly concerned with the community's youth, mentoring young people, providing scholarships, and joining with others to establish and promote programs such as Rites of Passage (with Shirley Gordon) which teaches teens that they can attend college and become leaders. These activities have given young people the hope and the support that keeps them out of gangs and on the path or promise.

Rev. Coffee also founded or participated in a wide variety of civic organizations and could be found bringing people together for a wide variety of social issues. From the Bridge Builders Organization (to promote racial reconciliation), 100 Black Men of Sonoma County, Race Equality Week, and Citizens Against Domestic Violence to the Salvation Army Advisory Board and Citizens for Balanced Transportation, Rev. Coffee's presence and energy were a catalyst for the whole community.

In 1981, he co-founded Santa Rosa's Martin Luther King, Jr. birthday celebration (with Carole Ellis and Mary Moore) which continues to inspire youth and bring people together. In 2004, he had the honor of meeting King's son, Martin Luther King III who spoke at a Sonoma County Human Rights Commission event at which the first of a new series of awards were presented—the Reverend James E. Coffee Human Rights Awards.

Rev. Coffee himself earned many awards throughout his years of service. He appreciated these acknowledgements, yet the greatest honors for him were the light of understanding in a teen's eyes, the dialogue across a racial barrier, and the legacy of love and activism. He leaves a Community Baptist Church that is multi-cultural with 500 active members who will carry on his work.

He is survived by his wife Vivian; his children James Jr., Shirley, and Yvette; three grandchildren; one great grandchild; and countless friends who will mourn him and be inspired by his example.

Madam Speaker, I am one of those many friends and I will miss him every day. To me, the Reverend James Coffee, has been the perfect embodiment of one of his favorite sayings: "Make a difference one day at a time." Reverend Coffee did make a difference—with strength and persistence, humor and compassion—every day of his life.

IN HONOR OF TAKE STOCK IN
CHILDREN GRADUATION AND
CONTRACT SIGNING 2010

HON. DEBBIE WASSERMAN SCHULTZ

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 22, 2010

Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ. Madam Speaker, I rise today to bring to the attention

of my colleagues the work of Take Stock in Children. This organization offers extraordinary educational and mentoring programs for disadvantaged youth throughout the state of Florida.

Enrolling students as early as sixth grade, Take Stock in Children offers each child a college tuition scholarship, a volunteer mentor, a case manager, and long-term support. The children in the program sign performance contracts agreeing to get good grades; exhibit positive behavior and; remain drug and crime free.

Through their programs, Take Stock in Children aims to reduce the number of high school drop-outs and increase the number of students who finish college and enter the workforce successfully. Since its inception in 1995, Take Stock in Children has served over 16,000 children in 67 of Florida's counties, graduating 92 percent of its scholars in comparison with the state average of 65 percent. In my home county of Broward, over 900 low income students have received scholarships since 1996, with 550 volunteer mentors meeting with the students at their schools every week.

I would like to congratulate the 72 Take Stock in Children senior scholars who will be graduating and the 85 new scholars who will be entering the program next week in Broward County. They join students graduating from around the state, 88 percent of which are first generation college-going students, empowered by the financial and moral support that this important program has provided over their high school career.

I am proud today to honor the important work that Take Stock in Children continues to do paving the way to better lives for many disadvantaged children and helping them pursue the American dream of a college education.

HONORING ISRAELI
INDEPENDENCE DAY

SPEECH OF

HON. STEVE COHEN

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 21, 2010

Mr. COHEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate the 62nd anniversary of the founding of the State of Israel, our friend and partner. After a process that began with the Balfour Declaration, the Mandate of the League of Nations and generations of struggling to regain their homeland, the United Nations passed a resolution on November 29, 1947 giving Israel the right to exist as a state. On May 14, 1948, Israel signed a proclamation creating the State of Israel, establishing it as a country that will "ensure complete equality of social and political rights to all its inhabitants irrespective of religion, race or sex." That same night, the United States officially recognized Israel as a sovereign nation.

Despite its unfortunate history of violence, the State of Israel has established itself as a world leader and a nation millions of Jews are proud to have as their homeland. Considering that Israel is the hundredth smallest country in the world with less than one thousandth of the world's population, what Israel has been able to accomplish is truly remarkable. What separates Israel from almost every other country is its truly innovative and entrepreneurial nature.

With regards to education, Israel has the highest ratio of university degrees in the world, so it is no surprise that Israel has become a leader in the health, science, and technology fields. In fact, many of the technologies we rely upon in the United States were actually developed in Israel such as the cell phone, computer operation systems, and voicemail technology. As a result of these technological developments Israel has developed a \$100 billion economy, which is larger than the combined economies of all its immediate neighbors.

Therefore, I rise today to celebrate Israel's Independence and to pay my respects to those who have lost their lives defending the nation they loved. Although the State of Israel has experienced more than its fair share of trying times, it has never lost sight of the noble ideals upon which the state was founded: freedom, justice, equality and peace.

CELEBRATION OF ELIZABETH
EVELYN WRIGHT DAY

HON. SANFORD D. BISHOP, JR.

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 22, 2010

Mr. BISHOP of Georgia. Madam Speaker, I rise today to celebrate Elizabeth Evelyn Wright Day, which will be commemorated this year on April 24th, in Talbotton, Georgia. Ms. Wright was an incredible woman. Her passion to inspire and educate the disenfranchised burned within, and her internal fire was often challenged by actual fire. She survived several arson attacks, yet remained undeterred. The flames of hatred were no match for the lamp of knowledge.

Elizabeth Evelyn Wright was born April 3, 1872, in Talbotton, Georgia. She was raised in a poverty-stricken area of Talbotton known as "Smith Hill." As a child, she was persistent in her educational endeavors. At St. Phillip's AME Church, she studied reading, writing, and arithmetic, and her scholastic excellence was quickly recognized by her professors.

To realize her potential, Wright then enrolled at Tuskegee Institute in Alabama, where she worked in the cafeteria during the day and attended classes at night. With the aid of Olivia Washington, wife of Booker T. Washington who was then Principal of Tuskegee Institute, Elizabeth Evelyn Wright was able to attend daytime classes. She became close with the Washington family, and was affectionately known as "Lizzie." Mrs. Washington inspired Lizzie to use her exceptional talents to educate underprivileged African-American children.

During her senior year of college, Wright was approached by Almira Steele, a white trustee at Tuskegee who knew of Lizzie's stellar academic reputation. She asked Lizzie to move to McNeill, South Carolina, to teach. In 1892, taking a hiatus from school, Lizzie realized her dream of educating African-American children and became inspired to open her own school.

In 1893, the McNeill School burned to the ground due to a hate-fueled attack. Witnessing this injustice inspired Lizzie to return to Tuskegee to graduate. She resumed teaching in McNeill, this time, at her own school. Nevertheless, the flames of hatred burned again as