

against tyranny and for their homeland. In the words of the Texas Declaration of Independence, the people's government had been "forcibly changed, without their consent, from a restricted federative republic, composed of sovereign states, to a consolidated central military despotism."

The Texas Revolution proved the bonds of freedom are stronger than ethnicity, as many Tejanos and Texans sacrificed their lives for Texas' freedom at the Battles of Gonzalez, Bexar, Goliad, the Alamo, and San Jacinto. The war was not between Anglos and Hispanics, it was a struggle between all Texans and the unjust military dictatorship of Antonio Lopez de Santa Ana in Mexico City. Texans and Tejanos knew then what we know now—freedom requires sacrifice.

Texas culture places high honors on heroes willing to sacrifice their lives for a better life for their fellow man, and Texans are known around the world as an honorable people who respond to the call of duty. While our young people are answering today's calls of duty, we should not forget those who have bravely answered that call in the past.

With an understanding of where they came from, future Texans will continue to respond to calls to service, and Texans will continue to be respected and admired around the world.

HONORING THE LIFE OF
BENJAMIN HOCHFELD

HON. BRIAN HIGGINS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 22, 2015

Mr. HIGGINS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life of Mr. Benjamin Hochfeld, who tragically passed away on November 24, 2014 at the young age of 43. A passionate family man and public servant, Mr. Hochfeld was a prominent member of the Western New York community.

Mr. Hochfeld touched many lives of various groups in Western New York. While working for Erie County Department of Environment and Planning and the County Attorney's office, he earned the respect and became close with many public officials and employees. He was a prominent figure in Buffalo's music community and an advocate for beautifying the Elmwood Village. His reach to members of the community was many and varied.

Mr. Hochfeld had many passions in his life, but his first love was of music. From a young age Mr. Hochfeld began studying piano and guitar. His passions led him to attend The Berkley College of Music in Boston, Massachusetts, where he further developed his craft. When he returned home to Buffalo, he continued his passion and played with several local bands, most notably with "Necktie Tour-niquet."

Mr. Hochfeld's passions continued with his endearment for gardening. Influenced by his loving wife Tracey, he spent hours beautifying the garden by her side. Their prized garden was featured during Buffalo's famous Garden Walk of 2014. Mr. Hochfeld hand crafted a stone fountain at the center of their garden that helped attract individuals from all over the country to view their garden. Here is an account written for the Buffalo Rising paper by a neighbor of Mr. Hochfeld.

When I first purchased my house on Norwood Avenue, almost 20 years ago, people told me that I was nuts. Upon moving in, the first thing that I noticed in the back "yard" of my house was a number of discarded purses (from purse snatchings) and gang graffiti tags.

Over the years my neighborhood has seen a drastic turnaround. It started with Elmwood Avenue rebounding, which in turn made the intertwined residential neighborhoods more desirable. Avenues and streets such as Norwood truly began to shine when home owners started to plant gardens, paint houses, and replace their front porches. Organizations such as Garden Walk contributed to the movement. Slowly but surely a healthy community began to take hold.

RECOGNIZING DR. BEVERLY
WALKER-GRIFFEA AS SHE IS IN-
STALLED AS THE SEVENTH
PRESIDENT OF MOTT COMMU-
NITY COLLEGE AND FOR HER
COMMITMENT TO ACADEMIC EX-
CELLENCE

HON. DANIEL T. KILDEE

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 22, 2015

Mr. KILDEE. Mr. Speaker, I ask the United States House of Representatives to join me in recognizing Dr. Walker-Griffea, President of Mott Community College, for her unwavering commitment to academic excellence and student success.

Dr. Walker-Griffea is the first female and first African American president in Mott Community College's history. A native of Tulsa, Oklahoma, Dr. Walker-Griffea holds a Doctorate of Philosophy in Child Development from Texas Woman's University in Denton, Texas, a Master of Education in Guidance and Counseling from Virginia State University in Petersburg, Virginia, and a Bachelor of Science in Journalism and Broadcasting from Oklahoma State University in Stillwater, Oklahoma.

Dr. Walker-Griffea has demonstrated a passion for ensuring all students have access to quality, affordable, and effective learning experiences. As a long-time advocate for collegiate student success, Dr. Walker-Griffea has served community college students in various capacities for twenty years. Her long history in education includes serving as Vice President of Student Affairs at Thomas Nelson Community College in Hampton, Virginia; Dean of Student Development at Houston Community College-Central Campus; and Interim Dean of Health and Environmental Sciences at Spokane Community College.

Mr. Speaker, I applaud Dr. Beverly Walker-Griffea for her strong leadership and unyielding commitment to academic success and our community.

HONORING MRS. JENNIFER
VIDLER AND THE 2015 WISE HON-
OREES

HON. JEB HENSARLING

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 22, 2015

Mr. HENSARLING. Mr. Speaker, for 12 years, the greater Mesquite area has embraced the opportunity to honor many exceptional women in the community through the Women in Service and Enterprise (WISE) Award Luncheon and Style Show. Today I would like to honor this year's award recipient, Mrs. Jennifer Vidler, who is a shining example of a committed community advocate and servant. I would also like to recognize honorees Beth Gaddis, Debbie Jacobson, and Linda Pimentel for their valuable service and commitment to their community.

Jennifer Vidler has lived in Mesquite most of her life. She is a graduate of North Mesquite High School and proudly served in the United States Air Force as a Specialist. Afterwards, she studied cosmetology and graduated with a perfect score through the state board of exam. Her salon has been a Chamber of Commerce member for 15 years, and voted best salon several times. Jennifer has been a member and chairwoman for the Board of Adjustments for six years and now she is a Planning and Zoning Commissioner. She has been Vice President and then President of Old Town Mesquite/Community Heart of Mesquite. For the last nine years Jennifer has worked very hard with the fundraising, planning, and implementing of Kid Fish and Pumpkin Fest. For many years Jennifer led the decorations for Christmas on the Square by herself, before a few people came to help. She has worked hard to bring a Farmers Market to Mesquite, and this year will be the 2nd Annual Farmers Market on the Square. Jennifer says, "I truly love Mesquite and think it can only be even better."

Past WISE Award winners have served in a variety of ways, but they are united by the long-lasting impact they have made on their community. Their service, community involvement and dedication to enterprise continue to inspire younger generations.

Today, I would like to recognize all of the WISE honorees for their outstanding service and congratulate them on their awards. Thank you, ladies, for helping make our community, state, and country a better place.

IN RECOGNITION OF THE 60TH AN-
NIVERSARY OF THE DENVER RE-
GIONAL COUNCIL OF GOVERN-
MENTS

HON. DIANA DeGETTE

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 22, 2015

Ms. DeGETTE. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor one of Colorado's most respected and valued organizations, the Denver Regional Council of Governments (DRCOG), on its 60th anniversary. Through collaborative cooperation, DRCOG speaks and leads with one voice while serving nine counties and 47 municipalities, and it stands as one of the three oldest