

IN REMEMBRANCE OF THE LIFE
OF SARID CHAIM SHAHDAIAH
AND QUINCY GEMAL WILLIAMS

HON. SHEILA JACKSON LEE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 31, 2016

“What is a fear of living? It’s being pre-eminently afraid of dying. It is not doing what you came here to do, out of timidity and spinelessness. The antidote is to take full responsibility for yourself—for the time you take up and the space you occupy. If you don’t know what you’re here to do, then just do some good.”—Maya Angelou

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in remembrance and recognition of the life of Sarid Chaim Shahdaiah, and Quincy Gemal Williams two very accomplished young men who tragically lost their lives in a car accident on December 3, 2014.

Many parents, teachers, neighbors and young people hope to find the kindness and dedication that these two young men exhibited regularly as sons, students, friends and incredibly well-rounded, commendable young men.

The achievements these young men earned far exceed the highest expectations of any proud parent or community member in awe of exceptional young leaders in today’s America.

I understand as well, that in recognition and honor of his pursuit of excellence, several highly esteemed universities expressed interest in Sarid, hoping that he would join their respected student bodies.

I was thoroughly impressed to learn that, through his dedication to his studies, Sarid earned a grade point average of 3.6 and was inducted into the National Society of High School Scholars.

As a highly accomplished student-athlete, he served the U.S.A. International Football Team as Captain, Team Ambassador and starting linebacker, in addition to exalting fervent school pride, during his junior year as a highly valued teammate of the DeKaney Wildcats, his high school varsity track and football teams.

Expanding the bounds of his requisite studies, he explored his curiosities for the world of science becoming a member of the Texas High School Engineering Career and Technology Council.

I join his family and many admirers in genuinely celebrating Sarid’s life and outstanding contributions.

Quincy was a beaming light of talent and happiness.

Affectionately called by his parents a “Junior”, Quincy was one of the most outgoing, lovable kids that a parent could ever want.

Quincy was one of the world’s best comedians. He had the ability to make anyone who came into contact with him laugh.

All who knew Quincy admired his prowess for presentation—deemed one of the “sharpest” brothers you’d meet.

Although young in body Mr. Williams was old in song; He was a profound lover of any and all Motown Performers and would listen to them regularly.

While at Andy DeKaney High School Quincy became branded as the “Soul Brother” of the football team.

Quincy was also a highly valued teammate of the DeKaney Wildcats high school varsity track team.

Quincy and Sarid were not only classmates and teammates, they were bonded and talented friends who earned the love and respect by all those who knew them.

These two young men cultivated their efforts, positioning themselves to successfully matriculate in May of 2016; and, but for their ill-fated passing, would by all accounts have celebrated their well-deserved accomplishments with their families as a milestone achievement in their young lives.

While I have no doubt they would have realized countless ambitions, we are left to accept that their dreams of immeasurable magnitude now rest with them.

These young men worked hard and touched many lives with their ambition and dedicated commitments to their families, friends, school and their community.

I cannot think of a more solemn manner of celebrating their life than to honor their efforts by bestowing upon their families recognition of the achievement for which they so ardently strode.

In the words of Booker T. Washington “character is power”.

Character truly is power and that power was present in the lives of these prolific young men.

Yes, their lives were cut short, but with what time they did have they effectively made the best of it.

Heaven has truly gained a dynamic pair of angels, while young Sarid and Quincy’s families lost their most promising stars.

Please join me in a moment of silence for the life of Sarid Chaim Shahdaiah and Quincy Gemal Williams.

SUPPORT FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A “NATIONAL CAMEROONIAN HERITAGE AND DIASPORA MONTH”

HON. CHRISTOPHER P. GIBSON

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 31, 2016

Mr. GIBSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to express my support for the establishment of a “National Cameroonian Heritage and Diaspora Month” during the month of May to celebrate the great contributions of Americans of Cameroonian immigrant heritage in the United States, who have enriched the history of our Nation.

Mr. Speaker, people of recent Cameroonian immigrant heritage and the greater Cameroonian diaspora are found in every State of the Union. Furthermore, the history of Americans of Cameroonian descent in the United States is inextricably tied to the story of the Nation.

This past year, I have been proud to establish and co-chair the Congressional Cameroon Caucus, along with Congressman ANDRÉ CARSON (D-IN), Congressman STEVE RUSSELL (R-OK) and Congressman HANK JOHNSON (D-GA). The Congressional Cameroon Caucus enjoys strong bi-partisan support, which includes Congresswoman SHEILA JACKSON-LEE (D-TX).

The community of Americans of Cameroonian immigrant heritage in the United States poses an inherently diverse population comprised of distinct ethnicities, religions and more than 100 language dialects. Americans of Cameroonian immigrant heritage in the United States come from all regions in Cameroon and do not constitute a homogeneous group. They include people from different religious, linguistic, ethnic, racial, cultural, and social backgrounds. Cameroon is nicknamed ‘Africa in Miniature or Mini Africa’ for its religious, linguistics, geographic and ethnic diversity.

Mr. Speaker, the month of May has been celebrated by Cameroonians at home and abroad, since 1972, because ‘Cameroon National Day’ is on May 20. Since independence in 1960, Cameroon has earned a reputation as a peaceful and welcoming nation, and as a linchpin of regional stability. Undoubtedly, Cameroon serves as an important economic, military, and cultural partner of the United States.

Additionally, Americans of Cameroonian descent have traced their heritage via DNA to various kingdoms in Cameroon such as Bamileke, Hausa, Tikar, Baka. Individuals such as Secretary Condelezza Rice, Congresswoman KAREN BASS, Congresswoman Kelly Robin; artists such as Quincy Jones, Blair Underwood, Venessa L. Williams, Sheryl Lee Ralph; and thousands of Americans of African-American, Afro-Latino America, Afro-European Americans and others, have traced their heritage to Cameroon.

Recent Cameroonian immigrants have also made significant contributions to American culture, including in areas of American life such as the military, health care, arts, education, community service, and public policy. Raising awareness about Cameroonian immigrant heritage is crucial to effectively fighting disparities within the greater Black population in the American narrative and is essential to building a stronger America. Additionally, Americans of recent Cameroonian immigrant heritage have played an active role in the civil rights movement and other social and political movements in the United States such as Sylvie Qwasinwi Bello of the Cameroon American Council.

Mr. Speaker, the people of Cameroon share the hopes and aspirations of the people of the United States for peace and prosperity throughout the world, but there remains much to be done to ensure that Americans of recent Cameroonian immigrant heritage and the greater Cameroonian diaspora have access to resources and a voice in the United States Government and continue to advance in the political, social, and economic landscape of the United States. Celebrating ‘National Cameroonian Heritage and Diaspora Month’ in the month of May would provide the people of the United States with an opportunity to recognize the achievements, contributions, and history of and to appreciate the challenges faced by Americans of recent Cameroonian immigrant heritage. For that reason, Mr. Speaker, I believe that a “National Cameroonian Heritage and Diaspora Month” should be recognized in May to celebrate the significant contributions of Americans of recent Cameroonian Immigrant Heritage to the history of the United States.