

storm surge caused by Hurricane Katrina. Despite his loss, Elaine Oneto, 1LT Oneto-Sikorski's mother, said her son looked to the future and talked about his homecoming which would have been in December 2005. "He was devoted to his children. He is so much more than any of us could say," Mrs. Oneto said. "He was a wonderful man who loved everyone and his loss is going to devastate this whole community."

Patrick Rager, 1LT Oneto-Sikorski's son, recently said he will always be remembered for his service and sacrifice. "I am proud of his service, and to this day, I strive to make him proud through hard work and getting good grades in school," Patrick said. "Many people go through this life and have little to no impact. Because of his sacrifice, he will not be forgotten."

1LT Oneto-Sikorski was remembered by a fellow soldier on a memorial website. "I was serving with Ski in Iraq. He was my XO and my close friend," SFC Gene Dufrene said. "Ski was by far the best officer that anyone could serve with. He was what we NCOs called a real soldiers' officer. He would break his neck to take care of us. He took care of each and every soldier under his command. We all miss our brother and we will always remember Ski for the man he was to each of us soldiers."

1LT Oneto-Sikorski was employed at Northrop Grumman's Ingalls Shipyard in Pascagoula, Mississippi, where he worked in the engineering department.

1LT Oneto-Sikorski was buried with full honors at the Biloxi National Cemetery.

1LT Oneto-Sikorski is survived by his parents, Elaine Marie Oneto and Robert Charles Sikorski, II; his wife, Kristine Seamans Sikorski; his three children, Robert Charles Sikorski, II, Patrick Rager, and Hannah Rager; the mother of his children, Clare Rager; and his two sisters, Shawn Durfey, and Kathleen Sherlock.

1LT Oneto-Sikorski demonstrated courage and bravery protecting the freedoms we all enjoy. His service and sacrifice for America will not be forgotten.

2017 WOMAN OF THE YEAR AWARD WINNER—JODY SAMONS

HON. JOHN GARAMENDI

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 2, 2017

Mr. GARAMENDI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Ms. Jody Samons of Willows, California, who has dedicated over 37 years to serving her community of Glenn County. She has touched the lives of countless people through her work and volunteer activities. In her current position as Glenn County's Community Development Director, Ms. Samons has secured over \$200,000 in grants and worked with numerous companies to create over 200 new jobs in the area. Her overwhelming success in this role has had, and will continue to have, an undeniably positive impact on her community.

In her volunteer capacities, Ms. Samons has worked to support the youth of her community by creating opportunities and guiding them to success. Ms. Samons was instrumental in the creation of the Orland High School Booster

club which helped support youth athletic programs in her community. She has also spent many years supporting youth in FFA or 4-H programs in any way she could. Ms. Samons served for many years on the Glenn County Junior Livestock Auction Committee and went on to found a non-profit organization to support the program when its future was in jeopardy. She also served for 7 years on the Glenn County Fair Board and worked tirelessly to ensure its continued success. Ms. Samons has spent many years supporting the youth in her community and never passed up an opportunity to help out.

HONORING FIRST LIEUTENANT PHILLIP DUPREY

HON. JOHN R. CARTER

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 2, 2017

Mr. CARTER of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor First Lieutenant Phillip Duprey of the United States Army for his dedication and service to our country. 1LT Duprey's extraordinary patriotism, citizenship, and commitment to community and service reflects the best values of Central Texas. He is a fitting recipient of a Congressional Veteran Commendation.

During his deployment to Vietnam, Phillip Duprey faced grave and mortal danger while conducting intelligence collection as a member of the Army Security Agency for the IV Division of the 101st Airborne Division. 1LT Duprey's leadership, dedication, and bravery undoubtedly saved the lives of many. For his service and valor in combat, 1LT Duprey received numerous medals including the Bronze Star and the National Defense Service Medal.

1LT Duprey's service and sense of duty did not finish with the end of his military career. Upon returning to the great state of Texas, 1LT Duprey dedicated his civilian life to the uplifting and betterment of his community. As a highly respected citizen, he is active in numerous community organizations, including twenty-two years on the Cedar Park Chamber of Commerce. Additionally, he served on the Cedar Park City Council for six years, the last two as Mayor pro tem. 1LT Duprey has dedicated himself to serving his community and is an embodiment of the Army values of honor, loyalty, and selfless service. For these reasons and many more, his community came together to honor 1LT Duprey as Cedar Park Citizen of the Year in 2000 and 2014.

I commend First Lieutenant Phillip Duprey's selfless service to the U.S. Army, the nation, and his community. He is a hero who has devoted his life to defending our freedoms abroad and serving his community at home. I join 1LT Duprey's family, friends, and neighbors in celebrating his outstanding achievements.

RECOGNIZING THE LIFE OF FALLEN MISSISSIPPI SOLDIER STAFF SERGEANT (SSG) JOE NATHAN WILSON

HON. TRENT KELLY

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 2, 2017

Mr. KELLY of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, today I rise in memory of Army Staff Sergeant (SSG) Joe Nathan Wilson who paid the ultimate sacrifice while defending our great nation on November 2, 2003, during Operation Iraqi Freedom. SSG Wilson was mortally wounded in an attack on a CH-47 Chinook helicopter near Fallujah, Iraq. Fifteen other servicemen were killed in the crash. He died from his injuries in a Kuwait hospital. SSG Wilson was assigned to Alpha Battery, 2nd Battalion, 5th Field Artillery Regiment, 3rd Corps Artillery, Fort Sill, Oklahoma.

According to the Associated Press, an Ohio serviceman said he survived because of the heroic act of SSG Wilson. Sergeant (SSG) Joe Minar said SSG Wilson cradled his head with his body to shield him when the helicopter crashed.

SSG Wilson was remembered on a memorial website by a fellow soldier. Staff Sergeant (SSG) Benjamin Dunlap of Stroud, Oklahoma, said SSG Wilson was a leader, "I served with SSG Wilson during our tour in Iraq. He was the epiphany of the NCO corps. He was always leading by example. He could never be seen without a smile on his face. I considered him to be my friend. He was a friend to all who knew him."

SSG Wilson graduated from Crystal Springs High School in Crystal Springs, Mississippi in 1992. Robert Green, the Crystal Springs High School athletic director, said SSG Wilson was a standout student, "He was a nice young man, especially on the football field." Shortly after graduation, SSG Wilson enlisted in the U.S. Army. Maxine Adams, SSG Wilson's mother, said he always wanted to be in the military, "He was a great son. It was important to Nate to be an accomplished person." Patricia Fortenberry, SSG Wilson's sister, is proud of her brother's service, "He was a great brother. He was my best friend."

Shortly after SSG Wilson's death, the city of Crystal Springs designated November 2nd as an official day to recognize his service to our nation. His family hosts a picnic and speakers are included at the event. It is held at the Joe Nathan Wilson Sportsplex and Memorial Fire Station in Crystal Springs which is named in his honor. Sally Garland, mayor of Crystal Springs, said the city will begin a new tradition in honor of SSG Wilson. Beginning this year, flags will be lowered to half-staff on the anniversary of his death.

SSG Wilson was buried at Brushy Creek Cemetery in Hopewell, Mississippi. SSG Wilson is survived by his mother, Maxine Adams; his wife, Erica; his daughter, Yasmin; his three nephews, Jaydan Adams, Jordan Adams, and Specialist (SPC) Jerrick Wilson; his two nieces, Kawanza Fortenberry and Latria Wilson.

SSG Wilson's bravery under fire demonstrated his devotion to his comrades and to our nation. His service will always be remembered.