

## EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

### CELEBRATING 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF LAS VEGAS VICTORY MIS- SIONARY BAPTIST CHURCH

#### HON. SHELLEY BERKLEY

OF NEVADA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, June 9, 2011*

Ms. BERKLEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and celebrate the 50th Anniversary of Victory Missionary Baptist Church in Las Vegas, Nevada.

On June 11, 1961, Rev. Abner J. Thompson, along with his wife, Mother Christine Thompson, founded the Victory Missionary Baptist Church under his pastorate. The Church was originally organized at the Zion United Methodist Church dining hall. Shortly after, a permanent place of worship was established on the west side of Las Vegas.

Under Reverend Thompson's leadership, several area families cultivated this newly formed church. From the earliest beginnings, the church and its choir became well known throughout Las Vegas and in other parts of the country. As the church continued to grow, the congregation outgrew the original location. Between 1981 and 1984, the pastor and families made plans to construct a new sanctuary that would include an education building, kitchen, dining area and Sunday school.

After 35 years of ministering, Reverend Thompson retired in February 1996. That following November, Dr. Robert E. Fowler, Sr., from Lawton, Oklahoma was installed as pastor. In 1998, Pastor Fowler outlined a plan for Victory Missionary Baptist Church that included a clear vision for the church. Within a year, membership grew more than 200 percent from previous years. Victory Missionary

Baptist Church was a "Church on the Move" and acquired the entire block where it is now located. These acquisitions were historic, as this was the first church on the west side of Las Vegas.

In 2003, Victory Missionary Baptist Church looked outward and focused on improving the community with programs designed to provide stimulation for the physical and recreational needs of the members. The health education ministry provided free health screenings and health education programs to the community at no cost, directly benefiting over 600 people.

In 2005, the church renewed its focus on Christian improvement, with Pastor Fowler instructing various ministries on how to better evangelize and become leaders in the church. In 2006 and 2007, the church went through a paradigm shift, with the ministries growing and adding new meaning and new challenges for the congregation.

In 2009, the church expanded its focus on vision and voice. The goal for the year was to challenge the congregation on a personal and spiritual level. While the national and local economies remained unsteady, this focus ensured the congregation that their positive relationship with God would remain unwavering.

As the Representative for Nevada's First Congressional District, I proudly recognize Victory Missionary Baptist Church for 50 years of dedicated service to the community of Las Vegas. Victory Missionary Baptist Church continues to be a beacon of light for its members and the community as a whole. I ask my colleagues to join me in celebrating Victory Missionary Baptist Church's 50th Anniversary.

### CONGRATULATING TINE VALEN- CIC, WINNER OF THE 2011 NA- TIONAL GEOGRAPHIC BEE

#### HON. KENNY MARCHANT

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, June 9, 2011*

Mr. MARCHANT. Mr. Speaker, it is with great pride and pleasure that I rise today to recognize and congratulate Tine Valencic for winning the 2011 National Geographic Bee. Tine's remarkable achievement is a testament to his discipline, perseverance, and extraordinary knowledge of the world's geography. I am proud to represent Tine, who attends 7th Grade at Colleyville Middle School and founded the Geography Club at the school.

This year, 5 million students, ranging from fourth to eighth grade, studied and perfected their geographic skills as they competed in nationwide geographic bees. Students like Tine spent many months preparing by studying landscapes, and physical features around the globe.

As the 13th place finisher in the 2010 National Geographic Bee, Tine prepared for this year's competition by studying 24-page spreadsheets filled with facts and information about geographic areas and cultures. Competing against 53 semi-finalists, Tine flawlessly answered 119 questions, including five final tiebreakers. Tine was awarded a scholarship for his hard work.

Mr. Speaker, I am honored to congratulate Tine on this significant accomplishment. I ask all of my distinguished colleagues to join me in commending Tine Valencic, winner of the 2011 National Geographic Bee.

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