

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Madam Speaker, I rise today to commemorate the achievement of Mr. Santonio Holmes, who on February 1, 2009 was named the Most Valuable Player of Super Bowl XLIII.

Mr. Holmes was born in Belle Glade, FL, a part of my Congressional district. Mr. Holmes came from humble roots and through hard work and dedication, he made it to the National Football League (NFL). Mr. Holmes' athletic prowess and entrepreneurship developed from an early age; as a young boy growing up in Belle Glade, he would catch rabbits by hand and sell them. Mr. Holmes attended Glades Central High School in Belle Glade, where he excelled in football, basketball and track. He went on to attend College at Ohio State from 2003 to 2005, where he starred as a wide receiver. In 2006 he was picked 25th in the first round of the NFL draft.

Mr. Holmes' performance in the Pittsburgh Steelers' victory over the Arizona Cardinals was nothing short of tremendous. He caught 9 receptions for a total of 131 yards. It was his last reception, however, that was most significant. With less than a minute remaining, the Steelers trailed the Cardinals 23-20. Steelers quarterback Ben Roethlisberger, in an improvised play, lofted the ball toward the right corner, over the hands of three defenders. Mr. Holmes leaped to get it and managed to drag both feet in bounds, his toes barely scraping the grass before he tumbled out of bounds. This touchdown and the subsequent conversion gave the Steelers a winning margin of 27-23.

Madam Speaker, Mr. Holmes' recognition as the Most Valuable Player of Super Bowl XLIII is well deserved. Mr. Holmes' personal story also highlights the promise and opportunity of our great nation, that all Americans, even those from the most humble of backgrounds, may achieve tremendous things. I am extremely proud to congratulate Mr. Holmes and encourage my colleagues to join me in doing so as well.

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