

Keynote Speakers



Congressman Mario Diaz-Balart

Republican – Florida 25th Congressional District

Congressman Mario Diaz-Balart is currently fulfilling his 8th term in the U.S. House of Representatives, serving Florida's 25th congressional district. Diaz-Balart is a senior member of the House Committee on Appropriations and is chairman of the Subcommittee on Transportation, Housing and Urban Development, in addition to serving on the State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs and the Defense Subcommittees. Diaz-Balart also serves on the House Committee on the Budget. He passionately serves his constituents, acting tirelessly in defense of individual rights and liberties, promoting economic prosperity, and supporting a strong national defense. He is well known for his advocacy of human rights and democracy around the world, as well as for his staunch support of our global allies.

Diaz-Balart was elected to the U.S. House of Representatives in 2002 to represent Florida's 25th Congressional District. Prior to his time in Congress, Diaz-Balart served 14 years in the Florida State Legislature in both chambers, House and Senate. He chaired a number of different committees, including the Combined Appropriations/Ways and Means/Finance and Tax Committee.

Diaz-Balart was born on September 25, 1961 in Ft. Lauderdale, Florida to Rafael and Hilda Diaz-Balart, and is the youngest of four brothers (Rafael, Lincoln, and Jose). He studied Political Science at the University of South Florida in Tampa.

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Vice Admiral David Johnson, United States Navy

Principal Military Deputy

Assistant Secretary of the Navy for Research, Development and Acquisition

Vice Admiral David Johnson, the son of a Navy captain and a Pensacola, Florida, native, graduated from the U.S. Naval Academy in 1982 with a Bachelor of Science in Aerospace Engineering.

Upon commissioning, Johnson reported to Trident Refit Facility in Bangor, Washington, where he served as docking officer, qualified as ship superintendent at Puget Sound Naval Shipyard and earned his engineering duty dolphins. Johnson graduated from the Massachusetts

Institute of Technology in 1989 with a naval engineer degree and a Master of Science in Mechanical Engineering. Subsequently, Johnson held submarine acquisition and repair positions at the Supervisor of Shipbuilding in Groton, Connecticut, as a waterfront coordinator delivering Ohio class submarines and later as the program manager's representative for the Virginia-class submarine; at Trident Refit Facility Bangor as the planning officer; and at program executive officer (PEO) Submarines as the assistant program manager for USS Jimmy Carter (SSN 23).

Johnson became major program manager Virginia Program Office (PMS 450) in 2005. Under his guidance, the Virginia program reduced overall cost by \$4 billion and delivered four submarines to the fleet. The program was awarded the 2007 DoD Value Engineering Award and the 2008 David A. Packard Award for Acquisition Excellence. Johnson also established and served as the first Undersea Enterprise chief technology officer.

Johnson's flag tours include PEO Submarines, deputy commander for Undersea Technology (SEA 073), deputy PEO Submarines for the Ohio SSBN Replacement Program and commander, Naval Undersea Warfare Center. In October 2015, he assumed responsibilities as principal military deputy for the Assistant Secretary of the Navy Research, Development & Acquisition.

Johnson has received various personal and campaign awards, including the Defense Service Medal, Legion of Merit and the Meritorious Service Medal with three gold stars.