

# The Prince George's Post



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PHOTO CREDIT: JESSE NASH/CAPITAL NEWS SERVICE

WASHINGTON—Steven Lowe (left), and Fred Edwards, (right), two of the original plaintiffs in the case challenging the constitutionality of a 40-foot cross in Bladensburg, Maryland, stand on the steps of the Supreme Court.

## High Court Hears Arguments Over Future of Bladensburg Peace Cross

By EUGENE "JESSE" NASH IV and VICTORIA GOMES-BORONAT  
Capital News Service

WASHINGTON (Feb 27, 2019)—Justices on the Supreme Court appeared split Wednesday during oral arguments over the constitutionality of a 40-foot Peace Cross that has stood in Bladensburg, Maryland for nearly a century.

Most of the conservative-leaning justices stayed relatively quiet during the oral presentations, while the more liberal justices intensely questioned those who argued the cross is a religious symbol that must be removed as well as those who defended the cross as a secular memorial to soldiers lost in World War I.

Justices Sonya Sotomayor, Ruth Bader Ginsburg, and Brett Kavanaugh asked attorneys questions that seemed to reflect skepticism that the cross was a secular symbol.

Ginsburg declared that "the Latin cross is the preeminent symbol of Christianity."

"People wear crosses to show their devotion to the Christian faith," Ginsburg said.

Kavanaugh agreed, saying that the cross is undeniably religious in nature.

A significant portion of the arguments was taken up with legal analyses of the type of tests the high court has used in the past and should use in the future to determine if a public memorial is religious or secular in nature.

When Neal Katyal, representing The

American Legion, argued that the cross is a part of a memorial park, Sotomayor countered by pointing out that the memorial is in the middle of a major highway and you "can't really tell that this cross is with anything else."

Michael Carvin, representing The American Legion, attempted to use the cross's "long-standing tradition" as a reason for it to remain. But, Sotomayor responded: "I don't know of a founding father, town, or state that put up a 40-foot cross."

Justice Elena Kagan questioned cross-supporting attorneys on whether the cross "indicated that the city was aligning itself to a specific religion."

Kagan also pressed Monica Miller, the attorney representing the American Humanist Association, which opposes the cross.

She and Justice Samuel Alito both asked Miller why this particular cross could not be stripped of its religious significance, citing the Ten Commandments as an example of a religious symbol taking on a secular meaning.

Neal Katyal, arguing for the American Legion, which defends the cross, argued that the cross has taken on a secular identity in the context of World War I memorials.

Miller argued that the cross is a prime example of a government acting as a

"mouthpiece" for a religion. She said that there were many reasons why minorities, back when the memorial was built, did not feel safe in objecting to its form, citing instances of Klu Klux Klansmen in the area silencing those who practiced religions other than Christianity.

Alito asked Miller what message the court would send if justices ruled against keeping the cross. She responded that removing it would restore the court to a place of neutrality.

Members of the American Humanist Association, Steve Lowe and Fred Edwards, were happy with how Miller argued their case.

"I think we answered the questions a little bit better than our opponents in some respect," Miller said. Lowe agreed, saying that he was very "proud" of how she represented them.

"The three women of the court were our best advocates," Lowe said in reference to Ginsburg, Kagan, and Sotomayor.

Kevin Bartlett, the legal counselor for the American Legion, which has its symbol on the cross, said that the whole case is a "slap in the face" to veterans.

"Nobody cared about religion when I signed up," said Bartlett, a Navy veteran. "We have to protect these memorials."

See PEACE CROSS Page A8 for a graphic connected to this story.

## Interim CEO, County Executive Call on Lawmakers to Support School Construction Financing Bill

By COMMUNICATIONS OFFICER  
Prince George's County Public Schools

UPPER MARLBORO, Md. (February 27, 2019)—Dr. Monica Goldson, Interim Chief Executive Officer, and Angela D. Alsobrooks, Prince George's County Executive today testified before state lawmakers in support of Senate Bill 1011, which allows Prince George's County Public Schools (PGCPS) to pursue alternative financing, such as public-private partnerships, for school construction.

If approved, Senate Bill 1011 would help accelerate the building modernization plan and lower costs. The proposed legislation would invest approximately \$1.8 billion over the next 30 years to fund system upgrades, school repairs, renovations, expansions and new construction.

"As our infrastructure continues to age, facilities fall further behind in repairs and our students are forced to learn in challenging conditions, we have thought creatively about how to make every dollar count. We recognize the need to use innovative financing mechanisms, other alternatives to traditional financing, as well as efficiencies and cost-saving options in school construction and maintenance," said Dr. Goldson. "The less time and expense it takes to address the adequacy of our school facilities, the greater our focus can remain on our core mission to educate children."

The proposed legislation will provide:

- 18 new schools to serve 6,600 new students
    - 1 High School
    - 8 Middle Schools
    - 9 Elementary Schools
  - High-needs facility upgrades for 17,400 current students by 2026—eight years earlier than under traditional financing methods.
  - \$180 million savings in deferred maintenance and construction costs
- Many county school buildings are almost 50 years old. School renovation needs exceed \$8 billion over 20 years.

"Prince George's County has been tasked with providing more than its fair share of school funding over the last 20 years," said County Executive Alsobrooks. "It is time the county received its equitable share from the state to ensure students have every opportunity to succeed."

"Full funding of our capital improvement program and the availability of additional alternative funding sources are critical to ensuring adequate educational facilities," added Dr. Goldson, who has served as PGCPS chief of operations. "Senate Bill 1011 allows us to address these important needs and maximize taxpayer dollars."

The full text of Dr. Goldson's testimony is available at [www.pgcps.org/ceo](http://www.pgcps.org/ceo).

## Free St. Patrick's Day Lyft Rides Offered Throughout P.G. County To Prevent Drunk Driving

By TAMMY WAN  
Washington Regional Alcohol Program (WRAP)

UPPER MARLBORO, Md. (Feb. 25, 2019)—Preparing to combat that time of year when, according to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), over a third (37%) of all U.S. traffic deaths involve drunk drivers\*, free St. Patrick's Day Lyft rides will be offered to deter impaired driving throughout Prince George's County, Maryland beginning Sunday, March 17th.

Offered by the nonprofit Washington Regional Alcohol Program (WRAP), the 2019 St. Patrick's Day SoberRide® program will be in operation beginning at 4:00 p.m. on Sunday, March 17th (St. Patrick's Day) and continuing until 4:00 a.m. on Monday, March 18th, 2019 as a way to keep local roads safe from impaired drivers during this traditionally high-risk holiday.

See FREE ST. PATRICK'S DAY LYFT RIDES Page A8

## House Aiming to Mandate Funding For Maryland HBCUs

By DANIEL OYEFUSI  
Capital News Service

ANNAPOLIS, Md. (Feb 28, 2019)—Amid settlement talks between Gov. Larry Hogan, R, and advocates for Maryland's four historically black institutions, the House of Delegates is scheduled to hold a hearing Friday on legislation that would force the governor to appropriate more than \$16 million in the state budget for each university, starting in 2021.

The hearing comes less than two months ahead of the April 20 deadline set by the 4th U.S. Circuit of Appeals for Hogan and the universities to reach a settlement regarding a 13-year lawsuit.

A coalition for the state's four historically black institutions—Bowie State University, Coppin State University, Morgan State University and University of Maryland, Eastern Shore—sued the Maryland Higher Education Commission in 2006, arguing

that the state put the institutions at a disadvantage by duplicating similar programs at traditionally white universities.

The commission is in charge of establishing policies for the state's public and private universities and also administers state financial aid programs.

A U.S. District Court judge in 2013 ruled in favor of the universities, stating that Maryland violated the constitutional rights of students at the state's historically black institutions. The judge or-

dered the two sides to mediate and reach a settlement but when talks failed, the state appealed to the U.S. Court of Appeals in 2017, where a panel of judges reiterated in January that the two should find a resolution.

In 2018, Hogan offered the four institutions a settlement of \$100 million to be distributed over 10 years, but Delegate Darryl Barnes, D-Prince George's, chair of the Maryland Legislative Black Caucus, called the offer "woefully inadequate."

Hogan met in January with the Black Caucus to discuss the current dispute.

House bill 779 is sponsored by Delegate Keith Haynes, D-Baltimore, as well as several members of the Black Caucus, including Barnes.

Haynes said the universities will have discretion over use of the funds, but they will focus on enhancing scholarships, faculty recruitment and course development.

Senate President Thomas V. Mike Miller Jr., D-Calvert,

Charles and Prince George's, speaking on the Senate floor on Feb. 20, urged a resolution to the lawsuit and suggested giving Bowie State money to create a law school, helping Morgan State purchase more land and developing a new in-demand academic program at the University of Maryland, Eastern Shore.

Haynes said the legislation doesn't seek to end the current litigation or replace a settlement, but

See HBCUs Page A5

### INSIDE

**Alzheimer's Association National Capital Area Chapter Recognizes Prince George's County Residents**  
Several residents of Prince George's County were recognized for their outstanding efforts in fundraising at a special reception on February 8 in McLean, VA.

Community, Page A3

**County Council Chair Statement in Response to Use of Racial Slur**

In the best interest of the state and its residents, Delegate Lisanti must make an important decision about her ability to effectively legislate on behalf of Maryland's richly diverse communities.

Commentary, Page A4

**Maryland Mortgage Program Announces New Products and Honors Top Performers**

Chief among the new Maryland Mortgage Program products is an array of loans and down payment assistance options specifically tailored to repeat homebuyers for the first time in program history.

Business and Finance, Page A5

**Movie Review:**

*The Favourite*

... movies where the main characters are all corrupt or vain are often satisfying because they let us enjoy the audacity of bad behavior without suffering the consequences of it.

Out on the Town, Page A6

**Earth Talk**

*Dear EarthTalk:*

*I heard a pundit on TV say that the way we can "Make America Great Again" is by reducing air pollution as it's making us dumb. Is there any truth to this?*

—Jane V., via e-mail

Features, Page A7

# TOWNS *and* NEIGHBORS

## In and Around Morningside-Skyline

by Mary McHale 301-735-3451

### Pastor John Cherry, founder of From the Heart megachurch, dies at 79

Pastor John Abron Cherry Sr., 79, founder of From the Heart in Andrews Manor and 26 branches globally, died Feb. 16 at a hospital in Fairfax. He was born in Choctaw County, Ala., the seventh of eight children.

He followed his father and grandfather in becoming an AME Zion pastor but eventually broke with the church and started Full Gospel Church in a Suitland storefront. As the congregation grew, the church moved twice in Temple Hills before changing the name to From the Heart Church Ministries in 1999 and to a large empty building in Andrews Manor Shopping Center in April 2009. From the Heart Church now has more than 27,000 members worldwide.

In 2006 he installed his son John A. Cherry II as pastor. Pastor Cherry Sr. resigned as Episcopal Pastor in July 2018 with plans to devote himself, as bishop, to his international ministry.

Survivors include his wife of 49 years, Rev. Diana Cherry; children, Pastor John Cherry II and Sharon Mitchell; a brother; a sister; seven grandchildren; and six great-grandchildren. Memorial Service was at From the Heart on Feb. 26 and hundreds of cars filled that parking lot.

He said in a recent interview, "The people here, I have grown up with them. I married them. I baptized them. I buried their pastors. They have been interwoven in my life, and I in theirs."

### Neighbors and other good people

Bonnie Kamenicky, of Morningside, called with the sad news that her former across-Maple Road-neighbor Sybil Deily died in January. I'll pay tribute as soon as I locate an obituary.

Michaela Cheatham, of Camp Springs, is now with the Peace Corps and will be heading for the Dominican Republic.

Danielle Malley of Joint Base Andrews, Isaiah Neal of Suitland, William Hall and Makayla Smith of District Heights are among the locals who made the Dean's List at Salisbury University. And I'm pleased to note that my grandson Sam Mudd, of Laurel, also made it.

Frank Samuel "Skip" Groff III, radio DJ and producer, died Feb. 18 in Olney at age 70. He was born in Waltham, Mass., but his military family moved frequently before settling in Suitland where Skip graduated from high school (which one, I wonder) and went on to Maryland U. to study TV and radio. His very large obit ran in *The Washington Post*.

### From the website of the Morningside VFD:

"Lots of hard work recently by Morningside Volunteers to be recognized.

"We would like to congratulate our own Chuck Li, Chelsea Trolli, Ryan Neuville and Jack Mansfield on successful completion of the requirements to operate as an Ambulance Attendant. We would like to recognize Live-In Firefighter EMT's Quida Livingston and Liam Sullivan on successfully completing the requirements to drive the Ambulance. And finally, our hats off to past Live-In Firefighter EMT Ryan Walsh on successfully completing the requirements to become an Engine Driver.

"These individuals and their efforts are indicative of our membership's desire to serve and quest for additional opportunities to do the same. We are proud of them and their commitment to our organization."

### Colonial Tavern Dinner

Darnall's Chance invites you to be their guest as they recreate the atmosphere and flavor of a mid-18th century tavern diner in Upper Marlborough on March 16, 7 p.m. Enjoy colonial food and spirits. Following dinner, listen to or join in with Ship's Company as they sing sea shanties and tavern songs of the period.

Reservation and payment are required in advance: resident, \$35; non-resident, \$45. Info: 301-952-8010. Darnall's Chance House Museum is at 14800 Governor Oden Bowie Drive in Upper Marlboro.

### Morningside Memories: 40 years ago

Local, county and state officials

gathered at the Morningside firehouse on March 4, 1979 to dedicate two plaques, one for Frank Briguglio, the late County Fire Chief, and one for Matt Rosch, former Morningside Mayor, founder of the Teen Club and volunteer fireman. Clair Loughmiller, president of the Morningside VFD, emceed the program.

On a sad note: former Morningsider Roman Valentine Stocklinski died suddenly Feb. 20, 1979, at his home in Florida. He was the husband of Morningside's first mayor, June Stocklinski.

### John Mudd, IBEW retiree

John Paul Mudd, 61, of Upper Marlboro, a retiree of the electrical union IBEW Local 26, died Feb. 20. He was born in Washington and grew up in Clinton. When he was a teenager, he started his own lawn-mowing business in Hillcrest Heights. That job evolved into a home-contracting business.

He loved country dancing, the beach and boardwalks. He loved helping the elderly and would drop everything to fix a leak or start a furnace late at night. Most of his renters didn't see him as a landlord; they saw him as a close friend.

Survivors include his mother Madeline Ann Mudd, daughter and son-in-law Maryann and Robert Moore, grandson Trent Moore and eight siblings. Mass of Christian Burial was at Lee Funeral Home with burial at Resurrection. By the way, John was a cousin, several degrees distant, of mine.

### Milestones

Happy birthday to Jon McKlveen, Shirley Dodgson and my grandson Richard Shearer, March 9; John F. Latimer (his 99th), Ange Meoli, Karl Kaufman Jr., Alberta M. Smith and my son-in-law John Mudd, March 10; Karen Cordero, Blake James Shipman and Father Scott Hahn, March 11; Harold Wilson, Rebecca Turner and Marcy Richardson, March 12; Pamela Woodall, Kathy Elborne, Cordelia Bland, Shirley Carruth and Gregory Ritter, March 13; my daughter Therese Gallegos and Belinda Benavidaz, March 14.

Arts Center, 10701 Livingston Road, Fort Washington, Maryland 20744. Telephone number is 301-203-6070; TTY 301-699-2544, HarmonyHallArts@pgparks.comarts.pgparks.com.

"Jourdan Carroll is one of those singers you never want to forget. His voice is so deep and mesmerizing, with notes so low, some claim he makes the ground shake, Carroll made his star-like debut in his early teens. His resemblance to Barry White was so often noted, he decided to bring it into his shows. In his tributes to Barry White, Carroll captures the charismatic persona of Barry White and White's penchant for making impromptu comments while performing."

"Carroll has performed on television, movies, and stages nationally, most notably in Las Vegas and New York. He has performed for such prestigious audiences as The Soul Train Cruise and the Tom Joyner Foundation Fantastic Voyage. His tribute to Barry White is a must-see event for Barry White and classic rhythm and blues fans." This Concert is for all ages. Tickets cost \$40 per person, \$35 seniors and students.

### CONGRATULATIONS

Congratulations to Makayla Eugene who lives in Brandywine, Maryland, the daughter of Curtis and Stephanie Eugene, granddaughter of Frank and Gwendolyn Deville. Congratulations to all the students at Frederick Douglass High School in Upper Marlboro, Maryland who made the Honor Roll.

"Forty five percent of Frederick Douglass students achieved honor roll not to mention the annual senior college scholarship awards, as well as extracurricular and alumni success.

### PANCAKE NIGHT

Christ United Methodist Church located at 22919 Christ Church Road, Aquasco, Maryland 20608 will have their Annual Pancake Night, Tuesday, March 12, 2019 at 6:30 p.m. For more information call 301-888-1316. Reverend Constance C. Smith, Pastor.

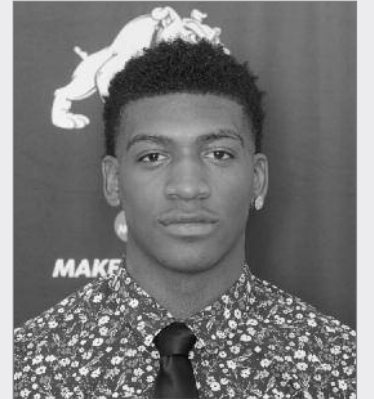
## Around the County

### Bowie State University Honors

#### Saiquan Jamison Named to Men's All-CIAA Team

CHARLOTTE, N.C. (Feb 25, 2019)—The Central Intercollegiate Athletic Association (CIAA) announced its 2018–2019 Men's All-CIAA and All-Rookie Teams today at the CIAA Basketball Tip-Off Awards Breakfast at the Charlotte Convention Center. **Bowie State University junior Saiquan Jamison** (Upper Marlboro, Md.) was the lone Bulldogs player voted to the team.

The All-CIAA honor is Jamison's first and he ranks first in NCAA Division II Offensive Rebounds (144) and leads the CIAA in Rebound Average 10.8 per game.



PHOTOGRAPH COURTESY BOWIE STATE SPORTS INFORMATION

Saiquan Jamison

#### Pere Alexander, Kyaja Williams and Head Coach Shadae Swan Receive Pre-Tournament Honor

CHARLOTTE, N.C. (Feb 25, 2019)—The Central Intercollegiate Athletic Association (CIAA) announced its 2018–2019 Women's All-CIAA and All-Rookie Teams today at the CIAA Basketball Tip-Off Awards Breakfast at the Charlotte Convention Center. Bowie State University redshirt senior **Pere Alexander** (Baltimore, Md.) and junior **Kyaja Williams** (Baltimore, Md.) were voted to the All-CIAA Team while **Bulldogs Head Coach Shadae Swan** was voted CIAA Women's Coach of the Year.

Williams leads the team in scoring with a 13.3 points per game average and Alexander ranks second in team scoring with a 11.9 points per game average. This is Williams' second All-CIAA honor and Alexander's first All-CIAA selection. Swan has led the Bulldogs to three straight 20-win seasons which includes a 22-4 overall mark this season through games of February 23.

The Bulldogs enter the tournament as the #2 Seed in the Northern Division and will receive a bye through the opening rounds.

—Gregory C. Goings, *Bowie State Sports Information*

### Free Alzheimer's Workshops in March in Prince George's County

#### Healthy Living for Your Brain and Body: Tips from the Latest Research

Tuesday, March 12, 2019 at 10:30 a.m.

John Eager Howard Community Center, 4400 Shell Street, Capitol Heights, MD 20743

Free. For more information and to register, call 800-272-3900.

At any age, there are lifestyle habits we can adopt to help maintain or even potentially improve our health. These habits may also help to keep our brains healthy as we age and possibly delay the onset of cognitive decline. This free Alzheimer's Association workshop covers four areas of lifestyle habits that are associated with healthy aging: cognitive activity, physical health and exercise, diet and nutrition, and social engagement. In each area, we will discuss what we know, drawing on current research, as well as what we can do—steps to take now to improve or maintain overall health in each area.

#### Understanding Alzheimer's and Dementia and Alzheimer's

Monday, March 18, 2019 at 7 p.m.

Central Baptist Church of Camp Springs, 5600 Old Branch Avenue, Camp Springs, MD 20748

Free. For more information and to register, call 800-272-3900.

Alzheimer's disease is not a normal part of aging. If you or someone you know is affected by Alzheimer's disease or dementia, it's time to learn the facts. Join the Alzheimer's Association for this free workshop. Topics covered include:

- Symptoms and effects of Alzheimer's disease and other types of dementia
- How Alzheimer's affects the brain
- Causes and risk factors
- How to find out if it's Alzheimer's disease
- The benefits of early detection
- How to address a diagnosis of Alzheimer's disease
- Stages of the disease
- Treatment
- Hope for the future
- Ways the Alzheimer's Association can help

—Cindy Schelhorn, *Alzheimer's Association*

### Local Students Honored

#### Local students selected to University of Minnesota Twin Cities Dean's List

*Students honored for academic success during the 2018 fall semester*

MINNEAPOLIS / ST. PAUL, Minn. (February 26, 2019)—**Roslyn J Brehl**, Junior, College of Liberal Arts, from **Mount Rainier, MD**, has been named to the 2018 fall semester Dean's List at the University of Minnesota Twin Cities, the university announced today.

To qualify for the Dean's List, a student must complete 12 or more letter-graded credits while attaining a 3.66 grade point average.

—University of Minnesota Public Relations

### UW-Madison Announces Winter Graduates

MADISON, Wis. (February 25, 2019)—More than 3,320 students received degrees from the University of Wisconsin-Madison during the winter commencement ceremony on Dec. 16, 2018. About 1,300 graduates took part.

Degree recipients from Prince George's County for the summer and fall of 2018 are:

#### Capitol Heights, MD

**Taiwan Deal**, College of Letters and Science, Bachelor of Arts, Sociology

**PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENT:** Over the last several years drug overdoses have continued to increase. At this point, the Surgeon General has issued a statement for all communities to increase Narcan availability since research shows when communities increase education and availability, the number of overdose deaths decrease. For more information, visit: <https://www.narcononnewliferetreat.org/blog/where-to-get-narcan.htm>. **Addiction Screenings:** Narconon can help you take steps to overcome addiction in your family. Call today for free screenings or referrals. **1-800-431-1754**

# COMMUNITY

## The American Counseling Association's Counseling Corner

### Recognizing Depression In Seniors

Everyone feels sad at times. Numerous things in life can leave us feeling blue. For most of us, this is usually a passing emotion that diminishes with time but for some people this sadness can be severe, long-lasting and life-affecting. That's when feeling blue can cross the line into depression, a mental health issue affecting a large number of our older population.

It's not difficult to understand why feelings of sadness can be more common or frequent for seniors. As we age our lives change in a variety of ways, often not for the better. There may be more health problems, often more severe. An older person's physical abilities have also begun to diminish and many find their memory isn't quite as sharp as it once was.

A common cause for sadness among the elderly is the loss of someone close. Feelings of grief over the loss of a spouse, relative or a close friend are often very strong and most likely more frequent with the passing of time.

While everyday feelings of sadness are not depression, there are some signs that can indicate when common sadness is turning into a more serious mental health issue. The most noticeable is when the sadness and grief someone is experiencing doesn't diminish with the passage of time.

Other signs of the onset of depression are when the joy in a person's life seem to be gone. Laughter is rare, favorite activities are no longer enjoyed, and things that used to bring pleasure, like a pretty sunset or a young grandchild, no longer provide happiness for the person.

Someone suffering from depression may also be tired all the time, loses interest in friends and withdraws socially. Eating and sleeping problems are common, and in some cases increased use of alcohol or drugs.

When someone close to you, or even you yourself, has experienced a painful loss and is beginning to exhibit signs of hopelessness, it's vital to get help quickly. Depression not only has a negative affect on health, but is a common cause of suicide.

A family physician or professional counselor has access to a number of tests that can help pinpoint depression, along with a variety of methods for treating it. Depression is a mental health issue that does not cure itself but it's a very treatable problem. Seek help quickly.

Counseling Corner is provided by the American Counseling Association. Comments and questions to [ACAcorner@counseling.org](mailto:ACAcorner@counseling.org) or visit the ACA website at [www.counseling.org](http://www.counseling.org).

### Local Students from A2

#### Laurel, MD

**Thanicha Ruangmas**, Col of Agricultural & Life Sci, Doctor of Philosophy, Agricultural and Applied Economics  
Chancellor Rebecca Blank praised the graduates for working tirelessly to achieve the dream of a college degree.

Chancellor Rebecca Blank told graduates that the number one predictor of their impact will not be genius or luck, but how hard they try and how hard they work.

Keynote speaker Allan "Bud" Selig, commissioner emeritus of Major League Baseball and a 1956 UW-Madison grad, told graduates that when he was in their shoes more than 60 years ago, he figured he'd one day be a history professor. But that wasn't his passion, he said. He dreamed instead of "a baseball life." He persevered to make it happen, moving a bankrupt Seattle franchise to his hometown and founding the Milwaukee Brewers.

"I knew if I were to live my dream, I had to be focused, I had to be resolute, and I had to be ready and willing to take a chance should an opportunity ever present itself," he said.

Student speaker Jamie Dawson, a crowd favorite with an enthusiastic fan club among audience members, encouraged her fellow graduates to "walk toward the things that give you joy," but also to not be afraid of life's complexities. On campus, she organized protests that gave underrepresented students a voice through art. "Embrace your story, your opinions, your creativity," she said Sunday.

For more on the graduation, see <https://news.wisc.edu/winter-commencement-surprises-celebration-and-moving-on-to-that-adult-thing/>

For more information about UW-Madison, visit <http://www.wisc.edu>.

—Mike Klein, University of Wisconsin-Madison

### Local student named to Dean's List at Washington University in St. Louis

ST. LOUIS, Mo. (February 27, 2019)—**Mireille Gerdes of Upper Marlboro, MD**, (20774) was named to the Dean's List for the fall 2018 semester at Washington University in St. Louis. Gerdes is enrolled in the university's College of Arts & Sciences.

To qualify for the Dean's List in the College of Arts & Sciences, students must earn a semester grade point average of 3.6 or above and be enrolled in at least 14 graded units.

Washington University in St. Louis is counted among the world's leaders in teaching, research, patient care and service to society. The university draws students to St. Louis from more than 100 countries and all 50 states, the District of Columbia, Guam, Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands. The total student body is more than 15,000 undergraduate, graduate and professional students. The approximately 3,800 faculty teach in seven schools: Arts & Sciences, Brown School, Olin Business School, Sam Fox School of Design & Visual Arts, McKelvey School of Engineering, School of Law and School of Medicine.

—Sue McGinn, Washington University in St. Louis

## Alzheimer's Association National Capital Area Chapter Recognizes Prince George's County Residents For Outstanding Fundraising Efforts in 2018

By CINDY SCHELHORN  
Alzheimer's Association

MCLEAN, Va. (February 27, 2019)—The Alzheimer's Association National Capital Area Chapter recognized community members across the region for their outstanding efforts in fundraising at a special reception on February 8 in McLean, VA. Among the honorees were several residents of Prince George's County.

Team Baker's Fun Bunch, led by former Prince George's County Executive Rushern Baker and the Baker family and friends, were presented with a Luminary Award for exemplary commitment to the Walk to End Alzheimer's in Prince George's County. The Baker Family also established the Christa Beverly Foundation in honor of Mr. Baker's wife to raise funds and awareness of Alzheimer's disease.

Among the honorees were 15 Prince George's County residents honored for their participation in Walk to End Alzheimer's, the world's largest event to raise awareness and funds for Alzheimer's care, support and research. They are (in alphabetical order):

- **Earlene Armstrong of Bowie, MD:** Raised \$3,325 as a member of Team The Power of Love
- **Michelle Bennett of Temple Hills, MD:** Raised \$3,436 as a member of Team Perkins Eastman
- **Gayle Broadway of Temple Hills, MD:**

Raised \$3,000 as a member of Team Mt. Ennon

- **Tajuana Brown of Capitol Heights, MD:** Raised \$8,456 as a member of Team Nana's Legacy
- **Brandon Burke of Suitland, MD:** Raised \$4,275 as a member of Team #be-aburke
- **Lynn Carpenter of Suitland, MD:** Raised \$3,075 as a member of Team Baker Donelson—DC
- **Tina Flowers of Fort Washington, MD:** Raised \$3,360 as a member of Team CMBC
- **Tony Grimes of Upper Marlboro, MD:** Raised \$6,810 as a member of Team Baker's Fun Bunch
- **Delmarie Hines of Fort Washington, MD:** Raised \$3,600 as a member of Team CMBC
- **Carlotta Jackson of New Carrollton, MD:** Raised \$3,540 as a member of Team Elder Estates, LLC
- **Kimberly James of Bowie, MD:** Raised \$5,256 for Team Future of Fitness
- **Irma Nicholson of Upper Marlboro, MD:** Raised \$7,920 as a member of Team The Power of Love
- **Katrina Streeter of Bowie, MD:** Raised \$6,630 as a member of Team DST PG-CAC
- **Barbara Stevenson of Fort Washington, MD:** Raised \$3,250 as a member of Team Faith Hope Love

- **Brenda Sutton of Upper Marlboro, MD:** Raised \$3,535 as a member of Team Sunshine Rays

The Chapter also recognized **Bailey Bernius of Bowie, MD** for outstanding accomplishment in fundraising for The Longest Day, the Association's newest global fundraising and awareness campaign. Bernius raised \$4,538 as a member of Team CDR.

People interested in creating a fundraising event or activity of their own choice for The Longest Day are encouraged to visit [alz.org/thelongestday](http://alz.org/thelongestday) to learn more and to register.

The 2019 Walk to End Alzheimer's in Prince George's County will be held on Saturday, September 14 at National Harbor. Registration is open for that Walk, as well as additional Walks throughout Maryland, DC and Virginia. Learn more at [alz.org/walk](http://alz.org/walk), or contact LaKeysha Boyd-Moore at [lmoore1@alz.org](mailto:lmoore1@alz.org) or 240.518.8496.

The Alzheimer's Association is the leading voluntary health organization in Alzheimer's care, support and research. Our mission is to eliminate Alzheimer's disease through the advancement of research, to provide and enhance care and support for all affected, and to reduce the risk of dementia through the promotion of brain health. Our vision is a world without Alzheimer's. For more information, visit [alz.org](http://alz.org) or call 800-272-3900.

## Maryland Lawmakers Back Sweeping Education Overhaul Plan

By CAROLINA VELLOSO  
Capital News Service

WASHINGTON (Feb 27, 2019)—Maryland's congressional delegation has voiced strong support for a sweeping plan to reform the state's educational system.

The Commission on Innovation and Excellence in Education has been investigating how to improve Maryland's public schools for more than two years.

In a meeting in the House Tuesday with some of the state's congressional delegation, commission chairman William E. "Brit" Kirwan, former president of the University of Maryland, College Park and former chancellor of the University System of Maryland, said the state's educational system is "mediocre" and more needs to be done to strengthen it.

"We are at a huge crossroads moment for our state," Kirwan said. "One of the hurdles we have to overcome is the complacency about the quality of our education."

One problem the commission has identified is insufficient financial support for schools located in low-income areas.

"We just aren't investing enough money as other states and other countries do in these schools," Kirwan said.

The commission is recommending expanding access to high-quality preschool for three- and four-year-olds and career and technical education for high schoolers.

Another top concern of the commission is the high turnover rate for teachers in the state. According to Kirwan, 47 percent of second-year teachers do not return for a third year.

Sen. Ben Cardin, D-Maryland, said "elevating the profession of teaching as a high profession with adequate training and compensa-

tion" is imperative to improving the quality of education in the state.

The commission is currently requesting \$3.8 billion for the necessary improvements. Cardin said this money would be phased in over a ten-year period in a "fiscally responsible manner."

Kirwan said he expects the Maryland General Assembly to address several of the commission's findings in the coming weeks. No significant legislation, though, is expected until next year's legislative session as the commission continues to work through the fall of 2019.

Kirwan said the leaders of the Maryland General Assembly are committed to considering legislation that implements the recommendations of the commission.

The delegation members made it clear that they consider education reform one of their highest priorities at the state and federal level.

"I think implementing the recommendations of the Kirwan Commission (has) to be the top, number one priority of the state," Sen. Chris Van Hollen, D-Maryland, said.

Rep. Elijah Cummings, D-Baltimore, said "the greatest threat to our national security is our failure to properly educate every single one of our children."

House Majority Leader Steny Hoyer, D-Mechanicsville, said in a statement that "we must ensure that every student has the opportunity to succeed, from early childhood education through secondary education."

"It is critically important that we bolster school readiness and college and career readiness as well as address disparities for students of color and students in low-income communities," Hoyer added. "The delegation is committed to supporting the implementation of Dr. Kirwan's recommendations and working with local leaders and stakeholders to improve public education in our state."

## NAREB Joins NAACP at New York Stock Exchange



PHOTO COURTESY OF NAREB

On Tuesday, February 26, 2019, the National Association of Real Estate Brokers (NAREB), based in Lanham, joined the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) for the ringing of the NYSE closing bell highlighting the Minority Empowerment ETF (NACP). (L-R) Donnell Williams, President-Elect of NAREB; Jacqueline Richardson, NAACP; Mayarani Smith, Regional Vice President, NAREB; Derrick Johnson, President and CEO, NAACP; Antoine Thompson, NAREB Executive Director, and former NYS Senator; and Marvin Owens, NAACP.

# COMMENTARY

## Todd M. Turner

Prince George's  
County Council Chair



### Statement in Response to Use of Racial Slur by Maryland Delegate

The Prince George's County Council soundly condemns the use of a racial slur, inappropriate in any context, by Maryland lawmaker Mary Ann Lisanti to describe our County. The use of such language is abhorrent and harmful, and Delegate Lisanti owes Prince George's County residents a public apology. We are proud, hardworking and longstanding citizens of the larger Maryland community and its history, and we share in the continuing fight for equality and opportunity for all.

The Council joins with County Executive Angela Alsobrooks, the Prince George's House Delegation, the Maryland Legislative Black Caucus and other stakeholders in the call for the General Assembly to take appropriate and responsive action. In the best interest of the state and its residents, Delegate Lisanti must make an important decision about her ability to effectively legislate on behalf of Maryland's richly diverse communities.

### Bill to Raise Minimum Wage Passes House of Delegates

By KRISTEN PETERSON  
for Maryland Fight for \$15

ANNAPOLIS, Md. (March 1, 2019)—Today, the Maryland House of Delegates passed a version of the Minimum Wage (Fight for Fifteen) bill (HB 166), sponsored by Delegate Diana M. Fennell (D-Prince George's). The House voted 96-44 in favor of gradually raising the state's minimum wage from \$10.10 to \$15 per hour. The bill now heads to the Senate.

Advocates are pleased the bill passed and would like the Senate to include indexing in their version of the bill which increases the minimum wage to inflation.

"We are excited that the bill passed the House with no additional amendments after Committee," says Ricarra Jones of the Maryland Fight For \$15 campaign. "We are asking the Senate not to further weaken the bill with more amendments. And we are making the case to the Senate to index the minimum wage based on inflation—the revised bill means that the minimum wage will max out at \$15 in 2025. Repeatedly debating the minimum wage issue is tiring for everyone in Maryland."

The original legislation proposed starting the increase this year and arriving at \$15 an hour by 2023. The revised bill requires employers to increase the current \$10.10 minimum to \$11.00 in January 2020 and then increase the minimum wage by 75 cents each January through 2025.

According to the Maryland Center on Economic Policy, a wage of \$15 per hour in 2025 is equivalent to earning \$12.97 per hour today. That is 46 cents less per hour than the original phase-in schedule proposed in the bill—\$960 over the course of a year for a full-time worker.

Supporters also plan to push the Senate to adopt a sub-minimum wage of at least 50 percent of the minimum wage in their bill to ensure a more stable wage for this workforce, which is estimated to be up to 30,000 people in Maryland.

This workforce, predominately made up of women and people of color, is vulnerable to unpredictable drops in pay as tips fluctuate from shift to shift.\*

"Raising wages for tipped workers does not affect their tips," adds Jones. "Tipped workers often must put up with sexual harassment on the job as well as live in poverty

and depend on food stamps at rates twice that of the general population. And states that have raised this wage have much lower poverty rates, while restaurant establishment growth is equal or higher."

Advocates say the bill will help working families in Maryland, especially those led by women of color, to meet their basic needs and their kids' needs and to address historical racial and gender pay gaps.

According to the Maryland Center on Economic Policy, 90 percent of affected workers are at least 20 years old, and three out of five work full time. Workers who would benefit from a raise in the minimum wage include one in four Maryland working women, one in four Maryland workers of color and 23,000 veterans.

The Senate version of the bill (SB 280) is sponsored by Senator Cory McCray (D-Baltimore City) and has bipartisan support. Raising the minimum wage is a top priority for the Maryland Legislative Black Caucus and Maryland's Democratic legislative leaders included it on their legislative agenda for the first time this year.

\*May 2016 State Occupational Employment and Wage Estimates, [https://www.bls.gov/oes/current/oes\\_nat.htm](https://www.bls.gov/oes/current/oes_nat.htm)

## Marc Morial

President and CEO, National Urban League



### To Be Equal:

### #OscarsSoWhite Beginning to Yield Much-Needed Change

"When film and television privilege white stories over other stories, they reinforce a racial hierarchy that devalues people of color. Not only do dramatic racial disparities indicate employment discrimination in Hollywood, the underrepresentation of people of color in film and television can also have wider societal consequences... When Audiences never see actors of color in major roles, they are less likely to perceive them as on equal footing with whites. Inversely, when whites and their stories are celebrated more than their fair share, audiences begin to associate significance, admiration and power with that group over others."

—Nancy Wang Yuen, Reel Inequality: Hollywood Actors and Racism

The Academy Awards ceremony on Sunday marked a paradigm shift for an industry that has struggled with diversity. Of the four acting awards, three were won by people of color: Mahershala Ali, Regina King and Rami Malek; Black Panther's Ruth Carter was the first African American to win an Oscar for Costume Design and Hanna Beachler the first to win for Production Design; and the writing team behind BlackKKlansman included two Black artists, Spike Lee and Kevin Willmot.

The industry made significant steps in the last few years.

Following two years of Academy Awards voting that produced no acting nominees of color, the National Urban League responded with blistering criticism.

In a 2016 letter to then-President of the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences, I pointed out that the overwhelmingly white, male, and older membership of the Academy dismally failed to reflect the vibrant creative filmmaking community.

At the time, the Academy was 94% white, 77% male, 86% age 50 or older, and had a median age of 62.

Activist April Reign created the hashtag #OscarsSoWhite in 2015, but the industry resisted change and when the following year produced no acting nominees of color, pressure—including our demand for a clear and specific blueprint for change—intensified.

Fortunately, our efforts produced results, and the Academy changed its membership rules. The class of members admitted in June 2016 comprised 46% women, and 41% people of color. The June 2017 class comprised 39% women and 30% were people of color. In 2018, 49% of new members were women and 38% were people of color.

The percentage of voting members of the academy who are people of color has doubled since 2015, from 8% to 16%.

That's still far below the 27% of the U.S. population that identify as non-white, but it is a welcome development.

Asked if lack of racial diversity is still an issue in Hollywood, April Reign answered, "Absolutely yes."

"Until we are no longer having these conversations about firsts in 2019, until we see everyone

having the opportunity, whether it's race and ethnicity, sexual orientation, disability, indigenous people in this country. Until we all have an opportunity to see ourselves represented on screen, not just during awards season but all year long, I'll still continue to talk about #OscarsSoWhite.

"The work continues, but I am thrilled to be able to celebrate the incremental progress that has been made, even if only for a night," she added.

It's worth noting that change began only after the Academy instituted specific rules designed to increase diversity. A vague push for diversity after the #OscarsSoWhite campaign began appeared to produce no significant results.

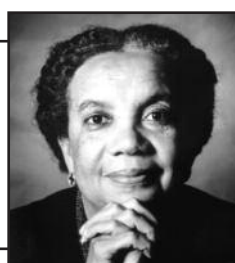
"It seems that the Academy's board of trustees believes diversity is a problem that will resolve itself," we wrote in our 2016 letter to the Academy. "The nominations show otherwise."

As we noted at the time, a lack of diversity in the entertainment industry is a complex issue without a simple solution, and we are well-aware the problem neither begins nor ends with awards nominations. But award nominations translate into box-office success, and the potential for box-office success determines which projects are greenlighted. Black Panther, with a nearly all-Black cast and a Black director, broke box-office records for 2018.

We hope its success, both critically and financially, bodes well for the future of diversity in American cinema.

## Marion Wright Edelman

President Emerita,  
Children's Defense Fund



### ChildWatch:

### Jean Fairfax Raised the Bar

"Someone had to break the pattern, and very often the civil rights revolution was initiated by the most vulnerable Black persons. Many of them were women and many of them were children—tough, resilient, hopeful, beautiful children. The greatest experience of my life was standing with them as they took the risks."

These words from Jean Fairfax were highlighted in the recent remembrance by the NAACP Legal Defense Fund (LDF) for their beloved colleague, who passed away in February at age 98. Jean was the founder and director of LDF's Division of Legal Information and Community Services and served at LDF for twenty years before retiring in 1984. In that role she made a quiet but profound difference. As LDF explained: "Over the course of her 40-year career, Jean Fairfax was a pioneering organizer, a professor, a religious scholar, a missionary, and an unparalleled strategist and policy advocate. She helped organize Black students and families in rural communities in the years following Brown v. Board of Education, and went on to shape and lead some of the most influential federal government policy innovations to support working class and poor families."

Later she and her sister Betty, a teacher, became philanthropic leaders and role models as they used their carefully invested savings to endow more than a million dollars in scholarships for poor students and students of color. Along the way she was a collaborator, friend, and inspiration to many of us at the Children's Defense Fund. As Black History Month has come to an end, Jean Fairfax's example reminds us we can't confine the importance of Black history to a single month. And as Women's History Month begins she is a special example of the legions of women—too often unsung—who have always been at the backbone of every transforming social movement in America.

Jean was raised in Cleveland, Ohio. Her parents

were both the first generation in their families born into freedom and the first to go to college, and Jean grew up valuing education and service to her community. After graduating Phi Beta Kappa from the University of Michigan she earned a joint degree in comparative religion from Union Theological Seminary and Columbia University and served as a university administrator before traveling to Austria as a missionary. She then became a Director of the American Friends Service Committee—first working with colleges and then becoming their Director of Southern Civil Rights. That work in the South at the height of the Civil Rights Movement led her to her role at LDF.

At LDF she helped determine strategy and researched and wrote key reports. One of her early projects there was a collaboration between LDF and the Washington Research Project, CDF's parent organization. That 1969 report, Title I: Is It Helping Poor Children?, exposed widespread illegal diversion of federal funds in Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act intended to provide financial assistance to local educational agencies serving areas with concentrations of educationally disadvantaged children from low-income families across the South. Winifred Green, who later founded the Southern Coalition for Educational Equity and was a longtime CDF board member, partnered with her on that report. Jean continued to work with Winifred Green and Oleta Garrett Fitzgerald, now CDF's Southern Regional Director, at the Southern Coalition on Educational Equity. Her legacy and influence lives on

through the Southern Rural Black Women's Initiative for Economic and Social Justice organized across the Deep South by Winifred, Oleta, and Sophia Bracy Harris, founding executive director of the Federation of Child Care Centers of Alabama.

Jean held fast to her priorities throughout her extraordinarily dedicated life. LDF's current President and Director-Counsel Sherrilyn Ifill said: "Jean's guiding principle was her deep and sincere devotion to and respect for poor and working-class families. She listened. She learned about the needs of parents and children and the barriers they faced, and then she fought for policies that would bring to those families the resources they needed to move their lives forward. She was a master strategist. Ms. Fairfax understood how racism worked to depress opportunities for Black families, and she was clear-eyed about the need to focus on the system of policies and practices—especially funding policies—that could be transformed to create a level playing field for those most in need."

One of Jean's most influential legacies was her successful effort leading the Committee on School Lunch Participation, a coalition of women's organizations, which in April 1968 released Their Daily Bread, a study of the National School Lunch Program. The report helped prompt Congress to establish the Special Food Service Program for Children, which became the Child Care Food Service Program and the Summer Food Service Program. After the CBS broadcast of the documentary "Hunger in America" and continuing pressure from Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s Poor People's Campaign and others, the Committee's work persuaded President Nixon to increase funding for the National School Lunch Program serving children in areas of concentrated poverty.

Jean was a firm but gentle leader. CDF colleagues shared

that if you arrived to a meeting with Jean 10 minutes early, you might still be late! Jean's attention to precision and excellence was a hallmark of everything she did, but she was always welcoming, inclusive, and gracious. Sophia Bracy Harris remembered Jean visiting her family when Sophia and her sister were integrating their high school in Elmore County, Alabama, soon after a firebombing of their home: "My mother spoke of having visited with royalty when Jean and Winifred visited us at our newly rebuilt house; Mom wearing her ragged field clothes, and Jean wearing a dress fit for a queen. But Jean treated Mom as if she was a queen."

Jean Fairfax set a high standard. We all can honor her legacy by following her example and carrying on her good work to help end child poverty and the hunger and lack of a quality education that so often accompany it.

## The Prince George's Post

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# BUSINESS AND FINANCE

## Social Security Matters

Ask Rusty:

### Why Should a Veteran Pay For Medicare?

By RUSSELL GLOOR,  
AMAC Certified Social Security Advisor  
Association of Mature American Citizens

Dear Rusty:

I am a Veteran and all my Medical needs are covered by the VA. Why should I be paying for Medicare out of my monthly SS check?  
**Signed: Inquiring Veteran**

**Dear Inquiring Veteran:** Well, it depends upon how comfortable you are that the VA will be able to provide ALL the medical services you may ever need, emergency or otherwise, for the rest of your life. I, too, am a veteran and receive some of my care—such as wellness exams, blood tests, some prescription drugs, and immunizations—from the VA, but I also have Medicare to cover other services which are not typically available on an immediate basis from the VA. The point is, there will almost surely be times when you won't be able to rely on the VA for needed immediate care or certain specialized services from specific medical experts, and if you don't have Medicare you may find yourself facing some very large medical expenses for which you will be personally responsible. That's where Medicare will help because nearly every medical facility and healthcare service in the country accepts patients with Medicare. And being immediately accepted as a Medicare patient anywhere in the country, anytime of day or night must certainly have some value for you. After all, none of us know what our health future will be.

Since you're now collecting Social Security I assume you're already enrolled in Medicare Parts A & B, and you're questioning why you should continue to pay the Part B premium. Medicare Part B is coverage for doctors and other outpatient services, while Medicare Part A provides hospitalization coverage. There's a premium for Part B (\$135.50/month in 2019), but Part A is free if you also qualify for Social Security. And, by the way, you must have Medicare Part A to collect Social Security after you're 65. For information, VA coverage for drugs is considered "creditable" as an alternative to Medicare Part D prescription drug coverage. But other VA healthcare coverage is not a "creditable" alternative to Part B by Medicare's standards, so it won't count for avoiding a late enrollment penalty if you drop Part B now and decide afterwards to re-enroll.

Unless you have other "creditable" healthcare coverage from your or your spouse's employer after dropping Part B, re-enrolling later will result in you being assessed a late enrollment penalty of 10% on top of the Part B premium amount, recurring every year, for each full year you go without Part B coverage. That penalty doesn't go away, and it will go up as the Medicare Part B premium increases (which it does from time to time).

Additionally, you will be restricted when you can later re-enroll and when your coverage will start again. For clarity, if you have other "creditable" (not VA) coverage you can drop Part B, save the premium, and re-enroll in Part B again later without penalty (when your other "creditable" coverage ends). But if you don't, you may find your healthcare options limited and you'll incur penalties for re-enrolling in Part B later.

Obviously the choice is yours to make, but I suggest you consider the above points carefully when making your decision about whether to drop Medicare Part B and rely only on the VA only for your healthcare coverage. That's not to take anything away from the excellent healthcare services offered by the VA, but only to make sure you're aware of the risks associated with dropping Medicare Part B.

*The 1.7 million member Association of Mature American Citizens (AMAC) (<https://www.amac.us>) is a vibrant, vital senior advocacy organization that takes its marching orders from its members. We act and speak on their behalf, protecting their interests and offering a practical insight on how to best solve the problems they face today. Live long and make a difference by joining us today at <https://amac.us/join-amac>.*

*This article is intended for information purposes only and does not represent legal or financial guidance. It presents the opinions and interpretations of the AMAC Foundation's staff, trained and accredited by the National Social Security Association (NSSA). NSSA and the AMAC Foundation and its staff are not affiliated with or endorsed by the Social Security Administration or any other governmental entity. To submit a question, visit our website ([amacfoundation.org/programs/social-security-advisory](http://amacfoundation.org/programs/social-security-advisory)) or email us at [ssad-visitor@amacfoundation.org](mailto:ssad-visitor@amacfoundation.org).*

## Maryland Small Business Development Center Workshop

### Access to Capital 3 Day Workshop Women-Owned Business Training

Seeking financing for your Women-Owned business, and want to explore applying for a loan? Are you starting a business or expanding your business? This training prepares you for the unique challenges of Women-Owned Businesses needing to apply and gain financing.

The training will cover: How to understand financial statements; how to create a winning loan package; the importance of a strong management team and business strategy; registering for one-on-one confidential business consulting with a SBDC consultant.

**Cost: \$50.00\* Register at <http://www.mdsbdc.umd.edu>**

**Dates: March 26, April 2, April 9, 2019 • 4-6 p.m.**

**University of Maryland, Baltimore**

**620 West Lexington Street**

**Baltimore, MD 21201**

Contact Information: Jennifer Funn

\*Scholarship provided by The Columbia Bank

## Maryland Mortgage Program Announces New Products and Honors Top Performers

Mortgage products now available for repeat homebuyers

By PRESS OFFICER  
Maryland Department of Housing  
and Community Development

NEW CARROLLTON, Md. (February 25, 2019)—The Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development recently announced new products under the Maryland Mortgage Program before an audience of mortgage lenders, real estate professionals, mortgage insurers, and other homeownership partners at the Hotel Annapolis on February 22. The department also launched a new, consumer-focused social media presence and recognized the program's top lending partners.

"Homeownership strengthens Maryland's communities and the economy, and, with a 30 percent increase in mortgage loans this fiscal year, the performance of the Maryland Mortgage Program under Governor Hogan's leadership continues to be tremendous," said Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development Secretary Kenneth C. Holt. "Expanding our loan and down payment assistance options and delivering exemplary customer service will ensure the Maryland Mortgage Program remains an attractive option for potential homebuyers."

Chief among the new Maryland Mortgage Program products is an array of loans and down payment assistance options specifically tailored to repeat homebuyers for the first time in program history. These new products include down payment assistance loans or grants of up to 4 percent of the purchase price.

Additional products featuring low and fixed interest rates and down payment assistance for first-time homebuyers and persons with disabilities were also announced.

To increase program access and communication for customers, the program has launched its own independent social media presence, including program-specific Facebook, Twitter and Instagram accounts.

The department also honored its top performing lender partners—First Home Mortgage Corporation, PrimeLending, and Primary Residential Mortgage, Inc. These lenders closed an average of more than 10 loans per month in 2018. Ryan Paquin of First Home Mortgage Corporation earned recognition as the top producing loan officer. Long & Foster Real Estate was the top producing real estate company, more than doubling the production of the next highest broker. For the fifth year in a row, Naji Rashid was the Maryland Mortgage

Program's top producing real estate agent.

Top lenders in the popular student debt eliminator program, Maryland SmartBuy, were First Home Mortgage Corporation and Primary Residential Mortgage, Inc. Maryland SmartBuy is the first mortgage program of its kind in the nation, offering student loan debt relief up to \$40,000 when purchasing a home.

The Maryland Mortgage Program has been the state's flagship homeownership program for more than 35 years, providing fixed-rate mortgages along with down payment and closing cost incentives. From Fiscal Year 2015 through Fiscal Year 2018, the Maryland Mortgage Program assisted more than 9,900 homebuyers with mortgages valued at over \$2.3 billion and over \$49.5 million in down payment assistance. For more information about the Maryland Mortgage Program and its newest initiatives, visit <http://mmp.maryland.gov>.



PHOTO COURTESY MARYLAND DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

First Home Mortgage Corporation was the top performing lender in 2018.

## GasBuddy Reveals Consumers Can't Break Money-Wasting Habits When it Comes to Buying Gas, Costing Them \$375 a Year

Complacency and procrastination plague American drivers, costing them a brand new 50" flat screen TV or round trip plane tickets to the Bahamas, every year

By PATRICK DEHAAN  
GasBuddy

BOSTON (Feb 26, 2019)—Old habits die hard, and in this case, it is costly too. GasBuddy, the only smartphone app connecting drivers with the Perfect Pit Stop, today issued its 2019 Pump Habits Study, an annual study to glean insights on how consumers decide where and when to stop for fuel, revealing that drivers can overpay by up to \$375 per year due to factors such as laziness, procrastination, and not taking advantage of loyalty programs.

This study was first conducted in 2016, and compared to the results from this year's study, the results have remained consistent even though gas prices have fluctuated. There are three things drivers continue to do that can cost them hundreds per year.

### 1. Running on Empty

More than one-third (35 percent) of those surveyed have run out of gas. Most people (39 percent) wait until they only have a quarter tank left of gas while 18 percent wait until the gas light comes on. Only 18 percent of people decide to fill up when they see a station with a good price.

"If you're waiting until the last second to get gas, you're going to pull into the first station you see without checking a

price and risk filling up at an expensive station," said Patrick DeHaan, head of petroleum analysis at GasBuddy. "Our research shows that having enough fuel in your tank to shop around for the lowest price, especially in large metro areas including Los Angeles, Boston and Chicago can save upwards of 60 cents per gallon."

### 2. Caving to Convenience

Nearly 80 percent of respondents have a gas station they regularly go to. When choosing a regular station, 31 percent say it's because the station's location is convenient, up 7 percent from GasBuddy's 2016 pump habits survey.

"Going to the same station because it's convenient is robbing drivers' wallets," said DeHaan, "The station around the corner could be as much as 15-30 cents per gallon less. Coupled with other bad habits like running on empty, drivers are missing out on a potential savings of \$325 per year."

### 3. Losing out on Loyalty Programs

While the majority of respondents have a gas station they regularly go to, 46 percent of drivers are missing out on any same-station savings by not belonging to any gas station loyalty or membership programs that are accepted at multiple gas stations across the country.

"Today's gas station brands reward

drivers for being loyal customers by providing discounts at the pump as well as products in-store," says DeHaan. "Stacking loyalty memberships with a Pay with GasBuddy membership that provides additional discounts at the pump and is accepted at nearly all gas stations nationwide can save drivers upwards of \$50 per year."

### Methodology

Results based on 7,300 responses from a GasBuddy survey issued on January 25, 2019.

*GasBuddy is a company that connects drivers with their Perfect Pit Stop. As the leading source for crowdsourced, real-time fuel prices at more than 150,000 gas station convenience stores in the U.S., Canada and Australia, millions of drivers use the GasBuddy app and website every day to find gas station convenience stores based on fuel prices, location and ratings/reviews. GasBuddy's first-of-its-kind fuel savings program, Pay with GasBuddy, has saved Americans more than \$4.5 million at the pumps since its launch in 2017. The company's business solutions suite, GasBuddy Business Pages, provides Fuel Marketers and Retailers their best opportunity to maintain their station information, manage their brand, and promote to their target consumer audience. For more information, visit [www.gasbuddy.com](http://www.gasbuddy.com).*

## HBCUs from A1

acts as a "standalone funding bill" of future investment in the institutions. Two of the state's historically black institutions, Coppin State and Morgan State, fall in Haynes' district, and he said the universities face a "whole new realm of competitiveness."

Retention and graduation rates for the state's historically black institutions fall significantly below the rest of the state's four-year public institutions. Sixty-six percent of first-year students at the four universities return for a second year, com-

pared to 83 percent at the other institutions, according to the Maryland Higher Education Commission's 2018 Databook.

Similarly, graduation rates at historically black institutions are 34 percent, less than half that of the rest of the state's four-year public institutions, at 73 percent, according to the databook.

Capital News Service reported in 2018 (<https://cnsmaryland.org/2018/03/16/hbcu-settlement-pending-md-lawmakers-say-its-not-enough/>) on legislation the House and Senate introduced to implement a computer networking and cybersecurity pro-

gram at the institutions, as well as mandating equitable funding for the universities—much like this year's legislation—but the bills failed to pass through both chambers.

The Maryland Higher Education Commission declined comment on the bill, writing in an email, "Due to the fact this case is currently in litigation, the state is unable to comment on any portion of the Coalition for Equity and Excellence in Maryland Higher Education v. Maryland Higher Education Commission lawsuit at this time."

# OUT on the TOWN

## March Madness: Upcoming M-NCPPC, Arts and History Events in Prince George's County

By PRESS OFFICERS

**Department of Parks and Recreation**

RIVERDALE, Md. (Feb 22, 2019)—There's no competition for the arts and history programming offered by the Department of Parks and Recreation in Prince George's County! Choose from a host of events beginning now through April and you can decide for yourself who takes the title.

### Seventh Annual Artists on the Rise Exhibition Reception

Date and Time: Saturday, March 9, 2019, 1-3 p.m.  
Location: Montpelier Arts Center, 9652 Muirkirk Rd, Laurel, MD 20708

Cost: FREE

Montpelier Arts Center strives to foster a positive, creative environment in which young and emerging artists realize their full potential as creative individuals. In honor of National Youth Art Month, Montpelier spotlights the talents of teen visual artists (ages 13-18) from the Washington metropolitan area.

### Laurel Art Guild Exhibition Opening Reception and Awards Ceremony

Date and Time: Sunday, March 10, 2019, 2-4 p.m.  
Location: Montpelier Arts Center, 9652 Muirkirk Rd, Laurel, MD 20708

Cost: FREE

Organized by the Laurel Art Guild, this annual exhibit is juried by a regional professional and showcases works by artists ages 18 and older who live in the Washington metropolitan area and surrounding states. The exhibit includes paintings, drawings, photographs, sculptures, collages, and more. This year will be the 50th anniversary exhibit. Cash prizes will be awarded for first, second, and third places and three merit awards. Get involved in your local arts activities and enjoy the support and camaraderie of your fellow artists. Find more information at [www.laurelartguild.org](http://www.laurelartguild.org).

### Smooth Sounds for Seniors: Stefan Scaggiari

Date and Time: Thursday, March 14, 2019, 12-1:30 p.m.  
Location: Montpelier Arts Center, 9652 Muirkirk Rd, Laurel, MD 20708

Ages: Seniors, 60 or older

Cost: \$12, **Pre-registration required.**

Versatile pianist Stefan Scaggiari is no stranger to Montpelier audiences. Scaggiari offers a comfortable mix of classic American songs and contemporary originals. He has performed as both a jazz and classical pianist at the Monterey Jazz Festival, the Concord Pavilion, and Baltimore's Artscape. Scaggiari has collaborated as a soloist with the Kansas City Symphony, the Evansville Philharmonic, the Florida Orchestra, and the Calgary Philharmonic and with his trio in crossover classical/jazz concerts at the Shriver Hall Concert Series.

### Live at Montpelier: Mark Wade Trio

Date and Time: Friday, March 15, 2019, 8-10 p.m.  
Location: Montpelier Arts Center, 9652 Muirkirk Rd, Laurel, MD 20708

Cost: \$25, Pre-registration required.

Voted one of the top 10 bassists of 2016 by the prestigious Down-

beat Magazine Reader's Poll, Mark Wade has been an active bassist in the New York City area for over 20 years. In February 2015, Wade released his debut album, Event Horizon, to international acclaim.

### Classical Recital Series: Axios Trio

Date and Time: Sunday, March 17, 2019, 3-4:30 p.m.  
Location: Montpelier Arts Center, 9652 Muirkirk Rd, Laurel, MD 20708

Cost: FREE

Anastasia Christofakis (clarinet), Elizabeth Hill (piano), and Justin Page (cello) unite as a trio to provide an entertaining musical sensation. Christofakis is a Greek-American clarinetist who enjoys an active career as a soloist, chamber musician, and educator. Elizabeth G. Hill, DMA, is an accomplished soloist, chamber musician, orchestral pianist, and educator. Cellist Justin Page performs around the country with orchestras such as the Orlando Philharmonic, the Pensacola Symphony Orchestra, the Tallahassee Symphony Orchestra, and the North Carolina Symphony. Free; \$5/person appreciated.

### Live at Montpelier: Kristin Callahan Quintet

Date and Time: Friday, March 22, 2019, 8-10 p.m.  
Location: Montpelier Arts Center, 9652 Muirkirk Rd, Laurel, MD 20708

Cost: \$25, Pre-registration required.

The Kristin Callahan Quintet will take you on a journey back in time to the era of the formidable Peggy Lee. A Maryland native, Callahan started her career in Baltimore and is now performing throughout the East Coast, attracting many of the finest touring and recording artists. With two albums already under her belt, Callahan is working on her third album, A Burning Kiss, which continues the theme of exploring love in all its facets. Tickets: \$25/person; 10% discount for Montpelier members and seniors.

### Liberty Girls: An American Girl Book Club

Date and Time: Saturday, March 23, 2019, 10:30 a.m.-12 p.m.  
Location: Darnall's Chance House Museum, 14800 Governor Oden Bowie Dr., Upper Marlboro, MD 20772

Ages: Girls Ages 7-13

Cost: \$30; **reservation is required by 3/15**

The Liberty Girls book club is back in 2019 with American Girls Marie-Grace and Cecile! Read about the exciting adventures of these two 19th Century girls from New Orleans, Louisiana. At each meeting, members will participate in a book discussion with a Prince George's County librarian, do a period activity or craft, and enjoy light refreshments. \$30 membership fee covers the book discussions, activities, refreshments for all four meeting dates, as well as, a NEW 2019 Liberty Girls t-shirt and book bag. Liberty Girls meets four times! March 23 and 30, April 6 & 13

The Department of Parks and Recreation *delivers an award-winning park system through progressive, innovative leadership and a commitment to the community and the environment in Prince George's County. For more on the Department of Parks and Recreation, visit [www.pg-parks.com](http://www.pg-parks.com) and stay connected on Facebook, Twitter, Flickr, YouTube, and Instagram. The M-NCPPC Department of Parks and Recreation encourages and supports the participation of individuals with disabilities in all programs and services.*

### Calendar Spotlight

#### Celebrating Women

##### Women's History Month: Women in Dance

Date and Time: Saturday, March 9, 2019, 3:30 pm  
Celebrate female dancers, choreographers and composers! We'll also try some dance moves!

Cost: Free

Ages: Ages 5-12

Location: Hyattsville Branch Library (Temporary location), 6502 America Blvd., Hyattsville, MD 20782

Contact: 301-985-4690

##### Wilma Rudolph

Date and Time: Sunday, March 10, 2019, 10:00 a.m.

Description: Join a park ranger as Greenbelt Park celebrates Women's History Month and discover the inspiring story of Olympic Gold Medalist Wilma Rudolph. Meet at the Ranger Station.

Cost: Free

Ages: 8 and above

Location: Greenbelt Park, 6565 Greenbelt Road, Greenbelt, Maryland 20770

Contact: 301-344-3944, <http://www.nps.gov/gree>

*See Calendar of Events on A7 for more events celebrating women.*

### OPEN TO THE PUBLIC



Greenbelt Park

PHOTO COURTESY NPS

**Greenbelt Park** is a hidden jewel located just outside of Washington, DC. It provides a sylvan escape from the busy city life where you can camp, hike, and enjoy time with friends and family. Greenbelt Park offers camping, hiking trails and picnic areas. The park features a 174 site campground and is open year round. The campground is known for its affordability, safety, peaceful surroundings, and National Park Service hospitality. Site specific reservations are available through [www.nps.gov/gree](http://www.nps.gov/gree).

Greenbelt Park: 6565 Greenbelt Road, Greenbelt, MD 20770 • 301-344-3944 • [www.nps.gov/gree](http://www.nps.gov/gree)

## ERIC D. SNIDER'S IN THE DARK ... Movie Review ...

### The Favourite

The Favourite

Grade: A

Rated R, some harsh profanity, partial nudity and some strong sexuality.

1 hr., 59 min

You wouldn't want to make them the staple of your cinematic diet, but movies where the main characters are all corrupt or vain are often satisfying because they let us enjoy the audacity of bad

behavior without suffering the consequences of it. Never is that more true than when the people in question are politicians or other elites, as in the immensely entertaining "The Favourite," telling the roughly fact-based story of two women vying for the affections of England's Queen Anne in the early 1700s. It's from director Yorgos Lanthimos ("The Lobster," "The Killing of a Sacred Deer"), no

stranger to dark comedy, but with all of its cutthroat machinations, pathetic figureheads, and behind-closed-doors absurdity, you'd be forgiven for assuming it came from the minds behind "The Death of Stalin" and HBO's "Veep."

When we begin, Queen Anne (Olivia Colman) is physically frail, suffering from gout and other ailments, hopelessly neurotic and self-doubting. Her best friend since childhood, the iron-willed Lady Sarah (Rachel Weisz), duchess of Marlborough, gives Anne unflinchingly honest advice, basically running the kingdom through her and inspiring as much terror in the hearts of the royal servants as the queen does. Politically, Sarah and prominent parliamentarian Lord Godolphin (James Smith) favor

continuing the war against France, even if it means raising taxes to finance it. (There was a time when nations didn't go to war if they couldn't pay for it.) The queen leans toward reconciliation, but she's putty in Sarah's hands.

Lady Sarah's security is threatened when her cousin, Abigail (Emma Stone), a gentlewoman whose family has fallen on hard times, shows up wanting whatever menial palace job she can get. Assigned to be a skultery maid, she starts looking for ways to be noticed by Anne and succeeds before very long. Robert Harley (Nicholas Hoult), a member of the opposition party and a proponent of peace, sees his chance to sway the queen's opinion and recruits Abigail to help undermine Sarah's influence.

You see how this could be a lot of fun (for the audience, not the characters). Sarah and Abigail are well-matched connivers, and there are wonderfully fraught scenes where they practice pigeon-shooting while subtly threatening one another. Weisz and Stone are perfect in the roles, the former regal and stately, the latter more of a girl-next-door, get-down-in-the-mud type, both fiercely intelligent and formidable. And I haven't even

mentioned that their triangle with Queen Anne isn't just political but romantic...

The queen, not nakedly ambitious or duplicitous like they are, is pitiful in other ways. She orders a page boy to look at her, then screams at him for looking at her. When a public appearance grows awkward, she pretends to faint. Well aware that sugar upsets her stomach, she has servants standing by with puke buckets so she can heave her cake and eat it too.

Most of this is played for laughs and succeeds in that way, but Olivia Colman also brings real pathos to the role. We come to understand the loneliness of being a queen and the tragedies this particular queen has endured, many of them related to her gender. More than Abigail and Sarah, Queen Anne emerges as a sympathetic figure whose awfulness can be ascribed to her history. But all three women share in the indignities women suffered in that era, and one of the film's many pleasures is seeing them make the most of what little power they have. You'd still rather be a man than a woman in the 18th century, but you'd think twice if being a man meant you'd run afoul of any of these three.

The screenplay, written by historian Deborah Davis and punched up by Tony McNamara (with Lanthimos' input, one suspects), has something else on its mind, too: the sheer ridiculousness of the royal court. While the women are plotting and stabbing each other in the back, the bewigged fatheads of parliament have obscene feasts and indoor duck races, and worry about their makeup. In one entirely unexplained scene, they revel in throwing fruit at a fellow lord who's naked except for his wig and apparently enjoying whatever this game is. The dance steps at a formal ball are Monty Python-level silly and thus hilarious on two levels: the level where silly dancing is always funny, and the level where royalty is ludicrous.

I also enjoy the way the movie is shot (by cinematographer Robbie Ryan), using only natural light and candles for authenticity, often with fisheye lenses that give you the feeling you're watching surveillance footage. We are flies on the wall for all the funny, messy, shocking, tragic, and slapstick events connected to a government full of Machiavellian grifters. Thank goodness it all happened 300 years ago and has no relevance now.



**Early 18th century. England is at war with the French. Nevertheless, duck racing and pineapple eating are thriving. A frail Queen Anne (Olivia Colman) occupies the throne and her close friend Lady Sarah Churchill (Rachel Weisz) governs the country in her stead while tending to Anne's ill health and mercurial temper. When a new servant Abigail Masham (Emma Stone) arrives, her charm endears her to Sarah. Sarah takes Abigail under her wing and Abigail sees a chance at a return to her aristocratic roots. As the politics of war become quite time consuming for Sarah, Abigail steps into the breach to fill in as the Queen's companion. Their burgeoning friendship gives her a chance to fulfill her ambitions and she will not let woman, man, politics or rabbit stand in her way.** ROTTENTOMATOES.COM

## Calendar of Events March 7–March 13, 2019

### Verda’s Place: An Homage to a Valiant Woman, Opening Reception

Date and Time: Friday, March 8, 2019, 6–8 p.m.

Description: Through memorabilia, photographs, and archival documents, Verda’s Place encourages interaction and participation to move beyond the exhibition space and into the communities of those who visit. Come learn more about this valiant woman and her legacy as we launch this new, interactive exhibition, which will be on display from March 8–December 28, 2019.

Cost: Free, register at [bdmuseum.maryland.gov/events/](http://bdmuseum.maryland.gov/events/)  
Location: Bancker-Douglass Museum, 84 Franklin Street, Annapolis, MD 21401

Contact: 410-216-6180

### Alison Crockett

Date and Time: Friday, March 8, 2019, 8–10 p.m.

Description: Alison Crockett is the quintessential nu jazz/progressive soul singer of her generation. You may have heard her on seminal recordings by King Britt, Blue Six, Us3, Landslide, John Wicks, Mathematics, and a whole host of other albums. ADA: Yes

Cost: Tickets: \$25/person; 10% discount for Montpelier members and seniors. **Reservation is required. Reservation Deadline: March 8, 2019**

Ages: All ages are welcome

Location: Montpelier Arts Center, 9652 Muirkirk Rd, Laurel, MD 20708

Contact: 301-377-7800; TTY 301-699-2544

### Tobacco, Cash Crop of America’s Past

Date and Time: Saturday, March 9, 2019, 11:00 a.m.

Description: Did you know that once Maryland was the largest grower of tobacco, its cured leaves for smoking, snuff, and chewing. This “herb” or “weed” as it was known, was sprouted and cultivated through the winter for spring planting and summer harvest, when the leaves were tall and green. Greenbelt was once lush with the green leaves of growing tobacco.

Cost: Free. Meet at the Ranger Station.

Ages: 8 and above

Location: Greenbelt Park, 6565 Greenbelt Road, Greenbelt, Maryland 20770

Contact: 301-344-3944, <http://www.nps.gov/gree>

### To-go Plant for MyPlate!

Date and Time: Saturday, March 9, 2019, 11 a.m.–1 p.m.

Description: Good nutrition starts with MyPlate! Learn to plant fresh vegetables to go on your plate. Planting supplies provided. Bring the whole family!

Cost: FREE!

Ages: All ages are welcome

Location: Cosca Regional Park, 11000 Thrift Road, Clinton, MD 20735

Contact: 301-446-6800; TTY 301-699-2544

### Memorabilia Preservation Workshop

Date and Time: Saturday, March 9, 2019, 11 a.m.–1 p.m. **RSVP and advance payment required. Call for more information!**

Description: Commemorate the centennial of the 19th amendment by showing off your election, “women’s lib” and 19th amendment memorabilia! Collections Manager Joseph Sherrin will teach you how to care for and store sashes, hats, buttons, posters, and fliers.

Cost: Residents: \$10; Non-residents: \$15

Ages: All ages are welcome

Location: Montpelier Mansion Historic Site, 9650 Muirkirk Road, Laurel, MD 20708

Contact: 301-377-7817; TTY 301-699-2544

### Pysanky Eggs with Goedele Gulikers

Date and Time: Saturday, March 9, 2019, 12:30–5 p.m.

Description: Learn to create these exquisite East European treasures!

Cost: \$15. **RSVP** to [info@cpae.org](mailto:info@cpae.org).

Ages: Adults and Teens

Location: Old Parish House, 4711 Knox Road, College Park MD 20740

Contact: [info@cpae.org](mailto:info@cpae.org) College Park Arts Exchange

### Prince George’s County Historical Society’s Spring Lecture Series: African American Women in Music: The Music of Pearl Bailey

Date and Time: Saturday, March 9, 2019, 1 p.m.

Description: Pearl Bailey, 1918–1990, was a singer, actress, author, and performer appearing in vaudeville, Broadway, and television. She won a Tony Award and a Daytime Emmy award. Ms. Bailey toured during WWII with the USO, and later after many Broadway productions, she hosted her own television variety series in 1971. *Light refreshments will be served following the program.*

Cost: \$5/person. **Call to reserve your seat!**

Ages: All ages are welcome

Location: Marietta House Museum, 5626 Bell Station Road, Glenn Dale, MD 20769

Contact: 301-464-5291; TTY 301-699-2544

### Argentine Tango Classes

Date and Time: Monday, March 11, 2019, 6:30–8 p.m.

Description: For the curious and cautious! Get a taste of Argentine tango in this drop-in class. Come alone, come with your significant other, or come with friends. We rotate partners so no need to bring one, but staying with a partner is also welcome. No dance experience required. Left feet welcome!

Cost: \$10/student per class. Purchase at PARKS DIRECT!

Ages: 16 and older

Location: Publick Playhouse, 5445 Landover Road, Cheverly, MD 20784

Contact: 301-277-1710; TTY 301-699-2544

### Bold Soul Sisters: Black Women Activists

Date and Time: Monday, March 11, 2019, 7 p.m.

Description: Join historian C.R. Gibbs as he presents the lecture, Bold Soul Sisters: Black Women Activists from the 19th and 20th Centuries as he discusses the impact of Black Women on activism and social justice.

Cost: Free

Ages: Adults

Location: Laurel Branch Library, 507 7th Street, Laurel MD 20707

Contact: 301-776-6790

## Dine ‘N’ Learn: Celebrate National Nutrition Month With M-NCPPC, Department of Parks and Recreation

By PRESS OFFICERS

Department of Parks and Recreation

RIVERDALE, Md. (February 25, 2019)—March is National Nutrition Month! Check out the FREE Healthy Cooking Demonstrations the M-NCPPC, Department of Parks and Recreation has prepared for your taste buds to enjoy. Learn how to prepare delicious, healthy meals and snacks in these step-by-step cooking demonstrations. Enjoy a sample of the delicious creations and take home new recipes! All ages welcome. No registration required.

### Spring Vegetable Stir Fry

WHEN: Wednesday, March 13, 11 a.m.–12 noon

WHERE: Temple Hills Community Center, 5300 Temple Hill Road, Temple Hills, MD 20748

### Cabbage Jambalaya with a Twist

WHEN: Thursday, March 14, 6–7 p.m.

WHERE: Vansville Community Center, 6813 Ammendale Road, Beltsville, MD 20705

### Avocado & Asparagus for Breakfast!

WHEN: Saturday, March 16, 11 a.m.–12 noon

WHERE: Watkins Tennis Bubble, 301 Watkins Park Drive, Upper Marlboro, MD 20774

### Root Vegetable Salad

WHEN: Wednesday, March 27, 11 a.m.–12 noon

WHERE: Langley Park Senior Activity Center, 1500 Merrimac Drive, Hyattsville, MD 20783

The Department of Parks and Recreation *delivers an award-winning park system through progressive, innovative leadership and a commitment to the community and the environment in Prince George’s County. For more on the Department of Parks and Recreation, visit [www.pg-parks.com](http://www.pg-parks.com) and stay connected on Facebook, Twitter, Flickr, YouTube, and Instagram. The M-NCPPC Department of Parks and Recreation encourages and supports the participation of individuals with disabilities in all programs and services.*

## Earth TALK™ Does Air Pollution Lower IQ?

Dear EarthTalk:

*I heard a pundit on TV say that the way we can “Make America Great Again” is by reducing air pollution as it’s making us dumb. Is there any truth to this?*

—Jane V., via e-mail

Unfortunately for the 40 percent of Americans (and 90 percent of the inhabitants of the rest of the world) who live in regions with air quality below healthy standards, it is true that air pollution can take a toll on our cognitive abilities.

A collaborative study by American and Chinese researchers in September 2018 found that “long-term exposure to air pollution impedes cognitive performance in verbal and math tests” with verbal performance specifically trailing off further as we age, especially for men. Researchers derived the findings after analyzing language and arithmetic tests taken by 20,000 Chinese kids and adults between 2010 and 2014 correlated against shifting levels of airborne pollution.

“Polluted air can cause everyone to reduce their level of education by one year, which is huge,” reports Xi Chen, a Yale professor and a co-author of the study. He adds that for the elderly, the effect can be more like a few years of lost education. “The damage on the aging brain by air pollution likely imposes substantial health and economic costs, considering that cognitive functioning is critical for the elderly for both running daily errands and making high-stake decisions.”

But it’s not just the elderly who should worry about air pollution making them dumber. A January 2018 study by researchers at the University of Southern California (USC) and University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA) tracked more than

1,300 pre-teens living in and around Los Angeles over a 12-year period and linked repeated exposure to higher levels of airborne particulate matter (from car exhausts and factory smokestacks) with lower “Performance IQ” scores that measure our ability to solve problems we’ve never encountered. For every increase of 2.5 micrograms per cubic meter in particulate matter pollution surrounding the teens’ homes, performance IQ scores dropped by one point. The teens living in the most polluted areas saw about a three point drop on average.

The researchers point out that lower IQ is related to reduced earning power over a person’s lifetime—as well as poorer mental and physical health. The upshot is that reducing air pollution can have a significant effect on the lives of the 130 million Americans disproportionately exposed to bad air on a regular basis.

“I think our study adds to growing evidence that the neurotoxicity of air pollution decreases the nation’s mental capital,” says senior study author and USC professor Jiu-Chuan Chen.

“For anyone who wants to help America succeed in the global competition of the knowledge economy, relaxing the air pollution regulations will very likely do the opposite.”



IMAGE CREDIT: PIXABAY

**Repeated exposure to poor air quality has been linked to lower scores on IQ tests for teenagers and the cognitive equivalent to losing one or more years of education for adults.**

## Lawsuits Take Aim at Interstate Air Pollution

States and environmental groups seek to reduce emissions that harm human health, Chesapeake Bay

By TIMOTHY B. WHEELER

Bay Journal Service

In a case with ramifications for the Chesapeake Bay, environmental groups have joined with several Northeastern states to challenge the lack of federal action to reduce interstate air pollution.

Earthjustice filed a lawsuit Jan. 30 with four other environmental groups, asking the U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia to review the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency’s decision not to order a curb on power plant emissions from inland states that contribute to unhealthy smog in East Coast states like Maryland, New York and Delaware.

The Chesapeake Bay Foundation joined the lawsuit, noting that by Bay Program estimates about a third of the nitrogen fouling the Bay’s water comes from the air. Half of that is in the form of nitrogen oxides—much of it from power plants outside the six-state Bay watershed—while the rest is believed to come from ammonia gas largely emitted by animal farming operations within the region.

Also joining in the lawsuit were Downwinders at Risk, the Appalachian Mountain Club and the Sierra Club.

The same day the environmental groups sued, New York state, New York city and five other states—Maryland, Delaware, New Jersey, Connecticut and Massachusetts—filed a separate lawsuit challenging the EPA’s decision.

“The Clean Air Act requires EPA to limit air pollution crossing state lines,” said Jon Mueller, the Bay Foundation’s vice president for litigation. “By ignoring the ‘good neighbor’ provision of the Clean Air Act, EPA is exacerbating climate change, harming human health and damaging water quality.”

The court filings are the latest in a series of legal maneuvers by mid-Atlantic and New England states attempting to get the EPA to address interstate air pollution that they contend is affecting the health of their residents. Maryland, for instance, says that its air monitoring has found that up to 70 percent of the nitrogen oxides causing ozone pollution in the Baltimore and DC areas comes from out of state.

Charles McPhedran, a staff attorney with Earthjustice, said that the EPA has been wrestling with how to resolve interstate air pollution since the late 1990s. The agency proposed a regulation to deal with it in 2005, only to have upwind states and the power industry successfully challenge it in court. In 2011, he said, federal regulators developed a new cross-state air pollution rule, but they acknowledged at the time that it would not be enough to fix the problem.

In 2013, Maryland and eight other states formally petitioned the EPA to expand the number of states required to jointly reduce ozone-forming pollution affecting the Northeast and mid-Atlantic. The states said to be contributing to East Coast smog with long-range transport of nitrogen emissions include Illinois, Indiana, Kentucky, Michigan, North Carolina, Ohio, Tennessee and West Virginia.

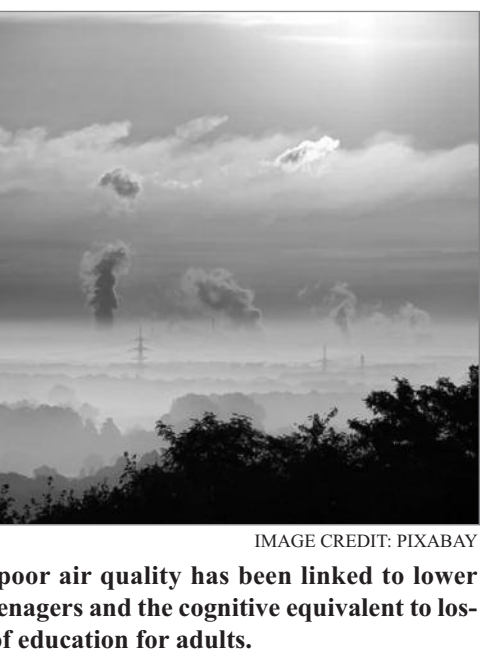
The EPA denied that petition in November 2017, a decision that the states also have taken to court. The agency said then that there were other, better ways to deal with interstate air pollution, including the “good neighbor” provision in the Clean Air Act, which was meant to address emissions that drift across state lines.

But last June, the EPA announced that it proposed to take no action, saying that smog-forming emissions are already decreasing as

You can help minimize air pollution. Start by trading the gas guzzler for a hybrid or electric car (or even better, a bike or a pair of good walking shoes and a transit pass). Go solar at home or, if you can’t, ask your utility if they offer a “green power” option. And don’t forget to urge your elected officials to introduce and support legislation aimed at reining in air pollution locally, regionally and beyond.

**CONTACTS:** “The impact of exposure to air pollution on cognitive performance,” [www.pnas.org/content/115/37/9193](http://www.pnas.org/content/115/37/9193); “Socioeconomic Disparities and Sexual Dimorphism in Neurotoxic Effects of Ambient Fine Particles on Youth IQ,” [healthpolicy.ucla.edu/publications/search/pages/detail.aspx?PubID=1707](http://healthpolicy.ucla.edu/publications/search/pages/detail.aspx?PubID=1707); Common Cause’s “Find Your Representative,” [www.commoncause.org/find-your-representative/](http://www.commoncause.org/find-your-representative/).

EarthTalk® is produced by Roddy Scheer & Doug Moss for the 501(c)3 nonprofit EarthTalk. To donate, visit [www.earthtalk.org](http://www.earthtalk.org). Send questions to: [question@earthtalk.org](mailto:question@earthtalk.org).



Repeated exposure to poor air quality has been linked to lower scores on IQ tests for teenagers and the cognitive equivalent to losing one or more years of education for adults.

a result of earlier regulatory actions. The agency projected that by 2023 ozone levels in the Eastern states would no longer violate EPA standards. It proposed to revisit the issue then.

States and environmental groups objected, questioning the EPA’s projections and saying that federal law requires action now to address continuing unhealthy air. In December, despite those objections, the EPA finalized its decision, prompting the lawsuits.

Earthjustice noted that EPA’s own data shows that more than 100 million people live in counties that fail to meet ozone health limits. Ozone exposure above and even below the EPA’s health standard has been linked with chronic respiratory diseases like asthma, as well as scarring of the lungs and premature death, and is particularly harmful to children.

“EPA is just kicking the can down the road,” Earthjustice’s McPhedran said, “and putting off their obligations with these decisions.”

Maryland has a separate legal dispute with the EPA seeking federal action against 19 power plants in five other states that it contends are responsible for generating long-distance pollution affecting its residents. In a petition filed in 2016, Maryland officials said the power plants have installed controls that prevent harmful emissions but often don’t use them on hot days, when nitrogen oxides combine with other chemicals in the air to form ozone, also called smog.

The EPA denied the two states’ petition on that issue as well, and Maryland filed suit in October 2018.

*Timothy B. Wheeler is associate editor and senior writer for the Bay Journal. He has more than two decades of experience covering the environment for The Baltimore Sun and other media outlets.*

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### Free St. Patrick's Day Lyft Rides from A1

During this twelve-hour period, area residents age 21 and older celebrating with alcohol may download Lyft to their phones, then enter a SoberRide® code in the app's "Promo" section to receive their no cost (up to \$15) safe transportation home. WRAP's St. Patrick's Day SoberRide® promo code will be posted at 3:00 pm on Sunday, March 17th on [www.SoberRide.com](http://www.SoberRide.com).

Last year, a record 982 persons in the Washington-metropolitan area used WRAP's St. Patrick's Day SoberRide® program rather than possibly driving home impaired. The charity also offers its SoberRide® program on Cinco de Mayo, Independence Day, Halloween and the winter holidays.

"Nearly 40-percent (37%) of all U.S. traffic fatalities during St. Patrick's Day 2017 involved drunk drivers according to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration," said Kurt Gregory Erickson, WRAP's President. "Between midnight and 6:00 am the day after St. Patrick's Day that year, three-fourths (75%) of all U.S. traffic deaths involved alcohol-impaired drivers."

SoberRide® is offered throughout Lyft's Washington, D.C. coverage area which includes all or parts of: the District of Columbia; the Maryland counties of Montgomery and Prince George's; and the Northern Virginia counties of Arlington, Fairfax, Loudoun and Prince William.

"Lyft is proud of the role ridesharing has played in reducing impaired driving across the nation. Here in the DC area, partnering with the Washington Regional Alcohol Program allows us to take our commitment to providing safe, convenient, and affordable transportation a step further, particularly during times of the year when people are out celebrating and in need of a ride home," said Steve Taylor, GM, Lyft Washington, D.C.

Sponsors of this year's St. Patrick's Day SoberRide® campaign include the 395 Express Lanes, AAA Mid-Atlantic, Anheuser-Busch, Brown-Forman, Constellation Brands, District of Columbia Association of Beverage Alcohol Wholesalers, Enterprise Rent-A-Car, Giant Food, Glory Days Grill, Lyft, MillerCoors, Restaurant Association Metropolitan Washington and the Washington Area New Automobile Dealers Association.

In addition, eleven of the Washington-metropolitan area's better-known Irish restaurants have also united to ensure a safe St. Patrick's Day celebration this year by sponsoring SoberRide®. These dining establishments include: The Dubliner Restaurant & Pub (DC); Fadó (DC); The Irish Whisper (MD); James Hoban's Irish Restaurant & Bar (DC); Kelly's Irish Times (DC); The Limerick Pub (MD); Martin's Tavern Est. 1933 (DC); Murphy's Grand Irish Pubs (DC & VA); O'Sullivan's Irish Pub (VA); Rí Rá Irish Pub (DC); and Siné Irish Pub (VA).

Since 1991, WRAP's SoberRide® program has provided 75,498 free safe rides home to would-be drunk drivers in the Greater Washington area.

*Founded in 1982, the nonprofit [501(c)(3)] Washington Regional Alcohol Program (WRAP) is a coalition of diverse interests using effective education, innovative programs and targeted advocacy to end alcohol-impaired driving and underage drinking in the Washington, DC metro area. Through public education, innovative health education programs and advocacy, WRAP is credited with keeping the metro-Washington area's alcohol-related traffic deaths historically lower than the national average. More information: [www.SoberRide.com](http://www.SoberRide.com).*

\*Source: National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, see: <https://www.trafficsafetymarketing.gov/get-materials/drunk-driving/drive-sober-or-get-pulled-over/saint-patricks-day>

### Peace Cross from A1

**MARYLAND-NATIONAL  
CAPITAL PARK AND  
PLANNING COMMISSION  
AND THE AMERICAN  
LEGION (COMBINED CASES)**

VERSUS

**AMERICAN HUMANIST  
ASSOCIATION**

KEY POINTS OF BOTH SIDES

Families in the American Legion donated money to build the cross.	It is situated on public land and is maintained by the state of Maryland.
It is not an ordinary Latin cross. It has the American Legion star on it.	It is a 40 foot cross that "dominates" the area.
It doesn't have a single word of religious nature on it.	Because of the sectarian nature of the cross, the values written on the side seem to apply only to Christian soldiers.
It is situated in a veterans' memorial park.	It is located on a median in the middle of a highway and has no crosswalks to get to it.