

The Prince George's Post



A COMMUNITY NEWSPAPER FOR PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY SINCE 1932

Vol. 91, No. 47 November 23 — November 29, 2023 Prince George's County, Maryland Newspaper of Record Phone: 301-627-0900 25 cents

Happy Thanksgiving ~

from the staff
at The Prince George's Post

PHOTO BY COTTONBRO STUDIO: [HTTPS://WWW.PEXELS.COM/PHOTO/FAMILY-CELEBRATING-THANKSGIVING-5791678/](https://www.pexels.com/photo/family-celebrating-thanksgiving-5791678/)



Prince George's County Planning Department Recognizes the Inaugural Cohort of the Newly Launched Neighborhood Planning Academy

By CALISTA BLACK
M-NCPPC

UPPER MARLBORO, Md. (Nov. 13, 2023)—The Prince George's County Planning Department of The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission (M-NCPPC) hosted its first graduation ceremony to celebrate the launch and honor the members of the inaugural cohort of its Neighborhood Planning Academy on Wednesday, November 8, 2023 at the Prince George's Sports and Learning Complex. This fall, 30 participants were selected from more than 300 ap-



PHOTO: M-NCPPC

The Prince George's County Planning Department of The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission (M-NCPPC) hosted its first graduation ceremony to celebrate the launch and honor the members of the inaugural cohort of its Neighborhood Planning Academy on Wednesday, November 8, 2023.

See COHORT Page A3

New Details on Council Member Edward Burroughs' Free PGCC Tuition Program

Program provides \$2 million for Prince George's County Community College Students

By LINDSAY WATTS
Prince George's County Council Media

District 8 Council Member Edward Burroughs III has announced a new program that uses MGM Casino revenue to provide free tuition at Prince George's County Community College.

The program is available to those living in the six-mile radius surrounding the casino in District 8 and some border areas of District 7. While the program was initially funded at \$1 million, the Prince George's County Council on Tuesday allocated another \$1 million to serve more residents and keep the program going beyond the upcoming semester.

Under the agreement to build MGM, a

portion of gaming and tax revenue is dedicated to the surrounding community through the MGM Local Impact Grant Fund.

"When I was elected to the County Council I was shocked to learn that this fund was primarily being used to pay for government services that our tax dollars already pay for in the southern part of the County," said Burroughs. "As a result, I rewrote major parts of the plan, and over the next year, we will roll out transformational initiatives like this one. Education is the great equalizer when we talk about combating poverty and crime, and we must expand opportunities through education."

The program is expected to impact over 1,000 new and current students.

"We commit ourselves to say that every resident in our community should have direct access as well as the opportunity to earn a credential, certificate, or a degree that is going to lift them from places of poverty into opportunities to earn family-sustaining wages," said Dr. Falecia Williams, President of Prince George's Community College. "Community colleges are America's lifeblood and we would let no one in our community have the door closed on that opportunity."

Scholarships will be distributed on a first come, first serve basis. Information about how to apply is available here: <https://www.pgcc.edu/go/scholarships/>

Governor Moore Appoints First Chief Sustainability Officer and Chief Resilience Officer in Maryland's History

By PRESS OFFICER
Maryland Governor News

ANNAPOLIS, Md. (Nov. 15, 2023)—Maryland Governor Wes Moore today announced the appointment of Meghan Conklin as the state's first chief sustainability officer and Michael Hinson as the state's first chief resilience officer. Through a whole-of-government approach, the chief sustainability officer and the chief resilience officer will work to address the current and future effects of climate change.

"Addressing the existential

threat of climate change requires bold and decisive action. We must think strategically and we must address our present challenges to prevent future effects," said Governor Moore. "I am confident that Meghan Conklin and Michael Hinson possess the leadership qualities necessary to meet this moment and I look forward to working with each of them to promote a cleaner, greener, more resilient and more sustainable Maryland."

The chief sustainability officer will work to ensure Maryland meets the state's bold cli-

mate and environmental goals, while the chief resilience officer will ensure Maryland is prepared to adapt, mitigate, and recover from all hazards and emergencies, including disasters that have increased in frequency and intensity from climate change.

Meghan Conklin, Chief Sustainability Officer

Meghan Conklin has more than 20 years of experience in climate change, environment, and energy policy, having served in senior roles in the Obama Administration, the

U.S. Senate, and the U.S. House of Representatives. Meghan previously served for four years as policy advisor to U.S. Senator Chris Van Hollen on issues including climate, environment, energy, agriculture, and more. In the Obama Administration, Meghan served as deputy assistant secretary for transmission permitting in the Office of Electricity at the Department of Energy and Associate Deputy Secretary of the Interior.

See APPOINTS Page A5

District 4 Council Member Ingrid Watson Hosts Community Forum on Rising Crime:

A Juvenile Crime Conversation

State's Attorney Aisha Braveboy, Prince George's County Chief of Police Malik Aziz, Prince George's County Schools Superintendent Millard House II, and Maryland State Senator Ron Watson—Special Guest Presenters

By ANGELA J. ROUSON

Prince George's County Council Media

Prince George's County Council Member Ingrid S. Watson (District 4), in response to rising concerns surrounding juvenile crime, will host a Community Forum on Rising Crime: A Juvenile Crime Conversation, on **Tuesday, November 28, 2023, from 6 to 8:30 p.m.** on the campus of Bowie State University in the Student Center Ballroom, 14000 Jericho Park Road, Bowie, Maryland 20715.

The Community Forum will feature State's Attorney Aisha Braveboy, Police Chief Malik Aziz, Prince George's County Schools Superintendent Millard House II, and Maryland State Senator Ron Watson as special guests. Participants will also hear from Bowie State University President, Dr. Aminta Breaux. In addition to receiving public safety updates and information, residents will have an opportunity to ask questions, share community concerns, and contribute to the development of comprehensive solutions through roundtable discussions.

Council Member Watson says the Community Forum on Rising Crime aims to engage residents, law enforcement, educators, legislators, juvenile justice advocates, and other stakeholders in discussions to explore effective strategies for preventing and combating juvenile crime.

"Juvenile crime is a serious concern, especially considering recent events at Bowie State University and Bowie High School. It is important for us to examine the root of this problem, and the community forum is an opportunity for District 4 residents to engage with government, understand how public safety officials are addressing the issue, hear proposed legislative solutions, and learn ways that we as a community might support their efforts."

Residents, local organizations, and media outlets are encouraged to attend and participate in the community forum. This event is free and open to the public. For additional information, contact Councildistrict4@co.pg.md.us or 301.952.3094.

'A Way to Save Lives': PGCMLS Aiming to Equip all Library Branches With Life-saving Defibrillators

By ANDREA CASTILLO
PGCMLS

LARGO, Md. (Nov. 13, 2023)—Each neighborhood branch of the Prince George's County Memorial Library System (PGCMLS) offers a variety of materials and services to its customers: copies of the latest best-sellers, programs for all ages including storytimes and conversation clubs, computers that connect to the internet, and more. Several locations in the system also have life-saving equipment that can help increase the chances of survival for those who experience cardiac arrest in library facilities, and the PGCMLS Foundation is on a mission to make sure that equipment is inside of every branch in the system.

This #GivingTuesday, on November 28, the PGCMLS Foundation is aiming to raise \$20,000

to equip all 19 library branches in the system with portable automated external defibrillators, or AEDs. Men and older adults are at increased risk of experiencing cardiac arrest, and Black people are more likely to die, although factors like family history, additional health issues, physical stress, alcohol and drug use, and other factors can trigger or increase the risk of suffering cardiac arrest, according to the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute.

Currently, AEDs are available at Baden, Hyattsville, Laurel, New Carrollton, and South Bowie branch libraries, and also at newly built locations, including Bladensburg and Surrattsville-Clinton branch libraries.

"When we refer to our libraries as 'safe spaces', we want

See SAVE LIVES Page A1

INSIDE

- Community to Bid Fond Farewell to Retiring Park Police Chief Stanley Johnson
- New Sculpture Exhibit at Montpelier Arts Center Announced by Department of Parks and Recreation, Prince George's County

Around the County, Page A2

Holiday House Tour Reinstates Longstanding Laurel Tradition

Marietta House Museum December Events

Governor Moore Receives National Urban League President's Award Community, Page A3

To Be Equal: Supreme Court's So-Called Ethics Code Is Worse Than Nothing

The justices may safely consider any misunderstandings dispelled. They have made it clear beyond a shadow of a doubt they regard themselves as unrestricted by ethics rules. Commentary, Page A4

Governor Moore Announces Appointments to Governor's Office of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing and State Board of Sign Language Interpreters

How Small Businesses Can Retain Customer Loyalty This Holiday Season Business and Finance, Page A5

TOWNS and NEIGHBORS

In & Around Morningside-Skyline by Mary McHale 301-735-3451

It's time to visit the Annual Gingerbread House

For a sweet treat, go to Darnall's Chance House Museum and view an amazing display of edible gingerbread houses. No nibbling allowed! Then you can vote for your favorite entries in the Viewer's Choice Competition.

The House will be open Friday through Sunday, November 24–26, December 1–3 and 8–10. Admission is \$2/Person (cash only); children 4 & under are free. Reservations are required for groups of 10 or more.

Darnall's Chance may be the oldest house in Prince George's County. It was built for James Wardrop in 1741–42 and includes the 18th century burial vault of merchant Harry Buck who lived there. The house was restored in 1988 and has a charming gift shop.

Tours are available by calling 301-952-8010. It's at 14800 Governor Oden Bowie Drive in Upper Marlboro, on a hill overlooking Schoolhouse Pond. If you've not taken the tour, and visited the gift shop, put that on your must-visit list for 2024.

Town of Morningside

Morningside's annual Breakfast with Santa will be at the Firehouse on Saturday, Dec. 9, beginning at 9 a.m. The menu lists pancakes, sausage, fruit, juice and coffee, followed by a Magic Show, door prizes and Santa's Secret Shop (for purchasing small gifts). Fee is \$5.00 per person. Space is limited; pre-register (301-736-2301) beginning November 20.

I am sorry to have missed the Town's annual Thanksgiving Feast Luncheon for Seniors. I accepted and then found I could not attend because of a previous commitment. It's always a good time. And, besides, last year I won at Bingo.

Morningside's meetings this month will be the Work Session on the 14th and the Town Meeting on the 21st, both beginning at 7. Morningside information: 301-736-2300.

Neighbors & other good people

My next-door neighbor Stacie is

proud of her uncle, Morris Craig, who toured I01 on August 28. Also, he is a WWII vet. He current lives in NE Washington.

I have just said goodbye to son Mike and his wife Sandy who are flying back to El Paso, Texas. But I won't be lonely. Daughter Therese Gallegos is flying in from Brownsville, Texas, tomorrow and will be here for Thanksgiving.

Veterans Day celebrated

Council Member Krystal Oriadha had the privilege of joining the 85th Veterans Day Observance hosted by American Legion Post 196 in Suitland. Post 196 is a nonprofit, community service organization that includes the American Legion Auxiliary Unit 196 and Sons of the American Legion Squadron 196.

Councilwoman Oriadha represents County Council District 7, which includes Morningside, as well as Capitol Heights, District Heights, Hillcrest Heights, Marlow Heights, Seat Pleasant, Suitland, Temple Hills and portions of Forestville and Oxon Hill.

Also participating in the observance were Maryland State Delegate Nick Charles (District 25) and City of District Heights Mayor Cynthia Miller.

Council Member Oriadha remarked, "Our freedom and rights are owed to our veterans and I'm grateful for all the men and women who protect our country."

Last week I asked where you were...

...when you got the news that President Kennedy was shot and had died. Here are some of the answers:

Carol DeGraba was in first grade at Morningside Elementary when the principal announced over the intercom that President Kennedy had been shot. "I remember seeing the hearse carrying the flag-draped casket down Suitland Road and seeing Jackie Kennedy sitting in the front. Did you see it go by, too? Those were sad days."

Judy Nyers was 6 years old and remembers her "Mom sitting in front of

the TV at our home at 6713 Larches Court and she was crying and crying, and I didn't understand the importance of what had happened."

Kathleen Shearer was "in the 7th grade at St. Philip's school. When we received the news, most of us were in shock that our Catholic president had been killed. There were many tears, and a lot of praying. I don't think any schoolwork was accomplished for the rest of the day."

Elaine Seidman was 4 and in the backyard when brothers John or Brian came home early from school and shared the news.

Dave Williams was working at Little Sisters of the Poor, building a new convent.

Julie's heating question

Julie Koch-Michael wrote with a question. She used to live at 305 Boxwood and wonders what type of heating system their house might have had years ago. Anyone have a suggestion?

Susan Mason wrote "My sister & her family (Gotshall) lived at 407 Allies Rd., and they had the type of heating system that had a heat grate in the floor (floor furnace) but it was not efficient heat." Her husband was in plumbing/heating business so while still living there they changed the heating system, but she didn't recall to what.

Dave Williams wrote that it was probably a central box oil-fired heating system.

Changing landscape

Located on Baltimore Avenue, Aster College Park is a new mixed-use community in Prince George's County. The design scope includes the first Trader Joe's in Prince George's County, multi-family units with 60,000 square feet of retail, health club.

Towne Square at Suitland Federal Center is moving right along. This \$500 million 25-acre mixed-use project in Suitland will have 2 million square feet

See **MORNINGSIDE** Page A3

Around the County

Community to Bid Fond Farewell to Retiring Park Police Chief Stanley Johnson

Johnson Honorably Served 37 Years with The Maryland-National Capital Park Police

RIVERDALE, Md. (Nov. 16, 2023)—The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission, Department of Parks and Recreation, Prince George's County, announces the retirement of Chief Stanley Johnson from the Maryland-National Capital Park Police. Chief Johnson has dedicated his career to protecting and serving the civilians of Montgomery and Prince George's Counties for 37 years. Colleagues, family, and friends will honor Chief Johnson with a celebration at Newton White Mansion in Mitchellville on **November 29 from 11 a.m.–2 p.m.**

"It has been my distinct honor and privilege to end my career as the Chief of Park Police in Prince George's County. I am proud of the dedication and professionalism of the Park Police Division in the Department of Parks and Recreation in Prince George's County," said Chief Johnson. Over the last few years, we have faced significant and historic challenges, including the COVID-19 pandemic. The Park Police weathered these challenges while providing top-notch service to the community. I have been deeply committed to public safety throughout my career. I love our community, and am confident this great Division will continue to thrive."

Chief Stanley Johnson began his career with Park Police in 1986 as a Patrol Officer and progressively moved up the ranks, serving in both the Prince George's and Montgomery County Divisions of the Maryland-National Capital Park Police. He served as the Park Police's first accreditation manager and has been instrumental in ensuring the agency maintains its accreditation status for the past 22 years. He was selected to serve as Chief of the Park Police in July 2016.

Under Chief Johnson's leadership, the Park Police embraced community partnerships and collaboration to solve common problems. This philosophy led to the Park Police achieving record lows in reported crimes for the past several years and recognition twice from the International Association of Police Chiefs (IACP) with Community Policing Awards. He has been recognized with many awards throughout his career.

A graduate of John Hopkins University, Chief Johnson holds a Master's Degree in Organizational Management with a focus in Police Executive Leadership, and a Bachelor's Degree in Management. He is a member of Springfield Baptist Church in Washington, DC where he has served on the Board of Trustees for over 30 years. Despite his many obligations, Chief Johnson takes delight in golfing, riding his motorcycle, and being a family man. He has been married to his wife for 45 years. They have 3 children and 4 grandchildren.

"Stanley Johnson has done an amazing job as Chief of our Park Police Division during my tenure," said Bill Tyler, Director of the M-NCPPC, Department of Parks and Recreation in Prince George's County. "His integrity, values, commitment to excellence, love for the community, and consistent support and accountability with and for his officers made him perfect for the challenging times we faced. Exemplifying the Park Police motto, 'Because We Care,' he prioritized embracing this community with compassion and transparency, and we are forever grateful to him for that."

The Maryland-National Capital Park Police, Prince George's County Division consists of 136 authorized sworn personnel, 35 civilian employees, and approximately 40 volunteers. The Park Police Division ensures the safety of park patrons and facilities 24 hours a day through crime prevention, apprehension, enforcement of criminal and motor vehicle laws, and enforcement of park rules and regulations. Learn more at <https://www.pgparcs.com/safety-policy/park-police>.

With over 28,000 acres of parkland, trails, athletic fields, playgrounds and more—M-NCPPC, Department of Parks and Recreation in Prince George's County provides an award-winning park system through progressive, quality, innovative leadership and a commitment to its community and environment. The Department delivers first-class recreational activities and programs for people of all ages and ability levels. It strives to improve the quality of life for residents in Prince George's County and the communities in which they live, work, and raise families. The Department's facilities and programming continue to evolve and expand to keep pace with the needs of its vibrant community. For more information, visit www.pgparcs.com.

New Sculpture Exhibit at Montpelier Arts Center Announced by Department of Parks and Recreation, Prince George's County

RIVERDALE, Md. (Nov. 17, 2023)—The Department of Parks and Recreation in Prince George's County, part of the Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission, is proud to announce Montpelier Arts Center's new sculpture exhibit entitled Woolgathering by artist Paul Daniel. Daniel is the selected artist of the Open Call for Temporary Public Art Sculpture at Montpelier Arts Center. The work will be on display from October 25, 2023 through October 24, 2025 in the entryway circle of the Center.

Paul Daniel is a Baltimore based artist who focuses on making large outdoor, kinetic sculptures. As a sculpture major at the Kansas City Art Institute, Daniel learned about building large-scale outdoor sculptures and developed an interest in making work that featured kinetic movement of some kind.

Regarding Woolgathering, Daniel states "The definition of Woolgathering according to the Oxford Dictionary is 'dreamy imagining'. I often daydream when making a piece and allow my mind to wander. Woolgathering was developed during Covid, using materials at hand and basing forms on previous smaller works. I focused on the columnar rotors overcoming the breakaway friction (how much wind energy is needed to start a stationary object to move)."

Open House and Reception

On **Sunday, December 3** from 1–4 p.m., see the new exhibition of art in the galleries as well as the Woolgathering installation. Attendees can meet and engage with exhibiting artists. Montpelier Arts Center is located at 9652 Muirkirk Rd, Laurel, MD 20708. For more information, visit www.pgparcs.com/event_list/holiday-open-house.

Montpelier Arts Center offers visual, literary, and performing arts experiences for children to adults; beginners to advanced. These creative spaces are designed to inspire artists to work in a variety of mediums including printmaking, sculpture, painting, ceramics, and more. Visitors can explore the three galleries with rotating exhibitions by local and national visual artists. Located on the grounds of the historic Montpelier Mansion, the center also houses artist studios, a bronze casting foundry, gas and electric-fired kilns, a digital lab, printmaking presses, and classrooms.

Brandywine-Aquasco

by Audrey Johnson 301-922-5384

PGCMA LEGISLATIVE MEET AND GREET

Prince George's County Municipal Association Legislative Meet and Greet (Highlighting PGCMA Legislative priorities) "Empowering Health, Inspiring Wellness" Thursday, December 7, 2023, from 6:30–9:30 p.m. at Show Place Arena. The address is 14900 Pennsylvania Avenue, Upper Marlboro, Maryland 20772. There will be music, food, and drinks. Cocktail attire. Cost is \$50. Cocktail Attire. Register today at [HTTPS://PGCMA120723.EVENTBRITE.COM](https://pgcma120723.eventbrite.com).

Payment options: Credit Card (recommended) or Check. Eventbrite charges a non-refundable fee for both check and credit card payments. Be sure to include your full Eventbrite fee with check payments. Make checks payable to PGCMA and mail to P.O. Box 4726, Capitol Heights, Maryland 20791. Deadlines: Check payment options will end on November 25, 2023, via Eventbrite. Check must be received by December 1, 2023.

CONGRATULATIONS

Congratulations Brendan Johnson who is the son of James and Vera Carrington Johnson, grandson of the late Ernest and Brenda Johnson, great grandson of the late Rev. Ernest and Elizabeth Johnson.

Calvert Hall National Letter of Intent Signing Ceremony November 8, 2023. Basketball Brendan Johnson Merrimack College.

BREAKFAST WITH THE GRINCH

Just Flawsome presents breakfast with the GRINCH 2023. It's our favorite time of the year. Join us Saturday, December 9, 2023, from 10 a.m.–1:30 p.m. Marlboro Pike, Upper Marlboro, Maryland. Full address provided upon purchase of ticket.

Kids will have fun with a Whoville Breakfast to include Cindy Lou Who pancake bar, eggs, bacon and fried potatoes, there will also be hot chocolate and juice. \$30 per child (0–16), \$28 for each adult 17 and above.

Kids will enjoy Christmas Crafts to create and take home, Face Painting and a D.J. They will also have an opportunity to have their picture taken with the Grinch and other special characters. This is the best family event in the city. They will also have a Best Ugly Sweater Contest. Wear your ugly sweater to participate in the contest.

Ticket costs include breakfast, all activities and crafts, a photo with the Grinch and a raffle ticket for a chance to win Christmas presents. All tickets are non-refundable and non-transferable. Tickets can be bought on Eventbrite. For further information email danielfamilyiic@yahoo.com.

PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY ROADS

Peace Cross in Bladensburg was often the site of flooding in the early 1900s. Before the Anacostia River Flood Control

Project in 1954, the Northeast Branch of the Anacostia River would overflow its banks and inundate the intersection of Route 1 and Route 50 (now Route 450). Sometimes, the water was so deep that the roadway became impassable, and all traffic had to be rerouted. Often businesses and homes were invaded by the muddy waters. (Courtesy of the Maryland Collection, University of Maryland Libraries, Special Collections.)

Old Prince George's County roads were dirt roads before they were paved. Ardmore Road (Farm to Market), October 5, 1936, in Brentwood workers were spreading gravel as the beginning of gravel work. June 15, 1937, workers were starting curbs and gutters by setting forms. (Courtesy of University of Maryland Libraries, Special Collections.)

The village of T.B., c.1900 facing west on modern-day Brandywine Road, near its intersection with Dyson Road, takes its name from an early land grant holder, Thomas Brooke. He marked the boundaries of his large plantation with fieldstones bearing his initials. The village grew around the northwest boundary marker, which rested where Accokeek Road now crosses Route 5 (Branch Avenue). (Submitted by Joan L. Chaconas, program assistant for the Surratt House Museum).

ICE IS BACK AT GAYLORD NATIONAL

ICE returns this holiday season at Gaylord National from November 19 to December 31, 2023. Classic 1964 animated television special, view 13 scenes from the beloved holiday classic Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer, will be brought to life by a team of 40 ice artisans to create the nearly 20,000 square-foot, frozen attraction.

The display is kept at a frosty 9 degrees Fahrenheit, but don't worry quests will be provided Gaylord National's signature blue parkas to keep them warm and toasty. The address is 201 Waterfront Street, National Harbor, Maryland. Overnight ICE packages tickets are on sale now. Visit ChristmasATGaylordNational.com for everything in store this holiday season.

NIGHTLY TREE LIGHT SHOW

The nightly tree light show runs every half hour from sunset to 9 p.m. Watch the 60-foot RGB tree as thousands of lights dance alongside a holiday medley performed by The United States Air Force Band.

FESTIVE FIREWORKS

Join us Saturday nights from November 11–December 30 at 5:30 p.m. at Gaylord National for a spectacular fireworks display following the tree lighting show.

HOPE THAT EVERYONE WILL HAVE A BLESSED THANKSGIVING

COMMUNITY

Cohort from A1

plications to participate in a six-week pilot program exploring the History, Present, and Future of Prince George's County, Planning 101, the Development Review Process, Building Healthy, Sustainable and Resilient Communities, and Multimodal Transportation and Street Safety. The curriculum was designed to demystify the complex process of planning in Prince George's County and provide opportunities for County residents and stakeholders to learn how to engage in the planning and development review process.

The Neighborhood Planning Academy held five virtual sessions and a final in-person session concluding with participant presentations. The participants selected diverse topics for their capstone projects including noise pollution, transportation, effective communication, bike lanes, ideal communities and spaces, solar power, and affordable housing.

"We applaud each participant's commitment to become an active participant in the planning process and an advocate for the needs of their neighborhoods and community," said Peter A. Shapiro, Chair of M-NCPPC and the Prince George's County Planning Board. "We look forward to seeing and hearing from them in future public meetings."

"From the inception to the launch and to the continued development of the program, we are proud of our team's ongoing efforts to engage, educate, and inspire representatives from all regions of our County," said Derick Berlage, Acting Deputy Planning Director of the Prince George's County Planning Department.

M-NCPPC included Jonathan Ammons, Greg Anderson, J. Leonard Anthony, Dan Behrend, Lois Brown, Tamara Davis Brown, Tyrice Brown, Janis Brunson, Divinity Buggs, Cassandra Burckhalter, Rachel Bush, Danielle Carter, Mary Cook, Dianna Davis-Small, Michelle Duvernay, April Gooding, Sharice Hendrickson, Harold Lawson, Gale Mamatova, Dan McDonald, Fai Nelson, Wanda Peterson-Parker, Jeronica Plummer, Ronald Skotz, Nancy Thompson, Diana Torres, Sabrena Turner, Leah Wade, Joycette Ward, and Angela Wearrien.

For more information on the Neighborhood Planning Academy, visit: <https://academy.pgplanning.com>. Prince George's County residents and stakeholders may join the mailing list to receive announcements about upcoming 2024 courses.

The Prince George's County Planning Department of The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission (M-NCPPC) is responsible for preserving, protecting, and managing the county's resources through high-quality planning services and growth management guidance. Our mission is to promote economic vitality, environmental sustainability, design excellence, and quality development in Prince George's County. Visit our website, www.pgplanning.org, to learn how you can become engaged in shaping the future of your community.

Save Lives from A1

to make sure that includes keeping them safe in the event of the unimaginable," said John Pfeifer, the Library's donor engagement and grants officer.

When someone goes into cardiac arrest—which happens when the heart stops because it has fallen out of rhythm and oxygenated blood cannot be pumped through the body—it is important to act quickly, said Jermaine Gordon, safety and security supervisor for PGCMLS.

In the first few minutes after cardiac arrest has occurred, it is critical both to administer CPR and use an AED if one is available. Through CPR, chest compressions are administered to keep blood physically flowing through the body. Pairing that with an AED, which sends electric shocks through the chest when they detect an irregular rhythm in the heart in order to keep it beating steadily, according to the American Heart Association, increases the chance of survival following cardiac arrest.

"[THE AED] is the most important part of the chain of survival," Gordon said.

The AEDs inside branches, which will also have accompanying signage, will provide audible instructions in English and Spanish, making using the devices in an emergency as simple as a round of "Simon Says," Gordon said.

In addition to getting AEDs in all PGCMLS branches, staff will have the option of volunteering to take CPR, AED, and first aid training courses as well, said Gordon, who is trained to teach the courses.

The use and availability of the devices is an issue that has continued to gain national prominence, thanks to incidents like one in January 2023, when Buffalo Bills safety Damar Hamlin suffered cardiac arrest at a game in Cincinnati. He credited CPR and an AED with saving his life and has since gone on tour to promote CPR training and distribute AEDs, according to ESPN reports.

Now found in all sorts of public facilities, from airports and banks, to government buildings and more, it makes sense to put them in libraries too, according to Gordon.

"Having a defibrillator is a way to save lives," he said.

The PGCMLS Foundation accepts donations online at pgcmls.info/donate, by phone at (202) 295-7007, or through email at development@pgcmls.info. Checks can also be mailed to PGCMLS Foundation, 9601 Capital Lane, Largo, MD 20774.

Morningside from A2

of development including a 120-room hotel, commercial office space, multi-family units, independent senior living, townhomes, retail and restaurant space, and a 50,000-square-foot cultural arts and technology center. It doesn't look like Suitland anymore.

A home at 4306 John Street, in Skyline, has sold for \$210,000.

Milestones

Happy birthday to Julie Koch-Michael and Darryl Moss, Nov. 26; Arthur Rose, Nov. 27; Thomas Shipman, Sr., Nov. 28; Stephanie White and Devin Kane Blade, Nov. 29; Karen Windsor, Alexis R. Paige, Ramona Britt, Patricia Branch, John Duncan and Kimberly White, Nov. 30.

Happy anniversary to Gary and Ivy Kline on November 28.

Email me (muddmm@gmail.com) with birthdays and anniversaries.

Holiday House Tour Reinstates Longstanding Laurel Tradition

By PRESS OFFICER
Laurel Historical Society

On Saturday, Dec. 9, the Laurel Historical Society's Holiday House Tour will return for the first time in five years. One of LHS' longest traditions, this event is a holiday fundraiser that invites community members to tour homes and buildings in the area.

Dating back to 1976, the Holiday House Tour is an all-ages event for those looking to tour extraordinary interiors inside beautiful period homes and buildings, learn about renovations, additions and the history of these local buildings, view some holiday decoration inspiration or simply socialize with neighbors while enjoying plenty of homemade cookies baked by Laurel Historical Society volunteers.

"We are very excited to bring back the Holiday House Tour after a five-year hiatus," said Ann Bennett, executive director of the Laurel Historical Society. "The event is a winter fundraiser for the Laurel Historical Society but, more than that, it is a way to get to know more about your neighbors or the Laurel area and kick off the holiday season with a fun event."

The Holiday House Tour committee has been working hard this year to arrange a variety of homes, businesses and unique stops in the greater Laurel area. This year's tour will consist of 10 different stops, including a house that was featured in the latest issue of Better Homes and Gardens, a home in historic Old Town that has been owned by the same family for almost 120

years and a new build in West Laurel with spectacular views of the area.

Participants will also have the chance to visit Gude Mansion, a rare surviving example of a three-story brick house in the Greek Revival style. This is a remarkable opportunity to see inside the Gude Mansion for the first time in over five years, as the building was only just reopened this summer following extensive renovations and restorations.

"I'm particularly excited about having such a diversity of properties on this year's tour," said Lisa Everett, Holiday House Tour committee member. "Old Town residences are always a staple of the LHS Holiday House Tour, but this year's event will also take ticketholders out of Old Town to some properties that we're pretty excited about."

The Tour will start at the Laurel Museum at 12:30 p.m. on Dec. 9. Those who purchased their tickets in advance will check in at the front desk and receive a sticker and tour map, which will include directions to each stop, locations of restrooms and refreshments, and any additional information such as accessibility and parking suggestions.

From 1 to 5 p.m., tour participants are welcome to visit the locations in the order of their choosing. At each stop, they'll step inside to learn about building, family, and occupant history, renovation processes, and future plans, as well as have the chance to ask the homeowners any additional questions. At the end of the tour, participants are invited to gather at Clyopatra Winery and Vineyard, Laurel's first vineyard and winery, for a complimentary wine tasting and social hour.

On the day of the tour, participants will

also have the chance to visit the Laurel Museum and its holiday gift shop from 12 to 4 p.m. The current exhibit "It's All Laurel: City Limits and Beyond" explores the four counties that are part of Laurel and further expands on the history of some of the stops on the Holiday House Tour, such as Gude Mansion. It strives to demonstrate that "Laurel" is more than the areas within the city limits. Focusing on communities ranging from Scaggsville to Russett to the historic African American community of Bacontown, the exhibit reveals the breadth of Laurel—geographically, demographically and historically.

Tickets for the Holiday House Tour are \$25 in advance or \$30 on the day of the event, up until 3 p.m. Tickets are available at the Laurel Museum or online at www.laurelhistoricalsociety.org/holiday-home-tour.html.

The Laurel Historical Society's 2023 collectible ornament, a full-color depiction of Gude Mansion, is available for sale within the museum shop and online at www.laurelhistoricalsociety.org/store/c1/Featured_Products.html.

The Laurel Historical Society is located within the Laurel Museum at 817 Main St. in Laurel, Md. The Laurel Museum is open on Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays from 12 to 4 p.m. The current exhibit "It's All Laurel: City Limits and Beyond" runs through August 2024. Admission to the Museum is free. Research requests and tour groups can visit on weekdays by appointment. For more information contact info@laurelhistoricalsociety.org, 301-725-7975 or www.laurelhistoricalsociety.org.

Marietta House Museum December Events

By STACEY HAWKINS
Marietta House Museum

Marietta's Lunchtime Lecture Series presents:
Dolley Madison in Digital:
The Papers of Dolley Madison

Please join Marietta House Museum on December 6, from noon to 1 p.m. for a Lunchtime Lecture featuring Holly Shulman, who is the director of the Dolley Madison Project at the University of Virginia Archives.

James and Dolley Madison spent time at Marietta House as guests to Gabriel and Jane Duvall. The Madisons and Duvalls dined, played cards, and talked about politics at Marietta House in the first quarter of the 19th century. Paul Jennings, the President's enslaved valet, likely came on these visits to Marietta. Shulman co-edited a book in 2003, *The Selected Letters of Dolley Payne Madison*. Also in 2003, the Mellon Foundation gave the University of Virginia Press a grant that Shulman used to create an electronic series of Dolley Madison's papers. Shulman was able to piece together information in the

letters sent and received with implications of Dolley's thoughts and opinions about politics, social networks, and Washington, D.C.

Free event. In-person at Marietta House Museum. Please register at www.pgparks-direct.com or call 301-464-5291 or email mariettahouse@pgparks.com. Registration is requested but not required.

Marietta House Museum is located at 5626 Bell Station Road, Glenn Dale, MD. 20769 and is a property of the Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission.

Winter Open House With Special Appearance by Papa Noël

On Saturday, Dec. 9, from 4 p.m. to 8 p.m. come to Marietta House Museum's Winter Open House with a special appearance by Papa Noël. The annual in-person tour includes a lovely walk through the beautifully decorated historic house. This year the museum is hosting a special visit with the French inspired character, Papa Noël. Celtic harpist, Chris Van Dyke, will perform throughout the evening while the

fragrant aroma of mulled cider and sweets flow throughout the house.

Visitors will travel through the historic house meeting trained staff who will share stories about the historic kitchen, parlor, dining room, and more. Because Duvall family roots go back to France, the museum has arranged for Papa Noël to meet with children between only 4pm and 6pm. He will send the children on a seek-and-find throughout the historic house to find little gifts and treats along the way.

House tours for everyone 4 p.m.–8 p.m. Light refreshments will be served. Celtic harp music is provided by Chris Van Dyke.

All ages. \$5 per person, ages 12 and under Free. Please register at this direct link: <https://tinyurl.com/4dam2xjj> or call 301-464-5291 or email mariettahouse@pgparks.com.

Marietta House Museum is located at 5626 Bell Station Road, Glenn Dale, MD. 20769, and is a property of the Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission.

Governor Moore Receives National Urban League President's Award

By PRESS OFFICER
Maryland Governor News

ANNAPOLIS, Md. (Nov. 13, 2023)—Governor Wes Moore attended the National Urban League's 67th annual Equal Opportunity Dinner in New York City [during the week of Nov. 6]. During the event, National Urban League President Marc Morial presented the governor with the President's Award, the organization's highest honor.

"The National Urban League has fought for economic justice—you fight so that a single mom in Baltimore City can own more than she owes. You fight so that a young man in the Bronx can achieve prosperity and pass something on to his children besides debt. You fight so that if something happens to you or a family member, it won't become a generational catastrophe," said Gov. Moore. "The kind of economic justice we're fighting for is about more than good-paying jobs, it's about creating ownership. In my

state of Maryland, we are going to close the racial wealth gap. We've already made progress, from advancing equity in government contracts to improving access to liquidity. But we have more work to do. We have more fights to win. We have come far, and the National Urban League has brought us here."

The National Urban League's mission is to help African Americans and others in underserved communities achieve their highest true social parity, economic self-reliance, power, and civil rights. Founded in 1910 and headquartered in New York City, the organization promotes economic empowerment, equality, and social justice through collaboration at the national and local levels with community leaders, policymakers, and corporate partners.

With 90 affiliates serving 300 communities in 37 states and the District of Columbia, the National Urban League spearheads the development of social programs and authorita-



PHOTO: MARYLAND GOVERNOR'S PRESS OFFICE

National Urban League President Marc Morial (far right) presented the governor with the President's Award, the organization's highest honor.

tive public policy research, and advocates for policies and services that close the equality gap. At the community level, the National Urban League and its affiliates provide direct services

that improve the lives of more than two million people annually.

Maryland is home to the affiliate Greater Baltimore Urban League.

COMMENTARY

Marc Morial

President and CEO, National Urban League



To Be Equal:

Supreme Court's So-Called Ethics Code Is Worse Than Nothing

"There's no clearer indication that these rules are useless than the fact that they end up codifying Thomas's outrageous behavior as ethically within bounds. According to the rules, not a single thing Thomas has done is a problem. Putting out a code of conduct that doesn't restrain Thomas is like erecting a dam that doesn't restrain water. It's just a gigantic waste of everyone's time."

—Elie Mystal

The so-called Code of Conduct the U.S. Supreme Court issued on Monday won't put a stop to corruption and wasn't intended to do so.

Quite the opposite: it is intended to justify corruption.

The Code's most glaringly obvious failing is the lack of any enforcement mechanism. But it's clear the justices don't intend their feeble code to be enforced: In "adapting" the federal judiciary's code of conduct, the word "enforce" is dropped from the opening section. Other federal judges are expected to "maintain and enforce high standards of conduct." Supreme Court justices are called upon merely to "maintain and observe" such standards.

Lower court judges should not "lend the prestige of the judicial office" to advance their own

private interests or permit others "to convey the impression that they are in a special position to influence the judge." The Supreme Court justices gave themselves considerable wiggle room by inserting the word "knowingly."

Lower court judges are directed to "take appropriate action" if they have reason to believe that a judge, a judicial employee, or a lawyer has violated the code of conduct. Supreme Court justices are expected to act only in response to employee misconduct.

Lower court judges "should make required financial disclosures ... in compliance with applicable statutes ..." Supreme Court justices "have agreed to comply with the statute governing financial disclosure," sending a strong signal that they consider their compliance voluntary, and that the statute does not apply to them.

Lower court judges are urged to "divest investments and other financial interests that might require frequent disqualification." The Supreme Court justices threw that standard out the window, along with a discouragement against accepting outside compensation that exceeds "what a person who is not a judge would receive for the same activity."

The new Code of Conduct is not an effort at reform, but a ham-handed exercise in public relations. In their statement on Monday the justices made it clear they were adopting the code—not because any of their own behavior had been a

problem—but to dispel "the misunderstanding that the Justices of this Court, unlike all other jurists in this country, regard themselves as unrestricted by any ethics rules."

If Justice Clarence Thomas regarded himself as restricted by ethics rules, he would not have accepted cruises on the yacht of a politically-active billionaire who had business before the Court, excursions on his private jet, and vacations at his private resort. At the very least, he would have disclosed the gifts, along with his sale of three properties to the same billionaire, including the home where his mother still lives, rent-free, and the tens of thousands of dollars the billionaire spent on improvements to the home.

If Justice Samuel Alito regarded himself as restricted by ethics rules, he would have turned down a luxury fishing trip with a billionaire whose hedge fund has repeatedly had business before the court, or at least disclosed it.

The list of the justices' ethical transgressions is disturbingly long, and the new Code of Conduct neither makes clear that they were, in fact, transgressions, nor prescribes any consequence for such transgressions.

The justices may safely consider any misunderstandings dispelled. They have made it clear beyond a shadow of a doubt they regard themselves as unrestricted by ethics rules.

—November 16, 2023

Marian Wright Edelman

Founder and President Emerita, Children's Defense Fund



ChildWatch:

Finishing Unfinished Work

"It should be clear by now that a nation can be no stronger abroad than she is at home. Only an America which practices what it preaches about equal rights and social justice will be respected by those whose choice affects our future. Only an America which has fully educated its citizens is fully capable of tackling the complex problems and perceiving the hidden dangers of the world in which we live."

This passage is from President John F. Kennedy's "Unspoken Speech," the speech he was on his way to deliver at the Dallas Citizens Council's annual meeting when he was assassinated on November 22, 1963.

I was a brand-new law school graduate in my first months of work with the NAACP Legal Defense and Education Fund on that fateful November day 60 years ago. I had begun the day in a rural Georgia prison visiting a young Black male death row client accused of killing a white farmer, and then returned to Atlanta, where I was sitting in a courthouse library researching how many Blacks and whites had been

executed in Georgia's history when a white man burst in grinning and shouting loudly, "Hot damn, they got him!" It took me a moment to realize he was talking about President Kennedy. I rushed with others to the nearest television set to see the news and could barely get away quickly enough from the hateful glee of some of the white citizens surrounding me. The memory of their celebration still makes me sick.

I met President Kennedy only once, in the summer of 1961 after my first year of law school, when I and many other young leaders participating in Crossroads Africa, a precursor to the Peace Corps, gathered on the White House lawn to hear him and Crossroads Africa's visionary leader Reverend James Robinson give us a sendoff to a summer of service in Africa. So much of the deep lingering sadness over President Kennedy's assassination is about the unfinished promise—unspoken speeches, unfulfilled hopes, the wondering about what might have been. So many Americans felt inspired to do more and be better by

the youthful optimism and challenges of the young President's words, only to find him so incomprehensibly and suddenly silenced by violence and hate.

Although the kind of venom I witnessed in Atlanta surrounding his death was stunning, many Black Americans felt his loss especially deeply because it was hostility we recognized and had often felt in our daily lives in the segregated South. When President Kennedy was elected, many of us were especially hopeful that he would move the country in a new direction on civil rights. In an era dominated by the Cold War, movement inflection points like the Freedom Rides and the Birmingham nonviolent direct action campaign challenging racial apartheid in one of America's toughest Southern cities initially seemed as if they might be considered a worrisome distraction to the new administration. But President Kennedy grew as he saw the massive violent resistance to change from some Southern whites unfolding before him that would not go away and realized that the pent-up Black demand for freedom also would not go away. He responded to the movement's persistent and sacrificial actions with passion and major action of his own.

On June 11, 1963, President Kennedy made a nationally televised address introducing a landmark civil rights bill that he sent to Congress one week later. The eloquent speech once again inspired many Americans to share his vision that America could and must be better. His tragic death created a political climate that, combined with President Lyndon Johnson's skillful political leadership, resulted in enactment of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Voting Rights Act of 1965.

We have since seen that President Kennedy would not be the last leader or citizen who stood up for equal justice to be slain. His death and others that followed remind us that our dreams and commitment to justice cannot depend on a single leader or be destroyed if one, a few, or many are lost to acts of hate and violence. We must always ensure there is a critical mass of leaders and activists committed to non-violence and racial and economic justice who will keep seeding and building transforming movements. When one leader passes many more must be ready to step up to the plate and keep working to ensure a more just America and world.

Sixty years later, the fight against intolerance, violence, and hatred in America is not over. But the message President Kennedy, Senator Robert Kennedy, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., and many others have given their lives to ensure is that America can and must live up to its promise. So I hope, as we remember a young President who told us to ask not what our country can do for us but what we can do for our country, that we will renew our commitment to working with children and young people today to build a just America where all of them are valued and enabled to achieve their God given potential regardless of the lottery of birth. And we must determine not to let our children and grandchildren have to fight again the same battles for the soul and future of America that earlier generations did. Our true remembrance to President Kennedy is in our actions to honor the unspoken words and finish the unfinished work.

—November 17, 2023

Governor Moore Launches New Workforce Development Programs for Maryland's Public Sector and Hospitality Industry During National Apprenticeship Week

By PRESS OFFICER
Maryland Governor News

ANNAPOLIS, Md. (Nov. 16, 2023)—Governor Wes Moore today launched new workforce development programs in the public sector and hospitality industry during the Maryland Department of Labor's third annual Maryland Apprenticeship Awards ceremony. The event, which coincides with National Apprenticeship Week, recognized 32 winners across six categories: Registered Apprentice; Youth Apprentice; Mentor, Business; Local Workforce Board; and Apprenticeship Champion, in addition to naming five new Apprenticeship Ambassadors to the Governor's Workforce Development Board.

"When we invest in apprenticeships, we empower more people to participate in our economy, no matter their path," said Gov. Moore. "Today, we are saying, in one voice, that we, as a state, are ready to invest in our future. Today is a celebration of the opportunities we can build when we move in partnership."

The new initiatives to expand apprenticeship in Maryland in-

clude the new Public Sector Registered Apprenticeship Program, a \$3 million initiative to support the growth of registered apprenticeships within Maryland's public sector. The fund will provide grants to public sector entities to create and expand registered apprenticeship opportunities within state, municipal, and local governments and serves as a bold, new career development and retention strategy.

The Maryland Department of Labor is also dedicating \$1.6 million to developing a new Maryland Hospitality Management Apprenticeship Program, which will create a pipeline to an associate degree and a management-level position for individuals in the hospitality industry. By partnering with six community colleges across the state, this innovative new program will expand apprenticeship into a non-traditional industry, providing individuals with new career and educational opportunities through hospitality apprenticeships.

Both programs are supported through a grant from the U.S. Department of Labor's Employment and Training Administration.



PHOTO MARYLAND GOVERNOR'S PRESS OFFICE

Governor Wes Moore launched new workforce development programs in the public sector and hospitality industry.

"The Maryland Department of Labor is proud to celebrate National Apprenticeship Week and showcase the key success of this program. Maryland is full speed ahead on growing apprenticeship through expanding to new industries, working with schools and colleges, and partnering with communities across the state," said Maryland Department of Labor Secretary Portia Wu. "Maryland has set ambitious goals for expanding apprenticeship and we mean to meet them. Registered apprenticeship is key to our state's

economic success. We've already hit historic highs in apprenticeship adoption and today's investments will accelerate our progress."

The governor was joined by Department of Labor Secretary Portia Wu; Department of Disabilities Secretary Carol Beatty, Department of General Services Secretary Atif Chaudhry, Maryland Higher Education Commission Acting Secretary Dr. Sanjay Rai; Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services Secretary Carolyn Scruggs. Howard County Executive Calvin Ball and

Anne Arundel County Executive Stuart Pittman were also in attendance, along with leaders from Maryland's hospitality, accounting, traditional trades, information technology, healthcare, manufacturing and labor unions. Additionally, leaders from local school systems and workforce boards were in attendance.

"Royal Farms is excited to launch our registered apprenticeship program to provide opportunities to individuals seeking a ca-

reer in retail and food service management," said Royal Farms Director of Training Jessica Mente. "We have created a clear pathway, and timeline, offering all the education and training tools needed for individuals to run a profitable business as a Store Leader for Royal Farms." Royal Farms was approved for a registered apprenticeship program during this week's Maryland Apprenticeship and Training Council meeting.

The Prince George's Post

The Prince George's Post
P.O. Box 1001 15207 Marlboro Pike
Upper Marlboro, MD 20772-3151
Phone: 301-627-0900 • Legal Fax: 301-627-6260
Email: pgpost@gmail.com
Contents © 2023, The Prince George's Post

Publisher/Senior Editor Legusta Floyd	Editor Lisa Duan
General Manager/ Legal Advertising Manager Brenda Boice	Administrative Assistant/ Billing -
Legal Advertising Assistant Robin Boerckel	Web Manager Kyler Quesenberry

Prince George's County, Md. Member National Newspaper Publishers Association, and the Maryland, Delaware, District of Columbia Press Association. The Prince George's Post (ISSN 10532226) is published every Thursday by the New Prince George's Post Inc., 15207 Marlboro Pike, Upper Marlboro, Md. 20772-3151. Subscription rate: 25 cents per single copy; \$15 per year; \$7.50 senior citizens and students; out of county add \$1; out of state add \$2. Periodical postage paid at Southern Md. 20790. Postmaster, send address changes to Prince George's Post, P.O. Box 1001, Upper Marlboro, Md. 20773.

BUSINESS AND FINANCE

Social Security Matters

Ask Rusty:

Can I Voluntarily Suspend My Social Security Payments?

By RUSSELL GLOOR,
National Social Security Advisor at the AMAC Foundation,
the non-profit arm of the Association of Mature American Citizens

Dear Rusty: My wife retired in 2015 and is receiving Social Security. I am past my full retirement age, and I still work. I recently filed for Social Security benefits and received my first payment earlier this month, and my benefits are around three times my wife's. I now find that, due to other income, I am having some regrets about filing for Social Security, as the taxes will be complicated. So, my questions are:

1. If I do a "Voluntary Suspension", can my wife still apply to get up to 50% of my benefits, or do I have to be "actively" receiving Social Security benefits? In other words, does the "Bipartisan Budget Act of 2015" prevent this?
2. If I do a "Voluntary Suspension", how soon could I "restart" my benefits?

Signed: Having Second Thoughts

Dear Second Thoughts: The Bipartisan Budget Act of 2015 closed a loophole which previously allowed someone to file for their Social Security retirement benefit in order for their marital partner to claim a spousal benefit, after which the primary beneficiary could suspend their own benefit and allow it to grow to maximum at age 70. That "file and suspend" option went away in April of 2016; thus, your wife cannot claim her spousal benefit while your Social Security retirement benefits are suspended (you must be "actively" receiving benefits for your wife to get benefits on your record).

Nevertheless, because you've already reached your full retirement age, you can voluntarily suspend your benefit payments at any time to allow it to continue growing by simply calling Social Security at your local office (or at the national number 1.800.772.1213) and asking them to do so. Your wife will not receive her spousal benefits for any months your benefits are suspended, but she would continue to get her own SS retirement amount (only the spousal portion of her monthly amount would be suspended).

You will be able to restart your benefits at any time by calling Social Security again and asking that your benefits be resumed. You can suspend and restart your benefits as needed (no restriction on how many times), but they will only start/resume the suspension effective with the month following the month you call. And, as you likely already know, for each month your benefits are suspended you will earn Delayed Retirement Credits (DRCs) resulting in a higher payment amount later.

Just for clarity, voluntary suspension of benefits is only available to those who have reached full retirement age but is an excellent way to increase your monthly Social Security payment. Your benefit will grow by .667% for each month suspended and, if your benefit is still suspended when you turn 70 years old, Social Security will automatically resume payments at that time, at your higher maximum monthly amount.

The 2.4 million member Association of Mature American Citizens [AMAC] www.amac.us is a vibrant, vital senior advocacy organization that takes its marching orders from its members. AMAC Action is a non-profit, non-partisan organization representing the membership in our nation's capital and in local Congressional Districts throughout the country. And the AMAC Foundation (www.AmacFoundation.org) is the Association's non-profit organization, dedicated to supporting and educating America's Seniors. Together, we act and speak on the Association members' 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 www.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) or email us at ssadvisor@amacfoundation.org.

Governor Moore Announces Appointments to Governor's Office of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing and State Board of Sign Language Interpreters

By PRESS OFFICER
Maryland Governor News

ANNAPOLIS, Md. (Nov. 15, 2023)—Governor Wes Moore today announced the appointment of Usherla DeBerry as acting director of the Governor's Office of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing. The governor also announced the members appointed to the newly-created State Board of Sign Language Interpreters.

"It is vital that we provide all resources and access to opportunities for Maryland's Deaf and hard of hearing community. I am confident that we have the right team in place to accomplish that goal," said Gov. Moore. "I am grateful that Ms. DeBerry and the new board members answered the call to serve. I thank Acting Director Breen for her tremendous work and leadership in the Governor's Office of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing during this search process and I look forward to all that the office, the board, and our administration will do together in partnership."

The Governor's Office of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing promotes equal and full access for all Marylanders by providing expertise that enhances the general welfare of Maryland's Deaf and hard of hearing residents. The office addresses policy gaps, provides expertise related to Deaf and hard of hearing issues, and facilitates the ability to access resources and services.

Usherla DeBerry is a seasoned professional in program administration and advocacy within the Deaf community. Prior to this role, she was a Regional Manager for the North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services Division of Services for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing and the Housing Operations Manager at Gallaudet University. She also has been adjunct faculty at Gallaudet University, Wake Technical Community College in Raleigh, North Carolina, and Delaware Technical Community College.

DeBerry holds a Bachelor of Science from Gallaudet University and a Master of Education from Wilmington University. Her appointment will be submitted to the Senate for confirmation during the 2024 legislative session.

Governor Moore also announced the members of the newly-created State Board of Sign Language Interpreters. In May, Governor Moore signed the Maryland Sign Language Interpreters Act into law, which established a licensing and regulatory system for sign language interpreters under the State Board of Sign Language Interpreters. Governor Moore's appointees to the State Board of Sign Language Interpreters include:

Susan Beaver is a nationally certified American Sign Language Interpreter who primarily works in K-12 educational settings and is a Child of a Deaf Adult. Her previous interpreting experience was staff interpreter and interpreter coordinator for the Deaf Independent Living Association. Beaver maintains memberships with the Registry of the Interpreters for the Deaf as well as the Potomac Chapter of Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf. Beaver holds a degree from the Indiana University of Pennsylvania.

Dr. Pamela Collins is an assistant professor for the Department of Interpretation and Translation at Gallaudet University. Her extensive professional expertise includes various faculty roles. Her research interests lie in the institution of access, services providers as an institution, the regulation, practice, and impact of scheduling practices in American Sign Language-English interpreting, the social organization of interpreters regarding race, culture, equality, inclusion, and diversity; and the educational experiences of minoritized students in interpreter education programs, and Deaf/Hearing teams. Dr. Collins was the president and board member of the National Alliance of Black Interpreters, D.C. chapter. Dr. Collins earned her Doctorate of Philosophy in Interpretation at Gallaudet University.

Shane Feldman founded and led In-nivee Strategies, Inc., an organizational and leadership development company that rapidly grew from a start-up to a nationally recognized consulting firm. Previous professional experience includes positions as executive director of the Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf and as chief operating officer for the National Association of the Deaf. Volunteer experiences include

several years as president, vice president and board member of various organizations including the Maryland Association of the Deaf. Feldman was the former chair of the Maryland Advisory Council on the Deaf and Hard of Hearing and was a member of committees and task forces to review medical video interpreting and interpreter standards. He earned his Master of Science in Management from the University of Maryland University College.

Jacob Leffler is a legislative and public affairs analyst at the United States Agency for International Development. His extensive volunteer experience includes serving as the vice president of the Maryland Association of the Deaf; as founder and president of the Baltimore City Association of the Deaf; and as Region 1 board member at the National Association of the Deaf. Leffler earned a Master of Arts in Public Administration from Gallaudet University.

Trudy Suggs is a Certified Deaf Interpreter with an extensive background in writing and publishing. Suggs has strong expertise in nonprofit management, budgeting, business communications, grant writing, publishing, and curriculum and workshop development and implementation. Suggs is the business owner of T.S. Writing Services, L.L.C., a writing and editing service. Through Savory Words Publishing, she has published works of Deaf authors in various genres. Suggs is the vice president of the Maryland School of the Deaf Foundation and holds a Master of Arts in Public Administration from the University of Illinois.

Kaylee Teixeira is a nationally certified and freelance American Sign Language interpreter. Her experiences include leadership and membership in the Potomac Chapter of the Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf, the National Alliance of Black Interpreters, D.C. chapter, and the National Black Deaf Advocates. Teixeira holds a dual bachelors in American Sign Language-English Interpreting and International Global Studies from the Rochester Institute of Technology.

Applications are being reviewed for the seventh member of the board. The board will elect the chair.

Appoints from A1

As Maryland's chief sustainability officer, Conklin will collaborate with internal and external stakeholders to coordinate efforts and resources needed to design, implement, and track progress toward the state's nation-leading environmental and climate goals. Conklin will participate as a member on the Governor's Climate Subcabinet and Bay Subcabinet, developing and implementing climate-related policies, regulations, and programs, and fostering partnerships with federal, state, local, and private stakeholders to provide additional resources needed to meet the state's climate goals on time, including

reaching net-zero emissions by 2045, improving water quality, and making Maryland the greenest state in the country.

Michael Hinson, Chief Resilience Officer

Michael Hinson spent more than ten years with the Howard County Office of Emergency Management, including more than three years as director. He previously served as deputy director and as a senior emergency management specialist in the office, assisting with recovery efforts after the devastating 2016 and 2018 floods in downtown Ellicott City. Hinson is also an adjunct faculty member at the Mid-Atlantic Center for Emergency Management

and Public Safety at Frederick Community College.

Hinson will work within the Maryland Department of Emergency Management to provide statewide coordination for resilience across all hazards, ensuring that Maryland can adapt to changing conditions and prepare for, withstand, and rapidly recover from disruptions to everyday life. The position—one of just seven similar jobs nationwide—was authorized last year by the Maryland General after being created by a bill sponsored by Sen. Katie Fry Hester, a Democrat representing

See **APPOINTMENTS** Page A6

How Small Businesses Can Retain Customer Loyalty This Holiday Season

(StatePoint) Small business loyalty is on the rocks, according to a new study that finds that consumers are feeling more love for big retail brands this holiday season.

The study, from cloud-based accounting platform Xero, found that while 27% of consumers feel loyal to big retail brands, only 14% feel loyal to small businesses.

"For a small business owner who launched their business because of a passion, identifying ways to gain customer loyalty can be overwhelming. Fortunately, our data provides insights into tactics that small businesses can take to nurture ongoing relationships with customers," says Ben Richmond, chartered accountant and U.S. country manager at Xero.

As the holiday season approaches, Xero is sharing these tips and survey insights to holiday-proof operations and keep customers satisfied:

- **Keep delivery affordable:** According to the Xero survey, 25% of survey respondents believe that delivery should always be free, regardless of original purchase price. "Free delivery is an effective way to build customer loyalty, so offer it if you can. Just be sure to utilize cash flow forecasting or work with your accountant to gauge how much it will cost you long-term," says Richmond. If free shipping isn't viable for your business, keep this fee low—30% said spending \$21–\$50 for delivery was agreeable. To bring down shipping costs, consider using shipping broker-



(C) UEAB / ISTOCK VIA GETTY IMAGES PLUS

- ages or building shipping into your pricing.
- **Make delivery fast:** At a point in the year when timing truly matters, it's a good idea to offer express shipping. Thirty percent of consumers want their items faster, plus this allows you to charge for expedited shipping. On this front, customers appreciate communication. Encourage them to start seasonal shopping early and set their expectations with cut-off dates for when the last orders can be delivered in time for the holidays. You may also want to consider diversifying your supply and distribution channels by looking to both local manufacturers and service

providers, and also large delivery partners, so you have options to fall back on if links in the chain are disrupted.

- **Make shopping convenient:** Match big retailer convenience by accepting multiple payment options, including e-wallets and by offering your products online. According to the survey, 50% of consumers are buying more online now post-pandemic, so it's a good idea to meet them where they are.
- **Build your reputation:** Show your passion and small biz credentials in your branding and packaging. Don't be shy about asking for reviews and referrals, as they're key to building trust. And when you're criticized online, always respond respectfully.
- **Return-proof your products:** Include detailed descriptions and pictures of your products to minimize returns. At the same time, consider offering more lenient policies for holiday-related returns. This both increases customer loyalty as well as extends the amount of time a return may impact your bottom line, as an extended period can allow for a slower trickle of negative growth.
- **Use tech:** Have a pulse-check on your cash flow by leaning into technology, like Xero's cloud-based accounting platform, to automate tasks, manage inventory and track transactions in real-time. Technology investments can help ensure you're constantly aware of how much return loss is acceptable per month as you plan inventory needs.

Check out the full study in Xero's report into online shopping trends by visiting xero.com.

"With a game plan that combines strategic actions, responsive communication and adaptability, small businesses can compete with the big box stores, and win customer hearts and minds over the holidays," says Richmond.

