

The Prince George's Post



A COMMUNITY NEWSPAPER FOR PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY Since 1932

Vol. 84, No. 9 March 3 — March 9, 2016

Prince George's County, Maryland

Newspaper of Record

Phone: 301-627-0900

25 cents



PHOTO COURTESY LORI VALENTINE

EDC President and CEO Jim Coleman (standing right) addressing capacity crowd at exporting forum.

'Activating Prosperity' at Exporting Forum

Prince George's Economic Development Corporation Shows More Than 125 Local Small Businesses Billions in Opportunity by Exporting Their Goods and Services to the World

By LORI VALENTINE
PGCEDC

LARGO, MD—More than 125 local small businesses turned out on Wednesday at the Prince George's County Economic Development (EDC) headquarters to find out how to double their revenue by tapping into billions of dollars in oppor-

tunity by exporting their goods and services. The businesses packed the room at the EDC's Prince George's County International Business Export Forum to hear from a 'Dream Team' of experts from the Maryland Department of Commerce and the United States Department of Commerce. The experts showed business owners exactly which

countries and sectors are most in need of goods and services, how to reach new customers through more than 100 different business development agents globally, how to build capacity in their company to be able to sell and deliver goods around the world, and more.

"Our ultimate objective is growing our local small busi-

nesses through exporting to the point where they must create more jobs to keep up with the demand for their goods and services all over the world," said EDC President and CEO Jim Coleman. "The Commerce Department and the State of

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State High School Graduation Rate Sets New Record High Dropout Rate at an All-Time Low

By DEIDRE MCPHILLIPS
Capital News Service

BALTIMORE, MD—A higher percentage of Maryland students are crossing the stage to receive their high school diplomas than at any other time in the State's history, according to data released today by the Maryland State Department of Education. As the graduation rate sets new records, the dropout rate has reached an all-time low.

"Each student who graduates from high school is a success story, and those students, families, and schools should celebrate that success," said Dr. Jack Smith, Interim State Superintendent of Schools. "It also is important to remember that a high school diploma is only the first step. We continue to strengthen our standards to better prepare each student for life beyond high school—be it further education, the workforce, or both."

The four-year cohort graduation rate reached 87 percent in 2015—5 points better than the 82 percent rate registered in 2010. The graduation rate jumped .6 percentage points over 2014, from 86.4 percent. Most student subgroups saw improvement in graduation rates between 2014 and 2015, although gaps in the numbers persist:

- Four-year cohort graduation rates for African American, Asian, Native Hawaiian and White stu-

dents all improved, as did the rate for students identifying as two or more races.

- The graduation rate for African American students has jumped from 76.09 in 2010 to 82.3 percent in 2015.

- The graduation rate for Hispanic students dipped by .6 percentage points between 2014 and 2015, but has improved by more than 5 percentage points since 2011, from 71.7 percent to 76.9 percent.

- Among students receiving special services, the four-year cohort graduation rate rose in two of three categories. Specifically, both special education students and students receiving free or reduced price meals improved. But the percentage of English language learners graduating fell from 54.1 percent in 2014 to 49.3 percent in 2015.

Maryland six years ago moved to the cohort graduation rate, which follows a set group of students from freshman year through their senior year. The four-year cohort graduation rate has improved every year since.

Simultaneously, the dropout rate has been in steady decline. The State's dropout rate, which stood at 11.9 percent in 2010, dropped to 8.1 percent in 2015.

The new high school and system data was made available on the updated MdReportCard.org website on February 12.

We're #1 ... Again!

County Leads State in Waste Diversion and Recycling Efforts

By PRESS OFFICER
PG County Government

LARGO, MD—For the second consecutive year, the Prince George's County Department of the Environment is pleased to announce the County's continued leadership in the State for waste diversion and recycling. Through innovative programs and outstanding efforts by County residents and business, Prince George's County remains #1 in keeping waste out of the landfill (waste

diversion) and ranks #2 in the State for recycling.

Special thanks are given to the residents of Prince George's County for their ongoing support and dedication to fundamental practices of reducing, reusing and recycling waste. Their adoption of small behavior changes in the disposal of trash and debris, results in a positive impact that not only affects this County,

See WE'RE #1 Page A3

Nominations are Open for NAMI Maryland Board of Directors

By PRESS OFFICER
NAMI

NAMI Maryland announces that it is now seeking nominations for candidates to serve on its Board of Directors starting in June 2016. As per the NAMI Maryland's By-Laws, candidates may be nominated by an individual

member or by an Affiliate. Candidates must:

1. Be a member of NAMI-Maryland by the election date of the Annual Meeting on June 12, 2016.

2. Provide a resume and statement indicating their consent to serve on the Board

See NAMI Page A5

EDC President Jim Coleman Presents to Blue Ribbon Commission on Structural Deficit

"We Can't Take Any Employer for Granted" Says Coleman

By LORI VALENTINE
PGCEDC

UPPER MARLBORO, MD—Today, EDC President and CEO Jim Coleman spoke before the 'Prince George's County Blue Ribbon Commission on Addressing the Structural Deficit' in Upper Marlboro about the strategies the Economic Development Corporation is taking to contribute to the removal of the County's fiscal deficit. Mr. Coleman pointed to the results of the EDC's 'We Care' business retention and 'Operation 535' business attraction initiatives as indicators of the positive direction that is expected to expand the County's commercial tax base. An increase to the commercial tax base has a significant impact on the fiscal deficit by generating more revenue for the County.

"The EDC launched its 'We Care' initiative last summer, recognizing that we can't take any of our employers for granted," said Mr.

Coleman. "But the biggest opportunities that we present to current employers, local job seekers and potential companies are that Prince George's County has 14 federal agencies, top talent and financing programs that make it the best place in the world to do business. That is what I call the Value Proposition of Prince George's County."

Since the 'We Care' initiative was launched in July 2015, the EDC Business Development Team has met with 258 of the top companies in Prince George's County. Ninety-nine percent have confirmed that they are staying in Prince George's County, retaining 144,903 jobs. Sixty-three percent of these companies confirmed that they are creating new jobs over the next six months, totaling 5,192 new jobs that will be created for the residents of Prince George's County.

The Blue Ribbon Commission on Addressing the Struc-



PHOTO COURTESY LORI VALENTINE

Jim Coleman, President & CEO, PGCEDC (center); Pradeep Ganguly, Executive Vice President, PGCEDC (left) and Earl Adams, Jr. Blue Ribbon Commission Chair (right)

tural Deficit was established by the County Council last year and charged with recommending policies to the County Council and County Executive that will address the County's structural deficit - the imbalance caused when normal government spending exceeds tax revenues on an annual basis.

"I think that you are looking at a renaissance in the County and great opportunity," said Commission member Jim Estep, Jr., President and CEO of the Greater Prince George's Business Roundtable. "With all of the

See EDC Page A3

INSIDE

3-Alarm Commercial Building Fire at Depot Lane in Upper Marlboro

Storage lockers were found to contain a multitude of items but primarily loaded with furniture, boxes of clothes, paper products, etc. One locker had a car inside, others with mechanical equipment, work tools and lawn mowers.

Community, Page A3

The Other Washington

Others were within yards of the White House. The movie *12 Years a Slave* retold the story of Solomon Northup, a free Black man from New York who in 1841 was tricked into traveling to Washington with a promise of work as a musician. Instead he was drugged and kidnapped, imprisoned in a slave pen.

Commentary, Page A4

Maryland Lawmakers to Introduce Bills Guaranteeing a Week of Paid Sick Leave for All Workers

Senate Majority Leader Catherine Pugh, D-Baltimore, is introducing a bill that would allow full-time workers to earn an hour of paid time off for every 30 hours they work, earning up to 7 days of paid time off.

Business, Page A5

Movie Review: Anomalisa

This is the story of Michael Stone, a depressed businessman who's in Cincinnati for one night to give a presentation about customer service. (He's an expert on the subject, having authored such books as *How May I Help You Help Them?*) As he endures mundane, banal conversations with the taxi driver, the hotel clerk, the bellhop.

Out on the Town, Page A6

Earth Talk

Dear EarthTalk:

What are endocrine disruptors, how do they make their way into my body and what can I do to avoid them?

—Jo McGovern,
Albany, NY

Features, Page A7

Towns and NEIGHBORS

In and Around Morningside-Skyline

With Mary McHale, will not run this week

Brandywine-Aquasco

by Audrey Johnson 301 888 2153

BRANDYWINE-NORTH KEYS CIVIC ASSOCIATION

Brandywine-North Keys Civic Association meetings are held 7:00 PM the third Wednesday of every month at Brandywine Elementary School. We meet in the Media Center at the school. The address is 14101 Brandywine Road, Brandywine, Maryland 20613. Please come out and join us at our next meeting March 16, 2016.

BIRTHDAY GREETINGS

Happy birthday to Doris Lee, Brandon Freeman, Vincent Glee, Darion Smalling, Jean Brown, Rom Escanilla, Joachim Neckere, Janice Patterson, Conrad Carter, Patricia Ann Weaver, Rachel Cain, Lauren Crawford, Marvies Davies, Gloria Garrett, Emmanuel Oghogho, Shela Sedgwick, Ronald Davis, Jean Noel, Malcolm Terry, Isabella Alansalon Oghogho, Matthew Oghogho, Karmalita Contee-Borders, Maleke Glee, Lynn Harper, Jose Rojas, Lawrence Oghogho, Romonia Pinkney, Ruth Turner, Winthrop Chew, Jerrod Contee, Francis Deville, Barbara Hall, Elizabeth Hamil-

ton, Selena Jackson, Zhariia Lee, Mykaylia Washington and Cecilia Patterson who are celebrating their birthdays during the month of February.

NEW HOPE FELLOWSHIP CANCER CARE MINISTRY

Please come out and join our Cancer Care Ministry as we host our 2nd Annual Testimonial Service Saturday, March 19 at 2:00 PM and Sunday, March 20th at 6:00 PM. We will have testimonies from survivors and caregivers, gospel singing and liturgical dancing.

Our address is New Hope Fellowship/ Nottingham Myers campus 15601 Brooks Church Road, Upper Marlboro, Maryland 20772. Telephone number is 301-888-2171. Rev. Constance C. Smith is our Pastor.

BEST HORSE SHOW SERIES

Join us Saturday, March 19, 2016 and Sunday, March 20, 2016 at 8:00 AM for Back Eyed Susan Horse Show series at The Show Place Arena. The address is 14900 Pennsylvania Avenue, Upper Marlboro, Maryland 20772. Contact number is 301-

952-7900; TTY 301-699-2544. The cost is free for spectators.

REUNION CLASS GIFT

We are calling all Bulldogs for Reunion 2016 which we will celebrate class years ending in 1's and 6's during Bowie State University Homecoming October 10-15, 2016. We are looking for volunteers to help make your reunion special.

The Class of 1966 will celebrate their 50th Reunion at the spring commencement on May 23, 2016. Reconnect with your classmates, participate in the commencement ceremony and represent the Gold Club (50-year alumni). A special luncheon will be held after commencement, which will include a 50th anniversary pinning ceremony.

Please make sure that we have your preferred email address on file. If you are not a member already, we encourage you to join the Bowie State University National Alumni Association to stay connected with the university. For more information, contact the Office of Alumni Relations and Annual Giving at 301-860-4327 or email alumni@bowiestate.edu.

Secretary Holt: Creating Affordable Rental Housing Across the State is a Win for Maryland Families

By PRESS OFFICER MDHCD

ANNAPOLIS, MD—Creating affordable rental housing opportunities across the state creates jobs and stimulates the economy while providing quality, energy efficient homes for families, senior citizens and individuals with special needs, said Secretary Kenneth C. Holt during remarks at the 2016 Maryland Housing Day event.

The secretary said programs such as Rental Housing Works provide invaluable financial resources for increasing the supply of affordable rental housing Maryland.

Maryland Housing Day is an annual event sponsored by the Maryland Affordable Housing Coalition to remind lawmakers of the importance of affordable housing to the state's economy. Members of the coalition include developers, contractors, lenders, investors, architects, engineers and property managers, as well as local governments, housing authorities and community organizations. The coalition is an alliance of more than 185 businesses and organizations in-



Secretary Kenneth C. Holt speaking at the 2016 Maryland Housing Day in Annapolis on February 18.

involved in the affordable rental housing industry.

Secretary Holt remains committed to expanding housing and community development opportunities through programs such as the recently announced Project C.O.R.E. Project C.O.R.E.'s holistic approach will create even more opportunities for affordable rental housing and support economic recovery in Baltimore City, Secretary Holt said.

Speaking on the administration's new student debt initiative, Secretary Holt described a unique plan to combine a potential home buyer's student loan debt with their mortgage of a department-owned property, enabling monthly savings and increased accumulation of home equity.

"Economic development is the keystone of the Hogan administration's platform to change Maryland for the better," Secretary Holt said.

Neighborhood Events

Edwards Calls House GOP's Unending Cycle of Attacking the Health Care of Women and Working Families More Irresponsible Governing

WASHINGTON, D.C.—Congresswoman Donna F. Edwards released the following statement today as House Republicans voted yet again to dismantle the Affordable Care Act and defund Planned Parenthood. The veto override failed in the House by a vote of 241-186. An override of a Presidential veto requires a two-thirds vote.

"House Republican's irresponsible governing continued today with the 63rd attempt to repeal or undermine the Affordable Care Act, and the 12th attempt to attack women's health care. With today's Republican attempt to override President Obama's veto, the American people are stuck in Groundhog Day, seeing numerous votes to further an ideological agenda instead of moving the country forward. It is ridiculous that Republicans continue to insist on wasting time on these harmful votes attacking women's health and the health care of hard-working families, when Congress should be working to create jobs and grow opportunities for working families."

Today, House Republicans failed in their Groundhog Day attempt to override the President's veto of their radical reconciliation bill, which:

- Defunds Planned Parenthood, leaving millions of American women without key preventive health services—including life-saving cancer screenings, well-woman exams, birth control and advice on family planning; and
- Destroys the Affordable Care Act, dismantling the newfound health and economic security of millions of working families. In Maryland, it would have threatened coverage for 292,271 individuals who enrolled in Medicaid and the Children's Health Insurance Program as of October 31, 2015. According to the non-partisan Congressional Budget Office, the Republican Reconciliation bill would have taken away health insurance from 22 million Americans after 2017.

Tom Street Named WSSC's Deputy General Manager for Administration

LAURE, MD—Tom Street, who currently serves as an Assistant Chief Administrative Officer for Montgomery County, has been appointed WSSC's new Deputy General Manager for Administration. He begins his new role effective February 16, 2016.

In announcing Street's appointment, GM/CEO Carla A. Reid noted his extensive public sector experience, and long history with WSSC. A retiree of the Commission, Street was employed at WSSC for 25 years, including executive positions as Budget Director and Team Chief for Strategic Planning and Business Development. He was instrumental in developing the Commission's annual operating and capital budgets and Capital Improvements Programs, its first formal multi-year financial plan and first strategic plan.

"I am delighted and excited to have Tom returning to WSSC to help guide and oversee the administrative aspects of the Commission," said Reid. "I welcome his



Congresswoman Donna F. Edwards

depth of experience both here and with Montgomery County Government, and believe he will be a tremendous asset in furthering my vision of building world-class customer service, stakeholder relationships and environmental responsibility."

Under County Executive Ike Leggett, Street is one of four administrators, and supports and advises the Chief Administrative Officer in the areas of customer service, emergency response, re-development and transportation. He is responsible for oversight of the county's MC311 Initiative, the county's online and telephone information system introduced in 2010, which enables the public to access Montgomery County government information and non-emergency services online or by calling a single number: 3-1-1. In addition, he coordinates issues such as White Oak revitalization, inclement weather response, pedestrian safety, the Purple Line project and affordable housing.

"I am honored to have this opportunity to return to the Commission and work for Carla and everyone on the team in moving WSSC forward," said Street. I welcome the chance to help build on its successes, and develop new initiatives to better serve all of our customers in Prince George's and Montgomery counties."

Street is a past president and board member of the Maryland-D.C. Utilities Association and has been a guest lecturer for the World Bank, Caribbean Development Bank, Maryland-China Business Council and U.S. Department of Environmental Protection.

He holds a Bachelor of Arts degree from The University of Florida and a master's degree in Public Administration from The American University in Washington, D.C.

Edwards Campaign Announces UFCW 400 and UNITE HERE Endorsements Representing 50,000 Workers

LANHAM, MD—Today, the Donna Edwards for Senate Campaign announced the endorsements of unions that represent 50,000 workers: UFCW Local 400 and the UNITE HERE International Union with three local unions. UFCW Local 400 represents 35,000 service industry workers, UNITE HERE represents more than 15,000 workers in Maryland's hotels, casinos, and airports.

"UNITE HERE is proud to endorse Congresswoman Donna Edwards in her race for the United States Senate. Before she was even in Congress,

Donna fought to bring thousands of union jobs to the National Harbor in Fort Washington. In Congress, she has been a clear voice in the call to fix our broken immigration system, including standing up for H-2B Visa reforms that would end unprotected work here in Maryland. Congresswoman Edwards has never compromised on her commitment to working families, and there is no better person to carry those values to the Senate."

Congresswoman Donna Edwards

"I am grateful to receive the endorsements of UFCW Local 400 and UNITE HERE International Union and their fantastic local affiliates. Together, we have fought for fair wages, the right to collective bargaining, and for the investments necessary to create good jobs right here at home. I look forward to continuing our partnership in the Senate, as we continue to fight to level the playing field for Maryland workers and their families."

WSSC General Manager/CEO Takes Disparity Study to Next Phase

LAUREL, MD—General Manager/CEO Carla A. Reid announced the next phase of the ongoing Disparity Study, which was launched in May of 2015. MGT of America, who is independently conducting the study, has partnered with McMillon Communications and Oppenheim Research to collect and analyze anecdotal information from the business community.

This phase of the study provides an opportunity for businesses to share experiences of doing business or attempting to do business with WSSC and its prime contractors and vendors.

"As the new General Manager and CEO of WSSC, improving stakeholder relationships is a top priority for me," said Carla A. Reid. "We can only improve by hearing from those businesses that have worked with us or participated in our procurement process about what is working and what is not. Participating in this study is an important way businesses can do that."

Participants will be randomly selected to contribute in this phase of the study via telephone interviews over the next four to six weeks. The information collected will determine the changes that must be made to procurement policies and procedures, including those of WSSC's Small, Local and Minority Business Enterprise (SLMBE) program.

Individual information will be kept confidential and aggregated for overall analysis and used only for the purposes of conducting this study.

The Disparity Study examines WSSC's four principal contracting areas—construction, architecture, engineering, professional services and goods and other services—to determine minority- and women-owned businesses' availability to compete as prime contractors and subcontractors in each of the four areas and the extent to which Minority Business Enterprises are used by WSSC.

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COMMUNITY

Practical Money Skills

By Nathaniel Sillin

Keeping Kids' Sports Costs Under Control

Most parents put countless miles on the car driving kids back and forth from various practices and games throughout elementary and secondary school.

As for the actual dollars behind all that driving and purchasing of uniforms, equipment, lessons and various activity fees, the numbers are pretty eye-opening. A 2014 study by the Utah State University's Families in Sport Lab (<http://www.usufamiliesinsportlab.com>) shows that the average annual family financial investment in youth sports came out to \$2,292.42, or 1.84 percent of that family's gross annual income.

Other research done within the program indicates that many parents spend much more—some in excess of 10 percent of gross annual income.

Whether that figure sounds low or high depends on your child's chosen sport and the number of years your child participates in it.

Whether your child's interest in sports is temporary or a long-term commitment, it's not only important to plan and budget what you're spending but to find ways to save. Here are some steps to begin:

Link up with other parents. Whether it's after-school or weekend soccer, hockey or baseball, your first source of intelligence is with parents who already have kids playing the sport. Discuss everything from the best program for your child overall to individual costs and fees associated with play—and don't forget to ask them how they've kept their budget in line.

Schedule for the best discounts. Don't miss any opportunities for sales on merchandise or discounts on training and activity fees. Paying early on merchandise, sports camp or pre-season activity fees can save significant money over time. Above all, avoid late registration fees on all sports and activities.

Make sure your child's health insurance is adequate. Depending on what sport your child plays, you may end up buying additional coverage beyond what your family health insurance allows. It takes virtually no time for a night or two in the hospital to run into tens of thousands of dollars, so take every step to make sure your child has the right coverage. Some health insurers may sell special sports coverage for minors, but if your child is playing an organized sport within a school system or league, they may have their own insurance requirements before they allow your child to play. There may be other coverage options as well—run those options by your qualified financial experts or fellow parents who are insuring their children against sports injuries.

Buy used. Whether it's equipment or uniforms, see if there are safe options to buy used. Auction sites may provide some solutions while many communities known for particular sports may have used equipment stores that can cut your bills extensively. If your child isn't destined for the pros, buying used makes a lot of sense—why buy full price if at some point their interest wanes?

Buy multiple sizes and neutral colors and styles. If you've got a growing child who is likely to maintain interest in a particular sport over several seasons, stock up on clothing in different sizes and go for neutral colors and styles that allow for gender-neutral hand-me-downs.

Negotiate shared transportation and group fees when possible. Again, in partnership with other parents or your school system, see if there are cheaper ways to travel, buy gear and find play and practice space. Always be on the lookout for cheaper options and set up a network either by email or social media where there's a free flow of spending tips and discounts that might come in handy. As for lessons, try the classroom approach. If your child wants to improve in a sport, work with other parents to hire an instructor who will do group lessons that will assure a lower cost per family.

Bottom line: Even if your child doesn't grow up with the natural skill of a Manning brother or a Williams sister, it's possible to introducing them to youth athletics without ruining your family finances.



3-Alarm Commercial Building Fire at Depot Lane in Upper Marlboro

By PRESS OFFICER
PG County Fire/EMS

UPPER MARLBORO, MD—At around 11:15 am, Tuesday, February 23, Firefighter/Medics were alerted to a commercial building fire. Fire/EMS units responded to the Fort Knox Self Storage facility at 15444 Depot Lane in Upper Marlboro and arrived to find smoke showing from the rear portion of the long 2-story building. Upon further investigation firefighters found several self-storage lockers on fire on the first level extending up to the second level. A 2nd Alarm was requested as firefighters fought a significant fire that now involved dozens of various sized storage lockers on both levels.

Storage lockers were found to contain a multitude of items but primarily loaded with furniture, boxes of clothes, paper products, etc. One locker had a car inside, others with mechanical equipment, work tools and lawn mowers. At least 2 small explosions were heard during

the firefight that demonstrates the dangers of fighting fires in storage facilities; you never know what's inside of them. The explosions did not cause any further damage. Some firefighters were evaluated on the scene for possible injuries; however, no one was transported due to injury.

Fire Chief Marc S. Bashour arrived on the scene shortly after the 2nd Alarm was sounded. He requested a 3rd Alarm bringing additional firefighters to the scene to assist with overhaul and extinguishment. There were about 40 Fire/EMS units on the scene and 105 firefighters and medics. It required about 2 hours to bring the fire under control. The contents of several dozen storage lockers were destroyed with others sustaining water and smoke damage.

Crain Highway, Route 301, had the southbound lanes closed during the fire as hose lines were stretched across the road and numerous pieces of apparatus and support vehicles were parked along both shoulders.



PHOTO BY MARK BRADY, PGFD PIO

As a matter of standard operating procedure all firefighters are processed through a wellness and rehab area after working on the fire ground. Medics monitor firefighters vitals signs and once within normal limits firefighters are returned to duty. Two firefighters demonstrated signs of hypertension and were transported to a hospital for additional evaluation.

Prince George's County Fire Investigators have concluded

their work and have classified this fire as "accidental." A candle fell behind a worktable in one of the lockers. Attempts to extinguish the fire delayed notification to 911. Fire loss is estimated at \$400,000.

Numerous Fire/EMS Departments from across the region either assisted at the fire or filled in at empty Prince George's County Fire/EMS Stations. Many thanks for their mutual aid assistance.



PHOTO BY MARK BRADY, PGFD PIO



PHOTO BY MARK BRADY, PGFD PIO

We're #1 from A1

but creates a sustainable ripple effect nationwide.

"Over the past five years, Prince George's has celebrated incredible progress in public safety, education and health outcomes while achieving unprecedented economic development growth. Yet, many are unaware of the environmental improvements we have made that have transformed us from an average jurisdiction to a model in environmental management and stewardship statewide and nationally," said Prince George's County Executive Rushern L. Baker, III. "I want to congratulate our Department of Environment for their innovative leadership and thank all of the residents and businesses of Prince George's County for creating a cleaner, greener, healthier and safer County for future Prince Georgians. To keep the momentum going, I encourage everyone to ask a relative, neighbor

or friend to make a commitment to recycling. It will significantly reduce trash, which is great for the environment."

"As a County, we continue to make impressive advancements reaching our goal of zero waste," says Department of the Environment Director Adam Ortiz. "The responsible act of recycling is a win for the County and a great demonstration of our diligence to find alternatives to throwing trash away and giving it a new life."

The official data recently released by the Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE) note the County's 2014 waste diversion remains strong at 64.03 percent, the highest in the State of Maryland. The County's recycling rate for 2014 is an impressive 59.03 percent, slightly less than Washington County's 2014 recycling rate of 60.59 percent.

MDE calculates the rate by adding the disposed trash tonnage and the recycling tonnage

to provide a total waste number. The recycling tonnage is then divided by the total waste number (tonnage) to obtain the recycling rate. Because of the efforts residents and businesses have made in eliminating waste before it starts, the County received the maximum Source Reduction Credit of 5 percent from MDE. Examples of source reduction practices include leaving grass trimmings on your lawn to add nutrients back into the soil, using reusable shopping bags and water bottles and selecting products that contain the least amount of packaging.

"This accomplishment is a major success for the County. We're working hard get these rates higher by establishing recycling programs in every County business and multi-family property," said DoE's Recycling Section Manager Marilyn Rybak. "Setting up a program is easy and the County's Recycling Division is here to assist commercial, industrial, institutional

and residential communities implement successful recycling and waste diversion programs, which may help save money on their disposal fees."

Recycling initiatives helping the County reduce its carbon footprint include a single-stream recycling program that utilizes a 65-gallon wheeled recycling cart, a food scrap composting pilot program for residential, commercial and educational institutions; and, the County's ban on disposable plastic bags in yard waste collection, reducing the amount of waste reaching the landfill and "mining" of materials on the landfill.

The County also passed a law requiring owners of businesses, apartments and condominiums to establish recycling programs within their offices and complexes; continues to foster a recycling partnership with Prince George's County Public Schools; and, conducts public outreach and educational programs for residents and businesses.

Baby Bunnies Egg Hunt

BRANDYWINE, MD—Bring your little bunnies for fun games and crafts at the Baby Bunnies Egg Hunt. Designed for children 5 and under, make sure to bring their baskets for egg collecting. This event will occur rain or shine. Pre-register by March 18 at Baden Community Center or by calling 301-888-1500. On the day of the event, the price increases to \$7/person.

When: Saturday, March 19, 2016, 10 a.m. - 12 noon

Where: Baden Community Center (13601 Baden Westwood Road, Brandywine, MD 20613)

Cost: County residents: \$5; Non-county residents: \$6 (Door price: \$7)

Ages: 5 & under

Reservations: Yes; Pre-register by March 18 at Baden Community Center or 301-888-1500

Located in Brandywine, this community center is attached to Baden Community Center. Its amenities include a fitness room, gymnasium, picnic pavilion, playground, playing fields, among others. Visit the community center to discover its wide array of amenities and the recreational programs it offers.

The Department of Parks and Recreation provides comprehensive park and recreation programs, facilities and services which respond to changing needs within our communities. The Department strives to preserve, enhance and protect our open spaces to enrich the quality of life for present and future generations in a safe and secure environment.

For more on the Department of Parks and Recreation, visit www.pgparcs.com and stay connected on Facebook and Twitter. The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission, Department of Parks and Recreation encourages and supports the participation of individuals with disabilities in all programs and services.

EDC from A1

projects and potential projects looking to come to Prince George's County, Jim Coleman is doing a very good job and really sees the big picture. He is able to work, company by company, to bring the businesses and the talent, collectively, to Prince George's County to see that our opportunities for growth are truly realized."

To further help the County's existing businesses to grow and create more jobs, the EDC will host 'IRS Pro-

curement Opportunity Day' on Tuesday, March 1st. at EDC Headquarters, 1801 McCormick Drive, Suite 140, Largo, MD 20774. The event will show local small businesses how to gain access to \$10 Billion in Procurement Opportunities from the U.S. Department of Treasury and IRS. This event is free and lunch will be provided. Space is filling up very quickly, so please register today by sending your RSVP to Crystal Ballard at (301) 583-4650 or cballard@pgcedc.com.

Proudly Serving
Prince George's County Since 1932

COMMENTARY

Cong. Steny H. Hoyer House Democratic Minority Whip



Hoyer Joins Rep. Gerry Connolly, 31 Other Members of Congress to Reintroduce the FAIR Act

Updated legislation would provide federal workforce 5.3% pay raise

WASHINGTON, D.C.—Congressman Steny H. Hoyer (D-MD) joined Congressman Gerry Connolly (D-VA), and 31 cosponsors, today in introducing legislation in the House to provide a 3.9% raise to federal workers plus 1.4% in lost locality pay. The Federal Adjustment of Income Rates (FAIR) Act would provide the pay hike to all federal employees, including locality pay, in 2017.

Connolly introduced similar legislation last year that would have provided federal employees a 3.8% pay increase for fiscal year 2016. The updated FAIR Act would ensure that federal employees serving across the country, in all 50 States and on behalf of constituents residing in every congressional district, earn a pay increase of 3.9%, plus a competitive locality pay adjustment of 1.4%, for fiscal year 2017.

"I am proud to represent 62,000 federal workers who reside in Maryland's Fifth District," said Congressman Steny H. Hoyer (D-MD). "Our federal employees have faced furloughs and uncertainty because of a government shutdown, and they have contributed \$138 billion toward deficit reduction. These employees deserve to be compensated fairly for the critical work they perform every day for our country. They deserve our gratitude, and I will continue to work on their behalf to make sure federal employees get the pay and benefits they have earned."

"No other group has been asked to sacrifice

more than our federal workforce, who have endured years of pay freezes, increased retirement contributions, no locality pay, sequestration cuts, and a government shutdown," said Congressman Gerald E. Connolly (D-VA). "This bill is a down payment on trying to help restore some of the losses that have been incurred by our dedicated federal employees, and I hope demonstrates we value their public service."

"Over the last six years, federal workers have seen a cumulative pay increase of just 3.3 percent," said Congressman Cummings, Ranking Member of the House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform (D-MD). "President Obama's suggested increase of 1.6 percent is good, but it is not enough. This bill will ensure that our federal workers are fairly compensated, and it will help our government recruit and retain a highly-skilled workforce."

"Federal employees have been the perennial punching bag for many of our colleagues despite the high quality of their work under unprecedented circumstances," said Congresswoman Eleanor Holmes Norton (D-DC). "Surely, it must be acknowledged that they have earned a pay raise as they have taken on much more work throughout these sequester years. Years of cuts, which have even eaten into pensions, have left federal employ-

See FAIR ACT, Page A6

Barbara A. Mikulski United States Senator for Maryland



Mikulski, Cardin Applaud President Obama's Nomination of Dr. Carla Yaden to Serve as Next Librarian of Congress

WASHINGTON, D.C.—U.S. Senators Barbara A. Mikulski and Ben Cardin (both D-Md.) today applauded President Obama's nomination of Dr. Carla Hayden to serve as the next Librarian of Congress in Washington, D.C. Since 1993, Dr. Hayden has served as the Director of the Enoch Pratt Free Library in Baltimore. In October, Senators Mikulski and Cardin wrote to President Obama in support of her nomination. A copy of that letter is available here.

"I'm proud to have recommended Dr. Hayden to President Obama to serve as our next Librarian of Congress, and look forward to her confirmation by the Senate," Senator Mikulski said. "Dr. Hayden has brought knowledge and truth to our communities, helping the leaders of today blaze trails and forge the way to the future. She has done a great service to Baltimore families, leading the way as Enoch Pratt Libraries light up the way for so many with knowledge. For more than 20 years, Dr. Hayden has honored the spirit of Enoch Pratt and his libraries, as a champion for causes of civil liberties and freedom of information. She has been a fighter for the freedom of all library users, no matter your age, race, religion or zip code, to be able to explore and learn. Baltimore's loss of Dr. Hayden would be Congress and the nation's gain."

"For more than two decades, Dr. Carla Hayden has overseen one of the crown jewels of Baltimore, the Enoch Pratt Free Library. Dr. Hayden is a cultural treasure to our city and a long-time defender of the free flow of information. I was proud to recommend her, alongside Senator Mikulski, to President Obama for a groundbreaking nomination to become the next Librarian of Congress. In the best tradition of the Enoch Pratt Free Library, which was established 'for all, rich and poor without distinction of race or color', the eminently qualified Dr. Hayden will become the first woman and the first African American to

serve as the Librarian of Congress in its 216-year history," said Senator Cardin. "Besides being headquartered in one of the most beautiful buildings in our Nation's Capital, the Library of Congress was America's first established cultural institution and is the largest library in the world. While the loss will be a great one for Baltimore City, I look forward to introducing Dr. Hayden to my colleagues and to welcoming her as our Nation's top librarian."

Dr. Hayden was nominated by President Obama to be a member of the National Museum and Library Services Board in January 2010 and was confirmed by the Senate in June 2010. Prior to joining the Pratt Library, Dr. Hayden was Deputy Commissioner and Chief Librarian of the Chicago Public Library from 1991 to 1993. She was an Assistant Professor for Library and Information Science at the University of Pittsburgh from 1987 to 1991. Dr. Hayden was Library Services Coordinator for the Museum of Science and Industry in Chicago from 1982 to 1987. She began her career with the Chicago Public Library as the Young Adult Services Coordinator from 1979 to 1982 and as a Library Associate and Children's Librarian from 1973 to 1979.

Dr. Hayden was President of the American Library Association from 2003 to 2004. In 1995, she was the first African American to receive *Library Journal's* Librarian of the Year Award in recognition of her outreach services at the Pratt Library, which included an after school center for Baltimore teens offering homework assistance and college and career counseling. Dr. Hayden received a B.A. from Roosevelt University and an M.A. and Ph.D. from the Graduate Library School of the University of Chicago.

In the next steps of the process, Dr. Hayden's nomination goes to the Rules Committee for consideration and then to the full Senate for a vote.



Huntington Railroad Museum

Open to the Public

HUNTINGTON RAILROAD MUSEUM

Developer Ben M. Plumb seized that opportunity and developed "Huntington City" around that railroad station. Shops, hotels, and comfortable Victorian houses filled the tree-lined streets of Huntington City, renamed "Bowie" in 1880 to honor Governor Oden Bowie, who was instrumental in bringing the railroad to this location. The station remained a busy stop until 1989, when it closed to make way for a new station at Bowie State University. The City of Bowie, in recognition of the station's important role in its history, restored the buildings in the early 1990's. Open Tuesday through Sunday, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.. For more information call 301-809-3089.

Child Watch by Marion Wright Edelman



The Other Washington

The Smithsonian Institution's National Museum of African American History and Culture is in the final stages of construction on the National Mall in Washington, D.C., next to the Washington Monument and near the National Museum of American History. It will be a transformative and long-overdue landmark in the center of the nation's capital. As the museum's director, Lonnie G. Bunch III, puts it, "This museum will tell the American story through the lens of African American history and culture. This is America's Story and this museum is for all Americans."

One of the most striking pieces visitors to the new museum will see is a slave cabin from Edisto Island, South Carolina that was painstakingly dismantled and brought to Washington to be rebuilt at the museum's center. It will join artifacts like a child's slave shackles and Harriet Tubman's shawl and hymn book in telling the chapter at the foundation of our national story. The slave cabin may have come from hundreds of miles away, but slavery itself was at the heart of our nation's capital from its very beginning.

Traces of this other Washington are everywhere. As the new capital was rising from former woods and swampland slaves labored on many of its buildings including the White House and the Capitol. As the Architect of the Capitol's office explains: "When construction of the U.S. Capitol Building began in 1793, Washington, D.C. was little more than a rural landscape with dirt roads and few accommodations beyond a small number of boarding houses. Skilled labor was hard to find or attract to the fledgling city. Enslaved laborers, who were rented from their owners, were involved in almost every stage of construction." Records showing how much owners were paid for their slaves' labor tell us a few of these slaves' names: Tom, Peter, Ben, Harry, and Daniel worked on the White House. Nace, Harry, and Gabe worked on the Capitol. One slave who received special notice was Philip Reid, who helped construct the Statue of Freedom that sits atop the Capitol dome. He was the only

person able to solve the puzzle of how to dissect and reassemble the original model of the statue after the sculptor who knew the secret refused to help without being paid more money. Philip Reid's master said Philip was "of mulatto color, short in stature, in good health, not prepossessing in appearance, but smart in mind, a good work man in a foundry, and has been employed in that capacity by the Government, at one dollar and twenty five cents per-day."

Slave coffles were a familiar sight in Washington's streets. Those lines of slaves chained together were horrifying to visitors from other countries and those traveling to the capital of the new country seemingly built on freedom. Slave markets and slave pens existed on a number of city sites including some not far from the spot on the Mall where the new museum will stand and the Tidal Basin now framed by beautiful cherry trees. Others were within yards of the White House. The movie *12 Years a Slave* retold the story of Solomon Northup, a free Black man from New York who in 1841 was tricked into traveling to Washington with a promise of work as a musician. Instead he was drugged and kidnapped,

imprisoned in a slave pen "within the very shadow of the Capitol," and from there illegally sold into slavery in Louisiana. As a new Congressman from Illinois from 1847-1849, Abraham Lincoln described a slave pen he saw "in view from the windows of the capitol, a sort of Negro livery-stable, where droves of negroes were collected, temporarily kept, and finally taken to southern markets, precisely like droves of horses."

Slaves likely helped quarry the distinctive red bricks in the Smithsonian Castle, a familiar landmark in the middle of all the Smithsonian museums. Quarrying was notoriously grueling work. The bricks came from a Maryland quarry owned by John Parke Custis Peter, a great-grandson of Martha Washington; many of the slaves Peter owned had ties to Mount Vernon, and scholars believe several of the adults who may have labored as slaves at the quarry were slaves at Mount Vernon as children.

Some of this history is commemorated in Washington today. Visitors to the U.S. Capitol can see a marker in the building's

See WATCH, Page A12

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 © 2016, The Prince George's Post

Publisher/Senior Editor Legusta Floyd	Editor Michal W. Frangia
General Manager/ Legal Advertising Manager Brenda Boice	Typesetter/Page Layout Jennifer Sheckels
Legal Advertising Assistant Robin Boerckel	Staff Writer Christina Williams
	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. 20772-3151.

BUSINESS

The American Counseling Association's Counseling Corner

Does Someone You Know Seem Suicidal?

Homicides are the centerpiece of any number of TV shows. Media stories often spotlight killings that occur around the country. And yet there is a much more common cause of death that receives relatively little publicity—suicide.

Suicide is actually the 10th most common cause of death in the U.S. (homicides rank number 17). For young people, ages 15 to 24, it actually is the second leading cause of death.

Yet most of us are unaware of the signs to look for when someone close to us may be contemplating suicide. That's especially important because many suicides can be prevented.

Depression, of course, is an enormous factor among those contemplating suicide. Someone who constantly seems depressed, or who has turned to excessive use of drugs or alcohol as a means for escaping his or her depression, often is at high risk for suicide.

Experts tell us, however, that most people who are thinking about suicide don't really want to kill themselves, but rather are looking for help to get them out of the fear and pain they are experiencing. One message from such findings is that it's okay to ask someone if he or she is feeling suicidal. There's no evidence that doing so will increase the risk of suicide, and may actually help reduce it. Asking this question can make the person feel less anxious, and may lead to a discussion of the problems and depression the person is feeling.

It may also open the opportunity for getting the professional counseling help that can assist the person in facing and learning to handle their situation. Counselors today can offer therapy and antidepressants that can be very effective in suicide prevention.

The National Suicide Prevention Lifeline (1-800-273-8255) is available 24/7 to link a caller with a qualified, trained counselor who can help people with substance abuse, economic worries, relationship and family problems, depression, mental or physical illness and any of the many other causes of severe depression.

The main message is that help is available. If someone close to you seems suicidal, talk to him or her and try to offer help and support, while also urging them to contact a professional counselor. And if you, yourself, are feeling overwhelmed, pick up the phone and call that toll free number above.

Counseling Corner is provided by the American Counseling Association. Comments and questions to ACAcorner@counseling.org or visit the ACA website at www.counseling.org

Comptroller Accepting Nominations for the 2016 William Donald Schaefer Helping People Award

Fifth Year of Honoring Individuals and Organizations Statewide

By PRESS OFFICER
Office of the Comptroller

ANNAPOLIS, MD—Returning for a fifth year, Comptroller Peter Franchot announced today that his office is accepting nominations for the William Donald Schaefer Helping People Award. Established in 2012 to honor the unparalleled legacy of public service left by former Mayor, Governor and Comptroller Schaefer, the award is presented in each of Maryland's 23 counties and Baltimore City to individuals and organizations with an unwavering commitment to helping people.

"Throughout our great state, there are many organizations and citizens, who like William Donald Schaefer, spend their lives helping others in their communities," Comptroller Franchot said. "I am very proud to honor those who go the extra mile to lend a hand, spend the time and offer hope and support to those who need it most. By doing so, these groups and individuals make our state a better place."

Award recipients will be selected on their demonstration of:

- Improving the community;
- Promptly responding to a citizen problem through effective government intervention;
- Directly aiding our most vulnerable populations; or,
- Establishing a public/private partnership to improve the lives of fellow Marylanders.

Comptroller Franchot will personally present the award to each winner

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Maryland Lawmakers to Introduce Bills Guaranteeing a Week of Paid Sick Leave for All Workers.

By RACHEL BLUTH
Capital News Service

ANNAPOLIS, MD—As Paul Brown walked to work as a security officer in Baltimore one morning, he felt dizzy.

Stopping along the way, he lost consciousness. He thinks he could have better dealt with his clogged artery—and the triple-bypass surgery he needed to fix it—if he had been allowed enough time off of work.

Brown told his story at a news conference in Annapolis Tuesday, standing in front of dozens of elected officials, union representatives and reporters.

"I had to ignore my body's advanced warning that there was a heart attack in my future," said Brown, who only gets one paid sick day per year. "... I believe that it wouldn't have got that bad if I had the time to get those symptoms treated."

Advocates say this isn't a problem only for Brown. More than 700,000 Maryland residents do not receive any paid time off when they get sick, according to Working Matters, an advocacy group campaigning for compensated sick days.

Senate Majority Leader Catherine Pugh, D-Baltimore, is introducing a bill that would allow full-time workers to earn an hour of paid time off for every 30 hours they work, earning up to 7 days of paid time off.

"We have it, here in the state of Maryland, as legislators," Pugh said. "If we get sick, we still get paid, so all we're asking is that we do for others what we do for ourselves."

Delegate Luke Clippinger, also a Democrat from Baltimore, is introducing a similar bill in the Maryland House. He said people on the lowest end of the income scale, the bottom quartile, are most affected by a lack of sick leave.

"The people who are the most vulnerable, the most subject to difficulties when economic times get rough, 75 percent of them don't have sick leave," Clippinger said.

A majority of Maryland residents—73 percent—like the idea of paid sick leave, but that number drops dramatically—to 12 percent—if the sick leave means a reduction in benefits, according to a 2016 poll by Gonzales Research and Marketing Strategies.

Working Matters cited a 2015 University of Maryland-Washington Post poll that said nationally, 83 percent of people support paid time off for sick days.

House Majority Leader Nicholas Kipke, R-Anne Arundel, said that mandating paid sick leave hurts small businesses, which operate on very small margins, the most.

"The small businesses that need employees to show up, the abuse of that benefit hurts. They experience additional costs," Kipke said.

Kipke said that instead of helping working families, these bills actually reduce their employment opportunities.

Clippinger disagreed, saying that when businesses don't have to train new employees because old ones get sick and leave, it actually helps the economy.

The legislation would only apply to businesses that have more than 10 employees.

Marsha Dabolt, 54, works for a greeting card company. She doesn't get any sick leave, and she says missing work means not being able to buy food that day, not paying the babysitter or not being able to put gas in the car.

"I'm sick and tired of the people who are against this saying we're not worth it, saying we are replaceable. We're not," Dabolt said.

Erin Yeagley is the political liaison of UFCW local 1994—a union that represents some government employees in Montgomery and Prince George Counties.

She said that even people who have paid time off are affected by those who don't. Yeagley said parents send sick kids to daycare if they don't have time off, and restaurant workers prepare food while ill if they are worried about losing their jobs. "The whole society will be healthier when people can stay home and take care of themselves while they're ill," Yeagley said.

Last year, the Maryland Chamber of Commerce opposed a bill for paid time off, but this session, Vice President of Programming and Communications Jessica Palmeri said she has not seen the bill.

CNS Correspondent Connor Glowacki contributed to this report.

Forum from A1

Maryland have more than 100 business development managers scattered all over the globe, ready to help our businesses connect to new customers in hot industry sectors. We are fully committed to ensuring that our local, small businesses take advantage of the State and federal resources that will help them grow and hire more residents. It's time for our local companies to connect to the world of opportunities beyond our shores. That is 'Activating Prosperity' by exporting."

The EDC's 'Activate Prosperity' initiative, launched in January, is an aggressive three-year plan designed to rapidly grow Prince George's County businesses by connecting them with valuable resources and programs; thereby creating more jobs for county residents.

"We were amazed by the number of Prince George's County businesses who came out today to learn about exporting and accessing State and federal resources to accelerate their global growth," said Signe Pringle, Managing Director of the Office of International Trade with the Maryland Department

of Commerce. "We look forward to looking back at the end of the year to see how many new markets Prince George's County businesses tapped into through our programs; how many export sales were completed how many leads you were able to gain from going to trade missions with the State or on your own, and most importantly how many new jobs have been created. Today's event proved that there is a lot of interest in exporting and we stand ready to assist."

The expert panelists provided detailed information on critical aspects of exporting, including: how to develop an international business plan, which countries are most in need of goods and services, how to access thousands of dollars in government funding to cover the cost of travel overseas and how to secure low-cost financing to help them build capacity in their company to enable them to sell and deliver goods and services to clients all over the world.

"Exporting supports sales growth by continuously providing new markets for local goods and services to be sold in. That's where I come in," said Bill Houck, Regional Manager, Office of International Trade, U.S.

Small Business Administration and one of the Forum's presenters. "My office specializes in export working capital, structuring transactions and risk management assessments so businesses won't stall when going after a foreign sale. Our job is to help with the financing capacity of businesses and export credit insurance to help companies get the most out of their international deals."

Attendees were particularly interested in the U.S. Commercial Services' international business-to-business matching-making presentation which provided key information on where the greatest demand is for their local products and services. Additionally, critical information was provided on how to gain easy entry into targeted countries and industries around the world.

"The U.S. Commercial Services' office is the trade promotion arm of the U.S. Department of Commerce, with offices in the U.S. as well as overseas staffed with more than 100 market and industry specialists around the world with connections to foreign governments, industry associations and business prospects," said Aisha Jones, Senior International Trade Spe-

cialist, U.S. Export Assistance Center. "Our job is to connect exporting companies to trade shows, buyers, distributors, sales representatives, partners for projects and the like. By using our services, we talk to them specifically for your company. It's that simple."

The Forum met with great appreciation from all of the attendees. Many of the local companies had never considered exporting before attending last week's Forum.

"Today's export event was very exciting and the information was invaluable," said Demetri and Kristine West, of West Construction, International. "We are glad to know about the programs available to our company. Without this Forum, we would have never thought about exporting, or about the number of customers to sell our services to across the pond. Now we are prepared to move forward with an international business plan and take our business to the next level."

If you would like more information about exporting your goods and services overseas, please contact John Mason at (301) 583-4650 or jamason@co.pg.md.us today!

NAMI from A1

3. Be able to carry out the duties of a Board member as described in the By-Laws http://namimd.org/uploaded_files/182/NAMI_BBYLAWS_approved_6_14_12.pdf.

4. Serve on a standing committee.
5. Be willing to serve a three year term of office.
6. Possess knowledge, skills, or abilities that will advance the mission on NAMI Maryland.

Please see the attached link for a listing of NAMI-Maryland Board Member Responsibilities and Expectations:

http://www.namimd.org/uploaded_files/326/Board_Member_Expectations_2015.pdf

As per the By-Laws, all nominations must be received at least 90 days prior to the Annual Meeting. The deadline for the

submission of nominations will be March 11, 2016.

Candidates will be contacted and screened by the Board Development and Nominating Committee (BDNC) for compliance with the requirements listed above. All candidates who pass the screening process will be listed on the ballot to be distributed at the Annual Meeting in June. The BDNC may also develop a recommended slate of nominees from those on the ballot.

Please submit the name of any nominee, a copy of their resume, including contact information, and a statement of consent of their willingness to serve to: NAMI Maryland 10630 Little Patuxent Parkway, Suite 475 Columbia, MD 21044 E-mail : info@namimd.org or kfarinholt@namimd.org Fax 410-884-8695

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OUT ON THE TOWN

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

Anomalisa
Grade: A-
Rated R, profanity, full nudity,
and strong sexuality
(all involving puppets, albeit
very lifelike ones)
1 hr., 30 min

In his screenplays for films like *Being John Malkovich*, *Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind*, and *Adaptation*, Charlie Kaufman has demonstrated two things: that he's fond of exploring themes of identity, memory, romantic love, and self-loathing; and that his own unspotless mind is a fevered, neurotic wonderland.

His latest, *Anomalisa*, isn't a departure from any of that. Its most obvious distinction—that it was filmed with lifelike puppets and stop-motion animation instead of live actors—is an ingenious and necessary component of the story, not an oddball aesthetic choice (or not JUST an oddball aesthetic choice, anyway). After the tragically under-seen *Synecdoche, New York*, this is only the second film that Kaufman has directed himself, and it has a similar heartrending poignance that resonates far longer than its comedic elements.

This is the story of Michael Stone (voiced by David Thewlis), a depressed businessman who's in Cincinnati for one night to give a presentation about customer service. (He's an expert on the subject, having authored such books as *How May I Help You Help Them?*) As he endures mundane, banal conver-



ROTTENTOMATOES

The story of a man's struggle with his inability to connect with other people.

sations with the taxi driver, the hotel clerk, the bellhop, we realize that all of their voices are the same (provided by Tom Noonan). When he calls his wife to have a conversation that should be more meaningful than the ones he has with strangers, we notice the same thing.

This is why the film had to be animated: from Michael's point of view, everyone besides him has the same voice. It holds true even for old movies he watches on TV. This is what life is like for him, an endless series of pointless interactions with people who all blend together and might as well be one person.

That is, until he meets Lisa. Her voice is different. (To be specific, it's the voice of Jennifer

Jason Leigh.) She and her friend Emily are attending Michael's conference and are a bit star-struck to meet him in the hotel. Emily flirts with Michael, but timid, reluctant Lisa is the one he wants. Emily is just another Tom Noonan in a world full of Tom Noonans. Lisa is special.

Kaufman (who co-directed with animator Duke Johnson) uses the central metaphor to great effect, showing how the giddy excitement of infatuation can make a person's flaws vanish. Lisa is vulnerable and usually overlooked by men ("Most people like Emily," she says simply), but that doesn't matter to Michael. Not right now, anyway. But an encounter with an ex-girlfriend of his shows how oblivious he can be to other people's

feelings, so wrapped up is he in his own melancholia.

There are sporadic bursts of caustic and surreal humor, often from out of nowhere, as if Kaufman can't help being funny even when he's trying to be serious. These light moments are welcome and occasionally sublime, but it's the heavier stuff that matters. As always, Kaufman isn't afraid to showcase a protagonist who's a total wreck of a human being, one whose breakdown we can watch with pity from a safe distance. The painstaking work of stop-motion animation is admirable (the sheer number of different facial expressions is staggering), but it's the story itself—hopeful, mournful, and sadly relatable—that will pierce your soul right in the gut.

Fair Act from A4

ees far behind their private sector counterparts."

"The men and women of our federal workforce deserve a robust pay increase after years of eroding salaries," stated Congressman Bobby Scott (D-VA). "I commend Congressman Connolly for his leadership on this issue, and I look forward to working with him and others to make sure our federal employees know that we value their work and dedication to our nation and its citizens."

"Wages for civil servants lag far behind the private sector, and federal workers have made significant sacrifices in recent years," said Congressman Chris Van Hollen (D-MD). "We must pay our federal workers a competitive wage to attract and retain top talent to carry out essential government services. This bill will honor our civil servants' commitment to public service by working toward providing them a fair pay raise."

"The introduction of this legislation signifies an effort to push for a significant and real pay increase for our federal workers in calendar year 2017 that's in sync with the 21st Century economy. I will continue to stand with our federal workforce, our retirees, and the federal employee unions who remain committed every day to serving and protecting the American public," said Con-

gresswoman Donna F. Edwards (D-MD).

"Americans want the best and brightest to serve our country," said Congressman John Sarbanes. "But if Republicans in Congress continue to denigrate public service and reduce the pay and benefits of our federal workers, then we will have a difficult time retaining and attracting top-talent to the public sector. That's why I'm proud to co-sponsor the FAIR Act, which would reverse the recent indiscriminate and dangerous pay cuts to our federal workforce."

"America's federal employees keep our country safe, advance new frontiers in science and research, and serve taxpayers each day," said Congressman John K. Delaney (D-MD). "America doesn't work without a high-performing federal workforce and that starts with making sure their pay is competitive and appropriate. I am proud to defend federal workers against misguided attacks and proud to stand with my colleagues in supporting a pay raise for federal employees."

"Our federal workers endured years of pay freezes, furloughs, retirement benefit cuts, and a government shutdown," said Congressman Don Beyer (D-VA). "I am proud to again cosponsor this legislation to build on that success and commit to paying our civil servants for their vital contributions to millions of American families."

Original cosponsors of the bill are: Rep. Steny H. Hoyer, Rep. Elijah E. Cummings, Rep. Donald S. Beyer Jr., Rep. Eleanor Holmes Norton, Rep. Chris Van Hollen, Rep. Donna F. Edwards, Rep. John P. Sarbanes, Rep. John K. Delaney, Rep. Stephen F. Lynch, Rep. James P. McGovern, Rep. Raul M. Grijalva, Rep. Ben Ray Lujan, Rep. Matt Cartwright, Rep. Keith Ellison, Rep. Mark Takano, Rep. Robert C. "Bobby" Scott, Rep. Jan Schakowsky, Rep. Madeleine Bordallo, Rep. Ed Perlmutter, Rep. Marcy Kaptur, Rep. Katherine Clark, Rep. Brendan F. Boyle, Rep. Joyce Beatty, Rep. Carolyn B. Maloney, Rep. Dutch Ruppersberger, Rep. Henry C. "Hank" Johnson, Rep. Jerrold Nadler, Rep. Bill Keating, Rep. Gregory Meeks, Rep. Brenda Lawrence, Rep. John Yarmuth, Rep. Danny Davis.

The FAIR Act has been endorsed by the Federal-Postal Coalition, comprised of 31 national organizations representing 5 million federal and postal workers and retirees: American Federation of Government Employees (AFGE); American Federation of State, County & Municipal Employees (AFSCME); American Foreign Service Association (AFSA); American Postal Workers Union (APWU); FAA Managers Association (FAAMA); Federal Managers Association (FMA); Federally Employed Women (FEW); International Association of Fire

Fighters (IAFF); International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers (IAMAW); International Federation of Professional & Technical Engineers (IPFTE); Laborers' International Union of North America (LIUNA); National Active and Retired Federal Employees Association (NARFE); National Air Traffic Controllers Association (NATCA); National Association of Assistant United States Attorneys (NAAUSA); National Association of Federal Veterinarians (NAFV); National Association of Government Employees (NAGE); National Association of Letter Carriers (NALC); National Association of Postal Supervisors (NAPS); National Association of Postmasters of the U.S. (NAPUS); National Council of Social Security Management Associations (NCSSMA); National Federation of Federal Employees (NFFE); National League of Postmasters (NLP); National Postal Mail Handlers Union (NPMHU); National Rural Letter Carriers' Association (NRLCA); National Treasury Employees Union (NTEU); National Weather Service Employees Organization (NWSEO); Organization of Professional Employees of the USDA (OPEDA); Patent Office Professional Association (POPA); Professional Aviation Safety Specialists (PASS); Professional Managers Association (PMA); Senior Executives Association (SEA).

The Edge of Sports

by DAVE ZIRIN

Why the Movie *Concussion* Spells Trouble for the NFL—and Moral Angst for the Rest of Us



Why do I believe the film *Concussion* will deliver a teeth-rattling blow to the NFL? Why am I sure this Christmas-release Oscar hopeful will raise far-reaching questions about the price we collectively pay for loving football? Why can I guarantee it will even further erode the already-subterranean reputation of league commissioner Roger Goodell? Because *Concussion* has something most "message films" do not possess: It's expertly paced and one hell of a film. If you didn't really give a damn about the tobacco industry but found yourself riveted by Michael Mann's *The Insider*, then this is your film—whether you watch football or not. The pacing, the acting, the kinetic athletic sequences, the use of familiar names, stories, and uniforms, give *Concussion* an accessible verisimilitude that does not only educate. It shocks.

The dramatic structure of the film is as tried and true as Hollywood itself: it's a David vs. Goliath story, an honest person vs. the powerful, one human vs. the machine. It's John Henry. It's Norma Rae. It's Karen Silkwood. It's Rocky Balboa. But what sets this story apart is not the structure or even the content: It's the moment. *Concussion* is the true tale of Dr. Bennet Omalu—brilliantly played by Will Smith—and his effort to get the National Football League to acknowledge the existence of the brain disease he discovered, Chronic Traumatic Encephalopathy. Dr. Omalu first identified the football-related brain disease in examining the brain of Hall of Fame Pittsburgh Steeler Mike Webster, who died at age 50 in 2002. Webster's mind was so deeply damaged that he was living in a van, using Super Glue to keep his rotting teeth in place and tasing himself as a method of handling the pain.

The NFL has still not come to terms publicly about what happened to people we cheered—like the late Webster, Dave Duerson, and Junior Seau. Unlike most other message films, *Concussion* is stepping into a live debate that has consumed the nation's most popular sport for the last seven years. This is not a dramatization, aided by hindsight, of a historical issue long put to bed. It's not about the well-known perils of smoking. It's stepping right into something that resembles a pit of vipers but more accurately is a 3,000 mile-wide media hydra, drawing its lifeblood from the National Football League's economic reach. We live in a time when the NFL is the most popular cultural product this nation produces. In a time of more channels, more choices, more websites, more podcasts, and more options, the NFL's ratings and reach have only increased and entrenched. The league is pure power, but demonstrably built on a foundation of broken lives. As so many politicians and corporate heads laud Roger Goodell for all he has done to "make the game safer," *Concussion* points a finger at the \$44 million-a-year man and calls out the emperor for being buck-naked in public.

The film is already provoking discussion beyond the sports jockosphere. Now, as a tie-in with the film, we have NFL veterans—boyhood heroes of mine—like former New York Giant Leonard Marshall talking to Yahoo Sports about his post-playing, concussed life and saying, "I just noticed that my behavior was starting to change. My patience, or lack of patience, was starting to diminish. I would forget things, forget financial responsibilities, take things for granted, have a short fuse with my daughter, a short fuse with my ex."

As such, the film goes beyond the artistic success of its actors, script, and pacing to pose a moral question to critics and sports networks. It is about the pull of corporate pressure vs. the public's right to know. Despite the efforts by the NFL and absurd sports-radio hosts trying to turn whether to play football into a "red state/blue state issue," even rock-ribbed right-wing Republicans like Mike Ditka are saying that he wishes kids would "take up golf" instead. Science is real, and the media now have to weigh not only the quality of the film but their responsibility to not bury a film that could save lives. If it didn't sound like a gross 1980s straight-to-Cinemax release, *Concussion* could be retitled *Informed Consent*.

We have the right to know the costs of imbibing this game. See this film, and learn who has stymied our access to this truth. You will learn something from seeing this film, but *Concussion* is a triumph precisely because it doesn't beat you over the head. Instead, it goes right to your other nerve centers, as you reel from thrills to disgust to tears to anger. For many of us, some of that anger will be directed at ourselves.

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Calendar of Events

March 3, — March 9, 2016

Film Screening: Egypt on the Verge of Revolution

Date and Time: Thursday, March 3, 2016, 6:30 pm
Description: *Garbage Dreams* (79 min, 2009),
Directed by Mai Iskander.

Cairo is one of the largest cities in Egypt, but for decades there was no formal garbage collection system in most of the city; instead, many neighborhoods were kept clean by zaballeen, or "garbage people." The zaballeen would pick up trash from the streets, sometimes being paid a few pennies for their efforts, but most would support themselves by selling cans, bottles, and other materials they found to recycling firms. After the film viewing, there will be a discussion with Valerie Anishchenkova, University of Maryland, Director of Arabic Programs about *Garbage Dreams'* depictions of Egypt on the verge of revolution.

Cost: Free
Ages: All ages welcome
Location: Brentwood Arts Exchange
3901 Rhode Island Avenue, Brentwood, MD
Contact: 301-277-2863; TTY 301-699-2544

Café Groove: Prince George's Best Dance Crew

Date and Time: Friday, March 4, 2016, 7-10 pm
Description: Watch as teen dance teams compete before a panel of judges for trophies, cash prizes and the title of Prince George's "Best Area Dance Crew."

Cost: \$3/person
Ages: 12-18
Location: Publick Playhouse
5445 Landover Road, Cheverly, MD
Contact: 301-446-3232; TTY 301-699-2544

Chaise Lounge Band

Date and Time: Friday, March 4, 2016, 8 pm
Description: This combination of five of the Washington area's top jazz musicians play sparkling arrangements of standards and original tunes, featuring the soft, luminous vocals of Marilyn Older.

Cost: \$25/person; 10% discount for Montpelier members & seniors
Ages: All ages welcome
Location: Montpelier Arts Center
9652 Muirkirk Road, Laurel, MD
Contact: 301-377-7800; TTY 301-699-2544

Soccer Lingo Interest Meeting

Date and Time: Saturday, March 5, 2016, 11:30 am-12:30 pm
Description: Learn about a new innovative sports and language program that teaches youth (ages 6-12) English as a Second Language (ESL), Spanish and soccer skills through fun training sessions.

Cost: FREE
Location: Cedar Heights Community Center
1200 Glen Willow Drive, Seat Pleasant, MD
Contact: 301-773-8881; TTY 301-699-2544

Tasting the Past: A Taste of Maryland

Date and Time: Saturday, March 5, 2016, 2:30 pm
Description: Foodways historian Joyce White shares the history of Maryland's most iconic food traditions and businesses. Afterward, treat your tastebuds to an assortment of local dishes.

Advance payment required by February 26.
Cost: Resident: \$18; Non-Resident: \$22
Ages: Ages 18 & up
Location: Riversdale House Museum
4811 Riversdale Road, Riversdale Park, MD
Contact: 301-864-0420; TTY 301-699-2544
riversdale@pgparks.com

Public Reception:

47th Annual Laurel Art Guild Juried Exhibition

Date and Time: Sunday, March 6, 2016, 2-4 pm
Description: Organized by the Laurel Art Guild, this annual exhibit is juried by a regional professional and showcases works by artists ages 18 & up who live in the Washington metropolitan area.

Cost: Free
Ages: All ages welcome
Location: Montpelier Arts Center
9652 Muirkirk Road, Laurel, MD
Contact: 301-377-7800; TTY 301-699-2544

Exhibition: Al-Mutanabbi Street Starts Here

Date and Time: Monday, January 18—Saturday, March 12, 2016 10 am-7 pm
Description: *Al-Mutanabbi Street Starts Here* exhibition at the Brentwood Arts Exchange features artists' books, broadsides, and letterpress work created for related *Al-Mutanabbi Street Starts Here* festivals in San Francisco and Boston. The art, related exhibits, programs, and events were inspired to commemorate the 2007 suicide bombing of Baghdad's historic bookselling street. In doing so, it celebrates the free exchange of ideas and knowledge and stands in solidarity with people everywhere that free expression is threatened.

Cost: Free
Ages: All ages welcome
Location: Brentwood Arts Exchange
3901 Rhode Island Avenue, Brentwood, MD
Contact: 301-277-2863; TTY 301-699-2544

Savor the Flavor Cooking Series: Fancy Fruit Fixin's

Date and Time: Monday, March 7, 2016, 6-7 pm
Description: Explore different ways to include fruit in your diet. March is National Nutrition Month and we invite you to savor the flavor of eating right all month long with our healthy cooking series at your community centers.

Take time to enjoy new flavors and fun with others while learning something new!
Participants will enjoy a cooking demonstration, taste free samples, and take home delicious healthy recipes.
Cost: Free
Ages: All ages welcome
Location: Prince George's Sports and Learning Complex
8001 Sheriff Road, Landover, MD
Contact: 301-583-2400; TTY 301-699-2544

EARTH TALK ... What Are Endocrine Disruptors? What Are They Bad? How Can I Avoid Them?

Dear EarthTalk:

What are endocrine disruptors, how do they make their way into my body and what can I do to avoid them?

—Jo McGovern,
Albany, NY

The endocrine system controls the various functions of cells, tissues and organs in our bodies through the secretion of hormones. The major glands that regulate the flow of these hormones include the pituitary, thyroid, parathyroid, and adrenal glands, as well as the pancreas and reproductive glands (ovaries in women, testicles in men). A properly functioning system ensures optimum mood, growth, development, metabolism, sexual function and reproduction.

Endocrine disruptors are chemicals that mimic or block the action of natural hormones. According to the Environmental Working Group (EWG), there is no end to the tricks that endocrine disruptors can play on our bodies. These chemicals can increase the production of certain hormones, decrease the production of others, turn one hormone into another, compete with essential nutrients and more.

Some 80 million pounds of atrazine, an herbicide named on EWG's Dirty Dozen List of Endocrine Disruptors, are applied in the U.S. each year. A 2010 University of California (UC) Berkeley study found that atrazine-exposed male amphib-

ians were feminized as a result. Ten percent of those exposed developed into females that copulated with unexposed males and produced viable eggs. "Given the overwhelming evidence of unacceptable risk, I'm quite frankly surprised that atrazine is even still in use," said Dr. Tyrone Hayes, professor of Integrative Biology at UC Berkeley and the study's lead author.

Monsanto's Roundup, a trade name for glyphosate and the most widely used herbicide in the U.S. with 250 million pounds sprayed each year, was also recently found to have hormone disrupting capabilities. Studies released in 2015 determined that Roundup decreased levels of progesterone and corticosterone, a steroid hormone produced in the adrenal glands. An earlier study determined that even at lower, "non-toxic" exposure levels, Roundup reduced testosterone levels. Recently it was announced that the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) will analyze the impacts of atrazine and glyphosate on 1,500 endangered plants and animals under the terms of a settlement reached with the Center for Biological Diversity (CBD). "This settlement is the first step to reining in the widespread use of dangerous pesticides that are harming both wildlife and people," said Brett Hartl, CBD's endangered species policy director.

Buying organic produce and drinking filtered water can re-



CREDIT: SUZIE'S FARM, FLICKRCC.

Buying organic produce can reduce your exposure to hormone-disrupting synthetic chemicals.

duce your exposure to hormone-disrupting herbicides and pesticides. Another good reason to install a water filter is to remove perchlorate, a chemical that is also named on EWG's Dirty Dozen list. A 2010 study found that, in pharmacologic doses, perchlorate inhibits iodine uptake, an element needed for the production of thyroid hormones. The findings were alarming as adequate iodine intake is essential for normal neurodevelopment in infancy and childhood. While further research is needed to determine the impacts of perchlorate in the environment, the American Thyroid Association recommends that women who are planning a pregnancy or who are pregnant ingest 150 mg of iodine daily to ensure adequate iodine nutrition and to overcome the potential adverse effects of perchlorate exposure.

While it may be frightening to think about all the potential exposures to endocrine disruptors around us today, purchasing environmentally-conscious, natural-based products for you, your family and your home; eating organic, fresh, unpackaged foods and drinking filtered water from a glass container are simpler ways to help keep your hormones and endocrine system in balance.

CONTACTS: EWG, www.ewg.org; CBD, www.biologicdiversity.org.

EarthTalk® is written and edited by Roddy Scheer and Doug Moss and is a registered trademark of **E - The Environmental Magazine** (www.emagazine.com).
Send questions to: earthtalk@emagazine.com.

Board of Public Works Approves Funding for Clean Water and the Chesapeake Bay

By PRESS OFFICER
MDE

BALTIMORE, MD—The Maryland Board of Public Works approved more than \$60 million in funding today to improve water quality and energy efficiency at the Blue Plains Advanced Wastewater Treatment Plant. The Board is composed of Governor Larry Hogan, Treasurer Nancy K. Kopp and Comptroller Peter Franchot.

"These are smart investments and great news for Maryland communities and citizens of the Chesapeake Bay region," Governor Hogan said. "This funding will boost the restoration and cleanup of the Chesapeake Bay and support an innovative upgrade to the Blue Plains sewage treatment plant to increase energy efficiency and reduce air emissions."

Maryland Secretary of the Environment Ben Grumbles said: "The combined heat and power project is a great example of energy and water infrastructure investments the Department of the Environment and Maryland Energy Administration are pursuing, such as the \$16.2 million in the energy-water infrastructure pro-

gram included in the Governor's budget."

The Board of Public Works also approved funding to reduce sewer overflows in Western Maryland. Secretary Grumbles noted that funding will help to green and grow the state's economy and protect and restore Chesapeake Bay watersheds.

The following projects were approved February 10, 2016:

Blue Plains Wastewater Treatment Plant Enhanced Nutrient Removal Upgrade—Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission

Funding of \$53,823,568 in the form of a Water Quality State Revolving Loan Fund loan to the Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission will help fund the planning, design and construction of Biological Nutrient Removal (BNR) and Enhanced Nutrient Removal (ENR) upgrades at the 370 million gallons per day Blue Plains Wastewater Treatment Plant in Washington. The plant is currently achieving phosphorus discharge levels that are better than the Enhanced Nutrient Removal goal. After the upgrade, the facility will reduce its nitrogen discharge by 83.3

percent, significantly reducing the nutrients discharged to Potomac River and ultimately the Chesapeake Bay. Enhanced Nutrient Removal upgrades of the state's major wastewater treatment plants are a critical component of Maryland's Phase II Watershed Implementation Plan. The funding is for the Maryland portion of the facility, which treats about 170 million gallons of wastewater per day from Montgomery and Prince George's counties.


Blue Plains Wastewater Treatment Plant New Digestion Facilities, Combined Heat and Power project—Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission

An \$8,169,077 Water Quality State Revolving Loan Fund Green Loan to the Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission will help fund the design and construction of the Combined Heat and Power System with New Digestion Facilities project at the 370 million gallons per day Blue Plains Wastewater Treatment Plant. The combined heat and power system will generate electricity from the digester

gas for plant usage and produce steam to heat the new digestion process, providing an estimated 40 percent of the plant's demand. The project will reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 130,000 metric tons of carbon dioxide equivalent a year. The funding is for the Maryland portion of the facility, which treats about 170 million gallons of wastewater per day from Montgomery and Prince George's counties.

Combined Sewer Overflow Elimination Phase VIII-A Grant Street project—City of Frostburg

A \$1,038,313 Chesapeake Bay Water Quality Project Funds Supplemental Assistance Program grant to the City of Frostburg will help fund the planning, design and construction of the proposed improvements to the Grant Street Connector, the final phase of the Frostburg Combined Sewer Overflow (CSO) Elimination Priority Project. Improvements to this connector will significantly reduce flows to the George's Creek Pumping Station, the LaVale Pumping Station and ultimately to the Cumberland sewerage treatment plant to prevent sewer overflows.



GREEN DECORATING

The next time your "inner Martha Stewart" surfaces and you decide to spruce up your home, try using some of these sustainable and eco-friendly decorating tips that are affordable as well as beautiful:

- ▶ Use plants around your home; they help purify the air and green up your space;
- ▶ Reuse and repurpose old furniture instead of buying brand new; and
- ▶ Switch to Energy Star-rated CFL bulbs, they use less energy and last longer than standard bulbs.

Prince George's County Second NetW@rk is a initiative of the Department of the Environment, Recreation & Parks Authority and Office of Central Services to promote cost savings and sustainability in our everyday behavior.