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PHOTO COURTESY LORI VALENTINE

EDC President and CEO Jim Coleman (standing) speaking at Shabach! Ministries, Inc. at First Baptist Church of Glenarden Worship Center in Upper Marlboro, MD.

PGCEDC Corporation Partners With Shabach! Ministries Host Small Business and Job Seeker Summit

EDC President Jim Coleman Motivates the Masses to Change the Things They Cannot Accept

By LORI VALENTINE
PGCEDC

UPPER MARLBORO, MD—On Saturday, March 19, 2016, the Prince George's County Economic Development Corporation hosted a Small Business and Job Seekers Summit in partnership with Shabach! Ministries, Inc. as part

of its "Activate Prosperity" Tour to build awareness about the opportunities and resources within the County. More than 100 job seekers, local business owners and entrepreneurs flocked to the First Baptist Church of Glenarden Worship Center in Upper Marlboro to learn about the 20,000 job opportunities, \$9 billion in business resources and

no cost training opportunities that residents can take advantage of through the EDC and its life changing programs.

"I appreciate the partnership that Shabach! Ministries and the Economic Development Corporation are creating for the residents of Prince George's County," said EDC President and CEO Jim Coleman. "We

want to re-create the sense of entrepreneurship that Jesus and his disciples displayed when He walked among us. Jesus was a carpenter, Luke was a physician, James and Peter were fishermen and all of them were focused on changing the

See **SUMMIT** Page A3

Volunteers Needed for Stream Clean-Up Set for April 8

Join CASA, County Council Vice Chair Glaros, NAI Michael and Douglas Development

By PRESS OFFICER
CASA

RIVERDALE, MD—In honor of Earth Day and as part of National Child Abuse Prevention Month in April, Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA)/Prince George's County is calling upon volunteers in the community to connect and make a difference at a special event to help improve the environment.

CASA in the Community: Stream Clean-Up, part of the Prince George's County "Clean Sweep," will enable CASA staff and volunteers as well as community citizens to work together to clean the stream adjacent to the CASA office in the Jemal's Calvert Building, and that is part of the Anacostia Watershed. Volunteers who attend the event will receive a free lunch, sponsored by NAI Michael. The event is scheduled from 11:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. on April 8 near the entrance to the CASA/Prince George's County Office which is in a Douglas Development office building at 6811 Kenilworth Avenue in Riverdale, MD.

Dannielle Glaros, Vice Chair for the Prince George's County Council, will attend the event to help support CASA staff and volunteers and community members in the clean-up effort. CASA/Prince

George's County will also receive support from the Prince George's County Department of the Environment, Sustainable Initiatives Division.

"The support we are receiving from Ms. Glaros, Douglas Development and the County's environment department is critical to increasing awareness, and can make a difference in the community so that we can all live in a clean, safe and nurturing environment," Binsner observed.

For more information about the Stream Clean-Up or to learn how you can make a difference in the life of an abused or neglected child in the community, contact CASA/Prince George's County by calling 301-209-0491, emailing staff@pgcasa.org or visit www.pgcasa.org.

About Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA)/Prince George's County, Inc.

Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA)/Prince George's County, Inc. is a volunteer-based organization that partners with the juvenile court to improve the lives of abused and neglected children living in foster care. With a strong commitment to diversity, CASA trains and supervises volunteers from the community who advocate for the best interest of children, recognizing and respecting each child's needs.

Maryland Promise Initiative is First to Reach 2,000 Youth Participants

Program Seeks to Prepare Students for Employment

By PRESS OFFICER
MSDE

BALTIMORE, MD—The Maryland PROMISE initiative has announced that it has reached its recruitment goal of 2,000 enrolled youth in Maryland. Maryland PROMISE is the first of the six U.S. Department of Education grantees to achieve their recruitment goal. The Maryland State Department of Education's Division of Special Education/Early Intervention Services is a partner.

Maryland was awarded the federal PROMISE grant in 2013. Its purpose is to improve services and supports for youth receiving Supplemental Security Income and their families in order to achieve improved educational outcomes, such as graduating from high school or completing postsecondary training.

"We know that evidence-based models for high-quality transition services provided

See **PROMISE** Page A7

PGCPS Announces Last Day of School

By PRESS OFFICER
PGCPS

UPPER MARLBORO, MD—Prince George's County Public Schools (PGCPS) students have lost seven days of school this winter due to inclement weather. The PGCPS school calendar for 2015-2016 includes plans for four inclement weather make-up days on June 15, 16, 17, and 20.

To address the need for three additional inclement weather closures beyond the four built into the calendar, the district converted the February 12 professional development day to an instructional day for students. Additionally, Chief Executive Officer Dr. Kevin M. Maxwell

See **SCHOOL** Page A3

EDC Partners with Town of Bladensburg for Economic Renaissance

"Activate Prosperity" Bringing Big Changes to Bladensburg Gateway Community

By LORI VALENTINE
PGCEDC

LARGO, MD—EDC President and CEO Jim Coleman and his team met in their Largo headquarters with top executives of the Better Bladensburg Block by Block and Business by Business Roundtable (B5 Roundtable), a group of local businesses committed to the economy and enhancing the quality of life within the Town of Bladensburg. The group discussed how the Economic Development Corporation can utilize its resources to revitalize this historically important port town and bring increased prosperity to its residents and businesses. Today's meeting was a continuation of a stakeholder meeting the Prince George's County Economic Development Corporation (EDC) attended with Bladensburg Mayor Walter James, Council member Walter Ficklin and



PHOTO COURTESY LORI VALENTINE

EDC President & CEO Jim Coleman (center) with EDC Team and the Better Bladensburg Block by Block and Business by Business Roundtable at Bladensburg Town Hall meeting.

the B5 Roundtable earlier this month, in which Mr. Coleman committed to partnering Bladensburg to revitalize its business community.

"Bladensburg is a shining town on a hill with a long and

rich business community, dating back to the 1800's and it deserves to be restored," said Mr. Coleman. "We are excited about the opportunity to assist this wonderful town in bringing back its vibrant

economy. My team of professionals is already at work with plans to implement the

See **ROUNDTABLE** Page A5

INSIDE

Comcast Awards \$119,000 in Scholarships to 110 Maryland High School Seniors

The Program recognizes students who strive to achieve their potential, who are catalysts for positive change in their communities, who are involved in their schools and who serve as models for their fellow students.

Community, Page A3

The Moment We Have Waited For

The 1960s Civil Rights Movement laid a foundation for the new world as ordinary people tired of injustice seized the moral high ground and confronted the racial violence surrounding them with controlled, disciplined, nonviolent action which allowed America to see there was another way to create change

Commentary, Page A4

With April 18 Deadline Approaching, More Than Half of Taxpayers Still to File

Electronic filing saves the state significant money in processing costs. Each paper return costs the state more than \$2 to process, compared to 19 cents for e-filed returns resulting in savings of millions of dollars each year.

Business, Page A5

Movie Review: *The Witch*

Though the film has some sequences of terror and some haunting sights, it's not an action-oriented story. The pervading eeriness comes more from the general tone, the sense of rising despair and urgency as the family is unraveled by fear and accusations. This doesn't have the plot structure of a typical horror film.

Out on the Town, Page A6

Earth Talk

Dear EarthTalk:

How is it that big game hunting can actually be good for wildlife?

—Ronnie Wilson,
Ft. Myers, FL

Features, Page A7

Towns and NEIGHBORS

In and Around Morningside-Skyline

by Mary McHale 301 735 3451

“Save the Sack” rebuilding fundraiser & reunion, April 10

Steak in a Sack, a 50-year-old Marlow Heights eatery, was seriously damaged by fire shortly after closing Friday night, Feb. 19. Silver Hill VFD responded to the blaze at “the famous hangout for many of our department members and their families.” They added, “We hope it reopens!”

Chuck Fraley, creator of the MarlowHeights60sand70s.com website, immediately announced a GoFundMe site which raised about \$2,000 that owner Dennis Khalid said would go to pay his employees “who have absolutely nothing right now.”

The Steak in a Sack Rebuilding Fundraiser and Reunion will be held at the Marlboro Moose Lodge on Sunday, April 10, 1 to 6 p.m. Donations can be made at the door or by mail (payable to Steak in a Sack and mailed to Marlboro Moose Lodge, 15103 Marlboro Pike, Upper Marlboro, MD 20772).

Entertainment will include live music by the Duke Brothers Band, cash bar, food, raffles, 50/50s, money wheels, door prizes, and a silent and live auction. There will also be MarlowHeights60sand70s.com memorabilia for sale, including newly-designed coffee mugs with the Steak in a Sack logo.

The Khalid family opened Steak in a Sack in 1962. The owner is working with the insurance company and in touch with a contractor for repairs and renovations.

The Steak in a Sack has been my favorite breakfast spot for as long as I can remember. This week I went by and saw the CLOSED DUE TO FIRE signs posted outside. I peeked in the window and saw for myself why.

Who plowed into the Subway?

The Subway and next-door barbershop on Suitland Road in

Morningside are wrapped in yellow tape. Something (a car, truck, whatever) plowed through the Subway window but I don't know when. Both businesses are closed. If someone knows the story, let me know.

Three running for Mayor of Morningside

The Town of Morningside will hold elections for Mayor and two Town Council seats on Monday, May 2. The three candidates for Mayor are Vice-Mayor Bennard Cann, Sheila Scott and incumbent Mayor Kenneth “Chrys” Wade. Candidates for the two Council seats are Councilwoman Sharon Fowler and Stacie Wade. I'll run profiles of the candidates in upcoming columns.

Baby Holmes

Royce O'Rion Stanley Holmes was born in La Plata on March 26 to Stanley Holmes' daughter Monique and Ron. Baby Royce weighed in at 7 pounds, 7 ounces. Great-grandparents are longtime Skyline resident Shirley Holmes and her late husband William.

Davies Concert Series Presents

William Feasley, with the Sunrise Quartet, will perform World Premiere works by Argentinian Composer Marcelo Ferraris on Sunday, April 17, 6:30 p.m. at Davies Memorial Unitarian Universalist Church, 7400 Temple Hill Road in Camp Springs.

Classical guitarist William Feasley was the first guitarist to be awarded the Peabody Conservatory's coveted Artist Diploma. He has since been the recipient of numerous prizes and awards: a gold medal in the 1987 PanHellenic Guitar Competition in Athens, the 1990 and 1995 Baltimore Chamber Music Awards and a 1996 Governor's Citation for Outstanding Achievements in the Arts in Maryland.

The concert will be preceded by a performance by student artists Abigail Gerst-

man and Andrew Kivrak playing violin and viola duets by Bach and Bartok.

The Davies Concert Series is in its 44th season, offering classical music concerts, educational opportunities for young audiences, and providing a venue for new American music. Tickets are \$15 for adults and \$5 for 0—18 year olds. Light refreshments will be served after the concert. For information, call 301-627-0284.

Changing landscape

The budget proposed in March by County Exec Baker would provide funds to help revitalize Suitland, starting with a project that would transform the Suitland Manor community into a town-center across from the Census Bureau.

Six Flags America, in Upper Marlboro, opened for the season on March 25 and offers surprises for thrill-seekers and for the whole family, including: Superman Ride of Steel Virtual Reality Coaster, new vehicles at the Big Easy Speedway (go-karts), shiny new cars at Coyote Creek Crazy Cars (bumper-cars), Legend of the West: A Stunt Spectacular, Splashwater Falls, and Chop Six, a new restaurant featuring Asian cuisine.

Milestones

Happy birthday to Debbie Callison, April 8; Donna Wood, April 11; (Darlie) Fay Norton and Donald Brown Jr., April 13; Ruth Nanne, Jean Osterkamp, Donald Brown Sr., Sarah Shipman, Autumn Williams and Fr. Jeffrey Samaha, April 14.

Happy anniversary to Chuck and Laura Smith Jenkins, on their 40th anniversary, April 10; and to Tex and Rickie Beardmore, their 52nd on April 11.

A special Happy 40th Anniversary to the Surratt House, in Clinton, which opened to the public on May 1, 1976.

And Happy 40th to the Washington Metro, which began running trains on March

301-868-2464. E-mail is cumcmd@verizon.net.

BADEN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Congratulations to all the students who participated at the Spaghetti Dinner and Talent Show that was held at Baden Firehouse. Students sang, danced, acted in a play, read poems, etc. Parents, students and staff you did a fantastic job.

BISHOP'S FAREWELL GATHERING

United Methodists in the Southern Region will have the opportunity to honor Bishop Marcus Matthews who is retiring in September. You are invited to join us April 16 from 3:00 PM to 5:00 PM at Westphalia United Methodist Church in Upper Marlboro, Maryland.

SOUTHERN MARYLAND HOSPITAL CENTER

You can get information about what you need to know about strokes. Southern Maryland Hospital Center offer a support group that meets monthly and provides an opportunity for caregivers and stroke survivors to cope with changes in their lifestyle? Contact

the Rehabilitation Medicine Department at 301-877-4563.

TAP PERFORMER

Makayla Eugene daughter of Curtis and Stephanie Eugene of Brandywine Maryland performed at the Chloe & Maud 8th Annual DC Tap Fest Concert directed by Emmy Award winner Ted Louis Levy. The concert featured some of today's hottest Tap Stars & live musicians, youth and professional Tap companies from around the world. Congratulations to everyone who participated in this Concert at University of the District of Columbia.

WALK & STAY HEALTHY

Union Bethel AME Church North location Women's Ministry walk indoors every 2nd & 4th Saturday at 8:00 AM in the Southern Regional Technology & Recreation Complex. The next date will be April 16, 2016. The address is 7007 Bock Road, Fort Washington, Maryland. Please bring Driver's ID for day pass (\$5 day pass for PG residents, \$6 for non-residents, free for ages 60+). Let's continue to walk and stay healthy together. Everyone is welcome and bring a guest.

Neighborhoods

All Giant Food Stores Now Offer Year-Round, Locally Sourced Produce From BrightFarms

LANDOVER, MD—Giant Food of Landover, Md. announced today that all 169 Giant stores now carry locally-grown produce year-round from BrightFarms Capitol Greenhouse, a 150,000 square-foot greenhouse farm located in Culpeper County, VA. BrightFarms will provide Giant an assortment of fresh salad mixes, such as baby arugula, Asian greens, baby spinach, spring mix, spinach blend and baby kale, as well as basil and a variety of tomatoes. The produce supplied will total nearly one million pounds per year.

“Giant Food's partnership with BrightFarms further emphasizes our commitment to our communities by providing sustainably sourced produce and creating local jobs,” said Gordon Reid, president of Giant Food. “Demand for locally grown produce is growing and we are pleased to provide our customers with fresh, healthy, sustainable produce throughout the entire year.”

BrightFarms' state-of-the-art greenhouse farms are specifically designed to conserve land and water and help the environment by locating the farms close to markets to reduce greenhouse gas emission from transportation. Its produce can go from “seed to shelf” in as little as 26 days, and will be delivered to stores within 24 hours of harvest, ensuring the produce is as fresh as possible.

“The BrightFarms Capitol Greenhouse allows us, in partnership with Giant Food, to provide consumers with the tastiest, freshest and most sustainable local produce possible, no matter the season,” said BrightFarms Chief BrightFarmer (CEO), Paul Lightfoot. “Giant is the right partner for us because of its commitment to the communities it serves; it's a huge win for both Giant consumers and the environment.”

BrightFarms also creates green-collar jobs for local farmers, allowing more money to stay within the community that it serves. For more information and to view a video on Giant stores' partnership with BrightFarms, visit Giant's website.

About Giant Food:

Giant Food LLC is committed to helping its customers save time, save money and eat well. Headquartered in Landover, MD, Giant Food LLC operates 169 supermarkets in Virginia, Maryland, Delaware, and the District of Columbia, and employs approximately 20,000 associates. Included within the 169 stores are 160 full-service pharmacies. Giant opened the first supermarket in the nation's capital on February 6, 1936. Giving back to the community is a cornerstone that was instilled by the founders 80 years ago. The company's core areas of giving include hunger, education, health and wellness, and supporting service members and military families. In 2015, Giant's monetary and in-kind contributions exceeded \$13.9 million. For more information on Giant, visit www.giantfood.com.

About BrightFarms:

BrightFarms grows local produce, nationwide. BrightFarms finances, builds, and operates local greenhouse farms in partnership with supermarkets, cities, capital

sources, and vendors, enabling it to quickly and efficiently eliminate time, distance, and costs from the food supply chain. BrightFarms' growing methods, a model for the future of scalable, sustainable local farming, uses far less energy, land and water than conventional agriculture. Fast Company recognizes BrightFarms as “One of World's 50 Most Innovative Companies” and one of the “Top 10 Most Innovative Companies in Food” in the world. For more information, please visit www.brightfarms.com.

WSSC Now Accepting Applications for Commissioners' Engineering Scholarship

LAUREL, MD—WSSC is now accepting applicants for its Commissioners' Engineering Scholarship. Winners of the scholarship can receive up to \$4,000 over four years, plus the potential for paid WSSC internships. All told, this amounts to a potential value of over \$10,000 over four years.

The engineering scholarships are awarded annually to students who reside in WSSC's service district of Prince George's and Montgomery counties and are enrolled in an accredited program at a college or university that leads to an engineering degree. High school seniors who have been accepted into an institution of higher learning and are enrolled in an engineering program are also eligible. Students can be enrolled in a school outside of the service district but must permanently reside in either Prince George's or Montgomery County.

Up to two new scholarships in the amount of \$1,000 each may be awarded and winners are eligible for additional awards of \$1,000 each year for up to four consecutive years, which may include any post-graduate studies in engineering. Scholarship winners are also given priority consideration for WSSC's paid summer internship positions while enrolled in school.

“These scholarships signal WSSC's commitment to promoting the importance of engineering degrees and STEM education in general, and in building WSSC's talent pipeline of the future,” said Chris Lawson, Commission Vice Chair. “This is an opportunity for students to become more familiar with WSSC, which employs a wide range of engineers to carry out the vital task of delivering clean drinking water to our 1.8 million residents. And we hope these students will want to come back and pursue careers at WSSC.”

To qualify for the 2016 scholarships, applicants must:

- Provide proof of permanent residency in WSSC's service district;
- Be enrolled (or accepted if a high school senior) full time in a degree program at an accredited college or university that leads to an engineering degree in one of the following areas: Civil Engineering, Electrical Engineering, Material Science and Engineering, Chemical Engineering, Mechanical Engineering or Computer Science/Engineering; and
- Write an essay examining the following topic, in 1,500 words or less:

“It seems like every year we learn about more and more products making their way into WSSC's source water. Recognizing this problem, what treatments should WSSC be considering for use in the future?”

In addition to the essay and proof of residency, all applicants must submit a cover letter, official transcript and two letters of reference. Applicants may apply online via the WSSC website or by mail to the attention of WSSC Corporate Secretary Sheila Finlayson, Esq., WSSC, 14501 Sweitzer Lane, Laurel, Maryland 20707. Submission deadline is Friday, June 3, 2016. For more information, access to online application and detailed eligibility guidelines, visit the website at <http://www.wsscwater.com/engscholar>.

Educational Systems Federal Credit Union Will Award \$37,000 in Scholarships, Applications Due in Early April

GREENBELT, MD—Educational Systems Federal Credit Union is now accepting applications for its 2016 scholarships. The Credit Union will award a total of \$37,000 to high school seniors in Anne Arundel, Calvert, Charles, Frederick, Montgomery, Prince George's, St. Mary's and Talbot counties as well as current students of the College of Southern Maryland, Montgomery College and Prince George's Community College.

For High School Seniors:

- The Credit Union will award eight, \$3,000 Dorothy Marvil Memorial Scholarships to high school seniors planning to attend college or a vocational school in the fall of 2016. Applications are due on April 4, 2016

- The Credit Union will award eight, \$500 Business and Finance Scholarship to high school seniors who have successfully completed all Business and Finance Program coursework, and plan to attend a college or vocational school in the fall of 2016. Applications are due on April 11, 2016.

For Community College Students:

The Credit Union will award three, \$3,000 Community College Scholarships to students who are currently enrolled at a community college served by the Credit Union and plan on returning for the 2016–2017 academic school year. Applications are due on April 4, 2016

Members of Educational Systems FCU who are college-bound high school seniors or students currently enrolled in a college or trade school can also apply for one of 12, \$1,000 scholarships offered by the MD/DC Credit Union Foundation. Applications are due March 31, 2016. For an application and to review a list of qualifications, visit The Foundation's application portal.

Educational Systems FCU (esfcu.org) has proudly served the education community for 60 years. With over \$800 million in assets and 12 branches, the Credit Union serves 87,000 members in seven school systems and three community colleges throughout Anne Arundel, Calvert, Charles, Montgomery, Prince George's, St. Mary's and Talbot counties.

Brandywine-Aquasco

by Audrey Johnson 301 888 2153

26TH ANNUAL UMES RECRUITMENT RECEPTION

UMES and the Washington Metropolitan Area Alumni Chapter invites you to the 26th Annual UMES Recruitment Reception. This is a premiere alumni-sponsored event showcasing UMES educational opportunities to future students and their parents Monday, April 11, 2016 at 6:00 PM. The location is Comfort Inn Hotel and Conference Center, 4500 Crain Highway, Bowie, Maryland

You will have the opportunity to meet the President, and Academic, Financial Aid and Residence Life representatives, talk with current student leaders, and receive on-the-spot decisions. RSVP by Friday April 8, 2016 at umesadmissions@umes.edu or call 410-651-8403.

CLINTON UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

Come out and join us on Tuesdays and Thursdays for a session of Body Call at 9:00 AM. Our address is 10700 Brandywine Road Clinton, Maryland. Office telephone number is 301-868-1281 and

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COMMUNITY

Practical Money Skills

By Nathaniel Sillin

Keeping the Peace Between Adult Children in Estate Planning

When you die, will your kids fight over your money?

It's an important question that might be hard to answer now, but parents who devote themselves to estate planning with relevant updates over their lifetimes can potentially keep arguments between adult children to a minimum.

As of 2013, American retirees are the sixth most generous in the world when it comes to the amount of assets passed on to family, according to a survey by HSBC, the global British bank. The latest survey (<http://www.about.hsbc.com.au/news-and-media>) noted that 56 percent of American retirees planned to leave an inheritance with an average amount of \$176,814.

How you allocate your estate, no matter what the amount, requires planning and proper communication. Here are a few ways to start.

Know where you stand first. If you haven't updated your estate planning in the last 5-10 years, do so now to fully understand your complete financial picture. Like all personal finance issues, estate planning should be adjusted when significant life changes happen or there is a major shift in assets, such as when a relative needs help. In short, your estate picture has to reflect current financial realities, so before you decide how to allocate your wealth either before or after you die, seek qualified financial, tax (<https://www.irs.gov/Businesses/Small-Businesses-&Self-Employed/Estate-and-Gift-Taxes>) and estate advice.

Once you've determined distribution, confirm your plan. Managing money and family are usually parallel issues until the topic of estate planning arises. For some families, splitting money, property and possessions more or less equally among adult children is a smooth process. However, when it doesn't result in the fairest outcome for everyone involved, it can be trickier to navigate. Varying situations for each child might mean that an even split won't work. Once you are able to determine your assets, start thinking through how you can distribute them.

Re-affirm your executor and powers of attorney. Making a will and designating various health, financial and business powers of attorney as applicable are the standard first steps in estate planning. Certain kinds of trusts might also be relevant. Generally it's good to have documents in place (<http://www.practicalmoneyskills.com/estateplanning>) early in life. As your children get older, it's a good idea to review those documents and designated leadership.

Start communicating. Hollywood has produced many a movie scene with family members sitting nervously in a lawyer's office waiting for the will to be read. Such moments make for great comedy or drama, but not great modern estate planning. Based on what you hope to leave your family, the state of your relationship with your adult children and whatever weigh-in you get from qualified advisors, it's usually better to communicate your plans to your children in advance in person and make sure your legal documents confirm exactly what you plan to do.

Bottom line: Could your current estate planning eventually put your kids and other family members at odds? Don't wait—the time to update or start estate planning is right now.

School from A1

requested a two-day waiver for PGPCS from the Maryland State Board of Education, which was granted during the March 22 Board Meeting.

As a result, Monday, June 20 is the last day for students, with schools dismissing two hours early. Tuesday, June 21, is the last day for teachers. There is also a two-hour dismissal for students on Friday, June 17. These dates are sub-



ject to change if there are additional emergency closures before the end of the school year.

PGPCS understands school delays or closures greatly impact students, families, and staff. When making decisions to close or delay schools, the district's key focus is on the safety of students and staff.

To view the PGPCS 2015-16 school calendar online, visit the PGPCS website at <http://www1.pgcps.org/calendar/>.

Summit from A1

circumstances in their communities. To paraphrase Angela Davis, I urge each of you to change the things you cannot accept, instead of accepting the things you cannot change. Where I come from, that is called 'hustling backwards'.

Mr. Coleman and the EDC team gave attendees specific information on the financing programs, training programs and the small business development services available to help them obtain maximum increase in their lives and businesses. Team members also discussed how to write a business plan, and how to get certified to do business with Prince George's County.

Shelly Gross-Wade, President and CEO of the Prince George's

County Financial Services Corporation (FSC First) talked about how her organization can be a resource for small business owners to gain access to traditional and non-traditional capital.

"As business owners in Prince George's County, you are in a world class community, and FSC First is here to finance your businesses," said Ms. Gross-Wade. "We are not here to measure your failures, we are focused on measuring your success. At the heart of all business, it is cash flow that pays bills; not collateral, not character. FSC First is here to finance businesses and help you speak the language of traditional banks to get to 'Yes' on a loan request." Kisha Logan, EDC Small Business Services Manager also shared her insight on how entrepreneurs and small businesses can be successful.

Comcast Awards \$119,000 in Scholarships to 110 Maryland High School Seniors

Annual Leaders and Achievers® Scholarship Program Recognizes Students' Leadership Skills, Academic Achievement and Commitment to Community Service

By PRESS OFFICER Comcast

BALTIMORE, MD (March 24, 2016)—The Comcast Foundation today announced the 2016 recipients of its annual Leaders and Achievers® Scholarship Program awards in Maryland. The Program recognizes students who strive to achieve their potential, who are catalysts for positive change in their communities, who are involved in their schools and who serve as models for their fellow students. The philosophy behind the program is to give young people every opportunity to prepare for the future and to engage them in their communities. The program also demonstrates the importance of civic involvement, and the value placed on civic involvement by the business community.

"I would like to congratulate these outstanding students who strive to improve their communities and show great commitment to academic excellence," said Maryland Governor Larry Hogan. "Thanks to support from community partners like Comcast, we can help ensure today's students become the next generation of exceptional leaders."

Comcast, joined by Maryland Lt. Governor Boyd K. Rutherford; Maryland House Speaker, Michael E. Busch; and other local elected officials and school administrators, recognized the students at a special event held Wednesday, March 23, at Maryland Hall for the Creative Arts in Annapolis. One hundred and nine recipients of the 2016 Maryland Leaders and Achievers® scholarships received \$1,000. Stephon Moody, a senior at Baltimore Renaissance Academy in Baltimore was awarded a \$10,000 Comcast Founders Scholarship—instituted in honor of Ralph J. Roberts, Founder and Chairman Emeritus of Comcast Corporation—for a total of \$119,000 awarded this year to Maryland high school students.

"We are honored to recognize the accomplishments of these Leaders and Achievers Scholarship winners. They demonstrate leadership in school activities and share a strong commitment to community service," said Mary McLaughlin, Senior Vice President of Comcast's Beltway Region. "We are excited to support them as they prepare for the next chapter in their educational careers."

To date, Comcast has awarded more than \$25 million to nearly 25,000 Leaders and Achievers Scholarship winners.

2016 Comcast Leaders and Achievers® Scholarship Recipients from Maryland:

Anne Arundel County

Zoe Bell of Broadneck High School in Annapolis
Bradley Donelan of Northeast High School in Pasadena
Emma Gregory of South River High School in Edgewater
Maya Kelly of Chesapeake High School in Pasadena
Carmen Lau of North County High School in Glen Burnie
Christopher Lawrence of Glen Burnie High School
Brianna Mentle of River Hill High School in Edgewater
Luis Reyes of Old Mill High School in Millersville
Cullen Taylor of Annapolis High School
Eric Zhao of Meade Senior High School in Ft. Meade

Baltimore City

Destiny Aruviereh of Coppin Academy High School
Jeremy Booth of Gilman School
Daiza Boyd of Edmondson Westside High
Kanisha Byrd of Digital Harbor High School
Sara Cox of Patterson High School
De'asia Ellis of Frederick Douglass High School
Rebecca Gearhart of Baltimore Polytechnic Institute

Aaron Greebe of Saint Frances Academy
Samantha Jesner of Bryn Mawr School
Kayla Jones of Mercy High School
Joshua Lollies of Benjamin Franklin High School at Masonville Cove
Stephon Moody of Baltimore Renaissance Academy
Emily Moore of Institute of Notre Dame
Kailah Randolph of Augusta Fells Savage Institute of Visual Arts High School

Christopher Smith of Cristo Rey Jesuit High School
Kirsten Toland of National Academy Foundation High School
Mya Tucker of Forest Park Senior High
Zane Turk of Greater Grace Christian Academy

Baltimore County

Ariel Barbosa of Towson High—Law and Public Policy Program

Emily Beatty of Parkville High School
Davon Bell of Arlington Baptist School in Windsor Mill
Allison Bernard of New Town High School in Owings Mills
Kara Collins of Sollers Point Technical High School in Dundalk

Arshad Fakhar of Dulaney High School in Timonium
Kayla Gorham of Pikesville High School
Trevonn Gyles of Owings Mills High School
Darren Hislop of Milford Mill Academy in Windsor Mill
Mia Kaufman of Franklin High School in Reisterstown
Molly Larkin of Jemicy School in Owings Mills

Virginia Leach of Garrison Forest School
Rachel Lewis of Concordia Preparatory School in Towson
Margaret Smith of Maryvale Preparatory School in Lutherville
Joshua Spero of Israel Henry Beren High School in Pikesville
Helen Spiller of McDonough School in Owings Mills
Sydni Thomas of Notre Dame Preparatory School in Lutherville
Delise White of Randallstown High School

Calvert County
Dana Wiggins of Huntingtown High School

Carroll County
Timothy Petry of Westminster Senior High School

Charles County
Jasmine Andrade of Westlake High School in Waldorf
Daniel Campos of Maurice J. McDonough High School in Pomfret
Mackaiya Cherry of Henry E. Lackey High School in Indian Head
Caroline Dinh of La Plata High School
Aniya Munson of Thomas Stone High School in Waldorf
Monique Reid of North Point High School for Science, Technology & Industry in Waldorf
Josef-Michal Ross of St. Charles High School in Waldorf

Dorchester County
Christopher Sudler of Cambridge-South Dorchester High School in Cambridge

Frederick County

Jules Chabot of Frederick High School
Ashli Earl of Frederick County Career & Technology Center
Lorena Gutierrez of Governor Thomas Johnson High School in Frederick
Noah Ismael of Linganore High School in Frederick

Harford County

Anne Capozzoli of C. Milton Wright High School in Bel Air
Quinton Burke of Fallston High School
Regina Futcher of Patterson Mill High School in Bel Air
Ganghyun Pysh of Aberdeen High School

Howard County

Columbia Dyson of Hammond High School in Columbia
Andrew Frommer of Centennial High School in Ellicott City
Anna Hemelt of Mt. Hebron High School in Ellicott City
Greta Li of Marriotts Ridge High School in Marriottsville
Morgan Lim of Long Reach High School in Columbia

Montgomery County

Damilola Ajayi of Springbrook High School in Silver Spring
Manuella Djomaleu of Rockville High School
Allen Duong of Col. Zadok Magruder High School in Rockville
Helena Hailu of Bethesda-Chevy Chase High School in Bethesda
Yidong Hu of Winston Churchill High School in Potomac
Sara Hunt of Richard Montgomery High School in Rockville
Nazea Khan of Montgomery Blair High School in Silver Spring
Katherine Koster of Thomas Edison High School of Technology in Silver Spring
Gabriella McDonald of Seneca Valley High School in Germantown
Matthew McDonald of Sherwood High School in Sandy Spring
Anuj Mehta of Poolesville High School in Poolesville
Jahnvi Muralidharan of Northwest High School in Germantown
Donovan Parris of Paint Branch High School in Burtonsville

See AWARDS Page A5

services the EDC provides for business development.

"I was truly enlightened today by the information provided at this workshop," said Carolyn Marshall, President of Carolyn's Corner, a customer service training and coaching center in Capitol Heights, MD. "I was particularly impressed by how this workshop encouraged small businesses to do our homework, have things in place and not come to the table empty handed so that we can do business professionally when we get ready to expand. I am very glad I came."

Job seekers learned about the training and certificate programs available through the County's Largo One-Stop Career Center and Laurel Regional Workforce Center to become competitive for high wage jobs, particularly in the areas of Information Tech-

nology, Health Care, Transportation and Construction. They also learned about the available grants to provide tuition, childcare and transportation assistance for residents participating in the training programs.

"Today's event was very informative and I received more than enough information on what I need to do to make better career choices," said Jane Washington of Upper Marlboro, MD "As an unemployed professional, I found out today that I can go to the Largo One-Stop Career Center to work with a recruiter, who can assist me in my job search. I will definitely be there on Monday morning!"

The EDC will continue its 'Activate Prosperity' tour at the Spirit of Faith Christian Center on Saturday, April 23rd at 9 a.m., 2261 Oxon Hill Drive, Temple

Hills, MD to share its life changing programs that can provide high wage employment or produce generational wealth through business creation and expansion. To attend this electrifying event, please RSVP to Crystal Ballard at 301-883-8254 or cballard@pgcedc.com today.

For more information on how to gain access to capital, get assistance in writing a business plan and other business support services, contact Kisha Logan, Small Business Services Manager at 301-583-4650 or kvlogan@co.pg.md.us.

For more information on how to identify job opportunities, register for job training and certification or career development workshops, contact Liz Williams, Director of Workforce Development Services at 301-883-4615 or elwilliams1@co.pg.md.us.

COMMENTARY

Cong. Steny H. Hoyer House Democratic Minority Whip



Hoyer Hosts Roundtable Discussion on Criminal Justice Reform

LARGO, MD—On March 28, 2016, Congressman Steny H. Hoyer (MD-5) hosted a roundtable on criminal justice reform to hear from Fifth District law enforcement officials, advocates, and community stakeholders who are working on criminal justice system issues in Maryland.

"I want to thank reform advocates and law enforcement officials in Maryland for joining me at a critically important roundtable to discuss a matter that Congress must address: comprehensive criminal justice reform," said Congressman Steny Hoyer. "Today, over two million Americans, some only teenagers, are serving time in federal or state prisons. Many of these prisoners are people of color who have committed relatively low-level offenses and, because of inflexible federal or state sentencing guidelines and poor legal representation, are serving sentences that any objective observer would say are disproportionate to the crimes they committed."

"The flaws in our criminal justice system are also very costly to taxpayers," continued Congressman Hoyer. "The system is too focused on

punishment and not enough on rehabilitation, with high recidivism rates as a side-effect. Recently, the House and Senate have been engaged in a bipartisan effort to make our federal criminal justice laws more rational, and so far the process has been mostly positive. We must ensure that our system of justice protects law-abiding citizens, assigns a just punishment to those who have done wrong, and provides a real chance for people who have made mistakes to make something of themselves after they have paid their debt to society."

The guest speakers at today's roundtable were Delegate Erek Barron, District 24 and a member of the Maryland Justice Reinvestment Coordinating Council; Judge Alexander Williams, retired U.S. Federal district judge; Tiffany Waddell, Director of Federal Relations, Maryland Governor's office; Bob Ross, President, Prince George's County NAACP; Michele Harewood, senior trial attorney, Office of the Public Defender for Calvert, Charles and St. Mary's Counties; and Deputy Chief of Police Pamela Davis, Anne Arundel County Police Department.



PHOTO CREDIT: WIKIMEDIA: COURTESY TOMF688

UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND COLLEGE PARK

The University of Maryland, College Park (often referred to as The University of Maryland, Maryland, UM, UMD, or UMCP) is a public research university located in the city of College Park in Prince George's County, Maryland, approximately 8 miles from Washington, D.C. Founded in 1856, the University of Maryland is the flagship institution of the University System of Maryland. It is considered a Public Ivy institution, meaning it is a public university with a quality of education comparable to those of the private Ivy League.

Child Watch by Marion Wright Edelman



The Moment We Have Waited For

Rev. C.T. Vivian, legendary civil rights leader, believes young people today are inheriting the world at a unique crossroads in history and that "this is the moment we have waited for. When I say 'we've' waited for, I'm talking about humankind has waited for. I'm talking about all the great philosophers and thinkers have waited for this moment. We have lived like we have lived, blowing each other up, killing each other, stealing from each other, making a world that is not fit for human beings—we have lived that way because it's been allowed to be." But Rev. Vivian believes we are reaching a tipping point where many are realizing we just can't go on this way and survive. I truly hope so for our children and grandchildren's sake!

Rev. Vivian, a Presidential Medal of Freedom winner, leader in the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC), a confidant of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., and a role model for so many of us in the 1960s era of civil rights activism and still, has been and remains an indispensable long haul moral, racial and economic justice warrior. At 91 years young he has a crystal clear message for today's young people and all of us. He inspired and challenged a receptive Children's Defense Fund audience of college students when he said he is convinced this is the generation that will finally create new ways of solving social problems to make that new, better world we must build together with urgency and persistence.

"The human drama of your time will not be a military drama ... Even if they want it, it can't happen, because we've come to the point that violence cannot solve human problems ... We can't live in an atomic world and think like we used to think in terms of how wars were fought, in terms of how men killed each other, because today, if we decide to live like we lived yesterday, none of us will live at all." Instead, "we have to come with a different understanding of our relationships to the world around us, and that's the most important thing of all ... You can't live in yesterday's world. And I want

you to be very thankful of that, because you are forming the new world to be and the old world has no place in it."

Rev. Vivian believes "if we are wise, we will not allow any of us to treat the rest of us as though we were less than rather than more than." And he looks to history to prove that hatred and violence always destroy more than they create and always turn back the clock of progress. "By the time the First World War ended and the killing was over, Europe was destroyed," he said. "All the work and hope and dreams that went on before it were destroyed in the midst of it. Second World War, right, we did the same thing—we destroyed what we had worked for and hoped for and dreamed for. War cannot be used anymore because you can't create the beloved community on yesterday's understandings. We will destroy more than we create, and you can't have the world you want that way. It's up to us to create the world we really want."

"The central task" he continued, "will be to remove violence as a means of solving social problems. When we really think of it that way, then we are on our way. The task will be differ-

ent than before. We all dreamed of it. We sat in church and talked about it. We made songs about it. We talked about a new world coming. We talked about all of that, right? Now that it's here, we've got to make it real."

It's up to us to create the world we really want ... We've got to make it real. The 1960s Civil Rights Movement laid a foundation for the new world as ordinary people tired of injustice seized the moral high ground and confronted the racial violence surrounding them with controlled, disciplined, nonviolent action which allowed America to see there was another way to create change. When C.T. Vivian was jailed and beaten, he never wavered. He says: "Gandhi and the world he lived in changed because he used a different method and a different means. Dr. King changed America because he used a different understanding. He used a different way to move" and Rev. Vivian believes today's young people can finish what his generation began.

His words have a special meaning and challenge today

See WATCH, Page A5

Marc Morial, President and CEO National Urban League



Obama Cares: Celebrating Six Years of the Affordable Care Act

"Today, after almost a century of trying; today, after over a year of debate; today, after all the votes have been tallied—health insurance reform becomes law in the United States of America. Today. It is fitting that Congress passed this historic legislation this week. For as we mark the turning of spring, we also mark a new season in America. In a few moments, when I sign this bill, all of the overheated rhetoric over reform will finally confront the reality of reform."

—President Barack Obama, President Remarks at Signing of Health Insurance Reform Bill, March 2010

On March 23, 2010, President Barack Obama signed the Affordable Health Care Act into law in the East Room of the White House.

Six years later, 20 million people who could not afford health insurance or were deprived of life-saving coverage because of a pre-existing condition, now have health insurance coverage. Today, our nation is actively narrowing the gap on adverse racial health care disparities. Today, under the law simultaneously loved and reviled as "Obamacare," most insurance plans fully cover preventative health care services; young adults, who might have otherwise been uninsured, get to stay on their parents' health insurance plans until age 26; and women are no longer forced to pay more for health insurance because of their gender.

And that is why this week; I will add my voice to the legion of American voices congratulating the current administration on its signature health care law as well as those calling for the necessary reforms to fix the law's shortcomings and ensure that this generation and future generations of Americans experience health care as a right, not an exclusive and elusive privilege.

From sea to shining sea, health insurance coverage gains have been shared broadly among American communities. African Americans have the highest mortality rate of any racial and ethnic group for cancer and Latino communities also suf-

fer from disproportionate rates of illness, like cervical cancer, according to the Department of Health and Human Services. Since the law's hard-fought inception, the number of uninsured among African Americans—and whites—has dropped by over 50 percent. The Hispanic rate of uninsured has decreased by a quarter, with almost four million Hispanic adults gaining coverage under the law. Over two million young adults, who were particularly likely to be uninsured after losing coverage under their parent's health insurance, are now guaranteed insurance under their parent's health plans until they are 26 years old.

Despite all of these gains, Republicans have continued to label the Affordable Care Act a disaster. How can 20 more million Americans with access to life-saving health care ever be described as a disaster? Yet, the Republicans have been engaged in a five-year long effort to repeal the Affordable Care Act. The GOP has busied itself taking over 50 votes to roll back the law and put the health of millions of Americans at risk, but has never leveled with the American people about a GOP alternative to the Affordable Care Act. Rather than take a position of slash and burn, we need to save what works and better what doesn't.

The Affordable Care Act is not the first large-scale government program to face its share of challenges or wide-spread criticism. Obamacare shares company with the Social Security Act, which was described by a critic as a "fraud on the working man," and Medicare was widely seen as a threat to American freedom. Despite the heated rhetoric, both programs are still here serving the needs of Americans.

The Affordable Care Act is in its sixth year of infancy—and while the program is no where near perfect—it is saving lives and putting an end to insurance practices that unfairly deny Americans insurance coverage. Obamacare has a long, bumpy road of reforms to travel, but in year six, it has also come a long way in providing better health choices for the American people.

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BUSINESS

The American Counseling Association's Counseling Corner

Don't Let Change Overwhelm You

Change happens to all of us. Sometimes it's gradual, as when we watch our parents (and ourselves) age, and sometimes it's very abrupt, as when our job ends unexpectedly.

Most of us don't like sudden change. We can easily accept small changes, but large, life-altering transitions can be frightening and stressful. But major changes don't have to be negative experiences.

One way is to view change as an opportunity, not a loss. Losing your job, for example, will produce negative feelings even if it wasn't your fault. The trick is to see what happened as a chance for something new—an opportunity to learn a new skill, to head in a different direction or to explore a passion you never had time for before.

To make change work for you, you have to take positive action. While a big change might make you want to hide and mourn, you can instead fight depressing emotions by taking steps for a better you. Eat healthier, get exercise daily and be sure to get enough sleep. Living a healthier life will have you feeling better emotionally and physically, and better prepare you to handle your transition.

You also want to look to others for support. Talking to a friend or family member who is able to listen in a safe, non-judgmental way can help you talk through your feelings and discuss what possibilities the future might hold. In some cases you might feel more comfortable talking with a clergy member or a professional counselor.

A sudden change is best handled when you take time to consider what has happened and what is now possible. One helpful activity is to make a list of all the positive, stable things in your life. You might be surprised just how many there are.

It's also helpful to pay attention to how what has happened is affecting you. Try keeping a journal where you can write about what your feelings, needs and wants are at this time. It's also fine to grieve for what has been lost. You're allowed to feel sad for what has changed, but those feelings shouldn't be to the point where they overwhelm you.

Change can be difficult, but when you accept that it can also provide opportunities that might otherwise have been missed, change can often end up being a very positive experience.

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

Watch from A4

when violence as a conflict resolution strategy has become a daily threat internally and externally in this era of domestic and global terrorism; relentless gun violence in our nation driven by a powerful gun lobby that saps the lives of 30,000 human beings every year including thousands of innocent children; and out of control demagogic political discourse which encourages violence at home and fuels anger around the world by demonizing people who believe and pray differently from many of us. What is it going to take for enough of our political leaders and citizens to stand up and reject the old world view too often riddled with intolerance and hatred? When will a critical mass of citizens and leaders come together to build a new nation and world fit and safe for all of our children and confront those who fuel racial and religious intolerance within and without our borders? And how many of us will stand up and say no to the violence of coarse and careless political, racial, gender, or any rhetoric intended to demean another human being and that teaches our children we cannot disagree without being disagreeable?

The Bulletin of Atomic Scientists publishes a

"Doomsday Clock." In 2016, the clock has been set at 3 minutes to midnight as tensions between the U.S., Russia, North Korea and other nations, particularly those involved in conflicts in the Middle East, remain high and landmark climate change agreements have not yet evolved into the fundamental changes needed to ultimately arrest the problem and mitigate additional conflict and catastrophe. Rather than be discouraged or paralyzed by these disturbing concerns, we need to get up, organize, and mount without ceasing our strong nonviolent voices and witnesses to change the narrative of what it means to be a good steward of God's earth and all of God's peoples—and be determined to pass on a safer and better nation and world order to our children and grandchildren.

Marian Wright Edelman is President of the Children's Defense Fund whose Leave No Child Behind® mission is to ensure every child a Healthy Start, a Head Start, a Fair Start, a Safe Start and a Moral Start in life and successful passage to adulthood with the help of caring families and communities. For more information go to www.childrensdefense.org.

Mrs. Edelman's Child Watch Column also appears each week on The Huffington Post

With April 18 Deadline Approaching, More Than Half of Taxpayers Still to File

Comptroller Franchot Urges Maryland Taxpayers to E-File for Quick Refunds; Provides Checklist to Help Prevent Errors

By PRESS OFFICER
Office of the Comptroller

ANNAPOLIS, MD—With the tax-filing deadline quickly approaching, Comptroller Peter Franchot encourages taxpayers who have yet to file to take advantage of all the conveniences of electronic filing. This year, taxpayers have three extra days to file; the deadline is April 18 due to Emancipation Day celebrations in Washington, D.C., on April 15.

"The best way to ensure a quick refund is to file electronically," Comptroller Franchot said. "Filing electronically also allows taxpayers who owe money to delay payment until April 30."

To date, more than 1.29 million taxpayers have filed their personal tax returns electronically with more than 90,000 fil-

ing via paper. Based on 3.04 million returns filed last year, the returns filed so far represent 45 percent of last year's total.

The Comptroller urges Marylanders to file electronically to ensure they receive their refund within days as opposed to weeks, as more than 1.29 million taxpayers already have taken his advice. To date, refund payments of more than \$1 billion have been issued to more than one million taxpayers.

Comptroller Franchot also asks taxpayers to review their returns carefully before filing, as simple mistakes can significantly slow down the processing of a tax return and refund. To ensure an accurate return, taxpayers should remember to:

- Check all Social Security numbers.
- Verify bank account (checking/saving) and

routing numbers for direct deposit refunds and direct debit payments.

- Double-check calculations, and
- Include all pertinent information including relevant forms and documents, such as the W-2 form.

Although electronic filing is strongly preferred, taxpayers filing paper returns should follow all the tips provided above, as well as remember to:

- Write legibly, or type.
- Use a pen.
- Sign the tax return.

Electronic filing saves the state significant money in processing costs. Each paper return costs the state more than \$2 to process, compared to 19 cents for e-filed returns resulting in savings of millions of dollars each year.

Free state tax assistance is available at all of the agency's 12 taxpayer service offices, Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. For branch location information, please visit marylandtaxes.com.

The agency's call center offers extended hours Monday through Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 7 p.m. through April 18, returning to normal business hours from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. thereafter. To check the status of a refund by phone, please call, 1-800-218-8160 or 410-260-7701. Refund status can also be obtained by visiting the agency's website at marylandtaxes.com.

For more information on electronic filing or any other tax-related matter, please visit the Comptroller's website or call 410-260-7980 in Central Maryland or 1-800-MD-TAXES (1-800-638-2937) outside of Central Maryland.

Roundtable from A1

Town's business sector plan, build management skills in its workforce and expose it to the developers and the capital it needs to make its business community successful. We are using in an economic renaissance. Bladensburg's best days are just around the corner."

According to Census data, the Town of Bladensburg has had its share of challenges over the years. Its current median household income is \$34,966 compared to the County's median household

income of \$73,623. In addition, 11.8% of Bladensburg residents are below the poverty line, while 9.4% of residents County-wide are below the poverty line. Collectively, these numbers represent a great opportunity for a renaissance to take place in the Town of Bladensburg.

Through its 'Activate Prosperity' initiative, the EDC is positioning itself to work directly with the Bladensburg business community to introduce them to the millions of dollars in resources available through the Prince George's

County Economic Development Corporation. Over the next few months, the EDC will be partnering with the Town of Bladensburg to create its own value proposition, attract more businesses and developments to Bladensburg, prepare its residents for high wage employment and restore its historical pride.

"We are very excited about partnering with the Prince George's County Economic Development Corporation and raise our businesses to a whole other level," said Carlyncia Peck, Co-Chair of the B5 Ini-

tiative. "We believe the EDC will allow our businesses to understand business in a way they have never understood it before and to bring prosperity right here to Bladensburg. We are truly looking forward to collaborating on a job summit and other activities later on this year."

To learn more about the Bladensburg economic renaissance and other EDC initiatives and events, follow the EDC on Facebook, LinkedIn and Instagram at PGCEDC. You can also follow us on Twitter @ExpandPGC.

Awards from A3

- Adrian Payabyab** of Gaithersburg High School
- Gabrielle Pogy** of Watkins Mill High School in Gaithersburg
- Nia Singleton** of James Hubert Blake High School in Silver Spring
- Chynna Smith** of Takoma Academy in Takoma Park
- Maura Stokan-Wright** of Stone Ridge School of the Sacred Heart in Bethesda
- Najma Thomas** of Wheaton High School in Silver Spring
- Aaron Zajac** of Northwood High School in Silver Spring

Prince George's County

- Johannah Azurin** of Oxon Hill High School
- David Cole** of Crossland High School in Temple Hills
- Andre Cook** of From the Heart Christian School in Suitland
- Tarek Ellis** of Friendly High School in Fort Washington
- Frank Godfrey** of Bishop Menamara High School in Forestville

- Opeoluwa Ladelokun** of High Point High School in Beltsville
- Ridwan Lawal** of Parkdale High School in Riverdale
- Katherine Mendez-Castillo** of Bowie High School
- Marvellous Oke** of Charles Herbert Flowers High School in Springdale
- Victor Okonmah** of Laurel High School
- Suphitha Phawapoothanon** of New Hope Academy in Landover Hills
- Ebony Pitt** of National Christian Academy in Fort Washington
- Sharon Sorto** of Bladensburg High School
- Anthony Thornton** of Suitland High School in Forestville

Wicomico County

- Alexandra Creasy** of James M. Bennett Senior High School in Salisbury
- Bria Johnson** of Mardela High School in Mardela Springs
- Ryan Spadin** of The Salisbury School
- Alexis Taylor** of Wicomico High School in Salisbury

- Jessica Wiley** of Parkside Senior High School in Salisbury
- Worcester County**
- Dynaisha Christian** of Pocomoke High School in Pocomoke City
- Reagan Dunham** of Stephen Decatur High School in Berlin

Connect with the scholarship winners at www.facebook.com/ComcastLeadersandAchievers. Explore and "like" Comcast in the community at <http://www.facebook.com/ComcastImpact>.

The Comcast Leaders and Achievers® Scholarship Program is one of the many ways that Comcast gives back to the communities we serve.

About Comcast Corporation

Comcast Corporation (Nasdaq: CMCSA) is a global media and technology company with two primary businesses, Comcast Cable and NBCUniversal. Comcast Cable is one of the nation's largest video, high-speed Internet and phone providers to residential customers under the XFINITY

brand and also provides these services to businesses. NBCUniversal operates news, entertainment and sports cable networks, the NBC and Telemundo broadcast networks, television production operations, television station groups, Universal Pictures and Universal Parks and Resorts. Visit www.comcastcorporation.com for more information.

About the Comcast Foundation:

The Comcast Foundation was founded by Comcast Corporation in June 1999 to provide charitable support to qualified non-profit organizations. The Foundation primarily invests in programs intended to have a positive, sustainable impact on their communities. The Foundation has three community investment priorities—expanding digital literacy, promoting service, and building tomorrow's leaders. Since its inception, the Comcast Foundation has donated more than \$176 million to organizations in the communities nationwide that Comcast serves. More information about the Foundation and its programs is available at www.comcast.com/community.

More Than 40,000 Marylanders Now Eligible to Vote

Ex-Offenders Start Registering to Vote With Change in Maryland Law "If You Are Out of Prison, You Can Vote"

By PRESS OFFICER
Communities United

BALTIMORE, MD—Former felons and supporters gathered at the Baltimore City Board of Elections today to celebrate the first day of voter registration for people on probation and parole with many of the attendees registering to vote. More than 40,000 Marylanders are newly

eligible to vote today, with more than half of those potential new voters living in Baltimore City.

"No more taxation without representation," said Perry Hopkins, an organizer with Communities United, a grassroots organization that led the campaign to restore the franchise to former felons. "Over the next couple of months, we are going to register and turn out ex-offenders to

vote. This is the beginning of a new movement to build our collective voice and impact. People need to know—if you're out of prison, you can vote."

"I have been disenfranchised for so long," said Greg Carpenter, a newly enfranchised voter who registered today. "I have been out of prison for 21 years, and have always wanted to vote but felt that all I could be was

silent. This is a sweet and liberating moment."

Last year, the Maryland General Assembly resoundingly passed SB340/HB980 to restore the vote to citizens who live in our communities but could not vote because of a criminal conviction in their past. It was vetoed by Governor Larry Hogan but his veto was overridden by the General Assembly on February 9, 2016.

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OUT ON THE TOWN

ERIC D. SNIDER'S
IN THE DARK
Movie Review

The Witch

The Witch
Grade: A-
Rated R, some grisly images,
disturbing themes,
nonsexual nudity
1 hr., 32 min

The Witch is not the movie to see if you want to be scared in a fun, Friday-night-date sort of way. It's the movie to see if you want to be deeply unsettled—not momentarily rattled by ghosts lurking in shadows or killers popping out of closets, but profoundly unnerved by dark philosophy. First-time writer-director Robert Eggers finds his horror in ideas more than in deeds (though there are some nasty deeds, too).

Set in New England around 1630, this quietly (and then very loudly) disturbing folktale has its dour Puritan characters speaking in King James' English ("Wilt thou not help thy father?") is a casual thing for a dad to say to his boy) and spending most of their time frowning. At the outset, this family is exiled from their Puritan settlement over a theological disagreement between the father, William (Ralph Ineson), and the church leaders. The details are fuzzy, but it seems William is too piously strict even for the Puritans. He and his wife, Katherine (Kate Dickie), take their children off into the wilderness and build a new home in isolation near a gloomy forest.

Before the movie is 10 minutes old, the family's infant son has disappeared and Eggers has treated us to a shocking glimpse of what must be the title character, in a dank cottage in the woods, doing unspeakable things. It's a brief but chilling sequence, and it pre-answers (for us) the question that will soon arise within the family of whether there are sinister forces working against them, or whether their ill fortune is the result of sin.

As Puritan extremists, they are all prone to feeling guilt. Katherine, dazed by the loss of the baby, prays and weeps constantly. The eldest child, Thomasin (Anya Taylor-Joy), an adolescent teen, is introduced to us in prayer, begging forgiveness



In this exquisitely made and terrifying new horror film, the age-old concepts of witchcraft, black magic and possession are innovatively brought together to tell the intimate and riveting story of one family's frightful unraveling in the New England wilderness circa 1630. Upon threat of banishment by the church, an English farmer leaves his colonial plantation, relocating his wife and five children to a remote plot of land on the edge of an ominous forest—within which lurks an unknown evil. Strange and unsettling things begin to happen almost immediately—animals turn malevolent, crops fail, and one child disappears as another becomes seemingly possessed by an evil spirit. With suspicion and paranoia mounting, family members accuse teenage daughter Thomasin of witchcraft, charges she adamantly denies. As circumstances grow more treacherous, each family member's faith, loyalty and love become tested in shocking and unforgettable ways. Writer/director Robert Eggers' debut feature, which premiered to great acclaim at the 2015 Sundance Film Festival—winning the Best Director Prize in the U.S. Narrative Competition—painstakingly recreates a God-fearing New England decades before the 1692 Salem witch trials, in which religious convictions tragically turned to mass hysteria. Told through the eyes of the adolescent Thomasin—in a star-making turn by newcomer Anya Taylor-Joy—and supported by mesmerizing camera work and a powerful musical score, *The Witch* is a chilling and groundbreaking new take on the genre.

for thinking about breaking the commandments. Caleb (Harvey Scrimshaw), a few years younger, averts his eyes when he notices his sister's cleavage, and frets about the status of his dead baby brother's eternal soul. He gets no comfort from religion, either. His father tells him no one but God knows who will be saved and who will be damned, and the way he describes it, it sounds pretty random. The only happy people are the twins, Jonas and Mercy, who are about 5 years old and spend their days singing songs to one of the family's goats.

Things soon get worse. The crops start to fail. William causes discord with a small lie that has

far-reaching consequences. Katherine mistrusts Thomasin, who was tending the baby when it disappeared. Caleb goes hunting in the woods, where nothing good ever happens. And at all times, everyone is afraid that they will offend God—or worse, already have.

Though the film has some sequences of terror and some haunting sights, it's not an action-oriented story. The pervading eeriness comes more from the general tone, the sense of rising despair and urgency as the family is unraveled by fear and accusations. This doesn't have the plot structure of a typical horror film, and the 17th-century language makes it harder to fol-

low than, say, *Paranormal Activity*. (That's not a complaint, just an observation.) It's what you'd call an "art-house" horror film, in that it emphasizes mood and character over jolts.

This constant, steady build-up makes the last 20 minutes of the movie—when things come to a head in a nightmarish cavalcade of evil—all the more horrifying. It reminds me, to a lesser degree, of another sinister-feeling horror film with religious undertones: *Kill List*. *The Witch* isn't nearly as effed-up, but it has a similar creeping darkness, leaving you with the sense that you've taken a harrowing ride through hell and gotten some of it on you.

The Edge of Sports

by DAVE ZIRIN

Muhammad Ali and the Black Panther Party



Stanley Nelson's new documentary *The Black Panthers: Vanguard to the Revolution* is a bracing examination of the history and politics of the Black Panther Party for Self Defense. Given that we are living in a time when the issues that animated this revolutionary socialist organization—racist police brutality and economic injustice—still resonate and given that new movements are finding their voice, this film could not be more timely. The documentary also made me consider the ways in which boxer Muhammad Ali played a role in the inspiration of the very existence of the Black Panther Party. In many respects, the events of the sports world were not in the mind of rank-and-file Panthers because they weren't playing games. As onetime Panther—and long-time political prisoner—Mumia Abu-Jamal said to me in an interview, "As someone who grew up, very young in the Party, I didn't form a lot of the idolatries that many age-mates did. At 14 to 15, I wasn't fantasizing about being a member of the NBA or the NFL. I was a member of the Black Panthers, and that was enough for me." Yet almost in the next moment Mumia said, "But if ever there was a sports hero to us, it was Muhammad Ali."

Because he had been speaking out against racism, war, and the mainstream civil-rights movement for several years before the Panthers formed, Ali had a singular resonance. His triumphs in the ring were themselves political acts. Future Black Panther Party leader Eldridge Cleaver wrote in his 1968 autobiography *Soul on Ice*, "If the Bay of Pigs can be seen as a straight right hand to the psychological jaw of white America then [Ali/Patterson] was the perfect left hook to the gut."

But Ali had an effect on the Panthers that rippled well beyond his wicked grace in the ring. In 1965 the Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) in Lowndes County, Alabama, launched an independent political party and became the first group to use the symbol of a black panther. Their graphic was of a black silhouette of a panther with a slogan straight from the champ: "WE Are the Greatest." They took his famous phrase, "I am the greatest," and made it a collective call to arms. In addition, Panther co-founder Huey Newton said that he became politicized by watching Malcolm X and Muhammad Ali give speeches. They inspired him, but left him wanting more because he "had enough of religion" and later wrote, "references to God or Allah did not satisfy my stubborn thirst for answers."

As for Muhammad Ali, he was not only aware of the Panthers. He saw what they were doing as a critical contribution to Black Freedom. In a 1970 interview for a publication known as *The Black Scholar*, Ali said, "I was determined to be one n—er that the white man didn't get. Go on and join something. If it isn't the Muslims, at least join the Black Panthers. Join something bad."

There are photos of Ali walking with the Black Panthers online and a clip of Ali speaking at a rally in support of the Panthers in San Francisco where he says, "Those of you who are white ... have many white leaders who can speak for you. You have many whites in power who have the billions and trillions of dollars to help you. But black people also need a spokesman."

Mumia Abu-Jamal also said to me that the only time a picture of an athlete made their newspaper *The Black Panther* was when Ali lost to Joe Frazier in the 1971 Fight of the Century and they put Ali's face up there under the heading, "The People's Champ."

This linking of Ali and the Panthers was also seen in the minds of the rebel black soldiers fighting "America's war" in Vietnam. In 1970, journalist Wallace Terry traveled to Southeast Asia to survey 392 African-American and white soldiers. The heroes of black soldiers were primarily Muhammad Ali and Black Panther Stokely Carmichael—all because they were seen as symbols of opposition to the bloody conflict.

Stories like this remind us that Muhammad Ali was not the harmless "civil rights saint" that he is often portrayed as. They also remind us why it is that Ali's radical teeth have been extracted and why the Panthers, as Stanley Nelson showed so searingly, were subject to vicious state repression. It wasn't because of berets or charisma. It was because they inspired masses of people to revolt. They inspired people to put down their guns in Vietnam or, even more scarily, turn their guns around. That was Ali. That was the Panthers. And given the plague of problems we face today, that is why Stanley Nelson did such a service by keeping the raw revolutionary memory of this organization alive.

Maryland Casinos Generate \$93.27 Million in Revenue During February

By PRESS OFFICER
MD Gaming & Lottery

BALTIMORE, MD—Maryland Lottery and Gaming today announced February 2016 revenue numbers for the state's five casinos—Hollywood Casino Perryville in Cecil County, Horseshoe Casino Baltimore in Baltimore City, Casino at Ocean Downs in Worcester County, Maryland Live Casino in Anne Arundel County, and Rocky Gap Casino Resort in Allegany County. February 2016's combined statewide revenue totaled \$93,273,076.

Hollywood Casino Perryville generated \$6,508,517 from both slot machines and table games in February. Gross gaming revenue per unit per day was: \$224.20 for slot machines, \$2,507.13 for banking table games and \$353.87 for non-banking table games. Hollywood Casino's February 2016 revenue increased by \$485,563, or 8.1%, from February 2015. Hollywood Casino Perryville

operates 850 slot machines and 22 (12 banking and 10 non-banking) table games.

Horseshoe Casino Baltimore generated \$25,012,475 from both slot machines and table games in February. Gross gaming revenue per unit per day was: \$224.95 for slot machines, \$2,272.70 for banking table games and \$937.43 for non-banking table games. Horseshoe Casino's February 2016 revenue increased by \$2,023,099, or 8.8%, from February 2015. Horseshoe Casino Baltimore operates 2,202 slot machines and 176 (151 banking and 25 non-banking) table games.

Maryland Live Casino generated \$54,010,644 from both slot machines and table games in February. Gross gaming revenue per unit per day was: \$290.74 for slot machines, \$4,087.39 for banking table games and \$1,355.33 for non-banking table games. Maryland Live's February 2016 revenue increased by \$7,040,636, or 15%, from February 2015.

Maryland Live Casino operates 3,994 slot machines and 206 (154 banking and 52 non-banking) table games.

Casino at Ocean Downs generated \$3,907,852 from slot machines in February, and its gross gaming revenue per unit per day was \$168.16. Casino at Ocean Downs' February 2016 revenue increased by \$569,752, or 17.1%, from February 2015. The Casino at Ocean Downs operates 800 slot machines, and does not have table games.

Rocky Gap Casino Resort generated \$3,833,588 from both slot machines and table games in February. Gross gaming revenue per unit per day was: \$178.27 for slot machines and \$1,026.63 for banking table games. This facility does not have non-banking table games. Rocky Gap Casino Resort's February 2016 revenue increased by \$359,013, or 10.3%, from February 2015. Rocky Gap Casino Resort operates 631 slot machines and 19 table games.

In a year-to-year comparison, February 2016 casino revenue increased from February 2015 by \$10,478,062, or 12.7%. See attached document (or click [HERE](#)) for a detailed breakdown of February 2016's fund disbursement, fiscal year-to-date totals for the individual casinos and combined state total.

Maryland Lottery and Gaming is responsible for all matters relating to regulation of the state's casinos. In this regulatory role, the agency oversees all internal controls, auditing, security, surveillance, background investigation, licensing and accounting procedures for the facilities. To keep Marylanders informed and maintain integrity and transparency in its regulation of the state's casinos, monthly financial reports are posted on [gaming.mdlottery.com](#). Maryland Lottery and Gaming reminds players to play responsibly and within their budget; resources are available at [mdgamblinghelp.org](#) or by calling 1-800-GAMBLER.

Calendar of Events

April 7, — April 13, 2016

Irene Sylvester

Date and Time: Saturday, April 4—
Sunday, April, 24, 2016, 1–3 pm

Description: Irene Sylvester continues her exploration of the planets with multimedia abstracts of Deep Space.

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

Pickle Ball Marathon

Date and Time: Friday, April 8, 2016, 9:30 am–2 pm
Description: Join us for our second anniversary pickle ball marathon! Games will be divided into three 90-minute segments on three indoor courts: 9:30–11 am; 11 am–12 pm; and 12:30–2 pm. (A maximum of 16 players are able to participate for each segment.) Please call 301-952-1063 or 240-821-0826 to reserve your time. Spectators are welcome to attend this event.

Cost: FREE
Ages: Ages 50 & up
Location: Cedar Heights Community Center
1200 Glen Willow Drive, Seat Pleasant MD
Contact: 301-773-8881; TTY 301-699-2544

Schoolhouse Rock Live!

Date and Time: Friday, April 8, 2016, 10:15 am & 12 noon
Description: Tom, a school teacher nervous about his first day of teaching, tries to relax by watching TV when various characters representing facets of his personality emerge from the set.

These characters show him how to win his students over with imagination and music, through such beloved Schoolhouse Rock songs as “Just A Bill,” “Lolly, Lolly, Lolly” and “Conjunction Junction.”

Based on the Emmy-award winning series from the 1970s, Schoolhouse Rock Live! is lighting up stages everywhere bringing its infectious zest to a cross-generational audience.

Curriculum Connections: Language Arts, History, Science, Math.
Cost: \$8/person, \$6/groups of 20 or more
Ages: Recommended for grades K-8
Location: Publick Playhouse
5445 Landover Road, Cheverly, MD
Contact: 301-277-1710; TTY 301-699-2544

Concert: Fred Hersch

Date and Time: Friday, April 8, 2016, 8 pm
Description: A jazz pianist and composer, Fred Hersch was the first person to play week-long engagements as a solo pianist at New York's Village Vanguard. He has recorded more than 70 of his own jazz compositions and has been nominated for several Grammy Awards.

Cost: \$30/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

Public Reception: Dominic Nash

Date and Time: Saturday, April 9, 2016, 1–3 pm
Description: Working in a collage-like manner, Dominic Nash builds up layers of fabric to create a sense of mystery and depth. Using both abstract and representational forms, Nash invites the viewer to return and see more and different things at each viewing.

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

Concert: A Tribute to the Music of Phyllis Hyman featuring Shang and the BRENCORE ALLSTAR Band

Date and Time: Saturday, April 9, 2016, 8 pm
Description: The music of the incomparable Phyllis Hyman is brought to life by the DMV's reigning Queen of Song, international recording artist Shang and the fabulous BRENCORE ALLSTAR Band.

Cost: \$30/general admission; \$25/students & seniors
Ages: All ages
Location: Arts/Harmony Hall Regional Center
10701 Livingston Rd., Fort Washington, MD
Contact: 301-203-6070; TTY 301-699-2544

Jazz Talk: “The Art of Listening to Jazz” with Nasar Abaday

Date and Time: Sunday, April 10, 2016, 2 pm
Description: Do you like listening to Jazz? If so, why? If not, why not? Through this presentational journey, you will learn to appreciate the history and culture of jazz, as well as understand its complex harmonies, creative arrangements, and compositional strategies.

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

Glow in the Dark Zumba Party

Date and Time: Tuesday, April 12, 2016, 7–8:30 pm
Description: Grab your favorite color glow stick and wear your favorite neon gear for an exuberating workout with Stacey! Glow sticks will be provided. There will be music, games, contests, and light refreshments.

Cost: Resident \$7; Non-Resident \$8
Ages: All ages welcome
Location: Upper Marlboro Community Center
5400 Marlboro Race Track Road,
Upper Marlboro, MD
Contact: 301-627-2828; TTY 301-699-2544

EARTH TALK ... Can Trophy Hunting Actually Be Good for Wildlife and Conservation?

Killing of Cecil the Lion in Zimbabwe Last Summer Sparks Debate About Future of Big Game Hunting in Africa

Dear EarthTalk:

How is it that big game hunting can actually be good for wildlife?

—Ronnie Wilson,
Ft. Myers, FL

When Minnesota dentist Walter Palmer killed Cecil, a much-loved wild 13-year-old black-maned lion, with his bow and arrow in July 2015 outside a protected section of Zimbabwe's Hwange National Park, animal advocates were outraged. The University of Oxford's Wildlife Conservation Research Unit team had been studying Cecil and his family—protected as long as they stayed within the invisible borders of the park—at the time. In response to the extensive media coverage and public fury following the incident, Delta, American and United airlines announced in August that they would no longer allow hunters to transport big game trophies, including buffalo, elephant, leopard, lion or rhino, on their flights.

Cecil's death also helped draw attention to big game hunting and its effects on wildlife populations and their ecosystems. Globe-trotting big game hunters imported more than 1.26 million “trophies”—the part of the animal they keep for display—to the U.S. between 2005 and 2014, according to a new report by Humane Society International (HSI). That's an average of 126,000 trophy imports a year, or 345 a day.

But hunting proponents found the sudden backlash over Cecil's death unsubstantiated. Dr. Alan Maki, conservation chair at the prominent hunting group, Safari Club International (SCI), argued that, considering that Africa's human population is projected to double to two billion in the next 25 years, more and more land will be needed to support this growth, resulting in lots of lost wildlife habitat. Safari hunting, a \$200 million annual industry, provides substantial value to wildlife, he said, by paying for anti-poaching patrols, national park operations and conservation programs that support local communities.

“We're too busy showing everyone what great hunters we are, and we're not doing enough to show what kind of conservationists we are,” says Ivan Carter, an African hunting guide and host of Carter's W.A.R. on the Outdoor Channel. “We have to change the perception that we are just trophy killers and we've got to focus on the fact that we're conservationists, and we do that by having and sharing the right information and research, and taking the time to post properly on social media.”

Of course, not everyone agrees that trophy hunting is benign, let alone beneficial. HSI maintains that widespread corruption in some of Africa's most sought after big game destinations means that money raised from trophy hunting in places like Tanzania and Zimbabwe is more likely used to line officials' pockets than to help ailing



CREDIT: INCE O'SULLIVAN, FLICKRCC

Wildlife activists were outraged when a Minnesota dentist shot Cecil, a 13-year-old black-maned lion who had wandered just outside of a protected area in Zimbabwe's Hwange National Park last summer.

wildlife populations. (This unavoidable corruption was part of the reason Kenya banned trophy hunting altogether within its borders some four decades ago.) HSI also points out that trophy hunting may be more about ego-stroking than conservation, with wealthy American hunters willing to pay top dollar to compete in contests to kill the most wildlife for awards (such as the “Africa Big Five” that includes lions, elephants, rhinos, leopards and Cape buffalo).

HSI, which has published

several reports detailing the negative effects of trophy hunting on wildlife populations, is working to get additional airlines to refuse passage to hunting trophies, and has helped introduce legislation to Congress calling for a ban on the importation of large animal trophies altogether.

While it appears that the debate is not going to be settled anytime soon, animal advocates maintain that upholding laws protecting species does much more to protect animals than killing them ever can.

CONTACTS: Oxford Wildlife Conservation Research Unit, www.wildcru.org; SCI, www.safariclub.org; Carter's W.A.R., www.outdoorchannel.com/showvideos.aspx?show-id=33240; HSI, www.hsi.org.

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Promise from A1

through collaborative initiatives like PROMISE have a life-long positive impact on employment for students with disabilities,” said Marcella E. Franczkowski, Assistant State Superintendent of Special Education/Early Intervention Services.

Youth enrolled in Maryland PROMISE are participating in a federal study aimed at improving long-term employment outcomes for those at-risk for dependence on public benefit programs. About half of the enrolled youth receive enhanced services as part of the research study intervention group.

Maryland PROMISE is built on the strength and coordination of its partners. Led by the Maryland Department of Disabilities and in conjunction with MSDE—along with the Developmental Disabilities Administration, Behavior Health Admin-

istration, and Department of Labor, Licensing, and Regulation—Maryland PROMISE offers career-related services to help youth recipients achieve better outcomes.

Through paid work-based experiences at local businesses, the youth are also given the opportunity to learn to be successful and contributing employees. To date, 318 youth representing every Maryland region have participated in summer employment. Both the families and youth receive counseling and financial education as part of services provided. Currently, 652 family plans have been completed and 93 family members have directly received support services from PROMISE staff. Through this holistic approach, the youth experience an environment conducive to success and a greater potential to gain skills necessary for competitive employment.

Pamela Corkran employed two PROMISE participants at her consignment shop, Too Good To Be Thru, in Baltimore last summer and noted she learned as much as the youth. Ms. Corkran indicated that while her teenage employees required guidance, they caught on quickly, were eager to learn, and brought a great deal of creativity to their positions at the store. She is hopeful the skills learned last summer will benefit them as they join the adult workforce.

“The Maryland PROMISE team had a vision for the initiative which relied on the Recruiters, Case Managers, and Family Employment Specialists having first-hand knowledge of the areas they serve—including the youth who live there and the businesses who are successful in those regions,” said Maryland Department of Disabilities Secretary Carol Beatty. “It is an immense credit to this team that

they were able to achieve such lofty goals given them by the research project while still providing personal and attentive supports to the participants. We look forward to the outcomes of the study and the bright futures of the youth who utilize these services.”

Maryland PROMISE is looking for additional employers across the state in order to expand these offerings in the summer of 2016. Participants receive ongoing support from their Family Employment Specialists so they enter the experience ready to learn.

If you are an employer interested in participating in the Maryland PROMISE initiative, please contact the Maryland Department of Disabilities at 410-767-3660 or info.mdod@maryland.gov. More information on Maryland PROMISE can be found at www.mdpromise.org.



REDUCE, REUSE & RECYCLE

Reducing waste can be hard. But, a small effort to recycle and reuse more items makes a big impact on our planet.

- ▶ Switch from disposable to reusable utensils, plates, cups, shopping bags, water bottles and coffee cups;
- ▶ Donate old clothes, toys, shoes and furniture in good condition to local thrift stores or consignment shops;
- ▶ Before buying new, search online resale shops with gently used items available for purchase; and
- ▶ Start a community swap where neighbors can drop off items they no longer want and others can pick up items that they need.

Donation box