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PHOTO COURTESY OF THE MONTGOMERY COUNTY PLANNING DEPARTMENT, HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICE.

The Jones-Hall-Sims house sat in Poolesville, Maryland, for over a century where it housed the descendants of freed slaves.

Freddie Gray to the Freedom House: Maryland Well-Represented in New African American Museum

By MINA HAQ
Capital News Service

WASHINGTON, D.C.—Although the Smithsonian's new National Museum of African American History and Culture opens Saturday in the heart of Washington, its neighboring state of Maryland has a strong presence.

From a freed slave house in Montgomery County to photographs of Baltimore's unrest after Freddie Gray's death, Maryland's black experience throughout history is broadly represented. According to the museum's online collection, Maryland was in the top 15 states with the most artifacts.

Artifacts from Maryland on display include an early 1800s stone slave auction block from Hagerstown, a paper cutter from the *Baltimore Afro-American* newspaper and a copy of the book *This Child's Gonna Live* by Maryland-born Sarah E. Wright, who portrayed the lives of a black family set by the state's Eastern Shore.

Paul Gardullo, a curator at the museum, said it's crucial to reflect the "deeply important" history of Maryland to African American life.

"While we are a national museum, our local audiences and local histories are incred-

See MUSEUM Page A3

Suitland, MD Native Serves Aboard Guided-Missile Destroyer in Pearl Harbor

By LT. CMDR. DAVID DAITCH
Navy Office of
Community Outreach

JOINT BASE PEARL HARBOR-HICKAM, HI—A 2010 Potomac High School graduate and Suitland, Maryland native is serving in the U.S. Navy aboard the guided-missile destroyer, *USS Chung-Hoon*.

Seaman Marcus Cunningham is a yeoman aboard the forward-deployed Arleigh Burke-class guided-missile destroyer operating out of Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam, Hawaii.



PHOTO COURTESY NAVY OFFICE OF COMMUNITY OUTREACH
Yeoman Marcus Cunningham.

A Navy yeoman is responsible for the administration and personnel management of all 337 people on the ship.

See YEOMAN Page A3

PGCPS Launches WorkForce Diversity Task Force

By PRESS OFFICER
PGCPS

UPPER MARLBORO, MD—Prince George's County Public Schools (PGCPS) recently launched a Workforce Diversity Task Force to develop a systematic plan to attract, develop, and retain a high quality workforce that represents the cultural diversity of students and the community.

The Workforce Diversity Task Force, spearheaded by the district's Office of Human Resources, will analyze current

staffing, student enrollment data, and initiatives that address workforce diversity, such as Latino Educator Recruitment and Men of PGCPS.

"As we experience a demographic shift in our community and schools, it is imperative that we have a workforce that reflects that shift," said Dr. Kevin M. Maxwell, PGCPS Chief Executive Officer. "It is important for our students to see teachers and staff members who look like

See DIVERSITY Page A6

Maryland Nursing Home Regulator Struggling to Keep Up

By CARLOS ALFARO and
DARCY COSTELLO
Capital News Service

COLLEGE PARK, MD—As complaints rise throughout the nursing home system in Maryland, state nursing home regulators have a persistent staffing problem and are struggling to keep up.

By the end of 2015, about one in every five positions were unfilled at the Office of Health Care Quality, which is crucial to the regulation and inspection of health care facilities such as hospitals and nursing homes, according to a 2017 fiscal year budget analysis conducted for the Maryland General Assembly. That vacancy level is nearly double from the previous year.

The staffing problems are hindering proper oversight, according to an analysis of the Office of Health Care Quality's 2017 fiscal year budget. The agency "has faced chronic staffing shortages over the past few years due to the combination of an increased workload, a

structural deficiency in positions allotted for survey and inspection activities, and chronic vacancies among surveyor positions," according to the state legislative analysis.

The OHCQ's staffing problems are, at the very least, slowing down the agency's reviews of nursing homes and other entities. A staffing turnover rate of 7.6 percent "impinges on the Office of Health Care Quality's (OHCQ) ability to fulfill its statutory responsibilities," according to its budget for the 2016 fiscal year. The update released earlier this year, for the 2017 fiscal year, paints a bleaker picture, saying that "OHCQ indicates it will do little to improve its staffing situation."

The agency's response time missed a federal goal set by the Department of Health & Human Services of starting an investigation within 10 days of a complaint alleging actual harm, according to the budget analysis.

See NURSING HOME Page A3

Local Leaders Set to Bring Back the Boom in Bladensburg Economy

Economic Development is a 'Team Sport' Says Secretary of Commerce Mike Gill

By R. JOSHUA REYNOLDS
PGCEDC

BLADENSBURG, MD—Yesterday, the Prince George's County Economic Development Corporation (EDC) participated in the Bladensburg Town Hall meeting to discuss ways in which the County and State could work together to bring an economic boom to the municipality. EDC President and CEO Jim Coleman, engaged in an interactive discussion with Maryland's Secretary of Commerce Mike Gill, Bladensburg Mayor Walter James and Bladensburg City Council Members and State Delegates about the role the Economic Development Corporation can play in connecting Bladensburg to economic opportunities.

"Bladensburg has all of the potential that is needed to be a successful municipality," said Coleman. "With its first railroad founded in 1845 as well as having started out as a seaport town, the potential here is endless. We have the tools at the EDC to restore Bladensburg



PHOTO COURTESY R. JOSHUA REYNOLDS

Bladensburg Mayor Walter James (3rd from left); MD Secretary of Commerce Mike Gill (Center); Bladensburg Town Administrator Debi Sandlin (4th from right); EDC President & CEO Jim Coleman (3rd from right); Councilmember Walter Ficklin (2nd from right) and EDC Chief of Staff Britta Vander Linden (far right) with business leaders from Bladensburg.

back to its glory days and we are going to make that happen. Let's bring back the boom in Bladensburg's economy."

Coleman spoke of millions of dollars in valuable resources to grow their local businesses,

attract new development to the town and prepare its residents for high wage jobs.

The EDC has made the success of Bladensburg a priority throughout the year hosting its Thirsty (For Business) Thurs-

day event as well as participating in business outreach events. Today, this effort was strengthened by Secretary of

See ECONOMY Page A5

INSIDE

PGCPS Announces New Early Start Program to Continue Head Start Services

Students will have the same instructors, program site, transportation services and school meals. Parents will have new mental health, nutrition and wellness resources. There will be increased monitoring and enhanced staff screening to address safety and disciplinary concerns.
Community, Page A3

Do Your Part: "March to the Polls" and Vote

In a democratic society, if we like or don't like what our political leaders are doing and stand for, we must make that clear through our voices and our votes and our monitoring of their actions. Staying home and failing to vote is a knife in the heart of our democracy.
Commentary, Page A4

Does Maryland's Wealth Explain the Success of Olympians Like Michael Phelps or Katie Ledecky?

We analyzed income data from 2000, because that's the year that the average member of the U.S. Olympic team turned 10 years old, a critical age in the development of Olympic athletes.
Business, Page A5

Movie Review: *Blair Witch*

Wingard and Barrett clearly approached their sequel with reverence for the original, a groundbreaking frightener so authentic that numerous viewers believed it really was documentary footage shot by non-actors who were then never heard from again. (I guess the last part turned out to be true.)
Out on the Town, Page A6

Earth Talk

Dear EarthTalk:

First Solyndra went under, then SunEdison ... If solar energy is growing so much in the U.S., why have some of the bigger players gone under and will the survivors be able to stay the course?

—Scott Marcinik,
Altoona, PA

Features, Page A7

Towns and NEIGHBORS

In and Around Morningside-Skyline

by Mary McHale 301 735 3451

Longtime Auth Village resident Mary Mitchell dies at 93

Mary Rose (Van Engelen) Mitchell was born on a dairy farm in Faribault, Minnesota, on Sept. 4, 1923. Although she enjoyed her upbringing on the farm, she always complained about milking cows in the cold Minnesota mornings. Mary's father had immigrated from the Netherlands, and Mary cherished her Dutch heritage. She was close to her cousins in Holland and visited them often.

She graduated from Bethlehem Academy, a Catholic school near her hometown. Then, in a spirit of adventure and patriotism, she embarked on a life-changing adventure, boarding a train to faraway Washington, D.C., during World War II. With her nimble fingers and flare for grammar, she landed positions in Civil Service and on Capitol Hill.

While dancing the jitterbug one night in a church hall, she was spotted by the love of her life, a dashing, dark-haired clarinet player, Russell Anthony Mitchell. The two were married for 68 years, parted only by his death in 2013.

Mary and Russ moved to Auth Village, where they raised two children, Barbara and Russell, and became active at St. Philip's Church where Mary was Prefect of the Sodality in 1963-64. She loved to cook, and was noted for her pumpkin bars (memorialized in St. Philip's Golden Anniversary Cookbook, page 14).

In 1960 she went back to work at Andrews and was known as "Mother Maintenance," keeping the planes running on time. After she retired again, she worked to perfect her bridge game.

In 2014 she moved from her longtime home on Delta Lane to Spring Village in California, Md. After a blessedly brief bout of pneumonia, Mary rejoined Russ to dance in the afterlife on October 2, 2016.

Mary was predeceased by her husband, two sisters and a brother. Survivors include her daughter Barbara Ann Mitchell; son and daughter-in-law, Russell James and Cindy Mitchell; and

many beloved nieces and nephews. Mass of Christian Burial was at St. Philip's, with burial at Resurrection Cemetery. (Thank you to Mary's daughter Barbara for her loving contribution to this obituary.)

Coming up

Oct. 27–Nov. 3: Early Voting. In our area, the closest place is the Suitland Community Park School on Regency Lane. Hours: 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. Voting is for U. S. President; U.S. Senator; District 4 Representative in Congress; several Court judges; Board of Education, District 7, and several Questions.

Sat., Oct. 29: Halloweenie Roast Campfire at Clearwater Nature Center at Cosca Regional Park, in Clinton. Join a naturalist for a non-scary, Halloween event, for ages 2 & up. See live animals and do a craft. Marshmallows, hotdogs and roasting sticks will be available. Costumes are not required. Hours: noon to 3 p.m. Fee, \$5.

Sat., Oct. 29: Morningside is hosting its first Trunk or Treat. On that night they'll hold a costume contest, bake sale, and Trunk or Treat from cars. Cars will also be judged for best (spookiest?). This event is meant to provide a safer Halloween experience for children. For information, contact Councilmember Blade, 240-464-4272, or Councilmember Fowler, 240-354-5953.

People

I've just received word that Mary Taylor, one of the Nichols family of Morningside, died Oct. 8. I'll pay tribute to her in next week's column.

Kevin Kelly is the 2016–17 president of the Surratt Society. Other officers are: Louise Oertly, vice president; Sue Perrotta, secretary; and Tom Buckingham, treasurer.

Ligia Rojas is the 2016–17 prefect of St. Philip's Sodality. Other officers: Carolyn Hayes, vice-president; Lorraine Wright, secretary; and Karin Yeatman, treasurer.

Changing landscape

Another federal agency may be moving to Prince George's. The General Services Adminis-

tration (GSA) is considering a site near the Branch Avenue Metro station for the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Service.

The Surratt House plans to begin preservation work within the year, and to demolish the vacant building next door—it has been donated to the House, making for a clear view of the Museum from the busy intersection at Brandywine and Piscataway roads.

May they rest in peace

Herbert M. O'Neill, 88, who lived on the same street in Forestville for more than 60 years, died Sept. 16. He was a S.E. Washington native before moving to Forestville. His wife Margaret, sons Michael and Patrick and daughter Jeanne preceded him in death. Survivors include his daughter Kathleen O'Neill Burgess, five grandchildren and his brother Eugene. Services were at Lee's with burial at Resurrection Cemetery.

William O. Taylor, Jr., 75, longtime resident of Suitland, died Oct. 1 in Shady Side. He was born in Washington to Mary and William O. Taylor Sr., and was married to Billie C. Taylor who died in 2009. He served in the U. S. Army and was employed for 40 years with Solon Automated Services. His memberships included: the Moose, B.P.O.E., American Legion and the Fleet Reserve. Survivors include son Ronnie Taylor, daughter Dawn Mahar, six grandchildren and siblings Joseph and Robert Taylor, Joan Gearheart and Rosemary Gearhart. He was preceded in death by brothers Frank and James Taylor and a sister Jean Sinclair.

Milestones

Happy birthday to Clyde Miller, Catherine Alvis, Jody Nyers and Christina Ramsey Eckloff, Oct. 22; Mary Flood Dawes, Oct. 23; Daniel John Fitzgerald and Anna Norris, Oct. 24; My granddaughter Kathryn Shearer and Donna Anderson, Oct. 25; Orva Heissenbuttel, Juanita Starke and Christopher Flaherty, Oct. 27.

Happy 50th anniversary to Masonic Centennial Lodge #174 in Upper Marlboro.

Brandywine-Aquasco

by Audrey Johnson 301 888 2153

COMMUNITY SUPPORT SYSTEMS

CSS 2016 Yard Sale/Flea Market will be on Saturday, October 22, 2016 from 8:00 AM–1:00 PM. Rain date will be October 29, 2016 from 8:00 AM–1:00 PM. The address is Chapel of the Incarnation 14070 Brandywine Road, Brandywine, Maryland 20613. To obtain more information call 301-372-1491.

The Yard Sale/Flea Market is to benefit Community Support Systems (CSS), a private, non-profit social service agency serving Southern Prince George's and Northern Charles Counties.

IT'S A VETERANS CASINO TRIP

Come and go with us to Delaware Park Raceway and Casino in Wilmington Delaware Saturday, November 12, 2016. Bus will leave St. Philip's Episcopal Church at 9:00 AM and Clinton Park-N-Ride, Clinton, Maryland at 9:30 AM and return at approximately 7:00 PM.

Fun package includes a \$30.00 rebate, 50/50 raffle, cake sale, and light refreshments. All tickets must be purchased by October 30, 2016. Donation is

\$40.00. Absolutely no refunds. Sponsored by Shirley Ann Cleaves. For tickets please contact Shirley A. Cleaves (302) 690-4260 or Doretha A. Savoy (301) 233-3136.

JOIN GIRL SCOUTS

Are you interested in getting your daughter into Girl Scouts to become part of an amazing organization for girls from Kindergarten–12th grade? Your daughter will have fun, make new friends and change the world. Join us at www.gscnc.org or call 800-523-7898. All abilities accommodated, financial assistance and volunteer opportunities available.

COMMUNITY DISCUSSIONS

Join us for Community discussions on balancing enrollment. Prince George's County Public Schools invite parents, students, and community members to participate in Community Discussions to continue an open dialog on opportunities to balance enrollment in the district, among other changes. Each Community Discussion will feature breakout groups on specific

schools that may be studied for possible changes. Discussions will not be limited to these schools and there are no specific proposals at this time.

The community discussions will take place from 6:30 PM to 8:00 PM on Thursday, October 20 at James Madison Middle School, Wednesday, October 26 at Accokeek Academy and Thursday, October 27 at Bladensburg High School.

NEW HOPE FELLOWSHIP PARISH

The United Methodist Women presents "Stop Worrying and Start Praying" Prayer Breakfast Saturday, October 29, 2016 at 8:30 AM in the Family Life Center/Nottingham Myers UMC 15601 Brooks Church Road, Upper Marlboro, Md. Rev. Constance C. Smith, Pastor. Donation: \$20.00 advance or \$25.00 at the door.

Guest speaker will be Minister Ruthell Bland Deliverance Church of Christ Capitol Heights, Maryland. Contact Christ UMC 301-888-1316, Nottingham Myers UMC 301-888-2171, Janice Watkins 202-247-8691 or Lillie Skinner 301-782-4579 for more information.

Neighborhoods

Edwards Statement on the Passage of H.R. 5303, Water Resources Development Act of 2016

WASHINGTON, D.C.—Congresswoman Donna F. Edwards (MD-4) released the following statement after voting for H.R. 5303, the Water Resources Development Act (WRDA) of 2016. The House of Representatives voted 399-25 to advance the bill to a conference committee, where the differences between the House and Senate versions will be resolved.

"The House today acted on an important piece of legislation to authorize resources for our nation's water infrastructure," said Congresswoman Donna F. Edwards.

"WRDA is critical for the economic and environmental future of Maryland: creating jobs, meeting unmet water transportation infrastructure needs, and protecting our vital natural resources and public health. With one of the longest coastlines in our country, this new law is important to our state. The Chesapeake Bay and several of its tributaries, including the Anacostia, Patuxent, Potomac, and Severn Rivers, flow through the Fourth Congressional District. I am disappointed that the bill does not contain the bipartisan agreement for the Harbor Maintenance Trust Fund to truly meet the long-term funding needs for our ports. I hope it can be restored in the final bill.

11,000 Maryland Associates to Receive Cash Bonuses

BALTIMORE, MD—As part of Walmart's continued focus on improving and enhancing the store experience for associates and customers, the company recently awarded \$2 million in second quarter cash bonuses to 11,000 hourly associates in Maryland. The bonuses, which were based on stores' performances from May through July of this year, are part of an overall incentive plan designed to reward associates whose stores have met their performance and customer service goals. Eligible associates can earn these bonuses four times a year.

More than 932,000 hourly associates received a second quarter bonus, up from 880,000 associates in the second quarter of fiscal 2016 and 687,000 associates in fiscal 2015.

"Walmart is proud to be able to reward our hardworking associates across Maryland for their unwavering dedication to create the best shopping experience possible for our customers," said Michael Collichan, Regional General Manager for Walmart. "We are working to make Walmart a better place to work for our associates and a better place to shop for our valued customers, and we believe investments like this will help us achieve those goals and continue to reach higher in the future."

Walmart's Investment in our Associates:

- In 2015, Walmart announced a two-year, \$2.7 billion investment in our associates. The commitment includes investments in education, training and higher wages. As a result, more than 1.2 million Walmart U.S. and Sam's Club associates received pay increases on the same day earlier this year. The second quarter bonuses are not part of the \$2.7 billion.

- Associate training is a key component of Walmart's asso-



Congresswoman
Donna F. Edwards

ciate investment strategy. This year Walmart announced plans to open 200 Academies across the U.S. designed to teach advanced retail skills to department managers and hourly supervisors. More than 140,000 associates are expected to go through the training program each year.

Peterson Companies Partner With Wounded Warriors Family Support to Implement Combat Wounded Parking Program Honoring Purple Heart recipients throughout the Washington, D.C. region

FAIRFAX, VA—Peterson Companies has partnered with Wounded Warriors Family Support, a national non-profit veterans' organization headquartered in Omaha, Nebraska, and are implementing the organization's national parking program (Combat Wounded) at several of their shopping centers throughout the Washington, D.C. metropolitan region. Wounded Warriors Family Support (not affiliated with Wounded Warriors) was founded by Colonel John Folsom, USMCR who spent 29 years in commissioned service including his deployment to Iraq. He holds the Navy-Marine Corps medal and a Bronze Star along with Meritorious Service medals for his service in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom. Folsom founded the organization mainly to provide valuable assistance to the families of those who have been wounded or killed during combat.

The National Purple Heart Hall of Honor estimates that there are somewhere around 1.8 million Purple Heart recipients. These are combat wounded service members who have transitioned back into civilian life. Many live in the Washington, D.C. region. Wounded Warriors Family Support developed the program to honor the commitment and great sacrifice of these national heroes. The organization created Combat Wounded parking signs for Purple Heart recipients to also let them know that they are not forgotten.

"We are pleased to be able to partner with Wounded Warriors Family Support on such a noble effort. Purple Heart recipients have given so much to our country. Peterson is honored to show our support and appreciation by making their lives a little easier in their own communities," said Kelly Price, vice president, Asset Management, Peterson Companies.

"We want to thank Peterson Companies for their support for our wounded veterans. By placing 57 Combat Wounded parking signs at their properties, Peterson Companies is honoring and recognizing these military heroes for their

sacrifice defending our freedom," said Folsom.

The 57 Combat Wounded signs can be found at the following properties: Fairfax Corner, East Market, and Fair Lakes Center (Fairfax, Va.); and Virginia Gateway (Gainesville, Va.) and at National Harbor (National Harbor, Md.), Downtown Silver Spring (Silver Spring, Md.) and RIO Washingtonian Center (Gaithersburg, Md.). The signs have been placed strategically in the most convenient locations—adjacent and accessible to elevators, ramps and handicapped spaces and are erected using the same guidelines that apply to similar handicap parking signs. Combat Wounded parking spaces can be located on the shopping centers' websites. Wounded Warriors Family Support has distributed more than 3,000 signs across the U.S. at veterans' hospitals and facilities as well as through national retailers.

Maryland Transit Activists Launch New Coalition Offering Vision of a Connected Maryland

Grassroots transit advocates from across Maryland will come together in front of Baltimore's Penn Station on Tuesday morning at 9:00 to launch a statewide coalition. At this press conference, the newly formed Maryland Transit Opportunities Coalition will present a transportation vision that looks beyond current squabbles and points toward a more prosperous and equitable Maryland.

Joining them will be elected officials from around the state.

The coalition's vision is a "Connected Maryland"—a statewide rail network that stretches from Elkton to Frederick and from Waldorf to Towson. For the price of one recently proposed highway widening—the \$8 billion plan to add toll lanes to I-270 and the American Legion Bridge—the state could build:

- The east-west Red Line which will create a connected Baltimore transit network
- The 2007 MARC Growth and Investment Plan, including
 - ▶ Trains every 15–20 minutes all day from Washington through Baltimore Penn Station to White Marsh
 - ▶ All-day two-way service from Washington to Frederick and to Camden Yards and from Baltimore to Aberdeen
 - ▶ Trains from Baltimore to Elkton and on into Delaware
- Southern Maryland Light Rail from Branch Avenue Metro station to Waldorf and White Plains in Charles County Affiliated with the new coalition are the Action Committee for Transit (Montgomery County), Baltimore Transit Equity Coalition, Prince George's Advocates for Community-Based Transit, and the Southern Maryland Alliance for Rapid Transit. The group is chaired by long-time transit activist Ben Ross. The group's vice-chairs are Gary Hodge (Southern Maryland), Karren Pope-Onwukwe (Prince George's County), Sam Jordan (Baltimore City), Ronit Dancis (Montgomery County), and Sharonlee Vogel (Howard County).

COMMUNITY

Practical Money Skills

By Nathaniel Sillin

Make Sure Every Dollar You Give to Charity Counts

Deciding to make a charitable contribution can arise from a desire to help others, a passionate commitment to a cause or the aim to give back to a group that once helped you or a loved one. Choosing which organizations you want to support can be difficult. There are over a million public charities in the United States according to the National Center for Charitable Statistics, and every dollar you give to Charity A is a dollar you might not be able to match for Charity B.



Whether it's a friend's charity run or supporting an animal rescue, often the decision to give comes down to a mix of internal and external factors. You have to determine which causes are most important to you, and with outside help you can compare how effective various charities are at using their funding.

Many non-profits do incredible work, but it's always smart to verify their claims. You can start your due diligence by double checking an organization's tax-exempt status using the Internal Revenue Service's (IRS) Exempt Organizations Select Check Tool. Once you verify its non-profit status, you want to make sure it's well run and makes a significant impact. There are several non-profits that evaluate and rate charities. You can find their guidance online and use it to compare charities and inform your gifting.

Sometimes a specific event rather than a general cause can spur you into action. When this happens, if you want to be sure that your money goes to support that particular cause you might want to narrow your search to charities that let you specify how your donation will be used. Otherwise, your money might not directly support those affected by the crisis.

Donating to a non-profit with effective programs and processes is the way to go if you're trying to help as many people as possible, but you can also make contributions to individuals or families through a crowd-funding website. There's something special about knowing exactly who and how you're helping, and they'll appreciate the aid from a stranger. Similarly, you can help entrepreneurs by making a microfinance loan through a non-profit. You can relend the money you're paid back to continue supporting small businesses.

If you're looking for ways to increase your contribution, ask your employer if it has a matching program. Some companies will double, or even triple, your gift to select nonprofits. If your company doesn't offer such a program, you could speak to your human resources department or boss about establishing one.

Third-parties also fund matching campaigns for charities. You can ask a charity if there's a campaign running and make sure your donation qualifies. Unless there's a pressing reason to make a donation today, you may want to put your money aside and wait until a matching campaign starts.

You might be able to increase your financial impact without outside help if you can claim a tax deduction for your donation. Calculate your tax savings each year and put the money back into your charity fund. Donated-related deductions can sometimes be confusing, and you may want to check with a tax professional or look online for tips from the IRS.

Your charitable gift could be the start of a legacy of giving among your family. By making donations a regular event during your children's formative years, you're establishing charitable giving as a family value that they can take into their adult lives. To engage children, make a donation to support a child's favorite cause and show them how the money makes a difference. For example, you could follow up a donation to a non-profit animal rescue with a visit to the shelter to see how the money helps the staff take care of the animals.

Bottom line. Making a donation is one way to support a cause you believe in and ensure your gift has a meaningful impact. You can do this by having money available when it's needed, donating to worthwhile charities, looking for ways to increase your financial impact and passing on a legacy of giving.

PGCPS Announces New Early Start Program to Continue Head Start Services

By PRESS OFFICER
PGCPS

UPPER MARLBORO, MD—Prince George's County Public Schools (PGCPS) Chief Executive Officer Dr. Kevin M. Maxwell announced that services will continue for all Head Start students, operated and funded by the school system through a new program called Early Start.

The Early Start program will serve 855 students with certified instructors and a high-quality curriculum at 35 program sites. Students will have the same instructors, program site, transportation services and school meals. Parents will have new mental health, nutrition and wellness resources. There will be increased monitoring and enhanced staff screening to address safety and disciplinary concerns.

"No services will be cut, no Head Start sites will be closed and all students will continue to

be served. That was our goal from the beginning," said Dr. Maxwell. "We are pleased to provide continuity and stability for students and families, and enhance student safety at all sites."

PGCPS and the Prince George's County Board of Education received notice from the Administration for Children and Families (ACF) in August that the Head Start program grant would be terminated for the 2016-17 school year. The Board of Education voted late last month to relinquish the grant; negotiations with ACF over the transition process began soon afterwards.

During the negotiations, which concluded in September, ACF continued to fund the Head Start program. Remaining program costs for Early Start will be covered through a combination of hiring freezes on current and projected central office vacancies (\$2.9 million) and eliminating 19 central of-

ice-based Head Start positions (\$2.6 million).

Prince George's County Board of Education Chair Dr. Segun C. Eubanks said, "This outcome ensures that students and families will experience no disruption or reduction in services. We will continue to examine the circumstances that led to the grant termination, but this path forward expands early education services in our schools and throughout our communities."

All Early Start instructors and classroom aides will be screened to ensure expertise in teaching, supporting and providing a safe learning environment for 3- and 4-year-old students and undergo CPS screening. Staff will receive more frequent professional development that reinforces standards of conduct for PGCPS employees and techniques on positive student discipline.

Stricter oversight will be provided by a 10-member Monitor-

ing Board, consisting of three parent representatives, two external early childhood education experts, two Prince George's County social services representatives, two PGCPS central office staff members and one Board of Education representative. This group will meet bi-weekly with responsibility for monitoring instructional practices and reviewing parent concerns, safety issues, staff responsiveness, staff development and training. An upcoming performance audit by the Maryland State Department of Education related to the federal grant termination, which Dr. Maxwell announced last week, will also provide recommendations for Early Start.

Early Start students will be offered a slot in the school system's full-day prekindergarten or kindergarten programs for the 2017-18 school year. PGCPS will remain eligible for future Head Start funding as early as fall 2017.

Nursing Home from A1

In 2015—the most recent year available—it took an average of 34 days to initiate an on-site investigation, which the agency attributed to a hiring freeze, according to the budget analysis.

Alice Hedt, former Maryland state long term care ombudsman, said the vacancies are a concern. "This shortage of one out of five positions not being filled — it's obviously going to impact their work," Hedt said. Christopher Garrett, spokesman for the Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, said OHCQ made "significant progress" in doing more with less through regulatory efficiency and effectiveness in the past three years. He defended the agency's budget, saying "staffing at all levels of government could be viewed subjectively."

"What matters is that OHCQ remains committed to performing the required surveys to hold providers accountable for maintaining appropriate levels of care to Marylanders," Garrett wrote in an email. The Office of Health Care Quality received

1,083 complaints about nursing homes in the 2015 calendar year. Of those complaints, 122 related to admissions, discharges and transfers.

These staffing concerns come as Maryland's elderly population continues to grow. In 2010, some 19 percent of the state's population of 5.7 million was age 60 or older, and this age group will rise to 26 percent by 2030. According to data collected by The Henry J. Kaiser Family Foundation, there were 25,513 residents in certified nursing facilities in Maryland in 2014, up from 24,178 residents in 2013.

The budget documents show the agency also had trouble surveying assisted living facilities. In 2015, the agency surveyed 70 percent of assisted living facilities, fewer than its goal of 80 percent. There were 1,482 licensed assisted living sites in 2015, and the number is expected to grow to slightly over 1,500 in 2016.

Problems with oversight might lead to a rise in unlicensed facilities that can gamble on operating without fear of being caught, according to one expert.

"A lot of these assisted living providers are popping up, and they recognize that it's difficult and that OHCQ has pretty limited recourse to be able to conduct surveys on a very regular basis with them," said Anne Hurley, former project director for Long-Term Care Assistance Project at Maryland Legal Aid. Still, the budget documents paint a more stark picture, saying the Office of Health Care Quality "has faced chronic staffing shortages over the past few years" due to increased workload and shortage of inspectors and surveyors.

The staffing woes are not expected to go down any time soon. The agency's workforce is old enough that within five years, 51 percent of the workforce will be eligible for retirement. Age is not the only factor in the agency's staffing problems: Similar opportunities in the private sector pay more than the agency, according to Maryland Delegate Kirill Reznik.

"We have a hard time filling those roles because the individuals who are qualified for those positions can make signifi-

cantly more money in the private sector," said Reznik, a Democrat from Montgomery County who chairs the health and human resources subcommittee that oversees the Office of Health Care Quality.

Reznik says that the agency is "losing people to the private sector, companies that the office is supposed to inspect." Across-the-board vacancies are nothing new to the agency that has about 202 positions overall. The agency is down 52 surveyor positions in the 2016 fiscal year. The deficiency peaked in the 2013 fiscal year with 107 vacancies in the last 12 years.

The agency's staffing shortage also affects the amount of federal funding it receives. Vacancies in its fiscal department make it harder for the agency to apply for federal funds, and it risks losing federal funds if it can't meet federal rules, according to the budget analysis. At the state level, the agency's budget is generally consistent. The agency has a \$20.3 million budget allowance for the 2017 fiscal year, a 1.4 percent increase from the prior year.

Yeoman from A1

"I get to work with the whole ship," said Cunningham. "I love the customer service part of the job. We make sure sailors are able to get the right training to advance their careers."

Chung-Hoon, measures approximately 500 feet and is powered by four gas turbines that allow the destroyer to achieve more than 30 mph in open seas.

According to Navy officials, destroyers are tactical multi-mission surface combatants capable of conducting anti-air warfare, anti-submarine warfare and anti-

surface warfare, as well as humanitarian assistance. Fast, maneuverable, and technically advanced, destroyers provide the required warfighting expertise and operational flexibility to execute any tasking overseas.

"Our Naval Surface Group Middle Pacific guided-missile destroyers are poised, trained, equipped and ready to deploy forward and support the Fleet," said Rear Adm. John Fuller, Commander, Navy Region Hawaii and Naval Surface Group Middle Pacific. "Working with friends and allies, our MID-PAC sailors provide sea control,

advance maritime security, enhance regional stability, and foster continued prosperity in the Indo-Asia-Pacific region."

Approximately 30 officers and 300 enlisted men and women make up the ship's company. Their jobs are highly specialized and keep each part of the cruiser running smoothly, according to Navy officials. The jobs range from maintaining engines and handling weaponry to washing dishes and preparing meals.

"It's a close mesh ship, so everybody knows everybody," said Cunningham. "We play

football, each ship has a team. We were on deployment last year, so we'll see how we do. Our first game is Saturday."

Challenging living conditions build strong fellowship among the crew, Navy officials explained. The crew is highly motivated, and quickly adapt to changing conditions. It is a busy life of specialized work, watches, and drills.

"Serving in the Navy means a lot," said Cunningham. "My mother served in the Navy and my father in the Army, so it's an opportunity to continue in the family tradition."

Museum from A1

ibly meaningful to us," he added.

Gardullo helped the museum obtain a prominent Maryland artifact: a freed slave house in Poolesville that was slated to be demolished in 2008. Curators have dubbed it "the Freedom House."

Brothers and emancipated Montgomery County slaves Richard and Erasmus Jones built the house after the Civil War. Soon, 15 houses neighbored it, and it became the Jonesville Community. The area continued to house descendants of the Jones family—through

birth and marriage—for almost 150 years, according to the Maryland State Archives.

The house was one of the last Jonesville Community homes standing, a relic of an era characterized by slavery, segregation and rebirth. The building's last owner was a Jones family descendant who died in 2007, leaving it vacant, said Scott Whipple, supervisor of the Montgomery County historic preservation unit at the county's planning department.

So when a couple wanted to demolish the house and build another in 2008, Whipple called up his old college friend Gardullo and asked for his help.

Gardullo "basically dropped the phone and ran to one of his bosses, and said 'We're going to try to get the house,'" Whipple said.

The two-story house stood in contrast to the smaller slave cabins enslaved African Americans lived in before emancipation, Gardullo said.

"The story that this home tells of rising from the ground two stories high is a tangible symbol and metaphor for this period of newfound freedom," he added. "But it also is a symbol of the limitations put upon African Americans during this same period."

Jonesville is one of about 40 "kinship communities" across

the county, Whipple said, and many of the original houses aren't around anymore.

"It just shows what people can do for themselves when their conditions change," Whipple said. "This happened in other parts of the country, but the story that the museum is using to tell this chapter of our history is a Montgomery County story."

And the history is always being made.

In April 2015, Freddie Gray died from neck injuries he suffered while in Baltimore police custody.

ATTENTION SENIORS Come Learn Computer Skills with Us ...

FREE OF CHARGE!

Accokeek First Church of God will be providing free computer training on Saturday, October 22, 2016, from 1 to 3pm. The classes will then continue the last Saturday's of every month, starting November 26, 2016, 1 to 3pm. If you are interested, please call or email Thomas Kirby, on 301-500-5327, thokirby@gmail.com, or you can call the church at 301-283-2116.

The classes will be geared towards seniors, and we will review the components of the computer, the components of a network, create a Word, Excel, and PowerPoint document and create and save files.

COMMENTARY

Barbara A. Mikulski

United States Senator for Maryland



Mikulski Announces \$2 Million Federal Grant for At-Risk Youth Mentoring Programs

WASHINGTON, D.C.—U.S. Senator Barbara A. Mikulski (D-Md.) today announced that the Cal Ripken, Sr. Foundation (CRSF) has been awarded a \$2,000,000 federal grant through the Department of Justice's Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention program. These federal grant funds will help the foundation provide mentoring opportunities for at-risk youth in Maryland and 18 other states.

As Vice Chairwoman of the Senate Appropriations Committee as well as the Commerce, Justice, Science Appropriations Subcommittee, Senator Mikulski included \$90 million in grant funding administered by the Department of Justice for mentoring programs supporting at-risk youth as part of the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2016.

"Prevention and intervention programs targeting at-risk youth are a critical tool in changing the direction in the lives of young people," Vice Chairwoman Mikulski said. "I believe in putting money in the federal checkbook to create an investment in organizations like the Cal Ripken, Sr. Foundation, which provides mentoring programs to help children learn and grow in a safe environment.

This national program not only provides activities and services, but role models like Baltimore's Cal Ripken, Jr., who can truly make a difference."

CRSF will use these funds to support their Badges for Baseball program, which uses baseball- and softball-themed programs to help build character and teach critical life lessons to underserved youth residing in America's most distressed communities. The program combines character education with healthy activity while engaging volunteers and law enforcement officers as mentors to foster positive relationships between youth and police. More than 450 youth attended this year's CRSF's Summer Camp. Nationwide, 1,006,247 children were engaged in the CRSF programs in 177 communities in 18 states in 2015. In Maryland, this included roughly 1,400 youth.

The Cal Ripken, Sr. Foundation, headquartered in Baltimore, Md., is a 501c(3) non-profit organization, working throughout the country with local organizations and schools serving America's most distressed communities. CRSF is a supporting partner to those organizations who, on a daily basis, play such a critical role in developing, inspiring and saving young lives.



C & D Canal Museum

Open to the Public

WIKIMEDIA COMMONS PHOTO BY: ACROTHERION

C & D CANAL MUSEUM

The Chesapeake and Delaware Canal is a 14-mile-long, 450-foot-wide and 40-foot-deep ship canal that connects the Delaware River with Chesapeake Bay. The C&D Canal Museum at Chesapeake City, Maryland is housed in the original canal pumphouse with a waterwheel and pumping engines, operated by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. The museum illustrates the canal's history and operations. Current operations can be viewed through a television monitor which gives visitors up-to-the minute locations on ships as they travel through the canal. Admission is free and the museum is open Monday-Friday year round, except for government holidays.

Child Watch

by Marion Wright Edelman



Do Your Part: "March to the Polls" and Vote

"I was beaten, left bloody [and] unconscious so that every person could register and vote. Do your part."

—Congressman John Lewis (D-Georgia)

"In the past, apathy was a moral failure. Today, it is a form of moral and political suicide."

—Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. (1958)

If Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. were alive today, I am certain he would be urgently saying it is a moral imperative for each one of us to register and vote in our local, state, and national elections this year—and every year. Shortly after Congressman John Lewis spoke movingly at the opening of the National Museum of African American History and Culture, he was asked on a radio show if he thought this was the time to organize another march on Washington. Without missing a beat, he replied: "I think the best march that we can have right now in America is on Election Day, November the eighth, for all of us all over America—Black and White, Latino, Native American, young people—to march to the polls. The vote is precious. It's almost sacred. It is the most powerful nonviolent tool we have in a democratic society."

On March 7, 1965, when John Lewis was 25 years old, he and Rev. Hosea Williams were leading 600 other people in a nonviolent march from Selma, Alabama to the state capitol in Montgomery to demand voting rights for Black Alabama citizens. They and others were brutally attacked by lawless Alabama state and local law enforcement officials at the Edmund Pettus Bridge. Lewis's skull was fractured and dozens of marchers had to be treated at the hospital. The televised images of "Bloody Sunday" and the savage beatings shocked the nation. While the massive television coverage of this brutality was new for many White Americans, for African Americans the attacks were just one more episode in a very long history of hostile Jim Crow resistance to their struggle to exercise their constitutional right to vote.

It's a history that 94-year-old distinguished Sixth Circuit

Judge Damon Keith knows all too well. In September he wrote a scathing dissent after two judicial colleagues upheld legislation allowing the state of Ohio to roll back voting rights. Judge Keith, a former civil rights lawyer and Howard Law School student of Professor—later U.S. Supreme Court Justice—Thurgood Marshall, immediately recognized the Ohio laws as yet another 21st-century tactic for disenfranchising Black and other non-White voters—what Frederick Douglass might have called "the same old snake." In his dissent he wrote: "The utter brutality of white supremacy in its efforts to disenfranchise persons of color is the foundation for the tragedy that is the Majority's effort to roll back the progress of history. I will not forget. I cannot forget—indeed America cannot forget—the pain, suffering, and sorrow of those who died for equal protection and for this precious right to vote." And he worried that "the unfettered right to vote is the bedrock of a free and democratic society."

Judge Keith shared profiles of 36 "martyrs of the struggle," Black and White men and women who were murdered while fighting for voting rights. He wrote in his conclusion:

"[V]oting is the ultimate expression of self-government. Instead of making it easier for all persons, unrestrained and unfettered, to exercise this fundamental right to vote, legislators are making it harder. States are audaciously nullifying a right for which our ancestors relentlessly fought and—in some instances—even tragically died."

He continued: "With every gain in equality, there is often an equally robust and reactive retrenchment. We must never forget that constant dialectical tension. For every action, there is a reaction. The Majority's decision is a fateful reminder that we can never fool ourselves into believing that we have arrived as a nation. Our decision today, and more decisions like this one, will undoubtedly shape the future of this Nation because deciding who gets to vote inevitably affects who will become our leaders—a determination that is grounded in the principles long cherished and long pursued by our Founding Fathers. This is exactly why so many are actively seeking to etch away at the right to vote in assembly halls across this nation.

See WATCH, Page A12

Marc Morial, President and CEO

National Urban League



Advancing Diversity in Law Enforcement

"Recommendation: Law enforcement agencies should strive to create a workforce that contains a broad range of diversity including race, gender, language, life experience, and cultural background to improve understanding and effectiveness in dealing with all communities. During these trying times when African American communities and law enforcement are grappling with a deep disconnect due to a lack of trust, communication, and implicit bias, the National Urban League welcomes every effective tool available to heal our communities."

—The President's Task Force on 21st Century Policing

The interagency report released this week by U. S. Department of Justice and the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, *Advancing Diversity in Law Enforcement* is a welcome tool that examines those key barriers as well as promising practices in the recruitment, hiring and retention of law enforcement candidates that can advance much-needed diversity in our law enforcement agencies.

Developed with support from the Center for Policing Equity, the report aims to provide law enforcement agencies, especially small and mid-size agencies, with a resource to enhance the diversity of their workforce by highlighting specific strategies and efforts in place around the country, such as:

- Ensuring that the agency's organizational culture is guided by community policing (a strategy of policing that focuses on police building ties and working closely with community members); procedural justice (the idea of fairness in the processes that resolve disputes) and cultural inclusivity (welcoming and including all people).
- Engaging stakeholders—both from within and outside the law enforcement agency—to help create a workforce that reflects the diversity of the community.
- Being willing to re-evaluate employment criteria, standards, and benchmarks to ensure that they are tailored to the skills needed to perform job functions, and consequently attract, select, and retain the most qualified and desirable sworn officers.

The report builds on the recommendations of the President's Task Force on 21st Century Policing, to which I provided testimony on our 10-Point Plan for Police Reform and Accountability. It emphasizes that "while greater workforce diversity alone cannot ensure fair and effective policing, a significant—and growing—body of evi-

dence suggests that diversity can make policing more effective, more safe and more just."

Police departments face challenges when it comes to the issue of diversity in recruiting. In her own testimony to the President's Task Force, NAACP Legal Defense Fund President Sherrilyn Ifill, said of youth in poor communities, "By the time you are 17, you have been stopped and frisked a dozen times. That does not make that 17-year-old want to become a police officer ... The challenge is to transform the idea of policing in communities among young people into something they see as honorable. They have to see people at local events, as the person who lives across the street, not someone who comes in and knows nothing about my community."

This week's report acknowledges those barriers, noting that "strained relations and a lack of trust of law enforcement may deter individuals from underrepresented communities from applying to be officers," and "the reputation or operational practices of law enforcement agencies may dissuade applicants from underrepresented communities from pursuing a career in law enforcement."

However, the report found that a diverse police force that represents the population it serves eases the tensions between the police and African-American communities, likely because:

- Increased representation of racial minorities increases the legitimacy of the law enforcement agency among minority residents;
- A greater presence of officers who are racial minorities not only is likely to change the public's perception of the agency, but these officers are also likely to be more knowledgeable and empathetic about the concerns and culture of minority communities;
- A higher number of minority officers within an agency provides opportunities for greater contact and interactions between white and minority officers, which can shape attitudes and reduce negative opinions or stereotypes about minority communities; and
- The presence of minority officers is likely to introduce different perspectives into an agency, and those perspectives can undermine an unnecessarily rigid response to certain events or perceived threats.

The National Urban League strongly urges law enforcement agencies across the country to not only read, but to also adopt or adapt those successful diversity-building efforts that have already been implemented by selected law enforcement agencies outlined in this report.

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BUSINESS

The American Counseling Association's Counseling Corner

Making the College Application Process Less Stressful

If you're parenting a high school junior or senior, then the stress of applying for a college is probably starting to escalate. While that first college class is still a ways off, there are lots of reasons for feeling anxious now.

There are tests to take, applications to complete and essays to write. And on top of all that is making a college decision that truly can be life shaping. No wonder everyone is stressed.

One way to reduce this stress is simply to understand all the issues, decisions and steps necessary for college admission. An important starting point is sitting down for a family discussion about paying for college. Family contributions, scholarships and loans can all be discussed, but the bottom line for many families may be that certain schools will simply be too expensive. Now is the time to make that decision.

Next, understand the full college application process. A good starting place for understanding the process is the College Board site at <https://bigfuture.collegeboard.org/get-in>. Your high school counselor can also be a good source with information about deadlines, programs of study and college costs. The counselor can also help narrow down college possibilities based on your son or daughter's interests, grades and overall school performance.

Most colleges still require ACT or SAT testing. For high school seniors, now is the time to do that testing, but high school juniors can also benefit from taking one of those national tests for the practice it provides. Studies have shown that because these tests can produce fairly high anxiety levels, students who take the tests more than once almost always improve on the second go around if only because they are less anxious and now better understand the testing procedures.

This is also a good time to pick up one or more college guides, either at your local bookstore or library (or sometimes from your school's counselor). These guides will provide descriptions of the various colleges and universities, and also outline the requirements and costs for each of the schools. Virtually every school now has a fairly comprehensive website which will provide a great deal of information for prospective students and their parents.

Understanding the costs and process involved in applying for college can make it all much less stressful for both parent and child. The key is to act early and not delay until the last minute.

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

Economy from A1

Commerce Mike Gill's support of Bladensburg.

"Economic development is a team sport," said Gill. "I really do believe that success starts with strong economic development policy and culture. Everyone sitting here today is a part of that culture and are a part of the team that is going to make Maryland, Prince George's County and Bladensburg a great success!"

Bladensburg Mayor Walter James hosted the Town Hall meeting and voiced his excitement to continue to build a thriving business community.

"We are happy to have Mr. Coleman and Secretary Gill in Bladensburg today," said James. "Today we talk about economic development and sustainability and our city looks forward to the support of the EDC and the Department of Commerce in continuing to grow our economy."

For more information on how the Economic Development Corporation can help your business grow, contact us at 301-583-4650.

Hoyer Announces SAFER Grant Awarded to Riverdale Heights Volunteer Fire Department

By PRESS OFFICER
Office of Steny Hoyer

WASHINGTON, D.C.—Congressman Steny H. Hoyer (MD-5) announced that a \$331,050 Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response (SAFER) grant was awarded to Riverdale Heights Volunteer Fire Department. The grant will be used for the recruitment of volunteer firefighters.

"Volunteer fire departments in Maryland play a critical role in keeping our communities safe," said Congressman Hoyer. "That's why I've been a strong advocate for the SAFER program so we can ensure that our departments are adequately staffed and our volunteers have

the necessary training to respond to emergencies. As co-chair of the Congressional Fire Services Caucus, I will continue to work with my colleagues here in Congress to ensure our departments have the resources needed to recruit, train, and retain volunteers."

The SAFER grant program provides necessary funding to help ensure 24-hour staffing at our nation's fire stations so that communities are protected from fire and fire-related hazards. Each year, Congressman Hoyer leads a letter with Members of Congress to the Appropriations Committee to ensure adequate federal funding for fire fighters across the country. Click here for more information on SAFER grants.

Does Maryland's Wealth Explain the Success of Olympians Like Michael Phelps or Katie Ledecky?

By JAKE EISENBERG,
CAMILLE CHRYSOSTOM
and JULZ HARVEY
Capital News Service

COLLEGE PARK, MD—Athletes from Maryland—including Michael Phelps (Towson) and Katie Ledecky (Bethesda)—dominated at the 2016 Rio Olympics, bringing home 16 gold medals.

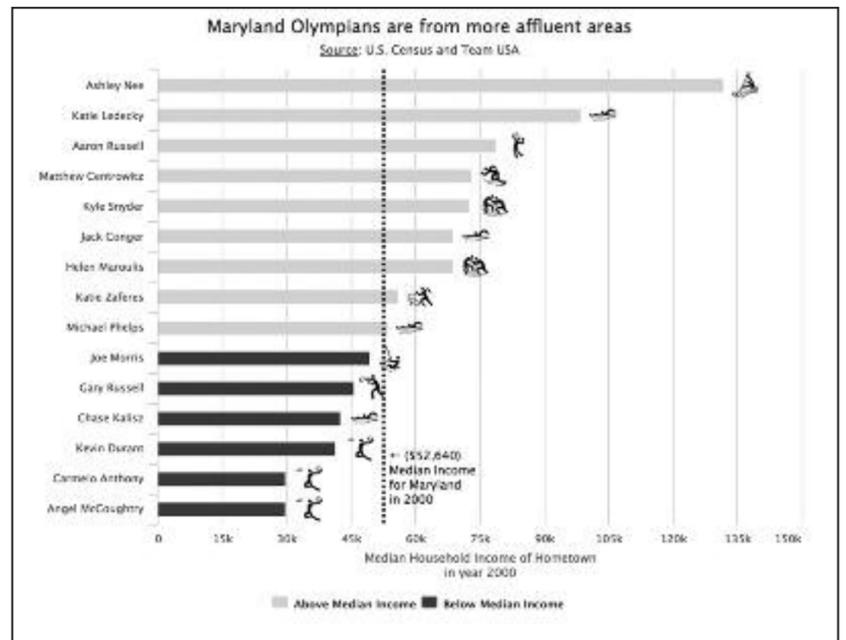
Why did so many Olympic stars hail from Maryland? It might be because Maryland is one of the nation's wealthiest states. And training for the Olympics is not cheap.

"We do indeed need to question whether we are sending our best—or merely the best individuals with access to key resources," said Adam Beissel, a lecturer in the University of Maryland's kinesiology department, who focuses on the sociological, economic and cultural relationships within sports.

We analyzed income data from 2000, because that's the year that the average member of the U.S. Olympic team turned 10 years old, a critical age in the development of Olympic athletes. In 2000, Maryland had the third-highest median income in the country and, in 2016, had an above average number of Olympic athletes per capita.

And, it turns out that a majority of Maryland's athletes come from wealthier than average parts of the state.

Of the 15 Rio Olympians who grew up in Maryland, nine were from hometowns with an



CAPITAL NEWS SERVICE GRAPHIC

This graphic lists 15 athletes as having hometowns in Maryland, while the per capita figure in the first graphic on this page was calculated from the 11 athletes on Team USA's Olympic roster who listed Maryland as their home state. Why the difference? We independently confirmed that four additional athletes—Carmelo Anthony, Matthew Centrowitz, Kevin Durant and Gary Russell—grew up in Maryland. The income figures do not represent the incomes of the athletes' families, but the median income of the hometown where they grew up.

above average median income, as this chart shows.

Training for the Olympics is expensive. So how to explain the six athletes from hometowns with median incomes below Maryland's?

Consider Joe Morris, a sailor from Annapolis.

The median income for whites in Annapolis—like Joe

Morris, who told CNS he identifies as Caucasian—was \$75,000, as the red bar in the chart below shows, well above the state figure. But it was \$31,000 for African-Americans (yellow bar), a huge disparity that lowered the city's median income (black bar) significantly.

And three of the athletes on this list—Kevin Durant (Suit-

land), Carmelo Anthony (Baltimore) and Angel McCoughtry (Baltimore)—play basketball. It's safe to say that basketball is qualitatively different from other Olympic sports, in that making the team is less dependent on skills acquired through costly Olympic training and more dependent on professional success.

Capital Costs at an All-Time Low for Local Government Infrastructure Financing Program

Program Offers Financing Options for Local Government Projects, Such as Youth Counseling Centers and Police Stations

By PRESS OFFICER
MDHCD

NEW CARROLLTON, MD—The latest round of bonds issued through the Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development's Local Government Infrastructure Financing program had the lowest capital cost in its 28 year operating history. This indicates that interest rates are hitting historic lows, and demonstrates the current financial mechanism and approach the agency utilizes to raise capital for Maryland's local governments works well and achieves excellent results.

Centreville, District Heights, Havre de Grace, Laurel, Manchester and Perryville were the beneficiaries of the latest financing. Fourteen distinct projects were funded totaling more than \$25 million. By comparison, in 2015, 10 projects worth nearly \$19 million were financed.

The LGIF program provides an efficient and economical means of access to capital markets in order to fund infrastructure projects for eligible local governments. The loans offer attractive rates and flexible terms. The program generates savings in the costs of borrowing by pooling the local demand and managing the bond issue. The

department also offers expertise and resources, including bond counsel and a financial advisor, to help local governments navigate successfully through the complexities of bond financing.

Although the program is frequently used for projects like streetscape improvements, transportation enhancements, and water and sewer treatment facilities, it is not limited to work of this nature. In Harford County, \$2,100,000 will be used to assist with renovations to the Havre de Grace Opera House, a staple of the county's arts community since 1871. In Cecil County, Perryville received \$2,500,000 for the construction of a new police station.

The town of District Heights in Prince George's County received \$2,360,000 and \$1,840,000 to fund the construction of a senior center and a youth counseling center, respectively.

"Infrastructure is the backbone that supports every community," said Secretary Kenneth C. Holt. "The department is proud to provide cost-effective assistance for these projects in Maryland communities. This is an impressive accomplishment—we've minimized costs while maximizing aid."

For more information on the LGIF program, visit <http://dhcd.maryland.gov/Communities/Pages/lgif/default.aspx>.

Museum from A3

In the aftermath of Gray's death, the city's peaceful protests turned into riots that reverberated far beyond Maryland. Tensions between Baltimore's black community and police reached a boiling point.

Weeks later, museum researcher Tulani Salahu-Din and curator Aaron Bryant went to collect artifacts in the city. They walked along North Avenue and saw the results of the city's worst wave of violence since 1968: the CVS that caught fire, merchants and shopkeepers whose stores had been looted and more.

An ATM machine outside of a store was completely torn off the wall, with a protest message spray painted across: "Freddie Gray" was all it said.

"We wanted to collect a range of items, we wanted to collect items that reflected the riots, the destruction, the cleanup effort, the artistic response to this unrest," Salahu-Din said, "and we wanted to collect from a range of people."

A photograph from Baltimore-based photographer Devin Allen is featured as a media presentation in the museum, Bryant said. It shows a young girl holding a Black Lives Matter sign during a Baltimore City Hall rally.

Salahu-Din said it was hard to say when the other artifacts from the 2015 Baltimore unrest will be in the museum, as they were collected after exhibition artifacts were approved. Studio A Modeling Etiquette and Dance Academy in Baltimore

County donated hoodie costumes—a symbol of social justice, Salahu-Din said, since Trayvon Martin was shot and killed in 2012 while wearing one—from a production called "Black is Beautiful."

Newborn Church in West Baltimore donated brooms and rakes used during cleanup after the riots, which Salahu-Din said she and Bryant emphasized collecting.

"We want to present a full picture of what took place," she said. "There was destruction but there were also people coming together to clean up their communities."

Maryland state archivist Ryan Cox called the museum a celebration of African American people's accomplishments in a country that "could afford to be reminded of that truth."

"Historians will be asking themselves in the future in regards to this time period ...

"Why does 2015 look and sound like 1965, which sounded a lot like 1895, which echoed a lot of the concerns that were addressed in 1865?" Cox said in an email.

Maryland's artifacts tell different stories from different eras, but Salahu-Din said the displays all have a universal theme.

"It's about people having freedom," she said. "Freedom to live, to be without the threat of violence lurking."

"It was critical for us as a museum—who have documented the history of violence against African Americans since slavery—that we continue to document that aspect of American life," she added.

OUT ON THE TOWN

ERIC D. SNIDER'S
IN THE DARK
Movie Review
Blair Witch

Blair Witch
Grade: B-
Rated R, some harsh profanity,
some grisly images,
general scariness
1 hr., 29 min

Not that *The Blair Witch Project* needed a sequel, but if had to get one, the team of director Adam Wingard and writer Simon Barrett were a good choice. They've made a handful of intense horror features in the last six years, including *You're Next* and *A Horrible Way to Die*, and contributed segments to the *V/H/S* films, anthologies that use the "found footage" style basically invented by *TBWP*.

Wingard and Barrett clearly approached their sequel with reverence for the original, a groundbreaking frightener so authentic that numerous viewers believed it really was documentary footage shot by non-actors who were then never heard from again. (I guess the last part turned out to be true.)

The new film, simply titled *Blair Witch*, doesn't try to improve on the format and tone that worked 16 years ago, and it's modestly successful at creating a sense of dread as new characters wander those same sinister Maryland woods.

We meet James (James Allen McCune), a college kid whose sister, Heather, was one of the original film's three ill-fated characters. Now a new tape has been found in those woods, reigniting James' desire for answers and giving him a glimmer of hope that Heather might actually still be out there. Aided by his film-school-student friend Lisa (Callie Hernandez) and some friends of theirs, Peter (Brandon Scott) and Ashley (Corbin Reid), James sets out to



ROTTENTOMATOES

A group of college students venture into the Black Hills Forest in Maryland to uncover the mysteries surrounding the disappearance of James' sister who many believe is connected to the legend of the Blair Witch. At first the group is hopeful, especially when a pair of locals offer to act as guides through the dark and winding woods, but as the endless night wears on, the group is visited by a menacing presence. Slowly, they begin to realize the legend is all too real and more sinister than they could have imagined.

investigate and document the woods where his sister vanished.

They have better technology than their 20th-century predecessors did. Earpiece cameras let them record everything hands-free, solving the "Why are you still filming this?" problem that vexes most POV movies. (Another plus: earpiece cameras are a lot less shaky than handheld ones.) A drone enables them to see the forest from above the trees; GPS on their phones ensures they won't get lost (at least until whatever supernatural entity haunts the woods messes with their tech, too).

The four are joined by a pair of local yahoos, Lane (Wes Robinson) and Talia (Valorie Curry), fervent believers in the Blair Witch

legend who claim familiarity with the geographic area in question. These two are a smart addition to the film: unpredictable X factors who put the other four characters on their guard and introduce more conflict to the group dynamics. They're also useful for filling us in on the details of the folklore, adding to the Blair Witch mythology already established.

Though the film isn't overlong (just 89 minutes), it does take a while to get going. The first hour offers occasional creepiness, but nearly every "scare" in that section is a disappointing jump scare—a cheat, in other words. There isn't a lot happening—and when it does happen, the low lighting, frantic movements, and

choppy editing make it hard to see WHAT is happening.

But it pays off in the last act, when all hell finally breaks loose and we're treated to a spookhouse full of sustained, mostly dialogue-free terror. Here's where Wingard and Barrett's cleverness, resourcefulness, and deep devotion to the dark arts are brought to bear. I wish the whole movie were as tight as that last sequence, but I suppose it's better to start slow and finish strong than the other way around. As long as everybody leaves with soiled pants, we're all winners.

(Note: This review may cause you to think that I have forgotten that *The Blair Witch Project* already had a sequel, *Book of Shadows*. Believe me, I wish.)

The Edge of Sports

by DAVE ZIRIN

Sports, Protest, and Risking Your Life: Interview With 2016 Olympic Medalist and Protester Feyisa Lilesa



As discussion swirls around sports and politics in the National Football League, one political athlete who trains far from the stadiums of the NFL is risking not only his career but also his life. At the 2016 Rio Olympics, Ethiopian runner Feyisa Lilesa won silver in the marathon and, when he crossed the finish line, threw his arms up in an X, his fists clenched. He did it again on the podium and again at the press conference following the race. The "X" was a symbol of defiance and a statement of solidarity with the masses of Oromo people being displaced from their homes and farms in order to expand Ethiopia's capital city of Addis Ababa into Oromia.

Beginning last December, Ethiopia's government has uprooted thousands of Oromo people, yet they are fighting back with widespread acts of resistance such as strikes, demonstrations, and other forms of civil disobedience. Their protests have been met with brutality. According to Human Rights Watch, 400 people have been killed, thousands have been arrested, and countless others have been "disappeared."

Now Lilesa is in the United States: still training, hoping to reunite with his family in Ethiopia, and concerned that all of their lives are at risk. Readers can listen to the interview via the link at the bottom of this article. (Thank you to Mohammed Ademo, who provided translation for this interview.)

Dave Zirin: Why did you decide to make that "X" gesture at the Olympics?

Feyisa Lilesa: I did it because my people were getting killed and imprisoned. My people were saying we've had enough of the killings, imprisonment, and being forced into exile. We're asking for justice and equality and freedom. I wanted to make sure that the international community got that message.

What was it that pushed you to the point where you felt that you had to do something?

I grew up witnessing the suffering of my people, but in the past nine months, the oppression and the killings got worse. People were protesting. Three months before Rio, when the Ethiopian Athletics Federation told me that I was selected to participate in the Olympics, I made a decision that I needed to make a stand and be a voice for my people. As the killings were happening, I was preparing and planning and training to go to Rio, but because of all the suffering and all the things that were going on around me, my legs were running, but my mind was preoccupied.

I also feared for my life as I was training because I was helping students who were dismissed from university or who were in hiding because they protested and the government was looking for them. The government knew I was helping. I feared that someone could just ambush and come out of a hideout and kill me as I was running and training in the wilderness. So having these fears as I was training, this is when I decided that I didn't want to continue to live like that and I needed to make a stand.

You mentioned that you helped students and protesters. In what way?

For those who were in jail, I sent them clothes and food. For those on the street who really don't have anywhere to go, there were times that I gave them money and other things and there were times when I gave my own shoes to people who did not have one pair. So there are different things that I did to help people who needed it, and I was in a position to do that because as an athlete I have a good life.

When you made the gesture, were you conscious in your mind of the history of people who have used the Olympics for protest—people like Tommie Smith and John Carlos who raised their fists in 1968?

I was unaware of it until afterward when someone posted a photo of me next to theirs. They made a collage where mine on the left said 2016 and theirs on the right said 1968. I found out and I learned a little bit about them and I'm happy to be mentioned alongside them.

Now I know that you mentioned after the race that you feared for your own life and the life of your family back home. Do you still have those fears right now?

I don't feel any fear for my personal safety. I'm in a country now where I have the right to protest and say what I believe, so I don't have any fears for myself. But the fear for the safety of my family is very much on my mind because they remain in Ethiopia and anything could happen to them.

See PROTEST Page A7

Annual Veteran's/Military Appreciation Day Accokeek First Church of God, Accokeek, MD Sunday, November 13, 2016.

On this day, we dedicate our 10:00am worship service to our veterans as well as men and women in uniform that are currently serving in the US Armed Services. We will salute, appreciate and recognize you for your dedicated military service, to include prayer, a certificate and special gift on behalf of our church. Our speaker is Reverend Andrew Johnson, a former Chaplain in the US Air Force.

Our worship service begins promptly at 10:00am and ends at 11:45am, with refreshments served in fellowship hall immediately following. If you are available to join us for this special appreciation / recognition worship service, please do so. You are welcome to bring as many military and/or civilian guests as you would like as well as extend this invitation to others within your sphere of influence.

Diversity from A1

them in the classroom, the school building, and throughout our organization. Diversity makes a difference, as it can greatly impact the academic achievement of our students."

Since 2014, PGCPS has:

- increased the number of Latino teachers by more than 60 percent, from 205 to 327.
- increased the number of Latino administrators and supervisors by more than 55 percent, from 8 to 14.
- maintained an 82 percent retention rate of Latino staff.
- met the staffing needs of immersion schools and International High

Schools with candidates of diverse backgrounds. • partnered with the Spanish Embassy and hired over 40 teachers throughout the county.

The task force is comprised of six subcommittees: Sourcing of Teacher Candidates, Sourcing of Administrator Candidates, Grow Your Own Teachers and Administrators, Higher Education and Professional Development, Cultural Competence and Support, and Communication and Branding.

The group held its inaugural meeting September 13 and will meet monthly through December. Recommendations will be presented to the Board of Education by January.

SCHOOLS IN SESSION

School is back in session and by following some simple safety tips we can all make sure children are safe.

- ▶ Motorists should slow down and be careful when driving on neighborhood streets and around school zones;
- ▶ Be alert for children walking to and from school and dashing across the street;
- ▶ Watch for children on bicycles, especially at intersections and driveways;
- ▶ Stop your car when you see lights flashing on a school bus; red flashing lights indicate that the bus is stopped and students are getting on or off; and
- ▶ When you approach a school bus picking up a child, remember it is the law to STOP!



Prince George's County School Nature is an initiative of the Department of the Environment, Redevelopment Authority, and Office of Central Services to promote fiscal savings and sustainability in our everyday behavior.

Calendar of Events

October 20 — October 26, 2016

Trunk and Treat

Date and Time: Friday, October 21, 2016 7:00–9:00 pm
 Description: Enjoy snacks, activities, costume parade and a contest. Outside is the Spooky Train Ride with Trunk & Treating (weather permitting). Pre-Teens and Teens ages 13–17 can volunteer to be a goblin on the Train Trail. First come, first served. Spaces are limited.
 Cost: Residents \$5; Non-Residents \$7 (register by October 20)
 Residents \$7; Non-Residents \$9 (AFTER October 20)
 Ages: 12 & under
 Location: Baden Community Center
 13601 Baden-Westwood Road, Brandywine, MD
 Contact: 301-888-1500; TTY 301-699-2544

Concert: Terry Marshall & Bridges

Date and Time: Friday, October 21, 2016, 8 pm
 Description: Terry Marshall has performed in clubs and concert halls as far north as Toronto, Canada and as far south as Rio de Janeiro. With Terry Marshall & Bridges, he offers a tantalizing straight ahead program for jazz lovers. Listeners of all ages can't help tapping their toes and humming along.
 Cost: \$25/person; 10% discount for Montpelier members & seniors
 Ages: All ages welcome
 Location: Montpelier Arts Center
 9652 Muirkirk Road, Laurel, MD
 Contact: 301-377-7800; TTY 301-699-2544

Jonny Grave Live at the Listening Room

Date and Time: Friday, October 21, 2016, 8–10 pm
 Description: Jonny Grave is a guitarist, songwriter, singer, band-leader, teacher, musical historian, journalist, photographer, and Bluesman from Washington, D.C. Growing up in a very musical family, Grave was introduced to the sounds of American traditional folk music early on.
 At age fifteen he found himself learning slide guitar techniques from old Blues records, and by seventeen he was performing them live.

Listen to his music at <http://www.jonnygrave.com>.
 Cost: \$15/person (register in the Parks and Rec e-store)
 Ages: All ages welcome
 Location: Brentwood Arts Center
 3901 Rhode Island Avenue, Brentwood, MD
 Contact: 301-277-2863; TTY 301-699-2544

Boo Bash

Date and Time: Saturday, October 22, 2016, 11 am–1 pm
 Description: Celebrate Halloween with games, fun, candy, music, and a costume parade. There's no telling what other "Bootastic" things could happen.
 Cost: Resident \$1; Non-resident \$2
 Ages: 3–12 years
 Location: Langley Park Community Center
 1500 Merrimac Drive, Hyattsville, MD
 Contact: 301-445-4508; TTY 301-699-2544

Calabash Carnage Pumpkin Carving

Date and Time: Saturday, October 22, 2016, 2–4 pm
 Description: Calabash Carnage Pumpkin Carving Celebrate Halloween and have lots of fun at the Brentwood Arts Exchange! Your family is invited to join us for a Pumpkin Carving Workshop. Use your imagination and create your own designs. Admission is free. Pumpkins are sold at cost, \$5 each.
 Cost: Resident: \$5; Non-Resident: \$5
 Ages: All Ages
 Location: Brentwood Arts Center
 3901 Rhode Island Avenue, Brentwood, MD 20722
 Contact: 301-277-2863; 301-699-2544

The Great Jack O' Lantern Campfire

Date and Time: Saturday, October 22, 2016, 7–8:30 pm
 Description: Come see a dazzling display of 50 hand-carved illuminated jack o' lanterns on the grounds of Darnall's Chance House Museum!
 Bask in the warmth of a fall campfire, roast marshmallows, and listen to haunted Halloween tales. Kids can win a prize on a hunt for glowing jack o' lanterns, and everyone can enjoy popcorn, marshmallows, and hot cider.
 Guests may bring their own chocolate bars and graham crackers if they wish to make smores.
 Rain date is Sunday, October 23 at 6 pm. No reservation required.
 Cost: \$4/person; ages 4 & under FREE
 Ages: All ages welcome
 Location: Darnall's Chance House Museum
 14800 Governor Oden Bowie Drive, Upper Marlboro 20772
 Contact: 301-952-8010; TTY 301-699-2544

Halloween on the Farm

Date and Time: Sunday, October 23, 2016, 4–7 pm
 Description: Join us down on the farm for an autumn celebration. Enjoy crafts, games, a costume contest, and hayrides.
 Cost: \$4/person
 Ages: All ages
 Location: Old Maryland Farm
 301 Watkins Park Dr., Upper Marlboro 20774
 Contact: 301-218-6770; TTY 301-699-2544

Alice in Wonderland

Date and Time: Tuesday, October 25, 2016, 10:15 am & 12 noon
 Description: The Lewis Carroll literary classic is magically brought to life in this 45-minute adventure.
 Join Alice, the Queen of Hearts, the Cheshire Cat, and the Mad Hatter in this imaginative rendition of the tale that has been entertaining youngsters since 1865.
 Cost: \$8/person; \$6/groups of 20 or more
 Ages: Recommended for Grades Pre-K–Grade 5
 Location: Publick Playhouse
 5445 Landover Rd, Cheverly, MD
 Contact: 301-277-1710; TTY 301-699-2544

EARTH TALK ... Solar Meltdown or Boom?

Dear EarthTalk:

First Solyndra went under, then SunEdison ... If solar energy is growing so much in the U.S., why have some of the bigger players gone under and will the survivors be able to stay the course?

—Scott Marciniak, Altoona, PA

No doubt, solar power is surging. The trade group Solar Energy Industries Association (SEIA) reports that our domestic solar power capacity has seen a compound annual growth of nearly 60 percent over the last 10 years. Meanwhile, solar accounted for 28 percent of all new power added to the U.S. electric grid in 2015 and the prices of photovoltaic panels have fallen so steeply that solar is now cost-competitive with coal or natural gas in some parts of the country. And there's no sign of solar slowing down anytime soon.

But just because Americans are warming up to solar doesn't mean that every company looking to lead this power revolution has been able to manage the growth and navigate the tricky world of shifting subsidies and incentives. The most infamous case of a solar company flare-out is Solyndra, a California-based start-up that was pioneering the design and manufacture of thin film pho-

tovoltaic cylinders and secured \$545 million in federal loan guarantees from the Obama administration's economic stimulus package.

"But a solar manufacturing boom in China crushed the price of conventional crystalline photovoltaic (PV) solar panels," reports David Ferris and Saqib Rahim in EENews' EnergyWire. "The economic rationale for Solyndra's pricey tubes was undermined, and the company declared bankruptcy in August 2011."

Solyndra's demise was certainly an embarrassment to the Obama administration, which had been touting the company as an example of the direction we should be heading in our energy sector, and augured poorly for the future of the still nascent green economy. But despite the setback, solar has grown at a record clip since 2011, surpassing wind as the largest renewable energy source in California.

This very maturation of the solar power industry in the U.S. made the April 2016 news of the bankruptcy of SunEdison, one of four remaining big players in the American solar industry, that much more surprising, given that the company was much larger in employees and revenues than Solyndra and had received more federal subsidies and loan guarantees overall.



CREDIT: U.S. DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY.

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"SunEdison's bankruptcy, for creditors, customers, shareholders and partners, is a very big deal with all manner of negative repercussions," comments Clint Wilder of the clean-tech advisory firm Clean Edge, "and it's a cautionary tale like those we've seen across the energy landscape and in other industries, where over-leveraged, aggressive growth strategies can come crashing down."

Meanwhile, America's remaining solar powerhouses—SunPower, SolarCity and First Solar—continue to expand judiciously. And hundreds of smaller players are working to shake up the industry even further and keep the bigger players on their

toes. While the growing pains for America's solar industry are far from over, the future still looks bright for solar power specifically and renewables of all kinds.

CONTACTS: SEIA, www.seia.org; EnergyWire, www.eenews.net/ew; Clean Edge, www.cleandedge.com; SunPower, www.sunpower.com; SolarCity, www.solarcity.com; First Solar, www.firstsolar.com.

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 Send questions to: earthtalk@emagazine.com.

Social Security Announces New Online Service for Replacement Social Security Cards in Maryland

Available to People Through a my Social Security Account

By PRESS OFFICER MDHCD

WASHINGTON, D.C.—The Social Security Administration introduced the expansion of online services for residents of Maryland available through its my Social Security portal at www.socialsecurity.gov/myaccount. Carolyn W. Colvin, Acting Commissioner of Social Security, announced that residents of Maryland can use the portal for many replacement Social Security number (SSN) card requests. This will allow people to replace their SSN card from the comfort of their home or office, without the need to travel to a Social Security office.

"I'm thrilled about this newest online feature to the

agency's my Social Security portal and the added convenience we are providing residents of Maryland," Acting Commissioner Colvin said. "We continue to provide world-class customer service to the public by making it safe, fast and easy for people to do business with us online and have a positive government experience. I look forward to expanding this service option across the country."

The agency is conducting a gradual roll out of this service; Maryland is one of the states, plus the District of Columbia, where this option is available. Throughout 2016, the agency will continue to expand the service option to other states. This service will mean shorter

wait times for the public in the more than 1,200 Social Security offices across the country and allows staff more time to work with customers who have extensive service needs.

U.S. citizens age 18 or older and who are residents of Maryland can request a replacement SSN card online by creating a my Social Security account. In addition, they must have a U.S. domestic mailing address, not require a change to their record (such as a name change), and have a valid driver's license, or state identification card in some participating states.

my Social Security is a secure online hub for doing business with Social Security, and more than 26 million people have created an account. In ad-

dition to Maryland residents replacing their SSN card through the portal, current Social Security beneficiaries can manage their account—change an address, adjust direct deposit, obtain a benefit verification letter, or request a replacement SSA-1099. Medicare beneficiaries can request a replacement Medicare card without waiting for a replacement form in the mail. Account holders still in the workforce can verify their earnings history and obtain estimates of future benefits by looking at their Social Security Statement online.

For more information about this new online service, visit the website at www.socialsecurity.gov/ssnumber

Protest from A6

Do you think, because your gesture got so much publicity, that that can serve to also protect your family because it makes them too high-profile for the government to target?

Yes, that's absolutely right and I've been thinking about that a lot, because if these were just unknown people and my name was not known and the story was not covered, my family would have disappeared without a trace by now. There are people who have been in that position before, that I know.

Where are you currently looking for asylum and if you get asylum will that also allow for your family to leave Ethiopia to join you?

I'm not planning to seek asylum anywhere at the moment and I've never dreamed of seeking asylum anywhere. For now, the US government has given me a visa that allows me to continue to pursue my dream, which is running. I haven't had an opportunity to think about what I want to do about my family, but my dream is to go back and live with them in a better [Ethiopia].

You're a world-class runner. How difficult is it to train and keep up that pace given all of the political issues swirling around your family and your home?

It is very tough. Looking back now, when I was training, my legs were functioning but my brain, not so much. They were not in sync. I know that if my mind and my legs were in sync, I could've bested that record and done better, but that did not happen. I want to continue to push myself hard and to get better and also use this opportunity that was created to continue to speak out. That helps in the sense that I can get some of it off my chest.

I would love to know who are your athletic and/or political heroes. Who has inspired you to both be a world-class athlete and someone who has spoken out about politics?

My athletic hero is the great Abebe Bikila, who ran barefoot in Rome [winning gold in the 1960 Olympic marathon] and opened these opportunities up for people like me to be here. He was our light and he shone a bright light on an Ethiopia that was not as advanced

and an Ethiopia that was cut from so much so that he didn't even have proper running gear. He's my athletic hero and inspiration.

I know that if Abebe Bikila did not win and make that history and put Ethiopians among the elite runners and inspire the country, I know that I may not be in the position to be a voice for my people and share the concerns and grievances people have with the media and the international community.

Right now there are a lot of NFL players who are protesting against racism and this is a big story in the U.S., so my first question is are you aware that this is happening in this country right now—a lot of athletes protesting?

I heard about it only after I got to the U.S. From what I understand, they are asking for equality and justice and certain rights. Everyone wants these basic human rights, or the respect of these rights, and everybody wants to be equal, and if they have grievances that they want to share, I appreciate the fact that they can share them without any fear and their rights are protected to do that.

Do you feel like you're in a kinship with athletes throughout the world who use sports as a place to speak out against injustice?

Yes, I think that there is something that brings us together as a community. If you take my example, we are asking for equal rights and the protection of our rights in Ethiopia, and likewise, these athletes, the ones at least that I am aware of, are also asking for the same rights. In that, we are all asking for equality and peace and justice. I think that makes us a community.

What would you say to anybody who says that athletes like yourself, like Colin Kaepernick in the NFL, should be seen and not heard? That you should just play sports, just be quiet and play.

I could eat and live and count the days and make money and be rich, but if I don't have freedom, those things don't mean much. If I, or these people, do not speak up for their rights and for the rights of their people, who's going to speak up for their rights and voice the concerns that they have as members of society? Who is also going to speak up?