

# The Prince George's Post



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PHOTO COURTESY OF IN REACH

**Toni A. Smith, Executive Director of In Reach and Teens Talk TV hosts and writers Solange Muller, Madison Townsend, and Madison Harris.**

## New Television Show Gives Prince George's County Teens a Platform to Speak Out and Raise Their Voices on Issues That Matter to Young People

Local high school and college students serve as hosts and writers for Bowie cable tv show.

By PRESS OFFICER  
In Reach, Inc.

BOWIE, Md. (September 10, 2021)—A Prince George's County based nonprofit organization, In Reach, Inc. is giving local teens an opportunity to address community issues in a fun and creative way. Teens Talk Television (TTTV), launched in 2020 and has already reached thousands of viewers.

"TTTV gives area teens a forum to use their voices in a positive way and engage in conver-

sations about issues that are important to them," said Toni A. Smith, In Reach Founder and Executive Director. "In Reach believes that students should always be in reach of a quality education and opportunities to help them develop and achieve their dreams. We are thrilled to offer this platform to young people to discuss how they can play an active role in improving their communities."

TTTV's half hour recorded programs will offer a variety of stories, perspectives, and dis-

cussions between high school students, young adults, and a range of residents living and thriving in Prince George's County. Show topics include college/career prep, social justice, climate change, reproductive justice, youth and disabilities, and entrepreneurship.

"In Reach is committed to helping Maryland students and young adults grow and develop as they navigate their journey to college, work, and life. We are hoping TTTV will remind them that their voices matter

and by speaking up on important issues they can help others while achieving their personal goals," added Smith.

The show's team includes: Madison Harris, Solange Muller, Madison Townsend and Tolu Dapo-Adeyemo. TTTV is streamed on In Reach's YouTube channel and broadcast on the City of Bowie's public access channels 11 and 77. Each TTTV episode includes a list of resources that help to further inform and educate viewers about the topics discussed.

## New 211 Health Check Program Provides Proactive Mental Health Support

The new service, created by the Thomas Bloom Raskin Act, is the first of its kind in the U.S., providing one-on-one outreach to participants from trained and caring specialists

By PRESS OFFICER  
211 Maryland

BALTIMORE (September 10, 2021)—211 Maryland, the central connector to health and human services for the State of Maryland, officially launched its new Health Check program on the eve of World Suicide Prevention Day on Sept. 10, to empower all Maryland residents to access weekly, proactive mental health check ins. September is also National Suicide Prevention Month. The 211 Health Check program was created by the Thomas Bloom Raskin Act during the 2021 legislative session in honor of Congressman Jamie Raskin's late son.

"Sarah and I and our whole family are grateful that Maryland is in the forefront of advancing both general mental health efforts and specific suicide prevention strategies," said Raskin. "We hope the Thomas Bloom Raskin Act will send the message throughout Maryland that we have the resources and the will to help everyone get through a mental or emotional health crisis."

The Thomas Bloom Raskin Act was introduced in the Maryland senate by Senator Craig Zucker and in the house by Rep-

resentative Bonnie Cullison. It passed with broad bipartisan support.

"For National Suicide Prevention week especially, it is important for Marylanders to know that you are not alone," said Zucker, the original sponsor of the bill. "I encourage anyone who needs mental health assistance to utilize the Thomas Bloom Raskin mental health check in program. The program is here to help and to save lives."

As part of a soft launch earlier this summer, the 211 Health Check program began pre-enrollment in July. The 146 participants who pre-enrolled began receiving proactive outreach from 211 specialists on Aug. 16. Any Marylander who is feeling sad, lonely, stressed, anxious or just in need of some extra support can enroll in the program by texting HealthCheck to 211MD1 (211631). Later this fall, people will also be able to enroll by calling 211.

After enrolling in the program, a trained 211 specialist will reach out for an initial call and then once every following week.

During those weekly check-ins, the specialist will also connect the participant to local mental health resources. Participants can

continue receiving weekly calls until they decide to opt out of the program.

211's Health Check is one of several new services and programs to support individuals during all stages of a mental health or substance use crisis—from prevention efforts to immediate help for those in a crisis. 211 Maryland's partnership with the Maryland Department of Health's (MDH) Behavioral Health Administration (BHA) makes these services and programs available for free to all Marylanders who need mental health support.

"Our country is in a state of crisis from the pandemic as we've seen how the stressors of a loss of a job, loss of a loved one or loss of a home have created a surge in mental health needs," commented Quinton Askew, president and CEO of 211 Maryland, Inc. "These trigger moments can cause mental health issues, like depression, thoughts of suicide and increased substance use."

Mental health has been one of the top reasons people call 211 for the last five years. In the past year, 211 has received more than 18,000 calls for mental health, suicide and crisis support. The new 211 Health Check Program,

created by the Thomas Bloom Raskin Act, is one of several mental health services that 211 Maryland provides:

211 specialists are available 24/7/365 by dialing 2-1-1—to help connect Marylanders with local services for housing assistance, employment assistance, utility assistance and more challenges that can cause stress and strain on one's life, leading to mental health issues.

Through the uplifting push-alert texting program, #MD-MindHealth, Marylanders can receive inspirational text messages directly to their mobile phones as regular reminders to take care of their health and well-being, and to seek help if needed. Nearly 3,000 Marylanders have subscribed to the MindHealth program. Text #MDMindHealth to 898-211 to get started. Para español, texto MDSaludMental a 898-211.

211, Press 1 connects those contemplating suicide or suffering from drug and alcohol use with a trained crisis specialist who will talk with them openly and quickly get them the help they need.

"We are laser focused on

See MENTAL HEALTH Page A4

## VOACC Announces Appointment of Ruth Pollard as Their Board of Directors Chair

By PRESS OFFICER  
VOACC

LANHAM, Md. (September 8, 2021)—Volunteers of America Chesapeake & Carolinas (VOACC) announces the appointment of Ruth Pollard as their new Board of Directors Chair until the end of her term in 2023.

"We are thrilled to have such an accomplished leader willing to serve our faith based nonprofit," said Russ Snyder, President and CEO of Volunteers of America Chesapeake & Carolinas. "Ruth is becoming the Chair at the ideal time for our non-profit to lead and work with the Board of Directors and our management team on our VISION 2025 Strategic Plan initiatives which will strengthen our organization for years to come."

Ms. Pollard is an executive strategy and advocacy leader in Washington D.C., within the field of healthcare. Currently sharing her leadership as a consultant, Ruth most recently served as Vice President and Chief Strategy Officer with Providence Hospital and as Executive Director of Advocacy and Community Affairs for Children's National Hospital, both in Washington D.C.

"I am most looking forward to the people and the work," said Ms. Pollard. "I'm rooting for every person that we have the opportunity to serve, every staff member that has the spirit to serve, every leader who has the courage to lead, every partner who has the faith to invest, and every Board member who voluntarily serves to advance the mission of VOACC."

Ruth acknowledges the leadership of the immediate past Board Chair, Dr. Sharon Jones-Eversley, who helped to reposition VOACC during an important transitional period and prepared

her to take the helm and accelerate growth. The pandemic has only exacerbated the growing need for more integrated and innovative solutions to address gaps in behavioral health, primary care and affordable housing for underserved communities. Over the next two years, Ruth will collaborate with VOACC staff to implement structures, processes and systems that strengthen the overall service delivery, support scaling, and foster community partnerships for new and expanding opportunities.

"I see my role as the steward of the talent, resources and strategy of the organization," Ruth explains. "So, rest assure that I will be that person who asks lots of questions, purposely disrupts the norm, and at the same time, champion our organization to the end."

Volunteers of America Chesapeake & Carolinas, Inc. is a faith-based, nonprofit organization whose mission is to empower self-reliance and inspire hope. As a church without walls, the organization does this through personalized housing, ministry, health, and human services that benefit vulnerable individuals, their families and the community. The organization has more than 49 programs throughout Maryland, Virginia, the District of Columbia and the Carolinas serving the homeless, individuals with mental illness, individuals with intellectual disabilities, those in need of affordable housing, those in need of supportive services, those recovering from substance use disorders and those involved in community corrections. VOACC has over 800 staff members and more than 2,000 volunteers. The organization helps over 11,400 individuals and families every year from Maryland, Virginia, the District of Columbia and the Carolinas. Visit <https://www.voachapeake.org/>

## Leadership Maryland Now Accepting Applications for Class of 2022

Deadline to Apply is October 31, 2021

By PRESS OFFICER  
Leadership Maryland

ANNAPOLIS, Md. (September 10, 2021)—Leadership Maryland, the professional development program dedicated to building a better Maryland by harnessing the strength of its local business and community leaders, is now accepting applications for the Class of 2022. Leadership Maryland's selection committee will choose 52 applicants to complete an eight-month hands-on learning program focused on the state's most vital social, economic, and environmental issues.

Applications are open to senior-level executives with significant achievements in their ca-

reers and/or their communities. Ideal Leadership Maryland applicants will have a desire to learn more about Maryland's most critical issues and a personal commitment to be a force for positive change in their organizations, their communities, and their state. The chosen class will reflect a cross-section of the state by including diversity of geographic location, profession, ethnicity, age, and gender.

"Leadership Maryland offers an eye-opening, hands-on learning program that many of our alumni consider to be one of the most rewarding experiences of their careers," said Renée Win-

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What greater responsibility could we have to children than to do everything in our power to keep them safe?

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Project Restore Applications Open to Maryland's New or Expanding Businesses

MedStar Southern Maryland Hospital Center Welcomes New Interventional Cardiologist

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Catholic Charities DC to Offer Free Dental Clinics in Mid-Maryland Mission of Mercy

The free services for adults with appointments will take place beginning at 8 a.m. on the third Saturday of each month ...

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# TOWNS *and* NEIGHBORS

## In and Around Morningside-Skyline by Mary McHale 301-735-3451

### What it was like in my neighborhood September 11, 2001

Twenty years ago, my column was about how 9/11 looked and sounded around here:

There were Flags. At half-mast in front of the VFW. Above the door at GI Liquors. In front of the Shell station. Hanging over the Beltway from the Auth Road overpass. On lawns and fences and mailboxes all over Morningside and Skyline.

The roar of jets and helicopters overhead (when airports around the country were shut down).

Marine One chugging over my house, bearing President Bush back to Washington.

The long line of cars on Suitland Road waiting to get into Andrews, the line getting longer as non-essential personnel return to work.

Morningside VFD #27 sent across the Potomac and into the Pentagon courtyard to fight the fire, for hours.

Several hundred filling the pews at St. Philip's for prayer service. I was there.

From the parking lot at the Eastover Shopping Center, son John McHale could see the smoke at the Pentagon. Grandson David on the phone, talking to an official at the Pentagon when the man on the line said, "I have to go, apparently the building's on fire. I'll call you back."

He never did.

### Town of Morningside: new Chief announced

Last minute announcement by Mayor Cann—Wesley Stevenson is the new Morningside Chief of Police. This news comes late for my column; next week I'll tell you about the new Chief.

Mayor Benn Cann and the Town Council will host a Town Hall Meeting at the Municipal Center on Tuesday, Sept. 21, at 7 p.m. For information, call 301-736-2300.

### Will Douglass bridge help Washington become a State?

The new bridge is amping up interest in the District's possibility of becoming the 51st State. It's already being referred to as Washington, Douglass Commonwealth. (That way it could still be called "Washington, D.C.")

D.C. Mayor Muriel Bowser (D) and House Majority Leader Steny Hoyer (D-Md.) marched across the new Frederick Douglass

Memorial Bridge on Sept. 6, backed by the Duke Ellington School of the Arts Marching Band. With Frederick Douglass' great-great-granddaughter Nettie Washington Douglass in attendance, the bridge was blessed. By the time you read this, all lanes will be fully open.

### Changing landscape: zebras

Seen a zebra lately? You might have if you lived near Bellefield and Duley Station roads in the Upper Marlboro area. Five zebras escaped from a farm near there. Three are traveling together and the other two are a pair. Anyone who spots the runaways is asked to call the Prince George's County animal services division at 301-780-7242.

Check out the Farmer's Market Sundays at Creative Suitland, 4719 Silver Hill Road in Suitland, noon to 4 p.m.

Plans for Suitland High modernization include demolishing the Center for the Visual and Performing Arts and building a new one. Also there'll be new play fields and athletic facilities.

A new multi-purpose outdoor Legacy Courtyard at Bishop McNamara High School pays tribute to the Bernardine Sisters who founded La Reine High School and the Brothers of Holy Cross who founded McNamara.

A Ribbon-Cutting ceremony at Adventist HealthCare Fort Washington Medical Center was held August 30.

The National Postal Museum has reopened, the last of the Smithsonian museums to do so. If you've never visited, you should. With objects such as mail postmarked on the moon, a coconut from a lovesick soldier in Hawaii during WWII, a Civil War era absentee ballot, a mail-car, and so much more. It's in the Post Office building to the left of Union Station. Hours are Friday through Tuesday, 10 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. (Closed Wed. and Thurs until further notice). Admission is free.

A house at 6922 Pickett Drive just sold for \$345,000.

### Coming up

The 12th National Wine & Food Festival will be at National Harbor on Saturday, Sept. 25 & Sunday, Sept. 26 with VIP (\$99) hours from noon to 5 p.m. and general admission (\$49), 1 to 6 p.m. The event features live music and tastings from 15+ restaurants, craft beers and spirits along with more than 100 international and local wines.

The Maryland Renaissance Festival is underway in Crownsville.

The event continues through Oct. 24. For dates, admission and other questions, call 410-266-7304.

### Mary's Covid report: Maryland deaths rising!

Through 5 p.m. last Wednesday, 701 new cases were reported and 21 (!) more Marylanders had died. Maryland nursing homes are once again closing doors to visitors.

### Shirley Spears, Treasury Dept. retiree

Shirley A. Spears, 78, who retired after 20 years as Legal Administrative Specialist with the Department of Treasury, died Aug. 29. She was married to the late Clarence H. Spears, Sr.

Survivors include her children, Clarence and Charod Spears and Angel Sellers; sister Loretta Collins; and grandchildren Jazmin and Jayden. Services were at Fort Foote Baptist Church, Ft. Washington. Interment later at Arlington.

### James Earl Jones, served Oceanographic, Dept. of Agriculture

James Earl Jones, Sr., 80, of Temple Hills, computer specialist at the Oceanographic Office in Suitland and later at the Department of Agriculture, died July 31 at MedStar Southern Maryland Hospital.

He grew up in Graceville, Fla., graduated from Florida A & M University (FAMU) with a degree in Mathematics and post-graduate study at American University. Outside of federal employment, he was financial advisor and Director of Alumni Affairs at FAMU and was self-employed as part owner and manager of an apartment unit in Washington.

He is a past president of the Executive Board of the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) in Prince George's County, Life member of Omega Psi Phi Fraternity and Distinguished Alumnus of FAMU National Alumni Assn. He was a member of the Hillcrest Baptist Church in Temple Hills.

He's survived by his wife of 57 years, Penelope; children, Carolyn Hearn and twins Kenneth Holmes and Karen Holmes Fisher; eight grandchildren and brothers Cary C. Lewis and Willie Roy Jones. Services were at Fort Foote Baptist Church, Ft. Washington.

### Milestones

Happy birthday to Lee Burkhart, Sept. 20; Linda Holbart Van Meter, Morningside Clerk/Treasurer Karen Rooker and Teresa Kessler, Sept. 22; Elizabeth Long, Mary Kilbride, Dottie Arehringer, Amy Schlor and Peg Richardson, Sept. 24.

Happy anniversary to Ken and Janet Kaye, their 67th (!) on Sept. 25.

roles at the Office of both the Maryland Governor and Comptroller, the Maryland Department of Business and Economic Development, the Office of U.S. Senator Barbara Mikulski, and the Maryland Department of Human Resources.

A Maryland General Assembly resolution presented on the Maryland State Senate floor in March congratulated Mr. Kenderdine on his retirement after "more than 40 years of dedicated and exemplary service to the State of Maryland." Information received from a Newsletter for Retirees from the Maryland State Retirement & Pension System.

### PGCPS

Prince George's County Public Schools has implemented several solutions to address on-time and improve communication. These include centralized bus stops, GPS-enabled tablets on buses, and better tracking software. Outstanding questions should be submitted through their Transportation Resolution System. Contact information: Rudolph Saunders Director, respor@pgcps.org.

### BOWIE HIGH SCHOOL CADET

Bowie High School Cadet Ashton Burton completed an intensive eight-week Flight Academy program at Delaware State University to become a FAA Certified Private Pilot. Barton was one of 21 participants nationwide to complete the Flight Academy program and receive his private pilot's license with plans to become a naval aviator. Burton entered the program with no flying experience and earned 35 hours of classroom aviation academics, more than 45 hours of flight training and 17 hours of solo flights to receive his license. Information received from PGCPS Newsroom: Inform, Engage, Connect.

### PURPLE BICYCLE RIDE

Please join Prince George's County States Attorney Aisha N. Braveboy and Team PGSAO for a family bicycle ride for domestic ride Saturday October 9, 2021, at 8:00 a.m. Three routes 5, 10, 25 miles Allen Pond 3330 Northview Drive, Bowie, Maryland. Register <http://www.bileveg.com/pgsao-purple-bike-ride>. For more information contact: [maashe@co.pg.md.us](mailto:maashe@co.pg.md.us)

## Brandywine-Aquasco

by Audrey Johnson 301-922-5384

### BSU HOMECOMING

Join us as we celebrate Homecoming and cheer on the football team as we face Johnson C. Smith University Saturday, October 2, 2021, at 2:00 p.m. Bowie State University Bulldog Stadium 14000 Jericho Park Road Bowie, Maryland 20715. Categories: Athletics, Featured, Homecoming. Contact [webmaster@bowiestate.edu](mailto:webmaster@bowiestate.edu).

### HBCU CONFERENCE

Join Bowie State University as we host the Inaugural HBCU Entrepreneurship Conference Thursday, September 30, 2021, at 8:00 a.m. Boldly Paving the Way to Prosperity. This is a forum for like-minded faculty, campus, and community entrepreneur champions to share best practices, amplify all the great work, connect with colleagues, and strengthen our HBCU entrepreneurial ecosystem. The conference is sponsored by Truist, and features national thought leaders, including TRUIST, Operation Hope, INROADS, the US Black Chambers, Inc., and more.

This virtual conference will build on the rich historical legacy HBCUs have played in developing entrepreneurs, business owners and wealth in our communities. More importantly, the conference will lay the groundwork for what is to come and the role HBCUs play in boldly paving the way to prosperity. There will be further updates about how you can get a complimentary registration or to exhibit. Location: Virtual. Contact Julian Olanbiwonnu. Email: [olanbiwonnu@bowiestate.edu](mailto:olanbiwonnu@bowiestate.edu). The website is <http://bit.ly/HBCUEntrepreneurshipConference>. Categories: Entrepreneurship Academy, Featured. Contact: [webmaster@bowiestate.edu](mailto:webmaster@bowiestate.edu). Email information sent to me by my university.

### SONG SERVICE

Christ United Methodist Church in Aquasco, Maryland will live stream only a Song Service on September 25, 2021, at 7:00 p.m.

### BOARD OF TRUSTEES

A Government Finance professional from Prince George's County has been appointed by Governor Lawrence J. Hogan, Jr. to represent the interests of participating governmental units as the newest member of the Board of Trustees of the Maryland State Retirement and Pension System. Trustee Linda Vaughn Allen is a gubernatorial appointment to the Board.

Trustee Linda Vaughn Allen assumed the seat previously held by James M. Harkins, who retired from the Board after 14 years of dedicated service.

Trustee Allen is Deputy Director of the Office of Finance for Prince George's County, where she has served in various capacities for 16 years. Ms. Allen was Treasurer from 2010 to 2018 and Cash and Investments Manager from 2005 to 2010. Prior to joining Prince George's County, Ms. Allen served as Corporate Cash Manager for Manor Care Health Services, a long-term healthcare organization.

Trustee Allen attended Howard University and holds an MBA from the University of Maryland's Robert H. Smith School of Business. Information received from a Newsletter for Retirees from the Maryland State Retirement and Pension System.

### KENDERDINE CONCLUDES CAREER OF SERVICE

Trustee David R. Brinkley, Maryland Secretary of Budget, and Management, presents a citation from Governor Lawrence J. Hogan, Jr., to retiring Maryland State Retirement Agency Executive Director R. Dean Kenderdine, State Treasurer and Board Chair Nancy K. Kopp delivered a Board resolution to Mr. Kenderdine.

R. Dean Kenderdine, who as Executive Director led the Maryland State Retirement Agency through the largest legislative pension reform in System history and the replacement of a decades-old computer mainframe, retired July 1 after 14 years at the Agency's helm.

A lifelong servant, Mr. Kenderdine previously served in leadership

### Applications from A1

sky, '05, president and Chief Executive Officer, Leadership Maryland. "We are searching for the next cohort of our state's most impassioned and motivated leaders. Our Class of 2022 will gain knowledge of Maryland's challenges, insight into their own personal influence and leadership ability, and lifelong access to an incredible network of the state's most influential leaders."

To be considered for the Class of 2022, application packages must include:

- Completed application, available online only at [www.LeadershipMD.org](http://www.LeadershipMD.org);
- Paid non-refundable application fee of \$250;
- Two references;
- One letter of recommendation;
- Authorizing official statement from applicant's supervisor or CEO (unless applicant is self-employed or are their own supervisor);
- Professional color photo

and registration fees must be received by Leadership Maryland (134 Holiday Court, Suite 318, Annapolis, Md. 21401) by 5 p.m. on Sunday, October 31, 2021. Upon acceptance of the application, candidates will be contacted to schedule an interview with members of the Leadership Maryland selection committee. The selected Class of 2022 will be announced in early February 2022.

Before applying, candidates should know they will be able to attend Class of 2022 sessions on the following dates:

- March 14 (evening reception)
  - April 21 & 22 (Orientation—mandatory)
  - May 19 & 20
  - June 16 & 17
  - July 14 & 15
  - September 15 & 16
  - October 13 & 14
  - November 11
  - December 6 (Graduation)
- Full information regarding Leadership Maryland's application instructions, selection process, tuition and fi-

nancial assistance, 2022 program dates and locations, and attendance policy are available at [www.LeadershipMD.org](http://www.LeadershipMD.org). Anyone with questions may contact Leadership Maryland at 410-841-2101 or [Info@LeadershipMD.org](mailto:Info@LeadershipMD.org).

Leadership Maryland is a professional development program dedicated to building a better Maryland by harnessing the strength of its local business and community leaders. Each year, as many as 52 diverse and accomplished executives from Maryland's public and private sectors are selected to come together as a class for an eight-month hands-on learning program focused on the state's most vital social, economic and environmental issues. The first Leadership Maryland class graduated in 1993, and the organization's alumni network now consists of more than 1,100 leaders from all industries and regions of the state. To learn more, please call Leadership Maryland at 410-841-2101 or visit [www.LeadershipMD.org](http://www.LeadershipMD.org).

## Around the County

### Iowa State University Summer Graduates

AMES, Iowa (September 1, 2021)—Iowa State University awarded degrees to 802 graduates this summer. Students earning degrees have the opportunity to participate in fall or spring commencement ceremonies. The following are graduates from our area:

Hyattsville, MD: **Isaac Macarthy**, Human Computer Interaction

—Angie Hunt, Iowa State University

### 'PG13' High School Football Series Kicks Off Sixth Season

UPPER MARLBORO, Md. (September 13, 2021)—Prince George's County Public Schools (PGCPS) high school sports series PG13 returns for season six this week as scholar-athletes return to the playing field after two seasons impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic.

A joint venture between PGCPS and Visionary Media Productions, PG13 showcases scholar-athletes, coaches, families and school communities in 13 episodes, beginning with preseason preparations and culminating with the playoffs. Each episode portrays multidimensional stories, shot in a cinematic style, in four-to-seven-minute story arcs.

Season six premiere[d] on Monday, Sept. 13 with a focus on Dr. Henry A. Wise High School as they look to return to their championship perch, and Charles Herbert Flowers High School which has established itself as Wise's closest rival.

This season, tune in Mondays as we take you on and off the field with teams, coaches, players, fans and families. All 13 episodes will be broadcast on PGCPS social media channels, the PGCPS website and PGCPS-TV 96 (Comcast) and 38 (Verizon).

# COMMUNITY

## NASA, UMES Enact Space Act Agreement for Educational Opportunities

By KEITH KOEHLER  
NASA's Wallops Flight Facility

NASA and the University of Maryland Eastern Shore in Princess Anne signed a Space Act Agreement Sept. 7, 2021, that will expand opportunities for education, workforce development, and research.

The objective of the agreement is to enable a sustained pipeline of diverse talent for science, technology, engineering and mathematics careers at NASA's Wallops Flight Facility in Virginia. In addition, the agreement seeks to advance the understanding of suborbital and aeronautical science as well as research and development projects involving the research range at Wallops, to further advance NASA's mission.

"NASA Wallops and UMES have a 40-year partnership in providing educational opportunities for students," said Wallops Di-

rector David Pierce. "We see the signing of this agreement as renewal of this long-standing partnership to develop the next generation of aerospace professionals that are going to carry our country forward in the next 20 years."

This new partnership will benefit UMES students through opportunities leveraging academic studies with hands on experience through internships, on-site project engagement activities and opportunities to support mission work alongside Wallops professionals.

In addition to Pierce, participants included U.S. Senator Chris Van Hollen, Director of the NASA Goddard Space Flight Center Dennis Andrucyk, UMES President Dr. Heidi Andersen, Dean Derrick Dunn, Chairperson of the Department of Technology at UMES and UMES student Vicelese Sloan.



CREDITS: NASA WALLOPS/JAMIE ADKINS

NASA's Wallops Flight Facility signed a Space Act Agreement with the University of Maryland Eastern Shore on Sept. 7, 2021, that will expand opportunities for education, workforce development, and research.

## Honorée Fanonne Jeffers, the September Featured Author of Oprah's Book Club, In Conversation

LARGO, Md. (September 10, 2021)—The Prince George's County Memorial Library System is honored to co-present a virtual conversation with September's featured Oprah's Book Club author Honorée Fanonne Jeffers on **Monday, September 20** at 12 p.m. The virtual event continues the Library's robust anti-racism education programs for adults and is co-presented with the University of Maryland English Department and Center for Literary & Comparative Studies. Jeffers' most recent books are "The Love Songs of W.E.B. Du Bois"

(Harper, 2021) and "The Age of Phillis" (Wesleyan University Press, 2020). She will be in conversation with Kerry Sinanan, Assistant Professor of English, University of Texas-San Antonio. The event is free and open to the public. Registration is required at [pgcmls.info/events](http://pgcmls.info/events).

Jeffers' first novel captures what W.E.B. Du Bois coined "Double Consciousness," a survival mechanism of Black Americans, in the experiences of the novel's main character Ailey Pearl Garfield, who is raised up North, but

spends her summers in the deep South. In a journey to explore her roots, Ailey uncovers the good, the bad, and the ugly. The shocking tales of generations of ancestors—Indigenous, Black, and white—in the deep South unfold. In doing so, Ailey embraces her full heritage filled with oppression and resistance, bondage and independence, cruelty and resilience—the song of America itself.

In addition to this novel, Jeffers' other works include: "The Age of Phillis" (2020), long-listed for the National Book Award in Poetry and nom-

inated for the 2021 NAACP Image Award for Outstanding Literary Work in Poetry; "The Gospel of Barbecue" (2000); "Outlandish Blues" (2003); "Red Clay Suite" (2007); and "The Glory Gets" (2015).

Jeffers received the 2018 Harper Lee Award for Literary Distinction, a lifetime achievement award and won the Emerging Fiction Fellowship from the Aspen Summer Words Conference. Fellowships from the American Antiquarian Society fellowships, the Bread Loaf Writers Conference, the National Endowment for the Arts, the Vermont Studio Center, the Witter Bynner Foundation through the Library of Congress, and the Tennessee Williams' Scholarship in Fiction from the Sewanee Writers Conference are among her accomplishments. Jeffers is a Professor of

English at the University of Oklahoma.

The host, Dr. Kerry Sinanan, Assistant Professor of English at the University of Texas-San Antonio, received her doctorate from Trinity College, Dublin in 2003. She has taught at several universities in the United Kingdom and Ireland including the University of the West of England, and the National University of Ireland, Galway. She is now completing her monograph, *Myths of Mastery: Traders, Planters and Colonial Agents 1750-1833* for The University of North Carolina Press. This book examines the writings in various genres by slave traders and slave owners from the mid-eighteenth century up to British emancipation (1834).

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## Our new hospital is about to **changeUP** everything.

Amazing health care can do so much more than help you feel better. It can lift up an entire community. Our new, state-of-the-art hospital in Largo is now open - which means this entire community is about to rise. Here, you'll have access to more top specialists, a comprehensive Heart & Vascular Institute, a beautiful new maternity center with the latest advances for moms and babies, and so much more. As part of University of Maryland Medical System, we're stepping up the strength of all that we offer ... because when we stand strong, so do you.

See how we are changing up health care for you at [UMcapitalregion.org/changeUP](http://UMcapitalregion.org/changeUP).



# COMMENTARY

## Marion Wright Edelman

President Emerita,  
Children's Defense Fund



### ChildWatch:

## Bridging Gaps This School Year

"To America's children, families, and educators, the last two school years have not gone the way you planned. You've missed chances to connect, share, and help each other. Outside of the classroom, you've struggled with loneliness, fear, anxiety, and maybe much more. You've lost chances to learn new skills, and you may even have worried about having enough to eat or having a safe place to live. You've made the very best of a difficult situation, but I'm fighting to make sure that this year, you get the safe and fulfilling school year you deserve..." So begins an open letter Children's Defense Fund supporters are sharing with students, parents, and educators across our country at the start of another extraordinary school year. Back to school season always brings some uncertainty about the unknown,

but for the second year in a row the COVID-19 pandemic has created significant new worries and anxieties as schools continue to navigate uncharted ground.

There are ongoing concerns about how we can help children recover from the academic disruptions so many of them have faced, and children who were most at risk before the pandemic still have the most at stake. The recent New York Times editorial "The School Kids Are Not Alright" put it this way: "Virtually every school in the nation closed in March 2020, replacing face-to-face schooling with throw-together online education or programs that used a disruptive scheduling process to combine the two. Only a small portion of the student body returned to fully opened schools the following fall. The resulting

learning setbacks range from grave for all groups of students to catastrophic for poor children... [T]he pandemic amplified disadvantages rooted in racial and socioeconomic inequality, transforming an educational gap into a gulf."

The editorial cites an analysis by the nonprofit N.W.E.A. that found Latino third graders scored 17 percentile points lower in math in the spring of 2021 than in the spring of 2019, Black students 15 percentile points lower, and Native American students 14 percentile points lower, and studies showing that schools with higher numbers of Black, Latino, and poor students were more likely to remain closed, providing their students fewer opportunities for in-person learning. It also cites a McKinsey report that found the pandemic "has widened existing opportunity and achievement gaps and made high schoolers more likely to drop out. As the authors say: 'The fallout from the pandemic threatens to depress this generation's prospects and constrict their opportunities far into adulthood. The ripple effects may undermine their chances of attending college and ultimately finding a fulfilling job that enables them to support a family.' Unless steps are taken to fill the pandemic learning gap, the authors say, these people will earn less over their lifetimes. The impact on the U.S. economy could range from \$128 billion to \$188 billion every year as the cohort enters the work force."

These setbacks have the potential to become long-lasting limitations, and for many students, academic setbacks have been exacerbated and in some cases overtaken by the deep social and emotional toll the pandemic has taken on children of all ages and socioeconomic levels struggling with anxiety, loneliness, and grief. Now, just as many are returning to full-time, in-person learning for the first time since the pandemic began, families and educators are facing a dangerous new surge in the pandemic driven by some adults' determined resistance to measures designed to help keep children and adults in school safely. What greater responsibility could we have to children than to do everything in our power to keep them safe?

Children need to be surrounded by adults who are more willing and determined than ever to do whatever it takes to ensure they get the school year they deserve and desperately need. Schools must have specific strategies for helping students who are behind to catch up. All of us must support measures to help keep our children, teachers, and families safe. And parents and teachers must be ready to listen to children, discern how they are really feeling, and take every step they can to help them feel supported, connected, and secure. We must be prepared to bridge educational gaps before they become even deeper gulfs and offer all children the protection and support they need right now.

## Marc Morial

President and CEO, National Urban League



### To Be Equal:

## Michael K. Williams' Death Underscores the Need for "Antiracist Public Health Approach" To Substance Abuse

"He was a Hollywood star with an off-Broadway paycheck that mostly went up his nose. He was a pacifist with a barroom-brawl, razor scar down the middle of his face. He played a sneering killer but started his career in dance tights. On set, he was Omar Little, the Robin Hood of the hood feared by fictional street thugs who feared nothing else. Off it, he was an aimless soul begging for someone—anyone — to love and accept him for who he was, not who he played."

—Kevin Manahan,  
Newark Star-Ledger

Of the many tributes to gifted actor Michael K. Williams, who passed away Monday at the age of 54, the most enduring and consequential may be namesake legislation aimed at curbing mass incarceration in his home state of New York.

Assemblywoman Rodneye Bichotte Hermelyn of Brooklyn plans to introduce a bill named for Williams, a criminal justice reform advocate and A.C.L.U. ambassador for ending mass incarceration.

Williams gained fame in the early 2000s for his groundbreaking portrayal of Omar Little, an openly gay armed robber who preyed on drug dealers, in the HBO series *The Wire*. His portrayal drew upon his experiences growing up in Brooklyn's then-crime-ridden Vanderveer Estates and childhood abuse that left him conflicted about his sexuality.

Despite his professional success, Williams never overcame the demons that drove his struggle with drug abuse. Even in the years following his well-publicized recovery, he hinted of the turmoil beneath the surface.

"People often think that when a person puts down the drugs or the alcohol, that all the problems go away," he told journalist Tarron Hall in February. "That couldn't be further from the truth. Drugs and alcohol are not the problems, they're merely symptoms of the problem. And once those things go away, the real work begins."

Williams' death from a suspected fentanyl overdose underscores both the growing opioid crisis among Black Americans and the need for a more compassionate, community-based approach to substance abuse and mental health problems.

Days after Williams' death, the National Institutes of Health published a study revealing that opioid overdose death rates are growing faster among Black Americans than among whites. The study's authors recommended an "antiracist public health approach" to address the crisis in Black communities.

"We have to do something different, a more intensive intervention in the African-American community," addiction specialist Dr. Edwin Chapman, who serves the African American community in Washington, D.C., told NPR.

Williams struggled with cocaine addiction throughout *The Wire*'s run, sometimes sleeping on a bare mattress alongside other addicts in the basement of a boarded-up house in Newark. He sought treatment after the show ended in 2008, spurred in part by a meeting with then-candidate Barack Obama. "Hearing my name come out of his mouth woke me up," he told the *New York Times*. "I realized that my work could actually make a difference."

He became an ACLU ambassador for ending mass incarceration in 2014. At the time, his nephew Dominic Dupont was 17 years into a 25-year sentence in connection with a fatal shooting.

"Our society has been using jails and prisons as a dumping ground for the mentally ill and those addicted to drugs," Williams wrote in a 2015 ACLU blog post. These human beings don't belong in prison, they belong in treatment, yet we've pushed them into cages and denied them their humanity."

The criminalization of substance abuse is partly to blame for the rising opioid death toll, deterring people in crisis from seeking help.

"They have that fear. If you go to get help, then people want to turn you in and have your children taken away," said Latoya Jenkins, whose mother died of a fentanyl overdose in December. "If they are seen somewhere using drugs, instead of, 'Hey can I get you to a treatment center or get someone to help you. No, we're going to throw you in jail,'" she said.

Assemblywoman Hermelyn's legislation to reduce mass incarceration would be a fitting tribute to Williams and the cause for which he fought so fiercely.

"I will never forget that there are many more men with bright futures who look like me that have been relegated to our prison systems," Williams wrote. "However, instead of being provided with opportunities to express themselves or their creativity safely or getting the right support, they make mistakes which cost them dearly. The costs of those mistakes are high and these men pay with their futures."

individuals and communities by linking those with unmet needs to essential resources. As the 24/7/365 access point to vital resources that help individuals and communities thrive, 211 Maryland connects those in need through call center, website, text, and chat to support services for natural and man-made disasters, housing, food, domestic violence, aging and disabilities, tax and utilities, employment, health-care access, and veterans' affairs; additionally, 211 Maryland offers confidential crisis response for substance misuse, mental health, and suicide emergencies at <https://prssone.211md.org>. 211 Maryland is a registered non-profit 501(c)(3). To donate, please visit [www.211md.org/donate](http://www.211md.org/donate).

### Mental Health from A1

bringing to life new programs and services that can help Marylanders on their mental health journey, including the new 211 Health Check and having more specialists on staff to help address immediate concerns," said Askew. "We look forward to helping more Marylanders get the mental health support they need in the exact moment they need it."

To learn more about 211 Maryland's mental health programs, please visit [www.211md.org](http://www.211md.org).

211 Maryland is the central connector to health and human services for the State of Maryland, lifting up

## During National Small Business Week, Hoyer Visits Patuxent Brewing Company

WALDORF, Md. (September 13, 2021) – Today, Congressman Steny H. Hoyer (MD-05) visited the Patuxent Brewing Company, a Black-owned, small craft brewery business in Waldorf, MD, during National Small Business Week, which is celebrated between September 13 and September 15, 2021. Congressman Hoyer toured the brewery alongside Co-Owner Davie Feaster and Regional Director of Small Business Development Center at College of Southern Maryland Wynne Briscoe.

"I was glad to recognize Small Business Week today by touring the Patuxent Brewing Company in Charles County today. Maryland's small businesses are essential to our local economic growth and success, and that is why I have made it a priority in Congress to assist small business owners during this pandemic," said Congressman Hoyer. "I was happy to hear about the work co-owners Gene Lott, Tranice Watts, and Davie Feaster have done for our community since opening in 2019. The Patuxent Brewing Company has helped give back by supporting local community organizations such as the NAACP in Charles County, and they have also helped connect black-owned businesses by collaborating with the Small Business Development Center in creating a registry for black-owned businesses in the area."

"With the help of emergency COVID-19 legislation, both in the CARES Act and the American Rescue Plan, Congress both authorized and strengthened programs that assist small business owners with operating their businesses and keeping their doors open. But the work to assist our business owners continues – I will keep advocating for business owners and ensure they have access to resources they need to build back better from this pandemic. In 2020, our country experienced the worst decrease in business ownership in our history and now, we must look ahead to provide small businesses in Maryland – including the smallest businesses and minority owned businesses – with the long-term ability to thrive," continued Congressman Hoyer. "With the Build Back Better Act, we can create more opportunities for business owners that increase access to capital, improve Small Business Administration entrepreneurial development programs, expand federal opportunities, and help spur innovation. I applaud the Patuxent Brewing Company for their success and thank them for welcoming me today. As our only black-owned brewing company in Charles County, I will continue to fight for their needs and the needs of our small businesses in Congress."

## Council Chair Calvin S. Hawkins Addresses 20th Anniversary of 9-11 Attacks

On this solemn 20th anniversary of the horrific 9/11 terrorist attacks on our nation, the Prince George's County Council joins with fellow citizens to remember with heartfelt compassion, the nearly 3,000 lives sacrificed in New York City, at the Pentagon in the Nation's Capital, and on United Airlines Flight 93, near Shanksville, Pennsylvania.

Among the victims killed in the attacks were Prince Georgians who lived in the communities of Forestville, Temple Hills, Spring-

dale, Camp Springs, Upper Marlboro, University Park, Clinton, Fort Washington, Lanham, Capitol Heights, Landover, Oxon Hill, Forest Heights, and New Carrollton.

While the passage of time has not lessened the pain of that terrible day, September 11th reminds us of how unspeakable trauma can bring us all together in a unified response. On this 20th anniversary, the Council encourages our continued commitment to the fight against terrorism and injustice, as we embrace our incredible

resilience as a nation and community.

We remain grateful to our courageous first responders, hundreds who made the ultimate sacrifice. These brave men and women remain at the highest state of readiness, continuing to risk it all for our protection.

Our prayers for those left forever scarred by this devastating event in our nation's history will endure.

Prince Georgians will never forget.

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# BUSINESS AND FINANCE

## Project Restore Applications Open to Maryland's New or Expanding Businesses

Applicants can apply beginning on Wednesday, September 8, 2021 until Friday, October 8, 2021 at 5:00 PM. Please note: the application portal may close sooner if grant requests exceed the funding available. Applicants are encouraged to apply as soon as possible to avoid an early application deadline.

The Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) is administering \$25 million to provide financial support to Maryland's new or expanding businesses to help incentivize commercial investment in vacant retail and commercial properties.

Project Restore is providing two grant opportunities for businesses planning on opening or expanding into previously vacant spaces:

**Rental Assistance Grant:** The maximum grant request amount is \$30,000 for rent for one year (rental payment up to \$2,500 per month) for qualified small business with 50 or fewer employees (full time equivalents). Applicant's monthly rent can exceed \$2,500, but the maximum that will be paid by the Rental Assistance Grant will be \$2,500 per month for one year.

**Business Operations Grant:** The maximum grant award amount is \$250,000 for one or two years for businesses that generate sales and use tax. Grant funds can be used for activities and costs related to sustaining and growing the business such as staff costs, capital improvements, marketing, inventory and supplies, utilities and the like and cannot be used for executive salaries or bonuses. Grant awards will be paid quarterly and will be based on sales and use tax generated by and submitted to the state in Calendar Year 2022.

<https://dhcd.maryland.gov/Pages/ProjectRestore/default.aspx>

## Social Security Matters

### Ask Rusty:

### About Including "COLA" in Benefit Projections

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

**Dear Rusty:** In your reply to "Confused Senior" about when to claim Social Security benefits, I noticed that you did not take into account any compounded annual increases in benefit payments. While these are not guaranteed and are dependent upon the economy, they do affect the difference in total amount that can be drawn between eligibility age, full retirement age, or age 70. Would you please address this?  
*Signed: Stickler for Details*

**Dear Stickler:** Thanks for your feedback on that article. You are correct, of course, that I did not include Cost of Living Adjustments (COLA) in my response to the question asked, and that was intentional. I seldom include future COLA in these calculations because doing so would mean introducing a speculative factor, and I don't like uncertainties when it comes to claiming Social Security. It's not that I can't include COLA, but it's usually easier for people to grasp the straight (guaranteed) mathematical computation without adding a variable factor which could result in an inaccurate future benefit projection.

Historically, COLA increases have ranged from 0% to 14% because COLA is tied to inflation—a variable determined by annual changes to the national Consumer Price Index (CPI). If you remember the very high inflation years of the late 70s and very early 80s, those are the years when the highest COLA increases were granted. More recently (but before 2021) inflation has been held to its lowest level in recent history and, accordingly, COLA increases have been quite small. No COLA increases at all were granted in 2009, 2010 and 2015, and the increase in 2016 was a paltry 0.3%. The average COLA increase over the last 10 years (2011–2020) was 1.7%, and the average over the last 20 years has been 2.2%. I've done these computations both ways—including a 2% average COLA increase and not including any COLA increase—and the resulting breakeven point for claiming at age 70 vs. full retirement age doesn't significantly change.

For clarity, most early projections now suggest that high inflation in 2021 will cause the 2022 COLA increase to exceed 6%, far above the average over the past 20 years, further emphasizing the speculative nature of predicting COLA. Although the actual future benefit predictions would be somewhat different with a COLA projection added, those amounts would be conjecture (and "not guaranteed," as you have said). Excluding COLA from such analyses, however, does provide guaranteed amounts and I prefer to use solid numbers rather than speculative ones. If it turns out that COLA improves their benefit amount and break-even age that will be icing on the cake, but they've made their claiming decision based on solid information and guaranteed future benefit increases.

Other feedback from that same article suggested I should have also evaluated an option to claim benefits early and invest them, rather than waiting longer to get a guaranteed higher Social Security benefit. Just like trying to predict COLA, predicting investment growth introduces a variable that I'm not comfortable using when advising about Social Security benefits. For that type of speculative advice, it would be prudent to seek counsel from a certified financial planner.

The 2.4 million member Association of Mature American Citizens [AMAC] [www.amac.us](http://www.amac.us) is a vibrant, vital senior advocacy organization that takes its marching orders from its members. AMAC Action is a non-profit, non-partisan organization representing the membership in our nation's capital and in local Congressional Districts throughout the country. And the AMAC Foundation ([www.AmacFoundation.org](http://www.AmacFoundation.org)) is the Association's non-profit organization, dedicated to supporting and educating America's Seniors. Together, we act and speak on the Association members' behalf, protecting their interests and offering a practical insight on how to best solve the problems they face today. Live long and make a difference by joining us today at [www.amac.us/join-amac](http://www.amac.us/join-amac).

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## MedStar Southern Maryland Hospital Center Welcomes New Interventional Cardiologist Brian C. Case

Board-certified, fellowship-trained physician joins hospital in August 2021 as member of the MedStar Heart & Vascular Institute

By CHERYL RICHARDSON  
MedStar Health

CLINTON, MD (September 7, 2021)—MedStar Southern Maryland Hospital Center is pleased to welcome Brian C. Case, MD, FACC, a board-certified and fellowship-trained interventional cardiologist who joined the hospital in August 2021.

Dr. Case, a Montgomery County native, graduated cum laude from St. George's University School of Medicine in 2012 and then participated in an internship at NYU Langone Hospital-Long Island, formerly known as NYU Winthrop Hospital. Dr. Case completed an extensive residency at MedStar Georgetown University Hospital and was selected as the chief medical resident in 2016 for internal medicine. He then obtained fellowship training through a joint program at both MedStar Georgetown University Hospital and MedStar Washington Hospital Center in Washington, D.C., where he was honored as a chief cardiologist fellow in 2019, followed by two years of combined research and clinical interventional cardiology.

As part of the specialty care provided at MedStar Southern Maryland in Clinton, Maryland, Dr. Case treats patients with coronary artery disease through modern

technological interventions such as intravascular imaging and invasive physiology to help guide stent selection, placement and deployment. His training includes performing intravascular ultrasound and optical coherence tomography for intravascular imaging, as well as fractional flow reserves and instantaneous wave-free ratios for evaluation of physiological cardiac ischemia.

"My hope and goal is to incorporate my experience in training into the clinical practice and daily decision making for our patients here at MedStar Southern Maryland," Dr. Case said. "In the world of interventional cardiology, using intravascular imaging and invasive physiology on a daily basis will help guide treatment plans and allow us to provide more individualized, high-quality heart care. It's about having transparency and innovation that leads to the best possible outcomes for our patients. Because how we treat people is the heart of what matters."

For appointments with Dr. Case, please call 301-877-5677. To learn more, visit [MedStarHealth.org/Case](http://MedStarHealth.org/Case).

MedStar Southern Maryland Hospital Center, located in Clinton, Maryland, is a 182-bed acute care hospital serving the Wash-



PHOTO COURTESY MEDSTAR HEALTH

Brian C. Case, MD, FACC

ington, D.C., metro and Southern Maryland area. The hospital is focused on caring for patients and their loved ones utilizing advanced technology under the guidance of expert clinicians. Quality, Safety, Wellness, and Patient Satisfaction are achieved through a spirit of patient centered services that connect us to the community we serve. For more information, visit [MedStarSouthernMaryland.org](http://MedStarSouthernMaryland.org).

## Prince George's County Planning Department Releases Growth Concepts for the West Hyattsville-Queens Chapel Sector Plan

By ANIKA B. JACKSON  
M-NCPPC

UPPER MARLBORO, Md. (September 7, 2021)—On August 27, the Prince George's County Planning Department of The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission (M-NCPPC) release[d] preliminary growth concepts for the West Hyattsville-Queen Chapel Sector Plan. The public is invited to view and provide feedback via a survey on these growth concepts using the 3D Virtual Town Hall, a web-based, interactive tool to engage users in the planning process.

These growth concepts, or scenarios, illustrate potential layouts of how and where to accommodate future growth within the sector plan area, and the possible size and type of structures that are possible in 2045. The concepts were informed by existing conditions, challenges and opportunities identified, feedback received from community members and other stakehold-

ers at the virtual visioning workshop and throughout the planning process, and the draft vision and goals for the plan.

Developing growth concepts is part of the scenario planning phase of the West Hyattsville-Queens Chapel sector planning process. Scenario planning allows the planning team to test different growth options, with the end goal of developing a hybrid preferred concept that will inform the development of sector plan recommendations. The growth concept materials are bilingual and will be available for review through September 24, 2021.

Community members and stakeholders can access the growth concepts and the survey using the 3D virtual town hall developed by consulting team AECOM. In response to COVID-19 restrictions, the Prince George's County Planning Department partnered with AECOM, an international planning, engineering, and infrastructure firm, to provide a virtual alternative to traditional in-person public

meetings and town halls. The platform allows participants to watch videos; read pamphlets, documents, and reports; view maps, presentations, and links to other sites; and explore posters and other materials.

To access the 3D Virtual Town Hall visit <https://aecomviz.com/WHQC360/>. To learn more about the West Hyattsville-Queens Chapel Sector Plan, visit <http://www.mncppc.org/4931/WHQC> or contact the project team at [WHQC@ppd.mncppc.org](mailto:WHQC@ppd.mncppc.org).

The Prince George's County Planning Department of The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission (M-NCPPC) is responsible for preserving, protecting, and managing the county's resources through high-quality planning services and growth management guidance. Visit our website, [www.pgplanning.org](http://www.pgplanning.org) to learn how you can become engaged in shaping the future of your community.

## Tax Relief May Be Available for Property Owners Impacted By Hurricane Ida

By PRESS OFFICER  
MD SDAT News

BALTIMORE (September 3, 2021)—The Maryland State Department of Assessments and Taxation (SDAT) is encouraging residents and businesses whose property has been damaged by the effects of Hurricane Ida to contact the Department, as they may qualify to have their property assessments reduced. Maryland residents can fill out this form found at [https://dat.maryland.gov/Documents/Procedures/067070050\\_att1.pdf](https://dat.maryland.gov/Documents/Procedures/067070050_att1.pdf) and email it to their local SDAT assessment office. A list of all SDAT offices with contact information can be found on SDAT's website, <https://dat.state.md.us/realproperty/pages/maryland-assessment-offices.aspx>.

"SDAT is well-versed in natural disaster

response, and we stand ready to assist Marylanders whose property has been damaged or destroyed in the path of Hurricane Ida," said SDAT Director Michael Higgs. "We encourage those impacted to email this form to their local assessment office as soon as possible to have their damage surveyed."

Multiple locations across Maryland such as Annapolis, Rockville, and Baltimore City have been impacted by flooding and power outages caused by Ida. SDAT's assessors are currently logging affected properties and will begin surveying damage in the coming weeks. Please note that in order to have your property assessed, you must submit the form to your local assessment office.

When a decrease in value is confirmed by an assessor—either from an exterior inspection or from a resident submitting the attached application—an adjusted property

assessment will be sent to the County Finance Office and a new tax bill may be issued. If a property owner has already paid their tax bill, a prorated abatement will be issued. If the extent of damage is not clear from an exterior inspection, the attached form will be mailed to the property owner for them to complete and send back.

In addition to real property tax relief, business personal property destroyed as a result of Hurricane Ida may also be eligible for a personal property assessment reduction.

The Department joins Governor Hogan and the Maryland Emergency Management Agency (MEMA) in reminding residents to take all necessary precautions and avoid all affected areas. Visit <https://memamaryland.gov/Pages/default.aspx> for more information from MEMA on how residents can be weather prepared by ensuring that they know how to receive warnings, follow safety tips, and take certain actions.

## US Department of Labor Awards More Than \$6.7M in Worker Safety, Health Training Grants to 37 Recipients

Upper Marlboro organization awarded \$100K in grants

By PRESS OFFICER  
U.S. Department of Labor

WASHINGTON (Sept. 9, 2021)—The U.S. Department of Labor's Occupational Safety and Health Administration today announced the award of more than \$6.7 million in grants to 37 nonprofit organizations nationwide to fund education and training programs to help workers and employers recognize infectious diseases, including coronavirus health hazards, and identify preventive measures for a safe workplace. In addition to hazard control,

the training will also include understanding worker rights and employer responsibilities under the Occupational Safety and Health Act of 1970.

The award includes "Workplace Safety and Health Training on Infectious Diseases, including the Coronavirus" grants funded by the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021. The grants derive from the Susan Harwood Workplace Safety and Health Training program, named for in honor of the late Susan Harwood, former director of OSHA's Office of Risk Assessment. In her 17-year OSHA

career, she helped develop federal standards to protect workers from bloodborne pathogens, cotton dust, benzene, formaldehyde, asbestos, and lead in construction.

DC metro area grant recipients include: **International Association of Machinists Corporation for Re-Employment and Safety Training, Upper Marlboro, \$100,000**

These grants are a critical element in supporting OSHA's role in educating workers on their rights and assisting employers with providing safe workplaces.

# HEALTH *and* WELLNESS

## Hogan Announces Boosters for People 65+ in Nursing Homes

By ALLISON MOLLENKAMP  
Capital News Service

ANNAPOLIS, Md. (September 8, 2021)—Marylanders 65 and over living in congregate care facilities, including nursing homes, are eligible for COVID-19 booster shots effective immediately.

Gov. Larry Hogan announced the expanded eligibility at a press conference Capital News Service reporters attended Wednesday.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention currently authorizes an additional dose of the coronavirus vaccine for people who are immunocompromised.

Hogan called the addition of people over 65 in congregate care a broadening of the definition of “immunocompromised.”

At the Wednesday [September 8] COVID-19 update, Hogan also announced pharmacies and other vaccine providers are to issue booster shots, a third dose, to immunocompromised people without a prescription.

The governor says this is in line with CDC guidance and is meant to reduce confusion for providers.

The state will also begin a community COVID-19 vaccination project in areas with low vaccination rates, Hogan said Wednesday.

The project is expected to cost \$3 million and will include canvassing to directly engage residents of the target areas, Hogan said.

Hogan said he would like better guidance from the federal government on the subject of booster shots.

“This is something we’re gonna be dealing with for a long time,” Hogan said.

With schools starting the academic year, Hogan said President Joe Biden’s administration has not been able to provide an estimate on when children ages 5-11 might be eligible for the COVID-19 vaccine.

In a Tuesday press release, Hogan announced that 95% of Marylanders 65 and older have received at least one COVID-19 vaccine dose.

Last week, the governor said 80% of people 12 and older had received at least one vaccine dose.

In a “Meet the Press” interview Sunday, Hogan contrasted Maryland’s COVID numbers to those of Kentucky, where cases



PHOTO CREDIT RACHEL LOGAN/CAPITAL NEWS SERVICE

**Governor’s Reception Room in the Annapolis State House, Maryland, on Sept. 8, 2021. Gov. Larry Hogan announces that Maryland seniors are now eligible to receive COVID-19 vaccine booster shots at a press conference Sept. 8.**

have climbed to a new peak in recent weeks.

“We’re very proud of the fact that we’re one of the most vaccinated states in the country,” Hogan said in the Sunday interview.

He went on to say on Sunday that Maryland is still facing hospitalizations and deaths among unvaccinated people, including those who believe disinformation.

Hogan also said on the program that the state has unvaccinated residents in urban areas as well as Republican areas of the state.

Sixty-one percent of Maryland residents are fully vaccinated, which is higher than the national rate of 53%.

Despite progress on vaccinations, COVID continues to spread in Maryland.

The state’s COVID positivity rate Wednesday was 4.68 percent, according to the state health department.

Over 800 people were hospitalized with the virus Wednesday with over 200 intensive care unit beds in use, state data showed.

Nearly 9,900 people have died of COVID-19 in Maryland and over 505,000 have tested positive for the virus, according to state data.

## A Living Will for Your Dying Wish

by John Grimaldi  
Association Of Mature American Citizens

WASHINGTON (September 3, 2021)—“You don’t have to be old and sickly to start thinking about the benefits of making a living will, but it’s well worth giving it serious thought if you are a senior citizen,” says Rebecca Weber, CEO of the Association of Mature American Citizens [AMAC].

Weber explains that a “last will” is a document that lets you decide how your possessions, property and money will be distributed among family and friends when you die. A living will allows you to choose how you wish to be treated in the event that death is imminent and you are unable to communicate your wishes to your doctors and your family. “A living will does not go into effect if you are able to think and talk about the options you have, if you have been in an accident or are suffering from a dangerous illness. It only takes effect if you are incapacitated and cannot express your wishes.”

You can find “do-it-yourself” living will templates on the Internet and while they are relatively easy to complete, it’s important to bear in mind that different states have different rules about preparing living wills and so you may want to consult an attorney. You may also want to discuss your decision to execute a living will with your family and

your primary care physician. After all, if you are incapacitated and can’t communicate your wishes to the attending medical team, you’ll need someone to inform them that you have a living will. And should you have religious doubts or concerns, talk it over with your minister, priest or rabbi, says AMAC’s Weber.

The American Bar Association [ABA] suggests you may also want to consider providing a close relative with your health care directive, specifically for medical decision making. The ABA also notes that: “The critical task in advance care planning is to clarify your values, goals, and wishes that you want others to follow if they must make decisions for you, rather than trying to address every possible medical treatment. Workbooks such as The Tool Kit for Health Care Advance Planning can help you: [www.ambar.org/ag-ingtoolkit](http://www.ambar.org/ag-ingtoolkit).”

Attending doctors are required to adhere to your wishes when presented with a living will and/or a close relative or friend with your medical durable power of attorney. By following your instructions, they are providing immunity for themselves should an unexpected lawsuit arise.

Finally, you should be aware that prepar-

ing and presenting your living will/advance directive is only part of the process of ensuring that your wishes are followed in an end of life situation. The Bar Association puts it this way:

- First, make sure your doctor understands and supports your wishes, and you understand your health state, likely futures, and options.
- Second, there is no guarantee that your directive will follow you in your medical record, especially if you are transferred from one facility to another. You or your proxy should always double-check to be sure your providers are aware of your directive and have a copy.
- Advance planning is an ongoing, evolving process. Review your wishes whenever any of the Five D’s occur: (1) you reach a new decade in age; (2) you experience the death of a loved one; (3) you divorce; (4) you are given a diagnosis of a significant medical condition; (5) you suffer a decline in your medical condition or functioning.

The 2.4 million member Association of Mature American Citizens [AMAC] [www.amac.us](http://www.amac.us) is a vibrant, vital senior advocacy organization that takes its marching orders from its members. AMAC Action is a non-profit, non-partisan organization representing the membership in our nation’s capital and in local Congressional Districts throughout the country.

### Health Spotlight

## Catholic Charities DC to Offer Free Dental Clinics in Mid-Maryland Mission of Mercy

*First of 10 monthly one-day clinics for those in need will be Sept. 18 in Silver Spring  
Clinic in October will be in Temple Hills*

By ALEXANDRA PORBEN  
Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of Washington

WASHINGTON (September 9, 2021)—Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of Washington will offer 10 monthly one-day dental clinics during the Mid-Maryland Mission of Mercy to help low-income residents overcome barriers to good oral health.

The free services for adults with appointments will take place beginning at 8 a.m. on the third Saturday of each month at one of Catholic Charities’ three dental facilities. No clinics will be held in December or July 2022. The first three clinics are:

- **Sept. 18 at the Catholic Charities Center, 12247 Georgia Ave., Silver Spring, MD 20902,**
- **Oct. 16 at the Susan Denison Mona Center, 5859 Allentown Way, Temple Hills, MD 20748, and**
- **Nov. 20 at the Spanish Catholic Center, 1618 Monroe St. NW, Washington, DC 20010.**

“For the past eight years, Catholic Charities DC has provided over \$3 million worth of free dental services to 3,750 patients at the biannual Mission of Mercy free dental clinic,” said Deacon James Nalls, executive director of the Family, Parish and Community Outreach department and organizer of the event. “Because of the pandemic, we’ve moved from a one-day event to monthly clinics. We hope that the new model will address the huge demand for oral health access in the community.”

Mission of Mercy offers oral-hygiene education and the restorative treatments fillings and extractions. Dentists will determine which emergency services can be offered to patients. If necessary, follow-up services will be done by local dental providers.

“We are thrilled to offer access to dental care, as many of our patients, due to certain circumstances, are not able to receive proper care. Without good oral health, there are medical conditions such as hypertension, diabetes and COVID-19 in which an individual can have worsening symptoms,” said Dr. Lucciola Lambruschini, director of dental services.

Volunteer dentists and dental assistants will staff the clinics, and supporting volunteers will serve as greeters, registrars and interpreters. In all, 100 volunteers will support this important oral health initiative.

“Dental professionals and supporting volunteers are incredibly generous and eagerly give their time and skills to care for other people who do not have access to dental care,” said Margaret O’Neill, director of volunteer engagement.

The Mid-Maryland Mission of Mercy would not be possible without support from the Maryland State Dental Association Foundation.

Resources: Details about the Mid-Maryland Mission of Mercy clinics are available on our website. For information on volunteer opportunities, visit <https://bit.ly/3jhzMJh>.

Catholic Charities DC is the largest independent social services agency in the Metropolitan D.C. area. As the charitable arm of the Archdiocese of Washington, Catholic Charities DC invests in communities by providing critical services to hundreds of thousands of people in need throughout the District of Columbia and Montgomery, Prince George’s, Charles, Calvert and St. Mary’s counties in Maryland. The organization works tirelessly to give help that empowers and hope that lasts to those it serves regardless of background, belief or circumstance. For more information, visit [www.catholiccharitiesdc.org](http://www.catholiccharitiesdc.org) and follow us on social media @CCADW.

## How Some Patients Are Finding Drug-Free Relief From Chronic Pain

(StatePoint) When Chad VanCamp, 42, began feeling intense pain in his tailbone whenever he sat down, life changed. Suddenly, his favorite hobbies became unbearable and he began dreading everyday activities that most people wouldn’t think twice about—car rides, airplane trips and even going out to dinner.

More than 50 million people in the United States live with chronic pain—which is pain that persists for six months or longer. Unfortunately, many suffer without finding relief, and not for lack of trying. Pain is one of the most common reasons adults seek medical care, but its sources are often complex and difficult to diagnose. Additionally, patients may not be familiar with the wide range of available treatments.

As for VanCamp, he tried many different relief strategies, including visiting his family doctor, seeing a chiropractor, and getting cortisone shots. Some of these measures provided him with temporary relief, but nothing worked long-term. Eventually, the pain was so intense that he even met with a doctor to discuss the possibility of having his tailbone removed. Having left no stone unturned, VanCamp was angry and frustrated, nearly resigning himself to the idea that relief might never come.

Chronic pain like VanCamp’s is a serious medical issue and can be linked to restrictions in mobility and daily activities, dependence on opioids, anxiety and depression, and poor perceived health or reduced quality of life. Unfortunately, it is also an issue exacerbated by recent world events. In a survey conducted by Boston Scientific of chronic pain sufferers, nearly half of the respondents reported that their pain had worsened during the pandemic.



PHOTO COURTESY STATEPOINT

**Experts say non-drug therapies can provide long-term solutions for chronic pain.**

“Given that the opioid epidemic continues to surge, educating patients about non-drug treatment interventions is critical,” says Dr. Louis Raso, a pain specialist and owner of an interventional pain management practice. “Pain physicians actually have many non-drug tools in our toolbox to address chronic pain.”

For example, Dr. Raso treats many of his patients with spinal cord stimulation (SCS). Most commonly used to treat pain experienced in the lower back, legs and feet, SCS interrupts the perception of pain as it travels to the brain. This small device is im-

planted under the skin and flexible leads are connected to the stimulator and placed near specific nerves along the spinal cord.

And because each person experiences pain differently, patients can adjust the programming of the device to personalize their treatment.

When VanCamp realized that his pain was hindering his ability to be fully present in his life and the lives of his family members, he underwent a procedure to implant the Spectra WaveWriter SCS System from Boston Scientific, which is designed to offer fast, tailored pain relief. That was two-and-a-half years ago, and with SCS, he’s had nearly complete pain relief. Today, favorite activities like family bike rides and hunting trips are no big deal. He even went horseback riding—something he’d never dreamed he’d be able to do just a few years ago.

“Above all else, SCS has helped me feel like a normal person again,” says VanCamp. “While results may vary among patients, I would urge anyone living with chronic pain to consider this and other treatment options, and to remember that they’re not ‘broken,’ they’re just in pain. Don’t ever give up searching. I found SCS and it completely turned my life around.”

To learn more about chronic pain, take a pain assessment quiz, connect with other patients and find a pain management specialist in your area, visit [pain.com](http://pain.com), a resource from Boston Scientific.

Chronic pain can make daily life unbearable. However, experts say that non-drug therapies can provide a long-term solution for patients.

# COUNTY CHURCH DIRECTORY

Author from A3

This event is co-presented with the University of Maryland Center for Literary and Comparative Studies, "Antiracism: Communities + Collaborations." Registration through the University of Maryland is required for this event.

About the University of Maryland Center for Literary and Comparative Studies, "Antiracism: Communities + Collaborations" *Antiracism: Communities + Collaborations* allows the Center for Literary & Comparative Studies to carry our collective work from 2020-21 forward as we return to campus. Following the Mellon Foundation's new emphasis on building "just communities," "Antiracism: Communities + Collaborations" features scholarship, teaching, and public engagement to reimagine boundaries, model antiracist literary and rhetorical inquiry, and foster collaborative relations across and beyond campus. *Antiracism: Communities + Collaborations* builds on the Center for Literary and Comparative Studies' 2020-2021 series, *Antiracism: Research • Teaching • Public Engagement*, which featured 66 speakers and 22 events, and registered over 3,000 people from 13 countries (with an archive of 19 videos and essays drawn from the series published in the *Los Angeles Review of Books* and forthcoming in *Public Books* and *The Eighteenth Century: Theory and Interpretation*), the CLCS Steering Committee is sponsoring a second year of antiracist programming in 2021-2022.

The Prince George's County Memorial Library System (PGCMLS) helps customers discover and define opportunities that shape their lives. The Library serves the 915,000+ residents of Prince George's County, Maryland through 19 branch libraries, a 24/7 online library, and pop-up services throughout the community. PGCMLS is a responsive and trusted community-driven organization. Programs, services, and outreach activities serve booklovers, immigrants and refugees, job seekers, children, young professionals, seniors, and families alike. PGCMLS' robust online offerings include curated content collections for kids, teens, educators, Spanish speakers, and more. Virtual events and outreach provide access to the Library from the comfort of home or on the go. Special programs include the D.R.E.A.M. Lab, STEM Pals, and 3D printing, which offer teens and lifelong learners with opportunities to learn cutting-edge technology and STEM skills for job readiness or personal enrichment. The Library also provides drive-up WiFi access at all branches and mobile hotspot devices. As a strong community partner, the Library regularly collaborates with local government agencies and non-profit organizations to provide access to essential community services and programs. Partners include the Prince George's County Human Relations Commission, Employ Prince George's, Prince George's County Public Schools, and Prince George's Community College. Visit [pgcmls.info](http://pgcmls.info) or the Largo-Kettering Branch at 9601 Capital Lane, Largo, MD 20774.

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