

# The Prince George's Post



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## The Awakening at National Harbor Will Undergo Restoration This Summer

National Harbor will spend over \$70,000 on iconic statue's repairs

By PRESS OFFICER  
National Harbor

NATIONAL HARBOR, Md., (April 1, 2024)—When National Harbor opened 16 years ago, developer Milt Peterson was committed to making art accessible. He wanted the destination to have a collection that was engaging to visitors of all ages. Therefore, when the late founder and chairman of Peterson Companies, developer of National Harbor was alerted that J. Seward John's "The Awakening" was placed up for sale, he seized the opportunity to purchase. The 5-piece, 72-foot cast aluminum sculpture depicts a distressed giant emerging from the earth and currently sits in the sand on the waterfront at National Harbor (153 National Plaza).

After being in Metro Washington D.C., Peterson wanted to keep the beloved piece local and purchased it for \$740,000. In February 2008, months before National Harbor's opening, "The



PHOTO COURTESY NATIONAL HARBOR

National Harbor has committed \$70,000 to repair the beloved 43-year-old, 72-foot cast aluminum sculpture that currently sits in the sand on the waterfront at National Harbor.

"The Awakening" was moved from Hains Point to National Harbor. A specially built beach was created along the Potomac River to allow visitors to interact with the art. He wanted the piece to be in

the heart of National Harbor, where it would have the highest engagement. After years of being climbed on, photographed, and the summer sun, it is need of a shin replacement.

As the stewards of the beloved sculpture, National Harbor has committed \$70,000

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## Prince George's County Health Department Launches Two New Programs After Receiving More Than \$7 Million in Grants

New Programs to Provide Comprehensive Behavioral Health Care for County Children, Youth, and Families

By PRESS OFFICER  
Prince George's County Health Department

LARGO, Md. (March 29, 2024)—The Prince George's County Health Department, Behavioral Health Division, is proud to announce the launch of the System of Care and Healthy Transitions grant programs on Saturday, March 30, 2024. These behavioral health programs are made possible through significant grant resources from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), marking a crucial step forward in providing comprehensive mental health support for young individuals and their families in Prince George's County.

"These grants emphasize the importance of providing timely assistance to children and families facing emotional distress,"

said Dr. Matthew Levy, Health Officer. "This supports the Health Department's commitment to implementing programs that will effectively support the emotional well-being of children and families, thereby reducing potential risks."

The Behavioral Health Division of the Prince George's County Health Department recently secured two substantial grants totaling \$7.75 million over five years from SAMHSA. These grants are specifically designated to enhance mental health services for children, youth, and young adults, along with vital services and support to their families.

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## Town of Cheverly Flood Mitigation Project Awarded \$1,688,000 Direct Federal Investment

By PRESS OFFICER  
Town of Cheverly

CHEVERLY, Md. (April 2, 2024)—The Town of Cheverly is pleased to announce that its Flood Mitigation Project has been selected for Fiscal Year 2024 Congressionally Directed Spending (CDS) funding. The project was included in the FY24 Omnibus Spending bill, passed by Congress and signed into law by the President. The funding allocation of \$1,688,000 represents a significant investment in the Town's ongoing efforts to mitigate the impact of flooding and ensure the safety and security of the people of Maryland.

This funding is the result of the diligent work of the town's staff, led by Town Administrator Dylan Galloway, and the Town of Cheverly is proud to have been awarded the necessary funding to address the challenges posed by flooding in our community. Their efforts have paid off, and the Town of Cheverly is proud to have secured the necessary funding to address the challenges posed by flooding in our community. The investment will provide the resources needed to deal with this critical issue and enhance the Town's infrastructure, protecting residents and their properties from the devastating effects of flooding.

The successful outcome of this funding endeavor would not have been possible without the support and advocacy of Senator Benjamin Cardin and Senator Chris Van Hollen. The Senators have recognized the importance of flood mitigation measures in ensuring the

safety and security of our residents. Their dedication to the people of Maryland and their commitment to addressing our community's needs have made this funding award possible.

"Warmer temperatures and stronger storms have brought historic flooding to our region, and the Town of Cheverly has experienced devastating impacts. Funding for this project will help Cheverly adapt to the changing climate and protect homes and businesses in the area from expensive flood damage. In working with municipal leaders, Team Maryland continues to advance community-led initiatives that are building safer, more resilient neighborhoods," said Senator Cardin.

Cheverly is committed to utilizing this funding to prevent future flooding incidents in town, ensuring that our community does not experience a repeat of the devastating March 2021 flood. The effects of that flood were deeply distressing for many families, some of whom still feel its impact today. This funding award represents a significant step in our ongoing efforts to build a resilient and secure community and improve Town infrastructure.

"The Town of Cheverly has experienced extreme flooding over the past several years, hurting local residents, property, and vehicles," said Senator Van Hollen. "These funds will help provide the critical infrastructure upgrades necessary to protect Cheverly from flooding and prevent damage to countless homes and roads."

## Prince George's County Alumnae Chapter of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. Celebrates 50 Years of Service With a Golden Gala Weekend

Chapter will award two \$50,000 endowments to two local colleges in honor of 50 years of service

By PRESS OFFICER  
Prince George's County Alumnae Chapter (PGCAC) of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Incorporated

CAPITOL HEIGHTS, Md. (April 4, 2024)—The Prince George's County Alumnae Chapter (PGCAC) of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Incorporated, in a significant milestone, announces its 50th Anniversary Celebration, marking five decades of unwavering commitment to Sisterhood, Scholarship, Service, and Social Action. This momentous occasion will be commemorated with a Golden Gala Weekend Celebration, April 13-14, 2024, at The Hotel at the University of Maryland. The celebration is in partnership with Delta Foundation, Inc.

Since its charter by 23 visionary women on March 31, 1974, PGCAC has stood as a beacon of excellence in Prince George's County, Maryland. It has grown to be the largest chapter of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc., garnering award-winning recognition for its impactful programs and services focused on adults and youth alike, in alignment with the

Sorority's Five-Point Programmatic Thrust—Economic Development, Educational Development, International Awareness and Involvement, Physical and Mental Health, and Political Awareness and Involvement.

Today, PGCAC's membership consists of over 1,100 college-educated, professional, predominantly African American women, who continue to uphold the Chapter's legacy of excellence. In recognition of its 50th anniversary, PGCAC recently awarded \$100,000 in scholarships to 23 high school scholars and continuing college students at its annual Scholarship Fashion Show Luncheon Benefit. Over the years, the Chapter has awarded more than \$1.6 million in scholarships to over 680 deserving students in Prince George's County.

To honor its 50 years of service and social action, PGCAC launched its 50-Favorite Things Community Service Projects and will award two \$50,000 endowments in Education and S.T.E.A.M. (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and

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## Prince George's County Planning Board and Planning Department Announce April 2024 Events and Meetings

By CALISTA BLACK  
M-NCPPC

LARGO, Md. (April 3, 2024)—The Prince George's County Planning Board and the Prince George's County Planning Department of The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission announce their upcoming public events and meetings for April 2024. For more details, review the list of events and meetings below or visit [www.pgplanningboard.org](http://www.pgplanningboard.org) and [www.pgplanning.org](http://www.pgplanning.org). Events and meetings are subject to change.

Prince George's County  
Planning Board Meetings

Thursday, April 18 | 10 a.m.

Thursday, April 25 | 10 a.m.

The Prince George's County Planning Board meets virtually on Thursdays to consider planning, zoning, subdivision, and other matters within its jurisdiction. The meetings may be viewed via live streaming video. Public participation is encouraged either through a phone bridge or by using GoTo Meeting. Everyone who wishes to speak at the Planning Board meeting must register online by Noon on the Tuesday, two days prior to the Planning Board meeting. Written comments, documents, and exhibits must be received via email, fax, or mail by Noon on the Tuesday before the Planning Board meeting to be included in the record. For more details, visit: [www.pgplanningboard.org](http://www.pgplanningboard.org).

Subdivision and Development  
Review Committee Meeting

Friday, April 12 | 9:30 a.m.

Friday, April 26 | 9:30 a.m.

Subdivision and Development Review Committee (SDRC) is a coordination and interagency meeting early in the development review process with the applicant and M-NCPPC staff, where the public can be invited to virtually view the meeting only. The meetings are held virtually and may be viewed via live streaming video. The agendas are posted online.

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### INSIDE

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Harmony Hall Arts Center Unveils Marcel Taylor's Newest Exhibition: "Unapologetic"

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Gift Recipient Shares How Families Are Making a Life-Changing Impact With Operation Christmas Child Shoebox Gifts

Thursday, April 11 at 7 p.m.—Jireh Place (3121 Trinity Dr. Bowie, MD 20715)

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TARMAC Lounge and Restaurant Turns to AI for Business Services

Leadership Maryland Announces Emerging Leader Program Inaugural Class

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# COMMUNITY

## Restoration from A1

to repair the shin. “The Awakening is a signature piece of our outdoor art here at National Harbor that we want to make sure visitors can enjoy for years to come,” said Kent Digby, EVP Asset Management, Operations, and Marketing. “Many visitors come to National Harbor just to see this sculpture. Milt loved watching children engage with The Awakening.”

After 43 years, it’s understandable that “The Awakening” needs some love. National Harbor has committed to hiring The Seward Johnson Atelier, the late sculptor’s foundation, to commence the repairs. The section of the leg to be replaced is currently being cast and the restoration is expected to take place in June. The replacement process should take about a week to complete, during that time the statue will be closed to the public.

The National Harbor art collection consists of a number of sculptures commissioned from nationally and internationally known artists Albert Paley, John Lopez and local artist Cheryl Foster, Steven Weitzman and others. An interactive guide to the art collection is accessible by texting ACNH to 56512.

For more information on National Harbor, visit [www.NationalHarbor.com](http://www.NationalHarbor.com).

*Situated on the banks of the historic Potomac River and just minutes from the nation’s capital, National Harbor is a waterfront resort destination unlike any other. National Harbor is home to two of Maryland’s Four Diamond rated hotels—Gaylord National Resort and Convention Center, the East Coast’s largest non-gaming hotel and convention center and has almost 2,000 hotel rooms and 660,000 sq. ft. of meeting space. MGM National Harbor, an integrated luxury casino resort with renowned chef-driven restaurants, a 3,000-seat state-of-the-art theater and one of the largest gaming floors outside of Las Vegas. The vibrant Waterfront District features boutique shops, restaurants and entertainment options along picturesque promenades. The iconic Capital Wheel, a 180-ft observation wheel, Tanger National Harbor offers 85 designer outlet stores, and a robust calendar of events round out this destination that welcomes more than 15.2 million visitors a year. For more information, visit [www.NationalHarbor.com](http://www.NationalHarbor.com).*

*The Seward Johnson Atelier expands the capacity of artists through immersive making and creative collaboration—producing and preserving works of art and design and creating cultural experiences to enrich communities and inspire engagement and was incorporated exclusively for charitable and educational purposes within the meaning of Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code; particularly, to promote the appreciation of, and education about, sculpture and public art in general, primarily thorough the creation, maintenance, sales and public placement of J. Seward Johnson, Jr.’s artwork. [www.sewardjohnsonatelier.org](http://www.sewardjohnsonatelier.org)*

## Nike to Host Volleyball Camps at Bowie State

By PRESS OFFICER  
BSU Athletics

BOWIE, Md. (March 29, 2024)—Bowie State women’s volleyball and Nike have teamed up for a four-day camp on Monday, July 29 through Thursday, August 1 from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. on the beautiful campus of Bowie State University inside A.C. Jordan Arena. The camps are geared towards girls ages (10–17) and boys ages (10–14) with the programs emphasizing all skills, serving and passing, setting and hitting Monday through Thursday.

**2024 Camp Dates**  
**July 29–August 1:**  
**All Skills Camp (\$425)**

All Skills program is designed to improve the fundamental skills needed for volleyball; passing, setting, serving, attacking, blocking, and individual defense. Campers can expect instruction on offensive and defensive skills through team play.

**August 2:**  
**Serving & Passing Clinic (\$55)**

Serving & Passing Clinic is designed for players to improve the strength of their serve and the effectiveness of passing. The serving portion of the clinic will focus on the various techniques of serving, along

with improving consistency. The passing portion of the clinic will focus on various passing techniques for both front-row and back-row passers, as well as all-around ball control techniques for all positions. Recommended for all players and positions.

**August 2:**  
**Setter & Hitter Clinic (\$55)**

Setter & Hitter Clinic is designed to focus on the fundamentals of setting and hitting. The setting portion of the clinic will focus on mastering hand positioning, follow-through, footwork, and decision-making. The hitting portion of the clinic will focus on mastering their approach, footwork, and arm swing. Hitters and setters will be combined for maximum repetition, drills, and live gameplay. Recommended for players of all abilities.

For more information regarding the Nike Camp at Bowie State, please visit

<https://www.usportscamps.com/volleyball/nike/volleyball-camp-bowie-state-university>.

For the most up-to-date information on Bowie State Athletics and its 13 varsity sport teams, visit [bsubulldogs.com](http://bsubulldogs.com).

## Gift Recipient Shares How Families Are Making a Life-Changing Impact With Operation Christmas Child Shoebox Gifts

By PRESS OFFICER  
Samaritan’s Purse

UPPER MARLBORO, Md. (April 2, 2024)—Operation Christmas Child, a project of international Christian relief organization Samaritan’s Purse, delivers gift-filled shoeboxes to millions of children in need each year. For years, Upper Marlboro families have packed shoebox gifts for boys and girls around the world. One of these gifts reached Analyn Elliott in the Philippines when she was a young girl. Elliott is now visiting Upper Marlboro residents to share how the simple gift had a life-changing impact.

Elliott will be telling her story to local groups and churches. She wants to encourage residents as they kick off the upcoming collection season to fill more than shoeboxes with fun toys, school supplies and personal care items—contributing to the global goal of reaching 12 million children in Jesus’ Name.

### Event Details

**Thursday, April 11 at 7 p.m.—Jireh Place (3121 Trinity Dr. Bowie, MD 20715)**

What Analyn Elliott remembers most about receiving an Operation Christmas Child shoebox gift is the joy she felt when she realized it was hers. That was a gift in itself for the middle child in a family of seven in the Philippines who struggled to make ends meet. Elliott tried not to compare what she had or didn’t have with her classmates, but it was hard not to wish for something to call her own. When Elliott received a shoebox—her first gift—she was filled with immense joy.

During Operation Christmas Child’s National Collection Week Nov. 18–25, Upper Marlboro residents can bring gift-filled shoeboxes to multiple drop-off locations across the area to be announced in late October.

For more information, call 410-772-7360, or visit [samaritanspurse.org/occ](http://samaritanspurse.org/occ). Participants can donate \$10 per shoebox gift online through “Follow Your Box” and receive a tracking label to discover its destination. Those who prefer the convenience of online shopping can browse [samaritanspurse.org/buildonline](http://samaritanspurse.org/buildonline) to select gifts matched to a child’s specific age and gender, then finish packing the virtual shoebox by adding a photo and personal note of encouragement.

Operation Christmas Child, a project of Samaritan’s Purse, seeks to demonstrate God’s love in a tangible way to children in need around the world and, together with the local church worldwide, to share the Good News of Jesus Christ. Since 1993, Operation Christmas Child has collected and delivered more than 220 million gift-filled shoeboxes to children in more than 170 countries and territories.

## C&J Migrant Solutions Foundation Hosts 2024 Fundraiser, Amplifying Immigrant Voices & Highlighting MD’s Economic Opportunities

By PRESS OFFICER  
CJ Migrant Solutions Foundation, Inc.

FORESTVILLE, Md. (April 4, 2024)—C&J Migrant Solutions Foundation announces An Immigrant Experience 2024 Summit and Dinner on **April 19, 2024**, from 6–9 p.m., at 3125 Ritchie Road, Forestville, MD 20747. The interactive and thought-provoking affair, will gather diverse speakers addressing the challenges faced by migrants, as well as economic opportunities for Maryland. The event will also feature the Honorable Councilwoman Wala Blegay and Maryland State Delegate, Honorable Ashanti

Martinez, representing Districts 6 and 22, respectively.

Established in 2023, C&J Migrant Solutions Foundation, established by Jamaican-born migrant and certified immigration form specialist, Candace Boykins, is dedicated to assisting migrants in navigating the immigration process on their way to becoming legal citizens of the United States.

“We stand on our mission to empower individuals and families by providing affordable and accessible immigration services”, says Boykins. “Events like the Immigrant Experience 2024 Summit and Dinner offer a platform for dialogue and

empowerment within the migrant community.”

With a lean staff of five, the black and woman-owned organization has already served over 150 members of the diaspora, including Africans, Caribbeans, and Afro-Latinos, since its inception.

Offering tailored support services around mental health counseling, ESL and citizenship classes, tax preparation and Notary services, C&J Migrant Solutions Foundation advocates for inclusivity and social equity for Black immigrants, as well as recognition of the contributions of the Black migrant community.

## The Animal Medical Center of Watkins Park Hosts Open House

By PRESS OFFICER  
Animal Medical Center of Watkins Park

UPPER MARLBORO, Md. (April 5, 2024)—The Animal Medical Center of Watkins Park invites the community to an open house on **Saturday, April 20**, from noon to 4 p.m. The event, which will be held at 60 Watkins Park Drive, Upper Marlboro, MD 20774, will allow pet owners and animal lovers to explore the center’s services and meet the veterinary team.

Drs. Kristen Hogue, Shadawn Salmond-Jimenez and Heather Dearie will showcase the center’s capabilities, including wellness exams, surgery, dental care, diagnostics, and more. The center also offers microchipping, pharmacy services, laboratory testing, preventative care and behavioral counseling.

### Meet the Veterinarians:

- Dr. Kristen Hogue, a Bowie native and Cornell University graduate, focuses on preventative medicine, dentistry, soft tissue surgery, and interest in small exotic pet medicine.
- Dr. Shadawn Salmond-Jimenez, a Baltimore native and Tuskegee University graduate focuses on diagnostic ultrasound, preventative medicine, with interest in internal medicine.

- Dr. Heather Dearie, a Millersville native and Tufts University graduate, focuses on preventive medicine, with interests in senior pet care, and exotic animal care.

### Open House Activities:

- Teddy Bear Clinic
- Dental demonstrations and talks
- Hospital tours
- Ultrasound demonstrations and talks
- Training demonstrations for dogs
- Raffles with prizes including free exams, dental procedures, and nail trims

### Additional Highlights:

- PG Animal Management Guild (PGAMD) with adoptable pet poster
  - Donation table for the Ellen Buck Fund
  - Complimentary food and refreshments
- For more information, contact the Animal Medical Center of Watkins Park at (301) 249-3030

Animal Medical Center of Watkins Park has provided excellent veterinary care for pets in Bowie, Mitchellville, Upper Marlboro, and Davidsonville communities for over 30 years. We offer state-of-the-art diagnostics and medical, surgical, and dental care.

**STATIONARY ENGINEER APPRENTICESHIP**



Applications for the IUOE Local 99 Apprenticeship Program will be accepted during the period of May 6–10, 2024, inclusive. Applications must be completed in person by the applicant at Engineer Center 9315 Largo Drive West, Upper Marlboro, MD 20774 from 9:30 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. \$35 application fee includes drug screen. For additional information scan the QR Code.





Equal Opportunity M/F

## Harmony’s Seniors Celebrate Women’s History Month

By LORRAINE W. JOHNSON  
Harmony at Enterprise

Women’s History Month was celebrated with a lot of vigor, pizzazz, umph, and style on Sunday, March 24, 2024, in Harmony at Enterprise’s Pub at 6:30 p.m.

The program featured Reverend Anita J. Gould, who offered prayer and led the Harmony Choir in a spirited rendition of “Sign Me Up.” Janice Boettger served as accompanist for the Harmony Choir and the program’s coordinator. Pianists Barbara Drew and Barbara Masters performed beautiful mu-

sical selections to the delight of a large and quite appreciative audience which consisted of independent and assisted living residents as well as family members.

Jean S. Bell, appropriately attired in clothing that would have suited Sojourner Truth (1851) and was coached by Caroline Pleasant, provided a dynamic reading of ‘Ain’t I a Woman?’ Maya Angelou’s poem, “Still I Rise,” which was presented at President Bill Clinton’s inauguration, caused the audience to reflect upon its significance as well as its meaning as it was dramatically presented by Irene Douglas. The fact that both ladies

were wheel-chair bound did not prevent them from sharing their God-given gifts. Lorraine W. Johnson read “Woman” by Nikki Giovanni and was assisted in the poem’s presentation by Shirley Day, Louise J. Tankerson, and Linda Wallace.

The program concluded with the rendition of Barbara Drew’s piano rendition of “God Be With You Till We Meet Again” and the Irish Blessing.

### Announcement

Special Mother’s Day Program will be held on **May 9, 2024** in the Harmony at Enterprise Pub at 6:30 p.m.

# COMMENTARY

## Marc Morial

President and CEO, National Urban League



### To Be Equal:

## State's Hostile Takeover of Tennessee State University Is Stark Example of Blaming the Victim of the State's Own 30-Year Crime Spree

*"By underfunding public HBCUs and denying the value of Black students on non-HBCU campuses, these extremists are making very clear the kinds of students they do and don't want to succeed. They also are the same ones waging war on the teaching of our nation's full history. But if we studied that history they seek to quash, we would know that the news out of Tennessee is just the latest example of conservatives rejecting the notion that Black people possess the capacity for self-governance."*

—Gevin Reynolds

It's a familiar pattern in right-wing political manipulation: Sabotage an institution. Point to the resulting damage as evidence of the institution's ineffectiveness. Use the manufactured evidence to subvert the institution.

That's what's at play in Tennessee Governor Bill Lee's hostile takeover of Tennessee State University.

Over the last three decades, the state of Tennessee has shortchanged TSU by a staggering \$2.1 billion, according to a federal study. Unsurprisingly, TSU has faced challenges in maintaining financial stability. But instead of responding ra-

tionally by honoring its legal obligation to equitably fund the university, the state has chosen to dissolve the state's board of trustees.

It's hard to find a more blatant example of blaming the victim.

TSU, like other HBCUs, was created by state lawmakers in response to an 1890 ultimatum: admit Black students to existing land grant universities or create a separate institution. Federal law required "a just and equitable division" of funds between the two.

Yet year after year, in budget after budget, the state of Tennessee continually allocated more funding per student and more funding overall to the University of Tennessee-Knoxville than to TSU. In the last five years alone, the state has spent an average of \$2,206 more per student at the University of Tennessee-Knoxville than at TSU, Nashville's NewsChannel 5 found.

A study by the U.S. Departments of Education and Agriculture recently found that of the 18 states with historically Black land-grant institutions, only Delaware and Ohio have equitably funded their HBCUs in accordance with federal law. Overall, the 16 states have underfunded their HBCUs by \$12 billion between 1987 to 2020.

"Unacceptable funding inequities have forced many of our nation's distinguished Historically Black Colleges and Universities to operate with inadequate resources and delay critical investments

in everything from campus infrastructure to research and development to student support services," U.S. Secretary of Education Miguel Cardona wrote in a letter to 16 governors in September. "I am continually inspired by all that HBCUs have achieved despite having to punch above their weight."

Despite the fact that the Tennessee legislature had previously acknowledged its own failure to comply with the law, Senate Education Chairman Jon Lundberg responded to the report by accusing the Education and Agricultural departments of "using TSU to stoke political and racial division in our state."

Lundberg's response is familiar to historians of the "Lost Cause" mythology that permeated the Civil Rights Era, falsely labeling those fought end segregation and secure voting rights as "outside agitators" disrupting the cherished Southern way of life.

The modern "Lost Cause" movement—known in some circles as "anti-woke"—doesn't pretend that Black Americans are content to live under racism. It claims that racism doesn't exist.

Similarly, the state of Tennessee's solution to racially discriminatory funding of its universities isn't to provide equitable funding; it's to shut down any discussion of it.

—April 4, 2024

## Ben Jealous

Executive Director, Sierra Club



## Love for the Outdoors is a Gift That Pays Forward

When we see a 75-year-old white man out in the woods with a group of Black and brown kids from low-income neighborhoods, teaching them about nature, few of us assume he is there because that is where he feels most comfortable.

Probably even fewer of us assume many of those kids look just like the ones he grew up with in public housing projects more than 60 years ago. Rocky Milburn grew up as one of the few white kids in a mostly Black public housing development in southern Indiana. His family was very poor. They were still poor when they moved into an old farmhouse in the country. That was where Rocky fell in love with the outdoors. Even though his parents struggled financially—perhaps even worse than when they lived in the projects—Rocky did not care.

"We lived right across the street from a creek," Rocky pronounces it "creek," "and I spent my days running the fields. You can kind of say it was my drug at the time." For more than 25 years, Rocky has been an Outings Leader with the Sierra Club's Inspiring Connections Outdoors (ICO) program in Tampa, Florida. The program takes youth from underserved communities on outings such as camping and canoe trips and visits to the beach. Rocky says, "many of these kids live two miles from the beach but have never seen the ocean."

His own experience has taught Rocky the importance of sharing his love of the outdoors. When the kids stand around Rocky and learn from him about nature, they do not see his age or his race. They see his heart. And they know his heart understands them

and the challenges they are facing because he is from the same type of place. People like Rocky who serve as nature's ambassadors to young people, and people of any age who are nature-deprived, are heroes. The kids in his program learn how to appreciate and be good caretakers of nature. They experience firsthand the lessons nature has to teach us; how being outdoors benefits both our physical and mental health.

And they carry these lessons with them throughout their lives. Levi Randolph attended the Academy Prep Center of Tampa, which has a partnership with the ICO program. While at Academy Prep, a private middle school designed to give bright children from low income families top-notch educational opportunities, Levi went on his very first camping trip: an outing led by Rocky Milburn. Now an adult, Levi is an Outings Leader with the Tampa ICO group alongside Rocky.

Levi is paying forward his experience. He is pursuing a career working with animals and investing his time to make sure other kids from his old neighborhood and school get the same chance he had to explore and enjoy nature. This is a story that repeats itself in families and communities in every pocket of our country. And we should encourage and celebrate it.

As someone who comes from a long line of outdoors enthusiasts who passed the love of nature on to me, I try to do the same for my kids. Whether we are skiing in the winter, paddling and fishing in the summer, or visiting national parks year round, I try

to do my part to make sure my family stays connected to the great outdoors. Everyone can do this, whether it is a community affair, a family affair, or both. Vedia Barnett is a disabled Air Force veteran.

After suffering a minor stroke, it was reconnecting with the outdoors and her love of nature that gave her a renewed sense of purpose to get back on her feet. "Just hearing the birds and feeling the sun on my face, it was like giving me life back." Now Vedia works with Sierra Club's Military Outdoors campaign, getting other women veterans outdoors.

She recounts one woman who left the service in the 1970s: "This was the first time she felt like she was in community with veterans who looked like her. And I think it's important even for veterans to understand that all these lands are for us—they're for everybody." Vedia's mom, a Marine Corp veteran, has also gotten involved, bringing senior women veterans in their 70s out to join the group's outings.

This month is Earth Month. It is a perfect time to get outside. Bring your friends and family out there with you. If there is a local program near you that helps get kids—or anyone—outside who doesn't typically have a lot of access to nature, consider chipping in your time. A love of nature is infectious. And it is one infection that is very worth spreading.

*Ben Jealous is the Executive Director of the Sierra Club and a Professor of Practice at the University of Pennsylvania.*

—April 5, 2024

### Programs from A1

The System of Care (SOC) grant will also focus on improving mental health outcomes for children and youth who are at risk of entering the child welfare and juvenile justice systems.

The SOC grant focuses on preventing the involvement of at-risk children and youth in the child welfare and juvenile justice systems. With a commitment to assisting at least 350 individuals from birth to age 21 facing emotional challenges, the SOC program aims to provide comprehensive support, prioritizing early intervention to prevent legal issues.

The Healthy Transitions grant targets the critical age group of youth and young adults, ages 16 to 25, offering essential support to navigate emotional turbulence. This initiative seeks to empower a minimum of 275 individuals in Prince George's County, ensuring they receive the necessary resources to improve their emotional well-being and transition successfully into adulthood. Additionally, The Arc of Prince George's County has also been awarded a \$750,000 Healthy Transitions grant from SAMHSA and will collaborate with the Prince George's County Health Department. While focusing on the same age group, they will specifically address the needs of indi-

viduals with Intellectual Developmental Disorders (IDD), further broadening the scope of support and services available to the community.

"The Arc Prince George's County is excited to support people with intellectual disabilities to gain access to mental health screening and treatment, said Constina Berry, Healthy Transitions Project Director. "It has been proven that youth and young adults ages 16–25 struggle to identify mental providers to receive proper treatment. Project LIVE is designed to train more mental health providers to accept people with intellectual disabilities for therapy and comprehensive treatment."

Residents have the option of self-referring, but we are also partnering with various agencies, including the Department of Social Services, Department of Juvenile Services, Department of Family Services, and the Prince George's County Public Schools, to ensure a holistic approach to referrals, enabling residents to access services seamlessly.

Effective March 30, 2024, families will be able to access services and support provided by subcontractors carefully selected by the Prince George's County Health Department, serving as the System of Care Clinical Home Providers and Healthy Transitions Clinical

Home Providers, respectively. These providers are committed to delivering tailored, evidence-based care to meet the unique needs of each individual and family.

Furthermore, non-clinical support is available through organizations such as National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) PGC, the Maryland Coalition of Families (MCF), and the Maryland Coalition for Families: Taking Flight Program, ensuring a comprehensive network of resources for those in need.

Through these subgrants, the Prince George's County Health Department reaffirms its dedication to the well-being of children, young adults, and families, expanding its reach to offer essential support to those who need it most.

For more information about the PGCHD System of Care children, youth, young adults, and families' initiatives and related services, please visit <https://www.princegeorgescountymd.gov/departments-offices/health/behavioral-health-services/systems-care-soc>

### 50 Years from A1

Math) to Bowie State University and Prince George's Community College during the Golden Glitz and Glam Gala.

"I am immensely proud of the work of the award-winning Prince George's County Alumnae Chapter," said Miriam L. Brewer, president of PGCAC. "We have made a positive impact not just in the county, but globally as well and look forward to continuing our service."

The Golden Glitz & Glam Gala will take place on Saturday, April 14 with musical entertainment provided by Washington, DC's own all-female band Be'la Dona. The celebration weekend will end on Sunday, April 14 with an Ecumenical Service featuring keynote speaker Rev. Shavon Arline-Bradley, president & CEO, National Council of Negro Women (NCNW), Inc. and a Jazz Brunch with music provided by the Jazzy Blu Band.

For more information about the 50th Anniversary Golden Gala

Weekend Celebration and to learn more about the Prince George's County Alumnae Chapter's impactful programs and initiatives, please visit [www.pgcacd.org](http://www.pgcacd.org).

Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. was founded in 1913 on the campus of Howard University to promote academic excellence, provide scholarships, support to the underserved, educate and stimulate participation in the establishment of positive public policy and to highlight issues and provide solutions for problems in their communities. Today Delta Sigma Theta Sorority has over 300,000 initiated members and more than 1,000 chapters worldwide, including seven in Wisconsin. The Sorority uses its Five-Point Programmatic Thrust of economic development, educational development, international awareness and involvement, physical and mental health, and political awareness and involvement to create its national and local programs.

## The Prince George's Post

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# BUSINESS AND FINANCE

## Social Security Matters

### Ask Rusty:

### When Should my Wife Claim Her Social Security Benefit?

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

**Dear Rusty:** I just saw an article which said that certain spousal options were going away, but there are still good options for when a spouse can claim. I am filing for my Social Security to start in October when I turn 70. My wife's full retirement age (FRA) is in December, and she now plans to file then for half of what my FRA benefit would have been (our original plan was for both to file in August). My wife's main reason for delaying until her FRA is to lock her into my maximum benefit if she has to someday change to Survivor's Benefit. Will this be gone for us? Neither of us was born before January 1, 1954. Please advise. **Signed: Planning for Both**

**Dear Planning:** I expect that the article you refer to was speaking of the option to claim only a spousal benefit first and allow one's personal SS retirement benefit to grow. That option was available only to those who were born before 1954 and had reached full retirement age. As you now know that option is not available to you.

Assuming your wife's highest benefit entitlement will be as your spouse, your current strategy—you claim your maximum benefit to start in October at age 70 and your wife starts her benefit in December at her FRA—is a good one which will yield the maximum possible monthly benefit for both of you. But for clarity, your wife's survivor benefit as your widow has nothing to do with when she claims her spouse benefits now.

The only thing which will affect your wife's benefit as your surviving spouse is her age when she claims the survivor benefit. If she has already reached her FRA of 66 years and 8 months when you pass, she will get 100% of the amount you were receiving when you died, instead of the smaller spousal amount she was receiving while you were living. Her survivor benefit would only be less than 100% of yours if she claimed it before reaching her full retirement age (which, of course, we hope would not be the case).

Just so you have the complete picture, your wife could, if desired, claim her Social Security to start at the same time as you in October but, since that would be earlier than her FRA, the amount she would get would be less than 50% of your FRA entitlement. Her spouse benefit would be reduced by 0.694% for each month earlier than her FRA it starts. For example, if your wife starts her spousal benefit in October when your benefit starts, she will get about 98.6% of the amount she would get if she waited until December to start her benefits. That's a permanent reduction, so if your wife's life expectancy is at least average (about 87), it's likely still wisest for her to wait until her FRA to start benefits. But in any case, when your wife claims her spousal benefit now will have no effect on the survivor benefit she will get as your future widow.

*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).*

*This article is intended for information purposes only and does not represent legal or financial guidance. It presents the opinions and interpretations of the AMAC Foundation's staff, trained and accredited by the National Social Security Association (NSSA). NSSA and the AMAC Foundation and its staff are not affiliated with or endorsed by the Social Security Administration or any other governmental entity. To submit a question, visit our website ([amacfoundation.org/programs/social-security-advisory](http://amacfoundation.org/programs/social-security-advisory)) or email us at [ssadvisor@amacfoundation.org](mailto:ssadvisor@amacfoundation.org).*

## Meetings from A1

### Prince George's County Historic Preservation Commission

Tuesday, April 16 | 6:30 p.m.

Hosted by the Prince George's County Planning Department, the Prince George's County Historic Preservation Commission meeting will be held virtually on the third Tuesday of the month. For meeting details, visit [pgplanning.org/496/Whats-New](http://pgplanning.org/496/Whats-New), call 301-952-3680, or email [HistoricPreservation@ppd.mnccpc.org](mailto:HistoricPreservation@ppd.mnccpc.org).

### M-NCPPC Full Commission Meeting

Wednesday, April 17 | 10 a.m.

The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission will hold its Full Commission meeting in a hybrid format from the M-NCPPC Parks and Recreation Administration Building in Riverdale and via videoconference. Agenda packets will be available online.

### Addison Road-Seat Pleasant Creative Placemaking Festival

Saturday, April 20 | 11 a.m.-3 p.m.

6301 and 6305 Addison Road, Seat Pleasant, MD 20753

The Prince George's County Planning Department will join the City of Seat Pleasant, Prince George's Arts and Humanities Council, and community partners for a celebration of creativity and culture. Participants will have the opportunity to actively shape the future of the community through interactive art installations, community dialogue sessions, and more.

### Assistance

The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission encourages the participation of persons with disabilities in all its programs and services. Register at least a minimum of two weeks in advance of the program start date to request and receive a disability accommodation. Call the Public Affairs Office at 301-952-3038, email [PublicAffairs@ppd.mnccpc.org](mailto:PublicAffairs@ppd.mnccpc.org), or complete the online form.

## TARMAC Lounge and Restaurant Turns to AI for Business Services

*Using Software with Integrated AI Helps Popular Local Restaurant Improve Sales, Service*

By PRESS OFFICER  
**SWIPEBY**

WINSTON-SALEM, NC (April 4, 2024) —TARMAC Lounge and Restaurant, which brings authentic West African, Nigerian and Central American cuisine to residents of Laurel, MD, and surrounding areas, recently added software integrated with AI to help better serve their customers. Claudia Adejare, Tarmac's owner, is proud to offer locally-sourced dishes to her loyal customers.

In October 2022, Adejare started working with Winston-Salem-based SWIPEBY to handle all online orders for pickup and no-commission delivery, and to help to drive more 5-star reviews on Google. In February 2024, Adejare decided to add some AI-driven features offered by SWIPEBY. They now have an online ordering screen that offers suggestions for other items a customer may want to try.

"We moved TARMAC to Laurel in

December and want to reach more people in this community," said Adejare. "Owning a small restaurant can be difficult because along with preparing and serving memorable dishes, you have to do all of the tasks while running a business, too. SWIPEBY helps take some of that off of my plate."

SWIPEBY, started by CEO Carl Turner when he was a student at Wake Forest University, is designed as a commerce platform to give brick and mortar businesses the ultimate in customer engagement and business service tools. SWIPEBY helps independent businesses, like TARMAC, complete with mega-corporations.

"With our AI support it is almost like TARMAC has increased its staffing by allowing the tools to do some of the tasks that staff has had to do before, freeing them to be more customer facing," Turner explained. "That is a huge benefit to restaurants in particular since staffing is a key ingredient to a successful estab-

lishment and provides a competitive edge against bigger competitors."

*TARMAC Lounge and Restaurant is a family-owned restaurant, operated by lead chef and owner-manager Claudia Adejare. She works closely with farmers and other local businesses to source the ingredients that go into her authentic West African, Nigerian and Central American dishes. They offer a large selection of dishes and consistently get rave reviews from customers.*

*SWIPEBY is a turnkey solution providing powerful AI-driven business services for brick-and-mortar businesses that automates workflow to reduce costs and improve efficiencies. The SWIPEBY platform allows businesses to compete in a highly innovative and evolving marketplace by turning ecommerce data into value with AI. SWIPEBY was founded in 2019 in Winston-Salem, NC and opened an office in Miami, FL in July 2021. [www.swipe.by](http://www.swipe.by).*

## Leadership Maryland Announces Emerging Leader Program Inaugural Class

*40 rising stars and high-potential employees chosen to participate in Leadership Maryland's new six-month professional development program*

By PRESS OFFICER  
**Leadership Maryland**

EASTON, Md. (April 2, 2024)—Leadership Maryland, the statewide nonprofit offering professional development programs dedicated to building a better Maryland by harnessing the strength of its business and community leaders, announces today the 40 individuals selected to participate in the first class of the Emerging Leader Program. The Emerging Leader Program's Class of 2024 consists of 40 rising stars and high-potential employees from across the state who are poised for upward growth within their organizations and who are eager to hone their core leadership skills.

Leadership Maryland's Emerging Leader Program will run from June to November, consisting of monthly day-long sessions that will include both interactive training led by a facilitator and panel discussions featuring leaders from across the state as guest speakers. The program's curriculum offers a holistic approach to leadership development, designed to help each applicant increase their self-awareness and gain behaviors, skills, and tools to become more adaptive, inclusive, strategic, and impactful leaders.

"We are excited to announce the very first Emerging Leader class and welcome these motivated and forward-thinking individuals to our new program," said David Fike '16 (LM) president and CEO, Leadership Maryland. "This year's class selection process was highly competitive, and after careful review of the applications, I am thrilled to share that the 40 members of the Class of 2024 represent a dynamic cross-section of ambitious and promising rising leaders. The knowledge, experience, and connections they will gain in our program will prepare them to become more adaptive and impactful leaders in their careers and communities."

Leadership Maryland's Emerging Leader Program is open to individuals who are advancing in their careers, are actively involved in their communities, and desire to become stronger leaders in both areas. Ideal Leadership Maryland members 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. For more information about Leadership Maryland, please visit [leadershipmd.org](http://leadershipmd.org), call 410-841-2101 or email [info@leadershipmd.org](mailto:info@leadershipmd.org).

### Leadership Maryland's Emerging Leader Program Class of 2024 participants:

Anne J. Allen '24 EL  
Program Officer, Strategy and Evaluation  
The Harry & Jeanette Weinberg Foundation, Inc.

Irmade Altema '24 EL  
Associate Vice President of Government and Business Affairs

Maryland Independent College & University Association

Crimson M. Barocca '24 EL  
Manager, Forensic Interview Research & Education  
Center for Hope

Alexandra Cenatus '24 EL  
Director of Programs  
Maryland Humanities

Christina L. Cornwell '24 EL  
Director/Emergency Manager  
City of Laurel

Phillip Costa '24 EL  
Deputy Director  
Baltimore Convention Center

Lisa D'Orsaneo '24 EL  
Account Manager  
Devaney & Associates, Inc.

Dawit E. Demissie '24 EL  
Pediatrician

Ashleigh J. Diaz '24 EL  
Sustainability Manager  
City of Bowie

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Assistant Manager, Human Resources  
Easton Utilities

Emmanuel Essien '24 EL  
Associate  
BFG Financial Advisors

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Community Engagement Coordinator  
Charles County Government

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Director of Communications  
Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development

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Founder & CEO  
The Eymit Group

Heather Grant '24 EL  
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Talbot Thrive

LaKisha Greenwade '24 EL  
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Wearable Tech Ventures

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First United Bank & Trust

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Chief Development Officer  
Ulman Foundation

Courtney A. Highsmith '24 EL  
Deputy Chief Administrative Officer  
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Senior HR Generalist – SHRM-CP  
Parker Plastics

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Amanda "Drew" Jabin '24 EL  
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Maryland Motor Vehicle Administration

Amol K. Khedkar '24 EL  
Associate Director – Account and Client Engagement  
Creative Information Technology, Inc.

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Director of Government Affairs  
Conduent

Ashley Leighton '24 EL  
Director of Retail Operations  
Culta

Shay Lewis-Sisco '24 EL  
Founder; DCPS Career Coach  
Maryland Parents Supporting Parents

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Director of Marketing & Communications  
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University of Maryland Global Campus

Christopher Mason-Hale '24 EL  
Community Advocate  
Kennedy Kreiger Institute

Kristine Mathey '24 EL  
SVP, Chief Strategic Growth Officer  
Educational Systems Federal Credit Union

Lauren D. McDermott '24 EL  
Program Manager  
Salisbury University

Danette Nguyen '24 EL  
Managing Director  
Maryland Women's Business Center

Charles H. Powell '24 EL  
Director of Development  
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Gregory M. Snyder II '24 EL  
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Prince George's County Fire/EMS Department

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