

# The Prince George's Post



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## UniverSoul Circus' Rhythm of The World Show Opens Friday, June 27 at National Harbor



PHOTO CREDIT: TIM PETHEL

Celebrating 31 years as one of America's top family events, UniverSoul Circus brings together the best international performers in a high-energy, interactive spectacle featuring world-class talent, vibrant costumes and music from across the globe. See article on page A3.

## Prince George's County Launches Major Bus Shelter Expansion and Free-Fare Transit Improvements

*New Investments Will Enhance Safety, Comfort, and Access for Riders Across the County*

By PRESS OFFICER  
Department of Public Works and Transportation

LARGO, Md. (June 11, 2025)—Prince George's County is rolling out an expansion of bus shelters and launching a new free-fare transit program—two key steps to make public transportation more comfortable, accessible, and equitable for residents.

Backed by new funding in the FY 2026 budget, the County's Bus Shelter Expansion Program will add more than 20 new shelters at high-demand and underserved bus stops. This effort builds on installations that began in spring 2025 and responds directly to residents who have long called for improved amenities at bus stops.

"At the heart of this program is listening to our residents and acting on their feedback," said Acting County Executive Tara Jackson. "These investments

will make a real difference for riders—especially in communities that depend on public transit the most."

The shelter expansion is timed to coincide with the launch of free-fare service beginning June 30, part of the County's Better Bus Network Redesign (BBNR). Together, these initiatives aim to reduce barriers to transit access and support broader goals around equity, economic mobility, and climate action.

In FY 2026, the County allocated an additional \$500,000 to grow the program, ensuring a fair distribution of new shelters across Council districts based on ridership and community needs.

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## Governor Moore Attends Groundbreaking for Housing and Economic Development Project at the Park Place at Addison Road Metro

By PRESS OFFICER  
Office of the Governor

ANNAPOLIS, Md. (June 13, 2025)—Governor Wes Moore today joined elected officials and leadership from Banneker Ventures for the groundbreaking of the Park Place at Addison Road Metro, a housing and economic development project along the Blue Line Corridor. The groundbreaking marks the start of a transformative \$96.1 million investment in the Capitol Heights neighborhood of Prince George's County. The project is supported by a cumulative state investment of nearly \$50 million and \$27 million in Low-Income Housing

Tax Credits, representing one of the largest ever development investments made in the Capitol Heights community.

"Where and how we invest says something about who we are and where we're going. And we know you cannot have economic mobility without physical mobility," said Gov. Moore. "That's why we're proud to be part of this project—one of the largest single investments in the Capitol Heights community in the history of our state. It is central to creating a future where access to work, wages,

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PHOTO COURTESY MARYLAND GOVERNOR'S PRESS OFFICE

The groundbreaking marks the start of a transformative \$96.1 million investment in the Capitol Heights neighborhood of Prince George's County.

### YOUTH MENTAL HEALTH PART SIXTEEN

## As Young Americans Struggle With Mental Health, Online Support Surges

By MAX SCHAEFFER  
Capital News Service

Adolescents across the country have increasingly suffered from anxiety and depression over the last 10 years, and school officials in Prince George's County noticed the same trend locally.

So when the county's public school system needed to support its struggling students, it did what schools and young people across the nation are doing—it turned to an online service.

Funded by the statewide effort to bolster youth mental health, the county partnered with Hazel Health, which specializes in providing online counseling to school-age children.

"I think accessibility is huge," Emily Pasco, the school district's mental health coordinator, said of the partnership. "That's his-

torically been a barrier for mental health services—transportation is an issue."

Supporters of online mental health services argue that they offer a convenient option in an era when providers are in short supply. According to a 2024 federal study, more than a third of the nation's residents live in an area where there aren't enough mental health professionals.

Enter online services such as Hazel, Gaggie, Counslr and Cope Notes.

"We are not a silver bullet; we are not going to solve everyone's problems, but we can be a great gap-fill," said Andrew Post, Hazel's president.

Online mental health services surged in popularity during the coronavirus pandemic when most in-person options were shut down, and it has remained popular in the years since.

With the online medium evolving every day, there is no consensus about it among psychological researchers, but various studies have shown online interventions can do some good.

For example, a 2024 study from the National Institutes of Health found there were "promising results regarding the effectiveness of online interventions in young people, especially for symptoms of anxiety and depression and for training of social functioning."

Megan Taylor, an independent licensed clinical psychologist from Northern Virginia with online and in-person therapy experience, said online therapy can sometimes feel safer to patients than seeing a therapist in person.

Yet the online medium makes it easier for unlicensed or unreliable providers to provide services they aren't qualified to pro-

vide, said Taylor, who has extensive experience with youngsters with autism.

"I feel really passionate about the fact that there are many therapists, who advertise themselves as being neurodiversity affirming or specializing in autism, but really haven't had that training," Taylor said.

Despite such concerns, online therapy is expected to grow as an option for troubled young people nationwide. Zion Market Research projects the global market for online therapy for teens to more than triple from 2023 through 2032.

That being the case, here's a closer look at several online mental health care options available to young people today:

### Hazel

Hazel was one of the big winners in the state's first round of

grants from its new youth mental health program, receiving \$2.75 million in Prince George's County, \$1.5 million in Baltimore City and smaller grants in Charles and St. Mary's counties.

Students in Prince George's County and elsewhere access Hazel's counselors through video conference, either at school or home. Post said the medium offers limitations as well as benefits for the students who access it.

"We are raising a generation of children who are very comfortable, for better or worse, with technology," Post said. "This construct of, 'I'm going to drop you off at this office and I'll pick you up in an hour,' is a little jarring, compared to, 'I'm going to hand you this iPad and you're going to see this person and talk to them.'"

Despite being a proponent of telehealth therapy, Post acknowledged for severe cases, in-person treatment always has to be an option for young people.

Prince George's County—

like Miami-Dade County, Florida, where Post taught and served as an administrator—is a majority-minority community where over half of the student population qualifies for free and reduced lunch. This comes with additional mental health challenges for students to navigate.

In 2024, Prince George's County saw 113 homicides.

"Gun violence is a significant issue," Pasco said. "Students being affected by either witnessing gun violence, or being affected by someone that they know being a victim of gun violence."

The top two most common reasons for referral, according to Pasco, are depression and anxiety, consistent with national trends.

One way Hazel looks to serve the unique needs of communities like Prince George's County is to only use providers who are licensed in the state.

"Number two is making sure

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# TOWNS *and* NEIGHBORS

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

### Thank you, Chairman Burroughs!

Prince George’s County Chairman Edward Burroughs III constantly seeks new ways to help the youth of District 8 (which is my District). Now, he has our students attending weekly workshops where they have learned about interviewing skills, finances, public speaking, event planning, stress management and more.

Several of these young leaders are now CPR certified.

They have also participated in community trips and events including testifying in front of the Prince George’s County Council.

### Where are you going next?

It’s graduation time and now I’d like to know—for publication—where you graduates are going next? To college? To military service? Getting married? To the beach? Traveling in foreign lands? Working at Walmart? Hanging out at home? Email me.

Tell me first of all: Where did you graduate? (With honors?) And then, what will you do next?

Let me know so I can let others know. We are proud of you! If needed, you can Email me at muddmm@gmail.com.

### News from Town of Morningside

When I arrived at the Town Hall this morning, I ran into a Morningside gentleman who was there to pay a \$40 fine for not coming to a full stop at one of the Morningside stop signs. He smiled about it and said he’d be much more careful in the future.

### July 4th, from Parade to Fireworks

The Morningside July 4th celebration begins with the parade at 11 a.m. this year. I hope to be there, under the Baptist tree, waving to the paraders.

Then, at 1 p.m., there’ll be great events in the Morningside park, such as the very popular mechanical bull-riding challenge, and other games.

There will also be an ice cream food truck, a taco truck, and possibly a beer truck (!). Fireworks start at dusk, around 9:15 p.m.

### Volunteers needed for the 4th!

Karen Rooker said more volunteers are needed to help with the celebration, doing such things as helping with crowd control and assisting with the game booths.

This would be a fun way for high school students to help their community and to build their resume while getting community service hours.

If you’re interested in helping, call 301-736-2301 and leave a clear message with contact number. Someone will call you back.

I had a nice visit with Karen, who gave me lots of interesting news.

I learned that three part-time Morningside police officers have recently graduated from the Police Academy, and by January, the Town will have 10 full-time officers.

Also, the fines that people pay for speeding and running stop signs are helping fund an additional speed camera. Don’t grumble if you get fined; the cameras make our community safer, especially when crossing Suitland Road, where a pedestrian recently died.

### KidsPost is back!

KidsPost ran for years in The Washington Post. I wasn’t a kid, but I enjoyed reading it as much as my kids did. But about ten years ago, KidsPost folded. I was disappointed—and I know lots of kids were.

Now, I guess The Post has had second

thoughts. They have announced, “KidsPost is Back And Better Than Ever!”

It will run in the Sunday Post. “Packed with mind-blowing facts, eye-popping photos, brain-tingling quizzes, and all the cool stuff kids love. From dinosaurs to space, animals to art, and history to inventions, each weekly edition of KidsPost is your family’s passport to fun and fascinating discoveries.”

Welcome back, KidsPost!

### Changing nature

The number of blue crabs in the Chesapeake Bay is low, marking several years of diminishing numbers and rising concern. The estimated number was 238 million, the second-lowest point since an annual survey. I hope the numbers perk up by the time I’m buying crabs for the annual McHale Crab Feast.

A wandering black bear visited Prince George’s recently and then moved on to Northern Virginia. It was first reported in Langley Park, Laurel and Beltsville. Recently it spent about four hours in a tree in the 800 block of Elden Street. Ultimately it crawled down the tree, then climbed another tree before the local fire department brought a ladder and emergency tarp to help the wildlife agency tranquilize it and bring it down. Officials of the state wildlife agency relocated the bear to a more rural area.

Spring migration is about over, and daughter Therese has since been enjoying her summer visitors. Some favorites are hooded orioles and buff-bellied hummingbirds, all fighting over a good seat at the nectar feeder. Also, in her backyard are curved-billed thrashers and great kiskadees. The Baltimore oriole, who was there last week, may be back in Maryland

See **MORNINGSIDE** Page **A3**



PHOTO COURTESY BERTINA BATES

Miss Virginia Star Bates

## Springdale Resident Qualifies as a State Finalist in the National American Miss Maryland Pageant

By PRESS OFFICER  
National American Miss

Miss Virginia Star Bates, age 21, qualifies as a State Finalist in the National American Miss Maryland Pageant to be held August 15–17, 2025 at the Hyatt Regency in Reston, Va. The pageant is held for girls four through twenty-four in six different age divisions.

The newly crowned Miss Maryland 19–24 will receive the official crown and banner, a bouquet of roses, and an invitation to compete at the national pageant in Orlando, Fla. She has the chance to represent the state of Maryland for the entire year.

Contestants will compete in four overall categories including Formal Wear Modeling, Personal Introduction, Interview, and Community Service Project. National American Miss also offers optional contests such as the Top Model Search, Talent, Actress, and so much more!

National American Miss is dedicated to celebrating America’s greatness and encouraging its future leaders. Each year, the pageant awards thousands in cash and prizes to recognize and assist in the development of young ladies nationwide. All activities are age-appropriate and family-oriented.

The National American Miss Pageant System is the largest in the nation. The focus of this organization is to create future leaders and to equip them with real-world skills to make their

dreams a reality. The program is based on inner beauty, as well as poise and presentation, and offers an “All-American spirit of fun for family and friends.” Emphasis is placed on the importance of gaining self-confidence and learning new skills, such as good attitudes about competition, as well as setting and achieving personal goals.

Miss Bates’ activities include training 30+ dogs of various breeds, mentoring youth to pursue their passions with confidence, using journalism skills to advocate for change, volunteering at Prince George’s County Animal Shelter and Charles Herbert Flowers High School. She also enjoys weekly movie/game nights with her friends, swimming and soccer, and meditating with monks. She hopes to pursue a career in Veterinarian science and wildlife rehabilitation.

Miss Bates’ sponsors include Thomas Family Catering LLC, T’s Divine Sweets & More LLC, The Bates Family, and the Borders Family.

Families interested in learning more about this unique and outstanding youth program may visit [www.namiss.com](http://www.namiss.com). Sponsorship fees for each age division are \$650. It is tax deductible for businesses. Anyone interested in supporting Miss Bates on her journey can send money via Venmo (@freshbiva) or Cashapp (\$freshbiva), or they can donate online at the Pageant Portal at <https://iam.buzz/1k6n7h>.

## Brandywine-Aquasco by Audrey Johnson 301-922-5384

### 2025 WOMEN’S CONFERENCE

A 2025 Women’s Conference will be held July 12, 2025, from 10 a.m.–p.m. at St. Philip’s Church, Baden Hall, 13801 Baden Westwood Road, Brandywine, Maryland. Continental Breakfast and Lunch Provided. Event is to benefit St. Philip’s Church, Baden.

Guest Speaker is Rev. Shemaiah Strickland. Special Mime Presentation Pastor Tae Ron Flemming. HOST: Lady Johnson. \$25pp, \$15 T-shirt (worn at conference). Contact Michele Chase 240-882-3369 or Lady Johnson 240-926-9199 for tickets Cash App: 4stphilipschurcbaden Memo “Conference”.

### 14TH ANNUAL BULLDOG GOLF CLASSIC

Join us for our annual Bulldog Golf Classic on Tuesday, October 7, 2025, at the Country Club at Woodmore. Contact Information: Primary Contact: Jennifer Coke ,14000 Jericho Park Road, Bowie, Maryland 20715. Telephone number is 301-860-4778 [jcoke@bowiestate.edu](mailto:jcoke@bowiestate.edu). Secondary Contact: Clyde Doughty, 14000 Jericho Park Road, Bowie, Maryland 20715. Telephone number is 301-860-3559 [cdoughty@bowiestate.edu](mailto:cdoughty@bowiestate.edu).

### ST. PHILIP’S CHURCH

Fundraiser Chicken Box with Potato Salad, Roll and Drink sponsored by Peter A. Gross, Scholarship/Memorial Fundraiser Sunday, June 29, 2025. Pick up 11 a.m. at St. Philip’s Church, 13801 Baden Westwood. Pre-Order only by 6/25/2025. Orders: Michele-240-882-3369, Shirley-302-690-4260, Vivian-804-301-9530.

### JUNETEENTH FREEDOM DAY EVENT

Come for a day of celebration of freedom and its continued pursuit on Saturday, June 21 from 12–4 p.m. at First United Methodist Church (6201 Belcrest Road, Hyattsville, MD 20782). There will be speakers, dancers, vendors, food trucks, community organizations and so much more. It will be fun for the entire family. This event has been organized by Black Clergywomen of the BWC and sponsored by Abundant Health and Advocacy and Action. Mark your calendars as you will not want to miss this wonderful event. See you there!

### SALUTE THE SUNSET CONCERT SERIES

Saturday evenings throughout the summer are military band nights at National Harbor. Bring a chair and enjoy an evening with performing ensembles from a variety of United States military bands at 7 p.m. Concerts are free and open to the public. These events are subject to weather (<https://www.nationalharbor.com/about/weather/>) cancellations. To check the status of a concert, please visit our Facebook (<https://www.facebook.com/visitnationalharbor>) or Twitter (<https://twitter.com/NationalHarbor>).

June 28 United States Air Force Band Airman of Note Septet. July Concerts: July 2 DC Army National Guard 257th Army Band (<https://www.nationalharbor.com/events/salute-the-sunset-dc-army-national-guard-257-army-band/>). July 5 United States Air Force Band Air Force Strings. July 9 United States Army Band “Pershing’s Own”. July 12 United States Air Force Band Singing Sergeants. July 19 United States Army Band “Pershing’s Own”. United States Air Force Band Air Force Strings.

### COMMUNITY SUPPORT SYSTEMS, INC.

Community Support Systems, Inc. Neighbor helping Neighbor. Phone (301) 372-1491, Brandywine, Maryland. “We are always here to lend a helping hand. Contact us now for more information on any of our programs and assistance or to give a donation. We are funded by community grants and individual donors to help us have the resources we need to help others daily”.

### COMMUNITY EDUCATION

“Now’s the time to plant the seed of something great in your life, help it grow, and see it thrive. Dig deep into new interests, skills, and hobbies, with classes in gardening, sustainability, healthy living, and much more this summer at the College of Southern Maryland”. “Whatever you want to sow and reap in your life, dig deep this summer with CSM Community Education”. “Go to [csmd.edu/community education](http://csmd.edu/community%20education) to explore CSM’s full range of Community Education offerings”.

### ANNUAL CRAB FEAST

The University of Maryland Eastern Shore Greater Annapolis Alumni Chapter invites you to save the date for its Annual Crab Feast, a beloved tradition filled with great food, fun and fellowship. This year’s event will take place on Sunday, July 13, 2025, from 3 p.m. to 7 p.m. at Martin’s Crosswinds.

Stay connected with Hawk4Life1886 Newsletter! For the latest update, news and exclusive content from Hawk4Life 1886, make sure to keep attuned to our Newsletter. Don’t miss out on exciting articles, events and special offers. Connect with us and be part of the Hawk4Life 1886 community! Questions or Feedback? Reach out to us at: [Kcturnbull@umed.edu](mailto:Kcturnbull@umed.edu).

### FAMILY CRISIS CENTER

The Family Crisis Center of Prince George’s County, Inc. is a private nonprofit, 501 c(3) human service organization. Our mission is to promote and facilitate the elimination of abusive behavior in intimate relationships.

A volunteer Board of Directors that includes a diverse mix of community leaders, allied professionals, and victim advocates, governs the Family Crisis Center. Services are funded with the assistance of public and private contributions, and grants administered through the following government agencies: Prince George’s County Department of Family Services Administration for Children, Youth & Families. Maryland Department of Human Resources (VOCA & DV Funds). Governor’s Office of Crime Control & Prevention (MVOC & VAWA Funds).

In addition, the agency sponsors annual fundraising events to assist with funding for our programs. For over 25 years, FCC has been the primary service provider in Prince George’s County that addresses the entire family with comprehensive services delivered by a team of highly skilled and dedicated professionals.

Programs and Services: 24-Hour Crisis Hotline, Safe Passage Program & Emergency Shelter, Family Violence intervention Clinic, Legal Advocacy, Community Outreach & Education, Children & Youth Services, Stay in Touch Program. 24-Hour Hotline (301) 731-1203.

### Transit from A1

Priority locations have been identified and will be installed in phases.

“These upgrades—more shelters, no fares—demonstrate our commitment to a public transit system that works for everyone,” said Michael Johnson, Director of the Department of Public Works and Transportation. “We’re building a network that meets the needs of today and tomorrow.”

These actions are part of the County’s long-term Transit Vision Plan, which lays out a five-year roadmap to redesign routes, upgrade infrastructure, and align Prince George’s County’s transit system with regional progress.

To view the full Transit Vision Plan and provide input by the Friday, June 13 public comment deadline, visit <https://tinyurl.com/pgctvp>.

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# COMMUNITY

## UniverSoul Circus Returns to the Greater Washington, D.C. Region With the Rhythm of The World Show Opening Friday, June 27, at National Harbor

*NEW OPENING DATE! A Ticketmaster “top 10 most requested family event,” UniverSoul Circus has captivated over 25 million fans worldwide, blending jaw-dropping stunts, music, dance and cultural performances for an unforgettable family-fun experience*

By PRESS OFFICER  
UniverSoul

WASHINGTON (June 9, 2025)—Flying acrobats, gravity-defying stunts, fire breathers, stilt dancers and the coolest clowns around! UniverSoul Circus returns to the greater Washington, D.C. region with its new Rhythm of the World production from Friday, June 27, through Sunday, Aug. 10, under the iconic big top tent at National Harbor (268 Waterfront St., National Harbor, MD 20745). *(Please note new opening date.)*

Celebrating 31 years as one of America’s top family events, UniverSoul Circus brings together the best international performers in a high-energy, interactive spectacle featuring world-class talent, vibrant costumes and music from across the globe. Audiences will experience a cultural celebration filled with rhythm, soul and extraordinary performances.

### A family favorite with global appeal

Rated as one of Ticketmaster’s “Top 10 Most Requested Family Events,” UniverSoul Circus has entertained over 25 million people with its unique blend of circus arts, theater and live music. The show spans genres including R&B, Latin, hip hop, jazz, gospel, pop and the infectious beats of world music. The diverse cast of performers, representing five continents, promises to dazzle and entertain with their acrobatic feats, comedic antics and cultural displays.

More than a performance, UniverSoul is a shared experience—an exhilarating, all-ages celebration where audiences from every background come together and feel like one big global family.

“Our Rhythm of the World production celebrates not only the

world’s top circus performers, but also the unity of people from all walks of life. It’s a powerful reminder of the universal values of love, respect and togetherness,” said Cedric Walker, founder and CEO of UniverSoul Circus.

### A beloved, budget-friendly, interactive experience

Described as “not your grandfather’s circus,” UniverSoul is known for its engaging and interactive experience, where audience members of all ages become part of the show. Whether it’s participating in a game of Simon Says, showing off dance moves during the Swag Surf or joining the Soul Karaoke spotlight, the crowd is always in the spotlight. Kids are invited to join Fresh the Clowns in the Big Top Kids Dance contest, while everyone enjoys the high-energy music and playful atmosphere.

With themes of unity and understanding, UniverSoul Circus fosters valuable lessons, encouraging children to honor their parents, be good students, and embrace love and tolerance.

Additionally, last year’s circus attendees praised the event for its affordability (“money well spent!”), the variety of performers and the educational experience of showcasing flags from the performers’ home countries. Many also referred to it as one of the “best family events ever” and urged organizers to “return next year!” This year, circus goers are raving about the well-rounded talent and fun vibe, noting, “Its beautiful to see different cultures and people come together,” and “We were all BIG KIDS under the BIG TOP.”

### A global stage combining thrills and culture

This year’s show features over a dozen new acts from around the world, all showcasing their skills under a brand-new, state-of-the-art big top tent from Italy. The tent is equipped with a dynamic

audio and lighting system that adds a new layer to the spectacular performances.

Featured performers include the soul-stirring African Dream hoop divers from Addis Abba, Ethiopia; an exciting, stylized teeterboard act from Ethiopia; a tantalizing strong-man hand-balance duo called Double Vision from the Dominican Republic; a high-flying acrobatic act from Russia called Zhukau Swing; and a dynamic twirling Cuban-Caribbean dance party and roller skating-themed spectacular.

New this year is a vertigo-inducing, electrifying Ethiopian Pole Act featuring dizzying spins and poses on a towering vertical pole plus a mesmerizing aerial silk act that blends beauty, emotion and daring skill to tell a love story that flirts with gravity and captivates audiences with its heart-stopping suspense.

Audience favorites are also returning, including the Caribbean Street Carnival, which features 20-foot dancing puppets, fire-breathing stilt dancers and vibrant folklore characters. The hip-hop dancing Fresh the Clowns (with hundreds of thousands of social media followers) will have the crowd dancing, while the daring Wheel of Death stunt artists will keep everyone on the edge of their seats as they perform heart-stopping flips and dives 60 feet in the air.

### Ticket and other information

Tickets start at \$25 and are available at Ticketmaster.com. Performance times are 7 p.m. on Thursdays and Fridays; noon, 3:30 and 7:30 p.m. on Saturdays; and noon, 3 and 6:30 p.m. on Sundays. Note: On Friday, July 4, performances will be held at noon and 4 p.m.

For more information, ticket prices, show times, and schedules, visit [universoulcircus.com](http://universoulcircus.com). Follow UniverSoul Circus on Facebook (@UniverSoulCircus), X (@UniverSoulCirc), TikTok (@UniverSoulCircus) and Instagram (@UniverSoulCircus).

## Love Life Coffee Hosts “Brush & Brew” Paint & Sip Event to Bring Laurel Community Together

By PRESS OFFICER  
Love Life Coffee

Love Life Coffee, the vibrant community hub located in the Laurel Shopping Center, invites neighbors to grab a brush, sip a drink, and connect at its upcoming “Brush & Brew” Paint & Sip on Friday, June 27, from 5 to 8 p.m.

Led by local artist Angie O’Neal, this relaxed, guided painting experience welcomes artists of all skill levels. Canvases and paint will be provided, along with wine, coffee, and fresh juices to enjoy throughout the evening. A live jazz performance will help set the mood, offering the perfect backdrop for a night of creativity and connection.

Donations start at \$35, with all proceeds supporting nonprofit organizations that uplift underserved and disadvantaged communities. Space is limited. Guests can RSVP by texting 240-765-6023 or emailing [info@lovelifecoffee.com](mailto:info@lovelifecoffee.com)

### A Café for the Community

Love Life Coffee is a Black-woman owned café based in Laurel, Maryland. Dedicated to serving incredible coffee, fresh pressed juices, and vegetarian- and vegan-forward food, Love Life offers an inviting atmosphere that is welcoming to all.

“Brush & Brew” is just one example of Love Life Coffee’s ongoing mission to foster creativity, culture, and connection. From wellness workshops, including the “Stride. Sip. Socialize.” Embrace Your Pace Run Club meetups on Saturdays, to Second Friday open mic nights, networking mixers, and artist showcases, the café has become a cherished gathering place where locals come to connect, express themselves, and grow together.

### Event Details:

Date: Friday, June 27  
Time: 5 p.m. to 8 p.m.  
Location: Love Life Coffee, Laurel Shopping Center  
RSVP: 240-765-6023 | [info@lovelifecoffee.com](mailto:info@lovelifecoffee.com)

### Morningside from A2

where it is the Maryland State Bird.

Therese herself is also back in Maryland, staying for a few weeks with me on Skyline Drive. I love having her! And according to her Merlin birding app, there was a Baltimore oriole in my backyard this morning. Maybe it followed her up here.

### Oreo is Missing

Cecelia Byrd, of Frank Street, reports her dog Oreo went missing from the front yard recently. Cecelia’s worried that Oreo may have gotten picked up. Oreo is very friendly and likes to go up to strangers. If you have any information about Oreo, please reach out to Cecelia at her address, 4300-4310 Frank St. Also, a reward can be worked out if returned.

### Milestones

Happy Birthday to Gary Fadness, June 22; Edson Cook, June 23; Gloria R. Johnson, June 24; Michael Taylor and Larry Frostbutter, June 25; Angela Booth and Mable Hemmes, June 26; Charles “Chuckie” Henry, Rose Hoffman, Veda Curcio, Shawn Kumra and Cathryn Cordero Pracht, June 27; Mike Dudding, Juanita Eppard, Erica R. Webb, EvaMarie Anthony and my granddaughter Leah Katherine Mudd, June 28.

Happy Anniversaries to Benny and Betty Nagro, June 23; Tim and Becki Cordero, June 23;

Mary and Mike Dawes, June 23, and Jack and Kimberly Hay, June 28.

## Hoyer Announces New Appointments to the U.S. Service Academies

By PRESS OFFICER  
Congressman Steny Hoyer’s Office

WASHINGTON (June 11, 2025)—Today, Congressman Steny H. Hoyer (MD-05) announced the names of 17 Fifth District students appointed to the United States Service Academies. The students, nominated by Congressman Hoyer, received appointments to the Air Force Academy, the Naval Academy, the Coast Guard Academy, and the Military Academy at West Point. All of the service academies require a nomination from an authorized nominating source.

“I am pleased to congratulate 17 students from Maryland’s Fifth District for their appointments to the United States Service Academies this year,” said Congressman Hoyer. “These students embody the character we expect from our men and women in uniform—a sense of duty, moral devotion, and principled conviction. I am thankful to their families for raising such bright leaders, and I join in wishing them the best of luck in their future military careers.”

The following Fifth District students received appointments:

**U.S. Military Academy (West Point)**  
Campbell Gelineau, Anne Arundel County  
Makenzie Brewer, Anne Arundel County



PHOTO COURTESY CONGRESSMAN STENY HOYER’S OFFICE

Congressman Hoyer with some of the students that received appointments.

Mackenzie Tokar, Charles County  
**Chase Clark, Prince George’s County**  
**Nelson Deandrade, Prince George’s County**

**U.S. Air Force Academy**  
Luke Dipietro, Anne Arundel County  
Lauren Grace Compton, Charles County  
**Alanna Francis, Prince George’s County**  
**Chikamdi Okeakpu, Prince George’s County**

**U.S. Naval Academy**  
Morgan Bujac, Anne Arundel County  
Chloe Haseltine, Anne Arundel County  
Michael Sohn, Anne Arundel County  
Clint Newnam, Calvert County  
Saunette Sanderson, Charles County  
Hunter-Robins Mann, St. Mary’s County  
Emily Maury, St. Mary’s County

**U.S. Coast Guard Academy**  
William Clay, St. Mary’s County

### Development from A1

and wealth isn’t an aspiration, but a reality. This project will help close the housing shortage, connect Marylanders with opportunity, and set the standard for what successful transit-oriented development looks like.”

The governor was joined by U.S. Senator Angela Alsobrooks, Maryland Comptroller Brooke Lierman, Prince George’s County Acting County Executive Tara Jackson, Prince George’s County At-Large Councilman Calvin Hawkins, House Majority Whip Jazz M. Lewis and Banneker Ventures President Omar A. Karim for the groundbreaking ceremony.

“Park Place at Addison Road Metro came from a shared vision for an equitable, transit-oriented future, and I was proud to work alongside Governor Moore, our state delegation, Omar Karim, and Banneker Ventures to bring this vision to life,” said U.S. Senator Angela Alsobrooks. “This \$94 million development is proof of what can happen when public will and private innovation come together to create something transformative. It is proof that when we work as a team and keep the ultimate goal in

focus, we can do something uplifting that has space for everyone.”

“The groundbreaking of Park Place at Addison Road marks a major step forward in our vision for the Blue Line Corridor and the future of Prince George’s County,” said Acting Prince George’s County Executive Tara Jackson. “This transformative, transit-oriented development is the result of strong partnership—with the State, the Maryland Stadium Authority, and our private sector collaborators. Together, we are creating vibrant, walkable communities anchored by Metro that will generate jobs, housing, and new opportunities for residents. Park Place reflects our shared commitment to smart growth and long-term economic vitality for our County.”

Park Place at Addison Road Metro is an 11,000 square foot, 196-unit, mixed-use residential and retail development along the Blue Line Corridor. Once complete, the site will primarily consist of living spaces with Class A amenities. All of the units, ranging from studios to three-bedroom apartments, will be preserved as affordable for 99 years.

The Park Place retail and residential mixed-use project marks the first phase of the Addison Park redevelopment, an

initiative to develop multiple residential mixed-use buildings in close proximity to the Addison Road Metro Station. The site will include 56 townhouses and a total of 349 units, as well as 4,000 square feet of renovated space for Mission of Love Charities Inc., a nonprofit that assists homeless and low-income households. The Town of Capitol Heights will also receive a new municipal building through the development project.

When the governor chaired the first Maryland Board of Public Works meeting of the administration, the board approved a number of measures authorizing capital projects across Maryland, including a memorandum of understanding to authorize \$400 million in bonds for economic development along the Prince George’s County Blue Line Corridor.

“Investing in communities like Capitol Heights and projects like the Park Place development strengthens the economic and social fabric here in Prince George’s County,” said Comptroller Brooke E. Lierman. “This project provides additional affordable housing in the area, which will allow more Mary-



# COMMENTARY

## Marian Wright Edelman

*Founder and President Emerita,  
Children’s Defense Fund*



### ChildWatch:

## Honoring Juneteenth

In 2021, President Joe Biden signed into law the bill that had been passed by unanimous consent in the Senate and 415-14 in the House to establish Juneteenth National Independence Day, June 19, as a federal holiday. Juneteenth marks the jubilant day in 1865 when many of the more than 250,000 people who were enslaved in Texas finally learned they were legally free. This deliberately delayed news was delivered by federal troops arriving in Galveston after the end of the Civil War, reaching them more than two and a half years after President Abraham Lincoln issued

the Emancipation Proclamation on January 1, 1863, that freed all people who were enslaved in the Confederate states. Honoring Watch Night, or Freedom’s Eve, on December 31 is a separate tradition in many Black churches and communities that commemorates that night in 1862 when enslaved people who were aware of President Lincoln’s intentions gathered and waited for the official news that the Emancipation Proclamation had taken effect. But that declaration of freedom was withheld from enslaved people in many places still under Confederate rule for as long as

possible. Texas was the last state where the truth was finally revealed, and so we honor Juneteenth because, in my beloved friend and role model Fannie Lou Hamer’s eternal words, nobody’s free until everybody’s free.

Many Black families have celebrated Juneteenth for generations, a tradition that began in Texas almost immediately following the first “Jubilee Day.” In 1968, during the Poor People’s Campaign, tens of thousands of people came to Washington, D.C. for a rally honoring June 19 as “Solidarity Day.” Just weeks after Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.’s assassination, Rev. Ralph Abernathy said that rally brought together all of us determined to “fulfill [Dr. King’s] prophecy of a united, decent America, dedicated anew to the concept of justice for all.” The drive to make Juneteenth a national holiday, led by tireless advocates like Mrs. Opal Lee, was another long-awaited milestone. One hundred and sixty years after the first Juneteenth, this year’s celebration is occurring at another inflection point as Americans are grappling with what our nation’s promised freedom really means, and whether those promises are indeed big enough to cover all Amer-

icans. From protests defending immigrants’ rights to those opposing dictators and kings, the struggle to define equality and liberty and justice for all is churning in cities and suburbs and small towns across the country. Where will it go next?

The Juneteenth holiday is not just a historic marker; it’s a mirror that reflects both the resilience and celebratory joy of generations of African Americans and the ongoing need to ensure that rights declared become rights realized. This year’s observance is an opportunity to focus on the day’s full meaning. In the face of sweeping attempts to sanitize storytelling about our nation’s past, commemorating Juneteenth invites honoring the full truth of American history, and recognizing that the fight for true freedom is still urgent in the face of new efforts to limit rights for some Americans instead of protecting them for everyone. Will we keep struggling to close the gap between the promise and the practice of justice, and to see that freedom reaches everyone, everywhere, without delay? Once again Juneteenth reminds us above all: nobody’s free until everybody’s free.

—June 13, 2025

## Marc Morial

*President and CEO, National Urban League*



### To Be Equal:

## Fortune 500 Milestones Reveal the Big Lie Behind Equity & Inclusion Backlash

*“Our findings suggest that Black leaders are required to meet a higher bar for advancement and point to the need to level the playing field for advancing up the organizational hierarchy.”*

—researchers Seung-Hwan Jeong, Ann Mooney, Yangyang Zhang, and Timothy J. Quigley

As a hostile backlash to racial justice and gender equality wipes out desperately-needed corporate diversity, equity, and inclusion initiatives, the latest Fortune 500 rankings marked two revealing milestones.

Though only nine of the companies—1.8%—are led by Black CEOs and just 11% are helmed by

women, both metrics are record highs in the 70-year history of the iconic list.

The nine Black CEOs, who are to be congratulated, are:

- Marvin Ellison of Lowe’s
- Thasunda Brown Duckett or Teachers Insurance and Annuity Association (TIAA)
- Toni Townes-Whitley of Science Applications International
- Christopher Womack of Southern Company
- Calvin Butler Jr. of Exelon
- Dave Bozeman of C.H. Robinson Worldwide
- Michael Bender of Kohl’s
- René Jones of M&T Bank

- David Rawlinson II of QVC Group

While Fortune noted in its announcement the significance of women CEOs breaking the 10% mark for the first time, neither the number of Black CEOs nor its implication were mentioned. In a separate article, however, the magazine reveals that only 28 of the more than 2,000 CEOs represented on the list since 1955 have been Black.

The nine Black CEOs on the 2025 list together represent more than 230 years of corporate executive experience and nine advanced degrees. The companies they lead made up more than \$244.76 billion in revenue last year.

The facts are inconvenient for an administration and its allies who are actively promoting racist lies about “reverse discrimination” and “lowered standards” associated with diversity and inclusion initiatives. In reality, the bar for advancement is significantly higher for women and Black CEOs. While men are more likely to advance directly to the CEO spot from lesser roles like division head, women are more likely to have served as President of a company before making the leap to CEO. And Black CEOs, on average, have accumulated years of education, advanced degrees, and elite education than their white peers, according to research.

The qualifications of Black CEOs generally are so impressive that companies commonly see their stock prices jump in the days after their appointments

are announced.

“Put simply, our study suggests that it is not enough for aspiring Black CEOs to be just as good as their White counterparts—they must be substantially better to make it to the helm of firms,” the researchers wrote. “Until this is addressed, the poor representation of Black leaders in firms, and the differential in market returns to their appointments, will likely continue.”

The higher bar that keeps women and people of color from advancing up the corporate ladder is not only unjust, it’s bad business. More diverse companies report higher revenue, and are more likely to be profitable; the vast majority of companies with strong DEI in their management teams will surpass their financial goals.

But, like segregationists who would rather drain their community’s pool than to allow equal access for everyone, anti-diversity activists are pressuring companies to scale back or eliminate efforts to remove barriers to equity and inclusion.

My fellow civil rights leaders and I make the risks very clear in a letter we sent to Fortune 1,000 CEOs. “These capitulations weaken businesses and the American economy more broadly. And, these shortsighted decisions make our workplaces less

See **TO BE EQUAL** Page A5

### Online from A1

that our population group truly reflects the population that we serve,” Post said.

Two out of every five Hazel therapists fluently speak a language other than English, according to Post.

### Gaggle

Like Hazel, Gaggle—which began in 1999 as an early email communication system between teachers and students in schools—provides online therapy. The company has evolved over the last 25 years, first into an online safety management platform and now a provider of teletherapy.

Gaggle’s safety management operation is still the primary service it provides to school districts, with over 1,500 districts using it. Just over 100 school districts use its telehealth service, although no Maryland school district uses it.

Growing the company’s telehealth operation is a company priority, said Heather Durkac, Gaggle’s chief innovation officer.

“Gaggle started and is involved with protecting those ‘digital hallways’—what kids were emailing, sending, sharing,

uploading, everything that was on district-provided devices or accounts,” she said.

Increasing concerns about mental health and self-harm—which company officials noted through its safety monitoring service—inspired the company to offer teletherapy as well.

“I used to talk about [during training with school districts] if students would send something like a suicide note or share suicidal thoughts,” Durkac said. “Now I talk about it in a position of when students are sharing those suicidal thoughts or a suicide note. That really just compelled us to do something more.”

The company made 20,000 phone calls to school districts for situations their safety analysts deemed an imminent threat for a student, and over 400,000 emails to school districts for concerns of a lower level, according to Durkac.

Durkac shared a story of Gaggle’s intervention when a student wrote a suicide note on a Google Doc on his school-issued Gmail account, which school officials saw because Gaggle’s safety management system gave them access to it. Gaggle contacted the school, and officials there got the student’s family and police involved. The student was found

at the local train tracks and taken to a hospital.

With a combination of Gaggle’s services, a school district could continue to work with the student to help prevent a similar situation.

“If it is one of those districts that has both services, they can choose to move them right into our Gaggle therapy services. If not, they have other resources,” Durkac said.

If one decides to access Gaggle’s therapy services, the company employs a team of licensed therapists that mostly do part-time work online while working with their own practice or serving as a supervisor somewhere else.

### Counslr

Another of the most widespread online counseling providers is Counslr, a service that partners with large companies, schools and communities. Counslr is partnered with school districts across 11 states but not Maryland—although it works with Child Trends, a Rockville-based nonprofit that researches child well-being.

Counslr offers text-based mental health support with a licensed mental health professional at any hour of the day.

Students complete a basic intake form and are matched with a professional who is supposed to best fit their needs.

“We are particularly effective at what we call ‘reaching the traditionally unreachable,’” Counslr co-founder and CEO Josh Liss said.

He said Counslr’s text-based method helps people avoid typical hurdles like cost, inconvenience or negative stigma around getting help.

“The majority of the sessions on our platform deal with relationship issues,” Liss said. “Very challenging to have a video session, when the person you want to talk about is lying in the bed next to you.”

Counslr is free for the students or members of its partner school districts or organizations. That entity pays Counslr for its services to be accessible to its students or members.

Liss said he is confident in Counslr’s ability to help its users, but recognizes its limits.

“We very intentionally do not provide therapy,” Liss said. “Our counselors don’t diagnose, they don’t treat and they don’t prescribe medication.”

When someone requires a more intensive form of care, like therapy, the company works with

the school counseling office to facilitate that, Liss said.

### Cope Notes

Cope Notes founder Johnny Crowder said he grew up with “severe mental illness” and had always resisted seeking treatment.

Once he got older and began to study psychology and neuroscience, that aversion turned to a curiosity and passion for helping people.

“I started texting people health education content from my phone,” Crowder said, “and eventually started building it into something more nuanced.”

This is how Crowder developed Cope Notes, a subscription-based service that sends users a text at a random point in the day.

The texts are written by a peer, or someone with experience with whatever challenge

their text references, then reviewed by Cope Notes’ clinical oversight panel of mental health professionals before being sent out.

One of the biggest challenges is finding a text that will be general enough to apply to a range of subscribers but specific enough to help. The service is anonymous, so the providers aren’t aware of who they’re texting.

“We’re serving people, let’s say one of them is a rural teenager with bipolar and one person is like an urban senior with no mental health conditions,” Crowder said. “How the heck do you craft a content library that is applicable across all of those demographics, if you don’t have that information?”

See **ONLINE** Page A6

### Development from A3

landers to achieve greater financial stability and access more opportunities for a prosperous future. I also applaud the retail development that will spur new investments from the business community that will support greater prosperity for our state.”

“Park Place at Addison Road is more than just a development; it represents a bold commitment to the families of Capitol Heights & Seat Pleasant,” said Delegate Jazz M. Lewis. “This project underscores our belief that everyone deserves safe, walkable neighborhoods, accessible transit op-

tions, and community amenities that foster growth and connection. After years of collaboration, advocacy, and dedication, this milestone is a testament to what we envisioned: a brighter future for our region has arrived. I’m honored to have played a role in securing state funding to bring this vision to life, and I extend my gratitude to Banneker Ventures for their vision and partnership in the corridor. The sun is rising on the Blue Line Corridor, and this is only the beginning.”

“We are truly grateful to Governor Wes Moore, Assistant Secretary Gregory Hare, and the entire Maryland DHCD Community

Development Administration team, Prince George’s Acting County Executive Tara Jackson and her team and all of our public and private partners for believing in our vision for Park Place,” said Banneker Ventures Chief Executive Officer Omar A. Karim. “This groundbreaking reflects what’s possible when public leadership and private commitment come together to invest in overlooked communities. With the support of the State and our financing partners, we’re proud to bring 193 affordable homes and neighborhood-serving retail to the heart of Capitol Heights.”

## The Prince George’s Post

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# BUSINESS AND FINANCE

## Social Security Matters

Ask Rusty:

### Can My Husband Work Part Time and Collect Social Security?

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 am writing to you on behalf of my husband. His intentions are to go part time as of January 1, 2026, working 30 hours a week and take Social Security benefits as supplemental income. How can we determine what his Social Security benefit would be with him still working part time? He will be 63 and 7 months old next January and has not yet applied for benefits. We look forward to hearing from someone very soon. **Signed: Anxious for Information**

**Dear Anxious:** If he claims Social Security at age 63 and 7 months, your husband’s benefit will be about 78% of what it would be if he waited until age 67 to claim. And, since your husband will not yet have reached his SS full retirement age (FRA), he will be subject to Social Security’s Annual Earning Test (AET), which limits how much he can earn while working and collecting early Social Security retirement benefits. The amount he can earn without paying a penalty changes yearly but, for reference, the earnings limit for 2025 is \$23,400 per year. If his work earnings exceed the annual limit, Social Security will take away some of his benefits. Using the 2025 limit as an example, if your husband’s annual 2025 earnings were \$40,000, then he would owe about \$8,300 (half of the amount he exceeded the limit by). Social Security would withhold his monthly benefits for enough months to recover what he owes for exceeding the earnings limit (how many months they withhold would be determined by his monthly SS benefit amount).

FYI, the earnings test lasts until your husband reaches his full retirement age (his FRA is age 67), but in the year he attains his FRA the penalty for exceeding the limit is less—\$1 for every \$3 over the limit—and the limit is much higher. The annual earnings test no longer applies once your husband reaches his FRA.

When your husband applies for his SS retirement benefit, Social Security will ask about his work plans and how much he expects to earn each year. Based upon that information, if he expects to exceed the annual limit they will pay his benefits for some months of the year (depending on his projected earnings) and withhold his benefits for the remaining months. They will also monitor his annual earnings as reported to the IRS and make any appropriate benefit adjustment afterwards.

If SS benefits are withheld because your husband exceeded the annual earnings limit, when he reaches his full retirement age (67), Social Security will give him time-credit for all month’s that benefits were withheld. Essentially, they will advance his actual claim date by the number of months benefits were withheld, which will make his monthly benefit higher at his FRA. The higher amount he receives after reaching his FRA will help him recover some of the money withheld as a result of exceeding the earnings limit before his FRA.

Please note that it is always best to inform Social Security up front if your husband plans to work and earn (even part time) prior to reaching his FRA. The IRS will provide the SSA with your husband’s earnings information, and SSA will (if his projected earnings weren’t disclosed when he applied) issue an Overpayment Notice if he earns more than allowed. He will then be required to repay SS everything owed, or have his benefits withheld until Social Security recovers what he owes.

One final point: by claiming his benefits in January 2026, your husband’s monthly amount will be reduced by about 22% (from the amount he would get at his FRA of 67). Claiming early (before FRA) always results in a benefit reduction, whereas waiting longer than FRA to claim always results in a higher monthly amount (maximum benefit is reached at age 70).

*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) or email us at ssadvisor@amacfoundation.org.*

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).

## To Be Equal from A4

safe and less inclusive for hard-working Americans.

“Abandoning DEI will have long-term consequences on business success—ultimately shirking fiduciary responsibility to employees, consumers, and shareholders. Businesses that fail to include women, people of color, people with disabilities, and LGBTQ+ people neglect their financial duty to recruit and retain top talent from across the full talent pool and limit their company’s performance overall.”

The slow progress represented by the Fortune 500 list exposes the lies in the Trump administration’s DEI propaganda. In capitulating to these lies, corporations are denying themselves access to an entire cross-section of talent and expertise, shortchanging their stockholders and customers, and lowering standards of excellence for the entire country.

—June 13, 2025

## Hospice of the Chesapeake’s Fashion for a Cause Raises More Than \$305K

By ELYZABETH MARCUSSEN  
**Hospice of the Chesapeake**

PASADENA, Md. (June 11, 2025)—Style met substance on June 5, as Hospice of the Chesapeake’s Fashion for a Cause returned to the U.S. Naval Academy’s Fluegel Alumni Center. The high-energy fashion show smashed last year’s totals, raising more than \$305,000 to support the nonprofit’s community health programs, including pediatric hospice care, children’s grief counseling, and family support services.

The event has become one of Annapolis’s most anticipated evenings. Guests were treated to a red-carpet experience complete with bites from local restaurants, personal magic trick performances by magician Chris Dugdale and a moving celebration of compassion and community care.

Returning for his fourth year as emcee, Bryan Nehman, co-host of C4 and Bryan Nehman on WBAL NewsRadio, guided the crowd through an evening that blended entertainment with heartfelt stories of the impact Hospice of the Chesapeake has on families navigating serious illness and loss. View the video shown at the event here: <https://vimeo.com/1093696533>.

The highlight of the evening was a runway show featuring dozens of looks from 18 Annapolis-area retailers and designers, including styles by Craig Coates Couture, whose designs have been featured at both New York and Los Angeles Fashion Week.

Professional models were joined by community members who took the stage with purpose and flair, showcasing everything from casual coastal wear to elegant evening attire.

Women’s fashions were modeled by Dr. Melanie Bell, Lisa Caltabiano, Jacqueline Coche, Shekila Cole, Tara Collins, Megan Cooper, Carla Criste, Alexis Decker Dugdale, Marina Dugina, Terri Hussman, Kathleen Kryza, Kayen McNeal, Khylah Settle, Dana Smith, Tatiana Tabacek, Rose Walker, and Kristin Williams.

Men’s fashions were modeled by: Mike Baldwin Jr., Jeremiah Batucan, Doug Beaver, Brian Berger, Kevin Campion, Chris Dugdale, Aaron Gaskins, John Hussman, Craig Johnson, Jay Jones IV, Josh Magariel, Jarret Simpson, Alexander Strachan, Brandon Temple, and Patrick Wergin.

Proceeds from the event directly benefit the organization’s comprehensive community care offerings, with a special emphasis on pediatric hospice and grief support services that ensure no child or family has to walk the journey of serious illness or loss alone.

The success of the evening was made possible by the support of numerous local businesses, foundations, and individuals, including the event’s committee: Ashley Babaian, April Boera, Kevin Campion, Amy Castleberry, Georgie Clark, Gene Deems, Jennifer Daly, Melissa Frawley, Holly Frye-Atcherson, Dr. Prabh Gill, Mary Hyson, Mary Frances Isakov, Stacy Martin, Tim McDonough, Cary Melnyk, and Challie Samaras.



PHOTO BY MIKE B. PHOTOGRAPHY

**A model shows off a stunning dress from Craig Coates Couture. Coates’s designs have been featured at both New York’s and Los Angeles’s Fashion Week.**

- Leading sponsors included:
- Presenting Sponsors: John & Cathy Belcher, Brian and Patricia Giese Foundation
  - Red Carpet Sponsors: Genesis of Annapolis, Merrill Lynch Wealth Management—Murray, McGehrin, and Shiery
  - Fashionista Sponsors: Dragonfly Health, George W. Stone Family Foundation, Shirley Ip, Russ Jones, Medicine with a Mission, MHE Foundation/Matthew Allen Earl, The Michael Stanley Foundation, Nancy Smit & Julien Hecht, University of Maryland Baltimore Washington Medical Center, Vento Family Foundation, Laura Westervelt
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## Governor Moore Announces \$6.95 Million in ‘Build Our Future’ Grant Awards to Support Innovation Infrastructure Development

By PRESS OFFICER  
**Office of the Governor**

ANNAPOLIS, Md. (June 10, 2025)—Governor Wes Moore today announced that the Maryland Department of Commerce has awarded 10 grants totaling \$6.95 million through the Build Our Future Grant Pilot Program. The recipients represent projects that will support innovation infrastructure development in eligible technology sectors.

“Maryland will win the decade by making strategic investments in high-growth sectors,” said Gov. Moore. “The latest round of Build Our Future grants provides key infrastructure funding to projects supporting life sciences, clean tech, cybersecurity, and agriculture. Today’s announcement marks an important continuation of our longstanding work to grow our economy, create jobs, and leave no one behind.”

The Build Our Future Grant Program—part of the Governor’s Innovation Economy Infrastructure Act of 2023—provides grants of up to \$2 million to private companies, nonprofit entities, local governments, as well as colleges and universities. Eligible industry sectors include advanced manufacturing, aerospace, agriculture, artificial intelligence, biotechnology, blue technology, cybersecurity, defense, energy and sustainability, life sciences, quantum, and sensors and robotics.

After a two-phase application process, the department approved 10 projects for funding:

- Blackbird Laboratories—\$2,000,000 to support the creation of the Baltimore Bio-Hub, a world-class, 35,000 square-foot life sciences incubator and wet lab to be developed at the City Garage Science and Technology Center. The facility will house and incubate early-stage companies. (Baltimore City)
- Frederick Community College—\$292,600 to support the build out of five rooms totaling 2,085 square-feet for life

sciences training, including expansion of an existing biotech lab; a simulated clean room; and conversion of a classroom into a biotech lab for cell culture. (Frederick County)

- **HighT-Tech**—\$1,000,000 for construction of a pilot manufacturing infrastructure to commercialize a novel, electrified, rapid high-temperature manufacturing process to disrupt the production of clean-tech material, including advanced batteries and hydrogen electrolyzers. The company is a spinoff from the University of Maryland, College Park and Johns Hopkins University. (*Prince George’s County*)
- LaunchPort, LLC—\$700,000 to establish commercial advanced manufacturing capabilities in a 4,000 square-foot, Good Manufacturing Practices-compliant environment within LaunchPort’s 30,000 square-foot facility in Baltimore, enabling domestic production of medical device components that are currently sourced in other regions of the U.S. and internationally. (Baltimore City)
- Liatrix—\$800,000 to construct a prototyping facility for next-generation thermal insulation materials in clean room space adjacent to existing headquarters. Validation of the technology would lead to an investment in larger-scale mass production. (Montgomery County)
- **Medcura**—\$333,333 for a biotech company that develops and commercializes a proprietary product from natural biomaterials to provide safe, effective and lower cost bleeding management solutions. This project will transform their headquarters building into an “end-to-end” manufacturing facility, significantly expanding manufacturing capabilities and moving the complete process back to Maryland. (*Prince George’s County*)
- Novel Microdevices—\$633,757 to establish and operationalize a Good Manufacturing Practices-compliant pilot manufacturing facility within their Baltimore City

headquarters to produce innovative microfluidic cartridges for infectious disease diagnostics. The facility will be equipped to scale production, reaching fully automated custom manufacturing lines after five years. (Baltimore City)

- Silvec Biologics—\$98,000 for the agricultural biotech company licensing University of Maryland technology to develop an RNA therapy to immunize trees, vines and bushes against deadly viral and bacterial pathogens. This project will expand an existing 6,000 square-foot facility—which includes offices, wet labs, and plant growth space—to an adjacent 3,000 square-foot space in the same building and conversion to lab space, allowing for 10 new jobs over two to three years. (Montgomery County)
  - Technology Advancement Center—\$95,456 to enhance, modernize and leverage existing cyber ranges and cyber kits with a focus on operational technology and critical infrastructure use cases. The goal is to provide an improved hands-on learning experience that supports Maryland’s goals to train and foster cybersecurity professionals. (Howard County)
  - Washington College—\$999,930 to revitalize a 16,000 square-foot portion of a former manufacturing plant for use as a community-facing entrepreneurship center, innovation hub, and technology incubator. The proposed food entrepreneurship and agricultural sustainability technologies initiative, including a community kitchen, cold storage, and a regenerative farm, will be centered within the innovation plant. (Kent County)
- “These grants represent investments not just in individual companies but in broader growth with these key industry sectors,” said Maryland Department of Commerce Secretary Harry Coker, Jr. “The projects have the potential to drive innovation and discovery and help build a stronger and more competitive Maryland economy.”



Online from A4

Answering this question has become a big part of the company’s content review process.

No two people ever get the same text at once, and the text comes through at a random time, although the company is working on features that will allow people to personalize their experience, according to Crowder.

The current Cope Notes pricing model allows someone to purchase an individual subscription for an annual cost of just over \$100. Cope Notes also offers group subscriptions for companies or schools.

Crowder recognizes Cope Notes is not a replacement for therapy. He said he feels Cope Notes is a resource that can be used to get someone ready for treatment in therapy, or help someone who has finished their therapy have some consistent support.

“I would say it’s a great step up or step down [from therapy],” Crowder said.

EarthTalk® Trump Determined to Gut the Endangered Species Act

By Shashwat Mishra | June 7, 2025

Dear EarthTalk:  
Does Trump have the political capital needed to gut or overturn the Endangered Species Act?  
— Alice Magritte, New Orleans, LA

The Endangered Species Act (ESA) has been one of America’s strongest environmental laws since it first passed in 1973. It’s credited with saving hundreds of species from extinction. Some species include the bald eagle and the gray wolf. But recently, the Trump administration has made several moves that critics say would weaken the ESA, particularly when it comes to defining what counts as “critical habitat.”

Under new rules announced in April 2025, federal agencies would no longer be required to protect areas that endangered species might potentially need to survive, only areas where they already live. This ignores that many species need room to migrate, adapt or recover. According to Drew Caputo, vice president of litigation at Earthjustice, “This is a recipe for extinction. Wildlife can’t survive if we don’t protect the places they need to live.”

So, does Trump actually have the political muscle to make these changes stick? In short, sort of—but it’s complicated. The administration does have backing from some Republican lawmakers and lobbyists tied to agri-

culture, oil and development industries. These groups claim the ESA is outdated and too restrictive, and that it interferes with land use and economic growth. But there’s also a lot of resistance. Environmental organizations like Earthjustice, the Center for Biological Diversity and the Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC) are all filing lawsuits challenging the legality of the new rule. Polls show that the majority of Americans support strong protections for endangered wildlife as well.

Plus, the ESA is hard to fully overturn. It would take an act of Congress to repeal it, and that’s unlikely to happen anytime soon given the current split in Congress. Instead, what we’re seeing is more like a slow chipping away of protections, done through administrative rules that can be changed again by future presidents. Still, those changes can last for years and seriously affect vulnerable species in the meantime.

For people who care about wildlife, there are things you can do. Support conservation groups taking legal action. Call your representatives and ask them to strengthen wildlife laws. And stay informed—some of these policy changes happen quietly, without much media coverage. The more people speak out, the harder it is to roll back decades of environmental progress.

CONTACTS: Destroying endangered species’ habitat

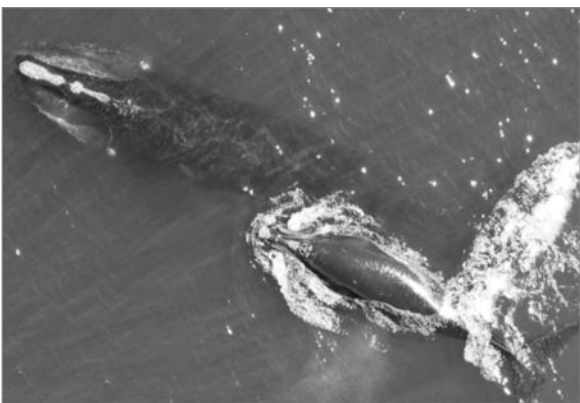


PHOTO CREDIT: CENTER FOR BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY.

Trump is considering slashing federal rules that protect North Atlantic right whales from the leading causes of their decline: deadly ship strikes and entanglement in commercial fishing gear.

wouldn’t count as ‘harm’ under proposed Trump rule, <https://www.npr.org/2025/04/17/nx-s1-5366814/endangered-species-act-change-harm-trump-rule>; The Trump Administration Aims to Gut Critical Habitat Protections for Endangered Species, <https://earthjustice.org/experts/drew-caputo/the-trump-administration-aims-to-gut-critical-habitat-protections-for-endangered-species>.

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