

# The Prince George's Post



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## Maryland Secretary of Commerce The Honorable Harry Coker, Jr. Tours Prince George's County for Full-Day Economic Engagement

By RHETT BUTLER  
PGCEDC

LARGO, Md. (July 10, 2025)—Prince George's County Economic Development Corporation (PGCEDC) proudly hosted Maryland Commerce Secretary Harry Coker, Jr. for a dynamic full-day tour highlighting the County's economic vitality, business innovation, and regional competitiveness. Secretary Coker was accompanied by key members of the Maryland Department of Commerce, local leadership from Prince George's County, and economic development stakeholders on a carefully curated tour that showcased the region's diverse business ecosystem.

The day began with a breakfast roundtable at the Silver Diner at National Harbor, featuring welcoming remarks from Prince George's County Ex-

ecutive Aisha Braveboy. Leaders from attending Prince George's County agencies also spoke, including PGCEDC Interim President & CEO Ebony Stocks, CEcD. The breakfast provided a platform for cross-sector leaders to highlight local business successes, collaborations between state and local

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Left to right, Prince George's County Economic Development Corporation Interim President & CEO Ebony Stocks, CEcD, Maryland Commerce Secretary Harry Coker, Jr., and Prince George's County Economic Development Corporation Executive Director of Business Development Larry Hentz

PHOTO COURTESY PGCEDC



### LOCAL WARMING: CLIMATE CHANGE IN MARYLAND—PART 1 OF 4

## Climate Change Is a Local Issue—and Here's What's Happening in Every Part of Maryland

By SASHA ALLEN  
Capital News Service

The oak trees on Mike Tidwell's street in Montgomery County are dying, so he wrote a book about it.

"In the last few years, I just have become very conscious of the fact that our biggest trees in Takoma Park were dying," said Tidwell, founder and director of the Chesapeake Climate Action Network. "I read in the city newsletter and heard from arborists that this mass tree mortality was linked to extreme weather, triggered by climate change. I thought that was sad and amazing."

Tidwell's new book, "The Lost Trees of Willow Avenue," looks beyond Takoma Park. It examines extreme weather events and climate change happening across the state. And other experts agree that the impact is vast, including on the Eastern Shore, where more dead trees can be found in the "ghost forests" of Blackwater National Wildlife Refuge.

These things are happening because temperatures in Maryland have never been warmer.

Since the 20th century, temperatures in the state have risen around 2.5 degrees Fahrenheit, according to the National Ocean and Atmospheric Administration. But it's more than just heat. Federal data shows the state is experiencing increasing precipitation, a higher probability of summer droughts, more extreme weather events and flooding accompanied with rising sea levels.

The impact of climate change on the state is as varied as its landscape. From vast forests and rolling farms that line the Eastern Shore to the 80.9 square miles of Baltimore City scattered with heat islands, different areas of the state will be affected by climate change in vastly different ways.

To hear Tidwell and other environmental experts tell it, the state's poorest communities will face the greatest climate chal-

lenges. Communities on the Eastern Shore—where farmlands are becoming wetlands—and Baltimore's city neighborhoods are at particular risk.

"There are certain communities, especially marginalized communities that won't have the resources to adapt," Tidwell said. "We just have to stabilize the climate before we face those truly nightmarish impacts."

The changes Maryland is likely to face are detailed in the federal government's fifth National Climate Assessment—but the Trump administration deleted all that data from the internet on June 30. However, the Local News Network at the University of Maryland's Philip Merrill College of Journalism downloaded all that data months ago and used it as the basis of this story and the accompanying county summaries.

Here's a closer look at what's happening to the climate, and what's expected to happen, across the state:

#### Eastern Shore

The remnants of Harriett Tubman's birth home sit in a dying forest in Dorchester County.

"They found the original foundations of her home and you now can't even get there because it's in the middle of a ghost forest," said Kate Tully, a researcher and associate professor at the University of Maryland College of Agriculture and Natural Resources.

Ghost forests—which are either partially or completely dead—can be found throughout the lower Eastern Shore in Dorchester, Somerset, Worcester and Wicomico counties. These ghost forests result from saltwater intrusion, or what Tully refers to as "invisible floods," where seawater creeps inland as temperatures and waters rise.

"That's essentially when the salt burns the tree from the inside out," Tully said.

High tides, droughts and groundwater pumping all contribute to this increasingly com-



PHOTO SAM GAUNTT/CAPITAL NEWS SERVICE

The sun sets over a "ghost forest" at the Blackwater National Wildlife Refuge on Maryland's Eastern Shore on June 5, 2025.

mon phenomenon. Eventually, land plagued by saltwater intrusion turns into either marshland or open water.

As a result, Tubman's home—only discovered just a few years ago in the Blackwater National Wildlife Refuge—is now inaccessible.

In the lower Eastern Shore, there are over 70,000 acres of forest classified by the state as ghost forests, with 90% of those acres classified as severely or very severely impacted. For a forest to fall under these classifications, at least half of its trees would be dead.

But saltwater intrusion isn't just killing forests.

"There are farmers that are being highly impacted by the saltwater intrusion and the loss of productivity of their land," said Elliott Campbell, director of the science and research division of the Watershed and Climate Services out of Maryland's Department of Natural Resources. "There's not really a way to, like, get the salt out."

Farms along the Eastern Shore, including northern counties such as Cecil, Kent, Talbot and Caroline, are known for growing corn and soybeans, used primarily to feed livestock, Campbell said. But these crops don't grow well in salty soil, and Campbell said there

is no perfect alternative.

While there are vulnerable farms throughout the entire shore, Tully said Black communities in the lower Eastern Shore are being disproportionately impacted by saltwater intrusion.

"We've already lost so many Black farms in Black communities on the Eastern Shore," Tully said. "There's actually a whole history that's already gone underwater that we will never get back."

In the Antebellum period, the lower Eastern Shore became home to many free Black people escaping slavery from Virginia and other Southern states. The tributaries of the Chesapeake Bay helped provide a living for many formerly enslaved people. But Tully said these communities—and their deep-rooted history—will disappear soon if they're not already underwater.

The Chesapeake Bay region is the United States' third-most vulnerable area to sea level rise behind Louisiana and South Florida, according to NOAA's National Centers for Environmental Information.

Because the low-lying, largely flat area is so vulnerable, the effects of an increasing climate are

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## M&T Announces Winners of the Prince George's County Small Business Accelerator Program

Tiyana Robinson awarded \$5,000 grand prize to support Beauty Mogul International, LLC

By PRESS OFFICER  
M&T Bank

LARGO, Md. (June 18, 2025)—Tiyana Robinson of Beauty Mogul International, LLC was awarded the \$5,000 grand prize in the small business accelerator pitch competition hosted by M&T Bank (NYSE:MTB) in partnership with FSC First. This program aims to equip entrepreneurs with essential skills and guidance to build resilient businesses, drive economic growth in Prince George's County, and create generational wealth for their families.

Robinson, founder and CEO of Beauty Mogul International, LLC, created BeautyPro Funnels, the first platform built for solo beauty entrepreneurs that allows booking, marketing, selling, and automating in one place. With 3.1 million beauty professionals running their own businesses in the U.S., Robinson saw an opportunity to help them manage and grow multiple revenue streams through one platform.

"This award means growth, it means the future of my brand, it means having an impact on beauty professionals all around the world," said Robinson. "M&T Bank and FSC First have been great partners in this program. I've learned so much about how to run a business, how to become investable. This was my first time pitching my business and I've experienced so much growth in the eight weeks we've been together, and this is just the beginning."

The competition was the culmination of an eight-week program launched on May 6. This hybrid program, featuring virtual and in-person courses at various county locations, covered topics such as business planning, capital sourcing, financial management, marketing, and branding. The program concluded on June 18 with a pitch competition, followed by the announcement of awards, funded by M&T Bank.

Dominyece Gregory of Tuft'n Up DC, LLC won the second-place prize of \$3,000, and Josei Harris of Halema, Inc. won the third-place prize of \$2,000.

To qualify, businesses had to be based in Prince George's County, in operation for at least two years, and in good standing. M&T Bank also offers similar accelerator programs in Montgomery, Howard, and Frederick counties, as well as Baltimore City.

"We're honored to collaborate with FSC First in presenting the Business Accelerator Program," said Pam Scott, Senior Relationship Manager at M&T Bank. "This initiative is designed to empower local entrepreneurs with essential resources and guidance to help their businesses flourish. With meaningful mentorship and practical tools, the program supports small business owners in navigating today's competitive market. We're excited by the strong engagement we had this year and applaud all who took part."

M&T Bank is a financial holding company headquartered in Buffalo, New York. Visit [www.mtb.com](http://www.mtb.com).

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The ceremony was ... to present students from Calvert, Charles, St. Mary's, and Prince George's counties as well as Baltimore and Washington, D.C. with financial scholarships to pursue their college dreams.

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**ChildWatch: Being Loving Champions for Justice**

How long? Not long, even in this current moment, as long as a critical mass among us remains determined to be love and be the partners and champions for justice ...

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**Prince George's County Climate Summary**

Over a century of historical data show temperatures rising, and researchers predict a future with higher rates of extreme heat and precipitation, more warm nights and fewer days that dip below freezing.

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# TOWNS and NEIGHBORS

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

**Morningside does a great 4th of July!**

My grandson Michael Gallegos and I found a good place, along a street in Morningside, to watch the July 4 celebration. Michael took some good photos of the fireworks.

Year after year, Morningside does a great job celebrating the 4th!

For me, the day began when Sister Haimanot—of the Daughters of St. Anne, currently assigned here—walked me over to Suitland Road to watch the Parade. She also found a chair and set it up at the roadside so I could see the action.

I’ll admit that I miss the school bands. (Isn’t there someone who could line up one by next year?)

But, as always, I enjoyed the Parade and the regulars who show up every year. Thank you, especially, to members of Suitland Road Baptist Church who set up chairs and had hand-outs available.

**Town of Morningside**

Now that the 4th is over, Morningside’s National Night Out planning is underway. It will be held Aug. 5—with food, games and more.

Morningside Councilman David Chambers was working on the planters outside Town Hall when I last visited, seeking news. Dave was sprucing it up for the 4th of July.

Also, he’s making plans for a Morningside Garden Club, getting kids interested in gardening as early as 5 or 6 years old. He eventually hopes to take the group on field trips.

**Maryland Municipal League**

Every June the Maryland Municipal League holds a conference in Ocean City. This year it took place June 23–26. Seven representatives attended from Morningside including Clerk-Treasurer Karen Rooker, the police chief, the mayor, and most of the Town Council.

The Municipal League was founded in 1936 and represents 157 incorporated cities/towns plus 4 “special taxing districts.” The Conference is a chance for Morningside officials to meet their counterparts from across the state and to attend classes.

**VFW’s National Home’s 100th**

Karen Rooker went from the municipal League conference to Eaton Rapids, Michigan, for the 100th anniversary of VFW’s National Home, which helps veterans and the families who have fallen on hard times and need help.

The National Home consists of 43 houses, funded by corporations, organizations, and state VFW chapters. People who apply/qualify can move in, and everything is provided while they get the chance to get back on their feet (average stay is about 4 years).

**Betty Fitzpatrick dies at 94**

Ora Elizabeth Fitzpatrick—known as Betty—was a Camp Springs resident for 66 years. She died April 1, 2025, at the age of 94.

She was a parishioner of St. Philip’s Church, in Camp Springs.

Betty is survived by her husband of 75 years, William; daughter Jane Ann Smith, son Daniel Fitzpatrick, and five grandchildren. Burial was at Arlington National Cemetery.

Betty’s cousin, Nancy Stacey, of Palm Coast, Florida, sent me this obituary. In fact, sent it twice because I apparently missed it the first time. Nancy is a very good cousin! Thanks.

**Penn Branch CVS closed**

Yes, the CVS at Penn Branch Shopping Center is closing (or may have already closed). Residents are protesting, citing the store’s convenience for seniors.

Apparently, its closure is a part of a larger trend of CVS store closures nationwide. Community members are actively protesting the closure and have launched a Change.org petition to urge CVS to reconsider.

Ward 7 leaders are also planning an event to assist seniors with mail-order prescriptions.

**McNamara’s new gate**

Bishop McNamara High School has a new gate which welcomes students, staff and visitors.

The Mustang Messenger, the school’s magazine, says, “The new gate is a statement of pride and security. Built from tan

cement with elegant white gates, the structure prominently features two cross-and-anchor symbols, reflecting the school’s rich heritage and commitment to faith...ensures a safe environment while maintaining the warm, inviting atmosphere that defines Bishop McNamara.”

**Changing landscape**

The Maryland Department of State Police has announced that a new Forestville Barrack is scheduled to begin operations in the Spring of 2028. It will remain at the intersection of Pennsylvania Avenue and Forestville Road and the current building will then be demolished.

The Prince George’s County government will receive \$360,000 to develop nine acres of land next to Huntington Park North, including a nature trail and expanded playground equipment in Bowie.

**The Texas floods**

Back in the 1940s my father, Dr. Richard Dyer Mudd, was assigned to Kelly Field, in San Antonio, Texas. The rest of the family soon left Saginaw, Michigan, and joined him at Kelly. We lived there through World War Two.

When it came to swimming, we had the Officers’ Club pool. But sometimes Dad would drive us north to the Hill Country so we could swim the beautiful, woody Guadalupe River.

I remembered those delightful outings as I listened with horror on July 4 to the reporting on the disastrous, flood—prone Guadalupe River. and the heavy rain which by now has taken more than 100 lives.

I hope the authorities are already at work planning a warning system.

**Milestones**

Happy Birthday to Mary Hay and Jeff Frederick, July 21; Ryan Simms and David Cook, July 22; Virginia Price, July 23; Angela Surratt, July 24; Bill Curcio and Thomas DeGraba, July 25; Florence Cray and Jennifer Booth, July 26.

Happy Anniversary to Percy and Barbara Crawford, their 53rd on July 22, and to Steve and Tessie Johnson, their 25th on July 22.

State University does not end once you leave the campus: you are part of the #BSU4LIFE community that represents more than 44,000 alumni. Connect with our community. Carla Henry Hopkins, Director. Phone: 301-860-3939. Twitter/X-@bsualumnioffice, Facebook-@Bowie State University, Office off Alumni Engagement, Instagram-@bowiealum, Email-alumni@bowiestate.edu.

**MEET SYDNEY RIVAS (’25)**

Sydney Rivas (’25), hometown Capitol Heights, Maryland with a Bachelor of Science in Chemistry, next step PhD Candidate at Georgetown University. Sydney has built a solid foundation for her future in research by immersing herself in collaborative, hand-on opportunities at Bowie State University. Her dedication to research and proactive approach to academic experiences, such as the Biomedical Research Initiative Summer Program, helped her secure a place at Georgetown University where she will pursue a PhD in chemistry.

Peer-led research programs created through the Department of Natural Sciences helped Rivas strengthen her skills in scientific research, presentation, and collaboration, paving the way for future success. “Build strong relationships with professors and peers, as these connections can lead to invaluable research experiences and personal growth,” she said. As Sydney prepares for her next academic chapter, her journey at Bowie State University stands as a testament to the power of mentorship, dedication, and a passion for discovery. She expressed immense gratitude for the support she received from faculty and peers alike.

Your tax-deductible gift to Bowie State today will help BSU students like Sydney Rivas succeed tomorrow. \$25 helps a student with fees, \$50 helps a student with school supplies, \$100 helps a student with a laptop or tablet, \$200 helps a student with a food plan, \$500 helps a student with room and board.

**COMMUNITY SUPPORT SYSTEMS, INC.**

CSS works diligently to improve the quality of life of our neighbors. We appreciate any contributions you are able to make to help us fulfill our Mission. Our HEART is in our work won’t you help us to help others. Ethel Shepard-Powell, Executive Director. Community support Systems, Inc., PO Box 206, Brandywine, Maryland 20613.

**SUMMER HAPPY HOUR**

Calling all Bowie State Alumni, Friends & Family! Join us for a Summer Happy Hour to mingle, network and celebrate Bulldog pride! Whether you are an alum, a proud supporter or part of the BOWIE family, we welcome you for an evening of fun, connection and community. Music by Walker Redds with food, fun and live entertainment Friday, July 25, 2025, from 4–8 p.m. at La’Caj Seafood (A Cajun Latin Fusion Kitchen & Bar) 4531 Telfair Blvd. #110, Camp Springs, Maryland 20746. Net proceeds from BSUNAA events will go towards scholarships for BSU students.

**Around the County**

**Prince George’s County Animal Services Facility and Adoptions Center Selected for Pilot Project to Get Lost Dogs Home**

*Best Friends Animal Society’s national pilot uses smart signs and community support to reunite lost pets with their families.*

LARGO, Md. (July 7, 2025)—Nearly 10 million pets go missing in the U.S. each year, and many of them never return home. Thanks to the support of Best Friends Animal Society, Prince George’s County will be able to take action!

The Prince George’s County Animal Services Facility and Adoptions Center (ASFAC) is one of only 25 shelters nationwide selected to join Network Neighbors, a new pilot program led by Best Friends Animal Society, a well-known animal welfare organization dedicated to ending the euthanasia of dogs and cats in America’s shelters.

Launched in June, Network Neighbors, supported by Petco Love Lost, aims to reunite lost pets with their families by providing critical information directly to the people who find them, right in their neighborhoods. Lost or stray pets account for many animals entering shelters, and the Network Neighbors pilot program aims to empower the community to help reunite families.

The pilot program is a partnership with Petco Love. It uses the free Petco Love Lost online tool, which applies artificial intelligence (AI) to identify features of found pets and match them with similar missing pets reported in the area. Pet owners can create a free profile for their pets at [www.Petcolove.org](http://www.Petcolove.org) to improve the chances of reunification if their pets go missing.

Local volunteers are helping ASFAC by distributing bilingual yard signs that feature a QR code linking to Petco Love Lost. This free, user-friendly online tool helps connect found pets with their owners, offering an easy way to return pets to their homes before they are taken to a shelter.

About 70% of lost dogs are found within a one-mile radius of their home. Signs are being posted in areas where County data from the past year shows a higher-than-average number of lost dogs.

“It is truly heartbreaking when a lost pet arrives at our facility, and we know someone is missing them just as much as they are missing their family,” said David Fisher, Associate Director of the Animal Services Division. “We are excited to be part of this project and help more of these animals reunite with the people who love them. Not only are families brought back together, but doing so also ensures our kennels aren’t filled with pets that already have homes,” added Fisher.

Over the next several months, ASFAC, Best Friends, and Petco Love will monitor the impact of grassroots efforts on the community. The program will primarily collect and analyze dog data, as shelters have more precise information on where lost dogs are found, making it easier to measure the impact. The goal is to benefit both cats and dogs. If successful, Network Neighbors could expand to communities nationwide, potentially reuniting thousands of pets with their owners or families.

For more information about Best Friends Animal Society, visit [www.bestfriends.org](http://www.bestfriends.org). Learn more about ASFAC at [www.princegeorgespets4us.com](http://www.princegeorgespets4us.com).

**Chair Burroughs to Launch Bi-Weekly Healthy Food Distribution in District 8**

As Prince George’s County faces record-high food insecurity rates, approaching 50%, Council Chair Edward Burroughs III (District 8) is launching a twice weekly free healthy food distribution program for 1,000 families in **District 8**. Families will be supported through the program for one year.

The District 8 Healthy Families Program, in partnership with The StoreHouse and Victory Church International, kicked off on Saturday, July 12 at Thurgood Marshall Middle School, 4909 Brinkley Road, Camp Springs, MD 20748.

Food insecurity in Prince George’s County is at an all-time high, with thousands of families struggling to put meals on the table and a growing number of residents impacted by federal workforce reductions. In addition, chronic illnesses such as heart disease, diabetes, and hypertension account for more than 60% of deaths in the county, underscoring the urgent need for comprehensive health interventions.

“This program is unique in that families in need can rely on having access to fresh and healthy food for a full year,” said Chair Burroughs. “So many Prince Georgians are facing financial uncertainty, and by providing this consistent support, we are not just offering meals, but empowering families to build a healthier future.”

Food distributions will take place via drive-thru pickup on the 2nd and 4th Saturdays of each month. Participants are District 8 residents who pre-registered to join the year-long program.

The StoreHouse is the nation’s first Black-run food bank, founded on the belief that fresh is best, providing nutritious, high-quality food with love and care.

“Access to fresh, nutritious food is one of the most powerful tools we have for building healthier communities. I am honored to be working with Chair Burroughs to provide residents of Prince George’s County with fresh foods,” said Mel Johnson, founder of The StoreHouse. “By providing these essential foods today, we’re not just feeding families, we are investing in our community’s health and future.”

“With a 32-year legacy, Victory Church International has been a beacon of hope in the local community and beyond, dedicated to spreading the transformative compassion and care of Jesus Christ,” said Rev. Kue Lattimore-Williams, Esq., Senior Pastor at Victory Church International. “As we come together in partnership with Chair Burroughs and The Storehouse, we are not just distributing food, we are sharing hope and transforming lives, proving that love in action knows no bounds.”



# COMMUNITY

## Students Honored

### Richard Scott Named 2024–25 PSAC Scholar Athlete

Pa. (July 10, 2025)—Richard Scott, of Hyattsville, MD, was named a 2024–25 Pennsylvania State Athletic Conference (PSAC) Scholar Athlete for Football at Commonwealth University-Lock Haven.

The PSAC honored 3,922 student-athletes from its institutions as PSAC Scholar-Athletes after the conclusion of the 2024–25 academic year. Student-athletes must maintain a cumulative GPA of at least 3.25 upon completion of the academic year to be eligible for the PSAC Scholar-Athlete Award.

The 2024–25 PSAC Scholar-Athlete total of 3,922 (54% of the entire PSAC student-athlete population) marks the 10th consecutive year the PSAC has awarded at least 40% of its student-athlete population with “Scholar-Athlete” status.

**Kyla Hildebrand of Bowie Graduates from Eastern Connecticut State University** WILLIMANTIC, Conn. (July 9, 2025)—More than 800 Eastern

Connecticut State University students received undergraduate and graduate-level degrees in the 2024–25 academic year, which culminated this past May with two commencement ceremonies at the conclusion of the spring 2025 semester.

Kyla Hildebrand of Bowie graduated with a Bachelor of Arts in Spanish.

**Congrats Oslyn on Being Named to EMU’s Spring 2025 Dean’s List!** HARRISONBURG, Va. (July 9, 2025)—Congratulations to Oslyn Mejia Gomez, a Digital Media and Communication major from Hyattsville, MD, on being named to the Spring 2025 Dean’s List at Eastern Mennonite University.

The Dean’s List, compiled at the end of each semester, includes degree-seeking students who achieve a semester GPA of at least 3.75 with no W, I, or F grades for 12 semester hours of standard grades.



PHOTO CREDIT BEA WEEMS

**LEAP Forward Inc. held another successful scholarship award ‘chat and chew’ reception that honored high school graduates and college students (middle) for their outstanding academic, leadership, and community service achievements. The photo above also includes the donors who participated.**

## LEAP Forward Awards Scholarships to 57 Students

*Nine scholarship winners are Prince George’s County students*

By PRESS OFFICER  
**Launching Educational Assistance Programs Forward, Inc.**

On June 29, a full house celebrated alongside LEAP Forward Inc., as it held another successful scholarship award ‘chat and chew’ reception that honored high school graduates and college students for their outstanding academic, leadership, and community service achievements. This year’s event marked the 24th anniversary of the organization. The scholarship program started in 1998, when LEAP Forward awarded three book scholarships totaling \$1,000. With the help of the community, volunteers, sponsors, family, corporations, friends and board members, the organization has seen consistent growth in its service to local youth. In 2025, 57 scholarships were presented at a minimum award of \$1,500, totaling \$94,000. To date, LEAP Forward has awarded over 507 scholarships totaling more than \$524,000.

“LEAP” Forward is named in memory of Wallace Lorenzo Leeper, a Calvert High Vocational Guidance Counselor, who was a strong advocate for Science, Technology, Engineering and Math career options. He is featured in Calvert High School’s Hall of Fame for his distinguished service to his job and his students.

This year’s theme was “Getting to Know You”. The ceremony was held in Calvert High School’s cafeteria in Prince Frederick, to present students from Calvert, Charles, St. Mary’s, and Prince George’s counties as well as Baltimore and Washington, D.C. with financial scholarships to pursue their college dreams.

In line with the theme, LEAP Forward provided the opportunity of bringing back the art of good old-fashioned conversation.

Scholarship recipients engaged in a “chat and chew” session with their respective scholarship sponsor family or organization. It was a time of learning from each other and particularly appreciating who scholarships were in honor of. Thirty-seven donor families and organizations participated. Scholars were able to share their experiences with those who are already in college and share their plans for their upcoming journeys for those who are incoming college freshmen. Stories and experiences were shared as generations networked. Communications, guidance, and advice will continue to be shared as the scholars continue to further their education and experience life journeys.

The students showed their appreciation by sharing thank-you cards and letters to the sponsors. The following Prince George’s County scholarship recipients will be college freshmen or returning students in a wide variety of programs from various colleges and universities:

The Wallace Leeper \$2,000 Memorial Scholarship was awarded to **Duke Boateng** (Charles Flowers High School - Information Science –University of Maryland, College Park)

The Clifton Morsell-Randolph Adams \$1,500 Memorial Scholarship was awarded to **Muhammad Bilal** (Charles Flowers High School: Computer Science –University of Maryland, College Park)

The George H. and Geneva Green Harrod \$2,000 Memorial Scholarship was awarded to **Destiny Lewis** (Chemistry – Bowie State University).

Receiving the Bill and Blanche Finch \$1,500 Memorial Scholarship was **Aneesa Azar** (Business Administration – Bowie State University).

The Elizabeth Simms \$1,500 Memorial

Scholarship was awarded to **Amari Edmonds** (Cyber Security Engineering – Bowie State University).

The Dorothy Mae Smith \$1,500 Memorial Scholarship went to **Messiah Smith** (Suitland High School: Music Performance – George Mason University).

The MasterMind Group \$1,500 Scholarship was awarded to **Boyan-Jise Tiwang** (Charles Flowers High School: Data Science – University of Michigan-Ann Arbor).

The recipient of the Geraldine Delores Whittington \$1,500 Memorial Scholarship was awarded to **Sanaa Gray** (Business Management- Bowie State University). Geraldine Whittington was the first African American presidential secretary in United States history serving President Lyndon B. Johnson.

The recipient of the Carrie Bertha Kent and Clyde Jones \$1,500 Memorial Scholarship was **Madison Harris** (Business Administration – Bowie State University).

Special thank you to the scholarship program committee, board members, and other volunteers.

Sponsors for the scholarship program included Walmart sparkgood (Dunkirk), Shore United Bank, Space Metrics, and Sam’s Club (Waldorf) and State Farm Agent Michael Paxson. Special donations were received from Giant Food (Prince Frederick and Dunkirk), Safeway (Dunkirk) and Weis Markets (Prince Frederick).

More information about LEAP Forward Inc. can be found at [www.leapforwardinc.org](http://www.leapforwardinc.org) and scholar and sponsor highlights can be viewed on the organization’s YouTube channel (LEAP Forward inc). The organization celebrates their 25th anniversary in July 2026.

## Social Security Matters

**Ask Rusty:**

### Why Can’t I Get my Social Security Payment Plus my Railroad Pension From my Ex-spouse?

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 have a question. I now get a Railroad Pension from my ex-husband. I did not know it was from the Social Security Administration. I want to collect my SS benefits and my Railroad pension. Can I do that? I do not understand why I cannot collect both. Please advise. Thank you. *Signed: Railroad Ex-spouse*

**Dear Railroad Ex-spouse:** Railroad pension benefits and Social Security benefits are fully coordinated—that is, your Railroad pension payment from your ex-spouse already includes your earned Social Security retirement benefit. That’s because the two government agencies (the RRB—Railroad Retirement Board—and SSA (Social Security Administration) work together and pay your benefits in one single payment, usually managed by the RRB if some of your benefit includes a railroad pension component. The RRB and SSA are two separate government agencies, but they fully coordinate benefits for beneficiaries.

This is exactly the same as if you were collecting regular SS ex-spouse benefits (instead of RR benefits) from your ex-husband; your personal SS retirement benefit is always paid first, and you receive an additional amount (a spousal boost) from your ex-husband. In your case, your “spousal boost” is the difference between your personally earned SS retirement benefit at your full retirement age (FRA) and half of your ex-husbands Tier I Railroad retirement benefit amount at his full retirement age. A railroad pension usually consists of two pieces—a Tier I benefit and a Tier II benefit, with Tier I benefits being the equivalent of the pensioner’s Social Security.

Your ex-spouse benefits under the RRB are handled the same way. The two agencies fully coordinate with each other, evaluate your SS entitlement, and then reduce the amount of your RRB Tier I ex-spouse benefit by your SS retirement amount and pay both amounts together. In this way, you only get one payment, consisting of both your earned SSA component and the RRB component. And whenever there is a railroad component, the RRB (Railroad Retirement Board) is usually responsible for making pension payments.

You may find the information at this RRB website helpful: [https://rrb.gov/RB-9/Social\\_Security\\_Benefits](https://rrb.gov/RB-9/Social_Security_Benefits) and you can also contact your local RRB field office by accessing this link: <https://www.rrb.gov/Field-Office-Locator>.

*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).*

*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).*

## St. Charles Running Festival Names Hospice of the Chesapeake as Official Charity Partner for 2025 Event

By ELYZABETH MARCUSSEN  
**Hospice of the Chesapeake**

WALDORF, Md. (July 8, 2025)—The St. Charles Running Festival is proud to announce its official charity partnership with Hospice of the Chesapeake for the 2025 event, set to take place on **Saturday, September 20** in Waldorf, Maryland, at the Regency Furniture Stadium.

The St. Charles Running Festival will serve as the charitable organization’s signature event for Charles County and help shine a spotlight on the vital work being done every day by the largest independent, not-for-profit hospice provider in the state of Maryland. Hospice of the Chesapeake supports patients and their loved ones through all stages of serious illness and grief, creating space for comfort, dignity, and meaningful moments.

After hosting its own event in 2024, Hospice of the Chesapeake joined forces with Corrigan Sports to combine efforts and broaden their collective impact.

“We’re thrilled to team up with Hospice of the Chesapeake and make this year’s event even more meaningful,” said Lee Corrigan, President of Corrigan Sports. “This partnership will showcase a cause that touches so many lives and



LOGOS COURTESY HOSPICE OF THE CHESAPEAKE

allows the community to recognize the importance of the services hospice provides.”

“Signature events are essential to our fundraising activities,” said Chris Wilson, Executive Director of the Hospice of the Chesapeake Foundation. “The St. Charles Running Festival will assist in raising critical dollars to support the mission of the organization as well as provide an excellent opportunity to educate and engage new community members.”

Runners can show their support by donating to Hospice of the Chesapeake during the registration process. Every dollar helps bring comfort and care to families in Charles County.

To register or learn more about the St.

Charles Running Festival, visit [www.StCharlesRunFest.com](http://www.StCharlesRunFest.com).

*At Hospice of the Chesapeake, we support individuals and families facing progressive, serious illness to reimagine hope—living each day with intention and peace—while ensuring our nonprofit organization remains a vital resource for future generations. We develop care plans to minimize symptoms and focus on what matters most for patients and families in Anne Arundel, Calvert, Charles and Prince George’s counties. Caring for life throughout the journey with illness and loss is the mission of Hospice of the Chesapeake. For more information, please visit [www.hospicechesapeake.org](http://www.hospicechesapeake.org).*



# COMMENTARY

## Marian Wright Edelman

Founder and President Emerita,  
Children’s Defense Fund



### ChildWatch:

## Being Loving Champions for Justice

For people whose hearts are broken by seeing news of parents, families, and children suffering anywhere, this has been a difficult week. It was an ideal moment to be buoyed by hopeful news like the messages the King Center in Atlanta shared during their celebration of Be Love Day on July 9, as they invited people to pledge to Be Love every day in order to create and strengthen the beloved community Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. envisioned.

As part of the Be Love pledge says: “I pledge to allow love to drive my thoughts, words, decisions, and actions, and honor the humanity of every individual. I pledge to speak the truth to power in love. I pledge to focus on defeating injustice and not destroying the person. I pledge to

support leaders who demonstrate a love for humanity. I pledge to promote unity and refuse to perpetuate or magnify division. I pledge to demonstrate a life of courage, care, and compassion as I boldly confront anything that stands in opposition to love.”

This is a needed path. Later this month, faith leaders and child advocates will gather at Children’s Defense Fund’s Haley Farm in Tennessee, CDF’s own space for building beloved community, for the 2025 Hall-Proctor Institute for Child Advocacy Ministry. Named for Rev. Dr. Prathia Hall and Rev. Dr. Samuel DeWitt Proctor, this is a place where faith, action, and joy come together to build a better world, and an experience that helps participants continue the necessary, hopeful, sacred

work of pursuing justice and joy for all young people. Ten years ago, the beloved late South African Archbishop and Nobel Peace Prize Laureate Desmond Tutu sent attendees a video message with a timeless exhortation for this work: “Justice needs champions. Good leaders with the ability to identify the challenges and the tenacity to address them. Good leaders driven not by personal ambition, but by an innate desire to improve the circumstances of the human family and the human condition.”

Archbishop Tutu continued: “We inhabit a moral universe. Goodness, righteousness, and fairness matter. We are born to love—all of us, including Black, Latino, and White [children] and everyone else. As members of the human family—God’s family—we were created with equal, infinite worth for interdependence. In conditions of harmony, equity, and common purpose, the whole family thrives. God does not use strong-armed tactics to ensure justice is done. God empowers us to do the right thing. It is up to us—you, and you, and you, and me.”

He then shared what he believed was God’s dream for all children: “And God says, I have a dream. I have a dream that all of my children will discover that they belong in one family—my family, the human family—a family in which there are no outsiders; all are held in the embrace of the one whose love will never let us go; the one who

says that each one of us is of incredible worth, that each one of us is precious to God because each of us has their name written on the palms of God’s hands. And God says, there are no outsiders—Black, White, red, yellow, short, tall, young, old, rich, poor, gay, lesbian, straight—everyone. All belong. And God says, I have only you to help me realize my dream. Help me.”

It is still up to us to use our own hands to help realize this dream. How long will it take? Dr. King himself answered that question in a similar context: “We must come to see that the end we seek is a society at peace with itself, a society that can live with its conscience . . . I come to say to you this afternoon, however difficult the moment, however frustrating the hour, it will not be long, because ‘truth crushed to earth will rise again.’ How long? Not long, because ‘no lie can live forever.’ How long? Not long, because ‘you shall reap what you sow’ . . . How long? Not long, because the arc of the moral universe is long, but it bends toward justice.” How long? Not long, even in this current moment, as long as a critical mass among us remains determined to be love and be the partners and champions for justice that immigrant children, children experiencing poverty, children of color, and all children, young people, and members of the human family need.

—July 11, 2025

## Marc Morial

President and CEO, National Urban League



### To Be Equal:

## Baltimore Success Story: Mayor Scott’s Community-Based Approach Achieves Historic Drop in Violent Crime

*“After years of investing in violence interrupters, community outreach workers and neighborhood-based prevention initiatives, Baltimore is witnessing the fruits of this focused approach. These programs work because they address violence at its roots, engaging directly with the individuals and communities most affected by crime.”*

—Maryland Public Defender  
Natasha Dartigue

When Brandon Scott took office as Mayor of Baltimore in 2021, he implemented a public safety

plan that tackled violence as a public health problem, emphasized community engagement, and committed to accountability.

Today, Baltimore is seeing the lowest homicide rate in 50 years.

The 22% decline in homicides and 19% decline in non-fatal shootings over the first six months of the year exceed the city’s Comprehensive Violence Prevention Plan’s goal of a 15% annual reduction in gun violence.

The historic milestone is part of an ongoing dramatic reduction in crime that began in 2003.

By the end of 2024, six communities—Belvedere, Woodbourne McCabe, Park Heights, Penn North, Franklin Square, and Brooklyn—saw a year without homicides, according to Scott’s first-term report.

Scott’s strategy is based on data showing that the people most likely to victimize or be victimized through gun violence was contained to a narrow group, and addressing the needs of those specific communities.

It’s about preventing crime, not just punishing it.

“We are not going back to the days of arresting any and every Black person who is just outside,” Scott said.

But Scott isn’t resting on his laurels. “While we acknowledge the historic lows we are experiencing, we must simultaneously acknowledge that there is much more work to do and our success makes me commit even further to doing it.”

When Scott embarked on his mayoral campaign in 2020, tackling violence in Baltimore seemed an unsurmountable task in one of the deadliest cities in the nation. Reinforced by television shows like HBO’s The Wire, the city’s image as crime-ridden and dangerous prompted national headlines like “Who Wants to Run the Deadliest Big City in America?”

Growing up Park Heights, Scott was all too familiar with the consequences of both rampant gun

violence and the city’s ineffectual and misguided tactics to curb it. He recalled his shirt snagging on a fence as he scrambled over it to escape gunfire that erupted in a church parking lot. He also had been handcuffed by police for what he termed “breathing while Black.”

Though only 36 when he was elected, he’d already been an elected official for a decade and had chaired the Baltimore City Council’s Public Safety Committee and co-founded the anti-violence group 300 Men March.

Other public safety achievements include the city’s \$1.2 million settlement with Polymer80, a major ghost gun manufacturer, and progress toward a consent decree for the Baltimore Police Department.

As a young mayor facing record-high crime rates in New Orleans in the 1990s, I saw that policing alone was not the solution. Through a comprehensive approach based on empowering people in underserved communities, my administration cut crime in half and transformed a scandal-ridden police department.

The experience of cities like New Orleans formed the basis for the National Urban League’s 21 Pillars For Redefining Public Safety and Restoring Community Trust, and Mayor Scott’s success in Baltimore is further proof of its effectiveness.

—July 12, 2025

## Experienced Research Administrator Will Advance BSU’s Goal of Becoming a Carnegie R2 Research Institution

By PRESS OFFICER  
Bowie State University

BOWIE, Md. (July 9, 2025)—Bowie State University (BSU) welcome[d] Dr. Yvonne Harris to its leadership team as the Vice President for Research & Innovation on July 9, 2025. In this new role, Dr. Harris will oversee BSU’s research projects and opportunities, working collaboratively to set priorities for institutional growth and investment in research and scholarship.

“Dr. Yvonne Harris brings a wealth of experience in academia and research administration at both R1 and R2 institutions, and we are excited to welcome her to Bowie State University,” said Dr. Aminta H. Breaux, president of Bowie State University. “Her deep expertise and leadership will be instrumental in advancing research excellence at Bowie State as we continue our path toward becoming a Carnegie R2 research intensive school.”

Dr. Harris is a highly accomplished academic and research leader with more than two decades of experience. As head of the newly established Division of Research & Innovation, she will provide strategic leadership for the Office of Research & Sponsored Programs, Grants Accounting, and the Office of Economic Development & Strategic Engagement.

“I am proud to join Bowie State University and contribute to its growing legacy of excel-

lence as an HBCU,” said Dr. Harris. “I look forward to collaborating with faculty, staff and students to advance the university’s mission and drive transformational impact through research. Academic research has the power to shape lives and communities, and Bowie State plays a vital role in generating knowledge that informs and improves our local, regional and national communities and economies.”

Dr. Harris comes to BSU

from Northern Illinois University, where she most recently served as vice president of research and innovative partnerships. She has held leadership roles at Truman College, Harper College, Chicago State University, James Madison University and California State University–Sacramento. Across her career, she has held a variety of leadership roles, including tenured professor, chair, dean at two-year colleges and vice provost, associate vice president and vice president at four-year universities. Her work has consistently focused on expanding research capacity, supporting faculty and

student scholarship, and fostering partnerships with federal, state and industry entities to promote innovation and economic development through higher education.

Dr. Harris earned three degrees from Northern Illinois University, including a bachelor’s degree in biology and a master’s degree and Ph.D. in molecular and cellular radiation biology. She also completed two Postdoctoral Fellows in the Department of Radiation and Oncology at the University of Chicago and the Department of Immunology and Microbiology at the University of Illinois at Chicago.

### Tours from A1

governments, and strategies for equitable growth.

“We were honored to welcome Secretary Coker and his team to experience the strength, diversity, and promise of Prince George’s County,” said Ebony Stocks, Interim President & CEO of PGCEDC. “This tour underscores the County’s position as a premier destination for business, technology, life sciences, and cultural experiences.”

The itinerary featured a range of business assets, including Cloudforce, a cutting-edge technology firm and national leader in federal contracting and digital modernization; Envue Eye & Laser, a pioneering veteran-owned medical enterprise revolutionizing ophthalmology; and The Peterson Companies and Arts’tination, showcasing National Harbor’s role as a regional hub for creative placemaking, small business, and tourism. The day also included a visit to MGM National Harbor, an economic anchor for hospitality and entertainment.

“Prince George’s County is a major economic engine for Maryland and a leading hub for innovation and discovery,” said Commerce

Secretary Harry Coker, Jr. “I’m pleased to kick off my county tours by visiting some of Prince George’s County’s top businesses, assets, and leaders. With their partnership, the success of Prince George’s County translates to the success of Maryland.”

The afternoon agenda included visits to the University of Maryland’s Fischell Institute for Biomedical Devices and Mtech, which bridge biotech research and commercialization; Genesis Engineering Solutions, a key player in the County’s advanced manufacturing and aerospace sectors; and Cleopatra Winery & Vineyard, a Black-owned agri-tourism destination in Laurel, capping the day with a community networking reception.

Joining Secretary Coker were:

- Stephen Rice, Deputy Secretary, Maryland Department of Commerce
- Mayank Kapur, Assistant Secretary
- Jennifer LaHatte, Managing Director of Policy, Research, and Government Affairs
- Delterese George, Senior Business Development Representative

Representing Prince George’s County alongside Ebony Stocks were:

- Larry Hentz, Executive Director of Business Development, PGCEDC

- Dawn Medley, President & CEO, FSC First
- Beverly Everson-Jones, CFOO, FSC First
- Jeffrey Swilley, Chief of Staff, Employ Prince George’s
- Dr. Guy-Alain Amoussou, Provost & VP of Academic Affairs, Bowie State University
- Leslie Graves, President & CEO, Experience Prince George’s
- Sheila Hession, Board Chair, Experience Prince George’s and Executive Director of Marketing & Sales, MGM

This collaborative experience strengthened interagency relationships and reaffirmed Prince George’s County’s alignment with the Moore-Miller Administration’s vision for an inclusive, innovative, and opportunity-rich Maryland.

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Prince George’s County Economic Development Corporation (PGCEDC)’s mission is to cultivate and promote a strong local economy supporting entrepreneurs’ and businesses’ growth and prosperity. It is dedicated to strengthening communities through business development and job creation. For more information about PGCEDC’s services to local companies, visit [www.pgcedc.com](http://www.pgcedc.com).

## The Prince George’s Post

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# ENVIRONMENT

## Prince George’s County Climate Summary

By RACHEL MCCREA  
Capital News Service

The world is heating up, and so is Prince George’s County. Over a century of historical data show temperatures rising, and researchers predict a future with higher rates of extreme heat and precipitation, more warm nights and fewer days that dip below freezing.

Annual average temperatures in the county have risen, according to 130 years of federal data. The annual average temperature for 2000–2024 is 57 degrees Fahrenheit. That’s two degrees warmer than the 20th century mean of 55 F.

The county’s warmest years were 2024 and 2012. Both had an average temperature of 58.8 F. (See chart at right, Prince George’s County Yearly Average Temperature, 1895–2024)

Scientists predict a range of future impacts in Prince George’s County if the planet continues to warm.

An interactive map published by the U.S. Global Change Research Program and its partners—but later removed from the web by the Trump administration—used climate models to predict county-level changes at different degrees of global warming.

The Local News Network at the University of Maryland’s Philip Merrill College of Journalism archived that data before it was deleted.

The data shows that with 2.7 F global warming, Prince George’s County is predicted to experience:

- 31 more days per year with extreme precipitation
- Six more days per year with temperatures over 95 F
- 14 more nights per year with temperatures over 70 F
- 14 fewer days per year with temperatures under 32 F

With 3.6 F global warming, Prince George’s County is predicted to experience:

- 34 more days per year with extreme precipitation
- 13 more days per year with temperatures over 95 F

- 24 more nights per year with temperatures over 70 F
- 23 fewer days per year with temperatures under 32 F

With 5.4 F global warming, Prince George’s County is predicted to experience:

- 47 more days per year with extreme precipitation
- 32 more days per year with temperatures over 95 F
- 48 more nights per year with temperatures over 70 F
- 37 fewer days per year with temperatures under 32 F

With 7.2 F global warming, Prince George’s County is predicted to experience:

- 62 more days per year with extreme precipitation
- 47 more days per year with temperatures over 95 F
- 63 more nights per year with temperatures over 70 F
- 46 fewer days per year with temperatures under 32 F

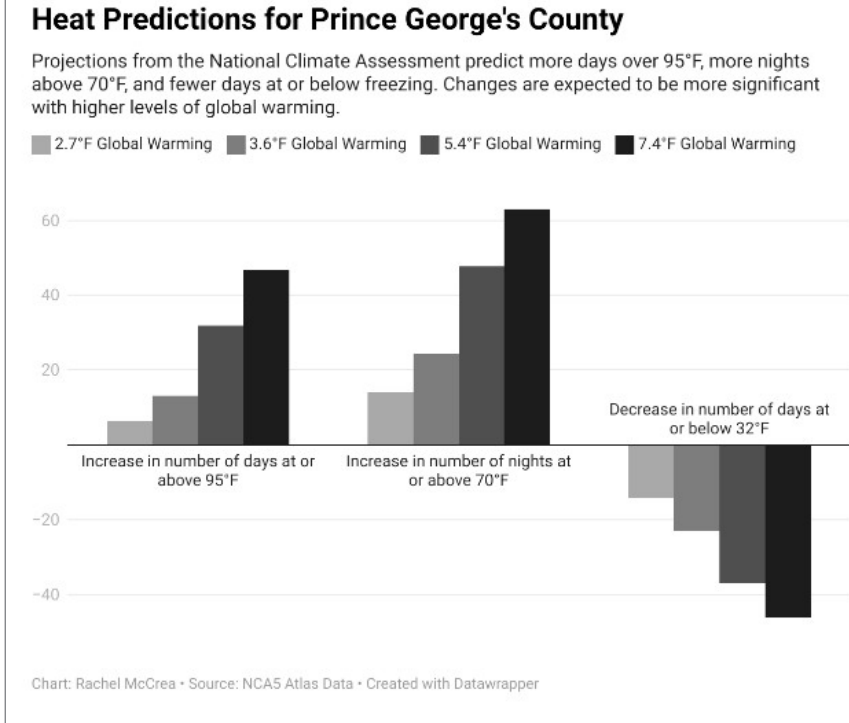
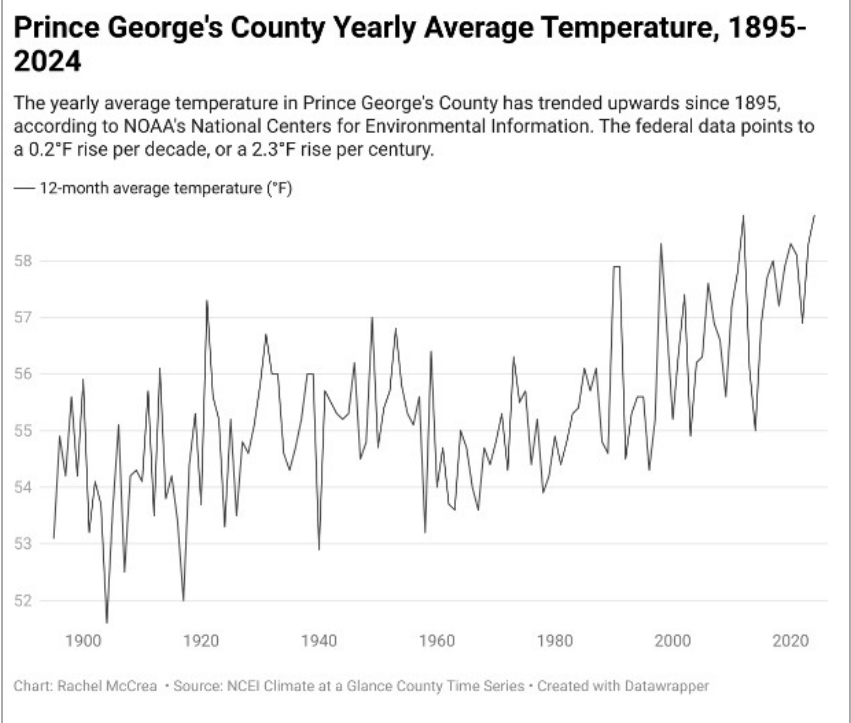
Note: Data rounded to the nearest whole number.

(See chart at bottom right, Heat Predictions for Prince George’s County)

Changes are compared to data from 1991–2020: for example, 12 more days per year over 95 F means 12 more days compared to the 1991–2020 average.

The federal climate atlas measures global warming by comparing Earth’s average temperatures to those measured from 1851–1900, called the “pre-industrial average.” The Earth is 2 F warmer than the pre-industrial average, according to NOAA.

Climate models used by the National Climate Assessment predict increases in average temperature and precipitation. The U.S. Climate Resilience Toolkit (run by the U.S. Global Change Research Program and NOAA) also predicts more rain, though it notes that “global climate models are simply not as skillful at projecting outcomes for precipitation as they are for temperature.”



### Climate from A1

much more intense than in other parts of the state. The Chesapeake Bay has already risen from 1.3 to 1.5 inches each decade over the past 100 years, and increasing temperatures would drastically increase precipitation.

The land isn’t the only thing vulnerable to climate change. Throughout the entire Eastern Shore, the fishing industry is changing.

“One very clear example is that we never had a shrimp industry in the state until the last couple years,” Campbell said.

Campbell also said blue crabs populations, which do well in warmer waters, will thrive. But the effects on the bay aren’t all positive.

Warmer waters will kill fish at an increasing rate, Campbell said. Similarly, an increase in carbon dioxide in the atmosphere increases the acidity in the ocean water, which can deplete oyster populations.

As for the Eastern Shore’s farmland and ghost forests, Campbell said the best case for this land experiencing saltwater intrusion is for it to transition into wetlands. The state has a pilot program to help farmers with that transition.

“In some cases, you see marshes forming under those forests,” Campbell said. “But in some cases, they eventually will transition to just open water and you lose that ecosystem.”

### Baltimore City

Baltimore City is vulnerable to both rising temperatures and increased precipitation. The city saw its hottest recorded temperatures in 2023, with an average of 59.4 degrees Fahrenheit for the year.

Increasing temperatures are one of the biggest threats to the city, and because of its infrastructure and lack of greenery, many areas in the city are classified as urban heat islands. High temperatures are dangerous for residents, may overload the energy grid and could increase respiratory illness rates, including asthma.

“The number one killer from climate change is not hurricanes, it’s not flooding—it’s heat,” Tidwell said. “Heat waves kill more people, especially the very old and the very young and the very poor, so very concerned about areas of Baltimore and elsewhere.”

Some people in the city are trying to combat these rising temperatures. Katie Lautar is the executive director of Baltimore Green Space, a non-profit organization working to preserve green spaces in communities.

“What we wanted to draw attention to is that if we are going to lose more forests, the temperatures are going to rise faster,” Lautar said. “Forests provide better cooling benefits to the surrounding community.”

But rising temperatures aren’t the only worry for the city. Rising sea levels and increases in extreme storm events could affect Baltimore because it sits right on the harbor. A study done by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers lays out the risks

Baltimore City faces. It found that from 1997 to 2011, the city was spending \$2.2 million annually to rebuild from flooding events.

Lataur said this is an issue the organization is trying to combat through their preservation and advocacy work.

“If there are streets that are already flooding with buses floating down the street in severe weather events, then we need to be especially mindful that development should not be encouraged right around those regions,” Lautar said.

The city is trying to adapt. Baltimore City adopted a new version of its disaster preparedness plan in 2023, specifically targeting the effects of climate change on the city’s residents.

The plan identifies issues ranging from dam hazards to extreme temperatures to soil movement. It also delves into plan implementation and maintenance, detailing key members of the Baltimore City government and their role in the plan implementation.

“Climate change is expected to exacerbate many of these natural hazard impacts resulting in intense and unpredictable events,” reads the preparedness plan. “Regardless of the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions, climate change impacts will continue to prevail for Baltimore City and its people.”

### Southern Maryland

On the Western Shore of the Chesapeake Bay are St. Mary’s, Charles, Calvert and Anne Arundel counties. Like the Eastern Shore, many areas in Southern Maryland are susceptible to flooding and rising sea levels.

“We have a lot of coastal development on the Western Shore,” Campbell said. “Less agriculture exists, but more communities. And there are quite a few very vulnerable communities on the Western Shore and the Eastern Shore to sea level rise.

While the region will see coastal ecological impacts, Campbell said his biggest worry for the Western Shore, including counties in Southern Maryland, are the impacts both rising sea levels and an increase in high intensity storm events could have on the communities in the region.

The region is extremely vulnerable to extreme precipitation increases as temperatures rise. If temperatures rise by 2.7 degrees Fahrenheit, Anne Arundel and Calvert counties will see 27 more days per year with extreme precipitation, while Charles County will see 38 more such days, according to the National Climate Assessment. These are some of the highest numbers in the state.

Increased flooding could be an issue, according to Campbell.

“If you look at, you know, Baltimore and Annapolis, they have a lot of infrastructure that is vulnerable even with a foot or two of sea level rise,” Campbell said.

### Capital Region and Howard County

Prince George’s and Montgomery are the two of the largest counties in the state, and along with Howard County, this region is home to 2.4 million

people, according to 2023 U.S. Census Bureau estimates.

While this region will continue to see climbing temperatures, extreme precipitation will remain a major problem. The three counties will see dramatic increases in days with extreme precipitation each year as temperatures rise.

Federal projections show Montgomery County will see nearly five more days a year at or above 95 degrees at the lowest levels of temperature increases, and Prince George’s County will see just over six days at or above 95. At this same level of warming, both of those counties can expect an extra 31 days a year with extreme levels of precipitation.

Doug Siglin, a retired environmental professional, lives in Howard County and is an environmental activist. He has also worked on advocacy projects in Montgomery County and Washington, D.C.

“I don’t think people are feeling the effects particularly of climate change, but I do think that they’re very aware of it,” Siglin said. “They’re very upset about it and they want something to happen. They just don’t know what it is that can be done.”

While the full implications of climate change are not evident to all, Howard County has already experienced fatal flooding events. In 2016 and 2018, torrential downpours of over 6.5 inches of rain in three hours flooded Ellicott City and Catonsville, resulting in three fatalities over the two years and major destruction with each flood.

Both Howard County and Montgomery County have climate action plans as well, both aimed at mitigating climate change impacts and lowering greenhouse gas emissions. In addition, Prince George’s County established a climate action plan in 2021 dealing with all aspects of global warming, including flooding.

### Central Maryland

Two of the three counties in central Maryland—Baltimore and Harford counties—are on the Western Shore. Carroll County is just inland.

Like the rest of the state, these counties are set to experience temperature increases and precipitation increases. And people are worried.

A Baltimore-area survey published by Johns Hopkins University in March includes residents from Baltimore County and Baltimore City. Nearly three-quarters of the Baltimore County residents surveyed said they are worried about higher costs due to climate change.

Overall, 73% of Baltimore-area residents believe climate change will affect them personally at some point in their lives. This is a stark difference from the 2023 national estimate of 46% of adults who believe climate change will affect them at some point in their lives, according to the Johns Hopkins survey.

“We found that the overall share of Baltimore-area residents who are concerned that climate change will personally harm them in the future is high compared to the nation and the state of Mary-

land,” the authors of the study wrote in a summary of their work.

If temperatures increase by 2.7 degrees Fahrenheit, residents will see between four and five more days above 95 F. The number of extreme precipitation events is expected to increase as well.

### Western Maryland

Western Maryland will see the state’s most minimal changes from climate change. Frederick, Washington, Allegany and Garrett counties will see temperature increases, but these counties are less susceptible to the drastic changes expected elsewhere.

In the region, Garrett County, the westernmost county in the state, will undergo the smallest temperature change seen in the state. With a 2.7-degree Fahrenheit temperature increase, Garrett County will only experience 0.33 more days each year over 95 degrees, just a fraction of a day.

However, experts said Western Maryland will still see extreme flash flooding as temperatures and precipitation increase. Allegany and Garrett counties already experienced flash flooding in May after a sudden outburst of up to five inches of rain.

“You don’t fully grasp the scale of it until you’re standing here, witnessing it for yourself,” Rep. April McClain Delaney (D) said when visiting the flooded area with Gov. Wes Moore. “We’ve met families who had to evacuate their homes and small business owners now facing tough choices.”

According to Deborah Landau, director of ecological management for the Maryland/DC chapter of The Nature Conservancy, flooding will continue to be a major issue in the Maryland panhandle. She said flooding and rising temperatures may harm communities and ecosystems.

“Western Maryland is part of the central Appalachian Mountains, and [The Nature Conservancy] has targeted the Appalachian Mountains as one of the most important places to protect worldwide,” Landau said.

She said the organization is working to protect the forests and the species that travel through them. According to Landau, the Appalachian Mountains are a “superhighway” for species movement in the region.

But people, along with the animals in their communities, will also see major effects in the region.

“It’s often going to impact a lot of maybe less affluent communities, those that are less likely to have flood insurance,” Landau said. “And with flooding, it takes a long time to recover. It’s a lot of infrastructure damage.”

Landau said the potential for flooding can be offset, at least partially, through forest protection.

“Protecting and restoring the forests that we have is really going to help move the needle back into the right direction, and hopefully help protect many of these communities that are currently being impacted by this awful flooding,” Landau said.

*Capital News Service reporter Rachel McCreia contributed to this report.*



# EarthTalk® Prevalence of Processed Foods Q&A Compromises Sustainability

By John Chang | July 2, 2025

Dear EarthTalk:  
*Is the prevalence of processed foods an environmental threat?*  
—Lori P., via email

Warm supermarket bread. Mouth-watering hot dogs. Fizzy, sweet soda. Processed and ultra-processed foods (UPFs) are pervasive in American diets. In fact, the U.S. leads the world in UPF consumption, with over 60 percent of our daily caloric intake coming from these manufactured products. Despite their popularity, many people remain unaware of the environmental consequences of these convenient foods.

What exactly sets these processed variants apart from wholesome foods? According to the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), processed foods are altered from their natural state through processes like canning, dehydrating and heating. Ultra-processed foods are more extreme, consisting mostly of substances and additives extracted from foods, such as fats, starches and preservatives. These products usually bear little resemblance to their original ingredients and are what most people imagine when they think of “processed foods.”

Marco Springmann, senior researcher at the University of Oxford’s Environmental Change Institute, explains, “If you processed some food at home, the chances are you expend more energy doing that, as the process isn’t as streamlined as a big factory.” In other words, preparing minimally processed foods at home may require more energy than industrial production, which relies on highly efficient systems. However, the long-term environmental impact of UPFs expands beyond just energy consumption.

The abrupt rise in UPFs threatens agrobiodiversity, or the variety in animals and plants used in the farming and food sectors. UPF production increases the demand for a narrow selection of high-yield crops—mainly rice, wheat, and corn—despite the existence of over 7,000 edible plants. This issue is further exacerbated by the widespread use of these limited crop species to feed livestock raised for processed meat production. Reducing agrobiodiversity diminishes the variety of consumable foods; during periods of underproduction or climate unpredictability, this could lead to issues in food security.

UPFs also contribute to environmental degradation through waste production: These products are often packaged in single-use plastics such as wrappers, bottles and containers. Each year, about nine million metric tons of plastic enter the oceans, where they can persist for centuries, breaking down into harmful microplastics that contaminate ecosystems.

In addition, UPFs carry a large water footprint, especially soft drinks, which require hundreds of liters of water for production, processing and packaging. They also require vast amounts of land, release greenhouse gases, and lead to eutrophication (the overflow of nutrients in marine settings).

Our eating habits do make a difference: the food supply chain leads to 26 percent of human-caused greenhouse gas emissions globally. But together, whether researching planet-healthy food alternatives or reducing reliance on single-use plastics, being environmentally conscious is a powerful step in deciding our planet’s future.



PHOTO CREDIT: PEXELS.COM.

The ubiquity of processed foods in the U.S. and elsewhere is not just a problem for human health but also for the environment.

**CONTACTS:** What is eutrophication? <https://oceanservice.noaa.gov/facts/eutrophication.html>; Regulatory Policy To Address Ultraprocessed Foods, <https://www.nejm.org/doi/full/10.1056/NEJMp2503241>.

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