

# The Prince George's Post



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## M-NCPPC, Department of Parks & Recreation in Prince George's County Launches Online Resource Center as Cancellations of Public Events Continue

*Virtual Recreation to Help Residents Stay Active*

By CHANDA WASHINGTON  
PG County Dept of Parks & Recreation

RIVERDALE, Md. (April 15, 2020)—The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission, Department of Parks and Recreation in Prince George's County announced today that it is canceling all events for May and launching a new Online Resource Center to help patrons stay active while in their homes.

"We continue to explore creative ways to keep everyone engaged during these difficult times. This Online Resource Center will serve as a one-stop-shop for fitness and fun for all ages as we continue to do our part to stop the spread of COVID-19 in our community," says Bill Tyler, Director of the M-NCPPC, Department of Parks and Recreation.

The Online Resource Center, located at [pgparks.com/onlineresourcecenter](http://pgparks.com/onlineresourcecenter), features

a weekly segment titled "Wellness Wednesday" in which fitness instructors share exercise tips—such as yoga, balancing, and stretching—that patrons can do in the comfort of their homes. Other resources available on the website include activities for kids and healthy meal prep suggestions.

The Department continues to urge resi-

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## Mel Franklin, Council Member At-Large: Prince George's County Buy Local Restaurant To-Go Challenge

Join me and support our local restaurants and the Prince George's County small business community! Starting this week, take the "Buy Local Restaurant To-Go Challenge" and pledge to purchase a to-go or delivery order from a sit-down restaurant in the County at least twice a week.

Take the pledge: <http://tinyurl.com/buy-local-restaurant-challenge>.

Let's ensure that our Prince George's County restaurants survive and recover from the coronavirus crisis. When our small businesses thrive, our communities thrive!

The Buy Local Restaurant To-Go Challenge is an Advisory Neighborhood Community (ANC) Initiative.

And remember to register for the Prince George's County Coronavirus Economic Impact Tele-Town Hall on **Thursday, April 23, 2020, 7:15-8:45 p.m.**: <https://tinyurl.com/covid-19-teletownhall>



IMAGE COURTESY PGCMLS

## D.C. United and PGCMLS Team-Up to Support Prince George's County Families

*Local Major League Soccer Team to Provide Online Content for Residents through Library System*

By NICHOLAS A. BROWN / ZACH ABAIE  
PGCMLS / D.C. United

LARGO, Md. (April 15, 2020)—D.C. United and the Prince George's County Memorial Library System (PGCMLS) have launched a new partnership to support all Prince Georgians with engaging online content to stay fit and connected during the present stay at home order.

The partnership, a first-of-its-kind in Major League Soccer, features free access to bilingual English/Spanish workout videos for kids (Talon's Workout Tapes), bi-weekly Ask Me Any-

thing (AMA) events with D.C. United players, and bi-monthly virtual story time, #SaveWithStories, for children ages 2-8 through the PGCMLS website ([pgcmls.info/DCUnited](http://pgcmls.info/DCUnited)) and social media.

"Our friends in Prince George's County have been wonderful supporters of our Club for a long time and their passionate community of soccer

See D.C. UNITED Page A2

## "Toque de queda"

2020 UMES senior  
Samantha Hernandez, of Lanham, Md., sees her study in Peru cut short

Article and photos courtesy of the University of Maryland Eastern Shore

UMES senior Samantha Hernandez was walking down a street in Cuzco, once Peru's ancient capital, the morning of March 22 when police stopped her for not wearing a mask.

Peru was among the leading western hemisphere nations to take aggressive steps early on to stem the spread of the coronavirus, which included "toque de queda"—a strict curfew. Local authorities embraced a strategy of wearing face masks in public, a directive Samantha missed as she focused on hunkering down and simultaneously trying to arrange a return to the United States.

The exercise science major is back home in Prince George's County today after a successful two-week self-quarantine—and plenty of time to mull a foreign exchange student experience for the ages.

"Life took a weird turn," she said.

Although reluctant to take credit, her selflessness in the midst of a global health crisis also helped nine fellow foreign exchange students return safely to the United States.

At the urging of Dr. Carol Champagne, an English and Modern Languages professor, Samantha qualified last fall for the U.S. Department of State's Benjamin A. Gilman Scholarship Program, which assists "students of limited financial means to study or intern abroad."

Her senior-year spring semester would be spent high in the Andes mountains, the land of the Incas two miles above sea level.

Arriving Jan. 16, Samantha settled into an internship working at a hyperbaric chamber clinic that treats patients with altitude sickness—a condition she mildly experienced just getting dressed early in her stay. Working at the clinic provided her valuable hands-on experience performing health-care related duties she needed to fulfill a graduation requirement.

As COVID-19 closed in on the Americas, Samantha sensed her semester abroad might end before it was supposed to on May 8.

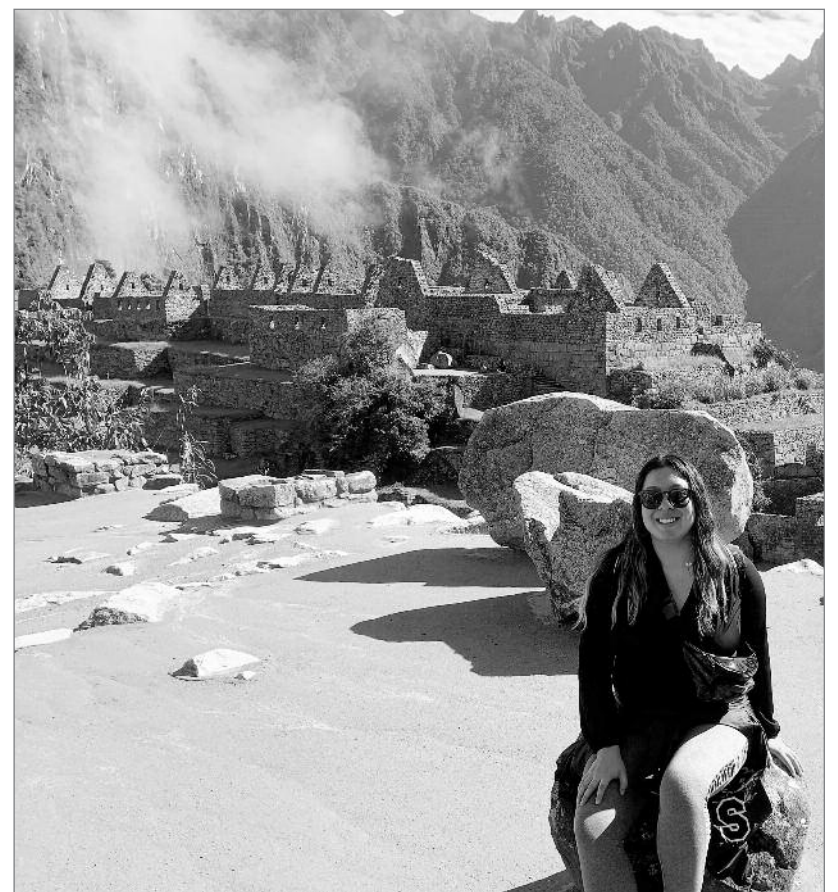
When Peru's president on March 15 ordered the nation's borders closed and gave people 24 hours' notice to leave the country, the aggressive step created an international stir that got Samantha's attention.

"I was living history in the making," she said.

She also conceded she might be stuck in the country indefinitely, but wasn't "too worried."

In a phone call home, she told her mother, "I'm fine. I'm well-adjusted. I've got good connections with people who offered to help me and I can speak Spanish."

As a scholarship recipient through a federal government agency, she reached out



Samantha Hernandez at Machu Picchu in the Andes.

to the U.S. embassy in Lima and the Knowledge Exchange Institute, which coordinated her travel and insurance coverage in case of emergency.

A pandemic, obviously, qualifies as an emergency. Arranging a flight out of a nation with closed borders proved daunting. The Peruvian government's swift action had left thousands of foreign nationals in limbo.

"I remember thinking 'if we do get a flight (out), it would be a miracle,'" she said. She and her American roommate packed their belongings but also bought two weeks' worth of groceries. "Be prepared for quarantine."

A week after Peru's government took drastic actions, Samantha and her roommate walked to a nearby grocery store packed with people all wearing masks.

The store wouldn't let them enter, so they headed back to their apartment only to be stopped by police, who interrogated them for ignoring the local directive to keep faces shielded. Samantha wasn't intimidated, but she worried she might face arrest.

The roommates explained their situation and went home. Samantha later hunted down the face masks, finally locating them at the fourth pharmacy she visited.

The next day, the U.S. embassy alerted her it could get her on a flight for March 25, a week earlier than she initially hoped was possible.

"I'm a Gilman scholar" sponsored by a federal agency, Samantha said to herself. "I got lucky."

Her thoughts turned to other American exchange students she had befriended.

"Is there a possibility of them being on the manifest for the same flight," she asked the embassy. "I feel like this may help them out."

The embassy was scrambling to gauge



Heading home: Christina Krewson, Samantha Hernandez and Mayra Arevalo.

See UMES Page A6

## More Than 21,500 Marylanders Obtain Health Coverage Through State Special Enrollment Periods

*Special enrollments for coronavirus emergency, tax filers allow uninsured additional opportunities to enroll through Maryland Health Connection*

By KELLY JONES  
for Maryland Health Benefit Exchange

BALTIMORE, Md. (April 16, 2020)—The Maryland Health Benefit Exchange today announced that more than 21,500 residents have enrolled in coverage through the state's health insurance marketplace, Maryland Health Connection. Earlier this month, the deadlines for both special enrollment periods were extended to accommodate growing health concerns as a result of the coronavirus (COVID-19) and the new tax filing deadline.

The coronavirus special enrollment period, which began a month ago and now runs through June 15, has resulted in more than 19,000 residents obtaining health coverage—61 percent in Medicaid and the remainder in private insurance, with most of those qualifying for financial help to lower the cost of the plan.

The Maryland Easy Enrollment Health Insurance Program, a partnership between the Office of Maryland Comptroller Peter Franchot and the Maryland Health Benefit Exchange, has resulted in nearly 2,500 residents getting coverage. **The extended deadline for this special enrollment period, now July 15, coincides with the new state income tax filing and payment deadline.**

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# COMMUNITY

## The American Counseling Association's Counseling Corner

### Overcoming Barriers to Improved Self-Esteem

Self-esteem is the term that describes our overall sense of self-worth or personal value. It is how much we appreciate and like ourselves.

A healthy level of self-esteem can play a significant role in succeeding in life. It means you believe in yourself and are more willing to take chances. But improving self-esteem sometimes requires overcoming various obstacles.

One such obstacle can be waiting for the perfect moment to start or finish something new. To overcome this, it's necessary to live in the present and to take action, rather than waiting for the stars to align perfectly before moving forward. Waiting for things to be "just right" usually means never taking action.

Tied to that can be the belief that we have to be perfect. Instead, it's important to look at our lives as works in progress, and to understand that sometimes it's okay to make a mistake or two. It can feel risky to take chances when we can't be positive of the outcome, but when we take that chance, and it comes out well, it means a big boost to our self-esteem and self-confidence.

Another problem in trying to improve self-esteem is that we often ignore our own needs. It can feel good when we do things that please others, but over time it can leave us feeling ignored and not worthy ourselves. While it's a good thing to be able to offer help to others, our own self-esteem increases when our relationships become more reciprocal. When we learn to voice our own needs and to ask for help when it's required, our appreciation of our own worth is going to grow as we see that others also value us and are willing to lend a hand.

People with low self-esteem sometimes hide in the background, trying not to be noticed. Doing so can leave us feeling lonely, misunderstood and frustrated because few people really get to know us. The cure is to be willing to share our ideas and opinions and to open ourselves to interactions with more people. Who doesn't feel better about themselves when they have more friends?

Trying something new or even risky is almost always better than staying stuck. But if low self-esteem has you feeling miserable and depressed, and you can't get started on overcoming the problem, consider meeting with a professional counselor who can offer help in working through self-esteem issues.

Counseling Corner is provided by the American Counseling Association. Comments and questions to [ACAcorner@counseling.org](mailto:ACAcorner@counseling.org) or visit the ACA website at [www.counseling.org](http://www.counseling.org).

## Lynda.com Courses Return to Prince George's County

Now With Enhanced Privacy Protections

By NICHOLAS A. BROWN  
PGCMLS

LARGO, Md. (April 14, 2020)—The Prince George's County Memorial Library System (PGCMLS) is pleased to announce the return of free access to Lynda.com Library for PGCMLS card holders. The Library initially offered access to Lynda.com in 2015 and the subscription was suspended in 2019 when the Library was concerned that the platform's integration with LinkedIn Learning would lead to the possibility that user data could be harvested for commercial purposes. After extensive discussions with Lynda.com, PGCMLS has entered into a new agreement that ensures appropriate user privacy protections for Prince Georgians who access the free online courses.

Lynda.com Library offers over 4,000 instructional videos led by renowned subject experts. Customers can learn technical skills, creative techniques, business strategies, and more. The platform also provides 12 categories of learning paths for discovering new subject areas and learning opportunities, ranging from "3D + Animation" and "Marketing" to "Education + Elearning." Learning paths like "Become a User Experience Designer" and "Become a Music Business Entrepreneur" provided a focused menu of courses that will guide learners to achieving desired levels of expertise with new skills.

"PGCMLS is pleased to again offer Lynda.com, which has historically been one of our most popular online re-

sources," said Michael Gannon, Chief Operating Officer for Support Services. "The quality of the Lynda.com courses is excellent and we now have a solid agreement with Lynda.com that ensures Prince Georgians' user data is protected and that no third-party account is required to access content."

Course content is available on computers or mobile devices (iOs, Android,

serve the needs of libraries: "We're excited to share that after continued discussions with the library community over the past few months, we're taking the first steps toward building a new library product that's dedicated to serving the needs of our library customers and their patrons."

Prince Georgians can access Lynda.com Library at [pgcmls.info](http://pgcmls.info) with



IMAGE COURTESY PGCMLS

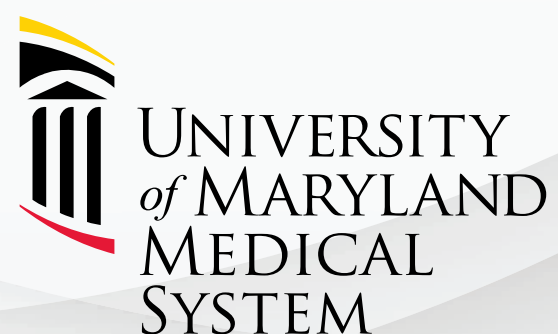
Win8 apps are available). Features of Lynda.com Library include a playlist where learners can save courses that interest them for completion at a later date, course certifications that can demonstrate expertise for job applications and professional development, and training focused on learning specific software or technical skills. Whether you are high school student, mid-career professional, entrepreneur, or executive, Lynda.com Library offers quality instruction that makes learning engaging.

Lynda.com Vice President for Product Development Hari Srinivasan voices the company's renewed commitment to

their library card number and pin. PGCPs students can access the platform with their LINK card number. During the public health emergency, customers may renew library cards online and new customers can register for a virtual library card to access dozens of online resources. Those who have used Lynda.com in the past can view their individual course and certificate histories in their secure account profile after they log in. PGCMLS will continue to offer its robust roster of online resources, which include The Great Courses, ArtistWorks, and CreativeBug.

# WASH YOUR HANDS

The best way to protect yourself from coronavirus and others from getting sick is by washing your hands regularly. Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth and disinfect objects and surfaces in your home that you frequently touch. When handling items from the grocery store, use disinfectant spray or wipes to clean external containers and move food items like bread and cereal to alternative storage containers. **We're in this together.**



Stay informed: [umms.org/covid](http://umms.org/covid)

# COMMENTARY

## Marc Morial

President and CEO, National Urban League



### To Be Equal:

## The Urban League Fights For You

*“Until government is able to stand up the benefits that are included in the CARES Act and Families First Act, people in the meantime have to live, that’s really the challenge. The Urban League and other non-profits are here to support people and get them connected to what they need. People have to know they can call a number and someone on the other end is going to care what they’re experiencing.”*

—Urban League of Greater Atlanta President and CEO Nancy Flake Johnson

It’s hard to believe the toll the coronavirus pandemic has taken on the economy, and even harder to describe. At least 22 million Americans have

filed for unemployment compensation in the last four weeks. It’s the largest and fastest string of job losses since the nation began keeping records in 1948.

The unemployment rate has soared to 20 percent, the highest rate since the Great Depression.

This economic devastation occurs against a backdrop of heartbreaking loss. More than 30,000 Americans have died of COVID-19, and African Americans are more likely to die than any other group.

I’ve often described Black America as the caboose on the nation’s economic train. Whether the train slows down or speeds up, we’re still running behind. And now the train is off the rails.

That’s why that Urban League Movement’s

role as economic first responders is more important than ever before. And I’m proud of the way our movement has risen to the challenge. Across the country, Urban League affiliates are an integral part of regional responses to the health and economic crisis in their communities.

It’s all part of the National Urban League’s coronavirus response initiative, The Urban League Fights for You. From distributing groceries to connecting job-seekers with opportunity to advocating in Congress for racial equity in the Rescue Plan, Urban Leaguers are leading the way.

In addition to offering many of their standard programs remotely, many affiliates have crafted unique responses to the pandemic.

The Urban League of Greater Madison is connecting laid-off workers with newly-available jobs. Because of the affiliate’s extensive experience in workforce development, the COVID-19 Workforce Recovery Initiative, is able to quickly and efficiently match employers with increased demand to workers with the necessary skills and requirements.

The Urban League of St. Louis has already fed more than 1,000 families through its drive-up grocery giveaway, which is ongoing. The affiliate is accepting donations of food, toiletries and funds for rental assistance.

The Louisville Urban League is keeping up the

community’s spirits on social media with “Louisville versus Da Rona,” a challenge in which young people can win cash prizes by showcasing what they’re doing to beat the coronavirus. Using the hashtag #LouisvilleVsDaRona, posts can include poetry, singing, comedy, skits, dancing, cooking or any way youths are passing the time while social distancing.

The Tallahassee Urban League is working with the Tallahassee Housing Authority to provide hot meals about 300 schoolchildren a day. Urban League President and C.E.O. Curtis Taylor says it’s about more than nourishment: “We want to do everything we can to let our kids know that we are here for them,” he said.

The Tacoma Urban League is using video conferencing to help small business owners apply for loans under the Paycheck Protection Program, and providing free Lyft rides to grocery stores and worksites. The Urban League of Metropolitan Seattle is helping pay laid-off workers’ rent. The Urban League of Central Carolinas hosted a virtual job fair.

The list of how Urban Leaguers are leading the response goes on and on. These are just a few examples. Follow @NatUrbanLeague and @MarcMorial on social media, and visit nul.org for more info. —April 17, 2020

## Marion Wright Edelman

President Emerita,  
Children’s Defense Fund



### ChildWatch:

## All Humankind Should Heed Pope Francis’ Call

During this holy season like no other, on Easter Sunday Pope Francis published a “Letter to Popular Movements and Organizations,” encouraging people struggling for justice for poor and low income people around our world calling for universal access to the “three Ts”: trabajo (work), techo (housing), and tierra (land and food). He said:

“If the struggle against COVID-19 is a war, then you are truly an invisible army, fighting in the most dangerous trenches; an army whose only weapons are solidarity, hope, and community spirit, all revitalizing at a time when no one can save themselves alone...You are looked upon with suspicion when through community organization you try to move beyond philanthropy or when, instead of resigning and

hoping to catch some crumbs that fall from the table of economic power, you claim your rights. You often feel rage and powerlessness at the sight of persistent inequalities and when any excuse at all is sufficient for maintaining those privileges. Nevertheless, you do not resign yourselves to complaining: you roll up your sleeves and keep working for your families, your communities, and the common good. Your resilience helps me, challenges me, and teaches me a great deal.

“I think of all the people, especially women, who multiply loaves of bread in soup kitchens: two onions and a package of rice make up a delicious stew for hundreds of children. I think of the sick, I think of the elderly...How difficult it is to stay at home for

those who live in tiny, ramshackle dwellings, or for the homeless! How difficult it is for migrants, those who are deprived of freedom, and those in rehabilitation from an addiction...My hope is that governments understand that technocratic paradigms (whether state-centered or market-driven) are not enough to address this crisis or the other great problems affecting humankind. Now more than ever, persons, communities and peoples must be put at the centre, united to heal, to care and to share.”

Pope Francis had a message for all of us and especially for workers who do not have any guaranteed income to sustain them through a crisis: “I know that you have been excluded from the benefits of globalization. You do not enjoy the superficial pleasures that anesthetize so many consciences, yet you always suffer from the harm they produce. The ills that afflict everyone hit you twice as hard...This may be the time to consider a universal basic wage which would acknowledge and dignify the noble, essential tasks you carry out.” He added: “I hope that this time of danger will free us from operating on automatic pilot, shake our sleepy consciences and allow a humanist and ecological conversion that puts an end to the idolatry of money and places human life and dignity at the centre. Our civilization—so competitive, so individualistic, with its frenetic rhythms of production and consumption, its extravagant luxuries, its disproportionate profits for just a few—needs to downshift, take stock, and renew itself.”

We must heed and act on the Pope’s urgent message

right now. Each of us must be visible and vocal and persistent in acting upon his message to bring hope during this trying time to millions of our brothers and sisters around the world who are suffering. The Pope’s urgent call for bold action, including a universal basic wage to help those caught in the trap of poverty, is both just and common sense. So much of the discussion in the United States right now is about how and when to restart the economy in order to get life back to “normal.” But if “normal” includes the same structures, systems, and inequalities that have been deeply enshrined in our nation, we must go far beyond the status quo that preceded the pandemic and disrupt the racism, sexism, and massive inequality built into our capitalist system. It is shameful that one in six children are poor and that children are our poorest age group. It is unjust and morally abnormal to have huge disparities based on race. It should not be normal that our nation imprisons more than a fifth of the world’s prisoners. And it should be profoundly abnormal that enough children and teens were killed by guns in America in 2018 to fill more than 165 classrooms.

As our Muslim brothers and sisters prepare for Ramadan, with its emphasis on prayer, fasting, and empathy for the poor and hungry, we can all continue this holy season reflecting on how abnormal our nation is in ways that we can change with a sense of urgency. Let’s use this season to stop the pandemics of greed, racism, sexism, and religious intolerance and to help create the world God intended, which is one of brotherhood and sisterhood. —April 17, 2020

## The Fate of the American Middle Class Is in the Hands of Regulators

By DONNELL WILLIAMS and ANTOINE M. THOMPSON  
National Association of Real Estate Brokers (NAREB)

(April 13, 2020)—Last week, Congress passed phase three of its COVID-19 response, the CARES ACT, a \$2 trillion stimulus package that has become most well-known for its direct payments of up to \$1,200 for many Americans. These payments are a much-appreciated addition to the already enacted policies like the delayed tax deadline, deferred interest on student loan payments, updated paid sick leave policies, and other actions taken to ease the impact the pandemic is causing.

One of the policies that the media has largely neglected to cover is the impact of widespread forbearance—the term for when a mortgage servicer



COURTESY PHOTOS  
Donnell Williams



Antoine M. Thompson

allows homeowners to temporarily pay at a lower rate or pause payments. During the current crisis, forbearance will serve as a significant relief for many middle and low-income families. The typical mortgage can add up to nearly 30 percent of the average American family’s income, and with many individuals temporarily out of work and impacted by COVID-19, forbearance allows those funds to be reallocated to immediate life-sustaining expenses like meals and medications.

Home ownership has long been a quintessential element of the American Dream. It is more than a place to live. It is a tangible path to the middle class—and arguably the greatest investment an individual can make. Furthermore, expanding access to home ownership is key to closing the gap between socioeconomic classes, providing new economic opportunities for families, and laying the foundation for success for aspiring homeowners.

However, an often unknown part of forbearance is that although homeowners around the country are receiving much needed relief, lenders and servicers are still obligated to pay principal, interest, taxes, and insurance, on the homeowner’s behalf.

Given the nature of their business, this is potentially fatal for non-bank lenders.

Non-depository mortgage servicers have limited liquidity access. And depending on the duration of the crisis at hand, non-bank servicers will not have the liquidity to advance mortgage payments at the high rate that will be necessary. This presents a challenge, considering more than half of all mortgages in recent years came from non-depository lending institutions—including larger parts of loans made to low-income families. If a solution for non-bank mortgage lenders is not found, we could backtrack on nearly a decade of housing gains and relief efforts, and require further government intervention to prevent a mortgage crisis that could mirror the events of 2008.

Now that the CARES ACT has been signed into law, it is important that regulators take the opportunity to clarify forbearance policy to not only provide needed economic relief to impacted homeowners, but also lay out guidelines for mortgage lenders to navigate this unprecedented challenge.

Unfortunately, policymakers failed to provide lenders and servicers with access to the necessary liquidity in the CARES ACT and puts the issue in the hands of regulators. Hours after Congress’ omission of liquidity to non-depository servicers, Gin-

nie Mae announced plans to provide liquidity in the market for servicers within the next two weeks. While this is a step in the right direction, regulators must provide additional guidance to protect lower-income Americans and allow servicers to prepare for the coming months.

Servicers open the door for homeownership for many American families. These institutions play a key role in market diversification and provide new opportunities for a diverse group of borrowers. It is essential that regulators and Congress work to ensure that non-bank lenders and servicers receive the necessary protections and have access to needed liquidity, allowing them to continue the important role they play in helping families realize the dream of homeownership.

Donnell Williams is president and Antoine M. Thompson is national executive director of the National Association of Real Estate Brokers (NAREB).

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## Maryland Congressional Delegation Announces More Than \$1.6 Million To Create Disaster Relief Jobs for Dislocated Workers in Maryland

WASHINGTON (April 20, 2020)—The full Maryland congressional delegation, including U.S. Senators Ben Cardin and Chris Van Hollen and Congressmen Steny H. Hoyer, Dutch Ruppersberger, John P. Sarbanes, Andy Harris, M.D., Anthony G. Brown, Jamie B. Raskin and David Trone, today announced \$1,665,000 in federal grants to help create temporary disaster relief jobs for laid off workers in Maryland. Funding comes through the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) Dislocated Worker Grants (DWGs). The Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic

Security (CARES) Act provided \$345 million nationwide through this program in response to record levels of unemployment caused by the pandemic. These grants would create temporary jobs related to the COVID-19 public health emergency response and fund job training in industries still hiring at this time.

“Across Maryland, individuals have lost jobs, been furloughed, or suffered reduced hours, causing an economic crisis in addition to the public health emergency. At the same time, certain front-line industries have de-

mand for additional capacity. These federal funds will help address these challenges head on,” said the delegation. “We will continue to work as a united delegation throughout this pandemic to support Marylanders in every way possible.”

These grants are allocated based on the numbers of confirmed cases. Supported by the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act of 2014, Dislocated Worker Grants tem-

See DISASTER RELIEF JOBS Page A7

# BUSINESS AND FINANCE

## Verizon Extends Thanks to Nurses and Teachers With Deep Wireless Discounts

By CHRIS SERICO  
Verizon

BASKING RIDGE, NJ (April 15, 2020)—Verizon has a long-standing commitment to those who serve—nurses, first responders, government agencies, active-duty military and teachers. Now, more than ever, we recognize the sacrifices and importance of those who support our communities. That's why Verizon is committed to supporting them through unique offers, discounts, recognition and donations.

Since the start of the COVID-19 crisis, Verizon has committed \$45 million in contributions and donations to nonprofits directed at serving students, healthcare workers, first responders, and small businesses.

### Best pricing to those who serve

Starting April 23, Verizon is expanding our best wireless unlimited pricing to nurses, who are doing such critical work keeping our friends, family and neighbors cared for, and teachers, who are keeping our students engaged and learning. They join active-duty military, veterans and people who work as first responders who already benefit from this ongoing pricing for their personal accounts and for their families.

“Verizon has a long-standing commitment to supporting people who work as first responders, the military and their families and we are proud to expand our efforts to include nurses and teachers at a time when they're doing so much to help us through this national crisis,” said Ronan Dunne, CEO of Verizon Consumer Group. “This is just another way for us to thank these heroes for everything they do, not just now during this challenging time, but every day.”

The new discounts will be available to eligible new and existing Verizon customers on Mix & Match wireless unlimited plans starting April 23 and on Mix & Match Fios internet plans starting May 7. For those who serve, wireless unlimited plans will be as low as \$30/mo per line for four lines with Start Unlimited and enrollment in Auto Pay, and Fios 200Mbps internet as low as \$34.99/mo with enrollment in Auto Pay. Customers who choose the Fios Gigabit internet plan can save up to \$30/month in service and equipment charges. These discounts can be combined with the Mobile + Home Rewards benefits for joint Fios home internet and wireless subscribers.

Wireless Customers can visit <https://www.verizonwireless.com/featured/giving-more/> to learn more and sign up on April 23, and Fios internet customers can visit <https://www.verizon.com/info/giving-more/> to sign up starting May 7.

## BBB Tip: Thinking of Sharing Your Senior Photo on Facebook? Think Twice!

By KELSEY COLEMAN  
Better Business Bureau

It seems harmless and fun! A bunch of friends on Facebook or other social media are sharing their senior portraits, including the high school name and graduation year, to support the graduating class of 2020 (most of whom are at home because of the coronavirus pandemic).

Watch out, scammers or hackers who surf

through social media sites will see these #ClassOf2020 posts, and will now have the name of your high school and graduation year, which are common online security questions. All it takes is an internet search to reveal more information about you, such as family members, your real name, birthdate or even where you live.

See SENIOR PHOTO Page A7

## CITY OF SEAT PLEASANT NOTICE OF A PROPOSED REAL PROPERTY TAX INCREASE

The Mayor and City Council of Seat Pleasant propose to increase real Property taxes.

- For the tax year beginning July 1, 2020 the estimated real property assessable base will increase by 4.6% from 303,279,236 to 317,151,448.
- If the City of Seat Pleasant maintains the current tax rate of \$.58 per \$100 of assessment, real property tax revenues will increase by 4.6 % resulting in \$80,458 of new real property tax revenues.
- In order to fully offset the effect of increasing assessments, the real property tax should be reduced to \$.5546, the constant yield rate.
- The City is considering not reducing its real property tax rate enough to fully offset increasing assessments. The City proposes to adopt a real property tax rate of \$.58 per \$100 of assessment. This tax rate is 4.6 % higher than the constant yield tax rate and will generate \$ 80,458 in additional property tax revenues.

A public hearing on the proposed real property tax rate increase will be held at 6:30 pm on Monday May 11, 2020 at City Hall, 311 68th Place, Seat Pleasant, Maryland 20743.

The hearing is open to the public and public testimony is encouraged. Persons with questions regarding this hearing may call Robert L. Ashton, Financial Advisor at (301) 336-2600 for further information.

## Resources

### Prince George's County COVID19 Business Relief Fund

Prince George's County Economic Development Corporation is pleased to announce the opening of the Prince George's County COVID-19 Business Relief Fund.

County Businesses can now apply for a loan and/or grant to support cash operating expenses including payroll, suppliers, rent, fixed debt payments and other business critical cash operating costs. Up to 6 months of verified payroll & operating expenses; not to exceed \$100,000.

Learn more about the Fund: [www.pgcedc.com/covid-business-fund-2020](http://www.pgcedc.com/covid-business-fund-2020)

### Get Listed in Regional Manufacturing Institute of Maryland's New Directory of Providers of COVID-19 Recovery Services/Solutions for Manufacturers

List your company/organization in RMI's new online directory of RMI members who can assist Maryland manufacturers with COVID-19 pandemic recovery and ramp-up.

Several weeks ago, RMI created the **Maryland Made to Save Lives** directory that lists Maryland manufacturing companies that make components, technologies, materials and products needed to fight COVID-19. (View it at <https://rmiofmaryland.com/maryland-made-to-save-lives-directory/>.)

Now, we have created a NEW online directory of RMI member companies and organizations providing critical services, solutions and resources for manufacturers as they enter the COVID-19 recovery period in the next few months and look to ramp up their operations.

The directory will provide valuable assistance to our State's manufacturers as they navigate through and recover from this devastating and unprecedented pandemic. RMI member companies and organizations in industries like insurance, accounting, legal, cybersecurity, marketing, business consulting, utilities/energy and more who offer an applicable service, solution or resource should submit to have their company/organization included.

*Note:* Only RMI members are eligible to be included in this new online directory, and there

is NO COST. Not an RMI member? Get membership details and join here: <https://rmiofmaryland.com/rmi-membership/>.

During the week of April 20, RMI will initiate a marketing campaign to make manufacturers aware of this directory and the critical services, solutions and resources provided by companies and organizations in it.

Questions? Email [peter.gourlay@RMIOfmaryland.com](mailto:peter.gourlay@RMIOfmaryland.com)

### Maryland Business Relief Wizard

[www.reliefwizard.net](http://www.reliefwizard.net)

### Maryland Small Business Development Center

Online Training/webinars, most with no fee <https://mdsbdc.eccenterdirect.com/events?reset=1>

### Check Out the NTA Blog:

*During This National Emergency the IRS Is Called Upon To Issue Economic Impact Payments to All Eligible Americans: What Taxpayers Can Do to Speed Up Payment*

Visit <https://taxpayeradvocate.irs.gov/news>, click on NTABlog

On March 30, Erin M. Collins started her term as the National Taxpayer Advocate (NTA) leading the Taxpayer Advocate Service, an independent organization within the IRS.

The Advocate is a critical position inside the IRS, serving as a voice for taxpayers inside the IRS as well as being a senior adviser to IRS leadership. The NTA also reports to Congress on areas of the tax law that impose significant burdens on taxpayers or the IRS, including recommending potential legislative changes.

### FSCFirst Elevates Financial Services Through New Website

FSC First announced the April 17 launch of their new website, which has been developed and designed as a user-friendly platform that is cutting edge and easy to navigate.

The new website provides access to an extensive portfolio of financial services, programs and resources to help businesses and entrepreneurs with all their needs. [www.fscfirst.com](http://www.fscfirst.com)

## Small Businesses: PPP Funds Are Exhausted, Now What?

By JESSICA CAMPOS  
Center for Rural Affairs

As of Thursday, April 16, the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) announced that the Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) had reached the maximum loan limit authorized by Congress, just 14 days after small businesses were first able to apply.

The program was created as part of the CARES Act, signed into law on March 27, 2020, which included \$377 billion in relief to small businesses, with \$350 billion of that allocated to the PPP.

Congress is debating a proposal to add \$250 billion to the program. Action could come as soon as this week.

If you still hope to apply, now is a good time to review your resources and prepare an application to be submitted when the program re-opens. Some banks are still taking new applications in anticipation of new funds from Congress, and some are asking small businesses to apply

once more funds become available, so check with an eligible lender at [sba.gov/paycheckprotection/fin](http://sba.gov/paycheckprotection/fin). If you applied but were not approved, contact your lender to determine your next steps. Act fast because future rounds of funding are not guaranteed.

A second round of funding may also make changes to PPP to ensure that the smallest businesses are able to access the program. We will update our resources to reflect any program changes.

To learn more about the program, including eligibility, loan uses, and application information, visit our fact sheet at [cfra.org/SmallBizEmergencyLoanResources](http://cfra.org/SmallBizEmergencyLoanResources).

*Established in 1973, the Center for Rural Affairs is a private, non-profit organization working to strengthen small businesses, family farms and ranches, and rural communities through action oriented programs addressing social, economic, and environmental issues.*

## TOWN OF BERWYN HEIGHTS CHARTER AMENDMENT NOTICE Summary of Charter Amendment RESOLUTION NO. 2020 – CR-01

On April 15, 2020, the Berwyn Heights Town Council adopted RESOLUTION NO. 2020 CR-01 amending the Town Charter to add Section 510, which reads as follows:

“When a State of Emergency has been declared for the Town by the Mayor and Council, or by the State of Maryland or Prince George's County, pursuant to state or local law, and in the judgement of the Mayor and Council the State of Emergency prevents the safe, orderly and efficient conduct of a town election, the Mayor and Council may, by resolution, postpone an election until such time as the election may be conducted in a safe, orderly and efficient manner and make necessary changes to the method, conduct, or voting system of an election to ensure an accurate vote count and certification of the election results.”

RESOLUTION 2020 –CR-01 suspends the effect of the provisions of Title 4, Subtitle 3, of the Local Government Article of the Maryland Code with respect to the adoption of this Charter Resolution, pursuant to the Maryland Governor's Executive Order No. 20-03-30-01.

The purpose of the Amendment is to enable the Berwyn Heights Town Council to postpone a municipal election during a State of Emergency, such as the current Coronavirus COVID-19 pandemic, and to adjust the method of election from the traditional in-person voting to another form to be determined by the Town Council.

For more information, please see the Town of Berwyn Heights website at [www.berwynheightsmd.gov/charter-and-ordinances](http://www.berwynheightsmd.gov/charter-and-ordinances), or contact Town Clerk Kerstin Harper at [kharper@berwynheightsmd.gov](mailto:kharper@berwynheightsmd.gov) or Town Manager Maria Broadbent at [mbroadbent@berwynheightsmd.gov](mailto:mbroadbent@berwynheightsmd.gov)

# HEALTH AND WELLNESS

## How Staying Safe by Telehealth Also Means Keeping Cyber-Secure

The COVID-19 pandemic has prompted social distancing as a safety measure across the country. How this new normal affects general health care can be seen in the rise of telehealth services, as people are encouraged to use them to limit in-person interactions with medical staff and help prevent the spread of COVID-19.

But like any online activity, there are security risks involved for patients' personal data and companies' private information. How can patients and doctors ensure each parties' information is protected?

"Telehealth was trending upward before the pandemic, and there were already privacy and security concerns," says Stephen Hyduchak, CEO of Aver (www.goaver.com), an identity-verification service. "But those are heightened now as people want the immediacy of care and are ready to accept the exchange of privacy to receive that.

"Medical data is some of the most sensitive information out there. HIPAA and other regulations have long been in place, well before more general privacy laws were instituted. Now, needing to share more of your medical history with the telehealth doctors makes the entire communication more vulnerable in a variety of ways. The application could get hacked. Also, IT infrastructure and cybersecurity often aren't up to speed at hospitals."

Hyduchak suggests using these security practices when using telehealth services:

**Double-check before downloading the app.** "Your health-care provider may have a preferred app that you can download from its website," Hyduchak says. "That's the safest route. Your company may offer this service, and if so, check with human resources to make sure the information is correct before downloading. Otherwise, use a reputable online store to download the app."

**Consider online app reviews and recommendations from your network.** "Reputable review sites can give you an objective look at apps and telemed services out there, but many reviews focus on capability, speed and convenience, so you may have to dig a little deeper regarding security," Hyduchak says. "That's where your personal network comes in. Query people you know who are using the app you're considering. And if the app is relatively unknown, you don't want to be one of the first to use it."

**Beware of phishing, social engineering of telemedicine.** "The basic rule for most cybersecurity measures very much applies: Always verify a link or attachment before opening it," Hyduchak says. "There are coronavirus-based phishing campaigns by hackers. Their aim is to get you to click onto a malicious telehealth link."

**Learn how the service uses your data.** "Look for telemedicine providers that explain their use of data that you share, usually doing this in writing with a code of conduct," Hyduchak says. "You have to make sure the telehealth service is reputable and that it's following all HIPAA rules. Also, only disclose relevant information that is absolutely essential."

"With telehealth services, a patient can see a doctor in isolation from their smart devices, so it's a close to ideal platform during an outbreak like this," Hyduchak says. "But having awareness of and using security measures is essential because the stakes are higher."

*Stephen Hyduchak is the CEO of Aver (www.goaver.com), an identity-verification service. Hyduchak worked in corporate finance for companies such as PRA Health Sciences before finding the entrepreneur bug. He began working on media and design for small businesses, which led him to consulting projects in the blockchain space, and eventually to founding Aver.*

## How to Stay Healthy While Social Distancing

(StatePoint) COVID-19 has the public re-thinking how they stay healthy—both physically and mentally. Even those in good health can start to feel anxious and fearful when the words 'pandemic' and 'social distancing' are mentioned.

But can you stay active and mentally healthy while social distancing? The answer is a resounding yes.

While routines have changed, it's critical that people keep exercising and eating nutritious meals, since the body is often able to better fight off illnesses when it's healthy and strong. Taking these steps helps fight off stress, which most people are experiencing right now in one way or another.

Here is some advice from Cigna chief nursing officer, Mary Picerno to help stay healthy, both physically and mentally, during this time.

**• Get Outside:** While it's important to limit physical interactions, getting outside for a run, walk or bicycle ride is a great way to boost endorphins and enjoy fresh air. Just make sure to maintain six feet between yourself and others. If weather or other reasons limit your ability to go outside, many companies and gyms are offering free online exercises right now. Endorphins have been found to reduce stress, increase feelings of happiness and help fight against depression.

**• Get Proper Nutrition:** Add fruits and vegetables to your plate for colorful, nutrient-rich meals. Vegetables also are a good source of fiber. Eating well will help you feel better and give you energy to keep moving. Now is a great time to try that new recipe or food subscription box!

**• Stay Hydrated:** Drinking plenty of water can help prevent dehydration. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, dehydration can cause unclear thinking and mood swings. Not sure how much to drink? Many medical professionals suggest following the 8x8 rule, eight ounces of water eight times a day.

**• Stay Connected:** Just because you can't be with friends and family in person does-

n't mean you can't stay in touch. Set up time to connect with video chats, phone calls and emails. Staying connected doesn't have to be high-tech. Have kids or just a kid at heart? Write encouraging messages on your driveway or in your windows for your neighbors, and postal and delivery workers.

**• Know Your Options:** One of the best ways to prepare is knowing what to do if you start to show symptoms. Cigna and many other health insurers are now waiving the costs of doctor visits related to a COVID-19 diagnosis as well as the cost of COVID-19 FDA-approved testing. To minimize your exposure, call or email your doctor or a local health system about a telehealth visit

to be screened for COVID-19. The provider will then identify what steps you should take next.

**• Get Support:** Talking through concerns and fears can help put them in perspective and make you feel calmer. You may want to reach out for professional support if you're struggling. Cigna offers many resources and tools, including a 24-hour toll-free help line (1-855-287-8400) to speak with qualified behavior health clinicians, a webinar focused on managing anxiety, fears and concerns, and mindfulness podcasts (available in English and Spanish) focused on improving resiliency and stress management.



PHOTO CREDIT © KERKEZ / ISTOCK VIA GETTY IMAGES PLUS  
During this challenging time, taking care of your health should be a priority.

## Five Tips on How to Combat Loneliness During Social Distancing

(StatePoint) As a result of the coronavirus pandemic, many people are staying in their homes to help prevent the spread of the disease. Feeling lonely from time to time is natural, but this unprecedented time of social distancing could lead to increased loneliness.

There are some easy ways to feel connected to others, even when you aren't seeing them in person. Consider these tips from Dr. Doug Nemecek, Cigna chief medical officer for behavioral health.

**• Use technology... but not too much.** Social media is a favorite and easy way to stay connected to family and friends, but too much use can leave you feeling lonely. Cigna's 2020 U.S. Loneliness Index found that 72 percent of very heavy social media users identify themselves as lonely. Balance technology use with disconnecting and taking time for yourself. Use real-time interactions with others, like video chats, to build meaningful connections and limit time spent passively scrolling social media. Read a book, take a walk or do a puzzle after screen time. It may help you feel more connected when you spend time online.

**• Join a virtual club or group.** There are plenty of resources available to find virtual book clubs, craft communities or even fitness challenges. You can start a new hobby, learn a skill or find others who are interested in the same things as you, remotely. Once the guidelines for social distancing are lifted, you'll

have new friends you can meet in person.

**• Spend time outdoors.** Simply leaving your house to take a jog around your neighborhood or to walk your dog a few blocks could improve your spirits, refreshing you for the next time you virtually connect with others.

**• Ask those you reach out to how they're really doing.** How you connect with those in your network makes a significant difference in how lonely you feel. People tend to feel less lonely when connecting on a deeper level. Cigna's study found that those who do not feel they have close relationships that give them emotional security and well-being have an average loneliness score of nearly 15 points higher than those that do. When video chatting with friends, ask them for their most honest response when you ask how they're doing. Everyone will likely feel better for it.

**• Rethink working hours.** We spend ap-

proximately 90,000 hours at work over our lifetime, so how we spend that time will play an important role in how we feel overall. Improving your work-life balance and connecting with colleagues can reduce loneliness. Your employer may also benefit from you feeling less lonely. Lonely employees are less pro-



PHOTO CREDIT © GORODENKOFF / ISTOCK VIA GETTY IMAGES PLUS  
Being unable to spend time with others in-person will likely cause many of us to feel lonely, but there are ways to help lessen those feelings during this challenging time.

ductive, produce lower quality work and miss more days of work. So, talk to your boss about slight changes you can make to how you spend your working hours. This could help you feel less lonely and benefit your company.

## UMES from A1

how many Americans needed help and told Samantha to have each of her friends send it details about their situation.

After a tense trip to Cuzco's airport—travel was banned but some cars could travel with special transit permission—and a long wait in line, Samantha and nine other exchange students boarded a plane to Lima, Peru's capital, the first leg of a 24-hour plus sojourn home.

When Samantha arrived at Reagan National Airport in Washington on March 26, her mother waited anxiously. She and two companions traveling from Peru were the only passengers on the flight from Miami wearing masks.

"My mom wanted to hug me so bad," Samantha said. "But she can't. My biggest fear is being a carrier (of the virus)."

Her family brought large refuse bags to shield her luggage and sanitizing agents to keep her family as safe as possible for the short ride home to Lanham, where Samantha isolated herself for the recommended 14 days.

"If I could get through this," she remembers thinking, "I could get through anything."

Samantha hopes to return to Peru someday.



PHOTO COURTESY UMES  
University of Maryland Eastern Shore Senior Samantha Hernandez at home.

**TUESDAY TIP**

**STAY UP-TO-DATE**

Stay up-to-date with important County alerts, including updates to services and those related to COVID19.

- Sign up at [alert.mypgc.us](http://alert.mypgc.us).
- Get updates on general information, weather, precautionary and emergencies happening in the County.
- Alerts are also available in Spanish.

