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Prince George's County Chief Information Officer Recognized as a 2020 LocalSmart Awards Winner

CIO Gibson honored as a visionary who has transformed local government to make a difference in residents' lives

By SHELBY HENDERSON
Prince George's County MD, Office of Information Technology

UPPER MARLBORO, Md. (December 7, 2020)—Prince George's County Chief Information Officer Wanda Gibson has been announced as a winner of the second annual LocalSmart Awards, a program created to highlight the inspirational people and projects making city, county and municipal governments more efficient and effective.

"I am Prince George's Proud of our CIO, Wanda Gibson, for receiving this national award in recognition of the work she is doing in our County Government," said Prince George's County Executive Angela Alsobrooks. "I want to thank CIO Gibson and her entire team at the Office of Information Technology for continuing to develop innovative solutions that will help us better serve the residents of Prince George's County."

The LocalSmart Awards, launched in 2019 by StateScoop, honor the individuals and projects that transform local government and make a difference in residents' lives. These awards celebrate the achievements of those who work to make a lasting impact in the government IT community.

"I am honored to serve Prince George's County in my storied career, re-energized by the innovative leadership of County Executive Angela Alsobrooks with the fresh trajectory of moving digital government forward," said CIO Gibson.

CIO Gibson was recognized for her leadership and vast experience with the Office of Information Technology (OIT), applying thought leadership in revamping tech opportunities, strategy, delivery and operations.

She led OIT's round-the-clock diligence in responding to the COVID-19 pandemic, seamlessly expanding the virtual government landscape for teleworking to accommodate additional business needs and remote capabilities, which allowed the government to continue operating virtually.

While rapidly supporting the pandemic response, OIT has many virtual, government-related accomplishments over the past year in the areas of digital workplace, public engagement and user experience, which include:

- Rapid development of several custom applications to support COVID-19 executive actions for community support, including the Ambassador Compliance Team, the Business Recovery Initiative, the Child Care Provider Recovery Program, food assistance, a CARES grant management system, and Geographic Information Systems (GIS) data visualization tools for COVID-19 data tracking and elections support.
- Implemented a new Performance Management Dashboard solution for the County Executive.
- Developed several new web applications to convert manual forms to online forms, allowing the public to complete forms virtually and employees to effectively process requests with an increased demand for services.
- Integrated teleconference and secure virtual meeting space countywide to expand the County's ability to host virtual meetings.



PHOTO COURTESY PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY MD, OFFICE OF INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

Prince George's County Chief Information Officer Wanda Gibson

- Expanded implementation of electronic document management and E-Signature platform as a part of going paperless.
- Enhanced the cyber security program by increasing the County's 24-hour IT security infrastructure and providing additional training for County employees.

According to staff, CIO Gibson has been an inspirational catalyst for them, with remarkable instinct in understanding the social impact of innovation in government and its value to the residents served.

For more information about the Local Smart Awards and a full list of winners, visit <https://statescoop.com/list/winners-of-2020-localsmart-awards-announced/>

PGCPS Announces First Community Conversations on School Boundary Initiative

Community input will help shape development of new school boundary plan

By OFFICE OF COMMUNICATIONS
Prince George's County Public Schools

UPPER MARLBORO, Md. (December 7, 2020)—Prince George's County Public Schools (PGCPS) will hold virtual community meetings in January to gather input on the Comprehensive School Boundary Initiative.

The initiative will provide an impartial analysis of current school boundaries, feeder patterns and program locations to develop potential adjustments for new and expanded school facilities, and balance facility utilization system-wide. As PGCPS works to get students back into classrooms safely amid the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, it is more important than ever to plan thoughtfully for student enrollment growth.

"The Comprehensive School Boundary Initiative is vital to the current and future planning of our schools, the success of our students and our sustainability as a system," said Dr. Monica Goldson, Chief Executive Officer. "With enrollment projections reaching nearly 143,300 by 2024, now is the time to address rapid growth, balance enrollment and ensure we operate all schools to their utmost capacity."

During the virtual public meetings, the Boundary Initiative team will discuss the process and

analysis, and hear from students, families, educators and community members about their boundary priorities.

Community Conversation Dates:

South County—Thursday, Jan. 7, 6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.

Spanish language—Saturday, Jan. 9, 10 a.m. to noon

Central County—Tuesday, Jan. 12, 6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.

North County—Wednesday, Jan. 13, 6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.

A second round of community engagement activities will take place during the spring and summer. That engagement period will gather feedback on the draft boundary options created during Phase I of the Boundary Initiative.

The Boundary Initiative has three key objectives:

- Create boundaries for new and expanded schools;
- Balance enrollment among existing schools; and
- Identify possible elementary school consolidations.

The Educational Facilities Master Plan establishes an optimal school building utilization

See BOUNDARY Page A6



SCREENSHOT BY PHILIP VAN SLOOTEN / CAPITAL NEWS SERVICE

Former Maryland Environmental Service Director of Operations and Strategic Partnerships Matthew Sherring testified virtually before the Joint Committee on Fair Practices and State Personnel Oversight on Thursday as part of an on-going review of a large payout to former MES Director Roy McGrath.

Maryland Lawmakers 'Disappointed' By Witness at Hearing

By PHILIP VAN SLOOTEN
Capital News Service

ANNAPOLIS, Md. (December 11, 2020)—The former Maryland Environmental Service Director of Operations and Strategic Partnerships invoked his right against self-incrimination more than 100 times, disappointing legislators during Thursday's joint committee investigation of a severance payout to the agency's former director, who was also briefly Gov. Larry Hogan's, R, chief of staff.

Documents indicated Matthew Sherring, according to

the General Assembly's Joint Committee on Fair Practices and Personnel Oversight documents, was hired by the state agency at the behest of former Director Roy McGrath in 2017, although the position was never formally advertised.

When Ward B. Coe, an attorney for the General Assembly, asked Sherring about his former position title, how he was hired into the environmental service and whom he reported to, he began invoking his right against self-incrimination.

"These are basic questions," Delegate Erek L. Barron, D-

Prince George's, and Sen. Clarence K. Lam, D-Baltimore and Howard counties, each complained at the end of the 2½-hour hearing.

During Sherring's tenure, records show he often traveled with McGrath to national and international conferences, burning through over \$91,000 of taxpayer funds in a little over three years while former Directors Jim Harkins and John O'Neill each spent a fraction of that amount during more than 11 years of service at MES.

See HEARING Page A3

Council Member Dannielle Glaros Applauds Greater Washington Partnership Upon Release of Capital Region Rail Vision

Report Presents Strategy to Provide a More Coordinated, Integrated and Competitive Rail Service

By ANGELA ROUSON
Prince George's County Council Media

UPPER MARLBORO, Md. (December 10, 2020)—Prince George's County Council Member Dannielle Glaros (D – District 3), applauds the efforts of the Greater Washington Partnership and all regional stakeholders upon Thursday's release of the Capital Region Rail Vision, a 25-year strategy to remove key physical and operating barriers, and provide residents a more coordinated, integrated, and competitive rail service. The vision outlines the necessary steps to better connect the region with more frequent and rapid rail service resulting in improved access to jobs, housing and more equitable and inclusive growth.

Council Member Glaros, a member of the Cap-

ital Region Rail Vision Advisory Committee, a work group contributing to the Rail Vision strategy, said the opportunity to work with regional leaders across jurisdictional lines on this initiative has yielded great benefits.

"I am extremely proud to serve on the Capital Region Rail Vision Advisory Committee led by the Greater Washington Partnership. The report released today outlines an innovative vision for the future which would provide Prince George's County residents direct access via MARC through Union Station, to places like National Landing in Virginia, and also create easier regional access to Bowie State University, University of Maryland, and the city of New Carrollton." Council Member Glaros adds, "Achieving this forward-thinking plan will require commitment from all stakeholders. I look

forward to the work ahead to implement this vision and grow a thriving economy."

Included among the benefits of the Capital Region Rail Vision to Prince George's County is run-through service to National Landing, expansion of Commuter rail off-peak service, decreased commuter rail headways, and integrated fare systems. Additionally, County residents could potentially traverse from New Carrollton to Crystal City in 30-minutes without transferring trains.

With advancing inclusive economic growth by driving solutions, and fostering unity as top priorities, the Greater Washington Partnership is a civic alliance of the region's leading employers and entrepreneurs committed to making the Capital Region one of the best places to live, work and build a business.

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To Be Equal: Black America Has Questions About Vaccines. National Urban League Has Answers.

"... the vaccine that you're going to be taking was developed by an African-American woman. And, that is just a fact."

Commentary, Page A4

Gregory Fowler, Ph.D., Named President of University of Maryland Global Campus

The University System of Maryland (USM) Board of Regents announced today that Fowler has been selected as the next president of University of Maryland Global Campus. He will begin his new position on January 4, 2021.

Business and Finance, Page A5

TOWNS *and* NEIGHBORS

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

The Skyline Three take on a yellow bin mess

Planet Aid Inc. is an organization that sets up yellow bins in business parking lots for charity collection, primarily of clothing and shoes. One of those bins is in the parking lot behind Andrews Restaurant and other businesses at the corner of Suitland and Randolph Roads. And it had become a dump for all kinds of trash.

Three Skyline Citizens' officers, President Stan Holmes, Treasurer Ashby Harmon and 2nd Vice President Kenia Spivey had been discussing what to do about it. They contacted the management who owns the shopping center and other agencies for help. Calls to Planet Aid to remove the bin went unanswered.

But things turned for the better when Carla Cash, community adviser for Council Member Monique Anderson-Walker, was able to get in touch with Planet Aid.

The Skyline Three (which I've decided to call them) had decided the only way that trash was going to get removed was if they did it themselves. They showed up on Dec. 8 with appropriate cleanup tools and went to work, bagging trash, shoveling and sweeping. It took three very long hours.

Ronald from Planet Aid arrived. He saw what they were trying to accomplish and jumped right in saying, "This is our community. We can't have this happening." (He lives in Upper Marlboro.) He loaded discarded furniture and more than 25 bags of trash into the truck. He also promised to add that bin to his route and said debris left around it will be dealt with weekly.

Skyline President Stan extended special thanks to Ashby Harmon and Kenia Spivey "who are always available to the community. Were it not for these two hard-workers, we wouldn't flourish." He also thanked Community Adviser Carla Cash, and Ronald from Planet Aid.

I extend my very own special thanks to Stan Holmes. Without his leadership, nothing would happen.

Neighbors & other good people

John Tierney, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration retiree and long-time resident of Camp Springs, died Dec. 7. A Mass of Christian Burial was said

for him Dec. 12. I'll pay tribute to this dear friend in next week's column.

Sophomore Robbie Beran scored 19 points and sank three 3-pointers for Northwestern's 111-60 win over Chicago State on Dec. 5. Robbie is the grandson of Gus and Dolores Steinhilber, formerly of Skyline, and son of Paula Steinhilber Beran. Robbie, by the way, is 6'9".

Robbie's mom, Paula, who grew up in Skyline, is a member of the Richmond law firm Tavener & Beran and was recently selected one of the Top 25 Female Attorneys by Virginia Super Lawyers.

Dr. Claudette Elizabeth Bennett, Census Bureau retiree, died Dec. 4 at her home in Fort Washington. She was a graduate of North Carolina A&T State University, Adjunct Professor at Howard University, and a member of Ebenezer AME Church for more than 30 years.

Morningside Mayor Jerry and Jean Glaubitz are celebrating their 78th anniversary in Heaven. They wed Dec. 23, 1942 at the American Lutheran Church in Lincoln, Neb., while Jerry was home on leave from the Navy. Happy Anniversary!

Some kids will get a new bike, thanks to MVFD

The Morningside Volunteer Fire Department has been working with other community partners to accumulate bikes and safety gear. They will be turned over to the County Volunteer Fire Rescue Association for distribution, "to brighten the holiday of those in need."

Town of Morningside

The office will be closed Christmas Eve, Dec. 24, and New Year's Eve, Dec. 31. For information, call 301-736-2300 or go to Generalmailbox@morningsidemd.gov.

In writing last week about the Annual Senior Luncheon, I should have mentioned that the seniors' conference call ended with a raffle. Several seniors won. I didn't.

Changing landscape

The Suitland Parkway Trail is a short, paved, multi-use path that runs adjacent to Suitland Parkway from SE Washington to the Maryland border. Proposed construction may eventually extend the trail to the Branch Avenue Metro Station, near Joint

Base Andrews.

For about six years now I have watched, sometimes painfully, the bridge & road work on Suitland Road under the Beltway. Most recently the center divider and the shoulders beneath the underpass have been bricked. And work continues.

Virus update: 51 Maryland deaths yesterday

The Maryland death total is now 4,916. Total Maryland cases are 219,961 with 2,632 added just yesterday (Dec. 8).

I'm still here, pecking out this column and hoping you'll soon email me (muddmm@aol.com) with news.

Morningside Memories: 40 years ago

Thirty-five Morningside Sportsmen's Club members, 40 children—mostly Sportsmen offspring—and Santa (George Catloth) spent seven hours caravanning through Morningside and Skyline on Saturday, Dec. 15, 1980, collecting canned goods and cash for their annual drive.

According to Drive Chairman George Playfair, about 90% of the families in the community donated. The Sportsmen were able to provide 19 needy families with full turkey dinners.

George and Assistant Chairman Don Jurney extended special thanks to Tommy at Skyline Restaurant for providing pizza and cokes for the children who helped. The Village Barn and local service stations made generous donations. Thanks were also extended to the Morningside Fire Department for the loan of their truck and the use of their driveway for construction of the float, which was the special design of Float Chairman Bob Walker.

Milestones

Happy birthday to my grandson Michael Gallegos, Dec. 19; Ricky Nichols, Dec. 20; Evelyn McKeown, Dec. 21; Timothy Flaherty and former Morningside Mayor Irving Robinson, Dec. 22; Paul Ford and Russ Kyser, Dec. 23; Kendall Lanehart and former Morningside Councilman Ken Miller, Dec. 24.

Happy anniversary to Ray and Betty Call on Dec. 20; and to Suitland Road Pastor Kelvin and his wife Jai McCune, on their 35th anniversary Dec. 21.

Around the County

CKC Annual Toys for Joy A Drive & Drop Toy Drive

SEAT PLEASANT, Md. (December 1, 2020)—Community Kinship Coalition, Inc.(CKC) announced today that they will be hosting their annual Toys for Joy on **December 19, 2020** in the left parking lot of Jasper's Restaurant located at 9640 Lottsford Road, Largo, MD 20774 between the hours of **10 a.m. through 4 p.m.** Toys for Joy is an annual toy drive hosted by CKC.

This year, Community Kinship Coalition has partnered with community stakeholders like Prince George's County Department of Parks and Recreation, Jasper's Restaurant, Viya Group, Jacobs Brand Management, and Monarch to bring local area children in need of Toys for Joy.

This Drive & Drop event will ensure safety measures and guidelines are being met amid the current COVID-19 pandemic crisis. "During this critical time, our mission is to bring happiness to our children this holiday season," said Dr. George Hodge, Community Kinship Coalition Founder and CEO, Protect the Prodigy.

Individuals and stakeholders will be able to safely pull up and drop off donations. All donations are tax deductible. New and unopened toys will be accepted. Monetary donations are being accepted via Paypal and Cashapp \$CKCJOY. Please visit the website at www.communitykinshipcoalition.org for more information. All toys and contributions will go towards local area children in need of assistance.

A flyer accompanying this release can be found on the website www.communitykinshipcoalition.org. Please follow us on social media for updates. We can be found on Facebook at Community Kinship Coalition, Protect the Prodigy, or Instagram @CKC659.

It is our pleasure to host the event and CKC wishes that you will also join in by donating. Let's celebrate living through giving this holiday season. Community Kinship Coalition is a non-profit Organization.

—Community Kinship Coalition

"The Right to Vote and African American Disenfranchisement"

An Online Workshop funded by the Maryland Humanities Council

Join Dr. Julie Rose on Thursday, January 14, 2021, 6:30-7:30 p.m. for an online workshop to investigate sensitive ways to engage students and visitors in learning difficult histories. Each participant will receive a free copy of Dr. Rose's book, *Interpreting Difficult History in Museums and Historic Sites* and a copy of *The Right to Vote: The Contested History of Democracy in the United States* by Alexander Keyssar for the workshop discussions and exercises, made possible by a grant from the Maryland Humanities Council through the Voices and Votes: Electoral Engagement Project. This public workshop is part of the first set of public programs of the Giving Voice Initiative. The Giving Voice Initiative is a public history approach to convene community partners to interpret and inspire social justice.

Historical perspectives on American voters' rights reveal stories of discrimination, oppression and civic injustices that are part of the legacy of systemic racism today. Many Americans can either personally recall obstacles to just-voting privileges or know of the difficult history, while other people express indifference or opt not to learn the history. This resistance is deeply personal and can be an obstacle to understanding racism in America. Audiences can find voting recollections of violence, discrimination, and humiliation can be too hard to bear. In this workshop, participants will explore sensitive methods to help learners work through their angst or apathy towards making connections to the relevance of difficult history.

Participants can request that books be mailed. Otherwise, participants may pick up their copies January 4 through January 14, 2021 (except Sunday January 10) at Marietta House Museum located at 5626 Bell Station Road, 20769. Please call Stacey Hawkins to schedule a time to pick up books.

To register, please go to Prince George's County online registration called Parks Direct (<https://web1.vermontsystems.com/wbwc/mdpg-parkswt.wsc/splash.html>). The workshop will be held virtually on Microsoft Teams. For assistance or for more information please contact Stacey Hawkins, Stacey.Hawkins@pgparks.com or 301-395-9541.

Marietta is located at 5626 Bell Station Road, Glenn Dale, MD 20769 and is a property of the Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission.

—Stacey Hawkins, Marietta House Museum

Local Student Named to MVC'S Fall 2020 Dean's List

MARSHALL, Mo. (December 10, 2020)—Dr. Diane Bartholomew, vice president of academic affairs for Missouri Valley College, has announced the Fall 2020 Dean's List. The requirements for the Dean's List are a 3.3 or higher grade point average; at least 12 graded hours for the semester and no "D," "F," or "Incomplete" grades for the semester. The following student from the area was named to the Dean's List:

Bowie, MD: **Divya Patel**, Freshman, Biology

—Danielle Durham, Missouri Valley College

Minnesota State University, Mankato Awarded 1,796 Degrees at End of Fall Semester

MANKATO, Minn. (December 10, 2020)—Minnesota State University, Mankato awarded 1,796 degrees to 1,753 students at the end of the fall 2020 semester, with this fall's graduates celebrated through a special website with commencement videos available as of Saturday, Dec. 12, the day on which the University's three traditional graduation ceremonies were scheduled but cancelled because of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Each graduate will also receive "commencement-in-a-box" packages shipped to their homes. Included in each box are printed commencement programs, a diploma holder and a few gifts to honor each graduate. The following student from the area graduated:

Lanham, MD: **Buhari Maiwada**, BSEC, Computer Engineering

More information about the Minnesota State Mankato fall commencement is at www.mnsu.edu/mavgrad2020.

—Dan Benson, Minnesota State University Mankato

Brandywine-Aquasco

by Audrey Johnson 301-922-5384

CHRISTMAS DAY SERVICE

Join Westphalia to celebrate "The Reason for the Season (Let Us Adore Him!)" in a virtual Christmas Day Worship Service 9:00 a.m.-10:00 a.m. Rev. Dr. Timothy West, Senior Pastor. Visit us on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/westphaliaum> Livestream or on demand at <https://westphalia.thechurchonline.com/WestphaliaUnitedMethodistChurch>.

BOWIE STATE UNIVERSITY

Live at 5 is back to its regularly scheduled program. Make sure you tune in to the Office of Alumni, Engagement's Facebook Page on Wednesdays. Last Wednesday December 9, 2020 at 5:00 p.m. appeared Richard Lucas III ('16) Truly a "Young Alum to watch.

Professor Lucas III, BSU Class of 2016 Abolitionist is a budding public intellectual whose scholarship sits at the Intersection of masculinity studies and Christian Ethics.

ANNUAL CHRISTMAS DONATIONS

New Hope Fellowship Annual Christmas Donations for Restore Health Rehabilitation Center Sunday December 20, 2020 drop off from 11:30-1:00 p.m. at North Campus Nottingham Myers Church 15601 Brooks Church Road Upper Marlboro, Maryland 20772. Drop off at Christ United Methodist Church South Campus 22919 Christ Church Road Aquasco, Maryland 20608.

Share your blessings with those that do not have. We may not be able to raise their spirits with songs and hugs, but we can help make daily living easier with our donations. Needed items are socks, deodorant, toothpaste, toothbrushes, lotion, soap, water, snacks, chips, and mouthwash.

MEDSTAR SOUTHERN MARYLAND HOSPITAL

Keeping you safe: At MedStar Southern Maryland Hospital Center, health and safety have always been among our top priorities. As we continue providing expert, timely care during the pandemic, we are taking extra precautions to protect you and your loved ones. To learn more about what we are doing to keep you safe, please visit MedStarHealth.org/Safe.

CLINTON UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

Thanks to the Clinton United Methodist Women, who have joined with us this year to donate items for the Pine View Nursing and Rehabilitation Center. We look forward to the fellowship with them for the holidays via Zoom. The Evangelism Ministry wishes you a Merry Christmas and a prosperous New Year. Peace, Stephanie Samuel, Evangelism Chairperson.

GWYNN PARK MIDDLE SCHOOL

Gwynn Park Middle School in Brandywine, Maryland has won state champions in boys' basketball in 1968, 1969, 1970, 1972, 1974, 1976, 1980, 1983, 1987, 1988; girls' basketball in 1974, 2002, 2003, 2004; baseball in 1984; Boys Outdoor Track and Field 2002 and Football in 2005.

A great school. I served as President and Vice President of the Parent Teacher Association, and Chairperson on several committees when my son attended the school. After retirement from the Federal Government, I worked at the school as a Substitute Teacher. A wonderful staff and great students.

CONGRATULATIONS

Congratulations to Shonnita Lee who is a member of Christ United Methodist Church in Aquasco for completing the journey to become a Certified Lay Minister.

NEW HOPE FELLOWSHIP DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS

Happy Birthday to Henrietta Brown, Raygiona Gant, Ellen Thompson, Ernestine Dorsey, Shaunelle Hawkins, Annette Makle-Dearing, Lisa McKelvy, Renie Spriggs, Icina Dent, Clinton Holland, Mary Lou Lee, Ellen Thompson, Terry Windsor, Dennis E. Worthy, Jr., Roger Broadwater, Jr. who are celebrating birthdays in December.

NEW HOPE FELLOWSHIP WEDDING ANNIVERSARIES

Congratulations to Mr. & Mrs. Orville Pinkney, Mr. & Mrs. Tony Proctor who are celebrating Wedding Anniversaries in December. Wishing you God's Blessings on your Wedding Anniversary.

EAGLE HARBOR

Eagle Harbor is an incorporated town on the Southeast corner of Prince George's County, Maryland, United States, and near the rural community of Aquasco, Maryland that is known as a historic African American Community founded in 1925. Eagle Harbor is 2 miles North of Chalk Point.

The town of Eagle Harbor which has a rich history is still a tranquil enclave of vacation cottages and year-round homes. The people are still just as friendly and as civic minded as they were 80 years ago when the town was incorporated. This waterfront town is located on the Patuxent River, in the southern tip of Prince George's County. Inform: <https://www.townofeagleharborincmd.org/history.php>

SEE AND HEAR BOWIE STATE LEADERSHIP

BSU President Dr. Aminta Breaux and BSU National Alumni Association President Darren M. Swain spoke during the breaks in Maryland Public Television's encore presentation of Stanley Nelson's film, "Tell Them We Are Rising" on Tuesday, December 1.

All content for HBCU Week can be viewed on MPT via live stream for those who live in DC/Maryland viewing area: <https://www.mpt.org/anywhere/live-stream-mpt/>. Those who live outside of MPTs viewing area can visit mpt.org/hbcu/ for on-demand viewing. Having trouble? Call MPT Member and Viewer Services at 410-581-4292 or email us at outreach@mpt.org.

COMMUNITY

MGM National Harbor Reflects on a Year of Community Engagement

By PRESS OFFICER
MGM National Harbor

NATIONAL HARBOR, Md. (December 8, 2020)—Today the team at MGM National Harbor, the premier luxury gaming resort in the DMV area, recognizes its four-year anniversary by focusing on the importance of community.

“COVID-19 has impacted everyone, making it a tough year for all of us,” says Jorge Perez, president and chief operating officer for MGM National Harbor. “As we continue to try to navigate through the pandemic we have made special efforts to understand how we can support our community partners, local and small businesses and families in need, right here in Prince George’s County, Maryland and the DMV.”

In March, with Governor Hogan’s executive order

to shut down businesses, our executive chefs immediately mobilized, ensuring all available fresh food from our property was safely and quickly donated to charitable organizations. Overall, the company donated more than 662,000 pounds of food—or 552,000 meals valued at more than \$530,000—to the communities in which we operate. MGM National Harbor worked with several food partners to contribute over 64,000 pounds of food to Prince George’s County residents and neighboring communities, a food distribution channel equal to 53,800 meals.

While food insecurity is a focus for MGM Resorts’ overall philanthropy program, the effect of COVID-19 increased the need for awareness and support. Other organizations like Prince George’s County School System received resources to help ease virtual learning for teachers and students and

Shepherd’s Cove received hygiene kits for women who were housed in their shelter.

Additionally, in 2020, the casino has given over \$400,000 to organizations who provide services through the region. These partners include: Alice Ferguson Foundation; Arc of Prince George’s County; Community Advocates for Families and Youth; Prince George’s Community College Foundation; Doctors Community Hospital Foundation; Goodwill of Greater Washington and a \$50,000 contribution to Capital Area Food Bank.

Employees of the resort take great pride in their active volunteerism and personal contributions to the community. Since opening in 2016, the team has logged over 21,000 hours using their time to assist organizations servicing the homeless, veterans, youth, low-income families, and environmental causes. Additionally, in 2019, employees raised over \$135,000 for the MGM Resorts Foundation where they serve as ambassadors for grant allocations. The funds raised are separate from other corporate giving and empowers employees to drive social change

and make an impact in their communities. Several local organizations that benefit from the Foundation include United States Veterans Initiative (USVETS); Food & Friends, Inc.; Higher Achievement Inc.; Habitat for Humanity Metro Maryland

MGM National Harbor is the number one tax provider amongst all six gaming licensees and the largest tax provider for Prince George’s County. This has allowed the resort to contribute more than \$612 million dollars to the Maryland Education Trust Fund, the most of all the Maryland state casinos since 2017. The taxes for Prince George’s County have allowed for the creation of the Local Development Council, which takes a portion of the tax proceeds in the amount of \$750,000 and awards grants to non-profits located or providing services to residents within a 3 mile radius of the resort. Other taxes go to supporting local infrastructure and first responder organizations like the Prince George’s County Police Department, Fire and EMS Department, Prince George’s County Schools and transportation initiatives that benefit the county.



PHOTO COURTESY
NAVY OFFICE OF COMMUNITY OUTREACH

Myeshia Daniels

Bowie State University Graduate And Contract Specialist in the Spotlight—Myeshia Daniels

By PRESS OFFICER
From Naval Facilities Engineering Systems Command Washington Public Affairs

Myeshia Daniels is a contracting officer for NAVFAC Washington at the Washington Navy Yard. She was raised in Washington D.C. by her grandparents, Mary and Norman, as well as her aunts, and has an older brother named Derric. A D.C. public school system alum, Daniels earned

a bachelor’s degree in business from Bowie State University in 2010.

Daniels began working with NAVFAC Washington in 2007 at Public Works Department South Potomac, Naval Support Facility Indian Head, as an automation office intern while still in college. She

joined the command in 2012, coming on board as a contract specialist intern, before being promoted to junior contract specialist in 2015 and then to contracting officer in 2018. She is responsible for pre/post contract actions for construction and A/E services ranging from \$1M to \$45M and

worked on a Regional MACC (Multiple Award Construction Contract) procurement valued at \$240M.

Daniels’ favorite part about her job is the execution of large construction projects along with developing relationships with employees in difference business lines. She also appreciates her team.

“Everyone works well together,” said Daniels. “There is good communication and we relate to each other. The work is enjoyable yet challenging.”

Working at NAVFAC Washington has increased Daniels’ knowledge and skills in contracting that will help her

be successful in her career long term.

“[In] this job, you continuously learn. Things are always changing... you just have to adapt to it.”

Daniels comes from a large family and is the proud mother of two boys, William, 9, and Claudio, 6. She enjoys the stability that working for NAVFAC Washington provides. William, now in fourth grade, is school-oriented and wants to be either a mathematician or a scientist, while kindergarten Claudio is defined by his independent nature.

Speaking about her boys, Daniels simply stated, “That’s my drive.”

Greater Washington Law Enforcement Lauded for Fight Against Drunk Driving

23rd-annual event honors local police in fight against DUI
Video of virtual ceremony viewable at <https://youtu.be/o6Bs9JsUZak>

By KURT ERICKSON
Washington Regional Alcohol Program (WRAP)

WASHINGTON (December 11, 2020)—Eighteen (18) Washington-metropolitan area police officers were cited today for their “outstanding commitment in the fight against drunk driving in Greater Washington” and presented with the area’s 23rd-annual “Law Enforcement Awards of Excellence for Impaired Driving Prevention.”

Bestowed this morning, virtually, due to the continuing COVID-19 pandemic, the nonprofit Washington Regional Alcohol Program (WRAP)

presented its 2020 Law Enforcement Awards including:

Corporal Thomas Kosakowski, Prince George’s County Police Department

Friday morning’s virtual, annual awards were bestowed by WRAP in memory of Metropolitan Police Department Motor Patrol Officer Anthony W. Simms. Officer Simms, as a result of injuries sustained while on duty, lost his life to an impaired driver during Memorial Day weekend in 1996. WRAP’s 2020 Law Enforcement Awards were presented online today via a video hosted by the nonprofit featuring longtime event Master of Cere-

monies Melissa Mollet (NBC Washington) and U.S. Representative Gerry Connolly (D-VA) who read the names of this year’s honorees into the U.S. Congressional Record.

“This year’s awardees represent the front lines in Greater Washington’s continuing fight against drunk driving,” said Kurt Erickson, WRAP’s President. “Their collective effort to annually arrest and remove nearly 14,000 drunk drivers from Washington-metropolitan area roadways has undoubtedly saved lives.”

In addition to receiving the Law Enforcement Awards, each of the 2020 WRAP honorees also received a pair of complementary Washington Nationals tickets (courtesy of the Washington Nationals) and a \$ 25 gift card to Glory Days Grill (courtesy of Glory Days Grill).

Sponsors of WRAP’s 2020 Law Enforcement Awards & Holiday Campaign Kick-Off included The Beer Institute, Breakthru Beverage Washington, D.C., Foundation for Advancing Alcohol Re-

sponsibility, GEICO, George Washington University Hospital, Glory Days Grill, Interstate Moving | Relocation | Logistics, Lyft and PAS Systems International.

Founded in 1982, the nonprofit [501(c)(3)] Washington Regional Alcohol Program (WRAP) is a coalition of diverse interests using effective education, innovative programs and targeted advocacy to end alcohol-impaired driving and underage drinking in the Washington, DC metro area. Through public education, innovative health education programs and advocacy, WRAP is credited with historically keeping the metro-Washington area’s alcohol-related traffic deaths lower than the national average. WRAP, however, may best be known to area residents via the organization’s popular free safe ride service for would-be drunk drivers, SoberRide®.

For more information, visit WRAP’s web site at www.wrap.org.

Hearing from A1

Sherring remained director of operations until terminated in August by acting Director Charles Glass, though no reason was stated in the letter displayed during Thursday’s hearing.

Despite hours of questioning, nothing new was learned regarding whether Hogan knew about McGrath’s questionable severance payout of over \$233,000 upon leaving his director position to become Hogan’s chief of staff in June.

Agency board members, the former deputy director and others stated, either in documents or testimony before the joint committee, that McGrath indicated the governor was aware of and approved the sizable severance amount.

However, Hogan told reporters during an August press conference that he didn’t know anything about the payout, and in a Sept. 23 letter to Senate President Bill Ferguson, D-Baltimore, and House Speaker Adrienne Jones, D-Baltimore County, stated his office was auditing and seeking to reform the “quasi-governmental” agency.

McGrath resigned his position as chief of staff days after news of the payout became public. He lasted on the job around 11 weeks.

“McGrath used MES as a slush fund,” Lam said after watching Sherring repeatedly decline to explain requests for reimbursement for conferences and other expenses seemingly unrelated to his duties or made

on McGrath’s behalf after his June 1 departure from the agency.

“How do we go back to our constituents and justify these expenses?” Lam asked.

Both Sherring and McGrath were subpoenaed to appear before the committee by a unanimous and bipartisan vote of the legislative policy committee on Sept. 23 to answer questions relating to McGrath’s hefty severance payout.

Committee records show former Directors Harkins and O’Neill each received payouts upon retirement consistent with the agency’s policies; however, McGrath’s request raised flags with the agency’s board, particularly after receiving an email on July 22 from retired Deputy Director Beth Wojton stating her concerns.

In the email to the board submitted weeks after her retirement, Wojton stated that “during the short time period where I had assumed the duties of Director, MES reimbursed the previous Director for approximately \$50,000 in expenses” and that those “expenses were not submitted to me nor did I authorize payment.”

The payout later raised concerns with lawmakers not only due to a pattern of expenses billed to taxpayers for thousands of dollars, but also for edits by Sherring and McGrath to agency board meeting minutes concealing “references to the Board’s approval of McGrath’s severance payment,” according to committee documents.

The edits were eventually rejected by the board for being inconsistent with state Open Meetings Act requirements.

Lam and Barron were also interested in what Sherring knew about McGrath’s appointment to Hogan’s COVID response team in March.

“According to the governor, he spearheaded efforts with Operation Enduring Friendship,” Barron stated, asking if Sherring had information about this assignment.

Lam followed up with specific questions regarding McGrath’s involvement in the procurement of South Korean COVID-19 test kits.

Sherring declined to respond to these questions as well, though they may have been more of a preview of McGrath’s questioning scheduled for next week.

“Today we had a high-level, politically connected employee who won’t answer basic questions,” Barron said at the conclusion of a long and fruitless hearing. “And yet we’ve seen as presented by counsel, Mr. Sherring and Mr. McGrath took great advantage of their state employment...perhaps wasteful and fraudulent advantage.”

Lam said he was also “disappointed with the lack of candor” from Sherring regarding his position or excessive expenses, stating “In the court of public opinion, you all represent what is wrong with state government” and this “reduces public trust.”

McGrath is expected to testify at the joint council’s next hearing scheduled for Wednesday [Dec. 16].

Hoyer Announces Winners of the Sixth Annual Fifth District Congressional App Challenge

WASHINGTON (December 11, 2020)—Today, Congressman Steny H. Hoyer (MD-05) announced the winners of the Sixth Annual Congressional App Challenge for the Fifth District.

Taking first place this year is Henry E. Lackey High School Tiana Clemons with her app, “BookBox.” Similar to an e-commerce site, Tiana’s app was created to be a central hub for those who want to share their own library of books with others.

Eleanor Roosevelt High School student Chinaza Ezinne won second place for her app “Happier,” which assists with mental health care by providing users with a diary, planner, list of therapists and psychologists, and various help hotlines all in one place.

Largo High School student Ethan Jennings

See APP CHALLENGE Page A6

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Prince George’s County Economic Development Corporation
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COMMENTARY

Marc Morial

President and CEO, National Urban League



To Be Equal:

Black America Has Questions About Vaccines. National Urban League Has Answers.

"We affirm that Black Lives Matter. And as Black health professionals, we have a higher calling to stand for racial justice and to fight for health equity. In the spirit of unconditional love for every single Black American, we have locked arms in an initiative to place the health and safety of our community at the heart of the national conversation about COVID-19. Respect for our Black bodies and our Black lives must be a core value for those who are working to find the vaccine for this virus that has already taken so many of our loved ones."

—A Love Letter to Black America from America's Black Doctors and Nurses

Is the coronavirus vaccine safe? How many of the trial participants are Black? How much will it cost?

Based on a history of racism within the nation's health care system, Black Americans are far more skeptical than whites about a COVID-19 vaccine, even as the FDA's vaccine advisory panel this week recommended authorization of Pfizer's version.

That's why the National Urban League, the Black Coalition Against COVID and the leading black health professional organizations convened a special Town Hall on Understanding the Vaccine on Thursday to answer those questions and address those concerns.

More than 10,000 concerned Americans joined the event, held on the National Urban League's web page, NUL.org, and social media channels, taking advantage of a rare opportunity to hear firsthand from Black medical experts who have monitored the development and testing of the vaccine and advised the government officials responsible for its approval.

Yes, the vaccine is safe. About 10% of trial participants are Black. And the vaccine will be free.

"Let me be perfectly clear. I have absolutely no concerns about where we are in terms of vaccine development," said panelist Dr. David M. Carlisle, President and CEO of Charles R. Drew University of Medicine. "We are facing a clear and present national emergency. People are dying every day. We need to turn around and stop it from happening in order to save lives. This is why the term emergency use authorization is so relevant. We are facing an emergency. I have total trust in my scientific colleagues that they are developing these technologies appropriately."

One attendee asked, "How do we get folk to trust when there has been a history of medical experimentation exploitation and ongoing health care disparities?"

Dr. Reed Tuckson, founder of the Black Coal-

ition Against COVID, responded: That's why all of our Black health organizations are working together to be in all the places where decisions are being made. In the past, we were not in positions of influence to monitor but that is definitely not the case today. We have our eyes on every stage in this process, including being on the committee today that made the recommendations to FDA."

Black mistrust of America's medical institutions is sometimes called the "Tuskegee Effect," named for a 40-year government study of 600 Black Alabama with syphilis in which the patients were not told of their diagnosis and were denied treatment.

Times have changed. As Dr. Anthony Fauci said during a similar Town Hall National Urban League presented on Tuesday, "So, the first thing you might want to say to my African-American brothers and sisters is that the vaccine that you're going to be taking was developed by an African-American woman. And, that is just a fact."

Dr. Kizzmekia Corbett is the lead scientist for coronavirus vaccine research at Fauci's National Institute of Health. She was also part of the team that worked with Moderna to develop its vaccine that's expected to receive emergency use authorization from the FDA.

Marion Wright Edelman

President Emerita, Children's Defense Fund



ChildWatch:

The Housing Crisis Harming Our Children

Home for the holidays. The COVID-19 crisis has disrupted many Americans' ability to travel home and visit families over the holidays in the usual ways, but for millions of families it is threatening to do much worse. In September, the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) announced an order prohibiting most evictions nationwide for the rest of the year, bringing desperately needed protection to the 30 to 40 million renters at risk of losing their homes during the pandemic and ongoing economic crisis—but this moratorium is set to expire January 1. That order also didn't provide renters with resources to cover back rent, utilities, or fees. Unless Congress and the federal government act now mil-

lions of the lowest-income families who have been protected will be at risk of eviction and homelessness to start the new year.

Our country can't contain the pandemic if millions are without homes or on the brink of homelessness in the middle of winter and the most dangerous surge yet. No child in the richest nation on earth should go without the simple safety and stability of a home. Yet even before this crisis millions of American children spent periods of their crucial childhood years living in cars, campgrounds, or crowded, unsanitary, and unsafe public shelters with almost nothing to call their own except anxiety, weariness, and unfulfilled longings. How have we gotten to this place and allowed so many children to go

without a safe and stable place to call home? As Christians prepare to celebrate the birth of the most famous poor child in history why is there no room for children in our 21st century inn?

The family housing crisis is rooted in the collision between eroding family incomes and growing housing costs. On the one hand, even before the COVID-19 crisis the economic recovery bypassed millions of American families with children, leaving them unable to afford available housing. On the other, the number of affordable housing units continues to fall because of gentrification, tax policies that encourage the development of luxury housing and commercial real estate, and the drastic underfunding of federal assistance that subsidizes housing for low-income families. Only 1 in 4 families with children who are eligible for housing subsidies receive them and the few who do receive help often can't find housing. Only 36 affordable and available homes exist for every 100 extremely low-income renter households.

The federal government has failed children and families by refusing to invest in economic security and affordable housing with devastating results. During a count on a single night in January 2019, 107,069 children were homeless. More than 1.5 million school-aged children experienced homelessness at some point during the 2017–2018 school year—more than double the number before the Great Recession.

Young children are especially vulnerable: more than 1.3 million children under 6 were homeless in 2017 during their years of greatest brain development.

More than 5 million other children live in families with worst case housing needs, meaning they have an income below 50 percent of the area median, spend more than half their income on rent, and receive no housing assistance from the government. These children often live in unmanageably expensive, overcrowded, unstable, or dangerously substandard housing. Many of their families are just one emergency away from eviction or homelessness in the middle of a crisis where "one emergency away" is a constant threat.

To provide all children with safe and decent housing we need to act with urgency to increase the supply of affordable housing, expand housing vouchers for families with children, and ensure basic economic security for working parents. No family should be forced to pay more than 30 percent of its income—the amount the federal government defines as affordable—to live in decent and stable housing. Children and families at most immediate risk during the pandemic need intervention now. Please contact your Members of Congress and ask them to provide rent relief to keep families housed after the eviction moratorium ends. This is a season for our nation to return to a basic sense of decency.

Benjamin L. Cardin

United States Senator for Maryland



Maryland Congressional Delegation Briefed on Initial COVID-19 Vaccine Distribution, Urges State Officials to Provide a Fair and Equitable Process for Future Allocations

Marylanders want to know where, how and when they can get vaccines, especially communities disproportionately impacted by this pandemic

WASHINGTON (December 10, 2020)—U.S. Senator Ben Cardin led a virtual Maryland congressional delegation meeting Thursday with Senator Chris Van Hollen and Congressmen Steny Hoyer, Dutch Ruppersberger, John Sarbanes, Kweisi Mfume, Andy Harris MD, Anthony Brown, David Trone and representatives of Jamie Raskin to discuss the latest information on the availability of and plans to distribute the COVID-19 vaccine across Maryland. Briefing the lawmakers on allocation and distribution plans for Marylanders were Dennis Schrader, Maryland Acting Health Secretary, and Dr. Jinlene Chan, Acting Deputy Secretary for Public Health Service, Maryland Department Health (MDH).

"Acting Secretary Schrader and Dr. Chan outlined the steps MDH has taken to prepare Maryland for the first round of vaccine distribution for hospital healthcare workers and nursing home residents and staff. As the state receives more allocations of vaccine, MDH will turn to distribution among those who are at high-risk in the general population. I encourage Acting Secretary Schrader and Dr. Chan to focus on communities disproportionately impacted by COVID-19 as well as well as equitable geographic distribution. We cannot allow those hardest hit by the virus to fall through the cracks. We do best as a state when we don't leave others behind," said Senator Cardin. "Getting vaccinated is a key piece in our fight against this deadly virus, and we will continue to encourage all Marylanders to be vaccinated as supplies become available."

"I appreciated the opportunity to speak with Acting Secretary Schrader today to learn more about the state's plan for vaccine distribution. Maryland is

facing record numbers of COVID-19 cases, and our hospitals are quickly approaching maximum capacity. I join in thanking the thousands of selfless doctors, nurses, and health workers on the frontlines fighting this virus," said Congressman Hoyer. "It's imperative that every Marylander continue to take this public health emergency seriously and work to stop the spread of COVID-19. I will continue to work with my colleagues at the local, state, and federal levels to reassure our citizens of the safety of the COVID-19 vaccine and ensure every Marylander be vaccinated as quickly as possible. Until the vaccine is widespread, it's critically important that all Marylanders remain vigilant and continue practicing social distancing and wearing their mask in public."

"As the COVID-19 vaccine approval enters its final stages, it's crucial that Maryland is prepared to safely, effectively, and equitably distribute it," said Senator Van Hollen. "On today's call, we underscored that our federal team is committed to providing any support we can in this process as well as the need for a transparent distribution plan that demonstrates how the vaccine will reach the communities hardest hit by the pandemic. We will continue working to ensure that our state has the resources necessary to address this crisis and keep Marylanders safe."

"Today, our Congressional delegation heard more details about Maryland's plan to distribute the long-awaited COVID-19 vaccine as the virus continues to surge at an alarming rate," Congressman Ruppersberger said. "There are a lot of moving parts, and while there are still many unanswered questions—such as how Maryland's

significant military population will affect our allocation of doses—one thing is clear: we must work together to ensure all Marylanders are vaccinated as quickly as possible in a way that is as equitable as possible. And we must all continue to do our part to stop the spread until the vaccine is available widely enough to take effect."

"Today's productive conversation with Acting Secretary Schrader provided our delegation with additional insight about how Maryland plans to distribute the initial COVID-19 vaccines to health care workers, long-term care facility residents and first responders," said Congressman Sarbanes. "Our delegation remains united and intensely focused on securing enough doses to ensure that every Marylander—particularly those in our hardest-hit communities—has access to a safe and effective vaccine as we work to eliminate the virus and get to the other side of this public health crisis."

"Our Black and brown residents across the state are much more likely to get COVID-19, be hospitalized, and die. While we are hoping for fast distribution of the vaccines, we must see to it that the

allocation is equitable. Given the grossly unequal health outcomes for communities of color, Maryland's rollout plan must address racial disparities as well as any distrust of the healthcare system," Congressman Mfume said. "On today's call with Acting Secretary Schrader and Dr. Chan, we underscored the need to prioritize those communities at the highest risk. I am committed to working with the Maryland Delegation, and our state and local leaders to see to it that the communities that have been hardest hit receive an adequate number of doses."

"As a physician, I am so encouraged by the fact that hundreds of thousands of Marylanders who are at highest risk will be vaccinated before the year's end, thanks to Operation Warp Speed," said Dr. Harris.

"As we look toward the distribution a number of promising vaccines, we can't lose sight of the disproportionate toll this pandemic has had on people of color

and underserved communities in our state. A critical aspect of any vaccine distribution plan must prioritize the hardest hit populations in Maryland and target outreach to promote vaccination as essential to public and individual health especially in communities of color," said Congressman Brown. "We cannot leave anyone behind in this effort. We defeat COVID-19 as one Maryland, through the equitable distribution of lifesaving vaccines."

"I've been on the phone with the hospitals, health departments, and local officials from every county in my district to ensure our communities are prepared to help every Marylander get the vaccine as fast and as fairly as possible. We particularly must address the massive increase in new COVID-19 cases in Western Maryland, which now holds the highest positivity rating in Maryland," said Congressman Trone. "I will continue to work with the Maryland federal delegation, Governor Hogan, our local leaders, and the Maryland Health Department to make sure we prioritize vaccine distribution to the groups and regions across Maryland that are being hit hardest by the pandemic."

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BUSINESS AND FINANCE

Social Security Matters

Ask Rusty:

Will My U.K. Pension Affect My Social Security?

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

Dear Rusty: I lived and worked in the United Kingdom prior to coming to the US at age 45, which qualified me for a UK State Pension worth the equivalent of about \$740 US dollars per month. Since moving to the US I have contributed to the US Social Security system for 14 years and my estimated US Social Security benefit is \$1,643 per month. I have heard about something called “WEP” and must be honest and say I don’t fully understand. Can you provide some advice or references so I can understand what happens to these sums when I retire? I don’t have any other pension income, so understanding these numbers is important. FYI, I hold both US and UK passports and will retire in the USA. **Signed: Blessed from the UK**

Dear Blessed: The “WEP” provision you refer to is known as the “Windfall Elimination Provision.” It affects anyone who is eligible to collect Social Security benefits, but who also has a pension from another entity (corporation, public agency, or foreign country) which did not participate in the U.S. Social Security program (meaning that SS FICA payroll taxes weren’t paid during that employment). WEP will reduce your US Social Security benefit by using a special formula to compute your benefit amount. Generally, the WEP reduction is determined either by the number of years of substantial SS-covered earnings that you have, or the WEP maximums (one of which is that your U.S. Social Security can’t be reduced by more than half of your non-covered pension). With less than 20 years paying into the US system, you will incur one of the maximum WEP reductions.

Something else important to understand is that the current estimate you have from Social Security doesn’t include the WEP reduction. That estimate assumes that you will continue to earn at your current level until you reach your full retirement age. You haven’t shared your birthdate, but from your email I assume you are now about 60 years old. If you were born in 1959, your full retirement age (FRA) for U.S. Social Security purposes is 66 years and 10 months (if you were born after that your FRA is 67, and if you were born before that subtract 2 months for each year prior to 1959). Your FRA is when you will get your “full” SS benefit. If you claim before that (age 62 is the earliest you can claim) your benefit will be reduced (even before WEP), and if you wait beyond your FRA you’ll earn Delayed Retirement Credits (DRCs) which will increase your benefit amount. DRCs stop at age 70.

Based upon what you’ve told me, I believe that your WEP reduction will probably be limited to one of the maximums, either half of your monthly U.K. pension, or the maximum for your “eligibility year” (2022?). We don’t yet know what the standard maximum WEP reduction for 2022 will be, but for 2020 it is \$480. That is the most that your Social Security benefit could normally be reduced. But if your U.K. pension is about \$740 USD then your maximum reduction should be about \$370, because the WEP reduction can’t be more than half of your non-covered (U.K.) pension. So, your US Social Security benefit of \$1,643 will most likely be reduced by about \$370 to about \$1,303. You will need to contact the UK pension system to see if any of your UK pension will be offset by your US Social Security benefits.

The 2.3 million member Association of Mature American Citizens [AMAC] 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) 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.

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

Gregory Fowler, Ph.D., Named President of University of Maryland Global Campus

Distinguished Scholar and Innovative Administrator to Join UMGC on January 4, 2021, Having Served Most Recently as President of Southern New Hampshire University’s Global Campus

By PRESS OFFICER
University of Maryland Global Campus

ADELPHI, Md. (December 9, 2020)—Gregory Fowler, Ph.D., grew up in Albany, Georgia, one of eight children; his mother was a secondary school teacher and other family members included ministers and pastors. He realized from an early age the power of education and the need to engage with people and help them wherever they are in life. These lessons have driven his success as a distinguished scholar, faculty member and innovative administrator during his 25-year career in higher education.

Based on that extensive track record of leadership in helping students succeed, the University System of Maryland (USM) Board of Regents announced today that Fowler has been selected as the next president of University of Maryland Global Campus. He will begin his new position on January 4, 2021.

Fowler comes to UMGC after nearly nine years at Southern New Hampshire University (SNHU), where he served in a dual role as chief academic officer and vice president for academic affairs before being elevated to president of SNHU’s Global Campus in September 2018. He has been responsible for academic functions in support of the university’s learning experiences and modalities—online, competency-based and hybrid—that met the

rapidly changing demands of the workforce and global communities, including programs for refugees in Africa and the Middle East and for learners in Mexico and Columbia.

“The board has identified an outstanding leader to move UMGC forward,” Board of Regents Chair Linda Gooden said. “Given that UMGC is the nation’s largest online public university and serves a broad diversity of students, the selection of UMGC’s next president has been critically important to the university and to the USM. Dr. Fowler’s extensive leadership experience with the Southern New Hampshire University Global Campus is an ideal fit for leading UMGC.”

Fowler’s portfolio at SNHU included oversight of more than 200 undergraduate and graduate programs in the liberal arts and social sciences, nursing and health professions, and STEM programs. He has provided vision and leadership to executive teams and faculty, including academic vice presidents, executive directors, deans, and more than 6,500 faculty and subject-matter experts.

“I am honored and humbled to be selected as the next president of University of Maryland Global Campus,” Fowler said. “I have always admired the institution’s mission and success in transforming the lives of adult learners. I look forward to joining the UMGC team as well as be-



PHOTO COURTESY UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND GLOBAL CAMPUS

Dr. Gregory Fowler

ing part of the larger team that is the University System of Maryland.”

After completing his undergraduate studies at Morehouse College in Atlanta, Fowler moved to the Washington, D.C., area and spent nearly four years at the National Endowment for the Humanities. There he worked as an outreach specialist helping to share the stories and empower the voices of underserved populations.

See UMGC Page A6

Real Estate Partnership to Bring \$500M Modern Logistics Campus to the Washington DC Region

Manekin and TurnBridge Equities Announce Innovative Industrial Park Project

By PRESS OFFICER
VSJ, Inc.

UPPER MARLBORO, MD (December 8, 2020)—Manekin LLC, one of the region’s leading real estate development firms, and Turnbridge Equities, a privately held real estate investment and development firm, announced their partnership to build a modern logistics park providing 3+ million square feet of Class A, “last mile” industrial buildings on 280 net acres in Prince George’s County.

The new National Capital Business Park has been designed to be a 13-building industrial park with warehouse, manufacturing and cold storage uses, and a 20-acre community park. This site will include buildings as small as 50,000 SF and as large as +1,000,000 SF, designed to meet modern logistics and “last mile” distribution standards with expanded employee parking, 185 foot truck courts, and numerous trailer drops available.

Development of this project will be managed by Manekin LLC and Turnbridge Equities; and engineered by Bohler Engineering, Powers Brown Architecture, a nationally known industrial architectural firm, has been retained to provide the spe-

cialized design and technical knowledge required for modern industrial buildings.

The National Capital Business Park was originally planned as Phase Two of the Collington Business Center Upper Marlboro, MD and totals more than 442 gross acres, of which approximately 160 acres will be preserved as open space and parkland.

“We’re passionate about this new campus and what it means for Prince George’s County and its business community,” said John Graham, Managing Director/Partner, Manekin LLC. “At Manekin, we’re committed to working collaboratively as a team to deliver quality facilities while building work environments that inspire optimal performance for our tenants and customers.”

This property offers a prime location for local, regional, and national commercial businesses to expand, grow and succeed in Prince George’s County. It is strategically located between Washington, D.C. and Baltimore, less than 20 minutes from the nation’s capital and connected to three international airports via a dense transportation network, including immediate proximity to the Capital Beltway (I-495/95), Route 301 and US-50.

Construction of National Capital Business Park is anticipated to begin in the second quarter of 2021 with an estimated delivery date in 2022. Once completed, this project will bring major improvements to Route 301, increased tax revenue by approximately \$21M and create approximately 4,000-5,000 jobs in the County.

For leasing or purchasing opportunities, contact Jeffrey Ludwig, jludwig@naimichael.com, 301-918-2923. For more information on the National Capital Business Park, please visit www.nationalcapitalbusinesspark.com.

Manekin LLC is a privately held real estate development and investment company. Founded in Baltimore by brothers Harold and Bernard Manekin in 1946 and now headquartered in Columbia, Maryland, Manekin’s goal is to create significant value for investors through a combination of strategic acquisition, development, capitalization, repositioning, and management of commercial real estate assets.

Turnbridge Equities, founded in 2015 by Andrew Joblon, is a privately held, vertically integrated real estate investment and development firm.

New Thoracic Surgeon Joins MedStar Southern Maryland Hospital Center

Puja Khaitan, MD, FACS, is now accepting new patients in Clinton

By CHERYL RICHARDSON
MedStar Health

CLINTON, Md. (December 2, 2020)—MedStar Southern Maryland Hospital Center welcomes new thoracic surgeon Puja Khaitan, MD, FACS, to their team. Dr. Khaitan is board certified in general surgery and thoracic surgery and specializes in both minimally invasive surgery and robotic surgery. The majority of her practice involves non-cardiac chest surgeries that treat lung cancer, mesothelioma, esophageal cancer, chest wall tumors and mediastinal masses. She is one of only a few surgeons in the United States trained in performing supercharged jejunal interpositions, a technically challenging operation that reconstructs a patient’s esophagus using a portion of the small intestine instead of the stomach.

“Helping and treating patients with cancer is extremely gratifying,” Dr. Khaitan said. “Specifically, with thoracic surgery, there is a lot of personalized management that goes into treating a patient, a term called precision medicine. I don’t just operate on someone, but I like to think of the person as a whole.”

With an emphasis on precision medicine, Dr. Khaitan believes each patient is unique. When designing individualized treatment plans, she considers a patient’s functional status, tumor biology and social support systems. “A patient’s recovery is directly related to the amount of social and emotional support they have,” she said. “I tell my patients they are important to me and I am available 24/7. I promise them if they call me, I will call them back within 24 hours.”

Dr. Khaitan graduated from medical school at the University of Texas Southwestern and completed her general surgery residency at Emory University Hospital along with a research fellowship at the University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center. She received additional cardiothoracic training at Brigham and Women’s Hospital. Dr. Khaitan first came to the MedStar Health System in 2017 and is the director of esophageal surgery at MedStar Washington Hospital Center, in addition to practicing at MedStar Georgetown University Hospital and now at MedStar Southern Maryland Hospital Center.

Dr. Khaitan’s office is located at 7501 Surratts Road, Suite 303, Clinton, MD 20735. For an appointment, please call 202-877-3158.

COVID-19
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6:30 p.m.

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5018 Lakeland Road
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301-474-3995
www.fbc-cp.org

Sunday School 9:30a.m.
Sunday Worship 11a.m.
Holy Communion 1st Sunday
Wednesday Bible Study 7-8p.m.
Wednesday Prayer Service 8p.m.

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Union
United Methodist Church

14418 Old Marlboro Pike,
Upper Marlboro, MD

Church (301) 627-7389

Sunday School (Children/Adults) - 8:30 a.m.
Sunday Worship: 10:00 a.m.

**Rev. Dr. Kendrick D. Weaver,
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Fax (301) 839-1721
E-mail: FHBC@verizon.net
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Boundary from A1

range of 80 percent to 95 percent. However, currently fewer than 27 percent of elementary/K-8 schools, 33 percent of middle schools and 19 percent of high schools fall within this range. For many years, PGCPs has faced challenges with balancing school enrollment across the county, with some schools operating under capacity, and others over-utilized with more students enrolled than available seats.

"We must balance utilization across schools to ensure equity in class sizes, program capacity and school funding," said Dr. Goldson. Only the 165 neighborhood schools will be included in this initiative. Specialty schools, regional schools, charter schools and special education centers will not be included in the boundary scenarios and options.

The Boundary Initiative began this fall and will conclude by December 2021 with recommended boundary changes offered by the CEO to the Prince George's County Board of Education for their approval. Potential boundary changes will be phased in starting with the 2022-23 school year.

For more information, visit the Boundary Initiative website at www.pgcp.org/boundary.

App Challenge from A3

won third place with his app "Music Bot," an app that makes music using a procedural algorithm.

"I join in congratulating Tiana, Chinaza, and Ethan on their winning apps," said Congressman Hoyer. "In a year filled with so many challenges, I was thoroughly impressed by the apps they created. Tiana, Chinaza, and Ethan displayed impressive talent and dedication. I'm confident the experience and skills they developed through the Congressional App Challenge will help them in their pursuit of future goals. Congratulations to our winners, and I thank every student who participated this year."

The Congressional App Challenge was established by the U.S. House of Representatives in 2013 as a nationwide event which invites middle and high school students from all participating Congressional districts to compete as individuals or groups up to four. Students work to create and present an original software application, or "app," for a mobile, tablet, or computer platform of their choosing.

The contest is modeled after the long-successful Congressional Art Competition and is designed to promote innovation and engagement in STEM education fields. Students who live in or are eligible to attend public schools located in Maryland's Fifth Congressional District were invited to join the Fifth District App Challenge, and the winning app will be placed on display in the U.S. Capitol alongside other winners from the nation.

UMGC from A5

while also earning a master's degree in English at George Mason University.

He left the NEH and became a lecturer and assistant professor of literature and American studies at Penn State University-Erie, at the same time he was completing his doctorate in English/American Studies from the State University of New York at Buffalo.

Fowler is a two-time Fulbright Senior Scholar (Germany and Belgium) and has presented his research at events throughout the world, including in Germany, where he also taught at the John F. Kennedy Institute for North American Studies at Freie Universität-Berlin.

He has held senior-level academic and administrative positions at a number of institutions, including Western Governors University, where he served as associate provost and dean of liberal arts and ensured student success by overseeing the development of new degree programs for all of WGU's colleges. He also was chief academic officer and vice president for academic affairs at Hesser College in New Hampshire.

Fowler currently serves as a board member and Commissioner for the New England Commission of Higher Education (NECHE), where he has worked with a team reviewing the shift to remote learning and its impact on the future of higher education.

Fowler also holds an MBA from Western Governors University and was a Charles A. Dana Scholar at Duke University. He has completed several higher education and executive leadership and negotiation programs at Harvard University.

"I thank Regent Sam Malhotra for his skillful leadership of the search committee that identified Greg Fowler as UMGC's next president," USM Chancellor Jay Perman said. "All of us are deeply impressed with Dr. Fowler's scholarship and his talents as a strategic and creative thinker. SNHU Global Campus is recognized as a pioneer in online higher education, and there's no doubt that Dr. Fowler has contributed greatly to that leadership."

The search for UMGC's next president began in September 2020, after Javier Miyares announced his retirement following a 45-year career that culminated in his transformative eight-year tenure as UMGC president. In Fall 2020, Miyares transitioned into an advisory capacity to Chancellor Perman, focusing on Systemwide data analytics and how to better position the USM for distance education during and after the COVID-19 pandemic. Lawrence E. Leak, Ph.D., immediately assumed the role of interim president at UMGC while the board completed its search for a permanent replacement.

"I would like to thank Dr. Larry Leak for his service as interim president," Perman said. "Dr. Leak's deep knowledge of UMGC and his energetic leadership have provided stability and momentum throughout the search process, and I'm delighted he's agreed to stay on at UMGC temporarily to advise throughout the presidential transition."

"It has been a special honor to serve in this capacity," said Dr. Leak. "I thank our staff and faculty for their support, their professionalism, and above all their friendship, which has meant so much to me. UMGC is well-positioned for Dr. Fowler's arrival. We are operationally and financially stable, enrollments are strong, and while we deal with the realities of the coronavirus pandemic, we have continued to provide our students with the outstanding service they so richly deserve. I could not be more pleased with Dr. Fowler's appointment or more confident in the future of our university under his expert leadership."

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