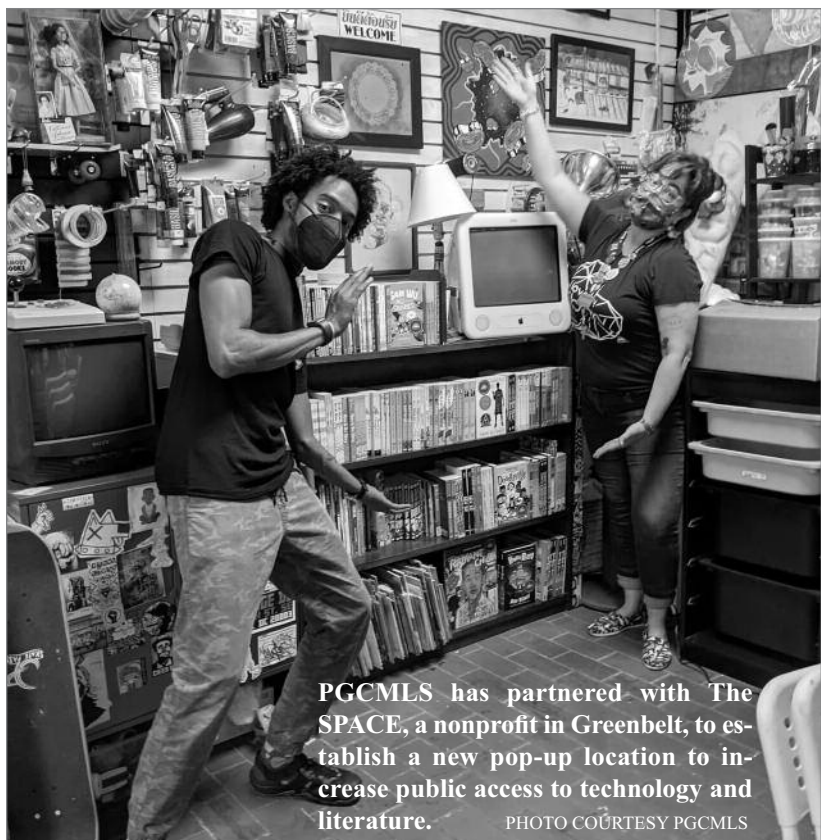


The Prince George's Post



A COMMUNITY NEWSPAPER FOR PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY SINCE 1932

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PGCMLS has partnered with The SPACE, a nonprofit in Greenbelt, to establish a new pop-up location to increase public access to technology and literature. PHOTO COURTESY PGCMLS

PGCMLS and The SPACE Collaborate to Connect the Community With Resources

By DONNA SCOTT-MARTIN
PGCMLS

LARGO, Md. (Sept. 15, 2021)—The Prince George's County Memorial Library System (PGCMLS) has partnered with The SPACE, a nonprofit in Greenbelt, to establish a new pop-up location to increase public access to technology and literature, attract participants with collaborative programming, and provide outreach to the significant population of immigrants, refugees, and Spanish-speakers living in the Greenbelt area. The SPACE, which stands for "Sharing Positive Artistic and Creative Energies," is a free art and tech-

nology space located in the Beltway Plaza Mall and is led by Executive Director Shaymar Higgs, the recipient of the City of Greenbelt's 2021 Outstanding Citizen Award.

As a part of this partnership, the Library is providing two laptops for public access at The SPACE, establishing a custom library collection of books for children, and supporting the Franklin Park and Springhill Lake communities with programming, early literacy outreach, and language learning and workforce development services. These resources will be made available at The SPACE Monday-Friday 3-7 p.m., and Saturday 12-7 p.m.

Staff at The SPACE will provide basic computer assistance to users, including how to apply for a virtual library card and access resources from the library's website with remote support from Library staff at the Greenbelt Branch and the Library's Ask A Librarian service. PGCMLS has provided 100 diverse, multilingual picture books, early readers, fiction and nonfiction books, and graphic novels to be housed and circulated at The SPACE.

Suggested library programs for viewing on the laptops while visiting The SPACE are Café a las cuatro, Kids Achieve Club, English Conversation Club, and Craftmoons. Sug-

gested services to access on Library laptops include Mango Languages, Brainfuse JobNow, Brainfuse HelpNow which offers live tutoring to students, and Spanish-language resources for children such as Lectorum by Make Make. All resources will be completely free with a library card, and The SPACE continues to offer free WiFi as part of a generous ongoing grant from an outside partner. In-person indoor programming will eventually be offered at The SPACE when COVID-19 conditions permit. Future programs will include

See RESOURCES Page A3

Volunteers Build New Kid-Designed Playground at Bladensburg Community Center, Funded by Monumental Sports & Entertainment Foundation and M-NCPPC

Kids in Prince George's County will soon have a new playground as part of nationwide effort by KABOOM! to help provide access to safe places to play

By PRESS OFFICERS
M-NCPPC & MSE Foundation

Volunteers from The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission, Department of Parks and Recreation, Prince George's County, and the Monumental Sports & Entertainment Foundation are building a new, kid-designed playground from September 28-October 1 at Bladensburg Community Center. Construction will start on Tuesday, September 28, 2021, and be completed on Friday, October 1, 2021.

WHEN: Friday, October 1, 9 a.m.-12 p.m. Volunteers construct playground

12-1 p.m. Site reset for afternoon volunteers

1-3:30 p.m. Volunteers complete playground construction

3:30-3:45 p.m. Ribbon-cutting ceremony (times approximate)

WHERE: Bladensburg Community Center, 4500 57th Avenue, Bladensburg MD 20710

WHO: Lysa Ratliff - CEO, KABOOM!

Elizabeth Hewlett - Chairman of the Prince George's County Planning Board

and The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission (M-NCPPC) Members of Monumental Sports & Entertainment, ownership group of the Washington Capitals, Wizards, and Mystics

This project will provide a customized, state-of-the-art new playground for hundreds of kids who attend the community center, as well as an opportunity to engage and bring together community members. Play is essential to the physical, social, and emotional health of every child. The COVID-19 pandemic demonstrated the need for access to parks and playspaces. M-NCPPC remains committed to providing vibrant outdoor spaces for the Prince George's County community.

In July, kids from the community were joined by Washington Capitals player Garnet Hathaway during Design Day, where the kids shared drawings of their dream playspaces with project organizers. Their ideas were integrated into the new playground design. Community members have been involved throughout the process, all the way from design to the upcoming installation. The community center provides activities for kids and adults of all ages.

The project is a part of Monumental Sports & Entertainment Foundation's commitment to making the region a better place for all by supporting game-changing solutions for the community!

The Bladensburg Community Center is managed by The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission (M-NCPPC), Department of Parks and Recreation, Prince George's County. Learn more about the Department at www.pg-parks.com and stay connected on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram.

MSE Foundation is committed to making the region a better place for all by supporting game-changing solutions for our community. Learn more at <https://www.monumentalfoundation.org/> and follow us on Twitter and Instagram.

KABOOM! is the national non-profit that works to achieve playspace equity. Kids who don't have access to play miss out on childhood and are denied critical opportunities to build physical, social and emotional health. To learn about our goal to end playspace inequity for good, visit kaboom.org and join the conversation at twitter.com/kaboom, facebook.com/kaboom and instagram.com/kaboom.

Prince George's County Planning Board Schedules Annual Budget Forums

2021 Budget Forums to be Held Virtually

By ANIKA JACKSON

The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission

UPPER MARLBORO, Md. (Sept. 15, 2021)—The Prince George's County Planning Board of The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission (M-NCPPC) announces it will hold its 2021 Budget Forums virtually this fall, to solicit comments on the Commission's budget for planning, parks, and recreation in Prince George's County for the next fiscal year, which begins July 1, 2022.

The virtual public forums will be held from 7-9 p.m. on:

- Tuesday, September 28, 2021
- Tuesday, October 19, 2021

Public participation is encouraged either through a phone bridge or by using GoTo Meeting (online video meeting software). The forums can be viewed live through the Planning Board's streaming service <http://mncppc.igmp2.com> and a video recording will be available for review after the hearing. Individuals or representatives of community organizations who wish to speak at this year's Budget Forum must register online, by noon, the Monday before the forum. To register, visit www.pgplanning-board.org, select "Testify at a Hearing," select Budget Forum, choose a

date and complete the form in its entirety, and submit. Following the registration submission, an email will be sent with the GoTo Meeting information by 3 p.m. the Monday before the forum, including the phone number and a web address to connect to the meeting. To submit documentation as a part of the forum, email information to PublicAffairs@ppd.mncppc.org.

Written comments will also be accepted until close of business, Tuesday, November 2, 2021. Comments may be addressed to Elizabeth M. Hewlett, Chairman, Prince George's County Planning Board, 14741 Governor Oden Bowie Drive, Upper Marlboro, Maryland 20772. Comments may also be faxed to Chairman Hewlett at 301-952-5074 or transmitted via email to PublicAffairs@ppd.mncppc.org.

The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission encourages the participation of persons with disabilities in all its programs and services. For special assistance (i.e. large print materials, assistive listening devices, sign language interpretation, etc.) call the Public Affairs Office at 301-952-4584.

Education Reform Panel Resists Hogan's Diversity Request

By TRISHA AHMED AND
ALEX ARGIRIS
Capital News Service

ANNAPOLIS, Md. (Sept. 17, 2021)—The nominating committee for an education reform panel has not reopened applications, despite Maryland Gov. Larry Hogan's urgent request on Sept. 10 for more diverse nominees.

Gov. Hogan's letter requested the committee to "immediately reopen the application process and provide a slate of nominees that accurately reflect our student population." (<https://www.marylandmatters.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/AIB-Letter-Sept.-10-1.pdf>)

The education reform panel, also known as the Accountability and Implementa-

tion Board for Blueprint for Maryland's Future, will monitor the implementation of new multi-billion dollar investments in Maryland schools beginning in 2022.

The panel's current nominees do not represent Latino communities, the Eastern Shore, Western Maryland or any other rural jurisdictions, the governor said.

In response to Hogan's request to reopen applications, the committee is waiting for the Maryland attorney general to provide clarity, according to Dr. Shanaysha Sauls, chair of the nominating committee.

"We need to get advice from the attorney general's office. We're getting legal advice about the options," Sauls told Capital News Service.

The law requires Hogan to

select seven nominees by Oct. 1 from the nominating committee's list, which must include a minimum of nine people.

The committee, which reviewed 43 total applications, submitted nine candidates—four who identify as white, four as Black and one as Asian—on Sept. 1.

Regarding the selection, "We thought it was diverse across a number of different dimensions: race, age and perspective," Sauls said, and the governor's letter "came as a surprise."

Crucial to the passage of the education reform bill was the creation of a "strong accountability system" to oversee the implementation of the legislation.

The seven-member panel

will be tasked with that responsibility, as well as with holding school systems accountable for student outcomes.

The Blueprint for Maryland's Future, which became law in February after the state Legislature overrode Hogan's 2020 veto, is a wide-ranging bill.

It represents a sweeping overhaul of Maryland's education system, with measures such as higher teacher salaries, expanded access to pre-K and greater support for English learners.

"Without adequate representation on the (panel), it will be difficult to sufficiently meet the needs of the Latino

See DIVERSITY Page A3

CEO Announces New COVID-19 Vaccination and Testing Policies

Guidelines include random pool testing of students and proof of vaccination for student-athletes

By PRESS OFFICER
PGCPS

UPPER MARLBORO, Md. (Sept. 10, 2021)—Today, Chief Executive Officer Dr. Monica Goldson announced new health and safety guidelines for Prince George's County Public Schools (PGCPS) students.

Beginning the week of September 27, schools will begin random pool testing of students regardless of symptoms and vaccination status. The school system currently tests any individual who displays symptoms of COVID-19. Parents and guardians are required to provide consent prior to testing. Approximately 10 percent of students with consent forms on file will be tested.

In addition, proof of vaccination for all student-athletes over age 12 will be required for participation in all sports. Unvaccinated individuals will be required to undergo weekly testing starting the week of October 18.

"This is another step forward in working to protect our 22,000 employees, nearly 132,000 students and their families, and all they encounter," said Dr. Goldson. "We will continue to leverage every available safeguard for the PGCPS community."

Students may also receive vaccinations during school hours at various middle school sites.

Prior to the start of school, PGCPS instituted a new policy requiring employees to provide proof of vaccination or undergo weekly testing.

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"This is something that every child, every adult should go see," Janet Hall encouraged.
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monthly bilingual storytimes, STEM programs for kids, and wellness programs for families.

"From sewing to jewelry-making and DIY crafts, The SPACE offers open studio and structured workshops for all ages as our way of providing the community with high-quality art supplies, computer technology, and professional art instruction. It operates as an alternate "third space" that is affirming and inclusive in the community," explained Executive Director Higgs. "The Library is excited about supporting and expanding upon these initiatives," contributed PGCMLS CEO Roberta Phillips.

The SPACE is a Black-owned and run nonprofit in Beltway Plaza Mall in Greenbelt, Maryland designed to provide free art for all. The SPACE stands for "Sharing Positive Artistic and Creative Energies." The SPACE: Free Art for All has as its mission to provide a pro-social environment that promotes individualized support through arts education and exploration opportunities, career development, and therapeutic services to youth, adults, and families in underserved communities. As a free art and technology space attractive to all ages, The SPACE offers open studio and structured, and professional workshops for personal enrichment and advancement. Resources include superior art supplies, computer technology, books, and more. The SPACE has provided over 8,000 individual art making experiences since opening its doors in 2018.

The Prince George's County Memorial Library System (PGCMLS) helps customers discover and define opportunities that shape their lives. The Library serves the 915,000+ residents of Prince George's County, Maryland through 19 branch libraries, a 24/7 online library, and pop-up services throughout the community. PGCMLS is a responsive and trusted community-driven organization. Programs, services, and outreach activities serve booklovers, immigrants and refugees, job seekers, children, young professionals, seniors, and families alike. PGCMLS' robust online offerings include curated content collections for kids, teens, educators, Spanish speakers, and more. Virtual events and outreach provide access to the Library from the comfort of home or on the go. Special programs include the D.R.E.A.M. Lab, STEM Pals, and 3D printing, which offer teens and lifelong learners with opportunities to learn cutting-edge technology and STEM skills for job readiness or personal enrichment. The Library also provides drive-up WiFi access at all branches and mobile hotspot devices. The Library's Laurel Branch Library received the 2018 AIA/ALA Library Building Award and was designated the best new public building in Maryland. As a strong community partner, the Library regularly collaborates with local government agencies and non-profit organizations to provide access to essential community services and programs. Partners include the Prince George's County Human Relations Commission, Employ Prince George's, Prince George's County Public Schools, and Prince George's Community College. Learn more at pgcmls.info or by visiting the Largo-Kettering Branch at 9601 Capital Lane, Largo, MD 20774.

Maryland to Start Apple's Electronic Credentials Program

By A.R. CABRAL
Capital News Service

ANNAPOLIS, Md. (Sept. 14, 2021)—Marylanders traveling on an airplane may soon be able to leave their plastic state identification behind for a digital card from Apple Wallet.

Other states introducing the digital identification program through Apple Inc. include Arizona, Connecticut, Georgia, Iowa, Kentucky, Oklahoma and Utah, according to an Apple Sept. 1 press release.

The digital ID feature will only be available on Apple devices, specifically using the tech company's Wallet application.

In 2019, Chairman Kumar P. Barve, of the Maryland House Environment and Transporta-

tion Committee, sponsored HB180, which would authorize the Motor Vehicle Administration to use electronic credentials in addition to a physical driver's license.

Barve, D-Montgomery, confirmed that Maryland's inclusion in Apple's digital identification pilot program is a direct result of HB180's passage in 2019, according to an email from the chairman.

Under the new law, the electronic credential is permitted to display two types of profiles: a limited profile that would only display age, a photo of the subject and "color-coded age indicator", and a full profile, which includes more specific identification information, according to the bill.

HB180, in the 2019 legislative session, was

passed unanimously in both chambers of the Maryland General Assembly and Gov. Larry Hogan, R, approved the bill in April 2019.

"Maryland is proud to be a leader once again in safe innovation with the implementation of mobile driver's licenses," Hogan said in the Apple Sept. 1 press release.

"As we look to the future, we are committed to enhancing convenience and accessibility while maintaining the highest safety and security standards for our state and citizens," the governor said.

The Transportation Security Administration will announce when the electronic credential will be implemented in the near future as a phased-in approach continues, according to TSA spokesperson Lisa Farbstein.

Broad Coalition Launches Effort to Help Resettle Afghan Refugees; Hogan Urges Aid

By SHAUNEEN MIRANDA
Capital News Service

WASHINGTON (Sept. 14, 2021)—A widespread coalition of political, religious and business leaders, joined by numerous large companies and advocacy organizations, on Tuesday launched an effort to help Afghan evacuees resettle in the United States.

The new group, called Welcome.US, seeks to engage the American public in welcoming Afghan refugees in a multifaceted effort. Cecilia Muñoz, the initiative's co-founder, said at a virtual press conference. The former director of the White House Domestic Policy Council under President Barack Obama, she is senior adviser to New America, a public policy group.

The initiative will try to make it easier for Americans to donate to frontline organizations and sponsor Afghan families arriving in the United States.

"Welcome.US is being launched in response to this outpouring from the American people to channel and fan its flames, building on the extraordinary work so many tireless frontline organizations have been leading," co-founder John Bridgeland said. He was director of the White House Domestic Policy Council under President George W. Bush. He is president and CEO of Civic Enterprises, a public policy firm.

Afghan-American organizations, faith-based groups, resettlement agencies, businesses, veterans, nonprofits, universities and political leaders have joined the initiative.

Maryland Gov. Larry Hogan also expressed his support for Welcome.US, urging Marylanders to help Afghan evacuees resettling in this country through donating money to frontline organizations, hosting families or providing essential services.

"When America began its withdrawal from Afghanistan, I made it clear that Maryland was ready and willing to welcome these Afghan allies," Hogan said at the press conference.

Hogan also spoke of America's history of compassion and commitment to helping others.

"Today, we're calling on that spirit of compassion yet again," Hogan said. "The thousands of Afghan allies, who desperately need our help now, have been our strong allies for the past two decades."

Welcome.US's co-chairs include Obama, Bush and former President Bill Clinton, as well as former first ladies Michelle Obama, Laura Bush and Hillary Clinton.

"Many of the refugees fleeing Afghanistan stood by America and risked everything for a chance at a better life," Obama tweeted. "With the launch of Welcome.US, we can support our new Afghan neighbors and reaffirm our common humanity. I hope you'll join us."

Welcome.US's launch comes during a pivotal moment in Afghan-American relations. The withdrawal of American troops and the Taliban's control in Afghanistan left hundreds of thousands of Afghan allies struggling to escape and find new places to call home.

The initiative also begins shortly after the 20th anniversary of the 9/11 attacks.

"But this call to action transcends the toxic politics of the moment, and I ask all Marylanders—and all Americans—to help us prove once again why this nation truly is 'the last best hope of earth,'" Hogan said.

Potential congressional legislation aimed at helping Afghan evacuees could affect the impact of Welcome.US.

"Congress has some serious work to do to make this success possible," said Nazanin Ash, the International Rescue Committee's vice president of global policy and advocacy.

Ash pointed to the Biden administration's request for funding and authority on extending refugee benefits to Afghan evacuees and providing them a path to permanent legal residency in the United States.

"Without this assistance, Afghan evacuees will not be able to access healthcare, language services or secure other public and private benefits that will help them find their footing and get a leg up in their new country," Ash said.

Hospice of the Chesapeake Announces Requirement for Workforce to be COVID-19 Vaccinated

By ELYZABETH MARCUSSEN
Hospice of the Chesapeake

PASADENA, Md. (Sept 14, 2021)—Today, Hospice of the Chesapeake announced that 98.33 percent of its employees are vaccinated for COVID-19. The not-for-profit community-based healthcare company providing care in Anne Arundel, Charles and Prince George's began implementing its vaccine policy in July.

"Requiring COVID-19 vaccinations is the right thing to do for our patients, their families, our care team members, their families, our volunteers and our healthcare business partners. We take our role in the health of this community very seriously and this decision is in keeping with our corporate values of courage and service to others. We are honored to stand in solidarity with our local hospitals and care facilities in this endeavor as we have for the last 15

months," said Michael Brady, President and CEO.

In July, Hospice of the Chesapeake announced to its workforce a Sept. 1 deadline for unvaccinated employees, including those who work remotely today or in the future, to become fully vaccinated for COVID-19 or apply for a medical or religious exemption. This requirement extended to all employees, contractors, interns, visiting students and volunteers. On Sept. 1, the organization reported that 98.33 percent of employees were vaccinated, with only a small group of granted exceptions for legitimate medical and religious purposes. Equally important, the organization requires daily screening for symptoms and possible travel exposure even for vaccinated employees.

"We view this decision as a logical extension of our ongoing role as thought leaders in the regional healthcare community" said Chief Medical Officer Dr. Eric Bush. Bush added, "Every organi-

zation and community member has an important part in slowing the spread of COVID-19. Strong vaccination rates have allowed us to feel more hopeful, but the impact of newly emerging variants remain a real threat. Vaccination is the best resource we have to safeguard everyone and focus on eradicating COVID-19."

Hospice of the Chesapeake's leadership team believes strongly in their role as providers of care for those living with advanced illness and experiencing end of life and is committed to continuing to allow access for patients and their families for those critically important end-of-life visits and conversations. "We will do everything in our power to ensure families can visit with their loved ones in a safe and healthy environment when and where it's right for them," said Bush.

In addition to employee daily screening, the organization also screens all patients, family members and visitors to inpatient care centers and offices for



PHOTO COURTESY HOSPICE OF THE CHESAPEAKE

(Dec. 22, 2020) Chief Medical Officer Dr. Eric Bush receiving his first COVID-19 vaccination shot at Doctors Community Hospital.

COVID-19 symptoms prior to arrival and requires the appropriate use of personal protective equipment based on unique situation. As well, the organization offers COVID-19 vaccines and testing for its employees, volunteers, and patients.

The community nonprofit encourages other employers, community leaders, and business partners to set an example that reflects our shared responsibility to protect our communities' health by getting vaccinated against COVID-19.

Diversity from A1

students whom this legislation is intended to support," Del. David Fraser-Hidalgo, D-Montgomery, the chair of the Latino Caucus, wrote to Hogan.

Fraser-Hidalgo also wrote that the Latino population has grown to nearly 12% in Maryland, according to the 2020 census, and that "Latino youth constitutes the largest proportion of English Language Learners."

Sauls addressed the bipartisan blowback over the committee's decision not to present any Latino nominees.

"(It was) as diverse as we could get, given the pool we had, which was limited in terms of Latinx representation," Sauls said.

Of the 43 applicants, only one identified as Hispanic and one as Afro-Latino, according to a Sept. 1 press release from the nominating committee. (<http://dls.maryland.gov/pubs/prod/NoPblTabMtg/AcctImplBrdNom/AIBNC-Announcement-Nominees.pdf>)

Hogan also expressed concerns about the nominees' geographic distribution.

"While many of the nominees selected are un-

doubtedly qualified individuals, there is a discernible lack of representation from the majority of jurisdictions in the State," Hogan noted in his letter.

Prince George's County Executive Angela Alsobrooks, D, also wrote a letter to Hogan, expressing her concern that none of the nominees live in Prince George's County, the state's second-most populous jurisdiction.

"While I appreciate that a representative from Prince George's County Community College will be considered...(the nominee) is not a county resident, nor does she interact with our public schools on a daily basis," Alsobrooks wrote.

Sen. Paul Pinsky, D-Prince George's, who serves as vice-chair of the nominating committee, responded to that concern.

"I actually solicited from people in Prince George's County who are very respected, and they chose not to do it," Pinsky told Capital News Service.

As of mid-day Sept. 17, the committee had not reopened applications.

"Right now there have been no changes to that slate of nine," Sauls said. "That's all I know until I hear further from the attorney general."

"Since we provide counsel to the committee, any

advice we may provide would be privileged," Raquel Coombs, a spokesperson for the Maryland attorney

general's office, wrote in an email to Capital News Service.

| Accountability and Implementation Board Nominees (in alphabetical order) | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|--|---------------------|-------|--------|---------------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|--|--|
| Nominee | County of Residence | Race | Gender | Areas of Expertise* | | | | | | | | |
| | | | | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | | |
| Doss, Mara | Anne Arundel | Black | Female | | | | | | | | | |
| Harris, Fagan | Baltimore City | Black | Male | | | | | | | | | |
| Kirwan, William | Montgomery | White | Male | | | | | | | | | |
| Leggett, Isiah | Montgomery | Black | Male | | | | | | | | | |
| Lynch, Jennifer | Baltimore County | White | Female | | | | | | | | | |
| Manko, Joseph | Baltimore City | Asian | Male | | | | | | | | | |
| Preston, Harry | Baltimore City | Black | Male | | | | | | | | | |
| Stapleton, Laura | Montgomery | White | Female | | | | | | | | | |
| Starr, Joshua | Montgomery | White | Male | | | | | | | | | |

* (1) early education through secondary policy; (2) post-secondary education policy; (3) teaching in public schools; (4) strategies used by top-performing state and national education systems in the world; (5) leading and implementing systemic change in complex organizations; (6) financial auditing and accounting; (7) other.

COURTESY SEPT. 1 PRESS RELEASE FROM THE ACCOUNTABILITY AND IMPLEMENTATION BOARD NOMINATING COMMITTEE

Annapolis, Maryland, on September 15, 2021. The nominating committee selected nine candidates for the Blueprint legislation's Accountability and Implementation Board: Mara Doss, Fagan Harris, William Kirwan, Isiah Leggett, Jennifer Lynch, Joseph Manko, Harry Preston, Laura Stapleton and Joshua Starr.

COMMENTARY

Marion Wright Edelman

President Emerita,
Children's Defense Fund



ChildWatch:

Happy 100th Birthday to the Great Constance Baker Motley!

On September 14, the NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund (LDF) celebrated the great life and legacy of trailblazing lawyer and judge Constance Baker Motley on what would have been her 100th birthday. She argued some of our nation's most important court cases to end racial segregation in public schools and accommodations along with a small band of brilliant and visionary lawyers led by Charles Houston including Thurgood Marshall, Jack Greenberg, and James Nabrit, Jr. Their work resulted in the landmark 1954 Supreme Court decision *Brown v. Board of Education*.

She was the first African American woman to serve as a federal judge and a role model, heroine, and inspiration for me and many others, including Vice President Kamala Harris, who said in her introductory remarks at the LDF celebration: "Constance Baker Motley spent her life defying expectations . . . She showed us the power of the law to effect change. And she taught us to see what can be, unburdened by what has been."

Connie Motley was the ninth of twelve children born to Caribbean immigrants in New Haven, Connecticut, home of Yale University. Her father worked as a chef at Yale's Skull and Bones Club, a secret society for the most privileged students like Presidents George H.W. Bush and George W. Bush. After graduating from her predominantly white high school with an excellent record, Connie Motley dreamed about becoming a lawyer but had to take a job as a domestic. How many brilliant Black boys and girls like her have stories that end there? But she found another job with the National Youth Administration, and while she was giving a speech at a local community center a wealthy white philanthropist heard her and offered to pay her college tuition.

She went to Fisk University in Nashville, Tennessee because she was eager to see the South, but transferred to New York University and earned a degree in economics in 1943. She then went on to Columbia Law School where she met Thurgood

Marshall. He offered her a job as a law clerk in LDF's New York office, and when she graduated she began her work with LDF full-time.

Constance Baker Motley soon became a leading civil rights attorney and made history in the 1950s and 1960s opening doors and crumbling the walls of legal apartheid. She helped craft the argument against "separate but equal" in *Brown v. Board of Education* and was the lead attorney in many desegregation cases, including successfully representing James Meredith in front of the U.S. Supreme Court when he sought admission to the University of Mississippi in 1962. She was the first Black woman to argue a case before the Supreme Court and the first Black woman lawyer many people across the South had ever seen, who were often caught off guard by the tall, elegant, brilliant woman with the powerful presence. She later said Thurgood Marshall chose her for key assignments in the South because he felt a Black woman lawyer would be safer than a Black man. As the first Black woman admitted to the bar in Mississippi I too found I could get away with statements and actions Black male lawyers may not have dared. She argued ten cases in front of the Supreme Court during her career and won nine.

Connie Motley then decided to become involved in New York politics, and became the first Black woman elected to the New York State Senate in 1964 and the first woman borough president of Manhattan in 1965. As a politician she championed opportunities for underprivileged groups, but her political career didn't end her brilliant legal career. In 1966, President Lyndon Johnson appointed her a United States district judge for the southern district of New York, making her the first Black woman ever appointed to the federal judiciary. She became

the chief judge of the district in 1982 and assumed senior status in 1986.

Constance Baker Motley was a very special lantern in my life. When I graduated from law school, I went to work at LDF in New York City where Julius Chambers and I were the first two Earl Warren fellows—a program designed to train and support young lawyers seeking to practice civil rights law in the South. Julius went to Charlotte, North Carolina where he tried groundbreaking civil rights cases and succeeded Jack Greenberg as head of LDF. I went to Mississippi. I will never forget the first day I walked into segregationist Federal District Judge Harold Cox's chambers. All the white male lawyers sitting around the table froze in shocked silence as I, a 24-year-old Black woman lawyer, entered the chambers. It was if I were an alien from Mars. As I walked around the table extending my hand to each white lawyer, none shook it. I sat and remembered Connie Motley, who had gone before to try cases in that closed violent society and racially segregated state.

At the close of the LDF celebration honoring Constance Baker Motley's 100th birthday, LDF alumna Kristen Clarke, our nation's Assistant Attorney General for Civil Rights at the Department of Justice, said: "For generations Black women like her have been the backbone of our national fight for progress, insisting again and again on the true meanings and values of democracy. And far too often our contributions have been ignored or diminished. But it is simply impossible to diminish the accomplishments of Ms. Motley . . . With determination and a keen legal mind, Ms. Motley turned the gears of justice, and when those gears did not exist she built them herself." *Thank you Connie!*

Marc Morial

President and CEO, National Urban League



To Be Equal:

Responding to Hurricane Ida: We Are Not Trapped to Repeat the Sins of Katrina Recovery

"In the wake of Katrina, contractors charged the same amount to rebuild a three-bedroom house, whether it was in the Lower 9th Ward or on high ground Uptown. But rebuilding grants didn't take that into consideration. The state-run Road Home program devised a grant formula based not upon rebuilding costs but on pre-storm home values. Since majority-black neighborhoods had lower property values, white homeowners received a markedly higher grants than black homeowner with comparable houses. The end result was that more white homeowners were able to rebuild, while more black homeowners couldn't afford to do so."

—Politico Magazine,
"The Dark Side of Katrina Recovery"

Almost three weeks after Hurricane Ida made landfall in Southeast Louisiana before barreling up the east coast thousands of homes remain uninhabitable, industrial sites are shut down, businesses are shuttered and at least 46,000 homes and businesses remain without electrical power.

As recovery from the storm continues around the nation, the National Urban League and our affiliates are mobilizing relief efforts on the ground while urging state and local elected officials to avoid the missteps that hindered recovery after Katrina and ground their programs inequity and racial justice.

A recent FEMA Advisory Committee Report, based on a Rice University study, found that federal recovery funding after a disaster disproportionately benefits white entrepreneurs. When major disasters strike and significant federal resources are invested, there is an increase in white net worth and a corresponding decrease in net worth for Black people.

I pointed to this report in a letter I sent last week to the governors of Louisiana, New York, and New Jersey, New Orleans Mayor LaToya Cantrell, and presidents of the several Louisiana parishes.

I reminded them that we are not trapped to repeat the sins of the decade-plus recovery from Katrina. We are not required to continue policies that, since Katrina, have led to inequitable recovery for Black families and unequal opportunities for Black businesses to thrive and contribute to the recoveries across all communities.

While Ida did strike on Katrina's anniversary, our federal, state, and local elected officials have the power to make sure the recovery in no way resembles the slow, inequitable, and imbalanced recovery in Louisiana; a recovery that has left many white neighborhoods thriving and white-owned businesses expanding and left too many Black communities behind.

The National Urban League recommends that the following guidelines to level the playing field and contribute to a recovery in which we all can take pride:

Make the earliest funding for impacted citizens truly and equally available. Due to FEMA's appli-

cation and compensation process, Black families often receive fewer funds. To remedy this injustice, FEMA damage assessments should no longer be done solely in-person or over-the-phone, but with the flyover and digital imagery technology used by insurance companies. Not only would this save time and money, but it would also strip unconscious bias from the process and lead to equitable and accurate compensation. Furthermore, because of decades of redlining and racial bias in-home appraisals, FEMA should prohibit appraised home values from being used to determine compensation.

Improve the timeliness and methodology for Community Development Block Grant funding. A year after funding that drives most post-disaster residential recovery. Congress still has not allocated any funding for recovery from Hurricanes Laura and Delta, and other storms that devastated American communities last year. The process is much more efficient in states that reimburse homeowners for CDBG-eligible rebuilding work. A Recovery Acceleration Fund model would make the reimbursement pathway accessible to all CDBG-qualifying homeowners.

The billions of dollars that will be invested into the region must be made available to Black-owned businesses. The labyrinth of paperwork, onerous requirements and high costs effectively screen out small and mid-sized Black businesses in the very communities that are impacted. When and where large contracts are deployed, they must be held accountable to ensure they provide sub-contract opportunities for Black-owned businesses in a real and meaningful way.

There is generational and life-altering impact when recoveries don't work and are not equitable. Since COVID, the importance of home and community has been reinforced for all of us.

In Louisiana, the hardest-hit region, the Urban League community is taking on its traditional role of economic first responder.

The Urban League of Louisiana, along with Thrive New Orleans, Convoy of Care, PepsiCo, and National Urban League, has organized a Hurricane Ida Relief Giveaway on Saturday, Sept. 18, to distribute food, water, baby formula, diapers, clothing, feminine products, cleaning supplies, and tarps.

The affiliate also has partnered with the Foundation for Louisiana to establish the Black Business Works Fund to help businesses stand back up in the aftermath of the storm and be stronger on the other side. Many Black-owned businesses are anchors in their communities, often hiring those who many others don't and won't. Creating supports that allow these businesses to remain competitive not only helps them but also helps the community to rebound.

For more information or to contribute to these efforts, visit <https://urbanleaguela.org/ida/>

Cardin Statement on Hispanic Heritage Month 2021

WASHINGTON (Sept. 15, 2021)—U.S. Senator Ben Cardin (D-Md.) today released the following statement in recognition of Hispanic Heritage Month, which runs from September 15 to October 15.

"This month, we especially celebrate and honor the Hispanic and Latino community for its culture, history, and indelible contributions to our country. Maryland has a vibrant Latino community of more than 550,000 residents, who play vital roles throughout our communities, such as teachers, health care heroes, essential workers, small business owners, and so many who are undeniably important to the makeup of Maryland.

"For the second year in a row, we are celebrating Hispanic Heritage Month during a pandemic. COVID-19 has had a disproportionate effect on the American

Latino community in terms of cases and severity. According to the Centers for Disease Control, Hispanic/Latino persons are nearly twice as likely to be infected with COVID-19, 2.8 times more likely to be hospitalized and 2.3 times more likely to die compared to white, non-Hispanic persons. This disparity is shocking, but not surprising. We must fully commit to breaking down the systemic obstacles to health care that have contributed to diminished access to care and higher rates of chronic disease for the Hispanic and Latino communities and other communities of color.

"The pandemic has taken a financial toll on the Hispanic community as well, deepening longstanding economic disparities. Thanks to President Biden's Build Back Better plan and legislation passed by Democrats in Congress, the current unemployment rate for

Latinos has dropped to 6.4 percent, which is a huge improvement from the start of the pandemic, when the rate peaked at 18.1 percent. It still does not match the economic rebound that white Americans have experienced. We have more work ahead.

"The United States stands for equality, prosperity, and justice for all. We continue to work to make these ideals reality. As a nation of immigrants, we must stay committed to making the American Dream attainable, including increasing access to affordable health care and housing, closing the wage gap, and enacting a reasonable and compassionate immigration system.

"During Hispanic Heritage Month and year-round, I join all Marylanders in recognizing the tremendous impact the Latino community has made on our state and our country."

Statement of Senate President Ferguson on the More Than 10,000 Marylanders Lost to COVID-19

ANNAPOLIS, Md. (Sept. 16, 2021)—Today is a solemn day for the State, as we mark the deep loss of more than 10,000 of our fellow Marylanders to COVID-19 since March 2020.

I, along with the entire Senate of Maryland send our most heartfelt sympathies to every friend and family member who has had to endure without their loved one by their side, due to this pandemic.

We have learned so much in the last year and a half, and we shall not let their memories be in vain. I will continue to fight for the health of all Marylanders, which includes vaccines and common-sense safety measures. We should all remember the over 10,000 Marylanders and endeavor to do our parts to finally stamp out COVID-19.

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BUSINESS AND FINANCE

Governor Hogan Directs MDOT MVA to Take Steps to Expedite Driving Tests and Credentials for School Bus Drivers

By SHAREESE CHURCHILL
Office of the Governor

ANNAPOLIS, Md. (Sept. 17, 2021)—Governor Larry Hogan has directed the Maryland Department of Transportation Motor Vehicle Administration (MDOT MVA) to take steps to make sure school bus drivers are able to obtain proper testing and credentials as quickly as possible in order to help meet the needs of school systems across the state.

On Saturday, September 25, 2021, MDOT MVA will host Bus Drivers' Day at the MVA at the following branch offices, with appointments scheduled from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m.:

- Glen Burnie, 6601 Ritchie Highway, Glen Burnie;
- Bel Air, 501 W MacPhail Road, Bel Air;
- Frederick, 1601 Bowmans Farm Road, Frederick;
- Easton, 9148 Centreville Road, Easton;

- Waldorf, 11 Industrial Park Drive, Waldorf; and
- Gaithersburg, 15 Metropolitan Grove Road, Gaithersburg.

Prior to the start of the school year, MDOT MVA began proactively reaching out to each school system statewide to help streamline appointment scheduling for bus driver trainees.

"We are grateful to all of the CDL drivers who are willing to step up and serve as school bus drivers," said Governor Hogan. "I have directed MVA to take additional steps to address a critical need in the industry, and at the same time assist schools, parents, and students across the state."

MDOT MVA is currently offering Commercial Drivers License (CDL) appointments at levels consistent with pre-pandemic availability. To increase accessibility, MDOT MVA recently

See BUS DRIVERS Page A7

Social Security Matters

Ask Rusty:

Will Retiring Early From Work Affect My Social Security?

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

Dear Rusty: I stopped working at age 55, well before my full retirement age of 66 years and 10 months. I had over 35 years working prior to retiring from work. I don't intend to start collecting Social Security until my full retirement age. Will I be penalized for all those years between when I stopped working and my full retirement age?
Signed: Planning Ahead

Dear Planning Ahead: Will you be "penalized?" No, because whenever you claim your Social Security benefit, it will be based upon the highest-earning 35 years over your entire lifetime (with the early years adjusted for inflation). Would your benefit be higher if you had continued to work and have high earnings longer? Probably, because earnings in the latter part of one's career are usually considerably higher than those in the early years. But everyone's situation is different.

Higher earnings today don't necessarily replace those in earlier years because of the inflation adjustment. For example, someone with \$50,000 in 1990 earnings would need to earn more than about \$115,000 in today's dollars to replace the earlier year. And keep in mind that your benefit computation uses only the dollars which you paid SS taxes on. So, someone earning \$500,000 this year would, for benefit computation purposes, only get credit for \$142,800 in earnings because the latter amount is what Social Security FICA (or Self Employment) taxes were paid on.

It is from your highest-earning 35 year history that your Average Indexed Monthly Earnings or "AIME" is determined, followed by yet another formula to convert your AIME to your "primary insurance amount" or "PIA." Your PIA is what you are entitled to in the month you attain your full retirement age (FRA). If you claim before your full retirement age you'll get less than your PIA, and if you claim after your FRA, you'll get more than your Primary Insurance Amount. If you delay claiming past your full retirement age, you'll earn delayed retirement credits (DRCs) up to age 70, at which time your benefit could be as much as 29% more than your PIA. Of course, you can also claim at any time between your FRA and age 70 to get all DRCs you've earned to the point you claim.

So, as you can see, the Social Security benefit you get will be determined by two main things—your 35 year lifetime earnings history, and the age at which you claim. You can't do much now to change your 35 year earnings history (short of returning to work and having very high current earnings), but you can control when you claim. And that decision, of course, should consider your health and your life expectancy, how badly you need the money, and your marital status. Your marital status is important if your spouse can collect a spousal benefit from your record, or if you are concerned about the amount your survivor(s) will receive if you die first.

The 2.4 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-partisan, 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.

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Prince George's County Announces Office of Central Services Fleet Among Winners for 2021 Green Fleet Awards

By EBONI A BLAIR
Office of Central Services,
Prince George's County

LARGO, Md. (Sept. 14, 2021)—Prince George's County's Office of Central Services (OCS) proudly announces the selection of its Fleet Division as an awardee for the 2021 Green Fleet Awards. Each year, government-operated fleets are evaluated and selected for their high-performance operations in areas related to reducing greenhouse gas emissions (GHG).

"Continuing to receive this award is a constant reminder that Prince George's County is a leader in our region on transportation and clean energy," said Prince George's County Executive Angela Alsobrooks. "We have not changed our goal to provide innovative transportation solutions for our County while reducing emissions and improving air quality."

The OCS Fleet Division placed in the top 50 (#41) of the world's largest fleet membership association, NAFA, with more than 2,000 national fleet members who come from corporations, public safety (law enforcement, fire departments), education (universities and K-12 school systems), governments agencies (federal, state, municipal, provincial), utilities, and any other entity that uses fleet vehicles in its normal conduct of business.

"As an agency with sustainable energy as one of our core missions, this award represents our on-going commitment and execution toward use of alternative fuels and adoption of hybrid and electric vehicles to reduce our fuel consumption and greenhouse gas emissions for a healthier Prince George's County," said Jonathan Butler, Office of Central Services Director.

The Green Fleet Award is a prestigious

honor and speaks to the excellence of the County's fleet service operation. County Executive Alsobrooks has made it a priority to reduce countywide greenhouse gas or carbon emissions by 80% below 2008 levels by 2050. The County has developed a reputation for leading the way in sustainable practices, being among the first to have electric and hybrid vehicles as well as fuel efficiency standards. Division Manager Rick Hilmer has led the Fleet Division for more than twenty years, resulting in the division receiving this award each year.

For more information about the 2021 Green Fleet Awards, and to view a full list of winners, visit the NAFA website (<https://www.nafa.org/awards/green-fleet-awards/green-fleet-awards-2021/>). For more information about the Office of Central Services, visit the OCS website (<https://www.princegeorgescountymd.gov/807/Central-Services>).

MedStar Southern Maryland Hospital Center Welcomes MedStar Health Breast Surgeon Patricia Wehner to the Team

Board-certified, fellowship trained MedStar Health physician joins MedStar Southern Maryland as site director of its breast health program

By CHERYL RICHARDSON
MedStar Health

CLINTON, MD (Sept. 13, 2021)—MedStar Southern Maryland Hospital Center is pleased to welcome Patricia Wehner, MD, FACS, a board-certified and fellowship-trained breast surgeon who recently joined the hospital as site director of its MedStar Breast Health Program. Prior to coming to MedStar Southern Maryland, Dr. Wehner practiced at MedStar St. Mary's Hospital in Leonardtown. She also currently practices at MedStar Washington Hospital Center in Washington, DC, and will continue seeing patients at this location as well.

Dr. Wehner attended the University of Maryland School of Medicine in Baltimore, Maryland, prior to starting a residency in general surgery at MedStar Washington Hospital Center. She then completed a breast oncology fellowship at the University of Southern California. As part of the specialty care provided at MedStar Southern Maryland in Clinton, Maryland, Dr. Wehner treats an array of conditions such as ductal carcinoma in situ, inflammatory breast cancer, invasive breast cancer, Paget's disease of the breast and Phyllodes tumor. Surgical procedures offered for patients include axillary node dissection, lumpectomy, and breast conservation with oncoplasty as

well as mastectomy.

"I knew at age seven that I wanted to be a doctor. And, I chose to work with breast cancer patients because of the special closeness I can build with women at this vulnerable time in their lives," Dr. Wehner said. "You can be assured that I will treat patients referred to me with the utmost respect, while providing individualized care that is expected from MedStar Health."

Dr. Wehner is currently the Associate Program Director of the MedStar Georgetown Breast Fellowship and an Assistant Professor of Surgery at Georgetown University. She won a Scientific Impact Award in 2013 from the American Society of Breast Surgeons and is also a recipient of the Alliance of Independent Academic Medical Centers' Excellence in Patient Quality and Care Award. Dr. Wehner also earned the distinguished role of being part of the MedStar Teaching Scholars Program for MedStar Health Research Institute.

For appointments with Dr. Wehner at MedStar Southern Maryland, please call 301-877-5607. To learn more, visit MedStarSouthernMaryland.org/Wehner.

MedStar Southern Maryland Hospital Center, located in Clinton, Maryland, is a 182-bed acute care hospital serving the Washington, D.C., metro and Southern



PHOTO COURTESY MEDSTAR HEALTH

Patricia Wehner, MD, FACS

Maryland area. The hospital is focused on caring for patients and their loved ones utilizing advanced technology under the guidance of expert clinicians. Quality, Safety, Wellness, and Patient Satisfaction are achieved through a spirit of patient centered services that connect us to the community we serve. For more information, visit MedStarSouthernMaryland.org.

Fall Tips to Kick Start the Financial Road to College

(StatePoint) Fall kick starts the financial road to college for parents of high school seniors. But if you're like the majority of parents, you both value the importance of a college degree, while harboring anxiety about the price tag.

In a recent College Ave Student Loans parent survey conducted by Barnes & Noble Insights, 85% of parents agree that earning a degree is more important than ever. At the same time, most parents surveyed agree that the cost of college is more of a financial burden than in previous years, that the cost is surprisingly high, and find paying to be stressful.

As you begin making your financial plans, consider these tips:

- **Build a smart college list:** Encourage your child to apply to a mix of private and public schools as sometimes merit aid from private universities can make costs comparable to public options. By applying to a variety of schools, you can compare financial aid award packages and identify a school that's not only a good academic and social fit, but a good financial fit as well.

- **Apply for financial aid:** Create a spreadsheet listing financial aid deadlines and requirements, which vary by school and state. You can check with your school's financial aid office to learn what paperwork is needed.

One date to circle in your calendar is October 1. This marks the day you can begin filing the FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid). Complete the FAFSA this fall and every year your child attends college. Doing so is the key to unlocking scholarships, grants, work-study and federal student loans. This is also the date you can begin filing the CSS Profile, an online application that nearly 400 colleges, universities, professional schools, and scholarship programs use to award more than \$9 billion in financial aid annually.

- **Look for scholarships:** Have your college-bound student seek out and apply for reputable scholarships. Be sure to read the fine print to understand the terms. One easy one to apply for is the College Ave Student Loans \$1,000 monthly scholarship sweepstakes.

- **Review your finances:** The overwhelming majority of parents (97%) plan to help pay for their child's college education, according to the College Ave survey. Of those, 62% plan to draw from their income and savings to do so. Make time this fall to review your financial resources to determine how much you can contribute without sacrificing your retirement goals. You may need to get creative. For example, 1 out of 10 parents surveyed find extra income from a side hustle.

- **Prep your student:** Many students learn their first money management lessons in college. Give your child the financial know-how needed to hit the ground running. Discuss how to create and stick to a budget, how to build an emergency savings account, and how to avoid peer pressure when it comes to spending. For example, just because a friend is dining out or traveling frequently, doesn't mean your child has to do the same. Also, discuss how they can contribute to their education costs. Creating financial goals now will help set your child up for financial success.

- **Get savvy:** As you navigate the financial road to college, stay savvy by referencing the free tips, resources, guides and financial expert advice available at collegevestudentloans.com/blog.

College costs can surprise many families. Don't get caught off guard. To get financially prepared, use the year ahead to explore all your financing options and formulate a plan.

EDUCATION

Centuries-Old Reprints, Letter on Display In Annapolis

By RACHEL LOGAN
Capital News Service

ANNAPOLIS, Md. (Sept. 10, 2021)—Walking into the Annapolis State House recently became a bit like time travel as several national founding documents from the 18th and 19th centuries were unveiled Thursday night as part of a Founding Freedoms exhibit.

Early and immediate newspaper printings of the Declaration of Independence, Constitution and Bill of Rights, as well as historic engravings of the declaration,

are on display, free to the public, from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. daily until Nov. 14.

Labels accompanying the newspaper printings describe a race to print nation-changing text.

The copy of the Constitution, appearing in the Pennsylvania Packet and Daily Advertiser two days after it was ratified in 1787, was a re-pressing of type set for copies sent to Congressional Convention committees.

There are also beautiful vellum and paper engravings sent as gifts to politicians; one 1823 copy of the Declaration

of Independence is more commonly used in textbooks than the original.

The collection, era-accurately and ornately framed and enclosed in dark wood displays, is on loan from Maryland native and billionaire philanthropist David Rubenstein.

Rubenstein's Americana Collection adviser Mazy Boroujerdi said the documents were collected over several years for the purpose of exhibition. Before they were on display, these historical artifacts were carefully conserved, he said to a Capital News Service reporter in an email.

"The tricky part of doing an exhibition in the Maryland State House is also the reason the setting has such promise. The building is less of a museum than an artifact itself," Boroujerdi said.

The display revolves around an original letter George Washington penned: his 1783 resignation as commander in chief of the Continental Army, complete with crossed-out words and darker writing where he re-inked his quill.

Washington read the letter to the Senate in the same State House that stands today.

"To walk through the old Senate chamber is to feel as the members of Congress did when Washington resigned as commander in chief of the Army," Boroujerdi continued.

The letter connects the exhibit to the State House and is situated chronologically between the declaration and the Constitution.



PHOTO CREDIT RACHEL LOGAN/CAPITAL NEWS SERVICE

Deborah Dixon, a Historic Annapolis volunteer, reads George Washington's letter, resigning as commander in chief of the Continental Army, at a tour guide orientation for a new Founding Freedoms exhibit Sept. 10, 2021, in the Annapolis State House.

The letter, owned by the Maryland State Archives, has been on display in the building since 2015.

When Deborah Dixon arrived at the State House this morning for training to lead Historic Annapolis tours through the exhibit, she expected the documents to be already visible. Instead, all but the letter were covered in thick, black sheets, which were pulled off and folded before orientation began.

"Annapolis was the national capital for 10 months. It's so neat that these documents are coming back to us," she said.

As sunlight streamed through the State House windows to fall on the cab-

inets and the protected documents, tour-guides-to-be talked in hushed, awed tones about bleached colors, pointing through where they would lead their groups through the building.

Janet Hall, who is organizing the Historic Annapolis guided tours, said even today's First Maryland Regiment re-enactors, who dress in period clothing and educate the public, tour[ed] the exhibit [last week], turning the State House into a bubble from the past.

What Hall called an "iconic and unique" exhibit isn't just for the knowledgeable. "This is something that every child, every adult should go see," Hall encouraged.



PHOTO CREDIT RACHEL LOGAN/CAPITAL NEWS SERVICE

Mazy Boroujerdi, the Americana Collections adviser for patriotic philanthropist David Rubenstein, explains the significance of an early newspaper printing of the Declaration of Independence at a tour guide orientation in the Annapolis State House Sept. 10, 2021.

New Episode: Let's Talk Stem With Dr. Calvin Mackie Podcast Outlines Ways to Help Minority K-12 Students Learn Stem Skills and Pursue STEM Careers

Video Version: <https://youtu.be/09UixvYWEQw>

Audio Podcast: <https://spoti.fi/3lnoxPe>

By PRESS OFFICER
STEM Global Action

NEW ORLEANS, La. (Sept. 14, 2021)—On the new episode of the *Let's Talk STEM with Dr. Calvin Mackie* podcast, the founder of STEM Global Action (SGA) and Dr. Joyce Baynes, a lifelong educator, discuss actionable options for helping children of color overcome barriers that impede their learning of science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) skills and becoming STEM professionals.

In an engaging conversation, they noted that parents must be more engaged in their children's education, teachers need improved professional development, K-12 students should have STEM activities outside the classroom and parents should be guiding their children towards summer programs that can provide additional STEM learning opportunities.

"What we've done is bring STEM to the community," said Dr. Mackie, citing SGA pro-

grams in New Orleans and around the country. "We do STEM after school, we do STEM at churches, whoever wants STEM outside of schools, we make sure that we...bring STEM to them."

Dr. Baynes added: "What you're doing with STEM Global Action is right on point because students really do need to see how this affects their lives and how they can move along the career track and be something that they thought they could never be." Further, Dr. Baynes called on more professional development for teachers, especially at the elementary school level. She also urged parents to learn more about STEM, such as facts like STEM jobs pay more than other fields, so they can better guide their children to successful careers.

Dr. Mackie and Dr. Baynes acknowledged these measures are necessary because of the discrimination still rampant today that stigmatizes girls and minorities. "In the 12th grade, I took calculus as well as physics. The

first day I went to my physics class I looked at the teacher, he looked at me, and he said, 'I don't think you belong here,'" recalled Dr. Baynes. Similarly, Dr. Mackie described being confronted by a professor in a college thermodynamic class. "Are you in the right place?" the Black student was asked.

Both overcame racial and gender stereotypes. Dr. Baynes has an undergraduate mathematics degree from Swarthmore College, an M.A.T. in mathematics from Harvard University and an M.Ed. in Administration and a Doctorate in Mathematics Education from Columbia University. Dr. Mackie holds a Bachelor of Science in Mathematics from Morehouse College, as well as a Bachelor's, Master's and Ph.D. in Mechanical Engineering from Georgia Tech. Dr. Mackie is a former tenured engineering professor at Tulane University, and Dr. Baynes is a retired teacher, administrator and superintendent of schools of two school districts in New Jersey.



PHOTO COURTESY BRAINLY

The best way for kids to become more vivacious readers and to cultivate a love of reading is to learn by example from their parents.

September Is National Literacy Month!

By PRESS OFFICER
Brainly

According to the American Academy of Pediatrics, reading proficiency by third grade is one of the most important predictors of whether a student will graduate high school and succeed in a career, yet according to a study by the U.S. Department of Education, 32 million adults in the U.S. still can't read (<https://nces.ed.gov/naal/estimates/index.aspx>).

Brainly, the world's leading online learning platform, shares tips from their parenting expert Patrick Quinn to help parents encourage their kids to read for fun more often, including:

Reading rewards. For every 10 books your child reads, allow him/her to choose a prize from a bin of dollar store goodies or earn some type of coveted privilege.

Piggyback on their passions. Pick books for your child that feature topics and themes he or she is already interested in.

Make a themed reading nook. Work with your child to make it an area where they'd want to hang out, which makes reading time even more special and appealing. Some themes might include under the sea, a Native American teepee, a princess palace, or outer space.

Set a good example. The best way for kids to become more vivacious readers and to cultivate a love of reading is to learn by example from their parents. Parents who read often are more than twice as likely to have kids who like to read.

Brainly is the world's largest online learning platform where students and parents go from questioning to understanding. At brainly.com and its group of websites and apps around the world, students connect their peers and experts to both receive and offer help with homework problems and questions. The unique opportunity to freely ask questions and gain the confidence that comes from helping others inspires students to learn in a collaborative community that receives more than 350 million users each month. For more information, please check out www.brainly.com

How to Get Kids Excited About Learning

(StatePoint) Pre-K learning is fundamental, giving children the skills they will need to thrive in school and beyond. But sometimes kids need more encouragement to get excited about learning. Here are some tools and strategies that can help:

Smart Screen Time

The plug-and-play TV video game LeapLand Adventures from LeapFrog is a great example of how learning video games can add value to your child's screen time. But it's not just educational, it's also fun. Players hunt for keys to unlock the Clever Castle, and

along the way, learn letters, numbers, shapes and colors. A great tool for early learners, kids can choose between two characters to explore Letterland, Numberville, Shapetown and Color Springs. Players can also explore more than 150 learning items at their own pace by playing the educational content directly in the Learning Center. With no web connection, downloads or account setup required, kids can start playing—and learning—right away. To get started, insert the plug-and-play HDMI game stick and USB power cable into the television and play using the wireless controller.

New Adventures

Visit a petting zoo. Explore a botanical garden. Attend a free outdoor concert. Try a food from another culture's cuisine. Kids learn best when they are exposed to new sights, sounds and ideas, so build time into your schedule to try activities with your child that will bring to life what they have learned in the classroom.

Learning is Fun

With the right tools, you can get kids excited about learning. One interactive, portable system to try is the LeapStart Learning Success Bundle, which grows with your child using touch-and-talk pages and features games, puzzles and creative challenges to help kids build math, reading and problem-solving skills. Many activities have two levels with over 50 key skills per grade level, so kids can play and learn at the right level and move up when they're ready. Included books are preloaded, one of which is "The Go! Go! Cory Carson Cory Carson Superhero School Book," based on the popular animated series. And an ex-

pansive library of books (sold separately) are compatible with the system, covering a variety of preschool through first grade subjects. The easy-to-hold stylus is comfortable for kids of all ages, promotes proper writing grip and neatly clicks into the cover for storage. A computer with an internet connection is required to load book content onto the LeapStart system.

Social Hour

Pre-K learning is not all about academics. Kids also acquire valuable social skills like cooperation, communication, sharing and more. Whether it's with play dates or the playground, be sure to give your child plenty of opportunities to flex these valuable life skills beyond the preschool classroom.

For more inspiration and educational tools, visit leapfrog.com/en-us/home.

With new tools and new adventures, you can leverage your child's natural curiosity about the world to make learning exciting and fun.



