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Robust, Unique Vaccine Outreach Bears Fruit for State Grant

By RACHEL LOGAN
Capital News Service

ANNAPOLIS, Md. (Sept. 23, 2021)—A \$3 million vaccine canvassing program Gov. Larry Hogan announced Sept. 8 is benefiting 26 community groups statewide, and in targeted minority or vaccine-hesitant areas, more unique solutions are bearing fruit.

Organizations responded to Maryland Department of Health requests for proposals in June. Awards approved for each group dispersed Aug. 1 and vary from \$50,000 to \$250,000 to support vaccine clinics and education efforts through June 30.

A number of groups are concentrated in Baltimore City and Prince George's County, and three groups focus on the Eastern Shore. The furthest west group is based in Frederick; no groups applied from Western Maryland, despite low vaccination rates and high case rates.

Dr. Mark Martin, a health department deputy director, told Capital News Service the chosen groups are diverse, and each one is working across assigned ZIP codes, targeting those where vaccination rates are the lowest.

These organizations have strong relationships with their communities, Martin said. "That little human interaction" in face-to-face outreach helps make the tactic effective.

In Frederick County, canvassing means far more than door-knocking. A continuous stream of clinics at farmer's markets, church block parties and oddly specific festivals has led to vaccinations for over 2,300 individuals before Aug. 31 since the Asian American Center of Frederick began canvassing in June.

The center organizes one or two events every day, whether it's a vaccine clinic or an information table, according to the center's vaccine program project manager, Angela Spencer.

Repeating locations helps: Shoppers at a Latino grocery store know that they can bring family along to get milk, bread and vaccinations twice weekly like clockwork, Spencer said.

The grant funding helps the center pay for some team member salaries, ground signs and giveaways at each table. Visitors are sure to leave with something besides the vaccine: from sunscreen to T-shirts, from coloring books for kids to jar openers for seniors and hand sanitizer above all.

"We forget about those we don't see on a daily basis," Spencer said. "Our responsibility is to reach every child, every senior living in a residential living facility and say, 'Hey. Have you been vaccinated yet? You can get one there and there.'"

For some canvassers, it's less about having many clinics and more about reaching the out-of-reach.

Bikur Cholim, a Jewish health center tasked with educating and vaccinating residents in Baltimore County, has vaccinated over 8,200 individuals since April, said Vaccine Clinic Director Dena Pollak.

Pollak said their goal isn't just to combat vaccine hesitancy, but to lift barriers, and bring vaccines to homebound individuals. Although Bikur Cholim was administering shots before the grant, state funding helped the health center expand its mobile vaccination services.

Clinics are held three times a week, sometimes vaccinating hundreds of people a day. On the other



PHOTO COURTESY CASA

A CASA volunteer knocks on a door in Baltimore to chat with residents about vaccines April 24.

hand, the team reaches 12 to 15 homebound individuals a week.

"It's a different skill set," Pollak said. "It's not 500 shots in two hours, it's one, two shots in two hours. Not as exhilarating."

Funding has helped Bikur Cholim get more visibility.

"We've upgraded from stickers to buttons—which doesn't sound like a major change, but it is," Pollak said. Stickers come off after a day, but buttons may stay proudly pinned to purses or backpacks.

Convenience fuels clinic participation in Prince George's County.

In Hyattsville, the immigrant advocacy group CASA helps a concentrated population of Latino and West African immigrants navigate the state health system. Now, CASA holds vaccine clinics in their neighborhood offices, according to CASA Director of Health and Human Services Michelle LaRue.

Over 11,000 have been vaccinated at clinics in Langley Park, Silver Spring and Baltimore offices since March. LaRue said it was "critical" that offices are in neigh-

borhoods, so many people just walk in on their way home from work.

"Our community doesn't have the luxury of working from home or paid sick leave." If getting the shot means taking the day off without pay, LaRue said, that month's finances could be jeopardized.

CASA holds some of its vaccine clinics in the evenings, and their biggest rush is Friday through the weekend, when a day to recover from side effects may coincide with a day off.

State funding helped CASA pay for staff training. CASA volunteers guide individuals through the entire vaccine process, from explaining the importance of the vaccine card to registering them for their second doses, all in Spanish or French.

LaRue said that the state vaccine registration website has many attached challenges. Many community members may not have internet at home, and the site is only available in English.

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Prince George's County Health Department Encourages Residents to Get Flu Shots

Free community flu clinics began Saturday, Sept. 25; flu vaccine also available at doctor's offices, retail pharmacies, and other health care providers

By GEORGE LETTIS
Prince George's County Health Department

LARGO, Md. (Sept. 24, 2021)—As flu season begins, the Prince George's County Health Department encourages residents to get their flu shots to protect themselves and their communities. Residents can get flu shots for free and without an appointment at the Health Department's four community clinics this fall (see schedule below or at health.mypgc.us/flu). Injectable flu vaccines will be available to anyone 6 months and older. People younger than 18 must be accompanied by a parent or a legal guardian. Free COVID-19 vaccines will also be available for eligible residents at the flu clinics.

The Health Department encourages those with health insurance to get their flu shots through their primary care provider, a local retail pharmacy, or an urgent care facility.

"Getting your flu shot is the best way to protect yourself from getting very sick or dying from the flu," said Prince George's County Deputy Chief Administrative Officer for Health, Human Services, and Education Dr. George L. Askew. "If you skip your flu shot, you are more vulnerable to severe illness and death if you get the flu, and more likely to spread the virus to others around you."

Although people with the flu are most contagious in the first three to four days after their illness begins, some otherwise healthy adults may be able to infect others beginning one day before symptoms develop and up to five to seven days after becoming sick.

Some people, such as older people, young children, and people with certain health conditions, are at high risk of serious flu complications.

"Getting annual flu shots prevents millions of illnesses, tens of thousands of hospitalizations and thousands of flu deaths nationwide every season," said Prince George's County Health Officer Dr. Ernest Carter. "Keeping each other safe and healthy from the flu takes the same vigilance that we have had during the COVID-19 pandemic: get the vaccine, stay home if you feel sick, wash your hands with soap and water frequently, and regularly clean your home and office surfaces."

People who have the flu often feel symptoms that usually start suddenly, not gradually. For additional flu resources and information, visit the Health Department's flu webpage.

October at PGCMLS: Civil Rights Leader Dolores Huerta, One Maryland One Book, Hatchlings: In the Nest, Teentober, Maryland STEM Festival, and Bibliobop

By DONNA SCOTT-MARTIN
PGCMLS

LARGO, Md. (Sept. 21, 2021)—The Prince George's County Memorial Library System's nationally recognized programming is on display this October with special initiatives for children, teens, and adults. The Hispanic Heritage Month virtual keynote event featuring civil rights leader Dolores Huerta with County Executive Angela D. Alsobrooks takes place Wednesday, October 6 at 7 p.m. Co-presented with the Prince George's County Office of Human Rights, this program recognizes the essential role and contributions of Latin Americans and Hispanics in advancing civil rights for all Americans. October featured initiatives include One Maryland One Book, Hatchlings: In the Nest, Teentober, Maryland STEM Festival, and Bibliobop Dance Party.

One Maryland One Book

PGCMLS is a proud partner of Maryland Humanities' annual One Maryland One Book initia-

ive, which is a statewide opportunity for Marylanders to connect through the shared experience of reading and discussing the same book. The 2021 theme is "hope" and the featured book is Ross Gay's "The Book of Delights," a collection of short essays written over the course of a year. Topics range from the beauties in nature to what it is to live as a Black man in the United States. PGCMLS' One Maryland One Book virtual programs are co-presented with the PGCMLS Foundation and Prince George's County Office of Human Rights. Complimentary print and ebook copies of "The Book of Delights" are available to customers who attend a series event and complete this form. Series events may require registration. Visit pgcmls.info/events for more details.

Ross Gay on "The Book of Delights" Virtual Author Event (October 4 at 7 p.m.)—Co-presented with Anne Arundel County Public Library

Oxon Hill Branch Library Book Discussion (October 12 at 2 p.m.)

Countywide Book Discussion Hosted by the South Bowie Branch Library (October 12 at 5 p.m.)

Bowie Branch Library Book Discussion (October 13 at 7 p.m.)
Greenbelt Branch Library Book Discussion (October 19 at 7 p.m.)

PGCMLS Open Mic: Delights (October 27 at 7 p.m.)—Co-presented with Creative Suitland With Pen in Hand Writing Group (November 1 at 7 p.m.)

Hatchlings: In the Nest

Based on the award-winning early-literacy programs Mother Goose on the Loose and Mother Goose on the Loose Goslings created by Betsy Diamant-Cohen, DCD, the Hatchlings: In the Nest program is a continuation of the two-year Maryland State Library's Hatchlings pilot project co-presented by PGCMLS. In the Nest consists of four live, virtual infant storytimes on October 5, 7, 12, and 14 for babies six months and younger and their parents and caregivers. It is the sequel to the Hatchlings: Ready to Hatch pro-

gram offered this past spring. In the Nest will be presented in Spanish at 10:30 a.m. and in English at 1 p.m. To register, click here or call Ask a Librarian at 240-455-5451.

The Hatchlings project steering committee includes Carrie Sanders of Maryland State Library; Dorothy Stoltz of Carroll County Public Library; and Elaine Czamecki, Early Literacy and Assessment Consultant. The three other library systems involved in the pilot project are Carroll County Public Library, Calvert County Library, and Howard County Library System.

Teentober

Teentober focuses on celebrating and highlighting teen programs and services within PGCMLS, many of which have been curated by teen volunteers in the Library's Teen Action Group (TAG). The volunteers' signature initiative this year is P.A.D. (Period Action Drive), which gives youth the opportunity to earn social service hours while collecting period and hygiene

products to donate to I'm Bruised But Not Broken. This nonprofit organization empowers, encourages, embraces, and equips women coping with domestic violence. October is Domestic Violence Awareness Month and P.A.D. supports the Library's healthy living strategic focus area, which aims to support the health and wellness of all Prince Georgians with educational programs and resources. Collection boxes will be available at all open PGCMLS branch libraries.

Check out the Teentober lineup that showcases events such as the Teen Reader's Advisory: Latinx Comics, Wednesdays Outdoor Movie Nights, Pumpkin Painting, Anime Jeopardy, Pop Star Coding with Ozobots and so much more! By participating in these programs, teens may discover new hobbies and career pathways. Many PGCMLS branches will also be hosting a Cosplay Parade. Visit pgcmls.info/events to learn more. Teens may also complete the library's Teentober Scavenger Hunt and post their results on so-

cial media tagging @PGCMLS and @PGCMLSTeens.

Maryland STEM Festival

Celebrate the Maryland STEM Festival at PGCMLS from October 15–November 14. Featured events include STEM-tastic: Crazy 8's Math (Tuesdays in October at 4:30 p.m.), Teen STEM Lab: The World in 3D (October 26 at 4:30 p.m.), and Celebrating Hispanics in STEM: Santiago Calatrava Valls (Wednesday, October 13 at 4:30 p.m.) with more to come in November. Be sure to visit the Library's events page for details.

Outdoor Bibliobop Dance Party

The Glenarden Branch Library is hosting a Bibliobop Dance Party on Saturday, October 2 at 10:30 a.m. on its lawn for toddlers and preschoolers and their parents and caregivers. Boogie and bop until we drop while enjoying the outdoors, fitness, and learning. Participants are welcome to bring their blankets or chairs to this outdoor event.

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TOWNS and NEIGHBORS

In and Around Morningside-Skyline

by Mary McHale 301-735-3451

Remembering what once was the Colony South Hotel

The Colony South Hotel in Clinton has been demolished. I saw a photo of the mountain of rubble that once was a well-patronized hotel.

The Chiaromonte family built the hotel in 1977 about the same time as their Southern Maryland Hospital. Colony South boasted a fine restaurant, 195 rooms, indoor swimming pool, banquet halls, and a charming lobby with a fireplace.

Over the years, I've attended some very special events at Colony South, especially the wedding reception of our daughter Sheila and John Mudd. I've enjoyed many Surratt Society banquets there. Also, dinners and breakfast buffets in the Wayfarer Room. It never occurred to me that it wouldn't always be there.

Back in February 2020 the hotel changed hands. President Michael Chiaromonte gave some background for the sale: "A few years ago when Med-Star Health acquired Southern Maryland Hospital, they expressed interest in completing their health campus by purchasing the Colony South Hotel." So they did.

After being sold, it became the Capital Plaza Hotel. Two years later Capital Plaza Hotel is that huge mountain of rubble.

Andrews remembers 9/11

Joint Base Andrews commemorated the 20th anniversary of 9/11 with remarks by Col. Tyler Schaff, LTG Marc Sasseville and Col. Chuck Ennis, USAF Retired. They shared personal memories of that catastrophic day. Symbolic 9/11 aircraft fly-overs and "Taps" played by the Air Force Band ended the moving homage to the lives lost and those who supported the effort.

Neighbors & other good people

Jim Reilly emailed me about two good neighbors who died recently:

William Loving, who had lived on Ladd Road for more than 40 years, died Aug. 1. Jim added, "He was always interesting to talk to, offering wisdom and insight."

Gwendolyn Davis-Atamu, a longtime resident of Elmendorf Drive, died June 14. She was retired from the District of Columbia government. "She often sat outside watching her grandchildren and

would wave to the neighbors driving by."

Jonathan Hutto sent a note saying how much he enjoys my column (Thank you, Jonathan!) and reported being at the Charles County Fair with his daughter.

Son John treated me to dinner last week at Mama Stella's where we had a nice visit with strangers Bill and Nancy who were dining at a nearby table. One topic was how much we appreciate having a "white tablecloth" restaurant. Such eateries are rare in our corner of Prince George's. Bill and Nancy also mentioned that a huge new development will be going in near the American Legion in Clinton.

Changing landscape

Demolition of La Reine HS, on Silver Hill Road, has begun; the windows have been removed. Meanwhile, at Bishop McNamara HS, construction of the new La Reine Science and Innovation Center classroom wing is progressing. The structural steel has been erected and work will soon begin on the roof.

It looks like the construction of the new bridge carrying the Beltway (Route 95) over Suitland Road is complete—they recently turned on new lighting in the underpass. Now it is bright both day and night.

The redevelopment of the corner of Suitland and Silver Hill roads is progressing. Buzzuto Construction is completing a new 6-story apartment building next to the townhouses that were completed over the last couple of years. More large buildings are coming.

Regarding the Temple Hill Bridge, this is the response I found online: "This project is currently 100% complete and is now open to traffic."

The Barber Moe at 5679 Suitland Road has Mon. & Tues. Specials and Military discounts. Open Mon.–Thurs. 3:30 p.m. to 8 p.m.; Sat, 9 a.m. to 7 p.m.; Sun. by appointment. Info: 202-498-1123.

Harmony at Waldorf announces a Luxury Senior Living Community is coming soon. Info: 240-435-4608.

A home at 6922 Pickett Dr., in Morningside, just sold for \$345,000.

Changes coming for trash and recycle pickup

Effective this week, the trash and re-

cycling collection is changing from Tuesday to Thursday, and our new hauler will be Fielding & Sons. Yard matter collection continues on Mondays.

Bulky trash pickups are scheduled online at bit.ly/PGC311 or by dialing PGC311. For more information on the collection changes, go to bit.ly/haulerchangeppgc.

Mary's Covid report: 46 more Marylanders have died

As of Tuesday, Sept. 21, at 5 p.m., Maryland had 974 new Covid-19 cases. Also, 46 more Covid deaths. Which means Maryland has lost a total of 10,309 to this terrible disease.

Msgr. John Brady, Chaplain for the Scouts

Monsignor John B. Brady Jr., 92, fourth generation Washingtonian, died Sept. 9. He received a BS in physics from Georgetown before entering St. Mary Seminary in Baltimore and was ordained a priest on June 4, 1955.

He served at many parishes in the Archdiocese but he is particularly remembered as full-time Chaplain for Scouting and Chaplain for Goshen Scout Camps. In 1991 he was named Monsignor.

Survivors include three siblings, Sr. Marian Brady, S.P., Rupert J. Brady and Therese Brady Donohue, and a host of nieces and nephews.

Monsignor's last parish was St. John's in Clinton, and it was there that his viewing was held. His funeral was at St. Bartholomew's in Bethesda with burial at Gate of Heaven.

Milestones

Happy birthday to Jasmine Wade, Nola Thomas and my grandson Sam Mudd, Oct. 2; John Ihrig, Oct. 3; Marlene Titus, Oct. 4; Sue Gilmore and Muriel Ireson, Oct. 5; Rory Lohman, Carmen Buffington and George Nixon, Oct. 6; Dr. Alvin Thornton and Kam Ron Blade, Oct. 7; and Greta Chambers, Oct. 9.

Happy 35th anniversary to Bill and Terry Ratliff on Oct. 4; and to my daughter Elaine and Luke Seidman on their 32nd anniversary, Oct. 7.

Happy 50th Anniversary to The Kennedy Center, which opened Sept. 8, 1971.

Brandywine-Aquasco

by Audrey Johnson 301-922-5384

CHRIST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

Christ United Methodist Church in Aquasco, Maryland celebrated Annual Homecoming on Sunday, September 26, 2021. Their theme once again locates us spiritually for where we are and where God wants to take us. This year, we will be united under the theme, "Walk into Our Season." The Scripture that will center us for this special moment in the life of Christ Church will be Joshua 1:9 "Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid, do not be discouraged, for the Lord your God will be with you wherever you go."

This year's celebration of Annual Homecoming included a concert featuring The Lomax Sisters, a female singing group from the Washington Metropolitan area whose angelic voices can be heard on the radio station WHUR 96.3 on Sunday morning. The concert was streamed on Saturday, September 25, 2021, on their Christ UMC Aquasco Live YouTube Channel. Sunday, September 26, 2021 they had in person as well as virtually on YouTube for their 9 a.m. service. The guest speaker was Reverend Chania Dillard of Reid Temple AME Church in Glen Dale, Maryland. Annual Homecoming Chairpersons were Tracy Pinkney and Phyllis Slater.

FIRST INTERNATIONAL EXCHANGE STUDENT

Bowie State University has expanded its footprint in international education welcoming its first foreign exchange student as part of the U.S. Department of State's Global Undergraduate Exchange Program in Pakistan (Global UGRAD-Pakistan).

Rising senior Samra Ejaz is the first international exchange student to join the BSU community. Samra who is pursuing her studies in computer science at Fatima Jinnah Women University, will spend the fall 2021 semester at BSU and expressed excitement about what's in store.

"This program is a huge opportunity for girls like me. I have never been this excited before," said Ejaz. "I just thought that I would be a teacher, and now I am looking forward to traveling to other states like New York and Florida and exploring the latest technology like barcode readers in shopping centers. My family and the people in my village are proud of me."

In just two weeks, Samra has already made fast friends with her peers on campus and has identified other personal goals she would like to achieve. She desires to become fluent in English, understand the problems of Americans, change American's perception of Pakistan.

As part of the semester-long program, she will participate

in a community service project, give a presentation on her country, interact with Americans in the Bowie Community and her peers on campus, and attend social events, which will allow her to gain a broad understanding of American culture and values. She will also take classes in American and African America History. Samra's computer science course schedule will allow her to immerse herself and develop expertise in her academic field.

"My hope is that this is going to be the first of many ongoing series of Pakistani students coming to experience the HBCU life and being able to bring that experience back to their home country to not only talk about the United States, but also African Americans in the United States," said Patrick Frazier, BSU Study Abroad Coordinator. "By doing this correctly, and giving a positive experience, we'll be able to bring more students here for either a semester or a year to continue this kind of cycle of bringing students to meet us, and for BSU students to meet the students from these other countries."

Over the past decade, UGRAD Pakistan participants have volunteered more than 40,000 hours of service in communities across the United States, and more than 90% of alumni share the skills and knowledge they learn during the program in their home communities upon returning to Pakistan.

Upon graduating college in December 2022, Samra plans to become an entrepreneur and establish her own software house. Because the culture in Pakistan traditionally limits women to teaching careers, Samra wants to introduce equal gender opportunities and inspire young girls in her community to think broader and pursue tech careers such as graphic design, digital marketing, and programming.

Since its inception in 2010, Global UGRAD-Pakistan has provided over 2,000 talented, highly motivated undergraduate student leaders from across Pakistan with the opportunity to study at an American campus. The program is part of a broader U.S. Department of State effort to promote greater understanding between the people of the United States and other countries.

"It's important for Bowie State to play on the world stage," said Frazier. "The impact of the program adds to the diversity of the university. Our students are able to better experience what happens in the outside world, to get a different voice than the one that perhaps they've received most of their life growing up in the United States. Media Contact: Cassandra Robinson, crobinson@bowiestate.edu.

Events Around the County

The LM Foundation's Annual 5K Walk/Run Against Domestic Violence

LANDOVER, Md. (Sept. 17, 2021)—Join us for the LM Foundation's Annual 5K Walk/Run Against Domestic Violence on **Saturday, October 2, 2021**, from 9 a.m. to 12 p.m. EDT at Prince George's Sports and Learning Center - Outdoor Track, 8001 Sheriff Road, Landover, MD 21043.

The fundraising event will help to support survivors of domestic violence by providing food, toiletries, and help to find temporary housing, etc. This Walk-a-Thon will also address and provide assistance to families on available resources, education, health, counseling, and a temporary safe haven from an abusive environment. In support of Bethany House, VA, the Walk-a-Thon goal is to raise awareness. A portion of the funds raised will be donated to financially support the Bethany House, No. Virginia.

"The goal of this event is to bring awareness of knowing the signs of domestic violence and how to support domestic violence survivors. If I had known the signs many years ago, I would have been able to help my best friend. I do this now so one will have to watch someone they love go through it and not know what to do." —Founder & CEO, Pamela Price

Event Details:

- Duration: (minimum) 5K or 3.1 miles
- Sponsorship Pledges/Donation: \$50.00 per lap
- Individual Registration Fee: \$35.00 (non-refundable)
- Group Registration Fee (4 or more): \$25.00 (non-refundable)
- Tee Shirts - \$15.00 Adult \$10.00 Children
- Onsite registration opens at 9 a.m. and the official start time is 10 a.m.
- Early Bird Registration at <https://thelmfoundation.org/domestic-violence-prevention-walkathon>

Our mission is to give hope to those who need it most! We aim to rebuild hope where it's been damaged or lost. We work to rebuild and restructure with those in need, those who are underprivileged, and those who are underserved. Our focus lies on community efforts, including small-scale construction projects, shelter, food aid, community awareness, and educational opportunities. We firmly believe it takes a village to raise a child, and if you work on creating the most well-equipped society you can, so many problems simply work themselves out. To learn more, visit <https://thelmfoundation.org>.

Purple Bicycle Ride for Domestic Violence

Please join Prince George's County State's Attorney Aisha N. Braveboy and #TeamPGSAO for a family fun bicycle ride for domestic violence awareness and prevention **Saturday, October 9, 2021** at 8 a.m. This year, we have three exciting routes, 5, 10 and 25 miles!!!

Beginning at 8 a.m. bikers will meet at Allen Pond and ride out at 8:30 a.m.

Along with reflective or protective safety attire, bikers are encouraged to wear something purple on the day of the race as a showing of support for survivors and victims of domestic violence, and continued awareness and prevention.

Come join the fun and ride your bike with the State's Attorney Aisha Braveboy to bring awareness to domestic violence and prevention.

If you would like to attend, please click here to register.

WHEN: Saturday, October 9, 2021, 8 a.m.

LOCATION: Allen Pond | 3330 Northview, Bowie, MD 20716

EVENT PARTNERS: Maryland National Capital Park and Planning Commission, Prince George's County Sheriff's Department, Bowie City Police, Safe Cycling, LLC, Streets Calling Bike Club

M-NCPPC, Department of Parks and Recreation, Prince George's County Announces Fall Programming at Publick Playhouse

RIVERDALE, Md. (Sept. 20, 2021)—The Department of Parks and Recreation in Prince George's County, part of The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission, is pleased to announce a variety of programs available this Fall at Publick Playhouse in Hyattsville, MD. Currently scheduled for September and October are:

September 16–October 28

Featured Artists: Maria Luisa Benavides "Maripi" & Maria Brito - This art exhibit celebrates Hispanic Heritage and culture through the artwork of two female artists. Maria Luisa Benavides, also known as Maripi, is inspired by the biodiversity and culture of her home country, Costa Rica. She creates colorful paintings, often in mandala forms, that feature vivid color and intricate designs. Maria Brito is a painter that is inspired by the vitality of plants and living nature, often recalled from her home country of Venezuela. Gallery Hours: Monday–Friday, 10 a.m.–4 p.m.

October 2, 8–9:15 p.m.

Panamanian Folkloric Group: Patria y Saloma - Prince George's Publick Playhouse is proud to present Patria y Saloma for an evening of Panamanian culture. A dance troupe composed of men and women wearing folkloric outfits will perform traditional dances. The dancers will be accompanied by live musicians with traditional outfits, dances, and songs. Dances and outfits represent different regions in Panama. This group specializes in keeping these traditions alive and helps us celebrate Hispanic Heritage Month. Cost \$25/Adult; \$15/Seniors, Students, and Children

October 7, 6–7 p.m.

Asa! Fitness Virtual Workshop and Demo - Asa! is an upbeat, high-energy, low-impact dance fitness program fusing modern African club dance movements and exercise science designed for participants of any level. Check out this interactive demo as experts showcase the power of Asa! Fitness. For Ages 18 and up. Cost: \$5

Oct 9, 16, and 23, 2–3 p.m.

Halloween Costume Making: Join us for a 3-session workshop exploring the fun and fanciful art of making costumes. Learn about costume design. Develop your imagination skills as you create your own costume piece in time for Halloween festivities. For Ages 13 and Up. Activity # 15601-567A. FREE

October 17, 4–5:15 p.m.

Mute: Dance Silenced by COVID, Film Screening and Artist Talk - Join us for a film screening and artist talk of Mute: Dance Silenced by COVID, written and directed by local DMV artist Shawn Short. Mute: Dance Silenced by COVID is an Award-Winning short documentary of six US dancers and their experiences within the initial months of COVID. A "light on the other end of the tunnel" story, Mute: Dance Silenced by COVID also speaks on personal reactions to George Floyd's murder, artist unemployment, new hopes, and creativity. All Ages Welcome. FREE

COMMUNITY

The Write Women Book Fest at Marietta

Marietta House will be co-hosting the Write Women Book Fest for a third year on Saturday, Oct. 9 from 12 to 5 p.m. The Write Women Book Fest was born from the private Facebook women's writing salon group Women Authors of Maryland, which changed its name recently to The Write Women Network.

Women authors at any stage of their writing career are invited to join this safe space to support each other and attend salons. Authors Heather Brooks and Cardyn Brooks first organized the festival in 2019 and enjoyed a better-than-expected inaugural event with almost fifty participating authors, publishers, and artists and more than 250 visitors. With the lockdown and uncertainty of the event for 2020, Heather and Cardyn moved to an all-virtual festival rather than cancel it and welcomed over 420 attendees.

Now in the third year, and still facing pandemic uncertainty, Heather and Cardyn worked with Marietta to celebrate with a hybrid event—part online and part in-person. There are about eighty participating authors, creators, and special guests this year, a third of them will be tabling and presenting in person at Marietta. There will be a variety of readings and workshops available online, recorded, and livestreamed and it's all FREE! There will also be fifty swag bags—each has at least one book and one t-shirt along with lots of other great swag inside.

For 2021, The Write Women Book Fest partnered with the Prince George's County Memorial Library System, which will be adding a book from each participating author to their circulating collection. Also be on the lookout for special Write Women Book Fest displays in three Prince George's County Library branches!

Heather and Cardyn also partnered with Bowie Barnes & Noble, who will be doing a special Write Women Book Fest display



PHOTO COURTESY MARIETTA HOUSE

Author Cardyn Brooks conducts the Writers panel discussion in 2020.

of authors who are inside of the Barnes and Noble system.

The Write Women Book Fest organizers would like to say that this event would not be possible without the support and partnership of Marietta House Museum, and the other partners, author Persephone Jayne, The Not-So Secret Podcast, Not Like Other Goods, and the Prince George's County Historical Society, as well as volunteers, musicians, and other gracious helpers. In addition to the book festival, the L. H. Farmer's Market will be onsite for food items from 9 a.m.–3 p.m.

Visit the website at www.thewritewomenbookfest.org to visit the online shop, see the event schedule, and learn about the panels and who will be there in-person. Those who wish to attend in-person, please register on Parks Direct or email stacey.hawkins@pgparks.com. You can find the festival on Instagram and Facebook @thewritewomenbookfest.

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.

PGCMLS Expanded Hours and Services September 27

By NICHOLAS BROWN
PGCMLS

LARGO, Md. (Sept. 24, 2021)—Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, the Prince George's County Memorial Library System (PGCMLS) has provided customers with internet access, nationally recognized virtual programs, access to physical materials through Curbside Service, and essential resource distribution events. Beginning on Monday, September 27, the Library expanded its hours and services as part of ongoing reopening efforts. The Library will now open two nights a week, offer 1–5 p.m. Sunday hours at nine branch locations, and reopen public meeting room reservations. Passport services will also resume later this fall (date to be announced).

"The Library is grateful to staff and community partners for preparing for this expansion in hours and services, which is a direct response to the community's requests now that

school is in session," said Roberta Phillips, Chief Executive Officer of PGCMLS. "Now that 80% of the eligible population has received at least one dose of the COVID-19 vaccine, we can safely resume more of the Library's essential services."

Health and Safety Guidelines

PGCMLS will continue to require facemasks and physical distancing at its facilities until further notice, regardless of vaccination status. These additional library safety measures will continue: plexiglass shields at service desks, hand sanitizer dispensers, and single use keyboard and mouse covers.

New Hours

- Monday: 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.
- Tuesday and Wednesday: 12 to 8 p.m.
- Thursday and Friday: 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.
- Saturday: 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.
- Sunday: 1 to 5 p.m. (Select branches only: Beltsville, Green-

belt, Fairmount Heights, Glenarden, Laurel, New Carrollton, Oxon Hill, South Bowie, and Spauldings branch libraries)

Available Services

- Full browsing
- Computers
- Online 2Go (borrowable laptops with built-in internet access*)
- Meeting rooms
- Study rooms
- Curbside service
- Printing, mobile printing, scanning
- Virtual and outdoor programs
- Library card services
- Passport services (to resume in fall 2021, date to be announced)

*Presently available at 14 locations

To get the most out of your library visit, download the PGCMLS mobile app (iOS or Android), which offers self-checkout to provide a contactless experience at branches. The Library's transition to Full Operations reflects the strategic planning and preparation by PGCMLS staff and the Board of Library Trustees.

Outreach from A1

"Our goal is to get to where there's no one left to vaccinate," LaRue said.

Vaccinations do not come so easily in other parts of the state.

In Southern Maryland, LifeStyles of Maryland is focusing on door-to-door canvassing, attempting to bond with, educate and pre-register for vaccine appointments 40 households a month. In August, they reached 33 households, according to Debborah Collins, a community health worker.

"We bring education to the households, then they come to us for vaccines," Collins said. "We have to gain the trust of the people, you know? If they don't know you, they haven't seen you—it's harder to gain their trust."

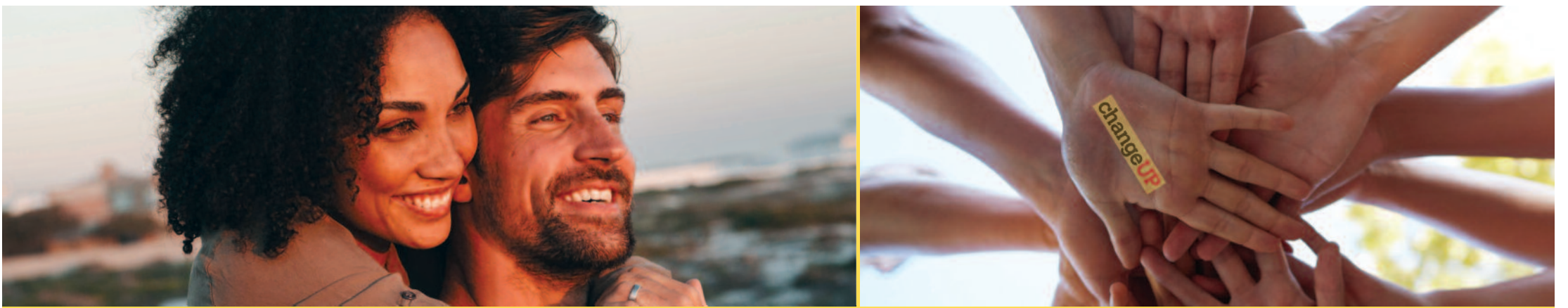
In Eastern Maryland, hesitancy about the shot and transportation issues are bigger problems.

Eastern Shore Wellness Solutions in Cambridge is tasked with covering both Dorchester and Queen Anne's counties, but has a three-person team, said company President Ashyrra Dotson.

"We spend two, maybe three days a week canvassing, depending on the area," Dotson said. Her strategy is canvas, then clinic: six clinics have garnered 41 vaccinations.

To remove obstacles to vaccinations, the wellness center has a transportation provider to help get individuals to clinics, as well as minimal child care services while parents wait the 15 minutes required after shots.

See **OUTREACH** Page A4



This is more than health care. It's a movement. A commitment to changeUP your health and the health of this community.

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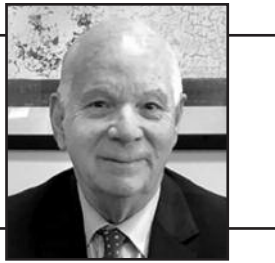
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COMMENTARY

Benjamin L. Cardin

United States Senator for Maryland



Cardin, Van Hollen Applaud Judiciary Committee Approval of Delegate Erek Barron to be U.S. Attorney for District of Maryland

Senators recommended Delegate Barron to President Joe Biden

WASHINGTON (Sept. 23, 2021)—U.S. Senators Ben Cardin and Chris Van Hollen (both D-Md.) today applauded the Judiciary Committee's approval of Delegate Erek Barron to be the U.S. Attorney for the District of Maryland.

"Maryland needs a U.S. Attorney with integrity, independence, and a passion for delivering equal justice under the law to Marylanders. Erek Barron's background as both a prosecutor and state legislator committed to criminal justice reform measures makes him uniquely qualified for

this position. We are pleased that the Judiciary Committee favorably recommended Erek to be the next U.S. Attorney for the District of Maryland and that his nomination will now to move consideration by the full Senate. We will continue working towards his swift approval by the full Senate so he can take charge of our federal efforts to improve public safety and deliver justice for all Marylanders."

Delegate Erek Barron

Delegate Erek Barron represents District 24 (Prince

George's County) in the Maryland House of Delegates. He was nominated to be the U.S. Attorney for the District of Maryland by President Biden on July 26, 2021. If confirmed by the Senate, Barron would fill the position previously held by U.S. Attorney Robert Hur. Hur resigned in February 2021 shortly after President Biden took office. Jonathan Lenzner has been serving as Acting U.S. Attorney for the District of Maryland since that time. Barron would be the first Black U.S. Attorney in Maryland's history.

Marc Morial

President and CEO, National Urban League



To Be Equal:

Gymnasts' Demand for Justice Is a Powerful Display of Courage and Grace

"I sit before you today to raise my voice so that no little girl must endure what I, the athletes at this table, and the countless others who needlessly suffered under Nassar's guise of medical treatment, which we continue to endure today. We suffered and continue to suffer because no one at the FBI, USAG or the USOPC did what was necessary to protect us. We have been failed, and we deserve answers."

—U.S. Olympic Gymnastics Champion Simone Biles, testimony to Senate Judiciary Committee

Just 17 years old in June of 2015, Maggie Nichols disclosed to USA Gymnastics officials that the organization's team doctor, Larry Nassar, had been molesting her since she was 15. Furthermore, she said she suspected that Nassar was abusing her friend and teammate Simone Biles as well.

USA Gymnastics waited more than a month to report the allegations to the FBI, by which time a private investigator had identified at least six victims, including McKayla Maroney and Aly Raisman. After receiving the report, the FBI did almost nothing. When agents finally scheduled an interview weeks later with McKayla Maroney, then 19, it was only to get USA Gymnastics "off of our back," according to investigators.

For nearly three hours, Maroney described to FBI agents—over the phone, in graphic de-

tail—the six years of sexual abuse she endured at Nassar's hands. She called it "the most uncomfortable conversation I had ever had in my life."

The agents who interviewed her took almost no notes and filed no reports. It would be another year and a half, after an Indianapolis Star investigation brought renewed attention to Nassar, before Nichols, Biles, and Raisman finally were interviewed, and a wildly inaccurate and misleading report of Maroney's interview was filed.

Despite the trauma of their abuse and betrayal by a system stacked against them at every turn, these four young women found the courage not only to seek justice for themselves and the hundreds of Nassar's other victims, but also to stand before the U.S. Senate to tell their stories and demand accountability for those who failed them so completely.

The testimony of Biles, Maroney, Nichols and Raisman at last week's hearing was both heart-breaking and enraging to witness. But it was clear to see that the same fortitude, resilience, and strength of spirit that made them athletic champions also drives their unshakable quest for justice.

As Department of Justice Inspector General Michael E. Horowitz, whose report revealed the dismal failings of the FBI's Nassar investigation, testified, "These gymnasts showed remarkable bravery by coming forward

to detail the shocking sexual assaults that they had endured from a USA Gymnastics medical doctor (Nassar) at the same time they were competing at the highest levels for our country. And, as you also heard today, these

athletes reported this abuse with the hope and the belief that their actions would save other young women and girls from the serial abuse that they had endured. Sadly, as our report indicates, the response of the FBI agents who received that information betrayed their law enforcement responsibilities and their duties to these victims."

It is hard to imagine a more demoralizing, disheartening experience than that which these gymnasts endured. They had every justification to surrender to despair and abandon hope. But they could not walk away from the opportunity to prevent what happened to them from happening to other girls and young women. For that, they deserve not only our admiration and respect, but our every effort to hold those responsible to account.

"Nassar is where he belongs, but those who enabled him deserve to be held accountable," Biles testified "If they are not, I am convinced that this will continue to happen to others across Olympic Sports ... A message needs to be sent: If you allow a predator to harm children, the consequences will be swift and severe. Enough is enough."

Outreach from A3

Greater New Hope church in Preston has had less luck with Caroline County. The team is still planning its first state-funded clinic.

Although the team would like to vaccinate about 100 people by next summer, spreading knowledge to those averse to the vaccine has been the team's focus, said Director of Programs Savannah Winston.

"It's down to individual choice. They have to make the decision," Winston explained. "Sometimes they just don't make that decision because they're not educated (about the vaccine)."

The third Eastern Shore group doesn't have as many issues reaching people to vaccinate.

Aaron's Place, a food pantry in Preston, has

had about 10 clinics, said executive director Cheryl Beulah last week, and at one event, she was able to help register 21 families for vaccine clinics.

In spread-out Caroline County, services must either go to the customer or bring the customer to the service—Beulah chose the latter and targeted those already coming to the pantry.

"Come with us and we'll give you a box of food!" Beulah exclaimed.

When individuals show up at one of the pantry's four locations, they're able to have a conversation about the vaccine and register for one while they wait in line for a box of food.

Beulah said she couldn't have nearly as much outreach before the state grant.

"I probably wouldn't have even talked to them, just put literature in someone's box," she said.

Brown, Cardin, Local Leaders Businesses, and Climate Activists Highlight Federal Investments in Electric Vehicles and Sustainability

Leaders test drove electric vehicles and emphasized the growing importance of green infrastructure

WASHINGTON (Sept. 21, 2021)—Congressman Anthony G. Brown (MD-04), Senator Ben Cardin (D-MD), local leaders, car dealers and climate activists highlighted historic investments in electric vehicles and green infrastructure in upcoming legislation during a community event at the New Carrollton Branch Library.

The Bipartisan Infrastructure Act invests \$7.5 billion for EV charging infrastructure, prioritizing low- and moderate-income neighborhoods and building a national EV charging network. Congressional Democrats also plan to increase the electric vehicle tax credit from the standard \$7,500 to \$12,500 for vehicles assembled in the United States.

"Congress is preparing historic investments to transform our nation's infrastructure, increase opportunity, advance equity and tackle the pressing threat climate change poses to the world," said Congressman Brown, a member of the House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure. "With challenges this big, we need bold action and commitment at every level. It calls on the federal government to make historic investments in clean, green infrastructure and lead the way. It calls on state and local leaders to keep sustainability and climate at the top of the agenda. And it calls on us as individuals and citizens to take action in our lives. Take the pledge to buy an electric car, I did".

"The Biden Build Back Better agenda, part of which passed the Senate this summer on a bipartisan basis, calls for a generational investment in our nation's infrastructure, with a goal of reducing our carbon emissions and increasing resiliency," said Senator Cardin, Chair of the Senate Environment and Public Works Transportation and Infrastructure

Subcommittee. "We have to deal with the reality of climate change and do what's right for America, and the world. The transportation policies in the bipartisan infrastructure bill will support the transition to zero-emission, electric vehicles by building the infrastructure that makes these cars practical. I'm excited by the potential of this effort to improve the quality of life, reduce pollution, protect our national security through energy independence, and create jobs here in America."

The Bipartisan Infrastructure Act also marks the largest investment in public transit in history and includes funding to replace thousands of transit vehicles, including buses, with clean, zero-emission vehicles. The legislation will also deliver thousands of electric school buses nationwide, including in rural and underserved communities.

As part of the Build Back Better Plan Congress plans to transition Postal Service and other government vehicles to electric, encourage utilities to switch to renewable energy resources, invests in the creation of a Civilian Climate Corps and creates a "clean energy accelerator" for the technology of the future.

"We are grateful to Rep. Brown and Sen. Cardin for their leadership and commitment to accelerating our country's transition to a cleaner, more equitable transportation future. This event illustrated how the future of driving is already here. With many models already available, Americans can switch to an EV now to start saving on costs and cut their carbon emissions—all while having a more fun driving experience," said Wendy Philleo, Executive Director of clean energy nonprofit Generation180, who helped organize the event.

CASA: The Biden Administration Must Immediately End the Mistreatment of Haitian Refugees and Stop Expulsion Flights

Haitians are seeking safety at the United States' borders and must be granted their legally assured chance to seek asylum

HYATTSVILLE, Md. (Sept. 24, 2021)—In response to the Biden administration's heinous actions towards Haitian refugees at the southern border, immigrant advocacy organization CASA released the following statement from Executive Director Gustavo Torres:

"CASA fully condemns the mistreatment of Haitians seeking refuge at the southern border. Once again we come face to face with the ugly racism in our country's broken immigration system. Haitian migrants are refugees seeking solace and safety in Del Rio, Texas, after the country's civil unrest and devastating 7.2 magnitude earthquake. Worse yet, the refugees are being enclosed in a camp with no meaningful food or water—inhumane treatment which is completely unacceptable. We urge the Biden administration to terminate the use of Title 42 as a reason to unjustifiably expel immigrants, in-

cluding Haitian asylum seekers. The Biden administration must immediately grant Haitians their legally assured chance to seek asylum and cease all expulsion flights to Haiti."

Haitian Bridge Alliance is helping Haitians seeking asylum in Del Rio, Texas, providing critical assistance to feed, clothe, shelter, and transport families to reunite with their loved ones across the country and also resources to those expelled to the southern border.

.....
With over 115,000 members across the states of Maryland, Virginia, and South Central Pennsylvania, CASA is the largest member-based Latino and immigrant organization in the mid-Atlantic region. Visit us at www.wearecasa.org and follow us on Twitter at @CASAforall

Congressman Anthony Brown: We Cannot Ignore the Plight of Haitian Refugees, nor the Graphic, Shocking Images of Intimidation by Officers

WASHINGTON (Sept. 22, 2021)—Congressman Anthony G. Brown (MD-04) released the following statement in response to the deportation of Haitian asylum seekers and horrendous images of mistreatment on the southern border:

"I am deeply concerned with the reported mistreatment of Haitian migrants at the hands of Border Patrol officers on our southern border. These asylum seekers deserve decency, compassion and a fair review of their cases. America must always lead by example, protect human rights, and serve as a beacon to oppressed peoples around the globe. While I believe we must humanely enforce our immigration laws, we cannot ignore the plight of Haitian refugees, nor the graphic, shocking images of intimidation by officers.

"We need a full accounting of the response to these refugees. We also must extend and redesignate Temporary Protected Status (TPS) for Haitian

migrants fleeing natural disaster and political instability in

their home country."

The Prince George's Post

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BUSINESS AND FINANCE

Maryland Book Bank Provides Books to Children and Educators Returning to the Classroom

BALTIMORE (Sept. 22, 2021)—The Maryland Book Bank (MBB), a Baltimore-based non-profit dedicated to cultivating literacy in children from under-resourced neighborhoods, is helping teachers fill their classroom libraries amidst the back-to-school rush as many educators and children across Maryland return to in-person classroom instruction. Educators, children, and families have been streaming through the doors for the past month, picking out books and reveling in the joy of curating a classroom library after a long and difficult year.

During one busy Saturday, MBB Program Manager Kim Tabb remarked, “we have heard from many educators that students have experienced learning loss over the past year and that the ability to have a fully stocked classroom library can be the difference between a child excelling or falling even further behind. That is exactly why the resources we offer are so important.”

Educators are welcome to visit the Book Bank on select days during the week to browse and pick from the Book Bank’s huge selection of children’s books and a variety of membership options are available to fit everyone’s needs. The Book Bank posts updated hours on their website weekly. In addition, contactless pick-up options are available for a convenient and safe way to receive books.

As for the Book Bank’s goals for the rest of the year, MBB Executive Director Mark Feiring said, “our goal is to distribute over 400,000 books this year between our Book Bank distribution and expanded Story Kit program. That would put us on par with where we were prior to the pandemic and let us know that we have made a huge impact on educators and children this year.”

The Maryland Book Bank distributes over 450,000 books a year to teachers, librarians, caregivers, and families throughout Maryland. It operates the book bank, a volunteer-organized collection of books open to the public, as well as the Ravens Bookmobile, a free mobile bookstore in partnership with the Baltimore Ravens that travels to local schools. <https://www.mdbookbank.org>

Social Security Matters

Ask Rusty:

Is My COLA Increase Based on My Current SS Benefit?

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

Dear Rusty: I started collecting SS when I turned 70 to maximize my income. One factor that is never mentioned is that the annual cost of living increase appears to be based on the previous year’s payment. I’ve talked to others who are about my age (77) and we talked about how much of an adder we will receive. Those who collected earlier always get much less than I do. So, it appears that the annual increase is based on previous year’s payment and not on the original payment from when I started collecting, so it has a compounding impact. Frequently the increase received by those who collected early covers the Medicare increase plus a small adder, whereas I have been getting a much larger increase. Can you comment? **Signed: Wondering**

Dear Wondering: I’ll be happy to clarify this for you. The annual Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA) for next year is determined by comparing this year’s Consumer Price Index for the 3rd quarter (July–September) to the same period last year. If there is a difference (which there usually is), the percentage of difference becomes the COLA increase percentage for next year. The COLA is applied annually starting with everyone’s December benefit (paid in January).

Everyone gets a different amount of COLA money because everyone’s Social Security benefit payment is different. Your COLA dollar increase is more than most of your friends because you waited until you were 70 to claim and, thus, have a higher benefit. Your friends who claimed earlier will have a smaller benefit and therefore get a smaller dollar amount as a cost of living increase. COLA is a percentage increase and, since the 2021 COLA increase was 1.3%, applying that percentage to each person’s SS benefit amount results in a different dollar increase for each. And you’re correct; since the percentage of increase is applied to your current benefit amount and not your original benefit amount, COLA increases are, indeed, compounded.

To further complicate matters, Social Security’s “hold harmless” provision sometimes results in beneficiaries paying less than the standard Medicare premium amount. If someone is now paying less than the monthly Medicare premium (\$148.50 for Part B (outpatient services)), any COLA increase awarded is used to bring their Medicare Part B premium up to (or closer to) the standard premium for that year. That means that sometimes the full amount of COLA dollars aren’t reflected in each person’s net Social Security payment, further confusing people when they see that their total SS payment didn’t increase by the announced COLA percentage.

So, as you can see there are reasons why everyone COLA looks different, but your basic point is correct—COLA is applied to your current SS benefit amount, not the SS benefit you were awarded when you claimed.

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-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 ssadvisory@amacfoundation.org.

Black Wealth Summit (BWS) Launches Real Wealth Talk Series

Free webinar series offers curated wealth building content tailored to Black people
Registration for BWS inclusive wealth building virtual experience October 20–22

By P. ANDREWS-KEENAN
Black Wealth Summit™

BALTIMORE (Sept. 21, 2021)—Knowledge is power when it comes to acquiring, growing and preserving wealth for Black families. In the lead-up to their groundbreaking, virtual Black Wealth Summit™ (BWS), October 20–22, the organization is hosting a webinar series, BWS Real Wealth Talk that speaks directly to wealth creation strategies for Black people. Get a sneak preview of the Summit’s carefully curated content, offered by best-in-class speakers. The series, moderated by media executive Walter Kirkland, kicked off September 29. The one-hour Zoom presentations are complimentary with special offers to participants to attend the October BWS. Topics and presenters include:

Real Estate: Investing for Income and Appreciation, October 6 with Cedric Nash, Serial Entrepreneur, Investor and Wealth Coach

Angel Investors: How Start-ups Find and Secure One, October 13, Michael Robinson, Health IT Executive, Investment and Business Advisory Firm Founder

Cryptocurrency: How to Get Started, October 14 with Alex Slocum, Cryptocurrency Strategist, Educator and Entrepreneur

Registration for the series is complimentary on Eventbrite. This series is a precursor to the Black Wealth Summit, created to offer every Black person access to the knowledge that can be used to build real generational wealth for their families and communities. BWS is the answer to making prosperity accessible to Black people. Registration for the inaugural October summit is now open. Confirmed speakers for October confer-

ence include John W. Rogers, Jr. Chairman, Co-CEO & Chief Investment Officer Ariel Investments; Paul Reilly, Chief Executive Officer, Raymond James Financial; Beverly Anderson, President of Global Consumer Solutions at Equifax; David Gardner, Co-Founder and Chief Rule Breaker at The Motley Fool; Kahlil Byrd (KB), Co-Founder and CEO, Invest America; Yolanda Daniel, National Black Bank Foundation; Omar Aguilar, Managing Director and Chief Investment Officer, Charles Schwab; and Carla Harris, Vice Chairman and Managing Director at Morgan Stanley.

Black Wealth Summit’s comprehensive curriculum is targeted to new, intermediate, seasoned and accredited investors, with exposure to a broad range of Black wealth success journeys. BWS has four areas of focus: Entrepreneurship, Securities (Stocks and Bonds), Real Estate, and Private Equity. In addition to the evolving list of world-class speakers offering real, relatable success stories on wealth accumulation, BWS will offer customized financial coaching sessions, exclusive workshops, an opportunity for connecting to a world-class community of those invested in Black success, and unmatched resources from some of the country’s top financial firms.

Some of the country’s major financial institutions are also vested in the organization’s approach and methodology. Morgan Stanley is a founding sponsor, and inaugural sponsors include Bank of America, JP Morgan Chase, Charles Schwab, Equifax, and Raymond James. These financial powerhouses will also be making their curated wealth curriculums and financial coaches available within the BWS learning framework. This strategy was important for BWS

to ensure attendees are receiving authentic information, from the right perspective.

Black Wealth Summit’s first-of-its-kind conference is literally where Black affluence and potential comes to connect with wealth creating allies. The organization pulls no punches when outlining their mission of being “unapologetically invested in the prosperity of Black people”. Founded in the midst of 2020’s pandemic and racial reckoning, the non-profit’s namesake, inclusive wealth and financial educational experience will draw nearly 1,500 people to the October event. Registration is now open with \$249 or \$149 pricing for VIP and general admission respectively.

Those participating in the Black Wealth Summit this October will also leave the event with a roadmap tailored to their wealth journey. To secure your place for this unprecedented event visit BWS and register today.

BWS is a first-of-its-kind opportunity to develop wealth literacy through access to comprehensive information in four focus areas: Entrepreneurship, Securities: Stocks & Bonds, Real Estate, and Private Equity. We are purveyors of trusted tips, tools, information, and networking to help Black people along their wealth journey. We partner with a cadre of financial powerhouses to make their curated wealth curriculums available within the BWS learning framework. BWS offers an inclusive wealth and financial educational experience, uniquely designed to bring together champions and channels that will foster prosperity for Black lives. Follow BWS on Instagram, Facebook, LinkedIn, and Twitter.

Good Food Markets Opens in Seat Pleasant

The social enterprise grocery store opens its second location dedicated to improving food access and community health in underserved communities

By KRISTA CARTER
Good Food Markets

SEAT PLEASANT, Md. (Sept. 20, 2021)—Good Food Markets, a local grocery store, opened a second location in Seat Pleasant, MD on Wednesday Sept. 15. Good Food Markets is a social enterprise of DC nonprofit Oasis Community Partners. In 2015, they launched their pilot location in the DC neighborhood of Woodridge in Ward 5. The Prince George’s County location was selected after extensive dialogue with the Prince George’s County Economic Development Corporation (PGC-EDC) as part of their efforts to improve food access in underserved areas of the County.

Good Food Markets is located in the Addison Plaza shopping center which had been home to a Safeway grocery store until it closed in 2016 creating greater difficulty for residents, many of which are seniors or low-income, to access fresh food. Mayor Eugene W. Grant of Seat Pleasant, Maryland enthusiastically welcomed Good Food Markets and said, “For over 1,902 days since the closing of a major grocery store in Seat Pleasant my residents have suffered the effects of a food desert.” He went on to say, “Good Food Markets will have a tremendous positive effect granting many of our senior citizens, families and neighbors access to fresh, wholesome and nutritious and healthy food options that they had been denied of for a long time.”

In addition to everyday grocery access, this location will also have a full-service café with a made-to-order menu and communal seating. “Good Food Markets is truly a welcome grocery opportunity to this area of District 7/Capitol Heights and Seat Pleasant communities in Prince Georges County! We welcome the retail grocery market to help supplement our need for quality foods, meats and vegetables,” said Sandra Womack of the Peppermill Village Civic Association.

Further, Good Food Markets will host health education events for adults and children, and partner with community organizations to provide residents with tools to stay healthy. “We are more than just a grocery store,” expressed Good Food Markets Marketing Manager, Krista Carter. “We have hosted over 400 programs since opening our first location on Rhode Island Avenue, and are excited to learn what our neighbors need in order to best serve as a comprehensive health and wellness resource,” she added.

The project was funded in late 2019 through grants, a Healthy Food Financing Initiative loan from the Low-Income Investment Fund (LIIF), and an Economic Development Incentive Fund loan from the PGC-EDC. The independent nonprofit organization has been able to battle through the challenging pandemic circumstances, and open this store despite rising construction and materials costs, and ongoing delays.

“Good Food Markets was founded on the fundamental belief that everyone deserves access to fresh, healthy food. The new Seat Pleasant location is the culmination of the work that numerous organizations and individuals have put in over years to advocate for policies, funding and action to expand food access in this neighborhood,” stated Good Food Markets Executive Director, Philip Sambol. He continued, “We are proud to be serving the Prince George’s County community and will continue to expand on our vision later this year with our third store in Ward 8.”

Throughout the pandemic Good Food Markets has provided emergency food to nonprofits and public sector entities, including the Prince George’s County health department, delivering over 540,000 meals worth of groceries in DC, Maryland and Virginia.

A Grand Opening celebration is scheduled on Saturday, Oct. 2 from 10 a.m.–2 p.m., with Prince George’s County Executive Angela Alsobrooks, Seat Pleasant Mayor Eugene Grant, and other community leaders scheduled to speak at the ribbon cutting ceremony.

Good Food Markets is social enterprise grocery store operated by nonprofit Oasis Community Partners with the mission to improve food access and community health by providing fresh healthy food, hosting fun educational events, and collaborating with neighborhood groups.

Governor Hogan Announces \$16.8 Million to Advance 42 Bicycle and Pedestrian Projects Across Maryland

Funds Awarded Statewide to Design Bike Lanes, Rebuild Trails, and Improve Multi-Modal Connectivity

By SHAREESE CHURCHILL
Office of the Governor

ANNAPOLIS, Md. (Sept. 20, 2021)—Governor Larry Hogan announced \$16.8 million in grants to support bicycle, pedestrian, and trail improvements through 42 projects across the state. The package includes \$12.4 million in federal funding through the Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP), \$1 million through the Recreational Trails Program (RTP), and nearly \$3.4 million in state funding through the Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT) Kim Lamphier

Bikeways Network Program.

“Over the last year and a half, more and more Marylanders have been walking, riding bikes, and using trails for transportation, recreation, and exercise,” said Governor Larry Hogan. “These grants, made possible through the federal and state programs, are helping us enhance quality of life and provide additional safe bike and pedestrian opportunities.”

The grant programs allow the state to support local partners and create new opportunities to expand Maryland’s transportation network.

“Bicycle and pedestrian facilities are key components of Maryland’s broad, multi-modal transportation strategy,” MDOT Secretary Greg Slater said. “Through these state and federal grant programs, we’re delivering projects that preserve and enhance Maryland’s cultural, historical, and environmental attributes and make them safe and accessible for everyone.”

The TAP grants provide funding for on- and off-road pedestrian and bicycle facilities, environmental mitigation efforts, and proj-

ENVIRONMENT

GREEN COUNTY EVENTS:

Virtual Green Summit Announced For October 4–8, 2021

DoE is happy to announce that the 7th annual Green Summit will be held virtually, **October 4 through October 8!** The Summit will host virtual workshops, presentations, videos, and at-home activities for you and your family to learn more about being environmentally friendly.

Sign up for email alerts or stay tuned for updates by visiting mypgc.us/greensummit.

Growing Green with Pride

Join the Department of Public Works and Transportation on Saturday, October 30, for our biannual countywide cleanup event Growing Green with Pride (GGWP)! This is an opportunity for communities, organizations and businesses to help keep our County clean and beautiful through a collaborative day of service. Participants will receive all the supplies necessary for litter collection, planting and mulching.

Register for the Fall 2021 Growing Green with Pride Day by Friday, October 15. For additional information and assistance, please contact Tonya Harris at tyahairston@co.pg.md.us or 301-499-8641. Growing Green with Pride is a rain or shine event.

—The DoE Sprout, Sept. 16, 2021

‘Forever Chemicals’ Frequently Found in Maryland, Pennsylvania Drinking Water

By TIMOTHY B. WHEELER
Bay Journal News Service

Toxic “forever chemicals” are turning up in more and more places as the federal government joins a growing number of states, including Pennsylvania in the Bay watershed, in moving to regulate at least some of them.

PFAS, or per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances, have been detected in more than 75% of community water systems tested so far in Maryland and in nearly 40% of drinking water samples analyzed in Pennsylvania, according to data from both states.

The surveys found two water systems in each of those states with PFAS levels higher than the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency’s health advisory threshold.

PFAS are a group of more than 9,000 highly persistent chemicals, many of them toxic, which have been in wide use since the 1940s. They are found in everyday consumer products such as non-stick cookware, pizza boxes and stain repellants. Their use in fire-fighting foams, though, has resulted in widespread PFAS groundwater contamination around airports and military bases nationwide.

The Maryland Department of the Environment has tested 129 water treatment plants statewide since 2019. Those plants, chosen because of their proximity to potential PFAS sources, furnish drinking water to 4.3 million residents, or 70% of Maryland’s population.

The MDE said levels above the EPA threshold were detected in treatment plants furnishing drinking water to 18,600 residents of the city of Westminster and 6,300 residents of the town of Hampstead, both in Carroll County.

After confirming the initial results, state officials ordered the wells with high PFAS levels supplying water to those systems be taken offline. Investigators have yet to pin down the contamination sources, but Denise Keehner, an assistant MDE secretary, noted that there is a fire training facility near the Hampstead well.

In Pennsylvania, the Department of Environmental Protection sampled 372 large and small water systems, including some serving private busi-

nesses, that were near sources of contamination. Another 40 baseline samples were taken from systems not close to known or suspected PFAS sources.

One site with results higher than the EPA’s guideline was a municipal water system serving about 1,500 residents of Saegertown, north of Pittsburgh. In Saegertown, system operators identified and curtailed use of a well with high PFAS levels, said Lisa Daniels, drinking water bureau director for the DEP.

The other came from a well furnishing drinking water to State of the Art, Inc., an electronic components manufacturer in State College with more than 100 employees, according to the company website.

State officials have yet to identify the sources of PFAS in either case, but the State College factory is located near the municipal airport, which has used PFAS-laden firefighting foam.

Prodded by its legislature, Virginia’s Department of Health has been tasked with sampling drinking water from up to 50 water supplies and waterworks for six PFAS compounds. The department is required to report the results by Dec. 1.

Certain PFAS can accumulate and stay in the human body for long periods of time. Studies using lab animals have linked exposure to high levels of PFAS with a variety of health problems, including liver and immune system damage, birth defects and increased risk of cancer.

Even so, there are no enforceable federal standards limiting how much is safe to consume in drinking water. In 2016, the EPA set an advisory level of 70 parts per trillion for either or both of just two of the more thoroughly studied compounds, perfluorooctane sulfonate (PFOS) and perfluorooctanoic acid (PFOA).

States usually rely on federal agencies to regulate exposure to harmful chemicals, often because they lack the technical expertise, laboratory capacity and other resources to make such determinations.

But with the EPA taking years to act on PFAS, at least 22 states have taken steps to limit several of the compounds in their drinking water, according to the Environmental Council of the States. Seven

states, including New York, have set or proposed their own enforceable maximum contaminant levels, while 10 others have advisory guidelines.

In Pennsylvania, which has been grappling with multiple cases of PFAS contamination in community water systems, the Wolf administration had vowed two years ago to begin the process of setting its own health-based limits on PFAS in drinking water. In June, the state Environmental Quality Board approved the DEP’s recommendation to proceed with setting a maximum contaminant level for PFOA. The department plans to propose that level later this year, according to DEP spokesman Jamar Thrasher.

Maryland officials say they intend to keep looking for sources of PFAS contamination in the state, sampling another 62 water systems, and focus on reducing exposures while leaving the standard setting to the federal government. The MDE’s Keehner said the EPA appears to be “moving pretty quickly” to assemble the latest scientific data to provide a legally defensible basis for limiting PFAS in drinking water.

Earlier this year, the EPA declared its intent to regulate levels of PFOA and PFOS in drinking water, but it will take a year or more to actually set maximum safe levels. The agency also has announced plans to regulate PFAS in wastewater discharges from certain industries—a potential source of drinking water contamination.

Congress could require even more aggressive steps. In July, the House passed the PFAS Action Act, which would require the EPA to regulate PFOA and PFOS in drinking water and set deadlines for determining whether to treat those and many of the other compounds as “hazardous substances” subject to mandatory cleanup under the federal Superfund law.

The measure faces an uncertain future, though, in the closely divided Senate.

Tim Wheeler is the Bay Journal’s associate editor and senior writer, based in Maryland. You can reach him at 410-409-3469 or twheeler@bayjournal.com. This article was originally published September 16, 2021 on BayJournal.com and was distributed by the Bay Journal News Service.

Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay Recognizes Dr. Alan Anderson As 2021 Maryland Watershed Champion

By ADAM MILLER
Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay

The Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay recognized Dr. Alan Anderson of Bowie State University as their 2021 Maryland Watershed Champion on Thursday, Sept. 23, 2021 at their annual fundraiser, The Taste. We are recognizing his work through our partnership with Bowie State University, and his commitment to ensuring his students have an opportunity to build skills related to environmental conservation. Dr. Anderson has been incredibly giving of his time to this partnership, and his efforts have created year-round meaningful watershed experiences for students in the classroom and beyond.

More information about our 50th Anniversary at their annual fundraiser, The Taste.

Formally known as “The Taste of the Chesapeake,” The Taste: Celebrate 50 Years is a new take on the important event to reflect on the Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay’s past accomplishments and look forward to the future of our watershed. The Taste is our largest annual fundraiser of the year which enables us to reach for bigger goals to grow programmatic capacity in Forests, Agriculture, Green Infrastructure, and Stewardship & Engagement.

This year’s regional watershed champions include Dr. Alan Anderson as our Maryland Watershed Champion, Michael Powell as our Virginia Champion, Brian Rodgers as our Washington D.C. Champion, and Teddi Stark as our Pennsylvania Champion. Along with the regional champions we also award an exceptional leader the “Fran Flanigan” award. This year we are honoring former Alliance Executive Director, Al Todd.

The Fran Flanigan award is named after our longest-tenured Executive Director of 20 years. Fran Flanigan was a stalwart leader and visionary for the Alliance. Al is being honored for his leadership of the Alliance as a previous Executive Director and his continued commitment to a cleaner Chesapeake Bay through many challenging years.

To learn more about Dr. Anderson, go to allianceforthebay.org/thetaste.

For the past 50 years, the Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay has brought together communities, companies, and conservationists to improve lands and waters. We envision clean streams and rivers flowing through resilient landscapes, cared for by the people who live, work, and play in the Chesapeake Bay watershed.

Strengthening Safety and Community: Paddock Pointe Cuts Ribbon on Route 1 Sidewalk Improvement Project

By ELLEN BUCHANAN
Paddock Pointe

NORTH LAUREL, Md. (Sept. 22, 2021)—Paddock Pointe, a transformative master-planned community adjacent to the Maryland Jockey Club in North Laurel, opened a newly-constructed sidewalk along U.S. Route 1 on September 21, 2021. State, county, local officials, and community members were in attendance. Both physical and symbolic, the sidewalk connects Howard County to the City of Laurel and Prince George’s County, providing a safe pedestrian link.

“As a transit-oriented development, Paddock Pointe strives to improve connectivity within and around our community,” said Mark Thompson, Senior Vice President of Development for I/ST Properties. “This is a concrete first step in the revitalization of North Laurel and the Route 1 Gateway into Howard County.”

Since breaking ground in 2019, Paddock Pointe has energized economic revitalization in North Laurel. To improve pedestrian safety and strengthen connections, Paddock Pointe added a sidewalk to a section of Route 1 northbound between the City of Laurel and the community entrance, and redeveloped Laurel Park Boulevard between Route 1



PHOTO CREDIT: R. SCOTT KRAMER, HOWARD COUNTY GOVERNMENT

From left to right: City of Laurel Mayor Craig Moe, Mark Thompson, Senior Vice President of Development for I/ST Properties, Angie Rodgers, Prince George’s County’s Deputy Chief Administrative Officer for Economic Development, State Senator Guy Guzzone (District 13), Howard County Councilwoman Christiana Rigby (District 3), Howard County Executive Calvin Ball.

northbound and southbound. The resulting enhancements include sidewalks, streetlights, landscaping, gutters, and storm drains.

Excitement for the sidewalk—and the reimagining of the corridor—was shared by Maryland leaders in attendance. State Senator Guy Guzzone,

Howard County Executive Calvin Ball, Howard County Councilwoman Christiana Rigby (District 3), and City of Laurel Mayor Craig Moe participated in the festivities.

“Building a community is even tougher in places that already have a neighborhood around it, and trying to integrate it all isn’t an easy task, and that’s what’s going on here—putting the pieces together and building a community and extending a community to an existing neighborhood where people want to live,” stated State Senator of District 13 Guy Guzzone.

“As we are coming through one of the most difficult times in not only our state’s, our nation’s, our world’s history, we can remember the importance of connections. We can remember the importance of safe and accessible ways for people to get around, and do the things that improve their quality of life,” said Howard County Executive Calvin Ball.

“This connection between North Laurel and the City of Laurel has been sorely needed for many years to better connect businesses, residents and communities together safely along Route 1. The sad truth is that too many residents in Howard County are put in danger every day simply due to the fact that our infrastructure was built exclusively

for cars, and not for us,” explained Howard County Councilwoman of District 3 Christiana Rigby.

“One of the most important things we can remember to do as we develop and plan is we continue to talk and communicate amongst each other. Our goal is always the same, to bring communities together,” said City of Laurel Mayor Craig Moe. “This is a fine example of everybody working together from the state down to the local level.”

The installation of a sidewalk increases pedestrian safety and encourages walking and cycling between residences, businesses, and community amenities. It also improves social connections and commerce, leading to expanded services throughout the North Laurel community.

For more information about Paddock Pointe, please visit their website at <http://experiencepaddockpointe.com>.

Paddock Pointe at the Maryland Jockey Club is a mixed-use, transit-oriented community located in North Laurel, Maryland. Residents of Paddock Pointe can experience unique, close-by amenities such as dining and shopping, trails near the Patuxent River, easy access to the MARC train services, and a wide variety of public recreational activities.

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Projects from A5

ects that are part of the Safe Routes to School initiative. A portion of the state's TAP allotment is awarded by metropolitan planning organizations. The \$12,427,100 in TAP awards support 12 projects, including:

- \$1.5 million to construct a multiuse trail at the Greenbelt Metro Station in Prince George's County that will connect neighborhoods and provide safe pedestrian and bicycle connection to commercial properties, regional parks, and the existing trail network, including Indian Creek Trail and Lake Artemisia
- Founded in 2011, the Kim Lamphier Bikeways Network Program provides state transportation funding for planning, designing, and construction of bicycle infrastructure including bike lanes and shared-use paths. Since the program's inception, every county in Maryland has received a bikeways award. Overall, the program has granted \$24 million for 158 projects, 123 of which have been completed. The program is named for the late Kim Lamphier, a tireless supporter for safe bicycle access across Maryland.
- MDOT administers the Kim Lamphier Bikeways Network Program, offering grant assistance to local jurisdictions and state agencies to improve safety, enhance multimodal connectivity, and fill missing links in the state's bicycle network. The \$3,382,244 Bikeways Program awards will fund 16 projects, including:
 - \$80,625 to install bike racks on Prince George's County transit vehicles;
 - \$54,080 for bicycle and shared scooter parking hubs in College Park.

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