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Sol Systems Delivers 3 MW Maryland Project to Greenbacker and Under Armour

By PRESS OFFICER
Sol Systems

CAPITOL HEIGHTS, Md. (December 2, 2019)—Under Armour joins the ranks of corporate leadership to prioritize renewable energy and sustainability goals. Increasingly, top U.S. corporations like Under Armour are choosing solar to power their operations, save on

electricity, and reduce their carbon emissions. In fact, corporations drove nearly 25% of the total amount of solar energy capacity that was procured in the United States in 2018, pushing the industry toward more innovative financing and power-purchase agreement structures.

Sol Systems, Under Armour and Greenbacker cut the ribbon on a freshly

completed 3 MW solar project, located in Capitol Heights, Maryland on Friday, November 22. Joined by United States Senator Chris Van Hollen, Congressman Anthony Brown, and several Prince George's County, Maryland officials, the ceremony cleared the way for the system to now begin powering two of Under Armour's facilities in Maryland, including its headquarters.

"At Under Armour, innovation is at our core," commented David Bergman, Chief Financial Officer of Under Armour. "This project is a perfect example of innovation and efficiency," he added.

Sited on an unused plot of land that was deemed unsuitable for residential development, the 3 MW solar project, will produce enough energy to power the equivalent of 333 average U.S. homes annually while contributing approximately \$1.4 million in tax revenue to Prince George's County over the length of its service.

Sol Systems initially began devel-



PHOTOGRAPH COURTESY SOL SYSTEMS

Sol Systems, Under Armour, and Greenbacker, along with government officials cut the ceremonial ribbon to celebrate Under Armour's new 3 MW solar project in Capitol Heights, Maryland.



PHOTOGRAPH COURTESY SOL SYSTEMS

Sol Systems CEO Yuri Horwitz sits beside Congressman Anthony Brown and Senator Chris Van Hollen as remarks are given at a ribbon cutting for Under Armour's new 3 MW solar energy project.

oping this project in 2016, arranging the financing and construction of the project before selling it to Greenbacker Renewable Energy Company. The electricity generated by the plant will be sold to WGL Energy Services, who will then exclusively provide it to Under Armour for 12 years.

"We started our company around a kitchen table 12 years ago, and wanted to make an impact on the future, said Yuri Horwitz, CEO of Sol Systems. "This is the physical representation of what we set out to do: reinvest in the community and offer a positive contribution to the DMV."

To celebrate the project's completion and the consistent growth of solar in Maryland, Senator Van Hollen, Congressman Brown, and Prince George's

County officials joined the project partners for a ribbon cutting ceremony.

"The private sector has really come together here," said Senator Chris Van Hollen, "this is a win-win-win for consumers, jobs, and for our environment," he continued.

"[The project] demonstrates that renewable clean energy and job creation are not mutually exclusive. In fact, they are mutually reinforcing," said Congressman Anthony Brown.

This solar project will be almost entirely surrounded by newly planted and existing trees, including maple, oak, pine, and cedars, creating a visual buffer for the site. The new plantings constitute a 1.5 acre woodland conservation easement that will be conserved in perpetuity beyond the life of the project.

Smithsonian's Chief Says More Museums Must Wait, Maintenance Is Top Priority

By AYANA ARCHIE
Capital News Service

WASHINGTON (December 6, 2019)—As the public demand for new museums increases, the Smithsonian Institution's chief says his top priority is getting on top of a huge maintenance backlog at the world's largest museum and research complex before he considers expanding.

Smithsonian Institution Secretary Lonnie Bunch III last month told the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee's economic development and public buildings subcommittee, which oversees the museum, that the repair backlog recently surpassed \$1 billion.

"A billion dollar backlog may sound insurmountable, but it's not," he said. "Since becoming secretary, I've had a chance to look at this with fresh eyes...I want us to analyze our maintenance projects building by building."

He added that part of the reason the backlog has been steadily increasing is that repairs aren't "sexy" to donors, many of whom would rather put their money to more visible changes.

House Democrats Carolyn Maloney and Jose Serrano, both of New York, introduced legislation earlier this year to add a women's history museum and a Latino history museum, respectively, to the Smithsonian complex. The women's history museum bill has cleared committee action and is awaiting a vote by the full House. The Latino bill is not as far along, still awaiting committee action.

Bunch said he is open to the addition of new museums, but that he must fully identify the challenges and the availability of resources for them, such as space on the National Mall, a better understanding of costs and a period of several years of study.

Bunch founded the National Museum of

African American History and Culture. He was elected as head of the Smithsonian Institution in May, becoming the first African American director and the first museum director to be promoted to secretary in 74 years.

He said that from his experience, the completion of a new museum will be at least a decade-long process.

"The prospect for new museums is really the great unknown for us," he said. "My hope is even if there isn't a museum, we will continue to make sure those stories are told."

He added that he is mostly focused on completing current projects.

The National Air and Space Museum is undergoing a \$650 million renovation that will be completed in 2025. The Smithsonian also intends to purchase a new headquarters building in Washington with 632,000 square feet, renovate The Castle and neighboring Arts and Industries Buildings, and is constructing a new sculpture garden for the Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden.

The Smithsonian also needs more storage, Bunch said.

The organization's Museum Support Center is in Suitland, Maryland, in the district of Rep. Anthony Brown, D-Largo. The center houses five storage pods, each the size of a football field.

Brown pointed out that despite the need for more storage space, Smithsonian has requested \$6.5 million for MSC for fiscal year 2020, out of a total \$210 million for facilities.



PHOTOGRAPH CREDIT HEATHER KIM/CAPITAL NEWS SERVICE

WASHINGTON—The Smithsonian's Castle, located on the National Mall in the nation's capital.

Bunch said the institution is working on a "master plan" to identify needed resources for the location.

"The Suitland campus is crucial," Bunch said. "Being able to use that campus to its fullest extent will help the Smithsonian continue to be the institution that preserves America's culture."

The Smithsonian Institution gets 62% of its total budget from Congress and all of its maintenance budget from Congress.

Cathy Helm, the Smithsonian's inspector general, told the House Administration Committee in September that the maintenance backlog is likely to grow because the institution is not spending enough to keep up.

The Smithsonian's fiscal 2020 budget request includes \$84.5 million for maintenance, which is about one percent of the current replacement costs of facilities. By contrast, she pointed out that the National Research Council has recommended that

See MAINTENANCE Page A8

Prince George's County Council Elects Leadership Team for Legislative Year 2020

Council Member Todd M. Turner to Serve
Second Consecutive Term as Council Chair;
At-Large Council Member Calvin S. Hawkins, II,
Elected Council Vice-Chair

By ANGELA ROUSON
PG County Council Media

UPPER MARLBORO, Md. (December 3, 2019)—The Prince George's County Council unanimously reelected Council Member Todd M. Turner (D) - District 4 to serve a second consecutive year as Council Chair. At-Large Council Member Calvin S. Hawkins, II, was also unanimously elected to serve as Council Vice-Chair. The newly-confirmed Council leadership team presided over the first session of Legislative Year 2020 on Tuesday, December 3, 2019. Chair Turner and Vice-Chair Hawkins will serve in Council leadership through December 1, 2020.

Chair Turner thanked his colleagues for again entrusting him with the Council's Gavel of Leadership and welcomed his new leadership partner.

"I look forward to working with my colleague, At-Large Council Member Calvin S. Hawkins, II, who will serve as Council Vice-Chair for Legislative Year 2020. Thank you for accepting the challenge of leadership. Your experience and team spirit will be critical components to achieving our legislative goals in the coming year."

Chair Turner also addressed

the collaboration needed for the County's continued success.

"We will continue to build on the strong collaborations we have established with the County Executive Angela Also-brooks, state lawmakers, regional and municipal government leaders, our communities, businesses, nonprofits, and other County stakeholders. These partnerships are already bettering the lives of our residents and move us closer to the coveted signature wins for Prince George's County."

Council Chair Turner, a resident of Bowie, was reelected to serve a second four-year term on the County Council in the November 2018 General Election. Vice-Chair Hawkins of Upper Marlboro was elected to serve his first term on the Prince George's County Council in the 2018 General Election.

Please visit <http://pgccouncil.us> for on-demand video of the Gavel Exchange Ceremony, or to access Gavel Exchange photographs and speeches. The Gavel Exchange ceremony will also be cablecast on Prince George's County Television (CTV), Channel 42 (Verizon FIOS) and Channel 76, (Comcast). For air dates and times, visit www.pgctv.org or contact CTV at 301.773.0900.

INSIDE

"Southern Management Leadership Program" for Students Introduced

"... What better way to give back to our local communities than developing impactful, creative, and inspiring local leaders," said Suzanne Hillman, CEO and president of Southern Management Corporation.

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ChildWatch: Books All Children Should Read

We want to share wonderful books about all the children who make up our beautiful rainbow human species and hear from you about books that transformed your life as a child.

Commentary, Page A4

University of Maryland School of Nursing Receives Health Professions Higher Education Excellence in Diversity Award for Second Straight Year

UMSON has a diverse student population, with 48% of its total enrollment composed of students of ethnic and racial diversity, compared to a national average of 33 percent.

Business and Finance, Page A5

Movie Review:

A Beautiful Day in the Neighborhood

You know pure goodness when you see it, and Hanks thoroughly conveys the goodness in Mister Rogers.

Out on the Town, Page A6

Earth Talk

Dear EarthTalk:

You don't hear much anymore about the cutting of our forests to make paper. ... have increases in recycling in recent years made paper production less destructive?

—J. W., Greenville, SC

Features, Page A7

TOWNS *and* NEIGHBORS

In and Around Morningside-Skyline

by Mary McHale will return next week

Brandywine-Aquasco

by Audrey Johnson 301-922-5384

SCHOLARS

Meet UMES' Trio of USDA 1890 Scholars. Three UMES undergraduates, Jailynn Britt, James Pinkney, and Tyler Reid, have been named 2019 USDA/1890 Scholars. Each have received full scholarships to the university that include books, professional development and employment with the federal government during the summer.

All three were influenced to pick UMES as a result of their participation while in high school, in the National Society for Minorities in Agriculture, Natural Resources and Related Sciences (MANRRS) Pre-College Initiative Program promoted across the state by the university's Karl Binns Jr.

JAILYNN BRITT

Jailynn is a sophomore from Brandywine, Maryland majoring in general agriculture with a concentration in agriculture studies. "The first time I heard about agriculture was in my high school's environmental academy. From there, I joined Future Farmers of America (FFA and (Jr.) MANRRS to broaden my views on agriculture."

Those organizations enabled her to be a Bayer AgAmbassador, participate in U.S. Department of Agriculture's AgDiscovery, be a Borlaug scholar and attend the World Food Prize conference in Des Moines, Iowa. As a UMES student, she recently traveled to Milan, Italy for the Seeds & Chips Global Food Innovation Summit.

"These are just a few opportunities and experiences being in agriculture have given me," she said. "Now that I am an 1890 National Scholar, I will only have more insightful and exciting experiences that will develop me as an individual and advance me into my dream career ... I loved how the university had a general agriculture program, which is a hard major to come by. I also knew it was an 1890 land-grant college specifically for agriculture."

Her industry partner for her scholarship is APHIS Veterinary Services. This past summer, she was a counselor for the USDA AgDiscovery program. After graduation Britt intends to continue her education, pursuing a masters and a doctorate. Her goal is to be employed with the USDA.

JAMES PINKNEY

James Pinkney is a junior from Clinton, Maryland majoring in environmental science with a concentration in Chem-

istry. Participation in the annual Jr. MANRRS Leadership institute at UMES and all the amazing opportunities and connections made the university his college choice.

"I knew UMES was the right school for me because it aligned with my interests, and I built advocacy here before I was even a student. I always had an eye on the USDA and the work that they do. Being able to have internships around agricultural and environmental science and in USDA labs was the icing on the cake."

Pinkney is partnered with the Agricultural Research Service (ARS) for his scholarship. He recently completed a summer internship in an ARS crops pathology lab in Davis, California, where he worked alongside a group of researchers and other undergraduates. The research focus was on the characterization and diversity of California agrobacterium strains and their effect on growing walnuts.

"If it was not for my MANRRS advisors, mentors and some professors continuing to push me and providing access to this opportunity, I would not have had the chance to be involved in the things I currently have going for me."

TYLER REID

Tyler Reid is a sophomore from Prince George's County majoring in agricultural studies. At Gwynn Park High School, she was a part of the environmental studies academy and a member and officer of the school's FFA chapter.

She attended the Jr. MANRRS Leadership Institute several times, making UMES a comfortable choice. "I came to UMES because I wanted to be able to graduate with my undergraduate degree with little or no debt. I had also formed a support system here through Karl Binns, Lisa Purnell, Stephon Fitzpatrick and Dr. Kimberly Braxton. I knew I would have people around me that would push me to succeed and help me accomplish my goals."

Her sponsoring agency is the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service. This past summer she was a Wallace Carver Fellow under the World Food Prize interning with the USDA in the Office of Partnerships and Public Engagement in Washington, DC.

Congratulations Scholars.

Environment Secretary Ben Grumbles Honors Student Artists At 18th Annual Rethink Recycling Sculpture Contest

Annual awards promote recycling and creativity among high school students
Three students from Suitland High School CVPA won four of the top prizes

By PRESS OFFICER

Maryland Dept of the Environment

BALTIMORE, Md. (November 22, 2019)—Environment Secretary Ben Grumbles presented a grand prize and prizes to eight other student winners today at the department's 18th annual "Rethink Recycling" Sculpture Contest at Montgomery Park in Baltimore City.

Later, the department awarded prizes for the image of a shadowy singer, a cardboard clock, and a tribal-inspired mask—all made from reused materials. Students from Carroll County, Prince George's County and Baltimore County won the top prizes.

"Maryland's youthful artists inspire us all to reduce, reuse, recycle, and rethink waste so we can keep protecting the environment and fighting climate change well into the future," Secretary Grumbles said. "Last year Marylanders recycled nearly 3.1 million tons of municipal solid waste and diverted nearly 48 percent of our waste from landfills and incinerators, with the future looking brighter and greener thanks to student-led innovations and creations."

Rethink Recycling challenges Maryland high school students to use recycled materials to create artistic and innovative sculptures. This year, 66 entries from 20 high schools in 14 counties across the state were on display.

Jorja Rodgers from Century High School in Carroll County was the Grand Prize winner for her shadow sculpture, "Silhouette of Selena." Rodgers' artwork was made using plastic and paper which created a shadow image on a backdrop. Rodgers received an Xbox One X Star Wars edition console bundle and extra controller for her efforts.

The category winners, who each received Sony Wireless ear buds, were:

- **Creativity: Martina Barber, Suitland High School, Prince George's**

County, for "Kamikaze," using crayons, paper, cardboard, hair and recycling bins as materials.

- **Workmanship: Casey Wehrman, Suitland High School, Prince George's County,** for creating "Body of Distortion," made of newspaper, cardboard, paper pulp and charcoal.

- **Use of Materials: Alex Vagnier, Winters Mill High School, Carroll County,** for "IDK," made of a personal computer, lamp, light switch, plexiglass, bottle caps and a waffle iron.

- **People's Choice Category: Sam Birkenthal, Towson High School, Baltimore County,** for "Six Nineteen," using only cardboard.

The second-place winners in each category, who received \$100 Amazon gift cards, were:

- **Creativity: Nikki Hamidi, Northwest High School, Montgomery County,** for her work entitled "Caffeine in Color."

- **Workmanship: Tony Leal, Suitland High School, Prince George's County,** for crafting "Deer of Reflection."

- **Use of Materials: Allison Johnson, Fort Hill High School, Allegany County,** for constructing "Recycled Head."

- **People's Choice: Emily Giffhorn, South Carroll High School, Carroll County,** for "Turtley Awesome."

Sponsors of the event were the American Cleaning Institute; Exelon; Maryland Recycling Network; Maryland, Delaware, D.C. Beverage Association; Blick Art Materials; Baltimore Museum of Art; National Aquarium; and Waste Management. Sponsors donated prizes, funding, and refreshments for this year's contest.

"We will need creative solutions and innovations to successfully tackle our nation's recycling challenges," said the recycling art event's top sponsor, Amer-

ican Cleaning Institute Senior Vice President of Communications and Outreach Brian Sansoni. "The cleaning products industry is proud to support and honor the artistry demonstrated in the 'Rethink Recycling' Sculpture Contest, which should inspire all of us to commit our energies to enhance recycling initiatives across the country."

In addition to the MDE prizes, the Maryland Recycling Network conducted its own judging and awarded its grand prize to Amber George, Leonardtown High School, St. Mary's County, for "Plastic Reef."

Contest judges tasked with determining the winners of the contest based on creativity, use of materials, and workmanship were: John Lewis, instructor at the Maryland Institute College of Art (MICA); Theresa Foggo, local muralist and freelance artist; Pamela Kellet, environmental scientist; Kaley Laleker, director of the Maryland Department of the Environment's Land and Materials Administration; and Stephanie Cobb-Williams, deputy director of the Maryland Department of the Environment's Land and Materials Administration.

Since 2001, the Department of the Environment has celebrated America Recycles Day by hosting the annual "Rethink Recycling" Sculpture Contest. High school students from across Maryland are invited to participate by creating sculptures made of recycled and reusable materials. "Rethink Recycling" is just one way MDE educates and empowers the public to reuse and recycle materials that would have otherwise gone into landfills.

To find out what you can do to reduce, reuse, recycle and buy recycled products, visit MDE's recycling web page. It is the mission of the department to protect and restore the environment for the health and well-being of all Marylanders.

Around the County

Meeting With MAGLEV

NAACP Maryland State Conference and Prince George's County Branch NAACP invite local residents to a Meeting with Maglev on **Thursday, December 12, 2019, from 7-9 p.m.** at the International Union of Painter's & Allied Trades District Council 51, 4700 Boston Way #D, Lanham, MD 20706.

Hear from representatives of Northeast MAGLEV and Baltimore Washington Rapid Rail, the developer of the DC to NYC SCMaglev High-Speed Train Project.

Learn about the project status, proposed routes, the potential for thousands of jobs, potential business opportunities, faster travel, reduced traffic, ways concerns are being addressed, how you can remain aware of issues, and much more.

For more information about this or future meetings, contact Prince George's County Branch NAACP President and Maglev Project Liaison Bob Ross, President@pgcnaacp.org.

—PGC-NAACP

Demetri Morsell Selected AFCA All-American First Team Honoree

WACO, Texas (December 3, 2019)—Bowie State University sophomore defensive back Demetri Morsell (Upper Marlboro, Md.) has added American Football Coaches' Association (AFCA) All-American First Team to his list of accolades for the 2019 season. Morsell, the only CIAA player selected to this team, ranked first in the (CIAA) conference in interceptions for the back-to-back CIAA Champion Bulldogs and ranks third overall in NCAA interceptions.

The AFCA has selected an All-America team since 1945 and currently selects teams in all five of its divisions. What makes these teams so special is that they are the only ones chosen exclusively by the men who know the players the best—the coaches themselves.

—Gregory C. Goings, Bowie State Sports Information



PHOTOGRAPH COURTESY BOWIE STATE SPORTS INFORMATION

DB, Demetri Morsell, 5-11, 170, So. Bowie State (Md.) Coach Damon Wilson Upper Marlboro, Md. (Wise)

Opportunity for Artists!

On behalf of the Town of Riverdale Park, our friends at the Hyattsville CDC just announced a Call for Artists for the Riverdale Park Public Art Initiative. The Initiative seeks five (5) sculptures of various styles and sizes to display for a one year-long placement, at pre-determined, publicly-accessible sites within the Town of Riverdale Park.

Artists across the greater metropolitan region are welcome to apply, especially those who live or have studios within Prince George's County. Submitted designs must be original artwork, and selected artists will be paid a \$2,000 honorarium. Call for Artist submissions are due by Monday, February 3, 2020.

For more information, visit <https://hydc.org/riverdale-park-public-art-initiative-call-for-artists-2k-honorarium-deadline-2-3-2020/>

—Gateway Arts District

Free December Health Resources Provided by Doctors Community Health System

LANHAM, Md. (December 2, 2019)—Throughout the year, Doctors Community Hospital offers numerous screenings and support groups. They are designed to help people maintain and improve their overall health. Some of the upcoming events include:

Free Breast Cancer Support Group

Third Tuesday of Each Month, 7-9 p.m.
Doctors Community Hospital, 8100 Good Luck Road, North Building, 4th Floor, Room 415, Lanham, MD 20706, 240-542-3034 | DCHweb.org/breast
Join women who are newly diagnosed with or are recovering from breast cancer.

Free Diabetes Support Group

Third Monday of Each Month, 6-7:30 p.m.
Doctors Community Hospital, 8100 Good Luck Road, North Building, 5th Floor, DSE Room, Lanham, MD 20706, 301-552-8661 | DCHdiabetes.org
Join people who have diabetes as well as their families during engaging and interactive discussions about coping with this disease.

Free Breast and Cervical Cancer Screenings

Doctors Community Hospital, 8116 Good Luck Road, Professional Office Building, Suite 110, Lanham, MD 20706, 301-552-8524 | DCHweb.org/breast

Women who reside in Prince George's County may qualify if they have a photo or picture ID, are ages 40 or older, are uninsured or underinsured or have a limited income. Appointment required.

Free Lymphedema and Chronic Swelling Support Group

December 19 at 2-4 p.m.
Doctors Community Hospital, 8100 Good Luck Road, North Building, 5th Floor, DSE Room, Lanham, MD 20706, 301-552-8144 | DCHrehab.org
Join people who have lymphedema as they share their experiences while learning about the latest treatment and management options.

Free Screenings on Mobile Health Clinic

The Wellness on Wheels (WOW) mobile health clinic is on hiatus and will return. For more information about the mobile health clinic, visit DCHweb.org/WOW.

—Chondria Andrews, Doctors Community Hospital

CORRECTION:

In the Capital News Service story "Trained to Serve: Maryland's Natural Resources Police K-9 Unit," published last week, the name of Indiana Conservation Officer Jeffrey Milner was spelled incorrectly.

COMMUNITY

The American Counseling Association's Counseling Corner

Lowering Stress Levels For Holiday Travel

In today's world virtually any holiday travel is going to be a cause for increased stress and anxiety. Whether driving for a holiday visit with relatives or taking a holiday plane trip, it's almost guaranteed that you'll experience some stress-producing, travel-related issues.

Regardless, holiday travel is popular. It's estimated that this year's holiday period will see more than 94 million Americans climbing in their cars for a holiday road trip. If air travel is what you're looking forward to, you'll be joining an estimated 6 million fellow citizens who will fly to their holiday destinations.

It isn't simply the numbers of travelers who add to holiday travel stress. There can be long, slow TSA security lines, delayed or cancelled flights, road construction, traffic jams on your route, and all the issues that bad weather can bring.

The secret to minimizing holiday travel stress is separating what you can control from what you can't. You have no control over that approaching snow storm, the crowded airport, or any of the many other outside factors that can impede your holiday travel plans.

So, in order to reduce stress and anxiety levels, focus on those factors you can control. If you're driving, take the time to check out news reports for your route and decide if you can leave earlier or later to miss the worst of the bad weather.

Planning can also make airport delays less of a headache. If you expect long TSA lines and crowded check-in lines, depart earlier for the airport. Important stress relievers are the things you can do to insure that you're not suddenly rushing and facing or missing deadlines. Don't frantically pack your suitcase at the last minute. Instead, do it a day early, check weight and size requirements, make sure it meets them, and then enjoy a relaxing cup of tea knowing you're prepared.

You can also always take charge of how you feel. Use distractions to change your focus. Getting upset or mad doesn't move security lines faster or make traffic jams disappear. Instead of feeling frustrated in line play a game on your smart phone or just people-watch your fellow passengers. Stuck in traffic? Listen to the car radio, enjoy the music, consciously change your attitude and look forward to enjoying your destination.

Holiday travel can be a hassle, and quite likely will be, but it doesn't have to be high stress.

Counseling Corner is provided by the American Counseling Association. Comments and questions to ACAcorner@counseling.org or visit the ACA website at www.counseling.org.

Van Hollen, Cardin Announce \$38.4 Million for Water Infrastructure Projects in Maryland

By FRANCESCA AMODEO / TIM ZINK
Press (Van Hollen) / Press (Cardin)

WASHINGTON (December 5, 2019)—U.S. Senators Chris Van Hollen and Ben Cardin (both D-Md.) have announced \$38.4 million in federal funding for the implementation of several key water infrastructure projects in Maryland. The funding, allocated through the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) Clean Water State Revolving Fund (CWSRF), will go towards Maryland's Intended Use Plan—a \$297 million plan, approved by the EPA, which aims to upgrade wastewater treatment plants and stormwater control measures throughout the state. Earlier this year, the Senators wrote a letter urging the Congress to maintain full funding for the EPA's CWSRF.

"This is a huge investment in Maryland's efforts to upgrade our water infrastructure, protect public health, and reduce costs to consumers. These funds will reduce water pollution and improve the efficiency of our water use, ultimately resulting in better service and lower costs for Marylanders. This investment will also boost our economy and create jobs along the way," said Senator Van Hollen, a member of the Appropriations and Environment and Public Works Committees. "Maryland's success depends on modernizing our infrastructure, from our transportation networks to our sewage and water systems, and I will continue working in the Senate to secure investments for projects like these."

"Safe, reliable water infrastructure is of the utmost importance for communities throughout Maryland. From Talbot County to Baltimore City, these investments will improve the reliability of sewer systems, prevent pollution from reaching public waters including the Chesapeake Bay, and protect against future flooding. I will continue to advocate for increased federal support for these essential public services," said Senator Cardin, ranking member of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee Transportation and Infrastructure Subcommittee.

The CWSRF program provides low interest loans for the construction of wastewater treatment facilities and other projects vital to protecting and improving water quality in rivers, lakes and streams for drinking water, recreation and natural habitat. The loans help communities keep water and sewer rates more affordable while addressing local water quality problems.

Project [for Prince George's County] that is eligible to receive loans under the State's intended use plan is:

- **\$35 million to the Urban Stormwater Retrofit Program Public-Private Partnership in Prince George's County.** This project involves the planning, design and construction of multiple projects to store or treat stormwater runoff to reduce pollutants from entering local waterways and the Chesapeake Bay. Projects range from installing small rain gardens to large urban retrofit solutions, such as pond retrofits and green streets.

Prince George's Community College and Southern Management Corporation Introduce the "Southern Management Leadership Program" for Students

Unique program provides scholarships to students attending Prince George's Community College, Montgomery College, and the University of Maryland

By COURTNEY DAVIS
Prince George's Community College

LARGO, Md. (December 4, 2019)—Prince George's Community College and Southern Management Corporation announced Southern Management Leadership Program as the new name for Hillman Entrepreneurs Program. For more than a decade, the Southern Management Leadership Program has served to develop local community leaders through a scholarship and intensive mentoring program at Prince George's Community College, Montgomery College, and the University of Maryland.

Students accepted into the Southern Management Leadership Program receive 50 percent tuition assistance during their sophomore, junior, and senior years in college, along with mentoring, experiential learning, and internship opportunities. This unique program is ideal for rising sophomores at Prince George's Community College who plan to transfer to the University of Maryland to complete their four-year college degree. The current cohort includes 20 students from Prince George's Community College.

"Southern Management Corporation and Prince George's Community College started their partnership in 2006 with the vision to identify promising leaders among our students," said Ruth Lewis, Prince George's Community College program director for Southern Management Leadership Program.

"Through financial and mentoring support this program changes the way students see themselves. It provides them with the tools and skills to become impactful, creative and inspiring local leaders."

Through the realignment of the program, Southern Management will work closely with program leaders and educators at all three schools to help deliver curriculum, provide internship opportunities, and find other ways to leverage the company's business resources to aide in the students' educations.

"We have long been committed to being good corporate citizens where we do business. What better way to give back to our local communities than developing impactful, creative, and inspiring local leaders," said Suzanne Hillman, CEO and president of Southern Management Corporation. "We have witnessed wonderful success with this program as our students have graduated and gone on to be positive influences in our communities, and we look forward to celebrating many more future accomplishments," Hillman added.

Named a National Center of Academic Excellence in Information Assurance designated by the National Security Agency and Department of Homeland Security (2015–2020), Prince George's Community College (PGCC) provides high-quality education and training for the progressive and career-oriented residents of Prince George's County. From new high school grad-

uates and career seekers to more seasoned professionals and senior citizens looking to enhance their skillsets, PGCC is comprised of students who represent a wide range of ages, backgrounds, and goals. Serving nearly 40,000 individuals annually, the college is the first choice for higher education for residents of Prince George's County. Collaborative partnerships, responsive degree and training programs, and a commitment to student success enables PGCC to address diverse education and workforce development demands. For more information, visit the college website at www.pgcc.edu. Prince George's Community College is accredited by the Middle States Commission on Higher Education, 3624 Market Street, Philadelphia, PA 19104; (267-284-5000); www.msche.org. The Middle States Commission on Higher Education is an institutional accrediting agency recognized by the U.S. Secretary of Education and the Council on Higher Education Accreditation.

Southern Management Corporation is the largest privately owned residential property management company in the Mid-Atlantic region. The company owns and manages 77 apartment home communities comprising more than 25,000 apartment homes throughout the Baltimore-Washington region. In addition to residential property ownership and management, Southern Management owns and manages commercial properties as well as four hotels and conference centers. To learn more, visit www.southernmanagement.com

Monarch Preschool College Park to Open Next Year in College Park

Kristin B. Taylor named preschool director

By PRESS OFFICER
Monarch Preschool College Park

COLLEGE PARK, Md. (October 16, 2019)—Monarch Preschool College Park, founded by The Children's Guild, will open in February 2020 and serve 120 children ages 3 to 5. The school will be located in an 11,400-square-foot renovated space in College Park United Methodist Church on the corner of Rhode Island Avenue and Hollywood Road in College Park. Monarch Preschool College Park will be open year-round with a full-day program to include before- and after-school care.

Monarch Preschool is the result of The University District Vision, making College Park a sustainable top-20 college town by 2020 and a collaboration with The Children's Guild. The Children's Guild is a nonprofit organization founded in 1953 and dedicated to pioneering educational services for children and families.

"The Monarch Preschool College Park is part of a larger effort to make College Park a top university community and is being open in response to a community need for additional high-quality pre-K learning opportunities," said Donna Wiseman, chair of the College Park University Partnership Education Committee and former dean of the College of Education at the University of Maryland. "The preschool will be a hub for the community, and its leadership and advisory board includes members of the city and university communities."

University of Maryland-alumna Kristin "Krissie" B. Taylor has been named director of Monarch Preschool College Park. Taylor has an extensive background and certifications in early education and, most recently, was director of Heritage Learning Center in

Hyattsville. She also is an advisor to Maryland State Department of Education's Ready at Five program, and from 2006 to 2011, Taylor was an elementary special education teacher for Prince George's County Public Schools. Taylor earned a bachelor's degree in family studies from the University of Maryland and a master's degree in curriculum and instruction from McDaniel College.

"I am very excited to have the opportunity to lead Monarch Preschool College Park and foster a lifelong love of learning in our students as we focus on the whole child. Our spaces, curriculum and teachers will all be active, engaged and helping children apply their learning to real-world issues based on high-quality, project-based learning, getting them ready for school and life beyond," Taylor said.

Monarch Preschool's advisory board is chaired by Fran Favretto, retired director of the University of Maryland Center for Young Children. Other advisory board members are Carolyn Bernache, chair of the College Park Education Advisory Committee, board member of College Park Academy and member of the College Park City-University Partnership Education Committee; Cat Peretti, a parent in College Park and executive director of My School DC; Denise Mitchell, College Park District 4 council member and founding board member of College Park Academy; and Valerie Woodall, senior program associate of College Park City-University Partnership.

"We look forward to collaborating and engaging with local assets in the College Park community, including working with the University of Maryland College of Education. We will be implementing a project-based curriculum that actively engages children in investigating the world around them as well as developing pathways for early childhood ed-



PHOTOGRAPH COURTESY MONARCH PRESCHOOL COLLEGE PARK

University of Maryland-alumna Kristin "Krissie" B. Taylor has been named director of Monarch Preschool College Park.

education teacher training, internships, research and partnerships," said Duane Arbogast, chief of strategy and innovation for The Children's Guild Alliance and former chief academic officer for Prince George's County Public Schools. "We are also excited to have Krissie, with her impressive background in early childhood learning and her connections in the community, as part of our team."

Registration is now open. For more information on Monarch Preschool College Park, visit <https://monarchprescho.wpengine.com/> or email engage@monarchpreschool.com.

Monarch Preschool College Park, an affiliate member of The Children's Guild Alliance, a nonprofit organization serving children, families and child-serving organizations, will be a year-round full-day preschool program serving 120 children ages 3 to 5. (<https://monarchprescho.wpengine.com/>)

Ready, Set, PrEP Expands Access to Medication to Prevent HIV in Prince George's County

By PRESS OFFICER
HHS Office of Public Affairs

WASHINGTON, D.C. (December 3, 2019)—Today, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) launched *Ready, Set, PrEP*, a national program that makes medications for pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP), taken daily to prevent HIV, available at no cost to people without prescription drug insurance coverage.

Although more than one million people at risk for HIV in the United States could benefit from PrEP medications, only a small fraction get them. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the U.S. Preventive Services Task Force recommend PrEP for individuals at risk of acquiring HIV. When taken as pre-

scribed, PrEP is highly effective at reducing an individual's risk of acquiring HIV.

Ready, Set, PrEP is a key component of the Ending the HIV Epidemic: A Plan for America (EHE) initiative. Prince George's County is one of the 57 jurisdictions identified as target areas for the President's initiative. EHE aims to reduce the number of new HIV transmissions in the United States by 75% in five years and by 90% in 10 years. By increasing awareness of PrEP and its access, the *Ready, Set, PrEP* program can provide thousands of people a safe, effective way to prevent HIV and bring our nation one step closer to ending the HIV epidemic.

"*Ready, Set, PrEP* is a historic expansion of access to HIV prevention medication and a major step forward in President Trump's plan

to end the HIV epidemic in America," said HHS Secretary Alex Azar. "Thanks to *Ready, Set, PrEP*, thousands of Americans who are at risk for HIV, including individuals in Prince George's County, will now be able to protect themselves and their communities. The Trump Administration recognizes the vital role of prevention in ending the HIV epidemic in America, and connecting members of vulnerable communities to prevention services and medication is an important part of the President's initiative."

"PrEP is highly effective in preventing HIV infection when taken as directed," said Assistant Secretary for Health Brett P. Giroir, M.D. "It is a critical tool for ending the HIV epi-

COMMENTARY

Marion Wright Edelman

President Emerita,
Children's Defense Fund



ChildWatch:

Books *All* Children Should Read

What's on your shopping list for the children you love this very special season? I encourage parents, grandparents, aunts, uncles, and adults everywhere to give children the gift of books. The right book can spark a lifelong love of reading and open up a whole new world for a child or teenager that will last far longer than a toy. The Children's Defense Fund (CDF) has a special list to share of books every Black child and, in fact, every child should read (<https://cdfwebstore.com/collections/gift-ideas>). We want to share wonderful books about all the children who make up our beautiful rainbow human species and hear from you about books that transformed your life as a child.

The CDF Freedom Schools® program is built around a superb collection of diverse books that reflect a wide variety of cultures and experiences. For some children the Freedom Schools curriculum is the first time they've seen books with characters who look like them. For others the storylines draw them in, teach them about moments in history they may not have studied in school, and make them fall in love with reading in ways they've never experienced. Children of color and children born with a rich diversity of special characteristics and needs must be able to see themselves in the books they read and be exposed to a wide range of books re-

flective of the nation and world we all share.

The reflection of the Black experience through books on the list below represents just one of many paths towards ensuring all children read books reflecting the full rainbow of our children's faces, cultures, and needs, including the history that still shapes the present. CDF Freedom Schools programs share stories by diverse authors and illustrators featuring Latino, Native American, Asian American and White characters, those from other countries and cultures and all mixes in between. Giving a book can give a child a chance to understand and step into the shoes of those who share our nation and world.

Theresa Venable, librarian at the Langston Hughes Library at CDF Haley Farm Servant Leadership Development School, assembled this list with the help of Dr. Rudine Sims Bishop, past chair of the Coretta Scott King Book Awards Jury and Professor Emerita of The Ohio State University; Dr. Cynthia Tyson, Professor of Education at The Ohio State University; and Dr. Jonda C. McNair, Professor of Education at Clemson University, who believe these books:

- Exemplify literary excellence
- Give children a sense of 'self'
- Encourage children to develop positive atti-

- tudes about themselves and others
- Reinforce a sense of Black heritage and Black history
- Provide a platform by which children can learn about and fall in love with characters that look like themselves
- Inspire children to be the best they can be
- Assist children in seeing the beauty, humor, and strength in their families and in others around them
- Inspire children to seek new ways of problem solving
- Encourage pride in African Heritage.

The list is divided into suggestions for Primary (Grades K-3); Intermediate (Grades 4-6); and Young Adult (Grades 7-12) readers and CDF offers many of these books for purchase through the CDF Bookstore. Choose titles today to give as gifts for the holidays or celebrate a birthday or the birth of a new child at any time of year by giving and sharing a wonderful book from this list.

Primary Fiction

Aunt Flossie's Hats (and Crab Cakes Later) by Elizabeth Fitzgerald Howard

Mirandy and Brother Wind by Patricia C. McKissack

Uncle Jed's Barbershop by Margaree King Mitchell

Tar Beach by Faith Ringgold

Mufaro's Beautiful Daughters: An African Tale by John Steptoe

I Love My Hair! by Natasha Anastasia Tarpley

Primary Nonfiction

Duke Ellington by Andrea Davis Pinkney

Primary Poetry

Meet Danitra Brown by Nikki Grimes

In Daddy's Arms I Am Tall illustrated by Javaka Steptoe

Primary Sing-A-Long

Let It Shine by Ashley Bryan

Intermediate Fiction

The Watsons Go to Birmingham by Christopher Paul Curtis

Zeely by Virginia Hamilton

M.C. Higgins, the Great by Virginia Hamilton

Roll of Thunder, Hear My Cry by Mildred D. Taylor

Justin and the Best Biscuits in the World by Mildred Pitts Walter

One Crazy Summer by Rita Williams-Garcia

P.S. Be Eleven by Rita Williams-Garcia

Gone Crazy in Alabama by Rita Williams-Garcia

Intermediate Nonfiction

We Are the Ship: The Story of Negro League Baseball by Kadir Nelson

Heart and Soul: The Story of America and African Americans by Kadir Nelson

Let It Shine: Stories of Black Women Freedom Fighters by Andrea Davis Pinkney

Voice of Freedom: Fannie Lou Hamer, Spirit of the Civil Rights Movement by Carole Boston Weatherford

Intermediate Poetry

Honey, I Love by Eloise Greenfield

Young Adult Fiction

The Crossover by Kwame Alexander

Like Sisters on the Homefront by Rita Williams-Garcia

Toning the Sweep by Angela Johnson

Young Adult Nonfiction

March: Book One by John Lewis

March: Book Two by John Lewis

March: Book Three by John Lewis

Brown Girl Dreaming by Jacqueline Woodson

All Ages

Many Thousand Gone: African Americans from Slavery to Freedom by Virginia Hamilton

The People Could Fly: American Black Folktales told by Virginia Hamilton

Marc Morial

President and CEO, National Urban League



To Be Equal:

Black Communities Are Making a Difference in The Fight Against AIDS

"The fact that there's a conversation that occurs on an annual basis on World AIDS Day is significant. The fact that the President of the United States, on an annual basis, now, comments and discusses AIDS, keeps it on the agenda. I think a very, very concrete outcome of that discussion is that President Bush put forward billions of dollars toward the AIDS prevention and education effort for the United Nations. I don't think that would've happened had it not been for World AIDS Day..."
—Jim Block, Co-Founder of World AIDS Day

The theme of World AIDS Day 2019, which took place on Sunday, is "Communities make the difference."

As part of the Centers for Disease Control's Partnering and Communicating Together to Act Against AIDS (PACT), the Urban League community is making the difference for nearly 300,000 people annually through outreach awareness, testing and education.

Worldwide, there are 37.9 people living with HIV, 1.1 million of whom are in the United States.

A shocking 42 percent of those—468,800—are Black.

Sadly, Black Americans remain the racial group most affected by HIV in the United States, accounting for 42 percent of new diagnoses last year. The rate of new diagnoses for African Americans was eight times the rate for whites and twice the rate of Latinos.

According to the CDC, one in seven African Americans living with HIV don't even know they have it, and therefore can't take advantage of HIV care and treatments and are more likely to pass HIV to others unknowingly.

Even after diagnosis, only about two-thirds of Black gay and bisexual men with newly diagnosed HIV, and 58% with previously diagnosed HIV, were linked to HIV medical care within 90 days of the diagnosis, when the virus is easier to suppress.

Further compounding the problem is the higher poverty rate among Black Americans.

Limited access to high-quality health care, housing, and HIV prevention education increase the risk for infection and make worse outcomes more likely.

Through PACT, the Urban League Move-

ment—along with groups like the National Black Justice Coalition, and the Black Men's Exchange—is raising awareness about testing, prevention, and retention in care among African Americans.

UNAIDS and the World Health Organization, the international agencies charged with confronting the AIDS epidemic, have set a target for 2020 known as 90-90-90. By the end of next year, 90 percent of all those infected will know they are infected; 90 percent of those infected will be receiving antiretroviral therapy, and 90 percent of those receiving therapy will have had the virus effectively suppressed.

In the United States, the Department of Health and Human Services has set a goal of reducing the number of new HIV infections by 75 percent within five years, and then by at least 90 percent within 10 years, for an estimated 250,000 total HIV infections averted. This initiative is known as Ending the HIV Epidemic: A Plan for America.

By raising awareness, and connecting high-risk populations to testing and health care, the Urban League Movement is helping to move African Americans toward both the 90-90-90 goal and the HHS Plan for America.

We Must Save Wildlife if We Are Ever Going to Save Ourselves

By KATE BREIMANN
Bay Journal News Service

There's so much in Maryland that's worth standing up for. Our "America in Miniature" is home to a rich diversity of natural features and wildlife.

From sailing around Annapolis and enjoying the beaches of the Eastern Shore, to hiking the Appalachian Trail and visiting state parks, Marylanders are lucky to have so many opportunities to experience the best that nature has to offer.

The benefits of spending time in nature are familiar to us all, so it's no surprise that, time and time again, polls show that Americans are passionate about protecting our wild lands and our wildlife, regardless of political ideology.

But the job of defending our wild has never been harder than it is today. A recent report found that worldwide, species and ecosystem diversity is declining faster than at any time in human history. Because of encroaching development, climate change and other impacts, the report estimates that extinction currently threatens 1 million species.

The report also points out that the loss of these species threatens humans ability to survive—our food, water and energy security, as well as our

public health, are all threatened as we continue to lose biodiversity.

The Chesapeake Bay is a defining feature of Maryland and a national treasure. It is an inherent part of our culture and an important part of the state's history. Home to bald eagles, blue crabs and about 3,600 other species of plants and animals, the Bay is one of the most productive estuaries in the world and is the largest estuary of its kind in the United States.

But even the Chesapeake is under threat—many of the species that visit or make their homes in the Bay are endangered or threatened, including the diamondback terrapin, Maryland darter and leatherback sea turtle.

Furthermore, we're seeing a decline in the presence of underwater grasses, which provide critical habitat and food to a variety of marine life, as well as add oxygen to the water and shield shorelines from erosion.

Despite those grave risks, the Trump administration recently announced a new rule that severely weakens the Endangered Species Act—one of our nation's bedrock environmental laws that protects wildlife and plants. Since President Richard Nixon signed the Endangered Species Act in 1973, it has prevented 99 percent of the species it protects from going extinct, and has allowed hundreds of them to thrive.

The new rule punches holes in this critical safety net, putting our most vulnerable species at an even greater risk. As Jeremy Cox of the Bay Journal pointed out in his August 2019 article, "Legal Battle Likely Over Trump Rules Weakening Endangered Species Protections," this rollback will have likely irreversible impacts on the vulnerable species of plants and animals that make their home in the Chesapeake.

A weakened Endangered Species Act will make it more difficult to save species in Maryland—the Maryland darter and leatherback sea turtle, for instance, which are both recognized as endangered. The weakened act will also make it easier for companies to develop pipelines and other industrial infrastructure inside wild places that are critical for endangered species' survival.

That isn't who we are. These aren't Maryland's values. That's the message we must send to our federal legislators in Washington. The ask is simple: Keep our animals from going extinct.

We are counting on our Congressional delegation to stand up for Maryland's wildlife by coming out in opposition to the Trump administration's rollback of the Endangered Species Act.

They should also work to strengthen the act and give threatened species a chance to bounce back by supporting the Wildlife Corridors Conservation Act that both houses of Congress are considering. As members of the Environment and Public Works Committee, Maryland Sens. Ben Cardin and Chris Van

Hollen are well-positioned to fight for this important bill on our behalf.

We also need to call on state legislators, here and in all the watershed states, to strengthen wildlife protections.

Now is the time to defend our wildlife, before it's gone.

Kate Breimann is an advocate for Environment Maryland. Her views do not necessarily reflect those of the Bay Journal. This article was distributed by the Bay Journal News Service.



PHOTOGRAPH CREDIT DAVE HARP

A diamondback terrapin emerges from the sand on Poplar Island off Talbot County, MD, in the Chesapeake Bay.

The Prince George's Post

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BUSINESS AND FINANCE

Social Security Matters

Ask Rusty:

About Survivor Benefits, My Own Benefits and Taxes

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

Dear Rusty:

I am 67 and still working full time but plan to retire after June of next year. Because of my income I have not been drawing my Social Security benefits; however, my income will not be a tax issue in 2020 with my planned retirement. If I begin drawing my SS when I'm 68 next June, can I draw it retroactively to the first of the year at that rate? Or, beginning January 1, 2020, can I draw on my deceased wife's SS and then switch to my higher rate upon my birthday in June? **Signed: Exploring My Options**

Dear Exploring: Since you are eligible for both a survivor benefit from your wife and your own SS retirement benefit you have a choice of which one to choose and when to claim. You can choose the survivor benefit first and continue to delay your own SS benefit, thus allowing your own benefit to continue to earn delayed retirement credits. You can delay until you are 70 years old or, depending upon your financial needs, you can claim your own benefit at any time, including June of next year.

Your survivor benefit from your wife will be 100% of the benefit your wife was receiving (or entitled to receive) at her death. You could have started that benefit when your wife passed, but it would have been reduced if that was before you reached your full retirement age (66). Survivor benefits reach maximum at your full retirement age (FRA), and at FRA you get 100% of your deceased wife's SS benefit. You can restrict your application to your survivor benefit if you choose to do so, and you can request up to 6 months in retroactive survivor benefits if you wish. By doing that, you are delaying the claim for your own benefit so it continues to grow in value.

Since you have not yet claimed your own SS retirement benefit, you have already been earning Delayed Retirement Credits (DRCs) at a rate of 2/3rds of 1% per month past your FRA of 66. DRCs accumulate until you are 70 years old, when your monthly benefit would be 32% more than it would have been at your FRA and 16% more than it will be when you turn 68 in June 2020. If, instead of continuing to delay, you decide to claim your own SS benefit in June of next year, you can claim up to 6 months retroactive benefits, but doing so will move your effective claim date back 6 months and your monthly benefit amount will be permanently reduced by about 3.3%.

So, to answer your two specific questions: yes, you can claim your SS retirement benefit in June 2020 and get 6 months retroactive benefits but your benefit will be reduced as explained above. And yes, you can claim your survivor benefit from your deceased wife in January 2020 and then switch to your own SS retirement benefit in June. From a purely financial standpoint, the latter method would give you some extra money starting in January without reducing your own SS retirement benefit. And it would also give you the option of delaying your claim for your own benefits beyond June 2020 and continuing to earn DRCs until a later time, up to age 70 if you wish. Doing so would give you a substantially higher SS retirement benefit for the rest of your life.

But in either case, the SS benefits you collect will only become part of your taxable income if your "combined income" exceeds \$25,000 (assuming you file your income tax as "single"). Your "combined income" is your normal Adjusted Gross Income (AGI) for income tax purposes, plus 50% of the SS benefits you received for the tax year, plus any non-taxable interest you may have. If your combined income exceeds \$25,000 then up to 50% of the SS benefits you received in the tax year becomes part of your overall taxable income; if your combined income exceeds \$34,000 then up to 85% of your SS benefits becomes part of your taxable income.

The 2 million member Association of Mature American Citizens (AMAC) (<https://www.amac.us>) is a vibrant, vital senior advocacy organization that takes its marching orders from its members. We act and speak on their 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 <https://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 ssadvisor@amacfoundation.org.

Accounting One-on-One Business Clinic at the Bowie BIC Jamie Lewis, CliftonLarsonAllen LLP December 17, 2019 • 11 a.m.–3 p.m.

Bowie Business Innovation Center (Bowie BIC) offers a FREE monthly Accounting Business Clinic for entrepreneurs and small businesses hosted by Jamie Lewis, Principal with CliftonLarsonAllen LLP. Jamie will be available to meet One-on-One with entrepreneurs and early stage companies who have questions related to business taxes, and accounting issues for their businesses.

- Choice of entity review and analysis—decisions made today can have a profound effect on your future.
- Tax compliance and planning checkup—bring your returns in for a quick review and discussion.
- Accounting review—are you getting the most from your software?

The sessions are opened to all Bowie BIC clients. Entrepreneurs from the Bowie business community are also welcome. Call or email Crystal Clark, Operations Director & Student Liaison (crystal.clark@bowiebic.com) to schedule a specific time with Jamie.

Bowie Business Innovation Center

Located at Bowie State University, Center for Business,
Suite 2312, 14000 Jericho Park Road, Bowie, MD 20715
301.383.1550 • www.bowiebic.com

University of Maryland School of Nursing Receives Health Professions Higher Education Excellence in Diversity Award for Second Straight Year

'INSIGHT Into Diversity' honors UMSON for commitment to diversity and inclusion.

By LAURA HAGER
University of Maryland School of Nursing

BALTIMORE, Md. (December 3, 2019)—For the second year in a row, the University of Maryland School of Nursing (UMSON) has won the Health Professions Higher Education Excellence in Diversity (HEED) Award from INSIGHT Into Diversity magazine. The HEED Award recognizes colleges and universities that demonstrate an outstanding commitment to diversity and inclusion.

The award process consists of a comprehensive and rigorous application that includes questions relating to the recruitment and retention of students and employees (and best practices for both), continued leadership support for diversity, and other aspects of campus diversity and inclusion. UMSON was among 43 institutions nationwide recognized with the HEED Award and is featured in the December 2019 issue of INSIGHT Into Diversity, the oldest and largest diversity publication in higher education.

"We are tremendously honored that the School of Nursing has been recognized for the second year in a row with this prestigious award," said UMSON Dean Jane M. Kirschling, PhD, RN, FAAN. "The process of applying for the HEED Award allows us to continually assess our progress on issues of diversity and inclusion. We know that diversifying the health care workforce—not only racially and ethnically, but also with respect to sexual orientation and gender identification, as well as an array of economic, cultural, and social factors—is an essential aspect of creating a truly ef-

fective and equitable system of health care for all persons."

UMSON has a diverse student population, with 48% of its total enrollment composed of students of ethnic and racial diversity, compared to a national average of 33 percent. Men compose almost 13% of UMSON's student body, compared to 10% nationally. The School also attracts students from various socioeconomic backgrounds, supporting about 60% with substantive merit- and need-based financial aid.

The School has a variety of programs and initiatives related to diversity and inclusion, including an LGBTQ+ ally working group, headed by Jeffrey Ash, EdD, associate dean for diversity and inclusion and assistant professor, and a member of the University of Maryland, Baltimore's (UMB) Diversity Advisory Council.

"We are again honored and very proud to be recognized for the prestigious HEED Award," Ash said. "This process requires us to take a long, hard look at ourselves internally in terms of our diversity and inclusion efforts. Diversity and inclusion and its work are not one day of the year or one month of the year. Diversity and inclusion, and inclusive excellence, is an everyday journey and occurrence. Inclusive excellence is about establishing high standards and expectations, a standard and expectation in self-awareness and engagement, and a standard that touches every aspect of our working and learning together as a school."

In its 2019 application, UMSON highlighted three areas of innovation:

- **Health and wellness:** The School's Office of Diversity and Inclusion has an affinity group called Fit 'n' Fun, which

partnered with UMB's Launch Your Life wellness program to sponsor and organize a Universitywide step challenge, the Ultimate Mileage Battle.

- **Social justice and activism:** UMSON introduced restorative justice (RJ) practices through its professional development program by facilitating circle discussion processes and starting an RJ interest group. The School aims to impact the way it addresses situations in which members of the School community harm one another, to encourage all voices to be heard in decision-making, and to address power imbalances.

- **Policies and strategy:** The School has updated its policies in two areas to enhance diversity and inclusion practices. In 2018, it began requiring chairs of search committees to engage in structured learning about implicit bias and how to run an optimal search. Secondly, UMSON has implemented a new section in its faculty and staff professional development plans in which employees create diversity goals and complete them within the annual evaluation period. This provides employees with the flexibility to set goals that fit within their roles or professional interests.

The University of Maryland School of Nursing, founded in 1889, is one of the oldest and largest nursing schools in the nation and is ranked among the top nursing schools nationwide. Enrolling nearly 2,000 students in its baccalaureate, master's, and doctoral programs, the School develops leaders who shape the profession of nursing and impact the health care environment.

With Student Loan Debt at an All-Time High, Some Students Worry About Post-Grad Life With Loans

By RACHEL BUCCHINO
Capital News Service

Student loan debt has reached an all-time high of \$1.48 trillion as of June 2019, and is expected to increase, according to the Federal Reserve Bank of New York.

Roughly 81% of this debt is composed of federal direct loans, as reported by Federal Student Aid (FSA), an office of the U.S. Department of Education.

There are two main components of student loan debt—federal loans and private loans. Federal loans are lent by the government; whereas, private loans are lent by banks and other private financial institutions. Private loans can have high, variable interest rates.

Federal loans tend to have low, fixed interest rates. The current interest rate for both direct subsidized and unsubsidized loans is 4.53%.

"The latest student loan debt statistics for 2019 show how serious the student loan debt crisis has become for borrowers across all demographics and age groups," Zack Friedman, entrepreneur and bestselling author of *The Lemonade Life*, wrote in an article published by *Forbes*.

Friedman also stated that student loan debt is now "the second highest consumer debt category" in the U.S.

Some students, however, feel that there is a general lack of knowledge about the impact that student loans can have on post-graduation life.

"Thankfully, I had the guidance of my mother, who calculated what my loans would be for each of the schools I [was] accepted to. She made the facts about student loans incredibly clear—facts I previously turned a blind eye to, thinking that finances and scholarships would just work out," Nichola Merkel, a senior at the University of

Maryland, College Park (UMD), said. "Without her, I probably would have ended up at an out-of-state school, ignorant to the debt that awaited my upon graduation."

Merkel, along with other students at UMD, agreed that without the guidance from parents or older siblings they, too, would turn a "blind eye" to the debt acquired from taking out a loan.

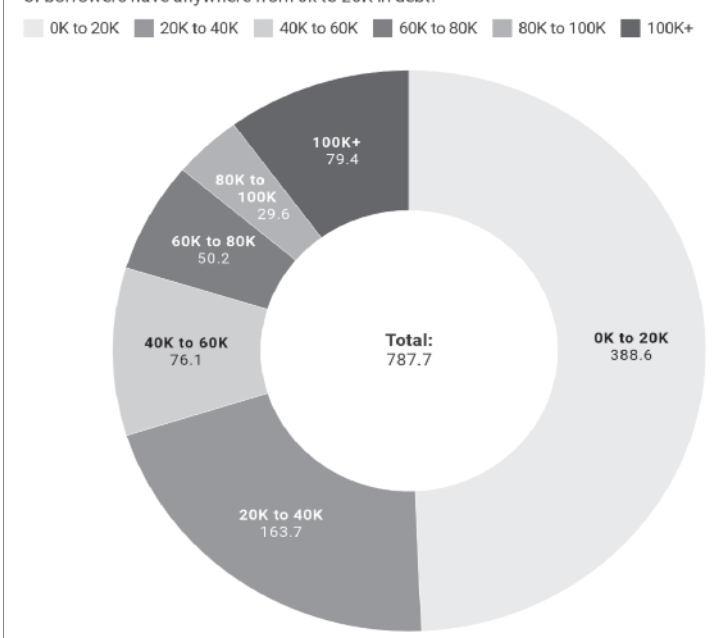
"I was fortunate enough to have an older brother who went through the entire student loan process so my family was able to assist me with what sorts of loans would have the lowest interest and would be easiest to take out and pay off," Kathryn Ozeroff, a junior at UMD, said.

With or without family guidance, the balance of federal student loan debt is still high in comparison to previous years.

The balance of all federal loans in the U.S. and Puerto Rico is \$1.36 trillion as of June 2019, reported in the Federal Student Loan Portfolio published by FSA. California, Texas, Florida, New York, Georgia, Pennsylvania, Ohio, Illinois, Michigan, North Carolina, Virginia, New Jersey, Maryland, Massachusetts and Tennessee are the top 15 states with the highest federal loan balance. These states alone comprise

Number of borrowers from each debt size in Maryland

There are 787,700 total federal student loan borrowers in Maryland as of June 2019. About 49% of borrowers have anywhere from 0k to 20k in debt.



Amount of borrowers are in thousands.
Chart: Rachel Bucchino • Source: Federal Student Aid • Created with Datawrapper

Top 15 states with the highest federal student loan debt

These states account for about 66% of the federal student loan balance as of June 2019.

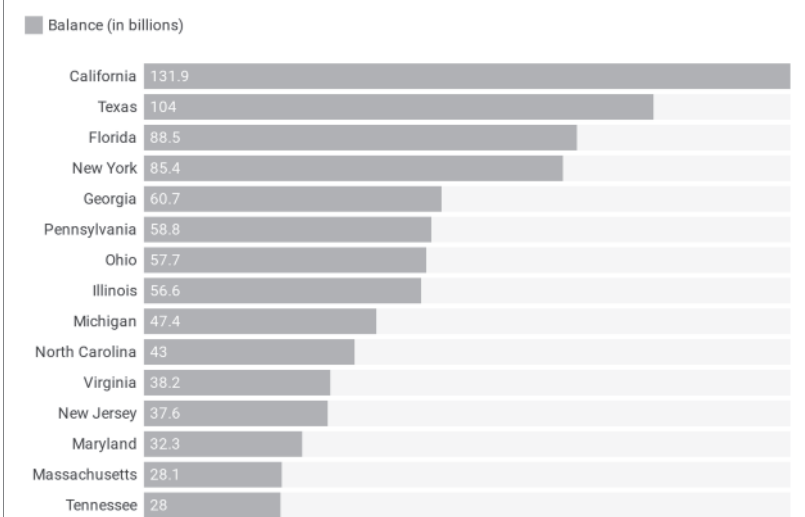


Chart: Rachel Bucchino • Source: Federal Student Aid • Created with Datawrapper

66% of the total balance.

Colleges within each state offer different federal loan packages for their students.

In Maryland, Johns Hopkins University has the highest reported tuition and fees but has the lowest average federal loan amount per undergraduate student from 2017 to 2018 at \$5,035. Washington College is next with an average amount of

\$6,206, according to the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES).

"I didn't do any research prior to applying for a loan. I had a lot of support from my parents and they helped me through the process," Molly Briguglio, a senior at UMD, said. "Even now, I am still very

OUT on the TOWN



Artists by the Tracks Open Studio December 14

in the Gateway Arts District opens their doors for their Artists by the Tracks Open Studios.

Saturday, December 14, 2019 at 11 a.m.–5 p.m.
3700 Otis Street, Mt Rainier, MD 20712

Participating Artists:

Otis Street Arts Project: 3706/ 3708 Otis Street, Mt Rainier
David Mordini, Lorenzo Cardim, Gloria Chapa, Chris Bohner, Art Drauglis, Kirsty Little, CeCi Cole McInturff, Elizabeth Curren, Eric Gordon, Shelley Lowenstein, Liz Lescault, Lisa Rosenstein, Special Guest: Zofie King, Gareth Branwyn, Glenn Richardson.

Washington Glass School: 3700 Otis Street, Mt Rainier
Tim Tate, Erwin Timmers, Michael Janis, Teri Bailey, April

Shelford, Debbi LoCicero, Trish Kent, Maxwell DeMulder, Patricia de Poel Wilberg, John Henderson, Nancy Kronstadt.

3700 Wells & Blue Fire Studios: Mt Rainier
Roberto Devers and Margaret Flaherty.

White Point Studio: 3708 Wells Avenue, Mt Rainier
Laurel Lukaszewski, Tamara Laird, Julia Walther.

Orange Door Studios: 3706 Wells Ave, Mt Rainier
Ellen Sinel, Veronica Szalus, Ellyn Weiss, Brian Williams and guest Sally Kauffman.

Back Track Studios: 3698 Wells Avenue, Mt Rainier
Kate McConnell, Dale Hunt, Michael Smallwood, Charles St. Charles, Lydia Prentiss.

3706 Otis Street Rear: Mt Rainier,
Valerie Theberge, Shahin Talishkhan, Sharon Robinson, Wayne Long.

Blue Door Studios: 3704 Otis St (Rear), Mt Rainier
Alonzo Davis, Alec Simpson.

Joe Hicks Ceramics: 3709 37th Street, Mt Rainier
—Gateway Arts District

Local Group Offering No Cost Grief Support in Largo

Holidays can trigger sadness and grief, especially for children who have suffered the death of a loved one. Fortunately, a local non-profit is providing no-cost counseling and activities for children, teens and adults in Largo. Activities include:

Surviving the Holidays: Coping with Grief

Thursday, December 12, 2019; 5–6:30 p.m.

RSVP: Teyawanda Booker, LCSW-C; 301-883-0866

Location: Capital Caring Health, 1801 McCormick Drive, Suite 180, Largo, MD 20774

Kids Connect (Support Group for Grieving Children)

4th Saturday monthly, 10–11:30 a.m.

RSVP: Paulette Davidson, M.Div; 301-883-0866

Location: Capital Caring Health, 1801 McCormick Drive, Suite 180, Largo, MD 20774

Sit 'N' Stitch: Grief Support

3rd Monday monthly, 1–3 p.m.

RSVP: Jessica Cabness, LCSW-C; 301-883-0866.

Location: Capital Caring Health, 1801 McCormick Drive, Suite 180, Largo, MD 20774

* Bring your own project/materials. Knitting instruction available on request.

Loss of Spouse or Life Partner

3rd Tuesday Monthly, 10–11:30 a.m.

RSVP: Paulette Davidson, M.Div; 301-883-0866

Location: Capital Caring Health, 1801 McCormick Drive, Suite 180, Largo, MD 20774

General Grief Support

2nd Monday monthly, 11 a.m.–12:30 p.m.

RSVP: Teyawanda Booker, LCSW-C; 301-883-0866

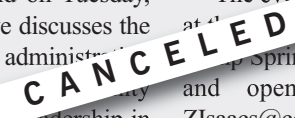
Location: Doctors Community Hospital, 2nd Floor, Conf. Rm., 8118 Good Luck Rd., Lanham, MD 20706

—Capital Caring Health

Community Conversation on December 17

Our next Community Conversation is being held on Tuesday, December 17, 2019. Join us as the County Executive discusses the Proud Priorities and initiatives that will guide our administration over the next several years. Residents will also have the opportunity to ask questions of the County Executive and agency leadership in our County Government.

The event will be held Tuesday, December 17, from 6:30–8 p.m. at the Prince George's Community College High School Auditorium (6901 Temple Hill Road, Largo, MD). Doors open at 6 p.m. While the event is free and open to the public, RSVP to Zahra Isaacs at ZIsaacs@co.pg.md.us. If you need sign language, Spanish language, or other accommodations, include that request in your RSVP.



ERIC D. SNIDER'S IN THE DARK

... Movie Review ...

A Beautiful Day in the Neighborhood

A Beautiful Day in the Neighborhood
Grade: A-
Rated PG, mild thematic elements
1 hr., 48 min.

Coming on the heels of last year's documentary "Won't You Be My Neighbor?," the unabashedly adoring Mister Rogers story "A Beautiful Day in the Neighborhood" puts us at risk of deifying the Presbyterian-minister-turned-TV-host. Frankly, I can't think of anyone in American culture more deserving of the honor. As nearly every other hero has turned out to have a dark side, some grievous flaw or hypocrisy, Mister

Rogers remains smudge-free. By every account of everyone who knew him, he was exactly as caring, compassionate, honest, and gentle as he was on "Mister Rogers' Neighborhood," where he taught millions of children valuable life lessons.

This comes across beautifully in the film, which is loosely based on Tom Junod's 1998 *Esquire* article and directed by Marielle Heller, who had the obvious good sense to cast Tom Hanks as Fred Rogers. The casting is perfect, not because Hanks does a perfect imitation of Rogers (it's more of an adaptation) but because Hanks is the closest thing to a Mister Rogers-like saint currently to be found

in Hollywood. A beloved star for almost 40 years, Hanks has settled nicely into his role as America's Dad, always there with his happy smile and twinkling eyes to reassure us that old-fashioned uprightness is still in fashion. We would kind of love to see him play a villain someday, but at the same time, no we wouldn't.

Rogers is actually not the main character in "A Beautiful Day in the Neighborhood," and the movie isn't a biopic. Rather, it's about a cynical *Esquire* journalist named Lloyd Vogel (Matthew Rhys) whose initially skeptical interactions with Rogers help him overcome the anger and bitterness in his own life. That sounds unbearably saccharine, and the fact that the screenwriters, Micah Fitzerman-Blue and Noah Harpster, were also responsible for the useless "Maleficent: Mistress of Evil" gives one pause. But Heller—whose last film, "Can You Ever Forgive Me?," was a grittier portrait of a jaded writer—seems keenly aware of the dangers here and gives the film

a down-to-earth feel, tinged with melancholy and even a bit of weirdness as we consider what a burden it must be to have everyone expect you to be perfect all the time.

Lloyd, a new father with his wife, Andrea (Susan Kelechi Watson), has issues with his own father, Jerry (Chris Cooper), who abandoned the family when Lloyd's mother was dying and has now reappeared wanting forgiveness. When Lloyd interviews Fred on the Pittsburgh set of his TV show, Fred spots his inner pain immediately and begins to gently coax it out of him. He does this simply by being himself: a positive-thinking pastor who genuinely loves every person he encounters. When he asks about Lloyd's wife and Lloyd says her name is Andrea and they've been married for eight years, Mister Rogers says, "That's a wonderful accomplishment. I would love to meet her someday"—and you can tell he means every word of it. He does meet her later, and sure enough, he is delighted to make her acquaintance.

That sincere niceness was the key to Fred Rogers' life and the key to Hanks' performance. The film begins with an episode of "Mister Rogers' Neighborhood," Hanks singing the song, putting on the sweater, changing the shoes, and so forth before sliding into the topic of today's show: forgiveness. Just seeing Hanks in bushy Mister Rogers eyebrows and hearing that kind, soothing voice coming out of him (ASMR for Generation X and their kids) was enough to bring me to tears—and I never even watched the show. You know pure goodness when you see it, and Hanks thoroughly conveys the goodness in Mister Rogers. The film ultimately has the same message as Rogers' show: that it's OK to have feelings, and that feelings can be channeled in the right direction. Isn't that beautiful?



ROTTENTOMATOES.COM

Tom Hanks portrays Mister Rogers in *A BEAUTIFUL DAY IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD*, a timely story of kindness triumphing over cynicism, based on the true story of a real-life friendship between Fred Rogers and journalist Tom Junod. After a jaded magazine writer (Emmy winner Matthew Rhys) is assigned a profile of Fred Rogers, he overcomes his skepticism, learning about empathy, kindness, and decency from America's most beloved neighbor.

Spotlight: Gingerbread Houses, *The Nutcracker*, and more!

FINAL WEEKEND:

20th Annual Gingerbread House Contest & Show

Date and Time: Saturday, December 14 and Sunday, December 15, 2019, 12–5 p.m. Groups of 10 or more are welcome by appointment.

Description: For a sweet treat, come and view an amazing display of edible gingerbread houses—no nibbling allowed! Visitors will have the opportunity to vote for the "Viewer's Choice" competition.

Cost: \$2/person

Ages: All ages are welcome

Location: Darnall's Chance House Museum, 14800 Governor Oden Bowie Drive, Upper Marlboro, MD 20772

Contact: 301-952-8010; TTY 301-699-2544

OPEN TO THE PUBLIC



Darnall's Chance House Museum

PHOTOGRAPH COURTESY OF M-NCPPC

Dedicated to the interpretation and study of the history and culture of 18th century Prince George's County, **Darnall's Chance House Museum** focuses on the experience of the colonial women who lived in the region. The museum offers innovative and interactive programs, special exhibits, and special events throughout the year. The museum is open year-round with guided tours by appointment Tuesday–Thursday, 10:00 AM–4:00 PM, walk-in tours Friday and Saturday, 12 noon–3:15 PM. Admission: Adults \$5, Seniors \$4, and Children \$2. FREE admission available to active duty military personnel and their families through the Blue Star Museum Tours program.

Darnall's Chance House Museum:

14800 Governor Oden Bowie Drive, Upper Marlboro, MD 20772
301-952-8010, TTY 301-699-2544

<https://www.mncppc.org/3055/Darnalls-Chance-House-Museum>

"Champagne" and Tchaikovsky

Date and Time: Sunday, December 15, 2019, 4–5 p.m.

Description: Sip a glass of holiday "bubbly" while you enjoy a three-piece orchestral ensemble performing an array of holiday works and selections from the holiday favorite, *The Nutcracker*, with the Coalition for African Americans in the Performing Arts (CAAPA). ADA: Yes

Cost: FREE!

Ages: All ages are welcome

Location: Montpelier Arts Center, 9652 Muirkirk Road, Laurel, MD 20708

Contact: 301-377-7800; TTY 301-699-2544

The Nutcracker

Date and Time: Saturday, December 21, 2019, 1 p.m. & 7 p.m.; Sunday December 22 at 3 p.m.

Description: Presented by the Ballet Theatre Maryland. Experience the wonder of this timeless holiday tradition. Allow yourself to be magically swept away by the tale of the young heroine Clara and her adventures to rescue her beloved Nutcracker from the Rat Queen's evil spell.

Cost: Adult \$59.75 (inc. \$4.75 service charge); Child \$39.75 (inc. \$4.75 service charge)

Ages: All ages are welcome

Location: Prince George's Community College, Center for Performing Arts, 301 Largo Road, Largo, MD 20774

Contact: 301-546-0926

Motown and More at the Holidays

Date and Time: Thursday, December 19, 2019, 11 a.m.–12 p.m. Get your tickets online, or call 301-277-1710.

Description: Come celebrate the holidays with The BRENCORE ALLSTARS Band as they perform traditional renditions of timeless classics, as well as more modern arrangements and original songs of the season from gospel to Motown. Bring holiday cheer and enjoy a fantastic time with the music of the season that we all know and love.

Cost: \$10/person. Purchase at PARKS DIRECT

Ages: 60 & better

Location: PubliK Playhouse, 5445 Landover Road, Cheverly, MD 20784

Contact: 301-277-1710; TTY 301-699-2554

A Christmas Carol at the Museum

Date and Time: Sunday, December 22, 2019, 1–4 p.m., talk begins at 1:30; performance 2–3:30, *Seating limited*.

Description: Join us for a short talk on early Victorian Christmas customs before hearing Stephen Mead perform from memory Charles Dickens' 1843 work "A Christmas Carol." Holiday refreshments available.

Cost: \$10. **Reservations:** www.laurelhistoricalsociety.org/store/p98/A_Christmas_Carol.html

Ages: All ages are welcome

Location: Laurel Historical Society & Museum, 817 Main Street, Laurel, MD 20707

Contact: 301-725-7975, www.laurelhistoricalsociety.org

Calendar of Events

December 12–December 21, 2019

Ugly Christmas Sweater Day

Date and Time: Saturday, December 14, 2019, 12–5 p.m.
Description: The holidays are here! Wear an Ugly Christmas Sweater to Janemark to receive 10% off your purchase of a bottle of wine. All discounted proceeds will be donated to a local Veterans Home in time for Christmas.

Ages: Adults
Location: Janemark Winery & Vineyard, 15200 Baden Naylor Road, Brandywine, MD 20613
Contact: 301-535-9126, info@janemarkwinery.com

The Living Christmas Tree

Date and Time: Saturday, December 14, 2019, 1:30 p.m. & 6:30 p.m.; Sunday, December 15, 1:30 p.m.
Description: Presented annually by Riverdale Ministries for over 30 years, The Living Christmas Tree is a spectacular production featuring the sights and sounds of Christmas! Each performance features dynamic holiday music performed by a symphony orchestra and choir singing from a 30-foot Christmas tree. Arrive one hour before the performance to see the setting of Jesus' birth portrayed by costumed actors and live animals. The story of Bethlehem comes to life as your children view Mary and Joseph and the baby joined by sheep and goats. Dress warmly while you enjoy complimentary refreshments.

Cost: Free
Ages: All ages are welcome
Location: Riverdale Baptist Church, 1177 Largo Road, Largo, MD 20774
Contact: 301-249-9111

Home for the Holidays Winter Celebration

Date and Time: Saturday, December 14, 2019, 2–3:30 p.m.
Description: Join Oxon Hill Library and Friends of the Oxon Hill Library for our annual holiday celebration. This event will feature Ebenezer Methodist Church Youth & Young Adult Choir singing a variety of traditional American and Ghanaian holiday songs. We will also have games, crafts, and stories to celebrate the winter holiday season- this event is fun for the whole family.

Cost: Free
Ages: Adults
Location: Auditorium, Oxon Hill Branch Library, 6200 Oxon Hill Rd, Oxon Hill, MD 20745
Contact: 301-839-2400

Holiday Concert: Sylvester Logan Sharp

Date and Time: Saturday, December 14, 2019, 8–10 p.m.
Get your tickets online, or call 301-277-1710.
Description: Start your holiday season with a dazzling performance by recording artist Sylvester Logan Sharp of the legendary group CHIC as she brings a soulful twist to your holiday favorites.

Cost: \$25/person; \$20/person: seniors (60 & better), students (18 and younger), and groups of 20 or more
Ages: All ages are welcome
Location: Publick Playhouse, 5445 Landover Road, Cheverly, MD 20784
Contact: 301-277-1710; TTY 301-699-2554

Healthy Holiday Cooking: Yams & Cabbage

Date and Time: Tuesday, December 17, 2019, 6–7 p.m.
Description: The Department of Parks and Recreation invites you to stay healthy and fit during the holidays with our healthy cooking demonstrations! No registration required. Enjoy freshly prepared samples, take home new recipes, and learn to prepare delicious meals that are good for you and your loved ones this holiday season!

Cost: Free!
Ages: All ages welcome. Children under 13 must be accompanied by a parent or guardian.
Location: Good Luck Community Center, 8601 Good Luck Road, Lanham, MD 20706
Contact: 301-446-6800; TTY 301-699-2544

Christmas Bottles & Blooms at Robin Hill

Date and Time: Thursday, December 19, 2019, 6–8 p.m.
Description: Create a beautiful centerpiece for your Holiday decor! Come relax with a glass of wine while making your own unique fresh local flower centerpiece for the holidays. This event is co-hosted by Anchored Roots Farm. No outside alcohol permitted. Must be 21 to attend. Space is limited and registration is required through eventbrite.

Cost: \$60, plus applicable eventbrite taxes & fees. Ticket includes: all flowers, materials, instruction, and first glass of wine
Ages: Adults
Location: Robin Hill Farm and Vineyards, 15800 Croom Road, Brandywine, MD 20613
Contact: 301.643.5619, info@robinhillfarmandvineyards.com

Pajama Party with Santa and Friends

Date and Time: Saturday, December 21, 2019, 11 a.m.–2 p.m.
Description: Wear your onesies and celebrate the joys of the season with Santa Claus! Enjoy holiday crafts, storytelling, holiday music, games, and more! Take a picture with Santa (nominal fees will apply)!

Cost: Child: Resident: \$12; Non-resident: \$12. Adult: Resident: \$16; Non-resident: \$21
Ages: All ages are welcome
Location: Prince George's Sports & Learning Complex, 8001 Sheriff Road, Landover, MD 20785
Contact: 301-277-1710; TTY 301-699-2544

In Concert: Greg Blackmon & Dunamis

Date and Time: Saturday, December 21, 2019, 8 p.m.–10 p.m.
Description: Greg Blackmon and Dunamis is one of Washington DC's newest and freshest recording artists to the gospel music community. The group has been blessed with such accomplishments as being nominated for the DMV Award for Best Traditional Gospel Group (2013), DC Regional Winner—Allstate Gospel Superfest (2015), and "I Commit My Life" single release and music video (2018).

Cost: Free. *Call for reservations*
Ages: All ages are welcome
Location: Harmony Hall Arts Center, 10701 Livingston Road, Fort Washington, MD 20744
Contact: 301-203-6070; TTY 301-699-2254

The Perfect Holiday Gift: A Tribute Concert Triad! The O'Jays...Phyllis Hyman...and Motown's Top Tunes Spring Concert Series at The Bowie Center for the Performing Arts

Special Pricing Only Through December 15!

By DAVID ANDRUSIA

The Bowie Center for the Performing Arts

BOWIE, Md. (December 5, 2019)—The Philadelphia Soul of the O'Jays...the sultry sounds made famous by Ms. Phyllis Hyman...and everyone's favorite Motown tunes form a tribute trifecta, this spring at The Bowie Center for the Performing Arts.

Concert impresario Robert Smoot brings his super-popular tribute concerts back to the Bowie Center with more variety and verve than anywhere else. "Our performers were thrilled by the reception they received here for our first Motown Tribute performance, and we're thrilled to bring these new shows to the Bowie," he says.

The Center's Executive Director, Jason Cook, seconds that emotion. "Robert's productions are known all around the mid-Atlantic region and beyond at the finest supper clubs and nightspots. It's a privilege to bring the Brencore All-Stars Band and his crackerjack

performing artists to our stage, and at prices that are a fraction of what audiences pay at the expensive and exclusive venues where these shows typically take place."

To make these shows even more accessible to the greatest number of people, The Bowie Center and Brencore Productions are pleased to offer special \$20.00 advance ticket purchases per performance through December 15. What better holiday gift than a fantastic musical concert family member of all ages will love?

February 15, 2020 A Tribute to the Music of the O'Jays
February 29, 2020 A Tribute to the Music of Motown
March 14, 2020 A Tribute to the Music of Phyllis Hyman
All performances are at the state-of-the-art Bowie Center for the Performing Arts Main Stage, 15200 Annapolis Rd., Bowie, MD 20715

Special \$20.00 tickets available only through December 15 at www.bowiecenter.org

NASA's Exoplanet-Hunting Mission Catches a Natural Comet Outburst in Unprecedented Detail

By CLAIRE ANDREOLI / MATTHEW WRIGHT
NASA's Goddard Space Flight Center / University of Maryland, College Park

GREENBELT, Md. (December 4, 2019)—Using data from NASA's Transiting Exoplanet Survey Satellite (TESS), astronomers at the University of Maryland (UMD), in College Park, Maryland, have captured a clear start-to-finish image sequence of an explosive emission of dust, ice and gases during the close approach of comet 46P/Wirtanen in late 2018. This is the most complete and detailed observation to date of the formation and dissipation of a naturally-occurring comet outburst. The team members reported their results in the November 22 issue of *The Astrophysical Journal Letters*.

"TESS spends nearly a month at a time imaging one portion of the sky. With no day or night breaks and no atmospheric interference, we have a very uniform, long-duration set of observations," said Tony Farnham, a research scientist in the UMD Department of Astronomy and the lead author of the research paper. "As comets orbit the Sun, they can pass through TESS' field of view. Wirtanen was a high priority for us because of its close approach in late 2018, so we decided to use its appearance in the TESS images as a test case to see what we could get out of it. We did so and were very surprised!"

"While TESS is a powerhouse for discovering planets orbiting nearby, bright stars, its observing strategy enables so much exciting additional science," said TESS project scientist Padi Boyd of NASA's Goddard Space Flight Center in Greenbelt, Maryland. "Since the TESS data are rapidly made public through NASA's Mikulski Archive for Space Telescopes (MAST), it's exciting to see scientists identifying which data are of interest to them, and then doing all kinds of additional serendipitous science beyond exoplanets."

Normal comet activity is driven by sunlight vaporizing the ices near the surface of the nucleus, and the outflowing gases drag dust off the nucleus to form the coma. However, many comets are known to experience occasional spontaneous outbursts that can significantly, but temporarily increase the comet's activity. It is not currently known what causes outbursts, but they are related to the conditions on the comet's surface. A number of potential trigger mechanisms have been proposed, including a thermal event, in which a heat wave penetrates into a pocket of highly volatile ices, causing the ice to rapidly vaporize and produce an explosion of activity, and a mechanical event, where a cliff collapses, exposing fresh ice to direct sunlight. Thus, studies of the outburst behavior, especially in the early brightening stages that are difficult to capture, can help us understand the physical and thermal properties of the comet.

Although Wirtanen came closest to Earth on December 16, 2018, the outburst occurred earlier in its approach, beginning on September 26, 2018. The initial brightening of the outburst occurred in two distinct phases, with an hour-long flash followed by a more gradual second stage that continued to grow brighter

About TESS: NASA's Transiting Exoplanet Survey Satellite is an all-sky survey mission that will discover thousands of exoplanets around nearby bright stars. TESS launched April 18, 2018 aboard a SpaceX Falcon 9 rocket. Visit: www.nasa.gov/tess-transiting-exoplanet-survey-satellite

for another 8 hours. This second stage was likely caused by the gradual spreading of comet dust from the outburst, which causes the dust cloud to reflect more sunlight overall. After reaching peak brightness, the comet faded gradually over a period of more than two weeks. Because TESS takes detailed, composite images every 30 minutes, the team was able to view each phase in exquisite detail.

"With 20 days' worth of very frequent images, we were able to assess changes in brightness very easily. That's what TESS was designed for, to perform its primary job as an exoplanet surveyor," Farnham said. "We can't predict when comet outbursts will happen. But even if we somehow had the opportunity to schedule these observations, we couldn't have done any better in terms of timing. The outburst happened mere days after the observations started."

The team has generated a rough estimate of how much material may have been ejected in the outburst, about one million kilograms

See NASA Page A8

Earth TALK™ Paper Waste: Have We Solved This Problem?

Dear EarthTalk:

You don't hear much anymore about the cutting of our forests to make paper. Has this destructive practice just moved overseas where we don't have to confront it, or have increases in recycling in recent years made paper production less destructive?

—J. W., Greenville, SC

It's true that saving paper (and in turn saving trees) used to be a big discussion topic at home, school and office, but these days you don't hear much about it. This is likely because paper recycling has become ubiquitous; most of us are now well-versed in how to sort recyclable paper from other "waste."

According to the American Paper and Forest Association (AF&PA), upwards of two-thirds of all paper consumed in the U.S. was recovered for recycling in 2018. What this means is that a lot of the paper we use now gets made with recycled materials that don't cause more logging and deforestation.

A big player in this march forward has been the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC), an international non-profit that sets standards on forest products and then certifies and labels those that meet the standards as eco-friendly. Another major factor has been the establishment of guidelines set forth and agreed to by 200 governmental and other entities in 2014's New York Declaration of Forests (NYDP), an international agreement to "end natural forest loss" by 2030.

Despite this progress, deforestation for paper still continues unabated in Indonesia and other parts of the developing world where government oversight is non-existent and profit incentives are too great for illegal loggers to ignore. Some 10 percent of global deforestation (a major driver of climate change) is due to logging for wood products including paper, according to the Union of Concerned Scientists (UCS).

UCS reports that clearing tropical forests and replacing them with mono-cultural plantations of so-called "fastwood" trees like



IMAGE CREDIT: TOM FISK, PEXELS

The forests of Indonesia are still falling to feed the world's demand for paper products.

acacia, partly to make virgin paper, accounts for more deforestation across Indonesia than more infamous environmental bogeymen like palm oil production and coal mining. "This is particularly harmful because about a quarter of fastwood plantations were cleared on carbon-rich peat soils," reports UCS, "adding significantly to global warming pollution."

Beyond recycled paper itself, there are some promising alternatives to wood pulp as a feedstock for paper production. Some well-known alt-paper feedstocks include fiber crops like bamboo, kenaf, hemp, flax and jute, agricultural scraps such as sugarcane bagasse, corn husks or straw, and textiles left-over in the production of fabrics and rope. A newer entrant in the green paper alternatives playing field is calcium carbonate—literally rock dust—which is made by pulverizing construction waste and fusing it together with plastic before compressing it with massive rollers into its final paper-thin form.

What about, you might ask, the rapidly-

growing digital age we find ourselves in now? Isn't that saving trees? Yes, but consider the electricity load of all the computers, tablets and phones, as well as the server farms and network switching facilities that keep your e-mail inbox full and your Facebook feed full of new content. They're largely powered by coal and other fossil fuels. Our addiction to digital information might just be taking a larger toll on the planet than if we still got our information the old-fashioned way—from actual books, magazines, newspapers and printed reports.

CONTACTS: AF&PA, afandpa.org; UCS, ucsusa.org; FSC, fsc.org; NYDP, forestdeclaration.org.

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