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In Maryland, Biden Signs Order Affecting 200,000 Workers in Federal Building Contracts

By TATYANA MONNAY AND RYAN WHITE
Capital News Service

UPPER MARLBORO, Md. (Feb. 4, 2022)—Construction workers and unions will enjoy new protections on major federally-contracted construction projects after President Joe Biden signed an executive order here Friday.

The order would affect an estimated 200,000 workers by requiring federal construction contracts worth over \$35 million to use project labor agreements, according to the White House.

"It will help guarantee a consistent supply of high-quality, highly-trained workers," the president told union workers at Ironworkers Local 5 here, a suburb of the nation's capital.

Project labor agreements establish the terms and conditions of the employment of workers on a per-project basis. The contractor awarded the federal contract must sign the pre-negotiated PLA with the corresponding union organization.

Then-President Barack Obama signed an executive order encouraging executive agencies to consider requiring the

use of PLAs for federal construction projects worth over \$25 million in 2009.

This new executive order makes PLA use mandatory.

The Biden-Harris administration says the order will make it easier for workers to settle on these agreements and will also expedite building times on

major construction projects.

"History shows us that projects under PLAs come in on time, often under budget, and put people to work in good paying jobs with benefits so that everyone wins," Sen. Chris Van Hollen, D-Maryland, told Capital News Service in an interview. He attended the Biden signing ceremony, along with

See CONTRACTS Page A4



UPPER MARLBORO, Md.—President Joe Biden speaks Friday to Ironworkers Local 5 here before signing an executive order that will affect about 200,000 workers under federally contracted construction projects.

PHOTO CREDIT TATYANA MONNAY/CAPITAL NEWS SERVICE

Alzheimer's Association To Host Maryland State Advocacy Week Starting February 14

Maryland residents invited to champion critical Alzheimer's legislation

By CINDY SCHELHORN
Alzheimer's Association

MCLEAN, Va. (Jan. 28, 2022)—The Alzheimer's Association will host its annual Maryland State Advocacy Week from February 14–18, featuring virtual opportunities for Marylanders to learn about policy priorities and engage with their legislators on key issues. Highlights of the week's events include:

Feb. 15 at 10 a.m. Maryland State Long-Term Care Ombudsman Stevanne Ellis will discuss her office's vital work during the pandemic to aid seniors in nursing homes and assisted living facilities.

Feb. 17 at 10 a.m. Maryland Secretary of Aging Rona Kramer and Maryland Department of Aging Deputy Secretary Bernice Hutchinson will share Maryland's plan for its seniors over the next five years.

Feb. 18 at 10 a.m. Quincy Samus, chair of Maryland's Virginia I. Jones Alzheimer's Disease and Related Disorders Council, will present the Council's new Alzheimer's State Plan.

"The Alzheimer's Association is grateful to Maryland De-

partment of Aging Secretary Rona Kramer, State Long-Term Care Ombudsman Stevanne Ellis—a hero during the COVID-19 pandemic—and most importantly, our advocates, said Eric Colchamiro, Director of Government Affairs for the Alzheimer's Association in Maryland. "Our annual state advocacy week presents an opportunity for our advocates to come together virtually to engage elected officials and learn from policymakers."

In addition to the meetings above, there will be opportunities for community members to meet virtually with their legislators. Meetings confirmed to date include:

Feb. 16 at 5:30 p.m. Charles County residents meeting with Senator Arthur Ellis and Delegate Edith Patterson.

Feb. 17 at 4:30 p.m. Prince George's County residents meeting with Delegate Nick Charles.

Feb. 17 at 5:30 p.m. Calvert County residents meeting with Delegate Mark Fisher.

See ADVOCACY Page A6

Prince George's County's Newest Senior Community, The Lewis, Now Leasing

By PRESS OFFICER
Prince George's County MD

LARGO, Md. (Jan. 31, 2022)—The Lewis, a new-construction senior apartment community located in the Town Square at Suitland Federal Center, is now accepting leasing applications. The new senior community is slated to be completed in March 2022 and will offer a mix of market rate and affordable units available for rent. Seniors must be 62 years or older to apply.

"During the last several months we have made tremendous strides in our efforts to preserve and expand affordable housing in our County," said Prince George's County Executive Angela Alsobrooks. "As we continue to move our County forward, it is extremely important for us to ensure that our longtime residents, especially our seniors, can remain in their homes and neighborhoods. By utilizing the Home Investment Partnerships and Payment in Lieu of Taxes programs, we are offering our seniors access to much-needed affordable housing."

The Prince George's County Department of Housing and Community Development awarded \$1.5 million in Home Investment Partnerships (HOME) funds and a Payment in Lieu of Taxes (PILOT) to the developers of this project, al-

lowing them the ability to offer affordable units to seniors with restricted incomes. The Redevelopment Authority (RDA) of Prince George's County is the Master Developer and landowner of the Town Square at Suitland Federal Center and supervised the development of this project.

The Lewis, located at 2901 Toles Park Drive, Suitland, MD, is a \$34 million complex with 137-units. 72 units are at 50% Average Medium Income (AMI) rents, 45 units at 60% AMI, 16 units at 80% AMI, and 4 units are unrestricted or market rate.

"Prince George's County is committed to the goal of building and preserving housing affordability and we are working hard to diversify the County's housing stock," said Aspasia Xypolia, Director of the Prince George's County Department of Housing and Community Development. "We are delighted to be offering this new and wonderful apartment community for County seniors. We continue to work closely with residents, community-based organizations, and housing advocacy groups to identify the right balance of programs and opportunities to deliver upon our housing goals and to turn these shared visions into realities for our community."

This brand-new senior community is nestled in the center

of the rapidly developing Town Square at Suitland Federal Center. It will feature a rooftop terrace, yoga room, fitness center, game room, and club room. Laundry rooms will be located on each floor and 21 units will have in-unit washers and dryers. The building is designed to meet strict "green criteria," which includes Energy Star appliances and other measures, resulting in healthy homes with low utility costs. The 6-story building is part of a vibrant, pedestrian-oriented neighborhood with retail and recreation coming soon. Residents will be a short walk away from the Suitland Metro Station and can easily access surrounding neighborhoods.

The development team for The Lewis includes Mission First Housing Development Corporation, The Henson Development Company, and the L.A. Bolden Company. The development team is partnering with the White Rose Foundation, a 501(c)3 organization and part of The Links, Inc., to provide office space in the building to specifically serve Suitland area seniors. The RDA has established a long-term lease with Mission First Housing Development Corporation.

For more information, contact the leasing office at The Lewis or visit The Lewis website: www.TheLewisMD.com

County Council Approves Proposed Correspondence Seeking Transfer of Federal Properties to Preserve Over 200 Acres of Prince George's County Land

Council Approves Joint Letter With County Executive to Federal Government and Maryland Federal Delegation

By ANGELA ROUSON
Prince George's County Council Media

The Prince George's County Council, during a virtual session on Tuesday, Feb. 1, 2022, unanimously voted to authorize the signature of Council Chair Calvin S. Hawkins, II, on a Joint Letter with County Executive Angela D. Alsobrooks addressed to the Federal Office of Management & Budget (OMB), Public Building Reform Board (PBRB) and the Maryland Federal Delegation - Senator Ben Cardin, Senator Chris Van Hollen and House Majority Leader Steny Hoyer and Congressman Anthony Brown. The Joint Letter supports the transfer of three federal properties to preserve over 200 acres of land in Prince George's County.

The correspondence responds to the December 27, 2021 "First Round" Recommendations of the Public Building Reform Board required by the Federal Assets Sale and Transfer Act of 2016, P.L. 114-287 (FASTA), which has a responsibility to identify opportunities for the Federal Government to reduce its inventory of real property to the benefit of the taxpayers. The County response addressed proposed PBRB recommendations on three properties located in Prince George's County:

- A 70-acre wooded parcel owned by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) in Glenn Dale
- A 100-acre wooded parcel at Goddard Space Flight Center known as NASA Area 400 in Lanham
- 41-acres of vacant property known as White Flint Parcel K owned by the General Services Administration ("GSA") (in both Montgomery and Prince George's counties).

The Joint Letter requests that the NASA 400 prop-

erty be transferred to the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service and incorporated into the Patuxent Research Refuge area. It also requests that the USDA Glenn Dale and White Flint properties be transferred to the Maryland-National Capital Park & Planning Commission (M-NCPPC) and/or Montgomery Parks Department for future parks and recreation use.

Council Chair Calvin S. Hawkins, II, thanked his colleagues and the Alsobrooks Administration for focusing on this important issue.

"I want to thank the County Executive and my colleagues for recognizing the significance of maintaining these properties for public uses in the future and expressing the County's position as part of the federal disposition process."

Prince George's County Executive Angela Alsobrooks noted the collaborative efforts to preserve County land.

"Collaborating on the future of these federal parcels allows us to showcase how Prince George's County is a great place for expanded opportunities for recreation, open space, and thoughtful preservation. We look forward to engaging our federal partners so that they too can help deliver upon making that vision a reality for all of our residents."

District 4 Council Member Todd M. Turner, who represents two of the areas impacted by the recommendations, also addressed the critical role of collaboration in the County's preservation efforts.

The County joined with several Members of Congress, and the M-NCPPC, Montgomery Parks Department and community groups, to submit a letter to OMB, which has directed to PBRB to reevaluate its recommendations, and provide additional outreach to impacted communities and governments.

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TOWNS *and* NEIGHBORS

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

Shirley and Bill motorcycled through 47 states in 12 years

Shirley Louise "Big Nana" Holmes, 89, longtime Skyline resident and Federal Records Center retiree, died January 20 at home with her family by her side. She grew up in Dawn, Va., daughter of Richard and Susie Carter.

She graduated from Caroline High School in Bowling Green, Va., and in 1954 met her soulmate, William Franklin "Bill" Holmes, of Newtown, Va. They married Aug. 8, 1955.

After moving to Washington, Shirley worked with the Department of Defense at Bowling AFB. She worked the nightshift so she could be home daytimes to be a full-time mother to her six children. Later she transferred to the Federal Records Center where she was responsible for committing thousands of documents to a new medium, "microfiche," and was rewarded for her accuracy and efficiency. She retired with 40 years but worked occasionally for the Show Place Arena and Equestrian Center.

In 1962 the family joined Emmanuel Baptist Church. Shirley sang in the Choir, worked with the Sick and Shut-in Ministry and was tapped to join the Progressive Club. She and her Sister-in-Christ, Elfrida Lee, started a 2-person ministry which provided gift baskets for the shut-in. She was honored with a plaque for 50 years of dedicated service.

They moved to Skyline in 1968 and Shirley became involved in her children's activities and in the Skyline Citizens Association.

In 1993, through son Warren, Shirley and Bill joined the Blue Knights International Law Enforcement Motorcycle Club and logged over 50,000 miles by motorcycle encompassing 47 states in 12 years.

Shirley served with children's organizations and Habitat and spoke every Mother's Day at an event hosted by retired police officers. She traveled the world with her children and was honored by the fire department on her 85th birthday.

She was predeceased by Bill, her husband of nearly 50 years, and son Warren. Survivors include daughters Portia, Charlene and Connie; sons Stanley, Anthony and Troy; five grandchildren and five great-grandchildren. Services were by Rev. Christopher L. Nichols, Pastor of Emmanuel Baptist, at Pope Funeral Home. Burial will be March 7, 11:15 a.m. at Cheltenham.

Shirley loved to bake, and always made two cakes—one for home and one for a friend.

Town of Morningside: Valentine party

Kids' Valentine's Day Craft Party will be Sunday, Feb. 13, 1-3 p.m. at the Municipal Center. Kids will make a special Valentine's Day gift for their special person. No charge for admission but snacks available for purchase (cash only). Space is limited to first-come and a parent must remain on-site. Reservations required and pre-payment for snacks. Call 301-736-2300.

The next Town Meeting will be Tuesday, Feb. 15, 7 p.m. at the Municipal Center.

Jeff West dies at 66

Jeffrey West, of Charles Town, W.Va., the youngest of the five West boys, died Jan. 23 after three years fighting pancreatic cancer. He grew up on Marianne Drive in Morningside, attended Crossland High School and served in the Army for more than 20 years.

Survivors include his wife Laura and sons Jeff Jr. and Danny. Thank you to his oldest brother, Robert Dice West Jr., for this sad announcement. My condolences to all the much-loved West family.

Neighbors & other good people

Edward Burroughs, III was the only candidate listed for Prince George's Special General Election on Feb. 1. I received my ballot, voted and mailed it. The only other candidate listed was "Other." So, now Ed is my District 8 County Council representative. I congratulate him and look forward to going to him when I have issues.

Nathaniel Exum, 66, who served as a member (D) of the Maryland Senate 1999-present and member of the Maryland House of Delegates 1975-1999, died Dec. 3 at his home in Peppermill Village. When asked what he thought was the most urgent problem facing his jurisdiction, he answered, "Education." Services were at First Baptist Church of Highland Park in Landover.

Applause!

The Prince George's County Memorial Library System has received a national award for innovation from the Urban Libraries Council.

MedStar Southern Maryland Hospital Center has been named in the 2022 U.S. News & World Report "Best Hospitals" publication.

Changing landscape

The Washington Football Team, which had

been the Redskins, is now the Commanders. John Kelly's Washington, in The Washington Post, asks what the nickname could possibly be.

The bridge on Temple Hill Road is finally open, as of Feb. 3.

On Groundhog Day, Punxsutawney Phil saw his shadow. Which means we have six more weeks of winter.

Last week I remembered the Knickerbocker Theater collapse 100 years ago, Jan. 27, 1922. Last weekend there were two remembrance events for the 100th anniversary of the disaster. The first was a candlelight vigil that began Friday at 6 p.m. The second event was a centennial commemoration that began at noon on Saturday at 18th and Columbia Road NW. Both events will remember the disaster victims, the rescue workers and those who cared for the injured and dying.

A home at 4413 Morgan Road, in Morningside, has sold for \$180,000.

Morningside Memories: February 1955

The new, revised edition of the Morningside Directory is distributed door-to-door by members of the Women's Civic Group, the price, 35 cents. Included in the Directory is a list of the Morningside Town Council: Matthew P. Rosch, mayor; W. Jay Lowery, public utilities; Donald P. Holmes, roads; Robert A. Morris, council secretary; and Lee H. Parr, Health & Safety.

Mary's COVID-19 report

Through 5 p.m. Wednesday Feb. 2, the total Maryland cases were 958,129. Of those, 1,349 were reported the last day. As for deaths in Maryland, there have been 13,572, of which 40 were the last day.

Milestones

Happy birthday to Sophia Grace Shives (Ruth Sanford's great-great granddaughter), Angie Miller and Pat Miller, Feb. 13; Joan Rose, Scott Jenkins, Mary Reilly (her 97th!) and Father Ted Hegnauer, Feb. 15; David Chambers and Mary Young, Feb. 15; Sarah Anderson and Dean Woods, Feb. 16; Danny Fowler and Charlene Holmes, Feb. 18.

Happy anniversary to Frank & Soo Wilson, Feb. 15; and to Wilda and Joe Cheseldine who were married Feb. 16, 1958, at Mount Calvary Church in Forestville.

Won't you be my Valentine?

by Audrey Johnson 301-922-5384

Brandywine-Aquasco

CIAA TOURNAMENT

2022 CIAA Men's & Women's Basketball Tournament will be held February 22-26, 2022. The Intercollegiate Athletic Association (CIAA), the nation's oldest historically Black Athletic conference, invites you to the 2022 tournament in Baltimore, Maryland. The highly anticipated week-long celebration will be the 77th annual celebration of HBCU championship basketball sports and culture. For more information and updates, visit: bowiestate.edu/ciaa or ciaatournament.org. Visit the CIAA Tournament COVID Protocols.

INTERNSHIP & CAREER FAIR

Bowie State University will hold an Internship & Career Fair February 18, 2022, from 10 a.m.-1 p.m. This event provides an opportunity for representatives of various field agencies and employers in the community to share information about their program offerings and any job postings with Bowie State University students. The event will be virtual. Contact Vivian Shannon-Ramsey Email: vshannonramsey@bowiestate.edu. Phone Categories: Career development Center, Lecture/Discussion.

BRIDGE REPLACEMENT UPDATE

The District 9 office has been in regular communication with DPW&T regarding the Temple Hills Road (completion first quarter of 2022) and Croom Station Road (estimated completion early winter 2021), bridge replacement projects. The replacement of the two bridges is a high priority for DPW&T and the District 9 office.

COPING WITH SUICIDE

Community members in need of grief counseling or mental health support are encouraged to contact Community Crisis Services, Inc. by dialing 211 and pressing 1 or call 800-273-TALK. Residents can also call the Affiliate Sante Group crisis support line at 301-429-2185. The National Suicide Prevention Lifeline is also a hotline for individuals in crisis or for those looking to help someone. To speak with a certified listener, call 1-800-273-8255. Received information from Patch (Upper Marlboro news alerts).

SECOND ANNUAL DISTRICT 9 DAY OF SERVICE AWARDS

January 17, 2022, we honored and celebrated the life and legacy of the great Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., and the example of service that he has given us all. It was a dynamic evening at the 2nd Annual District 9 Day of Service Awards presented by Vice-Chair Harrison and Co-Host Taylor Thomas in partnership with the Bold Beautiful Brilliant Girls Youth Empowerment Group.

The event highlighted some of the most notable community heroes of Prince George's County's District 9. Our super lineup included Congressman Anthony Brown, Council Chair Calvin Hawkins, RB sensation Maysa, gospel legend Stephen Hurd, local vocalist Kenny Sway, Vybe Band, poet Tasha Carter, and Saxophonist Edward Martin. Information received from District 9 office.

CONGRATULATIONS

Congratulations to Brendan Johnson, for earning a 3.7 GPA for the

semester, honor roll and he just found out that he is ranked in the top twenty-five for all sophomores in basketball in the state of Maryland. Sky's the limit. Brendan is the son of James and Vera Johnson. Grandson of Ernest Johnson and late Brenda Turner Johnson. He is the great grandson of the late James Garnell and Ruth Turner of Brandywine, Maryland.

COUNCIL CONNECTIONS

Tuesday, January 25th Council session concluded with a Vision Zero briefing update, a county initiative to eliminate all traffic fatalities and severe injuries, while increasing safe, health, equitable mobility for all including people who bike, walk, drive, and use transit.

NEED HEALTH INSURANCE?

The deadline for Marylanders to apply for health insurance through Maryland Health Connection has been extended until Monday, February 28. Prince George's County Health Connect is available Monday through Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. to assist residents with health insurance needs. For more information and to get covered, visit: <https://www.pghealthconnect.org>.

UPDATE: BULKY TRASH PICKUP

Want to get rid of bulky trash? The County is rolling out a newer, faster, and improved curbside bulky trash collection pickup. Starting February 14, residents can place two bulky items curbside on your regular trash day, without an appointment. Bulky appointments are still required for white goods/appliances and scrap tires. For a list of acceptable items and more information, visit <http://mypgc.us/clearthecurb>.

STUDENTS IN ACTION

Congratulations to Bowie State University communications major Kiarah Williams who participated in a White House Press briefing on January 26 with Secretary Marcia L. Fudge, Head of the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development.

COVID-19 UPDATE

Bowie State Athletics has decided to extend the policy of not allowing spectators, fans, and media for the remainder of the 2021-22 men's and women's basketball season. All home games will continue to be streamed live via the Bulldog Sports network. For more information, please review the spectator policy.

ANNUAL HBCU SUNDAY

February 20, 2022, Annual HBCU Sunday. During the 11:15 a.m. worship service, Washington National Cathedral will welcome alumni, organizations, families, and community representing the Historical Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) in a special Eucharist as part of Black History Month on the seventh Sunday after Epiphany.

BSU alumni are encouraged to wear their black and gold if they attend the service in person. The service will also be streamed on the church's website (cathedral.org) or YouTube Channel.

Around the County

Bowie State's Anderson and Harris Selected as Honorees for Church Mutual "Protecting the Greater Good" Award

BOWIE, Md. (Feb. 2, 2022)—Bowie State's Myles Anderson and Anii Harris of the Bowie State men's and women's basketball team was honored as two of 12 awardees of the Church Mutual Insurance Company, S.I. third annual "Church Mutual Protecting the Greater Good" award announced by the Central Intercollegiate Athletic Association (CIAA) Tuesday.

The \$1,000 contributions are awarded in the name of one male and one female student athlete participating in the CIAA tournament from each of the 12 CIAA member institutions.

The student athletes were chosen based on their demonstrated positive impact on their school, fellow students or community. The scholarships, disbursed to the general scholarship fund in the names of the selected student athletes, can be awarded at the discretion of the institution to any deserving CIAA member student.

Anderson, a native of Lanham, Md., started his own company, Mboogie Visuals, doing graphic design, photography and videography. He uses his company to impact the campus community providing graphics, photos and videos for several different events such as graduation, Greek life, athletics and lifestyle. Anderson is a junior majoring in visual communications. He takes pride in his work and captures many memorable moments that will last a lifetime for his peers on campus.

Harris is a sophomore computer science major is a great teammate and classmate, having above a 3.0 GPA every semester. The Ellicott City, Md., native works hard on the basketball court and always encourages her teammates to be better. Both on and off the court, she takes constructive criticism well and uses it to become a better person. Her devotion to her community exemplifies strong moral fiber and character.

For the most up-to-date information on Bowie State University Athletics, please visit www.bsbulldogs.com.

—Jolisa Williams, Bowie State University

Local Students Honored

Local Resident Named to President's List at Gonzaga University

SPOKANE, Wash. (Feb. 4, 2022)—The following local resident has earned placement on the Gonzaga University President's List for fall semester 2021. Students must earn a 3.85 to 4.0 grade-point average to be listed.

Glenn Dale, MD: **Carissa Victoria Halili**

—Bonnie Harper, Gonzaga University

Fairfield University Congratulates Fall 2021 Dean's List

FAIRFIELD, Conn. (Jan. 31, 2022)—The following Fairfield University student received Dean's List Honors for the Fall 2021 semester.

Hyattsville, MD: **June Dodson**

In order to be placed on the Dean's List, students must have completed a minimum of 12 credit hours in a semester, have no outstanding or incomplete grades for that semester, and have attained a semester grade point average of 3.50 or better.

—Susan Cipollaro, Fairfield University

Park University Announces Fall 2021 Graduates

PARKVILLE, Mo. (Jan. 25, 2022)—Park University announces its Fall 2021 graduates. The list of graduates includes those from the University's flagship campus in Parkville as well as its 40 additional campuses across the country and online worldwide. Park hosted its Kansas City Area Fall Commencement ceremony on Dec. 11, featuring keynote speaker Adelaida Severson, Ph.D., president and chief executive officer of Bushtex Inc., an international satellite communications firm in Gilbert, Ariz. The University had 1,340 students eligible to graduate—371 students received a master's degree and/or graduate certificate, and 969 students received a bachelor's degree, associate degree and/or undergraduate certificate.

Bachelor of Arts

- Vanessa Elizabeth Canas, Sociology, Fort Lee, Va. (attended Bladensburg High School, Bladensburg, Md.)

Bachelor of Science

- Bradley Alaska, Information and Computer Science/Computer Science, Bowie, Md. (attended Lakeland High School, Rathdrum, Idaho) *Summa Cum Laude (3.9 to 4.0 grade point average)*
- Brian Scott Hawk, Management/Human Resource, Accokeek, Md.
- Kwaku Kotsanu, Management/Logistics, Accokeek, Md. *Magna Cum Laude (3.7 to 3.899 GPA)*
- Brooke Lynn Newberry, Social Psychology, Upper Marlboro, Md. *Summa Cum Laude (3.9 to 4.0 grade point average)*
- Patricia A. Trotter, Management/Human Resource, Upper Marlboro, Md. (attended Seneca Vocational High School, Buffalo, N.Y.)

Associate of Science

- Spencer A. Allen, Criminal Justice Administration, Upper Marlboro, Md. (attended Culpeper County High School, Culpeper, Va.)

—Brad Biles, Park University

No Changes to Waste Collection Services Due to Presidents Day

County government offices, with the exception of public safety agencies, will be closed on Monday, February 21, in observance of the holiday.

Curbside collection of yard trim/organics, trash, and recycling will remain on regular schedule for residents receiving County provided services. There are NO changes due to the holiday. For more information on waste collection services, visit environment.mypgc.us.

For more information on County services that are suspended, visit mypgc.us.

—The DOE Sprout, Prince George's County MD

COMMUNITY

Black History Month: Bowie Native Earns Fellowship, Gateway Into Space Industry

By PRESS OFFICER
Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University

Exemplifying Black excellence in aerospace, Bowie native **Liam Johnson** was one of four Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University students who won 2022 Patti Grace Smith Fellowships, selections that set each of them up with paid summer internships at respected space firms, marking their first steps into the industry and on their career paths.

An Aerospace Engineering sophomore, Johnson will intern at Hawkeye 360.

"The Patti Grace Smith Fellowship focuses on addressing matters of racial and ethnic equity and inclusion in the aerospace industry," said Dr. Brittany Davis, director of Embry-Riddle's Office of Prestigious Awards and Fellowships. "In addition to providing Black undergraduates with their first hands-on work experience at one of the nation's premiere aerospace firms, recipients are given two personal mentors to help them navigate their future career."

In the program's inaugural year, in 2021, three Embry-Riddle students were selected as fellows. Approximately 40 students are chosen nationally each year.

"My motivation is my mother," Johnson said, adding that he admires how his mother battled adversity her entire life to, first, emigrate to the United States, and then graduate in the top of her classes at both Harvard and the Mayo Clinic before becoming a dentist. He also cited his Aunt Margaret,



PHOTO COURTESY EMBRY-RIDDLE AERONAUTICAL UNIVERSITY

Bowie native Liam Johnson

Uncle Frank and girlfriend as motivation, referencing each of their various accomplishments, degrees and skills. "My family reminds me that I can do better and that I need to work hard to bring the life I want to live, and the change I want to accomplish to fruition."

Johnson remembers having a tough time in high school, which taught him to "always stay true to my professionalism and to maintain composure." After graduation, he plans to become his own boss, lead an outreach mission and continue to invent and innovate systems for use in aerospace and beyond.

Learn more about Embry-Riddle's Aerospace Engineering programs online: <https://erau.edu/degrees/bachelor/aerospace-engineering>.

Library Celebrates Inventors and Innovators for Black History Month

By NICHOLAS BROWN
PGCMLS

LARGO, Md. (Feb. 1, 2022)—Black history and culture are a programmatic focus year-round at the Prince George's County Memorial Library System (PGCMLS). This Black History Month, the Library's virtual programs explore Black creativity and ingenuity across disciplines with read alouds for children, an appearance by author and journalist Wanda Smalls Lloyd, a new series that explores Black inventors and innovators curated by the Library's Workforce and Community Development Team, the Black Authors in Sci-Fi & Fantasy series presented by the PGCMLS Writers' Group, book discussions, an open mic event, and film discussions. Registration required for select programs.

Prince Georgians are encouraged to explore Black history and culture locally and nationally via the Library's online resources and Sojourner Truth Room at the Oxon Hill Branch Library. Black LGBTQ+ artists are invited to submit their work for inclusion in "Black and Proud+" a forthcoming community art exhibit to be displayed this winter and spring at PGCMLS branch libraries. Submissions are due February 11. Learn more at pgcmls.info/black-heritage.

Featured Online Resources:

PGCMLS Black Heritage Webpage

An introduction to Black History Month and black heritage curated by PGCMLS staff. Includes recommended streaming and reading content.

African American Experience

Research African American history and culture, including primary sources, timelines, audio clips, photographs, maps, and images.

African American Heritage

Research collection was created in partnership with leading African American genealogists and recognized leaders in genealogical information and consists of a mix of resources, records, and tools. Connect with a community of research experts, whose mentoring and assistance can be the difference between research success and futility.

About the Sojourner Truth Room

The Oxon Hill Branch of the Prince George's County Memorial Library System was built on the site of the Sojourner Truth Elementary School in 1967, at the height of the Civil Rights Movement. In response to the Civil Rights era's growing request for African American research materials, the Oxon Hill Branch Library's special collection located in the Sojourner Truth Room was created. Named for Sojourner Truth, the collection continues to honor one of this country's truly remarkable women and has become an outstanding regional resource. This comprehensive collection of reference materials on African American history and culture includes over 18,000 cataloged items (many are rare or out-of-print), periodicals, sheet music by African American composers, photographs, and posters. The pamphlet file contains pamphlets, clippings, and other reference sources. Explore the collection at pgcmls.info/sojourner-truth-room.

Event Highlights

African American Inventors and Innovators Series (All ages)
Wednesday, February 16, 6–7:15 p.m.: Transportation
Wednesday, February 23, 6–7:15 p.m.: Science

Author Events Co-presented with the Prince George's County Office of Human Rights (Adults)

Thursday, February 10, 7–8 p.m.: NewSouth Books Series: Wanda Smalls Lloyd on "Coming Full Circle"
Thursday, February 17, 7–8 p.m.: NewSouth Books Series: Cole S. Manley on "The Unlikely World of the Montgomery Bus Boycott"

Events for Children and Families

Friday, February 11, 4–5 p.m.: Craft and Create: Royal Portraits (All ages)
Tuesday, February 15, 4–5 p.m.: African American History Read Aloud (Ages 5–12)
Wednesday, February 16, 7–7:45 p.m.: Plant-based Soul Food Cooking (All ages)
Tuesday, February 22, 4–5 p.m.: African American History Read Aloud (Ages 5–12)
Wednesday, February 23, 7–8 p.m.: Open Mic: Celebrating Black Culture (All ages)

Black Authors in Sci-Fi & Fantasy Series (Adults)

Wednesday, February 23, 6–7 p.m.: Black Authors in Sci-Fi & Fantasy

See LIBRARY Page A7

BUSINESS AND FINANCE

Social Security Matters

Ask Rusty:

Will My Social Security Benefits Ever Be Non-Taxable?

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

Dear Rusty: If we take our Social Security at our full retirement age (66 years and 6 months for both of us) and we both continue to work, what are the income tax consequences? Is there an age at which we can still work and draw Social Security without tax consequences on our benefits? **Signed: Overtaxed Couple**

Dear Overtaxed Couple: Regardless of when you claim your Social Security benefits, whether those benefits are subject to federal income tax depends entirely upon your income as reported to the IRS. This is true even if you collect Social Security benefits after you reach your full retirement age—there is no age at which SS benefits become exempt from Federal Income Tax. Here's how it works:

Taxation of your Social Security benefits depends on two things—first, the amount of your combined income from all sources (known as your Modified Adjusted Gross Income or "MAGI") and second, your income tax filing status (whether you file your income taxes individually or jointly as a married couple). Your "MAGI" consists of your Adjusted Gross Income (AGI) on your income tax return, plus half of your Social Security benefits received for the tax year, plus any other non-taxable income you may have had.

If your MAGI for the tax year exceeds certain thresholds, then some of your Social Security benefits are taxable at whatever your normal IRS tax rate is. If, as a couple, you file your income taxes as "married-filing jointly," and your MAGI is over \$32,000, then 50% of your Social Security benefits received during the tax year becomes part of your overall taxable income at whatever tax rate is standard for your income. But if your MAGI as a couple for the tax year exceeds \$44,000 then up to 85% of your SS benefits becomes part of your overall taxable income. If your MAGI as a married couple is less than \$32,000 then your Social Security benefits aren't taxable.

For those who file their federal income taxes as a single the thresholds are lower. If your MAGI as a single filer is \$25,000 or less, your Social Security benefits aren't taxable. However, if your MAGI as a single filer is more than \$25,000, then half of your Social Security benefits received

during the tax year becomes part of your overall taxable income, and if your MAGI as a single filer is more than \$34,000 then up to 85% of your benefits for the tax year becomes part of your taxable income. But a word of caution for those who are married but choose to file taxes "married—filing separately"—if you file separately and live together at any time during the tax year, the threshold for taxation of Social Security benefits is zero.

So, Federal taxation of your Social Security benefits depends entirely upon your combined income from all sources and your income tax filing status—your age doesn't come into the picture at all, even if you are collecting Social Security benefits after your full retirement age. Be aware, however, that a dozen U.S. states levy an income tax on Social Security benefits, so you should check the tax laws in your state of residence to see if some or all your Social Security benefits will be taxed by the state you live in.

The 2.4 million member Association of Mature American Citizens [AMAC] www.amac.us is a vibrant, vital senior advocacy organization that takes its marching orders from its members. AMAC Action is a non-profit, non-partisan organization representing the membership in our nation's capital and in local Congressional Districts throughout the country. And the AMAC Foundation (www.AmacFoundation.org) is the Association's non-profit organization, dedicated to supporting and educating America's Seniors. Together, we act and speak on the Association members' behalf, protecting their interests and offering a practical insight on how to best solve the problems they face today. Live long and make a difference by joining us today at www.amac.us/join-amac.

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

MedStar Health Welcomes New President of MedStar Southern Maryland Hospital Center, Dr. Stephen T. Michaels

Former chief operating officer, medical officer of MedStar St. Mary's Hospital returns to MedStar Southern Maryland

By CHERYL RICHARDSON
MedStar Health

CLINTON, Md. (Jan. 28, 2022)—MedStar Health at MedStar Southern Maryland Hospital Center is pleased to welcome Stephen T. Michaels, MD, FACHE, as the new president of MedStar Southern Maryland and senior vice president, MedStar Health, effective January 28, 2022.

Dr. Michaels, an orthopedic surgeon who formerly practiced in Prince George's County, joined MedStar St. Mary's Hospital in 2011 as vice president of medical affairs. From 2012 to 2014, he assumed a joint role, also serving as vice president of medical affairs at MedStar Southern Maryland. In 2015, Dr. Michaels was promoted to the position of chief operating and medical officer at MedStar St. Mary's.

His leadership experience includes the management of medical affairs; physician recruitment and retention; and the expansion and delivery of innovative healthcare services to the community.

Additionally, across MedStar Health, Dr. Michaels served as co-executive lead on the MedStar Health Perioperative Governance Council, engaged in resource utilization management improvements, telemedicine implementation, and International Classification of Diseases-10 initiatives.

Dr. Michaels currently serves on the Health Services Cost Review Commission Performance Measurement Workgroup, Maryland Hospital Association



PHOTO COURTESY MEDSTAR HEALTH

Dr. Stephen T. Michaels

Council on Quality and is an active member of the MedStar Health Leadership Team.

MedStar Southern Maryland Hospital Center, located in Clinton, Maryland, is a 182-bed acute care hospital serving the Washington, D.C., metro and Southern Maryland area. The hospital is focused on caring for patients and their loved ones utilizing advanced technology under the guidance of expert clinicians. Quality, Safety, Wellness, and Patient Satisfaction are achieved through a spirit of patient centered services that connect us to the community we serve. For more information, visit MedStarSouthernMaryland.org.

COMMENTARY

Marion Wright Edelman

President Emerita,
Children's Defense Fund



ChildWatch:

Black History Month Right Now

The roots of Black History Month in our nation are nearly a century old, but at a moment when some people are seeking to block what children can be taught about the intersection of Black history and American history, its existence right now is as necessary as ever.

Dr. Carter G. Woodson, the son of former slaves, a pioneering Harvard-trained historian, and the founder of the Association for the Study of African American Life and History, created Negro History Week in 1926. At the time he was alarmed because so few people, White or Black, knew anything at all about Black people's achievements. Dr. Woodson understood just how critical it was to claim our rightful place in the history books and teach future generations about the great thinkers and role models who came before us. As he said then:

"Those who have no record of what their forebears have accomplished lose the inspiration which comes from the teaching of biography and history." Negro History Week was originally celebrated during the second week of February to coincide with Frederick Douglass's and Abraham Lincoln's birthdays. Eventually the single week grew into Black History Month, but through the years the celebration's symbolism and importance remained the same.

Dr. Woodson was especially concerned about the "mis-education" of Black children from their earliest ages—"The thought of the inferiority of the Negro is drilled into him in almost every class he enters and in almost every book he studies"—and the cumulative effects it could have. He wrote: "When you control a man's thinking you do not have to worry about his actions. You

do not have to tell him not to stand here or go yonder. He will find his 'proper place' and will stay in it. You do not need to send him to the back door. He will go without being told. In fact, if there is no back door, he will cut one for his special benefit. His education makes it necessary." He believed teaching children about Black history and Black accomplishments was a crucial corrective step.

We now understand the wisdom behind teaching not just Black children but all children Black history in our increasingly multicultural nation and world. Black, Native American, Latino, Asian American, LGBTQ, immigrant, and women's history are all American history. None of our children can afford miseducation and ignorance about the rainbow of others around them. And none of our children should ever be-

lieve their own history and existence are marginal, unimportant, inferior, or only worthy of the back door. It is beyond shameful that in 2022 teaching children the truth about American history is still viewed and treated by some as a subversive and illegal act.

Harvard Graduate School of Education professor Jarvis R. Givens, author of the 2021 book *Fugitive Pedagogy: Carter G. Woodson and the Art of Black Teaching*, places Dr. Woodson as part of a long continuum that began during slavery and continues into our time. He recently told the *Harvard Gazette* "the tradition of what some might call anti-racist teaching today is something that Black teachers had to engage in because it was a matter of life and death," and explained that part of the legacy of Black educators throughout history had been uplifting their students "and helping them imagine a world that had yet to exist, but one that they could strive for." He added: "Teachers will be vital for any vision of justice we might try to build, create, and enact in the world around us." This remains true for today's teachers and I hope all teachers and all adults will follow Dr. Woodson's example and teach the truth about Black history and American history this month and every month.

Hoyer Attends Collective Empowerment Group Morning Breakfast

WASHINGTON (Feb. 4, 2022)—[Last Friday], Congressman Steny Hoyer (MD-05) attended the Collective Empowerment Group's monthly Power Breakfast. Each month, the Collective Empowerment Group hosts a Friday morning breakfast that convenes Maryland pastors and business leaders for an hour-long program focused on networking and education. "I was glad to share the first Friday of Black History Month with the Collective Empowerment Group today," said Congressman Hoyer. "The Collective Empowerment Group's monthly meetings are vital gatherings that foster partnerships between our churches and businesses, and support valuable connections to our local community."

"These relationships also help strengthen and grow local economic opportunities throughout Maryland, an important priority throughout my time in Congress. The COVID-19 pandemic has un-

derscored dramatic racial economic disparities that must be addressed here in our communities and nationwide. That's why I was proud to have helped secure enactment of both the American Rescue Plan, which has helped families in need weather this pandemic, and the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, which will bolster jobs in Maryland's Fifth District and ensure equitable access to our economy for those who have been left out for too long," continued Congressman Hoyer. "I greatly support the work Collective Empowerment Group does for Maryland, and look forward to continuing our discussions in the future to help meet the needs our people."

The Collective Empowerment Group works to strengthen partnerships between churches and local businesses to align resources that empower community members and connect them to greater economic opportunities. Visit their website: <https://empowerdmv.org>.

Bill Aims to Reform Law That Means Second Chance for Most, but Can Trigger Deportation for Maryland Immigrants

By VANESSA G. SÁNCHEZ
Capital News Service

ANNAPOLIS (Feb. 4, 2022)—Under Maryland law, first-time, nonviolent offenders of relatively minor crimes can plead guilty and receive probation, and after a successful completion, go on without the burden of a criminal conviction haunting the rest of their lives.

Not so for the immigrants in the state. In order to receive probation, they must plead guilty to a crime, which for them can lead to deportation or make them ineligible to receive a green card or to become a citizen.

State legislators, advocates and prosecutors, including the Maryland Attorney General, agree that the 47-year-old law, which has given thousands of Maryland residents a second chance, unfairly harms immigrants including those who are lawfully living and working in the state, immigrants brought to the country as children, so-called "Dreamers" protected under the federal Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals policy, and undocumented residents.

Sen. Susan C. Lee, D-Montgomery, and Del. Wanika B. Fisher, D-Prince George's, are sponsoring legislation titled Probation Before Judgment, so immigrants would not be vulnerable to further penalties.

The Senate took up the bill this week and the House of Delegates will hold a hearing in the upcoming weeks.

"The current PBJ law unintentionally created an unequal application for citizens and noncitizens, and this bill is largely a technical fix to achieve equal justice" Lee, the lead sponsor on the bill, said Wednesday during a hearing on the legislation before the Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee. The provision adds a method for a judge to grant immigrants probation without having them plead guilty during the sentencing process. Advocates, including criminal justice officials, said it will not erode the original method of obtaining probation.

Federal immigration law interprets probation as a conviction, because the person pled guilty to a crime and that can lead to harsh consequences the bill is designed to eliminate.

During the hearing, witnesses said the federal immigration policy undermines the intent of PBJ but can be fixed at the state level by making probation not a conviction under state and federal laws.

They also said the law disproportionately impacts people of color. Attorney Emily Jones from Capital Area Immigrants' Rights Coalition, an organization representing immigrants in detention, said that more than a half of her clients were detained by Immi-

gration and Customs Enforcement after having contact with the criminal system and almost 99% of them are Black or brown.

Some senators are concerned, however, that the bill could constitute a violation of due process of the Maryland Constitution.

"You can't put people on probation unless you have them plead guilty," Sen. Michael Hough, R-Frederick and Carroll, said during the hearing.

Advocates and criminal law experts countered that the provision would only pause the finding of guilt, acknowledging that the facts of guilt exist.

The state's attorneys for Caroline and Montgomery counties testified in favor of the bill during the hearing and the committee received a letter of support from the Attorney General's office.

The letter said the bill "will help avoid devastating immigration consequences for people who commit minor crimes."

In an interview with the Capital News Service, Gabriela Kahrl, a lawyer and associate director at the Chacon Center for Immigrant Law in the University of Maryland-Baltimore, said the change in the law would "create equal opportunity to probation for every Marylander, regardless of whether they are a U.S. citizen or not."

"The person is not getting anything other than the failure to trigger the federal immigration statute that considers it a conviction,"

Kahrl said.

Janice Alonzo, an academic advisor and adjunct faculty member at Community College of Baltimore County, told legislators Wednesday she worries that a family member under DACA protection could be deported after being placed on probation for driving under the influence of alcohol two years ago.

The man has completed alcohol counseling classes and is working to pay the court-ordered fine, Alonzo said. A deportation would tear her family apart, she told the committee.

"We've cried and are very worried about the fact that this family member could be sent back home because of his one night mistake," she said.

The current law has devastating consequences for people who oftentimes are offenders of small crimes including theft, drug possession or a dispute, said John F. Gossart, a former U.S. immigration judge who also testified at the hearing.

"We're talking about individuals who have made a mistake, recognize their mistakes, and are willing to rehabilitate themselves," Gossart, a judge with the Baltimore Immigration Court for 31 years, told Capital News Service in an interview.

He is a member of the Board of Directors for the Immigration Law Section with the Federal Bar Association, a voluntary organi-



PHOTO JOE RYAN/CAPITAL NEWS SERVICE

Santus Guerrero, a workforce development specialist for CASA de Maryland, helps a community member get a CASA ID card in the group's Hyattsville office. CASA, other immigrant organizations, the Maryland Attorney General and several state's attorneys are among those pushing for the adoption of legislation in the General Assembly to change a state law that helps many Marylanders but inadvertently can lead to deportation for immigrants.

zation for private and government lawyers and judges practicing law in a federal court.

Gossart said over his career he had no choice but to issue deportation orders for more than a hundred immigrants who had received probation. The law did not permit him to give them a second chance even if he thought they deserved one, he said.

He recalled deporting a per-

manent resident on probation, a father of two U.S. citizens and a homeowner who Gossart described as a decent and good person.

"None of that counted," he said. "I had no choice. I was correct under the law, but I did not do justice that day," he said.

Contracts from A1

Sen. Ben Cardin, D-Maryland, and Rep. Anthony Brown, D-Upper Marlboro.

"Workers built this country and will help rebuild it. It's time we lift them up," Brown tweeted after the presidential visit.

Van Hollen, along with the rest of the Maryland delegation, pushed for more resources to be delivered to Maryland in the massive Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act that last year was passed by Congress and signed into law by Biden. The law is expected to funnel nearly \$8 billion to Maryland infrastructure, including broadband internet, roads and bridges.

Biden's new order, which goes into effect immediately, targets an industry that has taken some of the largest hits since the pandemic. It also directs the Department of Labor and the Office of Management Budget to lead trainings for implementing the new

requirements for the current contracting workforce.

Union workers also heard from Vice President Kamala Harris and Labor Secretary Martin Walsh.

"When the United States needs something to be built right, we turn to union workers," Harris said. "They are well-trained and well-prepared to get the big jobs done and to do them right, not to mention on time and on budget."

Serhan Ajaj is a 18-year veteran of Ironworkers Local 5. He started his four-year apprenticeship on March 4, 2002—a date that is still fresh in his head because that is the day he said his life changed in the best possible way. He now enjoys good insurance, a retirement plan and competitive wages.

"(Biden) gave me hope that they are going to continue to provide for my family the same type of life, the same quality of life I've been providing them," he said.

His wife and three kids have also benefited from his union work. When his wife found herself in the hospital a few years ago, the Ajajs did not pay one bill out-of-pocket thanks to the union benefits.

Ajaj said he plans to continue working in Ironworker Local 5 for another 12 years until his retirement.

The ironworkers fashioned a steel "46" for Biden, but the president said the welcome gift was so heavy he didn't think he could take it back to the White House.

In his remarks before signing the order, Biden took note of some ironworkers sitting above him. He recalled that while running for president, he visited a construction site where he saw a group of ironworkers having lunch on a beam 12 stories above the ground.

"You're nuts," the president joked. "Thank God you are. You gotta not only have some brains but you have to be coordinated to be an ironworker."

The Prince George's Post

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ENVIRONMENT

Earth TALK™ More Salad, Less Meat Better For Planet

Dear EarthTalk:
I've recently been really into salads and have been wondering does my consumption of more salads and less meat help fight climate change?
—Penelope Marie, via e-mail

Prioritizing salads is indeed a step forward, as meat and animal products lead to pollution and the production of greenhouse gasses that trap heat in the atmosphere and lead to global warming. Methane emissions from cows is a significant source of greenhouse pollution, but livestock agriculture also contributes to global warming in other ways. In fact, the global meat industry would be the third largest polluter if it was a country after the United States and India.

Worse, 58 percent of food emissions come from animal products alone. Another

contributing factor is improper storage methods leading to immediate declines in water quality when antibiotics and feces-borne diseases such as *e. coli* enter waterways. Several containment failures for pig feces in North Carolina in recent years highlight the severity of the problem.

Plant-based diets have the potential for reducing one's carbon footprint. A carbon footprint is how much each person contributes to climate change through their consumer behaviors, including their support of factory food production.

If you're one of the 89 percent of Americans who eat meat and other animal products, you're complicit with factory farming techniques. However, choosing to minimize your meat consumption—by eating salads—can help break this cycle. In fact, a recent study in the journal Food Policy finds that cutting meat consumption in half can reduce a typical American's carbon footprint by some 30 percent.

Some argue that so-called "ethical consumption" is less significant a factor than institutional action—and therefore individual actors don't have the capacity to shift global climate problems. But this line of reasoning fails to take into account the importance of citizen and consumer action in shifting societal be-

haviors. Indeed, consumers can work in tandem with governments and businesses. This could include boycotting meat, advocating for social change or volunteering with or donating to related nonprofit and/or political campaigns. Voting for candidates who take the climate crisis seriously is also an important way individuals can make a difference.

Finally, consider other ideas to reduce your carbon footprint even further. Salads are a great start, but staying mindful of what one puts into a salad is also important. Consider reducing quinoa and almond consumption. Quinoa degrades soil quality. Almonds siphon water away from people and animals, which contributes to drought conditions in California. Focusing on reducing meat consumption as much as possible may also be helpful, including switching to vegetarian proteins such as beans or reducing a reliance on proteins as the centerpiece of a meal.

Even if you've already done a great job reducing your carbon footprint in other ways, think about how much more you could be contributing by reducing or eliminating meat from your diet.

CONTACTS: Going vegan: can switching to a plant-based diet really save the planet? theguardian.com/lifeandstyle/2021/apr/25/going-vegan-can-switching-to-a-plant-based-diet-really-save-the-planet; Plant-based diet can fight climate change - UN, bbc.com/news/science-environment-49238749; Extinction Rebellion, extinctionrebellion.uk/; Cows Are the New Coal, time.com/6125014/cows-agricultural-emissions/.

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Department of the Environment Enforcement Action Leads to Financial Penalty, Funding for Environmental Project Serving Brandywine

MDE settlement with power plant owner PSEG Keys Energy Center requires \$125,000 financial penalty, \$75,000 for Patuxent Riverkeeper-led program

By PRESS OFFICER
Maryland Department of the Environment

BALTIMORE (Feb. 1, 2022)—A Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE) enforcement action against the owner of a Prince George's County power plant includes a significant financial penalty and a requirement to help fund an environmental education program serving students from communities near the facility.

A settlement of alleged air pollution violations by PSEG Keys Energy Center LLC requires the facility to pay a \$125,000 civil penalty to MDE and provide \$75,000 for an environmental program led by the Patuxent Riverkeeper. The alleged violations occurred at the PSEG Keys Energy-owned power plant in the Brandywine area of Prince George's County. The program is to serve environmentally overburdened minority communities in that area.

"The Maryland Department of the Environment is committed to clean air and environmental justice," said Maryland Environment Secretary Ben Grumbles. "This enforcement action ensures accountability and creates opportunity for

Brandywine and other nearby communities threatened by pollution."

MDE alleged a series of air pollution violations at the PSEG Keys Energy plant, including exceedances of emissions limits for particulate pollution from late September through early December 2019 and of the facility's carbon monoxide limit during a startup in July 2020. MDE also alleged that the plant failed to conduct a required analysis to optimize performance of its boiler.

The January 19 settlement agreement requires the plant owner to pay the financial penalty to MDE within 90 days. The settlement agreement states that the plant has taken corrective actions to resolve the allegations and made physical and operational changes that reduce their chance of recurrence.

That settlement also requires a \$75,000 payment to EarthReports Inc., trading as the Patuxent Riverkeeper, for a Supplemental Environmental Project that serves people, organizations or communities in the vicinity of the PSEG plant, including the Brandywine area of Prince George's County.

See PENALTY Page A7



IMAGE CREDIT: ROMAN ODINTSOV, PEXELS.

Eating more salad and less (or no) animal products is one of the most impactful ways you can fight climate change and help the planet.

Countywide Curbside Organics Composting Collection is Here!

Residents who receive County provided services AND opt-in the program will be able to mix their food scraps with their yard trim for the weekly Monday yard trim curbside collection. Food scraps must be placed inside the Organics cart.

Only residents who opted-in and received the appropriate program materials may put food scraps curbside for collection. Plastic bags are not accepted.

If you received a letter from DoE, Opt-In postcards are on the way!

Detailed opt-in instructions are on the postcard.

- Use only one option listed to opt-in:
 1. Scan the QR code on the postcard using a smart phone; **OR**
 2. Call the telephone number and provide the requested information.
 3. Complete the opt-in form online at www.toter.com/princegeorgescounty

Your program materials will be delivered during the Month of April, in celebration of Earth Month.

Households will receive collection materials, including a 32-gallon wheeled cart, a 2-gallon kitchen mini bin, a How-To Guide, a refrigerator magnet, and a list of Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs).

For additional information about food scraps composting email us at pgccomposts@co.pg.md.us or visit mypgc.us/compost.



HEALTH *and* WELLNESS

Governor's Office of Community Initiatives Announces "Listening Tour" to Hear From the Autism Community

By PRESS OFFICER
Gov. Coordinating Offices News

ANNAPOLIS, Md. (Feb. 1, 2022)—The Governor's Office of Community Initiatives today announced a listening tour webinar series, "The State of Autism," to engage and learn from stakeholders as the office seeks to build a strategic plan for Maryland. The first meeting [was] held on Feb. 8 via Zoom.

"Autism is a complex developmental disorder that has a very active community of concerned citizens," said Governor's Office of Community Initiatives Executive Director Steven McAdams. "As we seek to provide better resources for the community, it is important for us to listen and take stock of what is needed."

On Tuesday, Feb. 8, from 7 p.m. to 8:30 p.m., Maryland Autism Coordinator Katie Gandy host[ed] the inaugural town hall

meeting in coordination with the Howard County Autism Society. Follow the link to register in advance: https://us06web.zoom.us/join/register/WN_oKBIVhMBSIqQZJZwGMAqUQ. Subsequent meetings will follow in each county, at the same time, 7 p.m. to 8:30 p.m., until May.

"We are looking forward to hearing from autistic self-advocates, parents, caregivers, educators, therapists and related service providers, as well as businesses and community members who are all active in Maryland's autism community," Gandy said. "These listening sessions are essential to creating the framework of a proactive strategic plan to address real-time concerns of the community."

Dates and times of the webinars are as follows:
Howard County, Feb. 8
Baltimore County, Feb. 10

Carroll County, Feb. 17
Baltimore City, Feb. 22
Allegany County, Feb. 24
Harford County, Mar. 3
St. Mary's County, Mar. 8
Anne Arundel County, Mar. 10
Cecil County, Mar. 14
Somerset County, Mar. 18
Charles County, Mar. 21
Kent County, Mar. 24
Talbot County, Mar. 28
Dorchester County, Mar. 31
Montgomery County, Apr. 5
Washington County, Apr. 7
Calvert County, Apr. 12
Frederick County, Apr. 14
Prince George's County, Apr. 19
Wicomico County, Apr. 21
Caroline County, Apr. 26
Garrett County, Apr. 28
Queen Anne's County, May 3
Worcester County, May 5

ASALH Kicks Off Black History Month With its Second Black History Month Virtual Festival

By PRESS OFFICER
ASALH

WASHINGTON (Jan. 17, 2022)—The Association for the Study of African American Life and History (ASALH) is proud to announce the 2022 National Black History Theme—"Black Health and Wellness." We observe this theme in the midst of a worldwide pandemic in which racism has been labeled a "public health crisis" and during an ever-growing awareness about the ways in which African Americans have been disproportionately affected by health concerns.

The theme will be unveiled officially on February 1 by our new President Dr. W. Marvin Dulaney, Associate Professor Emeritus and former Interim Director of the Center for African American Studies at the University of Texas, Arlington, and former Deputy Director and COO of the African American Museum in Dallas, Texas.

This year's Black History Month Virtual Festival includes the marquee event, Black Bodies: From Exploitation to Excellence, a two-part-series exploring the historic exploitation of African Americans for the advancement of scientific and medical discovery. Both sessions will illuminate how these challenges and practices were used to leverage change in the medical profession, and foster resilience and excellence in our communities.

Black Bodies Part I: Exploitation in Medicine, takes place on **February 12, 2022**, from 12–2 p.m. EST, and will include panelists who will speak on race, gender and the origins of American gynecology, Henrietta Lacks HeLa cells and the Lyles Station radiation experiments. It features panelists: Dr. Deirdre Cooper Owens, author of *Medical Bondage*; Wilbert Smith, Author and Film Producer; Dr. Roland Pattillo, Vice President of the Henrietta Lacks Foundation; Dr. Clyde Yancy, also with the Henrietta Lacks Foundation; and Ms. Lisa Villarosa as Moderator. Black Bodies Part II: Race Norming in the National Football League (NFL), will feature a round table discussion among former NFL

players and sports medicine professionals including, Robert Moore, former Atlanta Falcon; Tim Watson, former Green Bay Packer; Roger Jackson and Rubin Carter both former Denver Broncos. Ryan Heathcock, former Howard University Bison football player, will moderate this critical discussion on issues of race norming, injury, mental health, and other relevant topics affecting the health and well-being of Black athletes on **February 27, 2022**, 5–6:30 p.m. EST. Registration ranges between \$65 to \$150 and is available through asalh.org/festival.

Be sure to participate in our other fascinating events that analyze and illuminate the theme and importance of Black Health and Wellness in the African American experience including a forum on the "Psychological Legacy of Slavery," in partnership with the National Park Service; several stimulating book talks co-sponsored with PBS Books featuring Harriet A. Washington and Dr. Sandro Galea; our Second Annual ASALH Book Prize Award; and special programming from the ASALH Manhattan Branch. The Black History Month Virtual Festival is our major Black History Month event of the year, and we would be honored to have you.

A highlight of this year's Festival is a moderated conversation with ASALH President W. Marvin Dulaney and Presidents of Black medical schools and professional health organizations. This event will take place Saturday, **February 19, 2022**, from 2 to 4 p.m. EST. Aww These include: Cheryl Lee-Butler, President-Elect of the National Dental Association; Dr. Joseph L. Wright, Chief Health Equity Officer at the University of Maryland Medical System; Dr. David Carlisle, President and CEO of Charles R. Drew University of Medicine (CDU) and Science; and finally, Dr. Rachel Villanueva who is President of the National Medical Association. The conversation will cover a broad landscape of topics addressing Black Health and Wellness, from the historical significance of the establishment of Black medical schools and professional organizations, and the scientific contributions of Black med-

ical professionals to contemporary issues related to health disparities, diversity, equity, and inclusion in the health professions, medical ethics, and public trust in medical practice.

Our founder, Dr. Carter G. Woodson, initiated Negro History Week in the second week of February 1926. In 2022 ASALH will mark the 96th observance of what has become Black History Month. This festival continues and expands the tradition of our Black History luncheon. This virtual event, which will be celebrated throughout the entire month of February, recognizes the leading role of African Americans in history. The festival will offer programming throughout February with activities broadcast via Zoom and ASALH TV.

As ASALH National President, Dr. Dulaney has stated, "The theme of Black and Health Wellness not only addresses the history of healthcare in the African American community, it is also a historical examination of the financial and economic health and wellness of African Americans. Broadening and expanding the theme to address what some historians and health care professionals call the "social and economic determinants" of health and wellness allows us to show the interconnectedness of a number of historical, social and economic factors on Black Health and Wellness."

This new set of events is a stellar opportunity to join with us in commemorating the extraordinary role of Black people in shaping the nation and world. As America confronts its past, we affirm the resiliency of people of African descent, demonstrated over generations by Black families and communities.

The theme for 2022 focuses on the importance of Black Health and Wellness. This theme honors the legacy of not only Black scholars and medical practitioners in Western medicine, but also other ways of knowing (e.g., birth workers, doulas, midwives, naturopaths, herbalists, etc.) throughout the African Diaspora. The 2022 theme considers activities, rituals and initiatives that Black communities have done to be well.

Advocacy from A1

The Alzheimer's Association has three Maryland legislative priorities this year to support the 100,000 Marylanders living with Alzheimer's and other dementias and the 238,000 state residents—family members and friends—who provide their unpaid care.

Support Dementia Caregiving in Maryland Communities requires an ongoing appropriation from each Maryland Area Agencies on Aging (AAA) to have a dementia caregiving navigator (DCN) on staff. The DCN supports family caregivers through care planning and referral to support groups and education. Fostering dementia-friendly communities through outreach events, scheduling professional consultations and offering cognitive screenings are additional services. Maryland Department of Aging (MDoA) grants fund each AAA based on a formula calculating the number of county residents with dementia.

Develop a Dementia Capable Maryland State Government requires the Maryland Department of Health to establish a full-time director of dementia services coordinator to oversee dementia services. This includes implementing the Maryland Alzheimer's state plan that manages the Virginia I. Jones Alzheimer's Disease & Related Disorders Council. Other measures include identifying and supporting the development of dementia-specific training and applying for grants to expand and improve services for affected Marylanders. This legislation is sponsored by Senator Malcolm Augustine (Prince George's County) and Speaker Pro Tem Sheree Sample-Hughes (Dorchester and Wicomico Counties).

Improve the Quality of Care in Maryland's Assisted Living Facilities requires the Maryland Health Commission to conduct a study to elevate the quality of care at Maryland's 1,276 assisted living facilities with 10 or fewer beds. These smaller providers, who comprise 76 percent of the state's assisted living facilities, care for 29

percent of the patient population. Assessing standards of care at these facilities increases knowledge about the unique role they provide for vulnerable seniors. This legislation is sponsored by Delegate Lisa Belcastro (Baltimore County) and Senator Pamela Beidle (Anne Arundel County).

Registration is required to receive the Zoom links to participate in one or more of these free virtual public meetings. To view the complete schedule, learn more and/or to register, visit alz.org/nca/volunteer/advocacy/maryland. For additional information on Maryland Advocacy Week and/or these legislative priorities, contact Eric Colchamiro at mdadvocacyday@alz.org.

The Alzheimer's Association leads the way to end Alzheimer's and all other dementia – by accelerating global research, driving risk reduction and early detection, and maximizing quality care and support. Our vision is a world without Alzheimer's and all other dementia®. Visit alz.org or call 800.272.3900.

Spotlight

NAACP Passes Resolution Urging Families to Educate Themselves and Take Action on End-of-Life Planning and Health Care

Resolution Notes African Americans Underutilize End-of-Life Options, Including Hospice & Palliative Care

By PRESS OFFICER
Compassion and Choices

WASHINGTON (Feb. 1, 2022)—Compassion & Choices praised the NAACP for passing a resolution at their annual meeting urging that families educate themselves on all aspects of end-of-life planning including advance healthcare directives, healthcare proxies and end-of-life options such as hospice and palliative care. The resolution was amended and ratified by the NAACP National Board of Directors in October, 2021.

A Duke Divinity School survey noted that only 50% of African Americans have talked with family members about their end-of-life care and 20% have never discussed end-of-life wishes with anyone.

The language in the resolution further notes that Journal of the American Geriatrics Society found that African American patients underutilize end-of-life care options, "including palliative sedation, pursuing life-sustaining treatment, refusing/discontinuing life-sustaining treatment, medical aid in dying, voluntary stopping of eating and drinking (VSED) and life-extending options."

The document as adopted concludes: "the NAACP shall be proactive in advocating for the education, consideration, and availability of all options when planning for the end of life ... all Americans should chart their end of life journey consistent with their own wishes and values."

"This resolution acknowledges the urgent need to educate our community about the importance of families discussing their end-of-life wishes and end-of-life health care options," said NAACP President & CEO Derrick Johnson. "The NAACP believes African Americans should have access to all end-of-life care options, so each individual can decide which one is best for them, in consultation with their doctor, family, faith leader and support system."

"The COVID-19 pandemic, and the outsized impact it has had on Black Americans, has served as a reminder of the importance of having discussions with loved ones and planning before a health crisis occurs," said Compassion & Choices President & CEO Kim Callinan. "We are grateful for the NAACP's work on this resolution and commitment to this important issue. It is a great step forward in ensuring everyone has the opportunity to express their end-of-life wishes and improve the chances those wishes are followed by their loved ones and medical providers."

"We thank the NAACP for this pledge to help educate and empower the Black community about planning," said Brandi Alexander, National Director of Community Engagement for Compassion & Choices. "Too often African Americans avoid these topics until it is too late. In my own family we never discussed this issue with my dad, and he suffered needlessly when he died because we did not know what kind of care he wanted, or didn't want, in his final days."

According to the National Hospice and Palliative Care Association, only 8% of hospice users are African American. Hospice care is a health service that provides comfort care to patients, in-home or at a facility, in their final phase of illness or within six months of death. Hospice offers an emphasis on patient support and the entire spectrum of improved quality of life.

The full resolution is posted at: <https://naacp.org/resources/2021-naacp-resolutions>

Founded in 1909, the NAACP is the nation's oldest and largest nonpartisan civil rights organization. Its members throughout the United States and the world are the premier advocates for civil rights in their communities. For more information, visit: naacp.org. Compassion & Choices is the oldest, largest and most active non-profit working to expand and improve healthcare options for the end of life in the United States, with 450,000 supporters nationwide. For more information, visit: CompassionAndChoices.org.

NAMI Maryland Webinar

Coping With the Ongoing Grief and Losses of the Pandemic

Tuesday, Feb. 22, 2022 • 12–1 p.m. EST

REGISTER: <https://register.gotowebinar.com/register/2947247933523535887>

It is an unfortunate reality that over 800,000 Americans have lost their lives due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. Where there is loss of life, there is grief. Dr. Alex Chan will help us understand the grief process and how to find meaning despite the loss. By the end of the webinar, you will be able to:

1. List the six stages of grief according to recent clinical research
2. Describe three strategies for encouraging the post-loss meaning-making process
3. Begin to assemble a narrative of resilience to address pandemic-related grief

Join NAMI Maryland and Dr. Chan to hopefully find clarity and comfort in these challenging times.

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