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Mitchellville Native Experiences the Navy's Virtual Reality Asset, the "Nimitz"



U.S. NAVY PHOTO BY CHIEF MASS COMMUNICATION SPECIALIST DIANA QUINLAN

220509-N-WF272-1022 PHILADELPHIA (May 9, 2022) U.S. Navy Lt.j.g. Cara Edwards, a native of Mitchellville, Md., assigned to the amphibious dock landing ship USS Harpers Ferry (LSD 49), experiences the Navy's virtual reality asset, the "Nimitz," during a Navy Promotional Day (NPD) Philadelphia, May 9, 2022. An NPD is a proprietary recruitment program built specifically for the purpose of attracting the brightest, diverse high school and college prospects, and showcasing opportunities for both military and civilian careers. The purpose of a NPD is to build and sustain strategic networks with high schools, universities and colleges, and to promote Navy awareness within diverse and under-represented communities while building a pool of Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) talent.

Atworth Breaks Ground in College Park

Atworth will deliver 451 apartment homes reserved for residents with incomes at or below 80 percent of AMI, with affordability guaranteed for the duration of the 98-year ground lease

By PRESS OFFICER
Gilbane Development Co.

COLLEGE PARK, Md. (May 11, 2022)—Gilbane Development Company, Metro, and Amazon were joined today by local elected officials, project partners, and members of the community at a groundbreaking ceremony to celebrate the start of construction at Atworth, a 451-unit affordable apartment community featuring a 324-space parking garage; 5,000 square feet of ground floor retail space; a one-acre public park activated with public pedestrian and bicycle pathways; community amenities including 2 courtyards, pool, fitness/yoga, rooftop deck; and, a community garden and public art.

Atworth is an example of transit-oriented development, a unique approach to preserve and create affordable housing options so moderate-to low-income families can afford to live near and

benefit from quality public transit. Transit-oriented development provides equitable economic opportunity, reduced traffic congestion and associated environmental benefits, reduced time commuting, and reduced expenses associated with auto ownership. Residential and commercial uses are built adjacent to the existing College Park Metrorail and MARC commuter rail stations, as well as the future Purple Line station which is currently under-construction and overseen by the Maryland Transit Administration. Metro is ground leasing a portion of its station property to the Gilbane Development Company for the project, under Metro's Joint Development Program. A \$56.3 million low-rate loan to Gilbane Development Company from Amazon's Housing Equity Fund ensures the project will provide critical workforce housing affordable to families earning 80 percent of area median income

(AMI) for entire term of the 98-year lease.

"Gilbane Development Company is elated to reach this important groundbreaking milestone for Atworth," said Robert "Bobby" Gilbane, Jr., vice president of Gilbane Development Company. "Today is a promise fulfilled, a celebration of like-minded partners coming together to find new and creative ways to deliver necessary housing to the community. Atworth would not be possible without Metro and Amazon's investment, and it could not be sustained without Prince George's County's involvement. Together, we worked creatively to make Atworth happen."

"It is exciting to see construction happening to deliver affordable housing at the College Park Metro Station in the University of Maryland Discovery District," said Dannielle Galaros, Member, County Council, Prince George's

County, representing District 3. "This investment by WMATA, Amazon's Housing Equity Fund, and Prince George's County is the type of partnership that is necessary to ensure more mixed-income communities, so that working families will always have access to jobs, transit, quality

housing, and opportunity in our region."

"Metro is a national leader in joint development, and Atworth is a great example of what our program is all about: revitalizing underused properties, expanding affordable housing and access to Metro stations, and unlocking economic benefits to support Metro as a connector to the region," said Metro's Executive Vice President and Chief Financial Officer Dennis Anosike. "This project will generate rider-

ship and revenue for Metro, as well as support residential expansion, businesses, and tax revenue for our local and state partners."

"Last June we announced a \$125 million commitment to expedite affordable housing at Metro stations," said Senthil Sankaran, Principal, Amazon Housing Equity Fund. "This is an exciting next step to bring affordable housing—and the many ben-

See ATWORTH Page A4



IMAGE COURTESY OF GILBANE DEVELOPMENT COMPANY

Atworth, located in College Park, MD, is a 451-unit affordable apartment community featuring a 324-space structured parking garage, 5,000 SF of ground floor retail space, and a 1-acre public park activated with public pedestrian and bicycle pathways, amenities, and public art features.

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TOWNS and NEIGHBORS

In and Around Morningside-Skyline

With Mary McHale, will return next week

Brandywine-Aquasco

by Audrey Johnson 301-922-5384

2022 VIRTUAL ESOPHAGEAL CANCER WALK/RUN

The 2022 Virtual Esophageal Cancer Walk/Run is hosted by The Salgi Esophageal Cancer Research Foundation. Participants can decide if they would like to walk/run either will take place on Saturday, June 18 or Sunday, June 19. Sign up today! <https://salgivirtualwalkrun2022.eventbrite.com>.

The 2022 Virtual Esophageal Cancer Walk/Run event can take place in your neighborhood, on a trail, bike path, track, by the ocean, sea, river or wherever you would like to walk or run. It is important to remember that by participating in the virtual event you must still take in accordance all social distancing guidelines.

Participants can also bicycle, rollerblade, skateboard, swim—the possibilities are endless. Since the virtual event is not timed, you are able to participate at your own pace, any distance and at any time either Saturday or Sunday. You may sign up as an individual or as a virtual team.

Virtual Ticket Only: \$20 to participate in the virtual event only, no t-shirt. Must register by Friday, June 17, 2022, at 5 p.m. EST. Information received from patch.com, Upper Marlboro, Maryland.

CSS SPRING FLEA MARKET IS BACK

Community Support Systems, Inc. Flea Market will be held Saturday, May 21, 2022, 9 a.m.–2 p.m. Address is 13907 Missouri Ave., Brandywine, Maryland. Rain date May 28. 10x10 Vendor Spaces \$25. Refreshments for sale. For more information: info@CommunitySupportSystems.org. Visit the website to fill out the registration form for the flea market and yard.

PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY CORONAVIRUS CALL CENTER

If you have any questions or concerns, please call the Prince George's County Health Department Coronavirus hotline at (301-883-6627) during the hours of 8 a.m.–8 p.m. to receive updated information about the coronavirus disease. *Please contact 911 for medical emergencies only. Do not contact 911 for Coronavirus-related issues.

OPEN HOUSE

“Art Play Learn has opened a new facility in the Bowie-Laurel area and is hosting an Open House May 20 from 11 a.m.–3 p.m. The address is 9811 Mallard Drive, Laurel, Maryland 20708. More information: <https://www.artplaylearn.com>. Come out and see our new space, talk to teachers, discover summer, fall programming and more. Summer camps and classes are open for enrollment as is fall homeschool tutorial programming.”

“Homeschool tutorials for PreK-High School, Brass Ensemble, weekly Summer Camps, once a week Summer classes, Maker Space activities.” Information received from patch.com/Maryland, A community member Meredith Kaunitz.

BOWIE STATE UNIVERSITY

Bowie State University Office of Alumni Engagement Live on 5 May 4 with Denise Roberts-France ('72) and Deborah Feaster ('72) BSU Golden Graduates. Office of Alumni Engagement will be celebrating BSU Graduates Past and Present all month long. Join the virtual conversation every Wednesday at 5 p.m. on the BSU Office of Alumni Engagement's Facebook Page.

SENIOR HEALTH AND FITNESS DAY

Wednesday, May 25, 2022, from 9 a.m.–1 p.m. join us for Senior Health and Fitness Day at Southern Area Aquatics & Recreation Complex, 13601 Missouri Avenue, Brandywine, Maryland 20613. Get your body moving and engaged at the 2022 Senior Health and Fitness Day. Come out and enjoy activities including Zumba, line dancing, Bingo, Drum 'n Tone, swimming class, a spin class, art, and more. Healthy snack provided by the Department of Family Services.

Register at pgparksdirect.com and search keyword “Health.” Ticket Code SPD-SPEC-GA-20220525. FREE event for seniors ages sixty & better. All participants must have an M-NCPPC Senior ID to register.

AMAZON SMILE

Just a reminder to sign up for Amazon Smile. We are all ordering more these days. With each order you place, Amazon will donate a percentage of your total to Community Support Systems. Please tell your friends and family. We can all donate without money coming out of our pocket.

Go to <https://smile.amazon.com/>, login to your Amazon account and select Community Support Systems Inc. in Brandywine, MD at checkout and presto you have made a donation. Remember: Amazon is donating monies based on your purchase. Amazon Smile's Impact: \$502.89 as of December 2021 to Community Support Systems.

LIVE VIRTUAL WORSHIP SERVICE

Are you Internet Accessible? Join us every Sunday. Secure your Spiritual space. Watch from your electronic device (computer, laptop, tablet, or mobile phone). Virtual Live: 8 a.m. Livestream or on demand. <https://westphalia.com>. Westphalia United Methodist Church, Rev. Dr. Timothy West, Senior Pastor. Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/westphaliaum/>. Live: 8 a.m. I Watch Party: 10:30 a.m.

Free Groceries at County Libraries

Part of New “Community Health Worker in the Library” Program

By SILVANA QUIROZ
PGCMLS

LARGO, Md. – Advancing health and food equity in Prince George's County is an important focus for the Prince George's County Memorial Library System (PGCMLS), which launched a new program called “Community Health Worker in the Library” on May 10, 2022*. This joint effort with the Prince George's County Health Department provides residents in communities throughout the county with an opportunity to take a preventative health assessment and receive free groceries. Public health workers will be available during distribution events to answer questions about community health resources and services and provide free KN95 masks and COVID-19 rapid test kits while supplies last; on-site clinical services will not be available.

Grocery distributions will take place indoors, 1–2 days per week, at select PGCMLS branch libraries in May and June. Up to 100 grocery bags will be available each week at each location. They will be distributed on a first-come, first-served basis. Face masks are required for all visitors in PGCMLS buildings (ages 2 and up).

“Health equity is one of the most important priorities in public health today and is a top priority for the Health Department,” said Dr. Ernest Carter, Prince George's County Health Officer. “This great partnership with our County library system is just another way that we are shifting the narrative, focusing on systems and social structures, and amplifying the significance of community health workers in improving health outcomes for Prince Georgians.”

The Library has a long history of mobilizing to support health and food security initiatives, including COVID-19 vaccine clinics and test kit distribution, summer meals for K-12 students, promoting health care enrollment, and hosting es-

Distribution Schedule

Visit pgcmls.info/events for listings. Subject to change.

Location	Day 1	Day 2
Hyattsville	Tuesdays, 12:30–5 p.m.	Thursdays, 10:30 a.m.–6 p.m.
Largo-Kettering**	Tuesdays, 12:30–5 p.m.	Wednesdays, 12:30–5 p.m.
New Carrollton	Wednesdays, 12:30–5 p.m.	Thursdays 10:30 a.m.–6 p.m.
Spaulding	Tuesdays, 12:30–5 p.m.	Thursdays, 10:30 a.m.–6 p.m.
Upper Marlboro	Wednesdays, 12:30–5 p.m.	Thursdays, 10:30 a.m.–6 p.m.

*Largo-Kettering will only host distributions in May.

sential resource distributions,” said PGCMLS CEO Roberta Phillips. “Our team is grateful for the opportunity to continue this work with the Prince George's County Health Department, in keeping with the Library's ‘healthy living’ strategic focus area.”

According to the Johns Hopkins University Center for Health Security, Prince George's County residents face “a long history of disparities in chronic diseases, HIV, infant mortality, and unequal access to healthcare.” The County Health Department tracks key indicators of these systemic health challenges at PGC Health Zone and the Library provides a range of educational resources and programs for healthy living at pgcmls.info/healthy-living-suite.

Celebrate Summer at National Harbor

From sunset boating to sightseeing on the river, Movies on the Potomac, military bands, the U.S.A.F. Honor Guard Drill Team and Friday Summer Sounds—National Harbor has it all!

By PRESS OFFICER
National Harbor

NATIONAL HARBOR, Md. (May 12, 2022)—National Harbor is the perfect destination for summer fun. Located just minutes from Washington, D.C. on the beautiful Potomac River, it provides a packed but flexible itinerary for families, couples and

singles. With its eight hotels, more than 40 restaurants, boutique shops and national brands (including Tanger Outlets,) National Harbor has something for everyone.

Friday Summer Sounds features musicians on the streets of National Harbor's Waterfront District from 5 to 7 p.m. on Fridays. Music will be provided from Bobby McKey's and other local artists.

National Harbor's waterfront is not just beautiful, it's accessible. With a walking/biking trail that goes to Old Town Alexandria and to Arlington, Virginia and a marina with a variety of boating options. And Capital Bikeshare has bikes to rent on site.

See SUMMER Page A3

Around the County

Helping Veterans

Helping Another Veteran Endure (HAVE) held an event in April, where suits and other items were sorted and organized for distribution to Veterans. MDVA Secretary George Owings attended and praised Mr. Prince Rawlings, Mr. Melvin Woodard and the other organizers of HAVE for their efforts. HAVE has collected over 3,000 suits to distribute to Veterans and the organizers are looking to partner with other community & veteran organizations for future “dress for success” events. Contact: Mr. Prince Rawlings at 202-417-1859.

—Maryland Department of Veterans Affairs

Library Staff Receive Statewide Awards

LARGO, Md. (May 6, 2022)—Prince George's County Memorial Library System (PGCMLS) staff have been local heroes throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, supporting COVID-19 relief efforts, distributing COVID-19 test kits, hosting food distributions, and ensuring Prince Georgians have free access to the internet and technology. Two PGCMLS staff members were awarded honors by the Maryland Library Association (MLA) during the organization's annual conference in Cambridge, Maryland, which took place May 3–6, 2022.

Michelle Hamiel, Chief Operating Officer for Public Services, received the MLA Outstanding Member Award in recognition of her decades of service to Maryland libraries, statewide leadership in race and social equity, and founding MLA's Black Caucus. Hamiel was also recently elected to serve as MLA's 2022/2023 vice president/president-elect, assuming the organization's presidency in 2023. Drew Clark, Graphic Design Specialist, was awarded MLA's Excellence in Marketing Award, which “recognizes the talent of communications and marketing personnel within Maryland libraries.” Clark's award focuses on his creative design for the bilingual (English/Spanish) 2021 Summer @ Your Library (“Verano en su Biblioteca”) program, “Tails and Tales,” which was presented in partnership with the Washington Nationals.

About Michelle Hamiel

Michelle Hamiel serves as the chief operating officer for public services at the Prince George's County Memorial Library System (PGCMLS) in Maryland. She has spent the last eight years helping to position PGCMLS as a national leader in the library world. Hamiel works tirelessly to help change the equity lens, nationally, statewide and locally. She serves as a member of the Urban Libraries Council Race and Social Equity Action Team. She currently serves as the facilitator for the Maryland Library Association Equity Diversity and Inclusion Task force. She serves as the facilitator for the Maryland State Libraries diversity and inclusion task force. As a transformative leader, Hamiel is passionate about working to develop policies, procedures and services that enrich the lives of individuals, provide access for all and tear down barriers that prevent others from realizing their full potential. Hamiel believes her work in libraries equalizes the playing field for those who have historically been excluded. Embracing the core value of libraries: access, democracy, diversity, education and lifelong learning, Hamiel consistently embraces and implements new ideas, innovations and programs that transform libraries and those who use them. She is a James Partridge award winner and a Maryland Library Association Outstanding Member award recipient. She recently received an Executive Certificate in Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion from Georgetown University. She holds a Master's degree in Library Science and a Bachelor's of Science degree in Business Administration. Hamiel keeps her finger on the pulse of library innovation by actively participating in the American Library Association, Public Library Association, Urban Libraries Council, and Maryland Library Association. She also receives inspiration from her students at the University of Maryland iSchool where she serves as an adjunct professor.



About Drew Clark

Drew Clark has been the graphic designer at Prince George's County Memorial Library System (PGCMLS) for over 3 years. Heavily influenced by nature and the animated films he watched growing up, he decided to enter the creative field. Reading has also shaped his interests and is one of the reasons he loves working for a library system. He hopes to inspire young readers and artists through his work. Outside of his artistic pursuits, he likes to go on adventures with his life partner Brian and their pup Lucky.

—Silvana Quiroz, PGCMLS

Department of Parks and Recreation, Prince George's County Announces Pesticide-Free Parks

RIVERDALE, Md. (May 11, 2022)—The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission, Department of Parks and Recreation in Prince George's County announces it has completed steps to make all 249 playgrounds, dog parks, and 132 of its parks now pesticide-free as a part of its mission to conserve and protect natural spaces and species.

The Department of Parks and Recreation is reducing its environmental impact by implementing more sustainable efforts and initiatives. After careful review of best practices, the Department has decreased the use of pesticides in its overall parks and increased the use of manual, mechanical and organic means to control pests. It will also reduce the number of ornamental landscape beds that can significantly decrease the need for pesticides.

In addition, the Department has launched a 48-hour pesticide pre-notification requirement for all pesticide applications on parkland that will be available on the new Integrated Pest Management & Sustainability website. The site will also have the list of parks that are pesticide free. Visit Integrated Pest Management Program and Pesticide Use (pgcparks.com) for more details.

The Department reviews best practices for land management, along with effective organic options to implement pesticide reduction efforts in support of its Sustainability Plan. It recently launched Mission Zero—a long-term sustainability initiative that aims to reduce environmental footprint as close to zero as possible by 2040.

COMMUNITY

Around the County

Bowie State's Myles Frost Nominated for Broadway's Tony Award

Winners Will be Announced in June

BOWIE, Md. (May 9, 2022)—He's been the pride of Bowie State University since he debuted as Michael Jackson last December at the Neil Simon Theater in MJ: The Musical. Now Myles Frost, a music technology major at Bowie State, has been nominated for a Tony Award for Best Performance by an Actor in a Leading Role in a Musical.

Frost competed for the lead role last year and has been amazing theater goers in New York with his acting prowess, signature Michael Jackson dance moves, and singing. He is one of the first, if not the first, HBCU student to be nominated for Best Performance by an Actor in a Leading Role in a Musical on Broadway.

Professor Tewodross W. Williams, chair of the Fine and Performing Arts Department, says he is overcome with joy. "When I saw him perform on Broadway in March, I knew he was a special talent," said Professor Williams. "The entire Bowie State University family is supporting him and will be watching intently when the Tony Award winners are announced on CBS and Paramount+ on Sunday, June 12."

To view a video about Myles Frost on Broadway, visit <https://youtu.be/FAglUFHkxMM>

Dr. William Welch Retires at 92 Years of Age and Thirty Years at Bowie State

Beloved Trailblazer Highlights Annual HRD Symposium and Expo



BOWIE, Md. (May 5, 2022)—The Human Resource Development (HRD) program [held] its annual symposium and expo on Saturday, May 7, from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. in the Student Center, Wiseman Ballroom to discuss networking opportunities, career readiness, and diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility (DEIA) in the workplace, topics to guide professional development for graduate students. "Honoring Legacy, Talent Development, and Strategic Partnership", this year's theme, has increased significance as HRD also honors retired professor Dr. William Welch after 30 years of service to Bowie State University.

At 92 years of age, Dr. Welch was the oldest full-time faculty member until he retired last December, and is credited with playing a major role in the development of BSU's HRD program. He arrived at Bowie State while he was a doctoral candidate in human resource development at George Washington University (GW) and decided he wanted to replicate aspects of GW's program, specifically in the areas of consulting, training, and adult learning at BSU.

"I was with the Prince George's County Human Relations Commission and initially started working with BSU as an adjunct professor because I didn't want to leave the county," said Dr. Welch. "We started the HRD program at Bowie State concentrating on those three topics critical to GW's program and later included experiential learning as a major component of BSU's offering."

Dr. Welch has received over 200 awards during his long career including the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission's 2004 Civil Rights Award; National Association of Counties Conflict Resolution Award; an Outstanding Leadership Award presented by the Prince George's County Human Relations Commission; and recognition from other local, state, and national organizations. Although the accolades for his service distinguish him from many others in HRD field, his primary focus was on advancing HRD and providing guidance to his students and faculty members.

"He was a major proponent of developing a strong HRD pipeline that will supply businesses, non-profits, and government agencies with professionals prepared to help organizations develop and manage their talent pool," said Dr. Joi Brown, a former student of Dr. Welch and an HRD adjunct professor. "Dr. Welch and Bowie State's HRD program prepared me for everything I do today and gave me the skill sets, confidence, and expertise that all practitioners need in today's changing work environment."

Although he will no longer be in a classroom, Dr. Welch will continue to provide his expertise to organizations and individuals through his consulting practice. He says his focus going forward will be on training and executive coaching.

"I've always deemed it imperative that I help people realize their potential," said Dr. Welch. "Over the years I have observed people who needed help in recognizing their talent and identifying their purpose. Since I've left Bowie State my focus is on executive coaching and showing individuals the changes they need to make in their lives to not only succeed, but soar in their professional endeavors," he said.

—David Lee Thompson, Bowie State University

Upcoming PGSAO Events

Community in the Courthouse

Please join State's Attorney Aisha N. Braveboy and #TeamPGSAO for the next Community in the Courthouse as we discuss mental health and criminal justice on May 31. Join State's Attorney Aisha N. Braveboy along with area law enforcement and mental health professionals for an informative dialogue on the intersection between mental health and the criminal justice system. Moderated by Tracee Wilkins, News4 Prince George's County Bureau Chief. This will be a virtual event via Zoom and streamed live on Facebook. If you would like to attend, visit <https://tinyurl.com/CICMay2022>.

WHEN: May 31, 2022, 6–7:30 p.m.

FOR MORE INFORMATION: commaffairs@co.pg.md.us

2022 Multicultural Festival

The Office of the State's Attorney is hosting the 2022 Multicultural Festival on Saturday, June 11 at 12 p.m. at the Show Place Arena/Equestrian Center, 14900 Pennsylvania Avenue, Upper Marlboro, MD 20772. Please join us as we celebrate community, culture and diversity in Prince George's County. Come and enjoy food, music, dance performance, kids corner, vendors and more!

This will be an in-person, outdoor event. If you would like to attend, please register in advance by visiting <https://multiculturalfest2022.eventbrite.com>.

WHEN: June 11, 2022, 12–6 p.m.

FOR MORE INFORMATION: cosuji@co.pg.md.us

District Six Council Member Medlock Sworn Into Office

Council Appointee Johnathan Medlock Seated for First Council Session

By ANGELA J. ROUSON

Prince George's County Council Media

Prince George's County Council Member Johnathan M. Medlock (D-District 6) was sworn into office today, Monday, May 9, 2022, to fill the District 6 Council seat vacated by the incumbent on April 15, 2022. The Council, sitting as the District Council, convened following the swearing-in ceremony, with Council Member Medlock participating in his first Council session.

Pursuant to the County Charter and County Code sections addressing Council vacancies, the Council unanimously voted on Tuesday, May 3, 2022, to appoint Council Member Medlock to serve the remaining seven (7) months of a Council term set to expire December 5, 2022, following the resignation of the incumbent on April 15, 2022.

In remarks to a contingency of supporters, Council Member Medlock reaffirmed his strong commitment to supporting District 6 residents and Prince George's County.

"One of the things I want the District 6 community to know and understand, is that you have a representative for your district—and democracy only works if

someone is working on democracy. Being in this position I have an opportunity now to serve not only the city of District Heights but all the surrounding areas with integrity, leadership, foresight, and commitment. I vow to work with the Council Members to make sure our County continues to move forward."

Council Chair Calvin S. Hawkins, II, commanding his colleagues on the execution of the Council's appointment process, looks forward to serving with Council Member Medlock.

"Council Member Medlock has established a record of service to the people of Prince George's County. As mayor, was a fierce advocate for District Heights and its residents, and I am assured that his commitment to serve will only intensify as the Council Member representing District 6. We look forward to his continued contributions in the months ahead as we move Prince George's County forward."

Prince George's County Executive Angela Alsobrooks, present for the swearing-in, addressed Council Member Medlock directly in her welcoming remarks, "It is so clear that your heart and energy are in public service and your experience has prepared you adequately to

fill in this County Council seat for the remainder of this term. I congratulate you on your appointment and thank you for stepping up once again when Prince Georgians have needed you most."

Council Member Medlock most recently served the City of District Heights as its Mayor, prior to his appointment to the Council's District 6 seat. He also counts among previous elected and appointed positions serving as Board Member, Prince George's County Revenue Authority; Vice-Chair, Prince George's County Human Relations Commission; Prince George's County Behavioral Health Ambassador; President, Maryland Black Mayors Association president.; and Board Member, National League of Cities - the only representative from Maryland serving on the Finance, Administration, and Intergovernmental Relations Committee.

Council Member Medlock is the proud father of two sons and lives in the City of District Heights.

District 6 constituent areas include the communities of District Heights, Forestville, Kettering, Largo, Mitchellville, and the unincorporated areas of Bowie, Capitol Heights, and Upper Marlboro.

Laurel High School Students Win Local 2022 Envirothon Competition

By PRESS OFFICER

Prince George's Soil Conservation District

UPPER MARLBORO, Md. (May 6, 2022)—The Prince George's Soil Conservation District (PGSCD) is pleased to announce that Laurel High School won first-place honors in the 2022 Prince George's County Envirothon Competition. Potomac High School came in second place. The Prince George's Soil Conservation District and the William S. Schmidt Outdoor Education Center hosted the 2022 Prince George's County Envirothon virtually from April 20th to April 27th. This year, twenty-five Prince George's County high school students were tested in five categories: aquatics, forestry, soils, wildlife, and this year's fifth issue, "Waste to Resources." Participating high schools in this year's competition included Fairmont Heights High School, Laurel High School, Oxon Hill High School, and Potomac High School.

"We are extremely proud of our students who competed in the 2022 Prince George's County Envirothon competition. We want to give a special congratulations to the winning team from Laurel High School and the runners-up from Potomac High School," said Steven E. Darcey, PGSCD's District Manager. "This program wouldn't have been a success without the hard work and dedication of the local Envirothon coordinators, teachers, and sponsors. We give many thanks to everyone involved. Next, let's win the Maryland State Envirothon!"

With the help of sponsors, PGSCD donated Envirothon Training Kits to six high schools in the county to help their coaches and teams prepare for the competition. These kits contained numerous materials, including field guides, fish models, male turkey legs, clinometers, tree and log scale sticks, pH soil kits, and soil tools, to name a few.

"We are proud that our Envirothon students are learning content and gaining skills that are essential for addressing local and global environmental issues," said Donald Belle, Environmental Outreach Educator with the Department of Environmental Education at the William S. Schmidt Center. "We want to build on their enthusiasm by providing methods by which they can address waste and create awareness at their schools."

PGSCD and the Schmidt Center collaborated with partners from the Maryland-National Capital Park & Planning Commission's Parks and Recreation division and Maryland's Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS-MD) to provide training opportunities and resources to teams and coaches. Each month, Parks & Recreation's Resource Specialists and NRCS-MD met to develop the interactive and virtual training, competition, review, and awards ceremony to prepare students for the State competition.

Due to field trip restrictions, the Envirothon competition continued to challenge and prepare the winning team for the Maryland Envirothon in a virtual setting. The State competition will take place in person on June 22nd at the University of Maryland Extension Research and Education Center's Clarksville Facility. Then, the Maryland State Envirothon champions will advance to the National Conservation Foundation (NCF) Envirothon competition held from July 24th to July 30th at Miami University in Oxford, Ohio.

With more counties and states participating each year, the Envirothon competition continues to expand its reach. PGSCD remains committed to its goal to educate as many students and teachers as possible on the importance of conserving our natural resources to preserve and protect the environment. As always, we are #PrinceGeorgesProud!

Summer from A2

The National Harbor Marina provides the opportunity for those who want to visit by boat or rent a boat. Last year, National Harbor added hydrobike water bikes. The bikes are non-polluting, easy to ride, lightweight safe and stable with 400 pounds of flotation. Available for rent for ages 8 and up, the water bikes are available from Boating in D.C. at National Harbor. The company also offers kayaks, paddleboards, and pedal boats.

Freedom Boat Club and Carefree Boat Club at National Harbor are a membership program where guests can rent a boat. A boating license is required. Maryland Yacht Charters has added an additional boat for National Harbor this season. Here, you can rent a boat with a captain for 2-4 hours and BYOB.

Monumental Boat Tours' offers two-person CraigCats. These are available along with a knowledgeable guide, in a separate boat, who provides history and exploration on a two-hour tour from National Harbor to Mount Vernon. Boaters will see Jones Point Lighthouse, Fort Washington, a lot of Potomac River wildlife and more.

Potomac Paddle Club offers another fun boating experience at National Harbor. It's the first pedal boat or "Cycleboat" company in the region. The social, active adventures on the water are the perfect way for friends, families, and colleagues to sip, cycle, and celebrate.

"National Harbor has so much to offer both on land and on the water," said Deborah Topicik, director of marketing at National Harbor. "With boating, movies and military concerts it's an exceptional location for a summer adventure."

Movies on the Potomac features top movies shown on the outdoor, waterfront screen (150 National Plaza) from May through September with family movies on Sundays at 6 p.m. and "date night" movies on Thursdays at 7 p.m. Attendees are encouraged to bring carryout from any of the many restaurants in the Water-



PHOTO COURTESY OF NATIONAL HARBOR

Last year, National Harbor added hydrobike water bikes.

front District. Salute the Sunset features U.S. Air Force, Navy, Marine and Army bands on select Wednesdays and Saturdays at 7 p.m. from May until September. The U.S. Air Force Honor Guard drill team will hold drill demonstrations on some of those dates.

Hotels at National Harbor have a variety of summer packages and specials. From Gaylord National Resort to MGM National Harbor, Westin National Harbor, the AC Hotel, Hampton Place and the new Hyatt Place, they offer waterfront views, family accommodations as well as romantic getaways.

Take in the waterfront views with free fitness classes every Monday and Tuesday at 7 p.m. with One Life Fitness and Sport & Health, and Saturday yoga classes at 10 a.m. by Zen Yoga Studio.

For more information on National Harbor, visit www.NationalHarbor.com.

COMMENTARY

Marc Morial

President and CEO, National Urban League



To Be Equal:

Abortion Bans Are Part of a Larger Agenda to Roll Back Advances in Racial Justice and Women's Rights

"At a time when open racism was becoming unfashionable, these politicians needed a more high-minded issue, one that would not compel them to surrender their fundamental political orientation. And of course, the beauty of defending a fetus is that the fetus demands nothing in return—housing, health care, education—so it's a fairly low-risk advocacy."

—religious historian Randall Balmer

One of the enduring myths of American politics is that evangelical Christians were spurred en masse to political action by the U.S. Supreme Court's 1973 ruling in *Roe v. Wade*, which protects the legal right to abortion.

The truth is much uglier. Right-wing panic over legal abortion was sparked—and stoked—by panic over the advancement of civil rights and women's rights. And the effort to roll back reproductive rights is part of a larger agenda to reverse the progress of the 20th Century and re-establish white male dominance over our nation's political and social institu-

tions.

The late Rev. Jerry Falwell, who founded the right-wing Moral Majority, did not speak publicly against abortion until 1978, five years after Roe. The Southern Baptist Convention passed a resolution in 1971 calling for the legalization of abortion, reaffirming it in 1974 and 1976. Focus on the Family founder James Dobson said in 1973 that the Bible is silent on abortion and that "a developing embryo or fetus is not regarded as a full human being."

No, the Supreme Court decision that galvanized the religious right was not *Roe v. Wade*, but *Green v. Connally*, which had its own origins in *Brown v. Board of Education*—68 years ago this week—which outlawed racial segregation in public schools.

Resistance to integration following Brown was so strong that whites-only private schools known as "segregation academies" sprung up throughout the south. Falwell, who famously referred to the civil rights movement as "civil wrongs" established his own segregation academy, Lynchburg Christian School, in 1967.

In 1971, the Court ruled in *Green v. Connally*—and affirmed later that year in *Coit v. Green*—that a private school which practiced racial discrimination could not be eligible for a tax exemption.

Bob Jones University, whose founder declared that integration was "contrary to the Word of God," was especially energetic in fighting the ruling. The revocation of Bob Jones tax-exemption in 1976 "alerted the Christian school community about what could happen with government interference" Bob Jones administrator Elmer L. Rumminger, told Balmer. "That was really the major issue that got us all involved."

Right-wing activists, particularly Falwell and Heritage Foundation co-founder Paul Weyrich, saw an opportunity to harness the surging racial anxiety among conservative Christians into political action.

"But Falwell and Weyrich, having tapped into the ire of evangelical leaders, were also savvy enough to recognize that organizing grassroots evangelicals to defend racial discrimination would be a challenge," Balmer wrote. "It had worked to rally the leaders, but they needed a different issue if they wanted to mobilize evangelical voters on a large scale."

In the late 1970s, organized opposition to legal abortion was mainly the domain of Roman Catholics. But the success of Republican candidates opposed to legal abortion in the 1978 Senate elections demonstrated to right-wing political activists the issue's potential to motivate conservative evangelical voters.

In the 1980 Presidential election, evangelical voters flocked to Republican Ronald Reagan, who as Governor of California had signed the nation's most liberal abortion law in 1967, over fellow evangelical Jimmy Carter, who publicly stated his personal opposition to abortion.

The movement to criminalize abortion has never extricated itself from its racist origins. "Whites who

score high on measures of racial resentment and racial grievance are far more likely to support strict limits on abortion than whites who score low on these measures," political scientist Alan Abramowitz told the New York Times. White supremacist groups are among the movement's most passionate supporters. At this year's March for Life rally in January, members of the white nationalist Patriot Front distributed cards reading, "America belongs to its fathers, and it is owed to its sons. The restoration of American sovereignty must follow the restoration of the American Family."

In a letter, earlier this week urging members of the Senate to pass the Women's Health Protection Act, other Urban League leaders and I pointed out that overturning Roe would put Black women in particular danger.

"Black women are 2.5 times more likely to die as a result of childbirth than White women. Meanwhile, due to racialized income and wealth disparities, inequitable access to medical care, and the other insidious ways structural racism manifests, people of color are more likely to require abortion care and are less likely to be able to afford out-of-state travel to obtain care if it is made illegal in their state," we wrote. "Therefore, it is not only a gender justice issue but a racial justice issue to codify the right to an abortion into federal law and ensure all pregnant persons have the ability to make personal health decisions."

As House Majority Whip James E. Clyburn tweeted, "We have seen #SCOTUS gut voting rights. Other decisions like Brown v. Board [desegregation of schools], *Loving v. Virginia* [allowing interracial marriage], and *Obergefell v. Hodges* [upholding same-sex marriage] could hang in the balance.

"History teaches us that if a thing has happened before, it can happen again."

"We must fight to reclaim rights that have been lost and defend rights that are in danger."

insecurity in America at the time. Now, more than half a century later, conversations on how we will finally put an end to hunger in America are long overdue."

Advocates demanding action on hunger set in motion a chain of events over the next few years that led to major reforms being adopted. In 1969, President Richard Nixon convened a White House Conference on Food, Nutrition and Health, declaring hunger had no place in our rich land. Positive follow up policy steps spawned major progress over time and paved the path for the indispensable child and family food safety net programs that so many tens of millions depend on today. But even now, we can still clearly see that the safety net has gaping holes. That's why it's good news that more than 50 years after that first White House conference, President Biden's administration has announced it will once again hold a White House Conference on Hunger, Nutrition, and Health this September.

The Children's Defense Fund joined other organizations signing a letter urging President Biden to convene a conference that reads in part: "We can end hunger in America, and a public commitment to a White House Conference, with ending hunger as a key priority, is an essential step in accomplishing this goal... The 1969 Conference led to an expansion of the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) and the National School Lunch Program, as well as the establishment of the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC). The Conference created the meaningful and necessary conversations to address hunger and food

It's time to seize the moment again, including putting permanent universal school meals on the 2022 agenda. Research confirms access to universal school meals boosts attendance, improves academic and health outcomes, and reduces behavior-related suspensions. Nearly 60 percent of children just above the cutoff for free meals are children of color, leaving them most at risk of losing out on the healthy food they need to succeed inside and outside of the classroom. Decades after that visit to hungry Black children in Mississippi, institutional racism still disproportionately denies children of color—and their families—access to healthy food at home and in their communities. Universal school meals and other tools to fight hunger are an essential step for advancing racial equity right now.

Marion Wright Edelman

President Emerita,
Children's Defense Fund



ChildWatch:

Hungry Children Still Need Help

As the school year winds down, once again millions of children and families are facing the reality that hunger doesn't take a summer vacation. This has been especially true over the last two years. Many of the lines at food pantries that started forming at the beginning of the pandemic still have not disappeared, and rising prices are now stretching families' budgets past their limits. Congress took action to help early on, providing crucial waivers and flexibilities that allowed schools to serve universal free meals to all students. But these protections for hungry children are set to expire June 30, and Congress has not yet extended them. Without immediate action, 10 million children will lose access to healthy, free meals and many summer meal sites will be forced to close their doors. Poor and low-income families, who are already reeling from the loss of the expanded Child Tax Credit that helped them afford groceries and other necessities,

are facing a very uncertain season ahead.

Addressing hunger in America should always be a priority. When I was working as a young civil rights lawyer for the NAACP Legal Defense Fund in Mississippi fifty-five years ago, I was asked to come to Washington to testify before Congress about how the War on Poverty was working in the state. I told the committee I had become deeply and increasingly concerned about the high levels of hunger in the Mississippi Delta. Senators Robert Kennedy and Joseph Clark agreed to come to Mississippi to see the crisis for themselves, and we visited homes—many of them shacks with dirt floors and empty ice boxes and cupboards—where we saw a kind of hunger many people did not believe could exist in America. We saw listless young children with bloated bellies and families who could not afford even the \$2 cost to buy the food stamps which had replaced the free food commodities

that were all that stood between them and hunger and malnutrition, even starvation. It was shameful, inexorable, and preventable.

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Maryland Members Announce Nearly \$130,000 for NASA Partnership With University of Baltimore, UMES to Support Students Pursuing STEM Careers

WASHINGTON (May 11, 2022)—Today, U.S. Senators Chris Van Hollen and Ben Cardin and Congressmen Dutch Ruppersberger, John Sarbanes, Kweisi Mfume, and Andy Harris (all Md.) announced \$129,731 to fund partnerships between NASA and Maryland universities to support young students' dreams of entering careers in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM).

The funds will support the University of Baltimore's Space Tech Camp—an initiative geared towards helping Baltimore City Public School students in Grades 10 and 11 learn about NASA's Artemis program by working on augmented reality (AR) projects and the University of Maryland, Eastern Shore's HAWKS MUREP Precollege Summer Institute—a two-week residential program with learning activities on

space exploration, aeronautics, and Earth science.

"Fostering students' love for science at a young age is critical to inspiring the next generation of innovative thinkers. For young scientists, especially those from underserved communities, learning in an enriching environment at one of Maryland's outstanding universities can help progress their academic trajectory or career goals and ultimately develop a more diverse pipeline of Marylanders in the STEM fields. That's why we continue to fight for resources for programs like these to help expand these unique opportunities for young students as they choose their future careers," said the lawmakers.

These funds are distributed through the Minority University Re-

search and Education Project (MUREP) and are administered through NASA's Office of STEM Engagement—which Senators Chris Van Hollen and Ben Cardin and Congressmen Dutch Ruppersberger, John Sarbanes, and Kweisi Mfume secured an additional \$10 million for in the FY22 appropriations legislation. MUREP is designed to help increase the number of students pursuing STEM careers from traditionally underrepresented and underserved communities through pre-college summer programs at Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) and Predominantly Black Institutions (PBIs).

The Prince George's Post

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Atworth from A1

efits of living near high-quality transit in a high opportunity area—to 450 households in Prince George's County." Atworth is located at 4201 River Road in College Park, MD, home to the University of Maryland.

Atworth is a 451-unit affordable apartment community featuring a 324-space structured parking garage, 5,000 SF of ground floor retail space, and a 1-acre public park activated with public pedestrian and bicycle pathways, amenities, and public art features. Atworth is adjacent to the College Park Metro station, home to the University of Maryland. The Atworth development will be within walking distance to the under-construction Purple Line, which will serve the MARC commuter rail with service to Baltimore,

Maryland, and Washington, D.C. Register for updates at <https://atworthcollegepark.com/>

Gilbane Development Company is the real estate development, financing, and ownership arm of Gilbane, Inc., a 150-year-old family-owned company. With over \$8 billion in development and more than 20,000 units of housing completed/underway, Gilbane Development Company's projects incorporate every aspect of real estate including: multifamily housing (market rate apartments, student housing, and affordable housing); single-family residential communities; mixed-use developments; healthcare facilities; K-12 schools; government facilities; garage/parking areas; corporate headquarters; operational data distribution centers; R&D manufacturing facilities; and, many types of facilities delivered through public-private part-

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Metro sells and leases property to private developers through its Joint Development Program with the objective of maximizing the benefits of transit-oriented development. Since 1975, Metro has completed 55 projects at 30 stations totaling 17 million square feet of residential and commercial real estate, which supports the region's economic growth and competitiveness. Metro continues to encourage further investment in Metro station areas by periodically offering new properties for development. Visit wmata.com/business/realestate/index.cfm

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BUSINESS AND FINANCE

Social Security Matters

Ask Rusty:

Will Paying the IRS Quarterly Increase My Social Security?

By RUSSELL GLOOR,
National Social Security Advisor at the AMAC Foundation,
the non-profit arm of the Association of Mature American Citizens

Dear Rusty: I waited to sign up for Social Security until I turned 70 last month so I would qualify for the maximum benefit. I have been the pastor of a small church for the last 15 years & they didn't take out deductions, so I paid in quarterly at the advice of my accountant so I would have an amount built up when the time came for me to sign up for Social Security. I received my first SS payment in March for \$1757.00 after Medicare was deducted. I have been told that once you turned 70 you get the maximum SS benefit, but my accountant thought that I can still pay in quarterly to boost that \$1757. I don't want to pay in anymore if it's not going to increase my amount (other than cost of living increases), so what do I tell my accountant? He's waiting to hear from me before he completes my income tax return. *Signed: Inquisitive Pastor*

Dear Inquisitive: By "pay in quarterly" I assume you mean that your earnings from the church are reported on IRS form 1099 and that you pay quarterly estimated income taxes to the IRS to avoid a penalty when you file your annual taxes. The primary reason to pay quarterly estimated taxes is to avoid an IRS penalty - paying your taxes quarterly doesn't matter to Social Security because they will use your annual income (regardless of when you pay the IRS) to see if your benefit should be increased. And whether your current income from the church will increase your Social Security benefit depends on your lifetime earnings history of paying into the Social Security program.

The Social Security benefit you're now receiving is based on your lifetime earnings history, specifically the 35 years over your lifetime in which you had the highest earnings (adjusted for inflation). Social Security always uses a 35 year window to compute your benefit amount, choosing the highest earning years from among all your earning years. If you have fewer than a full 35 years of earnings, they will add enough "zero" years to make it 35 to compute your benefit. What that means is that if you have fewer than 35 years of SS-covered earnings, your earnings now from the church will eliminate one of those "zero" earning years, which would result in a small increase to your Social Security benefit. However, if you already have at least 35 years of SS-covered earnings, then your current earnings will only increase your SS benefit if your recent earnings are more than any of those in the 35 inflation-adjusted years used to compute your age 70 benefit. Social Security will make that determination whether you pay quarterly estimated income taxes to the IRS or not, and they will automatically increase your monthly benefit if your current annual earnings from the church call for it.

How you pay the IRS won't factor into Social Security's determination, but not paying estimated taxes quarterly may affect your total income tax obligation for the tax year, which is what your accountant should be able to tell you. And if your tax return is filed as a self-employed taxpayer, you'll need to pay into Social Security via self-employment taxes, whether you pay the IRS quarterly or not.

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.

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Job Corps Launches Recruitment Drive in Maryland

Free career training and openings available at Woodland and Woodstock campuses

By PRESS OFFICER
Job Corps

WASHINGTON (May 9, 2022)—The U.S. Department of Labor's Job Corps program has launched a recruitment drive in Maryland, offering immediate openings and free career training for low-income students ages 16–24 in the nation's leading industries.

"This is a great opportunity for young adults in Maryland who are trying to leverage a strong job market," said National Director of Job Corps Rachel Torres. "We are a gateway to skills, credentials and opportunity. Our students need Job Corps, and the workforce needs our students."

There are two Job Corps campuses in Maryland: Woodland (in Laurel) and

Woodstock. They offer career skills training in high-growth industry sectors, including Advanced Manufacturing, Construction, Finance and Business, Health Care, Homeland Security, Hospitality, Information Technology, and Renewable Resources and Energy.

Job Corps is free for ages 16–24 from low-income households who meet the eligibility requirements, and students can apply and enroll at any time. Job Corps provides hands-on career skills training, on-campus housing, meals, health care and job search assistance. Applicants may qualify if they receive SNAP, TANF, or free or reduced school lunch, or if they are experiencing homelessness or are a foster youth.

The recruitment drive in Maryland is part of a national effort to restore Job Corps

campuses to full capacity after pandemic safety measures had restricted enrollments, due to the residential aspects of the program. Job Corps has restored pre-pandemic admission standards nationwide and has immediate openings in Maryland.

For more information about Job Corps, or to begin the enrollment process, visit jobcorps.gov or call 800-733-JOBS (5627).

Job Corps is a federal career technical training and education program for young people who aspire to higher-paying careers and higher education. With 121 residential and nonresidential locations nationwide, training is available in the nation's fastest-growing industries to eligible 16- through 24-year-olds. The program is completely free of charge.

Cardin & Van Hollen Announce Federal Funding for Bowie State University Innovation Programs

\$4 Million in Congressionally Directed Spending will Support Business Accelerator Program Expansion and Hydroponics Research at Maryland's Oldest HBCU

By PRESS OFFICERS
U.S. Senate Committee on Small Business & Entrepreneurship

WASHINGTON (May 9, 2022)—U.S. Senate Committee on Small Business & Entrepreneurship Chair Ben Cardin and U.S. Senate Appropriations Financial Services and General Government Subcommittee Chair Chris Van Hollen (both D-Md.) today announced \$4 million in congressionally directed spending to support innovation programs at Bowie State University, the oldest Historically Black College and University (HBCU) in Maryland. The senators secured \$3 million for the Bowie Business Innovation Center (Bowie BIC), as well as \$1 million for the university to develop a new laboratory for hydroponics research.

In addition to the announcement, the senators joined university President Dr. Aminta H. Breaux, Bowie BIC Executive Director Lisa S. Smith, graduates of the Bowie BIC business accelerator programs, entrepreneurs, and regional small business leaders for a listening session about the challenges facing Prince George's County entrepreneurs and small businesses. The senators also heard from graduates of Bowie BIC's 8(a) Accelerator Program, who informed the senators about their experience navigating the federal contracting process.

"The COVID-19 pandemic demonstrated that our nation's HBCUs are perfectly situated to help connect minorities, women, and other underserved entrepreneurs to the services and resources they need to succeed," Cardin said. "The \$3 million in congressionally directed funding will increase the Bowie Business Innovation Center's capacity to help underserved entrepreneurs more than ten-fold. The Bowie BIC inspired my UPLIFT Act, which would create a national network of accelerators and incubators on HBCU, MSI, and community college campuses. I remain hopeful that we will pass this legislation to tap into the entrepreneurial spirit that is surging through our communities."

"The Bowie Business Innovation Center is a pioneering initiative providing underserved small businesses with the tools they need to succeed and better position them to obtain government contracts. That's why I was proud to join Senator Cardin in supporting a \$3 million federal investment for the BIC within the federal funding bill this year," said Senator Van Hollen. "With these funds Bowie State will be able to expand services for Marylanders—and the Bowie BIC will help other HBCUs around the country replicate its success. We will keep working to bring more growth opportunities by leveraging federal investments to Bowie State and all of our state's HBCUs, which play an integral role in opening the doors to opportunity to people across Maryland."

"The \$3 million received in federal funding will help to create the Bowie BIC Center of Excellence pilot program that will deliver targeted resources to strengthen HBCUs," said Aminta Breaux, President of Bowie State University. "The program will also expand the existing work of the only 8(a) Accelerator Program in the country. We are grateful to Senator Cardin for helping us to secure the necessary funds to ensure continued success. This additional support will allow for the expansion and replication of the Bowie BIC 8(a) Accelerator Program mode through partnerships with other HBCUs. Additionally, we thank Senator Van Hollen for his work in securing



Senators Van Hollen and Cardin present check to Bowie BIC Executive Director Lisa Smith (R) and BSU President Aminta Breaux (L).

\$1 million to develop the Laboratory for Hydroponics and Aquaponics Research at Bowie State University."

The new \$3 million direct federal funding award to establish the Bowie BIC Center of Excellence for 8(a) Government Contracting at Bowie State University is a historic development," said Lisa S. Smith, Executive Director of the Bowie BIC, a non-profit business accelerator located at Bowie State University. "We are truly grateful to Senator Cardin and Senator Van Hollen for their work to secure this funding. With this funding, our award-winning 8(a) Accelerator Program can be expanded through the Center of Excellence and become a new resource for HBCU's in America by helping socially and economically disadvantaged companies participate fully in the U.S Small Business Administration (SBA) 8(a) Program and win government contracts that build wealth for the contractors, and bring jobs to their communities."

The award-winning Bowie Business Innovation Center 8(a) Accelerator program—the first in America—is a fast track for helping certified U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) contractors in the SBA 8(a) Business Development program win federal government contracts. Bowie BIC's 8(a) Accelerator program focuses on the development of a targeted federal capture strategy, mentoring and networking.

The program served as a model for Cardin's UPLIFT Act, which would create an Innovation Centers Program within the Small Business Administration (SBA) to award competitive cooperative agreements worth as much as \$400,000 annually to HBCUs, minority serving institutions (MSIs), and community colleges to establish and expand incubators and accelerators.

The senators also secured \$1 million in direct funding for the Bowie State University Laboratory for Hydroponics Research to position Bowie State students and researchers at the forefront of cutting-edge research in plant biology and agriculture.

Luminis Health Doctors Community Medical Center Recognized With a 'B' in Leapfrog Hospital Safety Grade

By PRESS OFFICER
Luminis Health

LANHAM, Md. (May 10, 2022)—Luminis Health Doctors Community Medical Center has received a "B" Leapfrog Hospital Safety Grade for spring 2022, the highest Leapfrog safety grade of all hospitals in Prince George's County. This national distinction recognizes Luminis Health Doctors Community Medical Center's achievements in protecting patients from preventable harm and error in the hospital.

"This is wonderful news for our hospital and our team of caregivers who fo-

cus every day on prioritizing and improving quality and patient safety," said Debra Richmond, president of Luminis Health Doctors Community Medical Center. "Our Leapfrog B grade shows that the initiatives we have put in place for quality and patient safety are working."

The Leapfrog Group, an independent national watchdog organization, assigns an "A," "B," "C," "D," or "F" grade to hospitals across the country based on more than 30 national performance measures reflecting errors, accidents, injuries and infections, as well as systems hospitals have in place to prevent harm.

The Leapfrog Hospital Safety Grade is the only hospital ratings program based exclusively on hospital prevention of medical errors and harms to patients. The grading system is peer-reviewed, fully transparent and free to the public. Grades are updated twice annually, in the fall and spring.

"The commitment of our team to keep patients safe from preventable harm and medical errors is extraordinary," said Dr. Sunil Madan, chief medical officer at Luminis Health Doctors Community Medical Center. "This recognition shows our patients and community that we always provide high quality, safe care."

To see Luminis Health Doctors Com-

munity Medical Center full grade details and to access patient tips for staying safe in the hospital, visit HospitalSafetyGrade.org.

Maryland-based Luminis Health is a nationally recognized health system comprised of Anne Arundel Medical Center, Doctors Community Medical Center, J. Kent McNew Family Medical Center, Pathways, and Luminis Health Clinical Enterprise. Formed in 2019, Luminis Health serves residents in eight counties across the state and offers services in primary care, imaging, specialty care, emergency care, hospital care, as well as mental health and addiction care. With 741 licensed beds and 80+ sites of care, the health system has more than 6,600 employees, 1,900 medical staff, and more than 1,000 volunteers. Luminis Health generates \$1.2 billion in operating revenue and contributes \$80 million each year for the community's benefit. Luminis Health

is committed to being a beacon of hope and healing for the region, while igniting new possibilities for how and where health care is delivered. Learn more at LuminisHealth.org. Connect with us on LinkedIn, Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram.

Founded in 2000 by large employers and other purchasers, The Leapfrog Group is a national nonprofit organization driving a movement for giant leaps forward for patient safety. The flagship Leapfrog Hospital Survey and new Leapfrog Ambulatory Surgery Center (ASC) Survey collect and transparently report hospital and ASC performance, empowering purchasers to find the highest-value care and giving consumers the lifesaving information they need to make informed decisions. The Leapfrog Hospital Safety Grade, Leapfrog's other main initiative, assigns letter grades to hospitals based on their record of patient safety, helping consumers protect themselves and their families from errors, injuries, accidents, and infections.

HEALTH and WELLNESS

Maryland Department of Health Announces Mental Health First Aid Training for Historically Black Colleges and Universities

This Mental Health Awareness Month, the state's four historically Black colleges and universities will begin mental health and substance use disorder training from the Mental Health Association of Maryland

By PRESS OFFICER
Maryland Department of Health

BALTIMORE (May 10, 2022)—The Maryland Department of Health (MDH) has launched Mental Health First Aid Training in Maryland's historically Black colleges and universities (HBCUs). Mental Health First Aid Training is a national certification program providing skills-based training to identify the signs and symptoms of mental health or substance use challenges.

Announced in recognition of Mental Health Awareness Month, this initiative aims to train 20,000 students, faculty, and staff members across four HBCUs—Bowie State University, Coppin State University, Morgan State University and University of Maryland Eastern Shore—during the next four years.

"This Mental Health Awareness Month, we celebrate an important partnership that

has the potential to identify and help address often unforeseen issues in the lives of students who attend these valued institutions," said MDH Secretary Dennis R. Schrader. "Mental Health First Aid Training is a nationally recognized program that expands the support for young people who are disproportionately experiencing behavioral health crises at a critical time of need."

In Maryland, 52 percent of Black high school students (ages 14 to 19) reported feeling significantly sadder and more hopeless the past year compared to the statewide average of 36 percent, according to the 2021 Youth Pandemic Behavior Survey. In 2019, suicide was the third leading cause of death for Black Americans ages 15 to 24, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

"Mental Health First Aid Training provides the opportunity for students, faculty, and staff to learn when they, or someone

they know, may benefit from mental health and substance abuse treatment," said MDH Acting Deputy Secretary for Behavioral Health Dr. Lisa Burgess. "The training also teaches people how to engage in conversations around this need—including how to address social stigma—and connect those in need with available resources."

This Mental Health First Aid training initiative, which MDH previously announced for Maryland's first responders, is being coordinated for Maryland HBCUs by the Mental Health Association of Maryland and MDH's Behavioral Health Administration with funding provided through the federal Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration's Mental Health Block Grant.

To learn more about Mental Health First Aid Training, visit mentalhealthfirstaid.org/about or the Mental Health Association of Maryland website.

Maryland Department of Health Recognizes Maternal Mental Health Awareness Month in May

MDH encourages pregnant women to plan for managing birth-related mental health conditions

By PRESS OFFICER
Maryland Department of Health

BALTIMORE (May 11, 2022)—In recognition of Maternal Health Awareness Month, the Maryland Department of Health (MDH) encourages Marylanders to learn the signs and symptoms of common mental health conditions experienced by pregnant women and how to get help for themselves or a loved one.

Maternal mental health conditions are among the most common complications in pregnancy and childbirth and can occur anytime during pregnancy or the first year postpartum. Research suggests that one in five women is affected by maternal mental health conditions such as depression, anxiety disorders, obsessive-compulsive disorder, post-traumatic stress disorder, bipolar illness (which may include psychotic symptoms), and substance use disorders. The most common conditions are perinatal mood and anxiety disorders, including postpartum depression.

This May, MDH encourages pregnant women to plan ahead by learning the symptoms of pregnancy-related mental health conditions and using the available programs and services for help, including:

Doula Services: A doula, or birth worker, is a trained professional who provides physical, emotional, and informational support to birthing parents. This support can happen before, during, and after birth. If a doula sees

symptoms or has concerns that a parent may be struggling with their mental health, they can help parents advocate for their feelings and needs or suggest a referral to an appropriate mental health professional. Doula/birth worker services are free for eligible Medicaid members.

Home Visiting Services: Home visiting services provide pregnant women with the care and support they need to have a healthy pregnancy and healthy child. After pregnancy, home visitors continue to support the parent and child. Home visiting services are free for eligible Medicaid members.

Opioid Misuse Program: The Maternal Opioid Misuse (MOM) Model provides extra support for pregnant and postpartum women with opioid use disorder, including screenings for needs related to social determinants of health and maternal anxiety and depression. MOM case management services are free for eligible Medicaid members.

"Ensuring that pregnant women have all the support they need before and after childbirth is critical for countless reasons," said MDH Secretary Dennis R. Schrader. "Improving maternal health outcomes is one key metric tracked in Maryland's Total Cost of Care Model, knowledge of and access to these resources is key to this improvement."

Maternal mental health conditions do not have a single cause. According to the National Institute of Mental Health research, conditions may be caused by a combination of genetic and environmental factors, such

as life stress (for example, demands at work or experiences of past trauma), the physical and emotional demands of childbearing and caring for a new baby, and changes in hormones that occur during and after pregnancy.

Signs and symptoms may include one or more of the following:

- Feeling sad or depressed
- Feeling overly irritable or angry with those around you
- Difficulty bonding with baby
- Feeling anxious or panicky
- Having problems with eating or sleeping
- Having upsetting thoughts that you can't get out of your mind
- Feeling as if you are out of control or "going crazy"
- Feeling like you should never have become a mother
- Worrying that you might hurt your baby or yourself

"People who are pregnant and new mothers should look for signs of depression and be encouraged to share their feelings with their health providers at all stages of pregnancy," said Behavioral Health Administration Acting Deputy Secretary Dr. Lisa Burgess. "This knowledge and open communication can help reduce pregnancy-related mental health conditions."

"Maternal mental health issues are serious and affect women experiencing symptoms,

See MATERNAL Page A7

Health Unit from A1

our clinic are designed to help patients recover physically, mentally, and emotionally, during what is likely one of the most stressful moments of their lives."

Today, Dr. Michaels was joined by U.S. Representative Steny Hoyer (MD-05), Prince George's County Executive Angela Alsobrooks, Maryland State Senator Michael A. Jackson, among other community and MedStar Health leaders at a ribbon cutting held for the new-and-improved unit.

Rep. Hoyer helped secure federal funding for the project through the FY2022 Omnibus Appropriations Bill passed in March. The Maryland Hospital Association's Bond Project also awarded the hospital a \$840,000 grant, which was included in state funding allocated during the 2021 legislative session.

"I appreciate the challenges that the COVID-19 pandemic has brought about for so many who were already struggling with mental health and addiction disorders both in Maryland and across the country. Strengthening resources for our community during this challenging time and

into the future remains a critical priority," said Congressman Hoyer. "I am so proud of the new MedStar Health behavioral unit in Prince George's County that will strengthen access to essential health services and address the increasing behavioral health needs in our district. I was glad to secure \$925,000 in federal funding for this project in the FY2022 Omnibus and know that this state-of-the-art facility will improve lives."

"We are excited to open this behavioral health unit here in Prince George's County," said Prince George's County Executive Angela Alsobrooks. "We know that mental health is a critical component of overall health and wellness, which is why expanding behavioral health services has been a critical component of our goal to build a continuum of care in our County. Prince Georgians deserve to have access to quality healthcare right here at home, and we want to thank MedStar Health for helping provide greater access to these much-needed healthcare services."

"As someone who spent the majority of his professional career in the public safety field, I

have an acute understanding of the importance of mental healthcare in relation to overall public health and safety," said State Senator Michael A. Jackson. "Providing both quality and accessible care for behavioral health needs is an absolutely essential public service and I'm incredibly grateful to MedStar Health for their leadership in ensuring these services in Prince George's County and throughout all of Southern Maryland."

MedStar Health's significant investment in the renovations underscores the health system's commitment to improving behavioral health for both patients and associates, especially as stressors amplified by the COVID-19 pandemic continue to impact daily life nationwide.

"When it comes to caring for people, protecting and improving the mental health and wellbeing of our patients and associates has always been a critical priority for MedStar Health," said MedStar Health President and CEO Kenneth A. Samet. "This important investment in Prince George's County helps address the growing behavioral health needs across our health system, we will be better able to serve our region for decades to come."



County, community and MedStar Health leaders at a ribbon cutting held for the new-and-improved unit.

Health Department Recommends Voluntary Mask-Wearing in Indoor Public Places in Prince George's County

By GEORGE LETTIS
Prince George's County Health Department

LARGO, Md. (May 12, 2022)—Due to the highly transmissible Omicron variant, COVID-19 cases have been steadily rising in Prince George's County and the State over the last six weeks. This recent rise is substantially lower compared to the winter Omicron case surge and County COVID-19 hospitalizations remain relatively low*.

However, out of an abundance of caution and to help the County avoid rising into the CDC's "Medium" COVID-19 Community Level, the Prince George's County Health Department recommends residents ages two and older wear masks in indoor public places voluntarily.

Masks remain required in congregate health care settings, County public schools and libraries, and in any business or organization that chooses to require them.

Residents five and older should get vaccinated against COVID-19 as soon as possible if they are not already, and those 12 and older should get a booster dose (if you are 50 or older you can get a second booster dose).

Continue to get tested if you feel sick or were exposed to someone with COVID-19. If you test positive, please stay home for at least five days and follow CDC isolation guidance. COVID-19 treatment is also available at pharmacies across the region as part of the federal government's Test-To-Treat program.

*County-level numbers are updated regularly on the department's COVID-19 data dashboard under the Current Status tab.

Brown, Hoyer Briefed on Prince George's County Telehealth Project Progress

Members secured \$4 million to implement a school-based pediatric telehealth network in Prince George's County

WASHINGTON (May 10, 2022)—Congressman Anthony G. Brown and Congressman Steny H. Hoyer met with leaders from Prince George's County to discuss progress, implementation and next steps for a new school-based pediatric telehealth network.

As part of the bipartisan Omnibus Appropriations Agreement for the remainder of FY2022, Reps. Brown and Hoyer secured \$4 million to build out the telehealth network and connect students in 100 public schools to proper physical and mental health services. Funding will be used for equipment, technical assistance, and the development of a network of physicians and practitioners available to serve students.

"Our schools are the cornerstones of our communities, providing support services for our kids and families well beyond the classroom. Supporting the physical and mental health of our children is essential to ensuring every child has an opportunity to succeed," said Congressman Brown. "The COVID-19 pandemic underscored the importance of building a resilient telehealth network to connect with students outside of the school setting. I look forward to working alongside Prince George's and Leader Hoyer to see this innovative project get up and running."

"I thoroughly enjoyed my conversation today with Prince George's County public health and education leaders about how federal funding I worked to secure with Rep. Brown will have an impact on the lives of so many children in the classroom and beyond," said Congressman Hoyer. "I often repeat the words of Marylander Frederick Douglass that 'it is easier to build strong children than to repair broken men.' These funds will help us support our young people's physical and mental development, and I am glad to see these comprehensive services in our communities and look forward to seeing the improvements this investment will provide to schools across Prince George's County."

Since 2012, MedStar Southern Maryland Hospital Center has invested more than \$100 million into improving facilities, including the hospital's recently opened Emergency Department and the MedStar Georgetown Cancer Institute in partnership with the Georgetown Lombardi Comprehensive Cancer Center. The new behavioral health unit will officially open its doors to patients later this month.

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Maternal from A6

their children, their partners, and their communities, added MDH Deputy Secretary for Public Health Dr. Jinlene Chan. "We urge new parents to identify symptoms, seek assistance and gain access to the support and interventions they need."

If you or someone you know might be experiencing a maternal mental health condition contact a health professional or Maryland's helpline by calling 211 and pressing 1, texting 898-211, or visiting pressone.211md.org.

For more information about maternal health programs, supports and services, visit <https://health.maryland.gov/phpa/mch/Pages/home.aspx>

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