

The Prince George's Post



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HOLIDAY EVENTS

Bright and Merry Holiday Market Dec. 8

Residents and neighbors are invited to celebrate the season on **December 8** with pop-ups from unique local vendors, holiday pet photos, ornament decorating and more!

Aster College Park, a new mixed-use residential community which brings elevated living to College Park, is excited to partner with unique local small businesses for a bright and merry Holiday Market on Thursday, **December 8 from 5:30-8:30 p.m.**

Residents and neighbors are invited to join a festive, jolly evening exploring a variety of holiday pop-ups from local Maryland shopmakers and vendors and enjoy indulgent baked goodies, hot chocolate, unique apparel and accessories, seasonal candles and custom, personalized ornaments. Furry friends will be treated to holiday portraits along with treats from local pet store Paw by Paw.

Additionally, guests are invited to tour Aster College Park, and learn more about the newly developed modern residences which feature more than 16,000 square feet of amenity offerings intended to provide future residents with a connected and wellness-focused living experience. Amenity highlights include a stunning outdoor pool set within terraced gardens, an amenity bridge featuring high-tech individual and co-working spaces, a state-of-the-art fitness center with pool deck views, a game room with wet bar and private TV lounge, an extensive art program and curated ground-floor retail featuring Trader Joe's and Crunch Fitness, among others.

The event is free to the public and all ages are welcome. See <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/aster-college-park-holiday-market-2022-tickets-469960172527?aff=ebdsbdestsearch>

WHEN: Thursday, December 8, 2022 from 5:30-8:30 p.m.
WHERE: Aster College Park / Sky Bridge & Lounge, 4400 Calvert Rd, College Park, MD 20740

Marietta House Museum's Annual Winter Open House Tour Dec. 10

Welcome the winter season at Marietta House Museum in-person on **Saturday, December 10, 2022**, between 5 p.m. and 8 p.m. for the delightful Winter Open House Tour. Walk through the elaborately adorned historic house to see rooms filled with Victorian era decorations and furnishings.

Visitors are invited to travel through the historic house to meet trained staff who will share stories about the 19th century historic kitchen, parlor, dining room, and more. Hear about the foodways and traditions of the free and enslaved people who once celebrated and endured winters at Marietta.

Enjoy the rich sounds of Celtic harp music while sampling winter fare of gingerbread and spice cookies, hot cider, and tea. Each guest will receive a packet that includes recipes of some foods depicted on the tour.

During winter months, Marietta will be undergoing major restoration work on the windows.

All ages. \$5 per person, ages 12 and under Free. Please register on www.pgparcs.com or call 301-464-5291.

Marietta House Museum is located at 5626 Bell Station Road, Glenn Dale, MD 20769 and is a property of the Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission.

New Holiday Conservatory Welcomes the Season at MGM National Harbor

A 20-foot-tall snowman, 1,500 poinsettias and festive delights commemorate the most wonderful time of the year

By PRESS OFFICER
MGM National Harbor
Photo courtesy
MGM National Harbor

NATIONAL HARBOR, Md. (Nov. 28, 2022)—MGM National Harbor is inviting visitors to embrace the holiday spirit with a new festive Conservatory display which encompasses a magical winter wonderland, featuring a colossal snowman, shimmering ornaments, and grandiose snowy Christmas trees.

The Conservatory

On display now through January 18, MGM National Harbor's holiday display explores the childlike wonder and excitement of the season with grand decor for a timeless and magical experience.

Fun facts:

- The Conservatory is comprised of nearly 1,500 poinsettias
- The centerpiece of the holiday display features a 20-foot-tall toy snowman with a little girl adding a carrot nose atop a 12-foot wooden ladder
- 9 oversized ornaments hang overhead with each featuring 10,000 small ornaments within
- A 7-foot-tall and 22-foot-long train with smoke billowing from the smokestack weaves through the display
- The Conservatory showcases an 8-foot-tall gift box filled with oversized ornaments
- 8 large white Christmas trees ranging from 16 feet to 25 feet tall stand throughout with gold stars atop



Kishia L. Powell to Lead WSSC Water as General Manager/Chief Executive Officer

Global Water Leader Unanimously Selected After Nationwide Search Brings Extensive Public and Private-Sector Expertise in Infrastructure Management and Utility Operations

By CHUCK BROWN
WSSC Water

LAUREL, Md. (Nov. 28, 2022)—Ushering in a new era of leadership, stakeholder engagement and strategic opportunities, WSSC Water's Board of Commissioners today announced Kishia L. Powell as WSSC Water's next General Manager/CEO. Powell currently serves as DC Water's Chief Operating Officer and Executive Vice President, overseeing Shared Services, IT, Operations and Engineering, including oversight of the Authority's \$6.4 billion capital improvement program, as well as Customer Service for a utility that

distributes drinking water and treats wastewater for more than 672,000 District of Columbia residents.

"Commissioners conducted a nationwide search with the goal of selecting an experienced global leader who will continue our unparalleled track record of water quality excellence, put customers first and ensure we remain vigilant stewards of the public's money," said WSSC Water Commission Chair Fausto Bayonet. "In unanimously selecting Kishia Powell as our next General Manager/CEO, we have achieved our goal."

Powell has 24 years of public- and private-sector water and wastewater util-

ity experience serving clients across the United States and London, England. She is recognized as a global leader in the water sector—improving service delivery, driving equity and inclusion and implementing strategies to address affordability concerns, climate change, resilience and innovation.

"I'm incredibly honored to have the trust of the Commissioners and excited to lead this nationally recognized utility and be part of the WSSC Water team," said Powell. "I look forward to working with the Commissioners, a dedicated workforce and stakeholders as we enter a new era of leadership focused on opportunities to improve services across



PHOTO COURTESY WSSC WATER

Kishia L. Powell

the board."

Before joining DC Water in 2020, Powell held executive management positions at three water/wastewater utilities serving millions of customers in Atlanta, Ga., Jackson, Ms. and Baltimore, Md.

See GM/CEO Page A4

Honoring Prince George's Soil Conservation District's 2019 Cooperator of the Year: Randy DeVaughn

By PRESS OFFICER
Prince George's Soil Conservation District

UPPER MARLBORO, Md. (Dec. 1, 2022)—On September 28, The Prince George's Soil Conservation District recognized Randy DeVaughn at its 46th Annual Cooperator of the Year Awards Dinner. Almost 200 attendees gathered to celebrate the DeVaughn family after a two-year hiatus due to COVID precautions. The event was held at Robin Hill Farm and Vineyard, in Brandywine, Maryland. Located on the Legacy Wine Trail, Robin Hill is one of six active "farm wineries" in Prince George's County. Their combined farm activities, winery and wedding venue exemplify the growing agri-tourism industry in the region.

The Annual Cooperator of the Year Dinner is the District's premier annual event and is attended by the agricultural, construction and consumer communities. Conservation partners from Maryland Department of Agriculture (MDA), USDA-Natural Re-

sources Conservation Service (NRCS) and Prince George's County Government were in attendance to present proclamations and recognize the DeVaughn family for their outstanding soil and water conservation efforts.

The annual dinner affords an opportunity to showcase the significant economic and environmental contributions of the County's agriculture community, and to recognize the outstanding soil and water conservation efforts of local producers.

Randy is a fourth generation Prince George's County farmer, and his operation covers over 888 acres in multiple counties on 23 individual farms. Randy has worked closely with the Upper Marlboro Service Center (the District, MDA, NRCS and the Farm Service Agency) over the years, participating in state and federal programs and a variety of best management practices including no-till, nutrient



PHOTO COURTESY PRINCE GEORGE'S SOIL CONSERVATION DISTRICT

The DeVaughn family received recognition as the 2019 Cooperator of the Year at a celebration held September 28, 2022. The celebration was delayed because of COVID precautions.

management, conservation crop rotation, hay plantings and cover crop.

The DeVaughn family farms have been preserved through the Maryland Agricultural Land Preservation Foundation (MALPF) and Rural

Legacy Programs, preserving the farms in agriculture in perpetuity. Randy's hard work ensures the family farm will be successful so it may be passed on to the next generation and is well deserving of this year's award.

The District appreciates the continued support of its cooperators, conservation partners and county stakeholders in celebrating Randy DeVaughn as the 2019 Prince George's Soil Conservation District Cooperator of the Year.

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To Be Equal: Historic Election of Los Angeles Mayor Karen Bass Ushers in a New Era of Inclusive, More Equitable Civic Leadership

We are proud to congratulate Rep. Bass as she prepares to be sworn in as the first woman to hold the office of Mayor of Los Angeles. Commentary, Page A4

Moore's Promise of Free Pre-K Must Balance Cost, Resources and Quality Learning

Bowie, Maryland, has a free pre-K program that it launched in 2020 after receiving a \$400,000 grant from the state education department.

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TOWNS and NEIGHBORS

In & Around Morningside-Skyline

Rickie and Billy traveled 118,000 miles in their '32 Model A Ford

Harriet Jane "Rickie" Beardmore, formerly of Morningside, died Nov. 27 at her home in Deale. She would have turned 80 on December 14. She was born in Washington, the second of the four daughters of James and Ruth (Goodwin) Merriman.

In her youth, she was involved at Holy Family Church, Hillcrest Heights, and as a majorette with the Silver Hill VFD. After graduating from Suitland High School in 1961, she worked at the National Bank of Washington; she was the bank's first female computer programmer.

While performing in the Riva Fire Department Parade in 1960, Rickie complained to a friend that she felt cold in her majorette uniform. The friend suggested she jump into the arms of Billy Beardmore, a Morningside fire fighter, to keep warm. She did. It was a good jump—she married him in April 1964. They settled in a Morningside home near Billy's family.

She was a longtime member of Model A Ford clubs and multiple antique car organizations. She and Billy cruised all over the U.S. in their antique vehicles and were especially proud of the more than 118,000 miles they traveled in their personally-restored 1932 Model A Ford Coupe.

She was a member of the Morningside VFD Ladies Auxiliary, bowled in their league in her younger years, and was a charter member and past president of the International Association of Fire Fighters Local 1619 Women's Association, and founding member of its Softball Tournament. She developed friendships with fire department families from all over the U.S. and Canada.

Rickie is survived by her husband of 58 years, PGFD Battalion Fire Chief (ret.) William D. "Tex" or "Billy" Beardmore; children, Shelly, Jimmy and PGFD Fire Lieutenant (ret) Jerry; their spouses; four grandchildren; and her sisters Donna Merriman and Jamie Behre. She was predeceased by her parents and sister, Gail Adams.

Visitation will be Dec. 10, from 1 to 3 p.m. at Rausch Funeral Home in Owings, with funeral service and reception at St. James Parish in Lothian.

Years ago, Rickie sang with the Sweet Adelines—I remember them well.

Town of Morningside

Breakfast with Santa, Saturday, Dec. 10, starting at 9 a.m. at the Morningside Volunteer

Fire Department. There'll be a Pancake Breakfast, entertainment, Santa Secret Shop and, of course, a visit and gift from Santa himself. Admission is \$7.00 per person. Santa Secret Shop is not included in admission but will offer items for \$2 each.

A reminder: Morningside is sponsoring a Food & Toy Drive to support three local families in the area. If you can donate a non-perishable food item, new toy or a cash donation, you can bring it to the Town office Monday–Friday, 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. through Dec. 21.

Morningside's next work session is Dec. 13, and the Town Meeting will be Dec. 20, both beginning at 7 p.m. For information about All Things Morningside, 301-736-2300.

Celebrating Christmas

If you have a special memory about celebrating Christmas in Morningside, email mudmm@gmail.com.

The 100th National Christmas Tree Lighting Ceremony took place on the Ellipse November 30. The event included President Biden and first lady Jill Biden and was hosted by LL Cool J. You can visit the tree 10 a.m. to 10 p.m. Sunday through Thursday and 10 a.m. to 11 p.m. Friday and Saturday, through New Year's Day.

The Mt. Calvary Adult Choir, of Mount Calvary Church in Forestville, sang at the pre-show of the Tree Lighting Ceremony.

Joint Base Andrews' service members and families showed up Nov. 17 to celebrate the U.S. Capitol Christmas Tree on its last stop before the tree headed to the Capitol for the Christmas season.

ZooLights are back at the National Zoo. They'll be illuminated for 22 select nights—through Dec. 30, 5 to 9 p.m. For information, visit <https://nationalzoo.si.edu/events/zoollights>.

Enchant, presented by the Hallmark Channel, continues at National Harbor through Jan. 1. It boasts "The World's Largest Christmas Light Maze & Village." Tickets now on sale at EnchantChristmas.com.

Neighbors & other good people

Peg Richardson, who sent me the obit for Rickie Beardmore, told me she and Rickie graduated together from Suitland High School. Also, that Rickie was married to her cousin Billy.

Condolences to Suzanne Hay and Debbie Rose, of St. Philip's Parish, on the death of their aunt, Phyllis Antosca, 94, at Discovery

by Mary McHale 301-735-3451

Village in Naples, Fla., on Nov. 27. Phyllis was born in Washington, graduated from Saint Cecilia's Academy and worked for the Dept. of the Interior and the Teamsters Local 816 until retiring in 1988.

I have been gifted with a big bag of Keurig-style coffee pods, half of which are Decaf, which I don't use. If you live in the area and want Decaf pods, call or email me at mudmm@gmail.com.

Changing landscape

There's a growing list of tenants at National Harbor, including Bombay Street Food, Silver Diner and Tom's Watch Bar. Fogo is replacing McLoone's Pier House which opened in 2010 but closed amid the pandemic. Fogo overlooks the water and includes patio seating. It's part of a chain which started in 1979 and features fresh cuts of fire-roasted meats, along with salads and traditional Brazilian cocktails.

A home at 4602 Morgan Road, in Morningside, has sold for \$370,000.

Happy 100th birthday, Charles Schulz

And, just who is Charles Schultz? He is the creator of Charlie Brown, Snoopy, Linus, Lucy, Pigpen, Peppermint Patty, Franklin, Woodstock and the Little Red-Headed Girl. Can we truly celebrate the holidays without "It's the Great Pumpkin, Charlie Brown" or "A Charlie Brown Christmas"?

In The Washington Post comic pages on Nov. 26, Charles "Sparky" Schulz was wished a happy birthday in many of the strips, in many different ways. Big Nate, for example reminded us that "Charlie Brown never wins a game or gets a Valentine or kicks the football."

Charles Schulz was born Nov. 26, 1922, in Minneapolis and died Feb. 12, 2000, in Santa Rosa, California. "Happy birthday, Sparky. Thanks for years of comic enjoyment."

Milestones

Happy Birthday to Beth Shipman, Dec. 9; Morningside official Sharon Fowler and my longtime-ago hair stylist Diane Zirkle, Dec. 10; Michelle Anderson, Dec. 11; Bernie Barbour Pace, Thomas Shipman Jr. and Jim Trexler, Dec. 13; Linda Gryskewicz, Dec. 15; my remarkable next-door neighbor Stacie Branham-Smith and Erin Nicole Brown-Sandoval, Dec. 16; Bradley Wade and David Williams III, Dec. 17.

Happy 10th anniversary to Johnny and Helen Richardson on Dec. 14.

by Audrey Johnson 301-922-5384

Brandywine-Aquasco

MOTOWN CHRISTMAS

Get into the holiday spirit and enjoy Motown holiday favorites by the Temptations, Stevie Wonder, Boyz II Men, Nat King Cole, the Jackson 5, James Brown, Chuck Brown and more Thursday, December 15, 2022, from 11 a.m.–12:00 p.m. at Publick Playhouse. The address is 5445 Landover Road, Cheverly, Maryland 20784. E-mail for more information: publickplayhouse@pgparks.com. Contact Telephone number is 301-277-1710 Purchase tickets through PARKS DIRECT! (<https://web1.myvscloud.com/wbws/cmepcgmodule=PST&fmid=192798174>) Cost: Tickets: \$10/person. Ages 60 & better.

SHOW PLACE ARENA

The Show Place Arena is a 5,800 seat multi-purpose arena in Upper Marlboro, Maryland, which is used for sporting events, concerts, boxing and professional wrestling events, consumer shows, trade shows, religious services, graduations and other events. Show Place capacity is 5,800. Opened in 1993. Owner: Maryland-National Capital Park and planning Commission. Information from Wikipedia.

Show Place Arena is located on the outskirts of Upper Marlboro, Maryland, the historic county seat of Prince George's County, Maryland, the property of the present-day Prince George's Equestrian Center and the Show Place Arena was used for horse racing since the mid-18th century. In the early 1900s the Marlboro Race Track was constructed; races were sponsored by the Maryland Jockey Club until 1972. Today, the Equestrian Center and Arena commemorate the history of Maryland's equestrian traditions and the importance of the horse industry to the state's economy. Information from <https://www.experienceprincegeorges.com/sports/venues/show-place-arena/>

CONCERT

Enjoy Happy Holidays with Secret Society Live Friday, December 16, 2022, 8 p.m. at Harmony Hall Art Center 10701 Livingston Road, Fort Washington, Maryland 20744. These talented musicians will bring you holiday hits in musical arrangements, only the way they do, Soul, funk, R&B, go-go, you name it, they can play it. Bring a friend, and let's celebrate the season right. Tickets: \$30 Adults, \$25 seniors and students. Buy your tickets through PARKS DIRECT!

LET'S CELEBRATE CHRISTMAS TOGETHER

Let us celebrate Christmas together on Saturday, December 24, 2022 "Christmas Eve" at St. Philip's Episcopal Church, Baden with Rev. Tyrone Johnson. The address is 13801 Baden Westwood, Brandywine, Maryland. It is a community event "Jesus is the Reason for the Season".

We will be having Holy Eucharist Service at 10 a.m. WHO: You, Me, the Children and All. Followed by Brunch with Christmas music,

movies, family pictures, games, fun and cheer.

RSVP with numbers for eating, for food accountability to 301-888-1536. Come on out and have fun with us.

NEW YEARS EVE SERVICE

Join us for our Parish New Years Eve Service at Nottingham Myers United Methodist Church, Rev. Shemaiah Strickland, Pastor, Saturday, December 31, 2022, at 4 p.m. The church address is 15601 Brooks Church Road, Upper Marlboro, Maryland 20772.

HARMONY HALLS ART CENTER

Harmony Hall Arts Center opened its doors to the public in September of 1989 and quickly evolved into Prince George's County's most popular, premier arts facility. We are your one-stop-shop for your visual and performing arts needs. The Center offers in-depth programs for the creative passions of aspiring artists of all ages in ceramics, sculpture, dance, drama, painting, voice, belly dance and photography. Enjoy our John Addison Concert Hall for a cozy entertainment experience, or view exceptional works of local, national and international artists in our exhibition spaces.

Harmony Hall Arts Center's physical address is 10701 Livingston Road, Fort Washington, Maryland 20744. Phone: 301-203-6070. Maryland Relay 7-1-1 for customers who are deaf, hard of hearing, or have a speech disability. Hours are Monday–Friday from 9 a.m.–5 p.m.

PRINCE GEORGE'S COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Prince George's Community College is a public community college in Largo in Prince George's County, Maryland. The College serves Prince George's County and surrounding areas, including Washington, D.C. Prince George's Community College offers 10 degrees, four certificate programs, and more than 300 online courses that can be completed. Information from Wikipedia.

BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS

Happy Birthday to Terry Taylor, Shawnee Hendricks, Nurbert Hughes, Nadia Prah, Anthony Bell, Elvin Falby, Valentine Grant II, Somto Mbakwe, Doris Mackall, Lilly Jalloh, John Stahl, Alaya Bell, Jahmayiah Dorsett, Elijah Kerrick, Carolyn Woodard, Donald Hill, B. Kent Maudlin, Theodore (Ted) Mosley, Carol Hughes, Juliette Adaku Onyiba Mbakwe, Iyana Rojas, Keinel Peralta, Ikechi (Ike) Mbakwe, Latsha Bell, Betty Rivers, Joelle Robinson-Oghogho, Wendell Wallace, Luz Knight, Solange Nana, Joanne Quarm who are Clinton United Methodist Church members celebrating birthdays in December.

WEDDING ANNIVERSARIES

Congratulations to Ronald Jones and Dr. Sandra Moon, Dr. Francis and Agatha Jalloh Nicol, Ikechi (Ike) and Chidinma (Chidi) Mbakwe who are Clinton United Methodist Church members celebrating Wedding Anniversaries in December.

Around the County

Library Offers Free Coats for Kids in Prince George's County

LARGO, Md. (Nov. 30, 2022)—The Prince George's County Memorial Library System (PGCMLS) and PGCMLS Foundation continue to provide essential support to the residents of Prince George's County this winter with the fourth annual edition of Operation Warm: Free Coats for Kids. This special initiative provides free brand new coats to children in need. Families can bring their children to locations below to obtain a free coat, while supplies last. The coats are generously sponsored by the PGCMLS Foundation, Wawa, and Operation Warm.

The PGCMLS Strategic Framework 2021–2024 includes a focus on healthy living. Ensuring that Prince George's County children can stay warm this winter is just one of many ways that the Library supports this focus area, along with promoting health care enrollment, providing access to health information resources, and offering a range of health and wellness programs throughout the year.

Event Listings: Operation Warm—Free Coats for Kids*

Saturday, December 17, 10 a.m.–12 p.m., Oxon Hill Branch Library

Saturday, January 7, 10 a.m.–12 p.m., Laurel Branch Library

The Prince George's County Memorial Library System and PGCMLS Foundation offer a free coat for kids who need one this winter. One coat per child, limit of 2 coats per family. Children must be present to receive a coat. Sizes 2T-18.

*Available while supplies last

Applicants Sought for Two City Council Vacancies

Filing Deadline is December 30, 2022

BOWIE, Md. (Nov. 29, 2022)—The City of Bowie is seeking applicants to fill two upcoming vacancies on the City Council. At-Large Councilmember Ingrid Harrison and District 3 Councilmember Adrian Bofo will be resigning from the City Council in December after being elected to other positions. Ms. Harrison will be sworn in as the County Council representative for District 4 and Mr. Bofo will be one of three delegates representing District 23 in the Maryland House of Delegates.

City Council will appoint individuals to fill the vacancies in January or early February after completing an interview process with interested individuals. To be eligible to apply for either vacancy, candidates must:

- Be at least 18 years of age;
- Have resided in the City of Bowie at least one year;
- Be a qualified voter in the City

The term of the selected candidates will be from the date of appointment until the end of this Council term, in November 2023. If they wish to remain on the Council for another term they will run for office in the next election on November 7, 2023.

There are two vacancies:

- At-Large Councilmember representing all residents of Bowie
- District 3 Councilmember, representing the residents of District 3. (The district consists of several neighborhoods listed at the end of this document. Applicants must currently reside in District 3.

Interested applicants should send a letter of interest and resume to Awilda Hernandez, City Clerk, Bowie City Hall, 15901 Fred Robinson Way, Bowie, MD 20716. Applications will be accepted until the close of business on December 30, 2022. For additional information, please call 301-809-3029 or email ahernandez@cityofbowie.org.

According to the City's Charter, when there is a vacancy on the Council less than 15 months before the next election, the City Council shall appoint an individual to fill the vacancy. The appointment requires a favorable vote by a majority of the remaining Councilmembers. If the vacancy were to occur 15 months or more before the term ends, the replacement shall be selected by a special election. (Since the next election is less than 15 months from now, there will not be a special election.)

District 3 consists of District 3A and 3B. The neighborhoods in each are listed below.

District 3A	District 3B
Allen Pond Townhomes	Bowie New Town Center Condos
Bowie Commons	Covington (north of Excalibur Road)
Brookdale Woodward Estates (Asst. Living)	Enfield Chase (south of Enfield Park)
Dixon Crossing	Ensleigh
Enfield Chase (north of Enfield Park)	Essington
Evergreen Estates	Evergreen Apartments (Senior Apartments)
Northview	Governors Green Apartments
Princeton Square	Heather Hills
Oakpond	Heather Ridge Apartments
Old Stage	Longleaf
Spring Meadows	Palisades
Westview	Patuxent Overlook
Woodmore Estates	Pin Oak Village (Senior Apts)
Woodmore Highlands	Vistas at Bowie
	The Willows (Senior Apartments)
	Woodland Lake Condos

Donating to Animal Services

We're running low on enrichment items, such as toys and treats, critter supplies, supplies for our kennels, and leashes for volunteers and staff.

View items our shelter needs and how to make a monetary donation at bit.ly/pgcanimalshelterdonations.

All items can be shipped to our facility at 3750 Brown Station Road, Upper Marlboro, MD, 20772. Donations can be also be physically dropped off at this address during our regular open hours: Tuesdays–Fridays from 10 a.m.–6 p.m. and Saturdays 10 a.m.–4 p.m. No appointment needed—donation bins are in the front lobby.

—DoE - Animal Chatter News, Dec. 1, 2022

COMMUNITY

Suitland Native Prepares Thanksgiving dinner Aboard USS Paul Ignatius



U.S. NAVY PHOTO BY MASS COMMUNICATION SPECIALIST 2ND CLASS AARON LAU

ENGLISH CHANNEL (Nov. 24, 2022) U.S. Navy Retail Services Specialist 1st Class Jeffery Meade, from Suitland, Maryland, prepares Thanksgiving dinner aboard the Arleigh Burke-class guided-missile destroyer USS Paul Ignatius (DDG 117), Nov. 24, 2022. Paul Ignatius, forward-deployed to Rota, Spain, is on a scheduled deployment in the U.S. Naval Forces Europe area of operations, employed by U.S. Sixth Fleet, to defend U.S., allied and partner interests.

Governor Hogan Speaks at Memorial Service for Prince George's County Sheriff Melvin C. High

By MICHAEL RICCI
Executive Office of the Governor

Following are the governor's remarks, as prepared for delivery:

It is an honor to be back home in Prince George's County and to have this opportunity, on behalf of all the people of Maryland, to pay tribute to the life, the memory, and the legacy of Sheriff Melvin High.

I want to begin by extending my deepest sympathies to Sheriff High's family—to his wife, Brenda, his daughter, Tracy, and his grandson, Christian—to his brothers and sisters in the Prince George's County Sheriff's Department, and to all those who loved him.

A "fixture in the region" with an "illustrious career"—a "servant leader" and "mentor"—a "true professional" and a "true gentleman." These are just some of the ways that Sheriff High has been lovingly described over the past few weeks. He wasn't just respected—Melvin was revered, and he was beloved all throughout the DMV over the course of an incredible life of service, which spanned more than five decades.

Born in Mississippi in 1944, Melvin received his bachelor's degree at Tennessee State University before joining the Marines and serving in Vietnam. In 1969, he joined the Metropolitan Police Department in Washington, D.C., eventually rising to the rank of Assistant Chief of Police, which placed him second in command and led to such notable achievements as handling the security arrangements for the first inauguration of President Clinton. He later became the Chief of Police in Norfolk, Virginia—the first African American to ever hold that office—where he is credited with introducing community policing.

In 2003, Melvin became the Chief of Police here in Prince

George's County during a particularly challenging time and made it his mission to restore trust within the local community.

Then in [2010], Melvin was elected to serve as Sheriff of Prince George's County. He would be re-elected twice and hold that post for 12 years, during which Sheriff High mentored younger deputies, launched innovative crime prevention strategies, received countless community honors and awards, and was often called upon to provide guidance and best practices to law enforcement officials across the nation.

Sheriff High truly put his whole self into his work. It was his calling, his passion. His humility, compassion, and dedication were matched only by his commitment to leaving the agency he was elected to serve better than he found it. In that, he was undoubtedly successful.

He let his work speak for itself, and the proof can be seen here today. It is evident in the caliber of the men and women who served alongside him and evident in the agency he leaves behind, which he spent 12 years modernizing for future generations.

To his brothers and sisters in the Prince George's County Sheriff's Department, I ask that each of you let your lives and your actions carry on the goodness and selfless service that marked Sheriff High's life. And to his family and friends, I pray that you find comfort and strength knowing that Sheriff Melvin High will not ever be forgotten.

On behalf of all the people of a proud and grateful state, we say farewell, thank you, and may he rest in peace.

May God bless and watch over his family, the men and women of the Prince George's County Sheriff's Department, and all of our law enforcement officers and first responders.

Maryland's Hoyer Adjusts to New Role Out of Leadership

By COURTNEY COHN
Capital News Service

WASHINGTON (Nov. 30, 2022)—Outgoing House Majority Leader Steny Hoyer, D-Maryland, has started transitioning into a new role after stepping away from his leadership position Nov. 17.

Hoyer said he looks forward to returning to the House Appropriations Committee, where he served during the years when he was not in party leadership.

"I'm going back to a committee that I think is one of the critical committees in the Congress of the United States," Hoyer told reporters on Tuesday.

Throughout his time on the committee, he secured funding for many projects in St. Mary's, Calvert, Charles, Prince George's and Anne Arundel Counties, which comprise his district.

Hoyer said he has prioritized his constituents throughout his tenure in leader-

ship, but now he looks forward to dedicating more time focused on the interests of the 5th District.

"I'm going to a position that I think will give me the opportunity to do that," Hoyer said.

The Maryland Democrat has been in the House since 1981 and served as the second-ranking Democrat in the House since 2003. He was considered to be in line for his party's top post, but when he announced he was leaving leadership he said "now is the time for a new generation of leaders."

House Democrats on Wednesday (Nov. 30) elected Rep. Hakeem Jeffries, D-New York, as their new leader, replacing Rep. Nancy Pelosi, D-California, who has been given the title "speaker emerita."

Hoyer's role will be filled by Rep. Katherine Clark, D-Massachusetts, who will be the minority whip in the next Congress. Rep. Pete Aguilar, D-California, will be caucus chairman. Jeffries is

52, Clark 59, and Aguilar 43—a trio representing the younger generation in the caucus.

The new leaders were announced on the same day Pelosi and Hoyer announced their plans to step down. Wednesday's votes formally endorsed the new, uncontested leaders.

"What you saw... was a change of generational leadership within our party in a very unified fashion, which I think is good for our party and it's good for the country," Hoyer said Tuesday (Nov. 29).

Hoyer said he will lend his experience and guidance to Jeffries and Clark whenever they need it. Even though he is no longer in leadership, Hoyer said he still has his passion to make a difference in Congress, pushing his agenda forward and helping Democrats campaign in future elections.

"You wouldn't expect me to disappear. That's just not my personality," Hoyer said.

Even though he is one of the oldest members in the House, Hoyer said he is still as excited about his job as ever.

"At 83, I'm doing pretty well," Hoyer said.

Local Non-Profit Concerned After Toy Donations Decrease for Annual Christmas Drive

By PRESS OFFICER
Central Union Mission

WASHINGTON (Nov. 29, 2022)—Central Union Mission is currently seeking toy donations for their annual Operation Christmas Miracle giveaway. This toy drive supports children in the Washington, D.C., metropolitan area, whose families are homeless or living below the poverty line and find it difficult to make ends meet during this time of year. Americans across the country have felt the impact of inflation, but parents, grandparents and heads-of-households have found it especially tough to supply the bare necessities for their families, let alone grant the wishes of their children for the Christmas holiday.

For those who live on a fixed income, the added responsibility of buying gifts this time of year feels impossible.

This year's program is in jeopardy of not meeting the needs of the 1500 need-based families who registered for gifts this

year. "I can't think of anything more heart-breaking than to imagine a young child waking up to nothing under the tree on Christmas morning," said Central Union Mission President & CEO Joe Mettimano. "We still have 1000 children to get sponsored and I believe the country's economy, inflation and the lagging recovery from COVID-19, all play into the shortfall."

Giving Christmas gifts to children in need is a Central Union Mission tradition that dates back to 1925 with First Lady Grace Coolidge. Each year, with the support of our community and generous donors, nearly 1,500 deserving children are able to celebrate the holiday with gifts under the tree.

Said one Mom who asked to remain anonymous, "It was either purchase Christmas gifts for my babies or pay the rent. Of course I had to pay my rent, but I had to figure out a way to get them something. Even if I couldn't get them everything on their list, I wanted them to have something. My neighbor told me about Central Union Mis-

sion's Operation Christmas Miracle, and it was such a blessing. My kids were able to get toys and clothes and I was so relieved."

President & CEO, Joe Mettimano said, "Operation Christmas Miracle is a source of joy and hope for our community. Children are excited and families are able to feel the kindness and generosity of others that renews their faith in humanity, but I'm concerned about this year's distribution. We have a long way to go, and we don't want any child to go without on Christmas morning."

Gifts for children can be dropped off at the Comprehensive Family Resource Center located at 3194-B Bladensburg Rd., NE, Washington, DC 20018 from 9 a.m.–3:30 p.m. through December 14. A suggested gift list is available on our website for those in need of gift ideas. The big distribution is scheduled to take place December 17–20, 9 a.m. to 12 p.m. each day. In addition to gifts, families will receive groceries too.

Salisbury University Announces 21% Increase in Merit Scholarship Funding

By JASON RHODES
Salisbury University

SALISBURY, Md. (Dec 1, 2022)—When Jahnaiya Sutherland was trying to decide where to go to college, Salisbury University was an easy choice.

In fact, the only challenging part was that other schools were offering full-tuition scholarships when SU was not—at least not in the same way.

"I received full-tuition scholarship offers from other universities, but the number of scholarships I received from Salisbury University made up for that," said the first-year data science major and honors student from Bowie, MD.

She was awarded three program scholarships from SU, along with a federal Pell Grant and a Howard P. Rawlings Guarantee Access Grant from the State of Maryland. With these combined awards, she expects to graduate debt-free in just four years.

Sutherland is among the 95% of incoming SU students who received scholarships and financial aid this semester. The good news for future students: The University recently announced a 21% increase in merit scholarship funding for those enrolling for the 2023–24 academic year.

"The cost of a college education should never be the roadblock that keeps someone away from their goals and dreams," said Allen Koehler, SU assistant vice president for enrollment management. "At SU, our dedicated team makes every effort to ensure that students can find financial assistance to ensure their college education is affordable."

SU's main scholarship plan, the Sea Gull Scholarship Program, has grade point average-based merit scholarships. Admitted students to SU are automati-

cally considered for these awards and are notified following their admissions decision. Both first-year and transfer students are considered.

Non-Maryland residents may save even more through SU's \$6,000 Good Neighbor Scholarship, available to first-year and undergraduate transfer students from 14 Mid-Atlantic and New England states, helping to close the gap between in-state and out-of-state tuition. For a full list visit www.salisbury.edu/afford-college/types-of-aid.aspx.

Once students are admitted to SU, they also are eligible to apply for program-based scholarships, like Sutherland's, through the University's Academic Works webpage, which may result in additional savings.

Some students also may be eligible for need-based grants and scholarships through the SU Fund. In addition, SU offers transfer student grants for those with an expected family contribution under \$6,000, according to their Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA).

"Most university scholarships, including many at SU, require students to complete the FAFSA annually," said Koehler. "One of the first tips we give prospective students is to fill theirs out right away if they have not already done so. It can open the door to more financial aid opportunities than many people realize."

Two recently announced programs at SU also may help relieve the financial burden for some. The Maryland Success Grant provides \$1,000 for full-time Maryland resident graduate and undergraduate students who are making satisfactory academic progress and have an expected family contribution under \$10,000, based on their FAFSA.

For Maryland Pell Grant recipients

who apply for admission directly out of high school with a minimum 3.75 grade point average, the Sea Gull Pell Promise covers the difference in tuition once all scholarships, grants and benefits are applied. It is renewable for up to eight semesters for those making satisfactory academic progress.

"We're proud of the fact that many national and regional publications, including U.S. News & World Report, The Princeton Review and Washington Monthly magazine, consistently name SU among the best values in higher education," said Koehler. "SU's generous scholarship packages, paired with our already reasonable tuition rates, allow students to receive a quality education at a price they and their families can afford."

For Sutherland, who hopes to pursue her M.B.A. after earning her undergraduate degree, that means more time to dedicate to academics and all that SU has to offer rather than worrying about how she will pay for it all.

"I'm getting a big-school experience at a smaller school where the professors really care about students," she said, noting that many also involve undergraduate students in their research. "I have an opportunity to apply for study abroad fellowships and scholarships, and I'm learning new perspectives from guest speakers who come from a variety of backgrounds."

"Because of my SU scholarships, I'm not paying anything for school. It's a great stress reliever."

For more information, visit the SU Office of Financial Aid and Scholarships webpage at www.salisbury.edu/admissions/financial-aid.

Learn more about opportunities to Make Tomorrow Yours at www.salisbury.edu.



PHOTO COURTESY MARYLAND GOVERNOR'S PRESS OFFICE

COMMENTARY

Marc Morial

President and CEO, National Urban League



To Be Equal:

Historic Election of Los Angeles Mayor Karen Bass Ushers in a New Era of Inclusive, More Equitable Civic Leadership

"Karen Bass has a long history of always being on the side of the people, fighting for the people, fighting for the people whose voices aren't in the room but must be present. That's who Karen Bass has always been. It's who she will always be."

The National Urban League and the civil rights community have had few champions in Congress as tenacious and effective as Rep. Karen Bass of California.

Earlier this year, the National Urban League worked closely with Chairwoman Bass and the Congressional Black Caucus on negotiations that led to President Biden's Executive Order on Advancing Effective, Accountable Policing and Criminal Justice Practices to Enhance Public Trust and

Public Safety. She and I partnered last year to highlight racial equity in COVID vaccines, and she advocated fiercely for the National Urban League's priorities in the federal COVID relief responses. She has been a mainstay of our annual Legislative Policy Conference.

Now, the House of Representatives' loss is the City of Los Angeles' gain. We are proud to congratulate Rep. Bass as she prepares to be sworn in as the first woman to hold the office of Mayor of Los Angeles.

Her inauguration on Dec. 12 also will mark the first time in history that the nation's four largest cities, will be led by Black mayors. She joins Eric Adams of New York, Lori Lightfoot of Chicago,

and Sylvester Turner of Houston.

As a former big-city mayor myself, and a past president of the U.S. Conference of Mayors, I am perhaps a little biased but I am convinced that mayors are the most important elected officials in the country. Cities are the economic engines of the nation. They are laboratories of innovation. When a failure of leadership at the federal level crippled the nation's response to the COVID pandemic, our mayors stepped into the breach.

The election of Rep. Bass, a longtime social justice advocate and coalition-builder, can be seen as a rejection of racially-divisive policies such as the "tough-on-crime" agenda advocated by her opponent, and the underhanded scheming revealed by a leaked recording of city council members making crude, racist remarks.

Mayor-Elect Bass is the ideal leader to bring together a city struggling to confront rising crime and a homelessness crisis. Her experience as an emergency room physician assistant treating individuals who were homeless, in the grip of substance abuse, and victims of crime and violence inspired her in 1990 to found the Community Coalition to address the root causes of injustice.

Her breakthrough as the first woman and second Black mayor of L.A. is just the latest in her long history of blazing trails for Black women. In 2004, she entered office as the only Black woman serving in the California state legislature. She was the first to lead a state legislative body when she

was sworn in as Speaker of the California State Assembly in 2008. She earned the 2010 John F. Kennedy Profile in Courage Award for her leadership during the state's budget crisis, which "put an end to years of government inaction and sidestepping of the difficult decisions."

When the election of the most ethnically and culturally diverse Congress in United States history swelled the ranks of the Congressional Black Caucus to a historically large membership in 2018, it was Karen Bass they turned to for leadership. With members serving as five full committee chairs, and 28 subcommittee chairs, the CBC under her watch advanced major racial justice priorities including establishing a record of continued voter suppression efforts around the country, laying the foundation for passage of the John Lewis Voting Advancement Act.

She was the primary sponsor of the George Floyd Justice in Policing Act, the most transformative legislation on policing to ever pass in a chamber of Congress. As a member of the House Judiciary Committee, she was instrumental in including passing the First Step Act, the most significant criminal justice reform in decades.

While Karen Bass might have won the mayoral election, the real winners are the people of Los Angeles, who have an opportunity to usher in a new era of inclusive, more equitable civic leadership.

—December 1, 2022

Maryland's Waterways Contain High Levels of 'Forever Chemicals' Pollution

By GABRIELLE LEWIS
Capital News Service

A recent report from the Waterkeeper Alliance revealed U.S. states' pollution levels of certain chemicals in their waterways—and Maryland's samples revealed high levels of contamination.

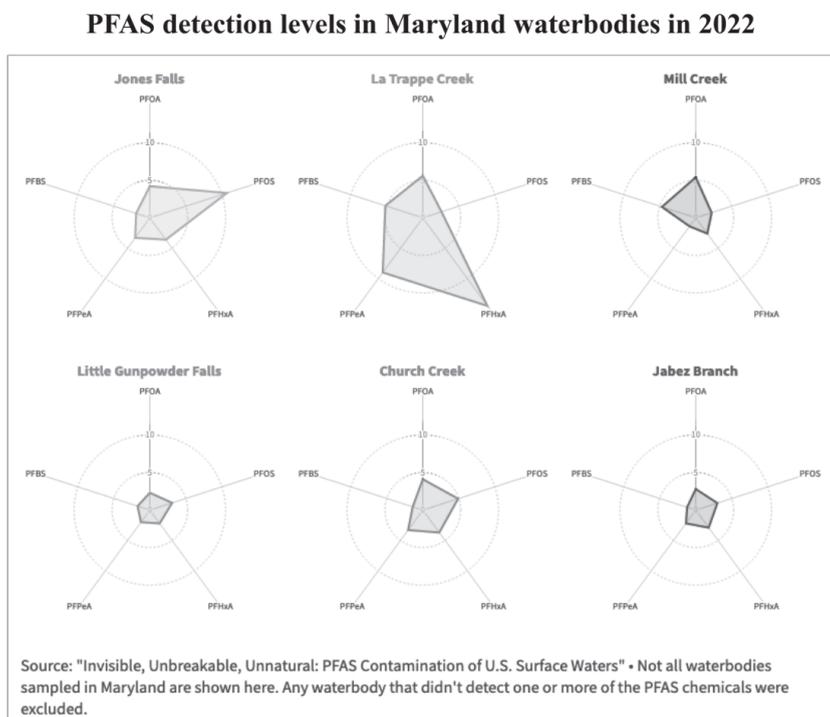
The Waterkeeper Alliance, a nonprofit global network of waterkeeper groups aiming for access to clean water everywhere, released a report in October to showcase findings from the past several months about U.S. waterways. The group collected samples from different bodies of water across the country and tested them for specific chemicals called per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances, or PFAS.

The report was created to address the lack of information available about the presence of these chemicals and the dangers they pose. Kelly Hunter Foster, the senior attorney for the Waterkeeper Alliance and an author of the report, said that to her knowledge, this report is the first of its kind.

"With PFAS, we recognized that there was a huge data gap all across the country for PFAS data in surface waters," Foster said. "Having this data available is important just for educating the public, but also, I think it's important for the public that we bring data like this to the attention of state and federal regulatory agencies so we can do more monitoring and try to get the standards in place to prevent more of it from entering the environment."

PFAS, which are widely used in many common industrial and consumer products, are also referred to as "forever chemicals," according to the report. These "forever chemicals" stay in organisms indefinitely without breaking down and accumulate over time in people, animals and the environment. There are approximately 9,000 derivatives of PFAS, according to the report.

High exposure to PFAS can have several adverse health consequences, according to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. Some of these include reproductive issues like decreased fertility and high blood pressure during pregnancy, developmental effects or delays in children, increased risk of some forms of cancer, a weakened immune system and increased cholesterol levels.



Source: "Invisible, Unbreakable, Unnatural: PFAS Contamination of U.S. Surface Waters" • Not all waterbodies sampled in Maryland are shown here. Any waterbody that didn't detect one or more of the PFAS chemicals were excluded.

The Waterkeeper Alliance took samples from multiple waterbodies in Maryland to test for various PFAS chemicals. Most of these waterways had detection levels between 1 to 15 ppt, exceeding the Environmental Working Group's acceptable detection level of less than 1 ppt. The EWG is a nonprofit activist group focused on environmentalist topics.

People can be exposed to PFAS in several ways, such as drinking contaminated municipal water or private well water, eating food grown or raised near places that use or make PFAS, eating food packaged in materials containing PFAS and using certain consumer products that contain PFAS.

The report found that Maryland had the highest number of PFAS detections out of the 34 states sampled and Washington, D.C., with a total of 134 detections. Samples of Maryland's waterbodies, particularly Piscataway Creek in Prince George's County, also had high detection levels of PFAS.

Brent Walls is the Upper Potomac Riverkeeper for the Potomac Riverkeeper Network, which submitted three samples to the Waterkeeper Alliance's report, including the sample from Piscataway Creek. He said the "hot zones" to look at for high PFAS levels will be areas where products were used at high levels for long periods. These areas tend to be close to military bases, airports and industrial users like wastewater treatment plants.

He also said areas used as firefighting training grounds are hot zones—during training for

civilian firefighters and people in the military to put out aircraft fires, they will use AFFF, a fire suppressant that contains PFAS. And according to Walls, Piscataway Creek has a military base nearby which has used AFFF on the grounds by this waterway for decades.

Walls also noted the PFAS pollution issue is both economic and cultural. Certain communities, such as Indigenous and Latin American communities, have cultures deeply integrated with communing with nature, going to waterways and eating fish they catch.

"It's going to impact everyone's health. If I caught fish and ate it out of a stream, there's chances I'm going to have high levels of PFAS in my system, but then again, if you buy fish at the supermarket, you still might have it because it's not being tested for," he said. "It's a pollutant that doesn't know color of skin or the size of your wallet. It is a pollutant that is impacting all of us."

The Maryland Department of the Environment declined to comment for this story. Spokesperson Jay Apperson sent the department's [web]page dedicated to PFAS, its risks and the work the department has done to address the issue.

Among these efforts include conducting samples of public water treatment systems in 2020 for PFAS and working with the cities where PFAS detection exceeded a safe level to improve their water treatment systems. The MDE has released reports on phases one and two of this water sampling initiative. Sampling for phase three finished up this past spring, according to the website, and the MDE will also release a report for this phase.

Walls believes Maryland's efforts to address PFAS are ahead of other states in the Chesapeake Bay watershed. However, he said there's still more work that can be done, such as the government implementing drinking water standards or requirements to test biosolids.

"The problem the states have—and it's not completely their fault even though they do have the ability to make their own judgments—is when you have an EPA that hasn't deemed PFAS as a toxic substance," he said. "The states have to go out on a limb to do it."

The Watergate Alliance's report recommended several

See 'FOREVER CHEMICALS' Page A6

GM/CEO from A1

As Atlanta's Watershed Management Commissioner from 2016 to 2020, Powell was responsible for day-to-day management and oversight of the water and wastewater utility serving 1.2 million customers. With an annual operating budget of \$644 million and a five-year capital program of \$1.26 billion, Powell leveraged strategic investment to improve service delivery, utility business processes and workforce development—including partnering with Atlanta's Department of Corrections to reduce recidivism by providing job training and apprenticeship opportunities to non-violent offenders.

"We are confident that Ms. Powell's extensive prior experiences provide her with well-rounded leadership skills that will benefit WSSC Water customers for years to come," said Commission Vice Chair Regina Y. Speed-Bost. "We thank outgoing General Manager/CEO Carla Reid for her many years of leadership and service to the citizens of Prince George's and Montgomery counties."

Powell is a registered Professional Engineer and has a bachelor's degree in Civil Engineering from Morgan State University's Clarence M. Mitchell, Jr., School of Engineering. She resides in Bowie, Md. Her first day as WSSC Water's General Manager/CEO will be Sunday, January 1, 2023.

Established in 1918, WSSC Water is Maryland's largest water utility and among the largest in the nation. With more than 11,000 miles of water and wastewater pipes, WSSC Water serves 1.9 million residents throughout a 1,000 square-mile service area in Montgomery and Prince George's counties.

Six Commissioners, three from each county, govern WSSC Water. They are appointed by their respective county executives and confirmed by their county councils. More information on WSSC Water Commissioners is on the Governance page.

WSSC Water is the proud provider of safe, seamless and satisfying water services, making the essential possible every day for our neighbors in Montgomery and Prince George's counties. We work to deliver our best because it's what our customers expect and deserve.

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BUSINESS AND FINANCE

Moore's Promise of Free Pre-K Must Balance Cost, Resources and Quality Learning

By SHANNON CLARK
Capital News Service

ANNAPOLIS, Md. (Nov. 30, 2022)—Gov-elect Wes Moore, D, has a laundry list of plans for Maryland.

Moore wants to give students an option to complete a year of service after high school, raise the minimum wage to \$15 this year instead of the scheduled increase in 2025 and support small businesses through modernizing the regulation process.

One of his focuses, which he discussed repeatedly during his campaign, is to provide free pre-kindergarten for all of the state's three- and four-year olds in need.

The state's Blueprint Plan promises to expand free pre-K to all children in need in the next 10 years. Passed in 2021 and beginning in 2023, the plan promises to increase education funding by \$3.8 billion each year for the next 10 years.

Moore says it needs to happen sooner. "Our children cannot wait 10-plus years for the plan's full implementation," Moore said in his 'Cradle to Career' education plan on his website.

Many states, including Maryland, have already launched programs or are in the process of doing so.

Experts and academicians say there are numerous benefits to expanding pre-K access.

"Universal programs are the only ones that ensure all children, especially the most disadvantaged, actually access quality programs," said Steven Barnett, senior co-director of the National Institute for Early Education Research, an organization considered the lead expert on early childhood education.

"Many children not in poverty gain from pre-K as well, even if they gain less than those who are more disadvantaged."

Doug Lent is communications director for the Maryland Family Network, a non-profit that advocates for quality childcare for children from birth to age five.

Lent said expanded pre-K would provide families with two benefits while also reducing societal poverty.

"It would give parents access to childcare who could not normally afford that childcare, which means parents can go to work while kids are...also receiving the skills that they need to then later on

go into the workforce or into education," he said.

In Baltimore City, free pre-K builds on the teaching relationship between parents and their children, said Crystal Francis, director of Early Learning for Baltimore City schools.

"Our parents are a child's first teacher," Francis said. "So we always want to make sure that we are just kind of opening up and sharing experiences that our kids are having, and supporting families with what they can do at home. You know, we don't want families to feel like they are not a part of the learning that happens here."

Experts say pre-K is important because by age five, 90% of the brain is developed.

"It's not a hyperbole to say that it is one of the most important decisions that a parent will ever make for their child," Lent said. "The first five years of a child's life quite literally set the stage for everything that comes after."

Berol Dewdney teaches pre-K at Commodore John Rogers Elementary and Middle School in Baltimore. Dewdney is also the 2022–2023 Maryland teacher of the year.

On a sunny, but cold Tuesday morning, Dewdney's students start their day reciting affirmations, some greet her with a hug and all commit to help keep the classroom safe before learning begins. A fall-themed countdown timer plays in the background and helps students learn time management as they play with blocks and toys while their teacher finishes setting up for the day.

Dewdney said she focuses her classroom on brain-based learning—learning that teaches children to plan, focus attention, juggle multiple tasks and to memorize.

Students in the classroom can be seen moving between small groups, creating play plans and putting those plans into motion by using toys set up in the classroom.

"Play is often thought of as this sort of cute thing, but it's not just cute," Dewdney said. "It's powerful. It's the language of kids, and they are the experts. So, we believe in using a play-based curriculum."

Dewdney said she has seen the benefit

of having accessible pre-K transcend beyond the classroom.

"Students love learning," she said. "They love coming to school, but they feel empowered to take that learning wherever they go."

But the primary question regarding expanded pre-K for Moore and state legislators will be the issue of cost and how to pay for it.

Lent said there is no simple answer to estimating the cost of implementing universal pre-K, due to different factors on how to pay for it.

As of last September, 27,767 students were enrolled in free pre-K in Maryland. In 2021, Maryland spent over \$7,414 on each child enrolled, according to the National Institute for Early Education Research.

Georgia became the first state to launch universal free pre-K. It started as a pilot program in 1992. It provides free voluntary pre-K to all of the state's four-year-olds.

Around 72,000 children are currently enrolled, according to Susan Adams, deputy commissioner for pre-K and Institutional Support for the Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning.

During a typical day, Georgia pre-kindergarteners can be found participating in small group activities, playing with other children outside or learning in a classroom setting, Adams said.

The program has multiple benefits, she said.

"You're going to get families that are going to benefit from it because we have an enriching environment for children to participate in while they go to work or school," she said.

Every state but Idaho, Montana, New Hampshire and South Dakota have some form of free pre-K, either in development or operation, according to a NIEER 2021 research study. Wyoming and Indiana were also listed, but Indiana now offers grants to low-income families to pay for pre-K and a rural preschool in Wyoming in April 2022 received a community foundation grant for free classes.

Some states like Georgia, rely on the state's lottery to fund their pre-K programs. Georgia's program received \$400 million for the 2022-2023 school year from the state's lottery, Adams said, an

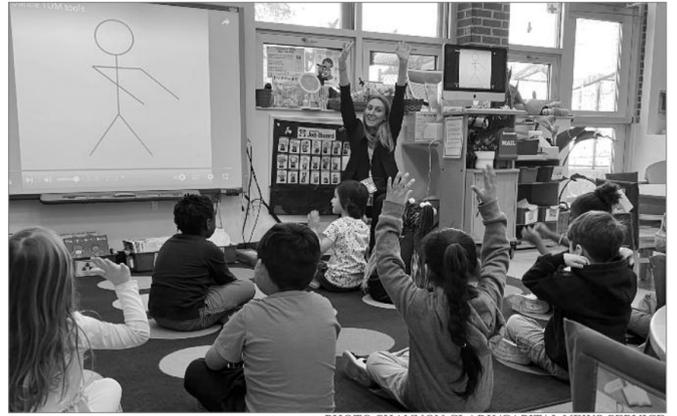


PHOTO SHANNON CLARK/CAPITAL NEWS SERVICE

Baltimore City pre-K instructor, Berol Dewdney, the 2022–2023 Maryland teacher of the year, uses an interactive video with hand signals to guide her classroom at the beginning of the school day.

amount equivalent to the pre-K budget.

Alabama's First Class Pre-K program is funded through the state's education budget, which this year allocated around \$174 million towards the program, said Barbara J. Cooper, secretary of the Alabama Department of Early Childhood Education.

Moore has said he will pay for Maryland's expanded pre-K program through taxes on revenue from "cannabis, sports betting and record income tax revenue." Additionally, he said, he would use money in "capital from the American Rescue Plan and the infrastructure bill," two federal programs Congress passed last year to help states with a variety of projects.

Implementing free pre-K comes with a suggested list of national standards by NIEER that school systems have adopted as a trademark of a high quality program. Cooper in Alabama proudly proclaims that her state's program has met the standards for the last 16 years.

The institute's guidelines include requiring all pre-K teachers to have a bachelor's degree, classes be capped at 20 students and schools have a "comprehensive, aligned, supported and culturally sensitive curriculum."

Bowie, Maryland, has a free pre-K program that it launched in 2020 after receiving a \$400,000 grant from the state education department. The program, which continues to be state-funded, started at Reid Temple Christian Academy for children in Prince George's County, which already had a private pre-K program.

Brenda Bethea, interim head of school, said Reid Temple applied to host the program at the request of the city's mayor, Tim Adams.

"(The city was) very interested in seeing the same results that all of our children here at the academy show at any given time," Bethea said.

The academy's private and free programs represent the challenge for Moore and state educators as they expand the state's existing program.

Bethea said she feels the state-financed program's curriculum is inferior to that of the school's tuition-based program.

The tuition-based program uses Wonders curriculum, along with additional resources to "move children forward" developmentally, Bethea said.

The free program has many of the NIEER requirements, all teachers must be state-certified, the program must use state prescribed curriculum and 20 spots are allotted per classroom.

Its teachers use Connect4Learning, a curriculum that Bethea calls a "watered down early childhood program."

"It is mediocre," she said. "It is much needed, but it is a mediocre product that has been offered to children."

Back in Baltimore, Dewdney advises state officials to be mindful as they implement the expanded program.

"It's a very pivotal moment in Maryland, but also in our country," she said. "There's a lot of energy around pre-K, but there is a difference between honoring and knowing that early childhood and high quality early childhood education matters and making that happen."

Social Security Matters

Ask Rusty:

Can a Working Widow Collect Survivor Benefits?

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'm 63 and still employed. My husband passed away 7 years ago at the age of 58. Am I able to collect my husband's Social Security while I'm still working? **Signed: Working Widow**

Dear Working Widow: Technically at age 63 you're eligible to collect a survivor benefit from your husband but, since you're working, we need to dig a bit deeper.

Any time benefits are taken before reaching full retirement age, Social Security's earnings test applies. The earnings test limits how much you can earn from working before they take away some (or even all) of your Social Security benefits. If your annual earnings for 2023 will be more than \$21,240, then Social Security will take away benefits equal to \$1 for every \$2 you are over that limit. If you earn substantially more than the limit, that could even temporarily disqualify you from eligibility to collect your survivor benefit (because your benefit amount may be insufficient to offset the penalty for exceeding the limit). So, if you're working part time and will not exceed the limit or only slightly exceed it, then you can claim your survivor benefit from your husband now and simply pay the penalty from your benefits. But if you're working full time and will exceed the annual limit by a lot, then you may wish to defer claiming your survivor benefit until you either reach your full retirement age (FRA) or stop working.

If you turned 63 in 2022, your FRA is 66 years and 10 months, and the earnings test applies until you reach that age. Four months earlier is when your survivor benefit from your husband will reach maximum (claimed any earlier it will be reduced by 4.75% per full year early). So, what should you do? I suggest you look at your own estimated maximum (age 70) benefit and compare that to your maximum survivor benefit from your husband. You should strive to maximize whichever benefit will be highest and claim that maximum benefit for the rest of your life. For example, if your survivor benefit at your FRA will be more than your personal age 70 benefit will be, then it would be smart to wait until

your FRA to claim your survivor benefit and collect that for the rest of your life. If, instead, your personal age 70 benefit will be higher than your maximum survivor benefit at your FRA, then you may wish to claim the survivor benefit first and allow your personal benefit to reach maximum and switch to your own higher benefit at age 70.

In any case, because you're working you must be careful of the earnings limit until you reach your full retirement age. The earnings limit goes up a bit each year, and in the year that you reach your FRA it goes way up (by about 2.5 times) and the penalty is less. There is no longer an earnings limit once you reach your full retirement age, but if you decide to claim Social Security before your FRA you should stay keenly aware of whether your earnings will exceed each year's annual limit.

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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The Institute for Entrepreneurial Leadership Launches New Capital Catalyst Initiative to Create More Pathways to Capital Access

The Initiative Will Provide Funding to Jumpstart Kiva Crowdfunding Campaigns for Business Owners With Annual Revenue Under \$250K

By PRESS OFFICER
Institute For Entrepreneurial Leadership

NEWARK, N.J. (Nov. 29, 2022)—The Institute For Entrepreneurial Leadership (IFEL) today announced the creation of its Capital Catalyst initiative. The initiative is designed to encourage giving that has a multiplier effect. Building on a pilot started in 2021 to support Newark, NJ area businesses with \$1,000 crowdfunding match loans, the IFEL Capital Catalyst initiative is seeking funders who will make charitable contributions that IFEL can use to catalyze funding for small businesses. Entrepreneur and veteran Diedre Windsor, is the first to answer the call with a \$25,000 Capital Catalyst donation.

Windsor, founder of Windsor Group LLC, a professional services company based in Chevy Chase, MD, cites her most important goals as giving back to the community and supporting women of color and veterans. "It's true what they say that you almost need to already have money to start a business. I recognize how important it is to get that early capital."

The message of taking individual responsibility for opening doors for others resonated at IFEL's Women of Color Connecting (WOC-CON) 2022 Summit where Windsor was a panelist. She decided that helping to address access to capital is a way that she could help. Her contribution will be used to support crowdfunding loans through the Kiva platform for women of color- and veteran-owned businesses.

"Despite starting businesses at a rate three times the national average, Women of Color experience less financial success than anyone else," shared IFEL CEO and Co-Founder Jill Johnson. "Diedre's contribution will enable up



PHOTO COURTESY IFEL

IFEL CEO/Co-Founder Jill Johnson

to 10 businesses to get much needed capital through a platform that creates greater exposure for the business. This model has huge potential to demonstrate how philanthropy can affect systemic change with respect to capital access."

IFEL will make initial loans on Kiva to begin the online crowdfunded campaigns. Once the loan has been repaid by the business owner, the funds will be used for another entrepreneur.

"Kiva is proud to continue our partnership with IFEL," said Natalia Ibarra, Kiva US Partnerships Manager. "We celebrate the launch of this new initiative, which will unlock much-needed capital for women and veteran business owners, and share gratitude to both Diedre Windsor and IFEL for bringing this innovative idea to life."

For more information about IFEL and the Capital Catalyst Initiative, please visit wearifel.org/capital-catalyst-program.

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courses of action for Congress and EPA to target PFAS contamination in water and prioritize clean water access. These actions include passing Clean Water Act legislation, funding and implementing better water monitoring and prioritizing implementation and enforcement of clean water and cleanup legislation.

On an individual level, Walls encourages people to be vigilant about the food they're consuming, as well as the products they're using. For example, anything with a waterproof component to it contains PFAS. He also emphasizes that people write letters to state and federal governments urging them to address PFAS.

"The larger the voice that we have, the more headway that we're going to make on this issue," he said.

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