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Merry Christmas FROM THE STAFF AT THE PRINCE GEORGE'S POST

PHOTO CREDIT COTTONBRO STUDIO, PEXELS.COM

Choose Your Own Adventure: How Players Navigate the Elite Basketball Landscape

By JAKOB BOWEN AND TRAVIS CHASE
The Shirley Povich Center for Sports Journalism | Capital News Service

In 2021, Rodney Rice was ready to begin his senior year at DeMatha Catholic High School in Hyattsville, Maryland. He was already a star for the powerhouse boys' basketball team. All signs pointed to Rice having a breakout final season.

About the same time, something radical was happening in youth basketball. A new option for high school players suddenly appeared. A sports media company, Overtime Elite, formed a development program for a few dozen elite players. OTE was doing something unheard of: Paying young players to jump their high school teams and develop their talents as professionals with upstart OTE.

Rice dreamt of playing someday in the National Basketball Association. OTE, with its emphasis on expert coaching and high-level competition, might have been a fast track. It was an opportunity to spend a few seasons in OTE's program, gaining a high school degree at the same time and get paid for the experience.

OTE offered to pay Rice a total of \$600,000, along with a promise of even more in name, image and likeness deals, Rice's father told Capital News Service. OTE declined to comment, saying the league does not discuss contract negotiations.

"They were talking about how they liked my game, how they can see me playing there, [...] and potentially get drafted in a couple years," Rice said. "It didn't sound bad at all."

Shaking up the high school sports hierarchy

Elite high school players like Rice have more options today than ever. Two media companies are shaking up the old order.

The National Interscholastic Basketball Conference is a ten-team super conference of private and parochial schools from Florida to Long Island to Utah. All conference games are car-



PHOTO COURTESY DEMATHA ATHLETICS

HYATTSVILLE, Md.—Rodney Rice faced a difficult decision during his senior year at DeMatha Catholic High School.

See BASKETBALL Page A4

CBF's Clagett Farm Donates More Than 10 Tons of Fresh Produce to Maryland Food Banks in 2022

By PRESS OFFICER
Chesapeake Bay Foundation

The Chesapeake Bay Foundation's (CBF) Clagett Farm donated more than 23,000 pounds of fresh, organic produce to Maryland food banks this year.

The donated vegetables and fruit ranging from strawberries and summer squash to green peppers and tomatoes were worth an estimated \$330,000. The weight total surpassed the farm's 2021 donation of 17,000 pounds of produce.

Each year Clagett Farm, which uses regenerative agriculture farming methods, grows food for its Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) customers and local food banks at its 238-acre farm in Upper Marlboro, Maryland. The food bank donations were about one third of the 75,000 pounds of produce grown by Clagett staff this year.

The donations were primarily provided to Shabach! Ministries in Landover and Prince George's Food Equity Council's Food Rescue Program.

"We are so grateful for the produce Clagett Farm has donated to Prince George's County Food Rescue and the recipient food pantries we serve," said Julia Groenfeldt, program manager for Prince George's Food Equity Council. "Since the pandemic, Prince George's County has continued to experience elevated rates of food insecurity—causing financial and capacity strains on community food

pantries that have been a lifeline for so many food-insecure individuals and families. These donations have been an incredible gift for these organizations that, unfortunately, often struggle to source high-quality local produce for their clients and communities they serve."

From July 2021 to Sept. 2022, Clagett Farm donated 10,330 pounds of produce to Prince George's County Food Rescue, which amounts to about 8,600 meals for community members. Clagett staff typically transfer the donations to the food banks the day after the produce is picked to maximize freshness and nutritional value.

"I serve everyone in the community and what I've seen recently is a decline in quality of food for the seniors in our community," said Gwen Pope, the manager of the food and clothing pantry at Shabach! Ministries. "They're not able to get quality food because of the cost. Working with Clagett Farm we've been able to channel quality, organic food to seniors to give them a better quality of life. And they know the difference. Most of them were raised on farms, they know what good food is and isn't. They continually come back to us and ask—'where are you getting this produce from?' They're so grateful."

Pope added that her clients are often surprised to hear the produce is grown in Upper Marlboro, near where they live. She said with the Clagett donations, they're able to serve about 250 clients each month.



PHOTO CREDIT CBF

Donations from Clagett Farm.

Clagett's CSA program also served about 300 families this year with weekly fresh produce. Most of the produce was grown on just 20 acres of the farm, which demonstrates how healthy soil and proper land management can produce bountiful returns.

"It was a tremendous year for Clagett Farm," said Jared Planz, CBF's Vegetable Production Manager. "We work to demonstrate how farmers can grow food for hundreds of families while also improving the environment. We believe these practices will be adopted by more farmers to support their community, fight

climate change, and improve the health of the Chesapeake Bay."

Clagett's regenerative agriculture practices include using cover crops to fix nutrients into the soil that later benefit crop growth. The farm rotationally grazes sheep and cattle in grass fields to provide the animals with food and the fields with natural fertilizer in the form of manure. And Clagett staff grow a diverse array of fruits and vegetables to attract different pollinators and beneficial microbes to the soil.

See PRODUCE Page A6

Wizards and Library Celebrate Reading in Prince George's County

By PRESS OFFICER
Prince George's County Memorial Library System

LARGO, Md. (Dec. 12, 2022)—"As a basketball-loving community, Prince George's County residents have a fantastic opportunity to connect with the Wizards and library this winter," said Nicholas A. Brown, Acting CO-CEO of PGCMLS. "The Wizards Winter Reading Challenge provides a great opportunity for families to connect across generations and share a love of reading, all while rooting for the home team."

To help promote youth literacy across the DMV area, the Wizards Winter Reading Challenge will provide participants the ability to connect with their library while encouraging them to build a positive reading culture. The free challenge can be joined online through Beanstack, a software platform and mobile app that allows readers to easily record their reading minutes, track their progress and stay motivated to complete the challenge.

For each activity completed, participants can earn points toward earning challenge badges. Badges are awarded for four different activity types focused on: reading, fitness fun, program attendance, and connect and share. Those who complete the challenge will be eligible for a variety of prizes, including a raffle entry for tickets to the Wizards' home game on April 9, 2023, versus the Houston Rockets.

Prince George's County residents looking to join the Wizards Winter Reading Challenge can register at pgcmls.info/Wizards. Customers of neighboring library systems can register through their local library or by visiting a participating library's website: DCPL, Alexandria Library, Fairfax County Library, and MCPL.

Army Corps, Prince George's County Sign Partnership Agreement, Moving Anacostia Watershed Restoration Into Construction Phase

By PRESS OFFICER
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Baltimore District

UPPER MARLBORO, Md. (Dec. 15, 2022)—The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), Baltimore District, and Prince George's County Department of the Environment (DoE) signed a Project Partnership Agreement (PPA) for the Anacostia Watershed Restoration project during a ceremony at the county's DoE headquarters in Largo, Maryland, Dec. 15, 2022. The PPA will usher in the construction phase of the project, which aims to restore a segment of the Anacostia Watershed within Prince George's County that has suffered from years of environmental neglect.

The project, which received \$30 million from the Fiscal Year 2022 Consolidated Appropriations Act signed by President Biden on March 15, 2022, will restore 7 miles of instream habitat; open 4 miles for fish passage; and connect 14 miles of stream to previously restored stream reaches.

Initial construction is expected to begin in late spring 2023 and will focus on the replacement of a pedestrian bridge that will be aligned perpendicular to the flow of the Northwest Branch.

"We're proud to have a strong partnership with Prince George's County DoE, as we work together to move forward this important restoration effort," said Baltimore District Commander Col. Estee Pinchasin. "As one of the most urbanized watersheds within the Chesapeake Bay, the execution of this Project Partnership agreement brings us one step closer to ensuring substantial envi-

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There's a lot of Life to See, so Take Action to See it for Yourself

We call glaucoma "the sneaky thief of sight" because with no early warning signs, many people don't notice any changes until they are already going blind.

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Black Woman-Owned Real Estate Brokerage Celebrates 5th Anniversary With Opening of Institute of Wealth and Real Estate

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Business and Finance, Page A5

TOWNS *and* NEIGHBORS

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

Darnall's Chance announces Viewers' Choice Award winners

The Gingerbread House Contest and Show allows contestants two opportunities to win prizes. The first is a chance to win with a panel of gingerbread judges. They judge based on strict criteria. This year's winners with the judges were:

Adult entries: 1st, Michelle Howell (\$100 prize); 2nd, Jamie Wisner (\$75), 3rd, Anita Guit (\$50). Child entries: 1st, Violet Stallings (\$75); 2nd, Renee Lakner (\$50); 3rd, Wyatt Hopkins (\$25). Family entries: 1st, Muldowney Family (\$75); 2nd, McClain-Hosman Family (\$50); 3rd, Arigo Family (\$25). Each received a ribbon marking them as 1st, 2nd or 3rd place.

The second opportunity to win is with the public in Viewers' Choice. The public gets to come in and vote for their one favorite in each of the three categories. The Viewers' Choice Award winners were announced December 11 at 5 p.m. when all the contestants came to pick up their entries. The winners of Viewers' Choice are:

Adult Entry: Hope for the Holidays by Michelle Howell

Child Entry: A Cozy Camper Christmas by Renee Lakner

Family Entry: St. Nick's Sweet Retreat by Nick's Legacy

Each Viewers' Choice Award winner was awarded \$275.

Megan Decker of Darnall's Chance says, "We are already looking forward to next year's contest."

Darnall's Chance Museum is now closed for the holidays and will reopen for regular house tours on Jan. 6. Walk-in tours are offered on Fridays and Sundays, 12 p.m. to 4 p.m. You can also schedule a tour Tuesday through Thursday by calling 301-952-8010.

Town of Morningside

Hall rental is now available for January, February and March. Info: 301-736-2300.

Morningside holds its next Town Meeting in Dec. 20, beginning at 7 p.m.

Neighbors & other good people

Former Morningside Council Member Carol (Kline) DeGraba sent a Christmas photo of her family up there in Rockville. She is currently using her nursing skills subbing for the nurse and pre-school teacher at St. Raphael School. Son Thomas is graduating this month from the Institute of World Politics with a Master of Arts degree. And daughter Maria and her husband Tyler expect their first child in mid-January. Her late mother, my friend Martha Kline would be so proud.

Changing landscape

The Washington Post is eliminating jobs. One major move is to discontinue its Sunday magazine. The last issue will be Christmas day. I am sad to lose the magazine; all my Post life I have read it and done the puzzles. I am not alone in my outrage.

Last week I told you that, starting July 1, D.C. will eliminate fares on Metrobus, allowing patrons to board free. However, for us in Maryland and, for that matter, in Virginia, there's a catch. Fare is free only when boarding in D.C. Under discussion is how will the city pay for this? One suggestion: more advertising space on bus sides.

Asian elephants Trong (age 19) and her daughter Nhi Lin (age 9) have been presented to the National Zoo as a gift from the Rotterdam Zoo in the Netherlands.

A home at Peggyanne Court, in Skyline, recently sold for \$440,000.

Pearl Harbor, continued

Regarding last week's story on Pearl Harbor, I received the following from former Skyline resident Jill Kimmel:

"My mom was at Pearl Harbor on Dec 7—she was living on base and when she heard the bombs, she called the commanding officer and told him those war games were too loud when he informed her, they were real. She hid in a broom closet and then when her house was bombed, she went out in the chaos. She never liked to talk about what she saw. My dad was on the other side of the is-

land on maneuvers unaware of what was happening until he broke radio silence. After Pearl, she was never really the same—very uptight through the years."

PGCC registration coming up

Prince George's Community College reminds us to "Gain an education and skills that will last a lifetime." They list what's available: 60 academic degree programs, 144 continuing education programs, and 32 certificate programs available at the main campus in Largo and five additional locations (including Suitland HS, Crossland HS and the Skilled Trades Center, 5200 Silver Hill Road, District Heights).

The last day to register is Saturday, Jan. 21; first day of class is Monday, Jan. 23. Info: 301-546-PGCC (7422).

There's a tuition waiver for county residents aged 60+. Years ago, I used that waiver to take a year of German.

COVID kits available

The USPS is offering free COVID kits again (4 per household) at <https://special.usps.com/testkits>. My daughter Sheila (thank you!) ordered four more kits for me.

Also, before you throw out "expired kits," Sheila says they can check to see if the expiration dates have been extended. Go to covid.gov/tests.

Christmas meanderings

The Christmas carol O Holy Night ranks first in a list of hymns most played in December at Christian churches in the U.S., according to Pushpay which offers electronic options for churches. The next choices were, in order, O Come All Ye Faithful, Silent Night, The First Noel, Joy to The World and Angels We Have Heard On High.

Every two years the U.S. Postal Service issues a traditional first-class Christmas stamp showing Mary and Jesus. This year's stamp features a 16th century painting by a Florentine artist.

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Around the County

M-NCPPC, Department of Parks and Recreation, Prince George's County Announces Inaugural in the Water Basketball Battle

Experience the Best of High School Basketball in the Region RIVERDALE, Md. (Dec. 15, 2022)—M-NCPPC, Department of Parks and Recreation in Prince George's County, introduces In the Water Basketball Battle*, a tournament featuring some of the most elite High School basketball programs in the region this holiday season. The tournament will be hosted at the Show Place Arena in Upper Marlboro, MD on December 29–30, 2022. Come see top boys' and girls' basketball players from Prince George's County and surrounding areas battle it out on the court. In between games, crowds will enjoy entertainment from local DJs, giveaways, and get to show their team spirit.

"We want to give our Prince George's County Public Schools an opportunity to play in an arena in their hometown, not just at their school gyms or when they travel to a tournament," said Bill Tyler, Director of the Department. "We have this great facility. We've made many upgrades to it, but it hasn't been regularly utilized specifically for the sport of basketball, which it can be," said Tyler.

Day 1 Schedule:

12 p.m. Girls Wave Bracket - Largo High School vs. Theodore Roosevelt High School

1:30 p.m. Boys Rip Tide Bracket - Takoma Academy vs. Anacostia High School

3 p.m. Boys Rip Tide Bracket - Alexandria City High School vs. Friendship Tech Prep

5 p.m. Girls Wave Bracket - Gwynn Park High School vs. Jackson Reed High School

6:30 p.m. Boys High Tide Bracket - Frederick Douglass High School vs. Theodore Roosevelt High School

8 p.m. Boys High Tide Bracket - Albert Einstein High School vs. Eleanor Roosevelt High School

Day 1 matchups will determine consolation and championship matchups for day two. Tickets are available for \$15 per day through www.pgparcs.com, www.ticketmaster.com and the arena box office. The box office will be open for ticket sales on days of the event. Patrons will need separate tickets for each day.

*This event is not affiliated with the 2020 Showtime Sports' documentary film Basketball County: In the Water.

Minnesota State University, Mankato to Award 2,193 Degrees at End of Fall Semester

MANKATO, Minn. (Dec. 14, 2022)—Minnesota State University, Mankato awarded 2,193 degrees to 1,936 students at the end of the fall 2022 semester, with commencement ceremonies scheduled for 9 a.m. and noon Saturday, Dec. 10 in Taylor Center's Bresnan Arena on the Minnesota State Mankato campus.

Upper Marlboro, MD: **Ayanna Powell**, BS, Dental Hygiene, Cum Laude Live-streaming captioning services will be provided for each ceremony.

Advanced degrees awarded by Minnesota State Mankato at the conclusion of the fall semester included ten doctor of education degrees, five doctor of nursing practice degrees and three doctor of school psychology degrees.

Graduate degrees awarded included 39 master of arts degrees, 12 master of accounting degrees, four master of arts in teaching degrees, 11 master of business administration degrees, six master of fine arts degrees, 165 master of science degrees, one master of science in nursing degree, 34 master of social work degrees, six professional science master's degrees, 33 specialist in educational leadership degrees and 62 graduate certificates.

Degrees awarded at the undergraduate level included 41 bachelor of arts degrees, 16 bachelor of business degrees, 13 bachelor of fine arts degrees, 1,300 bachelor of science degrees, 32 bachelor of science in integrated engineering degrees, three bachelor of science in civil engineering degrees, nine bachelor of science in computer engineering degrees, six bachelor of science in electrical engineering degrees, six bachelor of science in mechanical engineering degrees, 37 bachelor of science in social work degrees, 37 associate of arts degrees and 45 undergraduate certificates.

Undergraduate students receiving recognition included 262 students graduating summa cum laude (3.8 grade point average and higher), 249 students graduating magna cum laude (grade point averages of 3.6 to 3.79) and 256 students graduating cum laude (grade point averages of 3.4 to 3.59).

More information about the Minnesota State Mankato fall commencement is at <https://www.mnsu.edu/graduation/>.

Minnesota State Mankato, a comprehensive university with 14,482 students, is part of the Minnesota State system, which includes 26 colleges and seven universities.

—MNSU-Media Relations

Beatriz Huerta Inducted Into National Collegiate Hispanic Honor Society

MANCHESTER, NH (Dec. 13, 2022)—Saint Anselm College student **Beatriz Huerta of Hyattsville**, a Marketing major with a minor in Spanish in the class of 2023, has been inducted into the Omicron Rho Chapter of Sigma Delta Pi, a national collegiate Hispanic honor society, for the 2022-2023 academic year.

To be considered for membership in Sigma Delta Pi, students must have a 3.0 GPA in all Spanish courses taken and rank in the top 35% of their class.

Sigma Delta Pi, founded in 1919 at the University of California Berkeley, serves to honor those who attain excellence in the study of the Spanish language and in the study of the literature and culture of the Spanish-speaking peoples. There are currently 637 chapters of the society in the United States.

ABOUT SAINT ANSELM COLLEGE: Founded in 1889, Saint Anselm College is a nationally-ranked four-year liberal arts college providing a 21st century education in the Catholic, Benedictine tradition. Located in the greater Boston region in southern New Hampshire, Saint Anselm is well known for its strong liberal arts curriculum, the New Hampshire Institute of Politics, commitment to inclusiveness, a highly successful nursing program, and a legacy of community service.

—Paul Pronovost, Saint Anselm College

Brandywine-Aquasco

by Audrey Johnson 301-922-5384

LAIKA STUDIOS

Bowie State University Names Studio for First Black Female Animator. LAIKA Studios executives visited Bowie State on Dec. 8, 2022 to participate in panel discussions, workshops, and other activities in conjunction with the launch of the first stop-motion animation studio at a college or university in Maryland created through a partnership with the Oregon-based company. Bowie State University is the only HBCU in the nation with a stop-motion animation studio.

The all-day stop-motion animation event featured Brad Schiff, head of animation, costume designer Deborah Cook and other members of the LAIKA team speaking with students about animation, the studio and their career aspirations. LAIKA is one of the leading animation studios in the film industry and has garnered Academy Award nominations for all five of its films.

BSU's new studio will allow students to develop, animate and produce stop-motion and experimental animated productions, short films and unique digital storytelling experiences. The space is a green screen studio outfitted with digital, stop-motion animation equipment and cameras.

"There will be workshops with BSU students, Q and A sessions and a special evening screening of LAIKA's Golden Globe-winning animated film Missing Link," said Professor Williams, chair of the Department of Fine and Performing Arts.

"Activities will culminate with the launch of the new stop-motion animation studio in honor of Dr. Ayoka Chenzira. Dr. Chenzira, expected to be in attendance, the first African American female animator and one of a handful of Black experimental filmmakers. Bowie State University is honored to name our stop-motion animation space Studio Ayoka Chenzira".

While working in the studio, students will also have the opportunity to combine stop-motion with other genres of animation and filmmaking including 2D, 3D, pixilation animation, motion graphics, sci-fi and virtual productions in the future.

"With an increased adoption of animation in the film and advertising industries, there will be a growing need for skilled professionals to work in the field," said Professor Williams. "For example, Vinceaun Minto, a 2019 BSU Department of Fine Arts graduate, worked as an intern for LAIKA and is now an assistant cameraman. He's a member of the LAIKA team visiting Bowie State and will offer students and others at the event his perspective on stop-motion animation."

A recruiter from LAIKA's human resources department and a Diversity Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) representative was available to discuss career opportunities with participants.

LAIKA was founded in 2005 in Oregon by President & CEO Travis Knight. The studio's five films Coraline (2009), The studio's five films Coraline (2009), ParaNorman (2012,

The Boxtrolls (2014), Kubo and the Two Strings (2016) and Missing Link (2019) have been nominated for the Academy Award for Outstanding Animated Feature. Kubo and the Two Strings won the BAFTA Award for Best Animated Film and received an additional Oscar nomination for Visual Effects. Missing Link was awarded the Golden Globe for best Animated Film. LAIKA was awarded Scientific and Technology Oscar in 2016 for its innovation in 3D printing. The studio is in development on The Night Gardener, an animated film from an original idea by Bill Dubuque, creator of the hit series OZARK as well as its first live-action feature film based on the action thriller novel Seventeen by screenwriter John Brownlow. MEDIA CONTACT: David Thompson, dlthompson@bowiestate.edu, 301-860-4311.

BOWIE STATE UNIVERSITY

Stay up to date. Planning to change your email or mailing address? Please let us know. By keeping your information current, you will continue to receive BSU news and updates. Update your contact information. For questions and support, send an email to the Advancement Services Office at advancementservices@bowiestate.edu or call 301-860-4301.

CLINTON UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

Clinton United Methodist Church is a Methodist Church in Clinton, Maryland. Reverend Dorothea Belt Stroman, Pastor. The church is located at 10700 Brandywine Road, Clinton, Maryland. During the pandemic, they live stream on Facebook Sundays at 10:30 a.m.

NEW YEAR'S EVE SERVICE

Join us for our Parish New Year's Eve Service at Nottingham Myers United Methodist Church, Rev. Shemaiah Strickland, Pastor, Saturday, December 31, 2022, at 4:00 p.m. The church address is 15601 Brooks Church Road, Upper Marlboro, Maryland 20772.

ANNUAL DANCE SHOWCASES

The Uplift: Inspirational Dance Festival will be held Sunday, February 19, 2023, 4:00 p.m.-5:30 p.m. at Prince George's Publick Playhouse 5445 Landover Road, Cheverly, Maryland. Local dancers share their artistic voice with healing, comfort, and gratitude. For all ages. Tickets: \$20/person, \$15/person for seniors, students, and groups of 20 or more. Purchase tickets on PARKS DIRECT. Description <https://arts.pgpparks.com/calendar/EID=20904>. More information visit Prince George's County Parks and Recreation.

Seasons Greetings and a Blessed Happy New Year to Everyone!

COMMUNITY

Psi Epsilon Omega Chapter of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Incorporated® Launches Program to Develop Youth Leaders

By RACINE TUCKER-HAMILTON

Psi Epsilon Omega Chapter of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc.®

PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY, Md. (Dec. 19, 2022)—Psi Epsilon Omega Chapter (PEO) of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc.® (AKA) is launching its Youth Leadership Institute (YLI), the signature program of service under the sorority's "Empower Our Families" initiative.

"We are very excited about YLI as it will allow us to train young community leaders," said Benita A. Swindell, PEO president. "The participants will give their time and talent to improve their community and the world by working on a youth-led community service project that focuses on social change."

Karletta Young has a 10-year-old son and Everton Dennis has 10-year-old twins participating in YLI.

"I thought it would be a good opportunity for my son to socialize, learn new things, and build his confidence," said Karletta.

"It's important to be an example to other kids and our Black community," said Everton.

Participants in the program will select activities in three modules: *Believing in Yourself*, *Discovering Countries and their Cultures*, and *Using the Power of Purpose to Drive Success* (a community service project or presentation). Each YLI module has themes, and this cohort will focus on the theme "Being the Change We Want to See".

YLI is a youth-led interactive leadership development program for children ages 11–13 years old. Participants will learn how to create agendas, run meetings, plan and execute activities, and make oral presentations. Students are excited about making new friends and becoming leaders.

"This program will help shape and build kids for middle and high school. With these sessions I'm going to be able to see myself as a leader," said 11-year-old Cameron Coleman.

"I'm looking forward to making new friends, doing fun activities, and working together as a team," said 11-

year-old Denver Carter.

The first YLI cohort met on Dec. 17, 2022, and subsequent sessions will be on the first Saturday of January–June 2023 for two hours, in

the Laurel, Bowie, and Greenbelt service areas.

Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority Incorporated®, Psi Epsilon Omega Chapter

was chartered in 2007. Since its founding, the chapter has implemented its service programs in Laurel, Bowie, and Greenbelt, Maryland.



PHOTO COURTESY PSI EPSILON OMEGA CHAPTER

Members of Psi Epsilon Omega Chapter of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Incorporated® train young leaders in Youth Leadership Institute.

Kevin Durant and the Durant Family Foundation Commit to Major Investment in Bowie State University

Durant's donation will support athletic facility upgrades and university athletics programs

By DR. JOLISA WILLIAMS

Bowie State University Athletics

BOWIE, Md. (Dec. 12, 2022)—Prince George's County native Kevin Durant and the Durant Family Foundation have committed to joining the Bowie State University Athletics Department in the transformation of the university's main basketball gym and supporting BSU athletics programs.

"We are dedicated to providing resources and possibilities to students for higher education, especially in Prince George's County," said Wanda Durant, who leads the Durant Family Foundation. "Bowie State was the perfect place to make a meaningful impact."

The foundation has committed \$500,000 towards renovations of the basketball arena in the Leonidas S. James Physical Education Complex at BSU. Renovations will include installation of a new basketball court, expansion of seating capacity and upgrades to the press box area. The gift will also provide financial support for men's and women's basketball and university athletics programs. It also will establish a scholarship for Durant Center College Track students who attend BSU.

Bowie State President Aminta Breaux expressed her gratitude for Durant's generosity.

"We're grateful for the resources that Kevin Durant and his family foundation have generously donated to Bowie State University to advance student success in achieving their academic goals," said Breaux. "His contributions will go a long way towards updating our facilities and ensure a top-tier athletic experience for all of our students. The foundation has already built a network of community-centric services within the Durant Center in Prince George's County that is exemplary."

Durant's donation to Bowie State is just the latest in the Seat Pleasant native's philanthropic efforts in Prince George's County. In 2019, Durant's foundation partnered with College Track to establish College Track at the Durant Center in Suitland, Md., to help first-generation and low-income students pursue higher education.

The Durant Family Foundation is a 501 (c)(3) non-profit organization founded in 2013 by Prince George's County native Kevin Durant. The foundation's mission is to enrich the lives of at-risk youth from low-income backgrounds through educational, athletic and social programs. The foundation supports youth athletics, organizations addressing youth homelessness, disaster & emergency relief efforts, renovates basketball courts across the world, and provides educational opportunities for low-income and first generation college students via our partnership with College Track. As of 2019, the Durant Center, based in Prince George's County, has been the home for Durant Family Foundation charitable programs and community initiatives.

Bowie State University is an important higher education access portal for qualified persons from diverse academic and socioeconomic backgrounds seeking a high-quality, affordable comprehensive public university. The university places special emphasis on the science, technology, cyber security, teacher education, business and nursing disciplines within the context of a liberal arts education. For more information about BSU, visit bowiestate.edu. For the most up-to-date information on Bowie State University Athletics and its 13 varsity sports teams, visit www.bsbulldogs.com.

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Winter Grief Program Offerings

By ELYZABETH MARCUSSEN

Hospice of the Chesapeake

NEW grief workshops in the new year include winter walks and yoga

PASADENA, Md. (Dec. 12, 2022)—From walking an indoor labyrinth to combining yoga and art to express new beginnings, Chesapeake Life Center is offering creative programs for adults to find a path to healing from grief in the new year.

• **Labyrinth Workshop**—Join other grievers for an indoors winter labyrinth walk where you will be invited to reflect on the season of winter and the meaning of the winding path for your personal healing. For those grieving the loss of a special person, the labyrinth can be a metaphor for grief's journey but also a place where the griever can find quietude and calm. The workshop will be held at Brookfield United Methodist Church, 12806 Croom Road, Upper Marlboro, Maryland, from 6 to 8 p.m. Thursday, Jan. 19. The cost is \$10.

• **Pet Loss Workshop**—This is a free program for adults mourning the loss of a beloved pet. It will include a welcome, a time to share individual stories, an introduction to the grief process, an art activity to honor your beloved pet, brainstorming and suggestions for healthy coping. This workshop is sponsored by Perfect Pet Resort and will be held from 10 a.m. to noon Saturday, Jan. 23 at their location at 840 W. Bay Front Road, Lothian, Maryland. Registration for this free program is required and can be completed at www.eventbrite.com/e/pet-loss-workshop-sponsored-by-perfect-pet-resort-tickets-470642553547

• **Walking Through Grief**—Join other grievers for a free midwinter slow walk through one of the lovely parks in Prince George's County. This walk will focus on developing awareness of one's natural surroundings and how this can help in coping with loss. There will be time for discussion and reflection. This walk is for all fitness levels on an easy trail. The walk will not take place in inclement weather or temperatures below freezing. It will take place at Lake Artemesia Park, 8200 55th Ave., College Park, Maryland, from 11 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Monday, Feb. 13.

• **Golden Healing Retreat**—For many, grief leaves us feeling shattered and broken. Through grief work and healing after a significant loss, grievers can begin to rebuild and redefine ourselves. During this nurturing yoga and expressive arts retreat, participants will engage in yin yoga followed by the cathartic process of smashing ceramics and using the broken pieces to create something new in the form of a mosaic project. The retreat will take place from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. April 1 on the center's campus at 90 Ritchie Highway in Pasadena, Maryland, as well as at the Yoga Barn, 44 W. Earleigh Heights Road, Severna Park, Maryland. The cost is \$50.

Attendance restrictions and requirements will be updated using the most recent Centers for Disease Control guidelines and organizational policies prior to each event. Registration is required. Except for the Pet Loss Workshop, people can register by calling 888-501-7077 or emailing griefinfo@chesapeakecenter.org. Visit www.hospicechesapeake.org/events for a complete listing of in-person and virtual groups and workshops for adults and children.

ADULT grief support programs meeting this winter

Chesapeake Life Center will offer a variety of grief support groups for adults that will be meeting in person and virtually in the new year.

The following grief support groups will meet in person:

- **Drop-In Grief Support Groups** are open to anyone grieving. Groups offer participants an opportunity to share their feelings and obtain support from others who are experiencing loss. There is no fee. These groups will meet as follows:
 - North Beach Senior Center, 9010 Chesapeake Ave., North Beach, Maryland, from 1 to 2 p.m. Wednesdays, Jan. 4, Feb. 1 and March 1.
 - Southern Pines Senior Center, 20 Appeal Lane, Lusby, Maryland, from 2 to 3 p.m. Tuesdays, Jan. 10, Feb. 7 and March 7.
 - Calvert Pines Senior Center, 450 W. Dares Beach Road, Prince Frederick, Maryland, from 1 to 2 p.m. Tuesdays, Jan. 17, Feb. 14 and March 21.
- **Loss of Life Partner/Spouse Monthly Evening Group** is a group for individuals grieving the death of a spouse or life partner. It will meet on the center's campus at 90 Ritchie Highway, Pasadena, Maryland, from 6:30 to 8 p.m. on the second Wednesday of the month, Jan. 11, Feb. 8 and March 8.
- **Loss of Life Partner/Spouse 6-Week Group** will provide support for those who have lost a spouse or partner. Participants will use materials taken from Alan Wolfelt's book on surviving the loss of a soulmate. It will meet at Emmanuel United Methodist Church, 1250 Emmanuel Church Road, Huntingtown, Maryland, from 6 to 7:30 p.m. Mondays Jan. 30 through March 6. The total cost is \$60.
- **Grief and Movement**—Movement has long been used to help those who are grieving cope with the impact of the loss. Aspects of yoga including gentle stretching, breathwork and mindful walking techniques will be used. This quarterly offering will meet at 10 a.m. Saturday, Feb. 11, on the Pasadena campus. The cost is \$10.
- **Sudden Loss 5-Week Group** will meet weekly for five sessions to focus on how to heal from deaths that felt unexpected. Participants will learn grounding skills and how to safely express feelings of loss and its circumstances. The group will be led by two trauma-informed cli-

nicians. A five-week commitment is required. Participants will be pre-screened to ensure that the group is a good fit. The group will meet on the Pasadena campus from 5:30 to 7 p.m. Tuesdays, March 14 through April 11. The total cost is \$50.

One group will meet both in-person and virtually:

- **SoulCollage Grief Support Group** has participants create a series of collages to commemorate lost loved ones and to visually journal the grief process. The group will meet from 5 to 8 p.m. Mondays, Jan. 9, Feb. 6 and March 6 at the center's office at 9500 Medical Center Drive, Suite 250, in Largo, Maryland, as well as via Zoom.

Attendance restrictions and requirements will be updated using the most recent Centers for Disease Control guidelines and organizational policies prior to each event. Childcare is not provided, and children are not permitted in any of these groups.

The following groups will meet virtually via Zoom for Healthcare:

- **Loss of Life Partner/Spouse Monthly Morning Group** is for individuals grieving the death of a spouse or life partner. It will meet from 10:30 a.m. to noon on the second Wednesday of the month, Jan. 11, Feb. 8 and March 8.
- **Quarterly Child Loss Support Workshop** is for parents grieving the death of a child, regardless of age or circumstance. It will meet from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. Wednesday, Jan. 11 via Zoom. The cost is \$10.
- **General Loss 4-Week Group** is a facilitated support group offering attendees an opportunity to explore grief themes and share strategies for navigating grief in a community of trust. A four-week commitment is required. It will meet from 5:30 to 7 p.m. Thursdays, Jan. 26 through Feb. 16. The total cost is \$40.

Acknowledging that not everyone has access to this technology or may not be comfortable with it, the center suggests people call or email the office and grief professionals will work with individuals to help them find other appropriate resources if needed. Registration is required for all groups and can be completed by calling 888-501-7077 or emailing griefinfo@chesapeakecenter.org. Visit www.hospicechesapeake.org/events for a complete listing of in-person and virtual groups and workshops for adults and children.

New programs for grieving CHILDREN AND TEENS begin in 2023

Chesapeake Life Center has revamped its grief support programs for children and teens to better suit the schedules of families.

- **A Phoenix Rising Workshop** for chil-

COMMENTARY

There's a lot of Life to See, so Take Action to See it for Yourself

By Reena Garg, MD

As an ophthalmologist in the DMV, I see a lot of patients facing a terrible disease that can permanently rob them of their eyesight. It's known as glaucoma and Metropolitan Washington has one of the highest rates in the United States.

I recently had a patient, an African American man, who was diagnosed with glaucoma very late and had already lost quite a bit of his vision. He was referred to me after his physician prescribed eyedrops to treat his condition. When we met in my office, I could tell he was very anxious, so I took time to explain the condition and his treatment plan, with a three-month follow-up. About an hour later, he was still sitting in the waiting room. I told him it was okay to leave, but he couldn't speak and I could see tears in his eyes. "What's going on? Is everything okay?" I asked. He began crying and said, "You just told me I have glaucoma. Am I going to go blind?"

It is indeed frightening to get a glaucoma diagnosis, but it's even more frightening to be living with the disease and not know it until you are nearly blind. This is the case for half of the more than 3 million Americans who have glaucoma. And while anyone can get it, African Americans in the DMV are particularly at risk. But early detection and treatment can go a long way in saving someone's vision.

Glaucoma damages and destroys the optic nerve, which is like the power cord that connects the eye to the brain. When the power cord fails, vision is lost permanently. We call glaucoma "the sneaky thief of sight" because with no early warning signs, many people don't notice any changes until they are already going blind. In fact, a person will lose nearly 50% of their sight before they even notice a change. That is why early detection through yearly or regular eye appointments is so crucial. An ophthalmologist can pick up on subtle changes to a person's sight — changes that a person may not have even noticed.

The good news is that if glaucoma is caught early, we can prevent vision loss and blindness. We know that the biggest risk factor for developing glaucoma—and for its worsening—is elevated pressure in the eye. So typically, we manage glaucoma by lowering eye pressure. This can be done through eye drops, medications, lasers, or surgery, if needed. We are lucky to have many tools in the toolbox to treat this disease.

I recommend that people ages 40 to 60 see either an optometrist or ophthalmologist for annual exams. This is particularly true for African Americans because large clinical trials, specifically the Ocular Hypertension Treatment Study, have demonstrated that African Americans are at higher risk for glaucoma, especially in that age group.

Of course, everyone should take care of their sight by finding an eye doctor and going in for an eye exam. And remember, if you are diagnosed with glaucoma, there are many treatment options that can help you manage your disease and prevent

vision loss.

It is also important to share this knowledge with your family members. You are nine times more likely to have glaucoma if an immediate family member has it. So letting the next generation know they are at risk will allow them to have early conversations with their eye care professionals.

You can find an eye care professional through your doctor or local community organizations, like Prevention of Blindness of Metropolitan Washington. I challenge you to get an exam this year. There's a lot of life to see. Don't let glaucoma take those beautiful moments away from you.

Reena A. Garg, MD is a glaucoma and cataract surgery specialist at Visionary Eye Doctors. She specializes in the medical, laser, and surgical treatment of glaucoma and cataracts. She also serves as the Director for the ophthalmology residency program at Washington Hospital Center/Georgetown University.

REALTORS® Support Local Food Drive

By ERICA KALEDA

Prince George's County Association of REALTORS

LANDOVER, Md. (Dec. 19, 2022)—The Prince George's County Association of REALTORS®, the county's leading advocate for real estate and private property rights, held their annual holiday charity event on December 7, 2022 at The Grove at Oak Creek. This year's event raised \$5,000 in support of the Prince George's County Public Safety Assistance Program (PSAP) annual holiday food drive.

Proceeds from the event are used to purchase and pack complete holiday food baskets and provide them to distressed Prince Georgians in time for the Holiday season. The Association of REALTORS® and the Prince George's County Public Safety Assistance Program (PSAP) and other sponsors recognize a need in the community and rally each year for this cause. It is expected that over 2500 meal baskets will be delivered in time for the holidays.

REALTORS® recognize that there are always those who are less fortunate than others. "We are so happy and thankful to be able to help those in need during the Holiday season and partner with PSAP in order to make that happen", said, Shameeka Price, PGCAR's Community Service Committee Chair.

President Rachel Jefferies shared, "Even though this event was filled with fun and laughter, members of PGCAR were still able to donate to a good cause and help those in need and be able to make a difference in their communities".

The Prince George's County Association of REALTORS® is the voice for real estate in Prince George's County, Maryland, representing more than 4,000 real estate professionals in the national capital area, PGCAR is an affiliate of the Maryland and National Association of REALTORS®. We are proud to serve our



PHOTO COURTESY OF PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS

This year's event raised \$5,000 in support of the Prince George's County Public Safety Assistance Program (PSAP) annual holiday food drive.

members and our community and work to ensure professionalism in the industry. Our volunteers and staff work to offer services to real estate professionals and

to provide avenues for our members to become more successful. We proudly work to promote and protect home ownership and private property rights.

Basketball from A1

ried on ESPN cable channels or streamed on ESPN+.

Overtime is a fledgling media company that attracts huge audiences to social media posts featuring high school players. It formed OTE to capitalize on that audience.

In the end, Rice decided to turn down Overtime Elite and accept an offer to play college basketball at Virginia Tech. He's now a freshman at the school in Blacksburg, Virginia.

Rice's decision differs from the choice made by 27 elite high school basketball players who joined Overtime Elite for its first season. One of them was Malik Bowman.

Bowman spent his freshman and sophomore years at Bishop Walsh School, a small Catholic high school in Cumberland, Maryland. His play for the Spartans earned attention from major college programs like the University of Maryland, Georgetown and Ohio State. Bowman opted to skip college, announcing on Twitter in August 2021 that he would be joining OTE's first-year program.

"I'm just thinking, if I go here, I'm going to be having competition every day to play against," he said. "And on top of the pro trainers and coaches who played [professionally], I knew I could learn a lot from them."

Bowman said he was anxious about moving to Atlanta to participate in this new program, but that after his first year, he feels that he made the right choice.

"I was nervous because, of course, OTE is new. It hasn't gotten anybody to the [NBA] yet," he said. "Now I would think that I'm more confident in the decision that I made."

Another option for today's elite talent is the National Interscholastic Basketball Conference, the league where 6-foot-6 Travis Roberts competed in his senior season in 2021-22 before joining the Jacksonville State men's basketball team.

Roberts did not seek out the NIBC. The league found him when

his school, Bishop Walsh, joined the startup league in 2021, putting itself in the company of elite teams across the country. Still, he expressed gratitude for the one year in the league he was able to get.

"It's been great playing against a top team in the nation, top players, getting the exposure and you get the best conference in the nation," Roberts said. "It's been good for us."

Choosing the best path

Basketball runs deep in the Rice family.

Rice's father, also named Rodney, played high school basketball at St. John's College High School in DC, earning first team All-Met and Washington Post Player of the Year in 1983. He also played collegiate basketball at Boston College University for one year before finishing off his college career at the University of Richmond. Rice's grandfather played at Fairmont Heights and was All Met in 1960.

OTE first reached out to the latest Rice to carry on the basketball legacy through a youth coach who knew the family, Rodney's father recalled. The elder Rodney works as a player representative, and he managed business affairs for former NBA star Amare Stoudomire.

Talks got serious enough for Rodney's father to visit OTE's basketball training headquarters in Atlanta.

Negotiations extended to October, with OTE putting an offer on the table: \$600,000 over two years plus \$150,000 in NIL opportunities, according to Rodney's father.

The numbers startled Peter Strickland, Rice's coach at DeMatha Catholic.

"I remember thinking, 'My, this world is changing,'" Strickland said. "We are now pursuing high school players [...] to make them professionals at a really early age."

There were good reasons to say yes to OTE, even beyond the obvious financial incentives. In the new developmental program, Rice would have a chance to learn under head coach Kevin Ollie, a

former NBA player and former coach of the University of Connecticut men's basketball team which won a National Collegiate Athletic Association national championship.

The Rice family also was intrigued by the education program offered by OTE. In addition to basketball training, all players attend classes and work toward their high school degrees.

"Being able to take classes during the season was a bonus, you could start working towards a degree," Rice's father said.

There were turnoffs too.

At Overtime Elite, Rice would be a professional and would have forfeited any remaining high school and college eligibility. That would have closed an important door for Rice. His one-time high school coach Mike Jones had left Dematha Catholic in 2021 to become associate head coach at Virginia Tech. Coach and player had developed a close relationship. Virginia Tech was one of a few schools that Rice considered, along with Louisville and Alabama.

In the end, the decision to say no to OTE and yes to Virginia Tech happened at the family's breakfast table.

"It was me, Rodney's mom and himself, and we were kind of going over the pros and cons," Rodney's father said.

"My dad told me, at the end of the day, I make my own decisions. But I want everyone else to feel comfortable too, especially if it's my family," Rice said. Rice's sister also joined him as a student at Virginia Tech.

"I made my decision based on my social life, being around people my age and people that don't play basketball," Rice said.

This basketball season, watch out for Rice in his maroon and orange Hokies uniform. He'll be wearing No. 1.

Grief from A3

dren ages 6 to 18 will allow an opportunity for grieving children and teens to come together to socialize and feel supported in their grief. Groups will be divided by age and grade level based on enrollment. Understanding that grief has no timeline, this quarterly program is open to everyone, no matter when your loss took place. The first of these workshops will feature a visit from Artsy Partys. Their creative team will guide participants to demonstrate how to utilize art as an imaginative outlet for grief. In the process, they will connect to others who also are navigating the grieving process. No artistic ability or previous experience is re-

quired. The workshop will take place from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. Feb. 4 on the John & Cathy Belcher Campus, 90 Ritchie Highway in Pasadena, Maryland. The cost is \$25 and includes lunch and materials.

• **Stepping Stones 6-Week Grief Support Group** also is for ages 6 to 18, but focuses on newly bereaved children and teens whose loss occurred within the last 12 months. Groups will be divided by age and grade level based on enrollment. The group will focus on normalizing grief reactions, teaching coping skills and providing opportunities to remember the loved ones that have died. A social space for parents and guardians will be available each week. A six-week commitment is required. Families

have the option to attend on the Pasadena campus or our Charles County campus, 2505 Davis Road, Waldorf, Maryland. Both groups will meet from 6 to 7:30 p.m. Wednesday, March 15 to April 26. The groups will not meet April 5.

Attendance restrictions and requirements will be updated using the most recent Centers for Disease Control guidelines and organizational policies prior to each event. Registration is required and can be completed by calling 888-501-7077 or emailing griefinfo@chesapeakelifecenter.org. Visit www.hospicechesapeake.org/events for a complete listing of in-person and virtual groups and workshops for adults and children.

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BUSINESS AND FINANCE

Social Security Matters

Ask Rusty:

Retired Federal Employee Has Small Social Security Benefit

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

Dear Rusty: When I started getting Social Security at 62, I was told by the SS office I would get a smaller monthly amount because I worked for the Federal Government and received a Civil Service Retirement System (CSRS) pension. I paid into Social Security for about 20 years working outside the government, and I now receive only about \$280 a month in Social Security. It just seems like I should be getting more. How can I look into this matter that Social Security calls a “windfall?” **Signed: Federal Retiree**

Dear Federal Retiree: From what you’ve shared, you didn’t contribute to Social Security while earning your CSRS pension, but you did contribute to SS while working elsewhere, thus earning a Social Security retirement benefit in addition to your CSRS pension. Those who receive a federal pension under the old Civil Service Retirement System (CSRS) are affected by Social Security’s Windfall Elimination Provision (WEP), which reduces any Social Security benefit they become entitled to through other work outside the Federal government, and this is the reason your SS benefit is only \$280 per month. For clarity, federal employees who retire under the newer Federal Employee Retirement System (FERS) are not affected by WEP because they contribute to Social Security.

The formula for computing Social Security when WEP applies is rather complicated and depends on the number of years you contributed to Social Security from substantial earnings in the private sector. With 20 or fewer years contributing to SS you incur the maximum WEP penalty for your “eligibility year” (the year you turned 62), but with more than 20 years contributing to Social Security the WEP reduction is mitigated, and with 30 or more years contributing to SS, WEP no longer applies.

If you were receiving your CSRS pension when you claimed Social Security, your WEP-reduced SS benefit was computed at that time and has continued. But if you had additional years working and contributing to Social Security after you first claimed, it’s possible that you now have more than 20 years contributing, in which case you may be entitled to a smaller WEP reduction and thus a higher Social Security benefit. The only way to find out if you’re now entitled to a higher benefit due to additional years contributing is to call Social Security, either at your local office or at the national number (1.800.772.1213) and ask them to review your current benefit under WEP. If you now have more years contributing to Social Security than you had when you first claimed, you may be entitled to a benefit increase.

Before calling SS, you may wish to first review your lifetime earnings record on file at Social Security and determine how many years of contributions from substantial SS earnings you actually have. You can get a copy of your lifetime SS earnings record from Social Security, most easily from your personal online “my Social Security” account. If you don’t yet have an online account set up, you can easily do so at www.ssa.gov/myaccount. Then, you can review your lifetime SS-earnings against the chart at the following link which shows what your earnings must have been each year to count under WEP: www.ssa.gov/pubs/EN-05-10045.pdf.

So, to recap: if you continued to work after starting your WEP-reduced Social Security benefits, you may be entitled to a smaller WEP reduction and thus a higher Social Security benefit now, but you will need to contact Social Security to evaluate your current status (and, if appropriate, increase your Social Security benefit).

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

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

Restoration from A1

ronmental improvements are made for our habitat and communities.”

USACE has coordinated the federal effort to restore the watershed since the early 1990s, as part of their duties within the Anacostia Watershed Management Committee. In February 2010, USACE, in cooperation with local resource agencies, completed the Anacostia River Watershed Restoration Plan, which identified more than 3,000 projects for implementation and has since led to follow-on watershed ecosystem restoration studies in Prince George’s and Montgomery counties in Maryland.

“Prince George’s County is excited to continue its partnership with USACE on this important stream restoration and habitat improvement project,” said County Executive Angela Alsobrooks. “This partnership will ensure our commitment to restoring and protecting our water quality and the environment by working toward a cleaner, healthier Anacostia River.

The greater Anacostia River watershed encompasses approximately 176 square miles in Montgomery and Prince George’s counties, Maryland; and the District of Columbia. Human development and alteration in the watershed have led to severe stream habitat damage, including excess sediment and erosion, physical blockages for fish movement, poor water quality and loss of wetlands and forests along the Anacostia River.

Black Woman-Owned Real Estate Brokerage Celebrates 5th Anniversary With Opening of Institute of Wealth and Real Estate

By PRESS OFFICER
The Haven Firm

HYATTSVILLE, Md. (Dec. 19, 2022)—On December 17, 2022, The Haven Firm, LLC, a full-service real estate brokerage specializing in helping clients build wealth through real estate, celebrated its 5th anniversary in business. Principal Broker and Owner Dominique Lamb is expanding the Haven Firm’s offerings by launching the Kirby Institute of Wealth and Real Estate, a subsidiary of the brokerage named after her late grandfather, Marvin Kirby, who died in August 2022 with over a million dollars’ worth of personal real estate holdings. Through the Kirby Institute, Lamb will offer courses to the public as well as other real estate professionals ranging from real estate investing, financial literacy as well as pre-licensing and continuing education courses. The initial courses offered include a course for homeowners explaining their options in a recession, a financial literacy course for teens and a course on successful short-term rental investing. The courses will be offered virtually in early 2023 and pre-registration begins this weekend.

When asked about her grandfather’s influence she said: “I can recall my grandfather speaking of homeownership since I was a young child. He always wanted to own multiple properties so that his children would always have somewhere to live. I grew up believing that I could own a home and now I have not only invested in my own real estate but my work allows me to share the wisdom I learned from my family and help others to build wealth through their own real estate investments.”

The Haven Firm, LLC continues to expand down the East Coast, now serving Washington, D.C., Maryland, Virginia, Georgia and Florida. Lamb aims to expand to North and South Carolina in 2023. The Haven Firm, LLC is a Black-owned and operated full service brokerage, assisting clients with buying and selling residential and commercial property, land, rentals and also offers property management and real estate investment consulting. The National Association of Realtors has also certified Lamb as an instructor of the certification courses for the Short Sale and Fore-



COURTESY PHOTO

Dominique Lamb and her team at The Haven Firm, LLC.

closure Resource (SFR), At Home With Diversity (AHWD) and Military Relocation Professional (MRP) Realtor designations.

In celebration of their 5th anniversary, the Haven Firm welcomes clients, colleagues, family and friends to celebrate this milestone at Creative Saints Loft with the help of Haven’s corporate sponsors: Fitzgerald Financial, Red Carpet Home Inspection and PRG Title.

Maryland Humanities Executive Director Graduates From Leadership Maryland Class of 2022

By SARAH WEISSMAN
Maryland Humanities

BALTIMORE (December 13, 2022)—Leadership Maryland recently announced that Lindsey Baker, Executive Director at Maryland Humanities, has graduated from the hands-on learning program. In a press release, Leadership Maryland describes itself as the “the professional development program dedicated to building a better Maryland by harnessing the strength of its local business and community leaders.” The program honored Baker and the entire Class of 2022 at a graduation ceremony held December 6 at the Hilton Baltimore BWI Airport. As a graduate, Baker is now a member of Leadership Maryland’s alumni network, consisting of more than 1,300 leaders from all industries and regions of the state.

Leadership Maryland selected Baker and 49 other applicants to complete the eight-month. The class participated in an orientation and closing retreat that bookended five, two-day sessions focused on Maryland’s five main geographic regions and what Leadership Maryland calls “the most vital issues impacting economic development, education, health and human services, criminal justice, the environment, and multi-culturalism/diversity across the state.”

Baker, a resident of Laurel, has worked for fourteen years as an action-oriented, non-profit leader whose work has always been firmly grounded in community engagement, racial equity, transparency, and inclusivity. Prior to becoming the Executive Director of Maryland Humanities, she served as the Executive Director of Patapsco Heritage Greenway and spent nearly a decade as the Executive Director of the Laurel Historical Society.

Baker currently serves on the Federation of State Humanities Councils Racial Equity Committee, the Maryland 250 Commission, and the Board of Directors of Hike It Baby. Previously, she sat on the boards of the Anacostia Trails Heritage Area and Small Mu-

seum Association, the latter who has selected her for their 2023 conference keynote speaker. She served on the Leadership Nominating Committee and Small Museums Committee for the American Association of State and Local History and was appointed Chair of the Small Museum Administrator’s Committee of the American Alliance of Museums.

“Participating in Leadership Maryland’s twenty-ninth class was a unique opportunity to explore the most pressing issues facing the state of Maryland and build relationships with leaders dedicated to making meaningful change in our state,” says Baker. “One of Maryland Humanities’ goals is to lift the field of humanities statewide, and I think what I learned through participation in Leadership Maryland and the relationships we built will move us forward in this goal. I look forward to strengthening these new relationships with fellow leaders from across the state.”

“This has been a special class year, both for me as the new president and CEO, and for our organization, as we hosted our full program together, in person for the first time since 2019,” said David Fike ’16 (LM), president and Chief Executive Officer, Leadership Maryland. “The Class of 2022 came into this year eager and inspired, and they’ve maintained that enthusiasm throughout each of our sessions. This is a remarkable group of professionals, diverse in experience and talent, and we look forward to seeing how they will influence our state with the knowledge and connections they’ve gained this year.”

Leadership Maryland is open to senior-level executives with significant achievements in either their careers and/or their communities. Leadership Maryland says that “ideal members have a desire to learn more about Maryland’s most critical issues and a personal commitment to be a force for positive change in their organizations, their communities, and their state.” For more information about Leadership Maryland,

please visit www.LeadershipMD.org, call 410-841-2101 or email Info@LeadershipMD.org.

Maryland Humanities creates and supports bold experiences that explore and elevate our shared stories to connect people, enhance lives, and enrich communities. For more information, visit mdhumanities.org. Maryland Humanities is generously supported by the National Endowment for the Humanities; the State of Maryland; the Citizens of Baltimore County; private foundations; corporations; small businesses; and individual donors. Connect with Maryland Humanities on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and YouTube.

Leadership Maryland is a non-profit organization offering professional and youth development programs dedicated to building a better Maryland by harnessing the strength of its current and future leaders. Established in 1992, Leadership Maryland’s professional development program selects as many as 52 diverse and accomplished executives from Maryland’s public and private sectors each year to come together as a class for an eight-month learning program focused on the state’s most vital social, economic and environmental issues. Leadership Maryland also offers Maryland Leadership Workshops (MLW), the state’s premier leadership development program for middle and high school students. For more than 65 years, MLW has provided peer-led summer residential and community outreach programs that empower participants—known as delegates—to take ownership of their personal development as they grow in self-awareness, set measurable goals, and collaborate with peers in diverse groups. Together, Leadership Maryland and MLW have established thousands of Marylanders on their lifelong leadership path, equipped with the knowledge, skills, and connections needed to influence positive change in all aspects of their lives and within our state. To learn more, please visit leadershipmd.org or mlw.org.

Morningside from A2

Postal Service has issued these religion-themed stamps since the 1960s.

The Catholic Standard newspaper had children write what Christmas means to them. Georgiana Papouras, 7th grader at St. Columba School in Oxon Hill, wrote, “Christmas to me means spending time with family and taking time to pray and appreciate Jesus.”

Amen.

Milestones

Happy Birthday to the Christmas babies on my address list: Jean Nichols, born 1964; Jason Tomlinson, 1983; Samantha Bowie; Christine Mucker; and two Christmas babies who are celebrating with Jesus in Heaven, Florine Miles and Loretta Hooe.

Happy Birthday to Jeffrey Norton and Michael Nichols, Dec. 26; Virginia Simms, Carolyn Jeffcoat and Kirra Starr Mears, Dec. 27; Christopher Garris, Anne Lucas, Patsy Anderson and my granddaughter

Samantha McHale, Dec. 28; Brayden Proctor, Dec. 29; Amy Anthony Wade and Robert Tretler, Dec. 30; Pat Spry and Janet Ferguson Hemming, Dec. 31.

Happy Anniversary to Nola and Bruce Thomas, their 45th on Dec. 27; my grandson David and Nina McHale, their 22nd on Dec. 30; and grandson Isaac and Eva Gallegos, their 2nd anniversary on New Year’s Eve.

A Blessed Christmas to all my Readers!

