

The Prince George's Post



A COMMUNITY NEWSPAPER FOR PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY SINCE 1932

Vol. 92, No. 38 September 19 — September 25, 2024 Prince George's County, Maryland Newspaper of Record Phone: 301-627-0900 25 cents

Sky Bridge at Town Center Hawaiian Celebration Sparks Sweet Memories for Resident

Through the recent luau party held by the Watermark Retirement community, one resident got the chance to relive happy memories.

By PRESS OFFICER
Watermark Retirement Communities

UPPER MARLBORO, Md. (Sept. 9, 2024)—The halls of the Sky Bridge at Town Center rang with the beat of drums and the sounds of Hawaiian music during the community's luau on Aug. 28. Traditional dancers performed a historical war dance and a hula for the seniors, while many residents dressed up and enjoyed a specially made meal from the community's chef.

For one resident, Mattie Norwood, the luau was a chance to dance and enjoy a wonderful day with her fellow residents. It also sparked happy memories of her time living in Hawaii in the 1980s.

Norwood, who has lived at the Sky Bridge at Town Center since it opened in December 2022, called Hawaii home for four years after her family moved for her husband's work at the military base on Oahu.



PHOTO COURTESY WATERMARK RETIREMENT COMMUNITIES

Ms. Mattie dances to the music at The Sky Bridge at Town Center's Luau.

There, Norwood worked for the government while her two youngest sons attended and graduated high school.

At first, Norwood was worried that the family would have a hard time adjusting to a new setting, as

beautiful as it was, but she found her sons "became locals" rather quickly. "We met so many kind families at the base and through my sons' football games. After the games we would all head to the gymnasium, filled with food and then

the music, laughter and camaraderie starts."

She loved her time there and is still in contact with many friends and family in Hawaii today. When she

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Department of Parks and Recreation in Prince George's County Announces 2024 Celebrate Africa Festival

By PRESS OFFICER
M-NCPPC

RIVERDALE, Md. (Sept. 10, 2024)—M-NCPPC Department of Parks and Recreation, Prince George's County is pleased to announce its 7th annual Celebrate Africa Festival on September 22, 2024—recognized in Prince George's County, Maryland as African Heritage Month.

The festival acknowledges the contributions and impact of the African immigrant community on Prince George's County and the Washington metropolitan area—celebrating the beauty, vibrancy, and cultural relevance of the work of African artisans, musicians and performing artists. The festival aims to promote cultural awareness and understanding between African immigrants and other communities.

The inaugural festival was held on October 14, 2018, and in its second year recorded attendance of over 2,000 attendees. Notably, the metropolitan area is home to the fourth largest African immigrant community in the United States. This year's activities showcase the rich cultures of the African continent and will feature performances from musicians from Prince George's County and beyond.

Supporting businesses that support the African community of Prince George's County is a priority for this festival, and the Celebrate Festival Ven-

dor Village has been described as one of the best examples of genuine African customs and traditions in the northeast United States. Peruse the work of local craftspeople selling textiles, jewelry, and bath products. Experience firsthand the artwork from celebrated international artist Shiri Achu, hand-crafted drums from Hands on Drums, and wares from local business including Delkis Collections, Kwamboka, Afrique Fashion House, Malik's Fashion Boutique, Doors to Africa, Candles with Attitude, Sweet Splendor Bath and Body, and more.

Explore the flavors of the African Continent from local food trucks representing the best of African cuisine across the region including Shewa Ethiopian, Gidi Chow, Bigmama Kitchen, and 1936 Food Truck.

This family-friendly event is free and suitable for all ages. Learn more at https://www.pgparcs.com/event_list/celebrate-africa.

Sunday, September 22, 2024;
1–6 p.m.

Fairwood Community Park, 12390 Fairwood Parkway, Bowie, MD 20720

Uasuf Gueye Jazz Quartet, Driven by traditional instruments from the 13th century Manding empire such as the Balafon and the Ngoni, the Urban Vir-

See FESTIVAL Page A3

Governor Moore Proclaims September as African Heritage Month in Maryland

By PRESS OFFICER
Office of the Governor

ANNAPOLIS, Md. (Sept. 10, 2024)—Governor Wes Moore today proclaimed September as African Heritage Month in Maryland, celebrating the significant contributions of African immigrants to the state's cultural, social, and economic landscape. The governor and the Governor's Office of Community Initiatives were joined by members of the Maryland General Assembly and community leaders for the commemoration event in Annapolis.

"Maryland is home to the fourth largest share of African immigrants in the country, and

this month, we shine a light on the mosaic of the African diaspora and its rich presence in Maryland," said Gov. Moore. "In our state, we don't shy away from our diversity—we embrace it, and we will continue to celebrate African Heritage Month with pride for generations to come."

The proclamation marks the inaugural year of African Immigrant Heritage Month in Maryland, reinforcing the Moore-Miller Administration's commitment to promoting inclusivity and celebrating the diverse communities that contribute to Maryland's rich cultural landscape as we recog-

nize the African immigrant community's vital role in shaping Maryland's future.

"This proclamation is not only a recognition of our past but a celebration of the continued contributions African immigrants make to the vitality and strength of Maryland," said Maryland Commission on African Affairs Administrative Director Dr. Antwan Brown. "We thank Governor Moore for his leadership and support."

The Maryland Commission on African Affairs within the Governor's Office of Community Initiatives continues to play an instrumental role in connecting African communities with



PHOTO COURTESY MARYLAND GOVERNOR'S PRESS OFFICE

The governor and the Governor's Office of Community Initiatives were joined by members of the Maryland General Assembly and community leaders for the commemoration event in Annapolis.

state leadership and advocating for policies that promote economic growth, education, and civic engagement within the community statewide.

All Marylanders are encouraged to celebrate and participate in the events honoring African Heritage Month throughout September:

<https://goci.maryland.gov/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/2024/09/African-Immigrant-Heritage-Month-Events-9.3.24-Final.pdf>

Transportation Security Administration Publishes Proposed Regulation That Provides Necessary Flexibility as Federal Agencies Prepare to Enforce REAL ID Requirements Beginning May 7, 2025

By PRESS OFFICER
TSA

WASHINGTON (Sept. 12, 2024)—The Transportation Security Administration (TSA) published a Notice of Proposed Rulemaking that would provide federal agencies with necessary

flexibility to begin enforcement of the REAL ID regulations on the May 7, 2025, deadline in a manner that takes into account security, operational risk and public impact.

This proposed rule seeks to ensure that federal agencies, including TSA, are well positioned

to begin enforcing REAL ID requirements on May 7, 2025. The proposed rule does not extend the REAL ID deadline. Instead, it would allow TSA to consider a phased enforcement approach to REAL ID implementation. Travelers without a REAL ID compliant ID or another form of

acceptable ID after the May 7, 2025 deadline could face delays at airport security checkpoints.

"TSA is engaging with the public, licensing jurisdictions and states to facilitate a smooth

See REAL ID Page A2

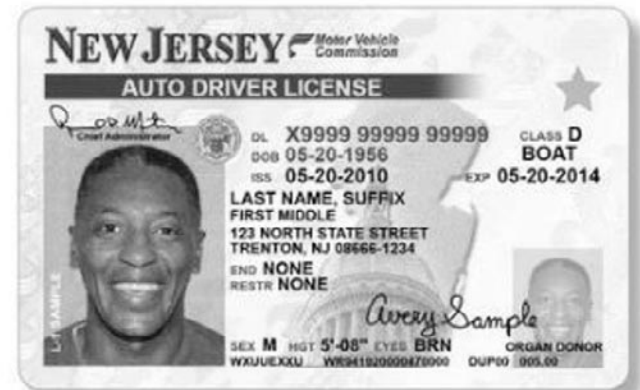


IMAGE COURTESY TSA

The image above is an example of a state-issued REAL ID compliant identification credential, complete with a star in the top right that signifies it is a REAL ID drivers' license.

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"We are extremely excited that we are delivering the final phase of this long-awaited affordable housing community," said Prince George's County Executive Angela Also-brooks.

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Leadership Maryland Now Accepting Applications for Class of 2025 Programs

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TOWNS and NEIGHBORS

In & Around Morningside-Skyline

Imagine Morningside among Best Charter Schools in Maryland

Imagine Foundations at Morningside—formerly known as Morningside Elementary School—has been named as one of the Top 20 Best Charter Elementary Schools in Maryland.

Principal Sara Cypress can be proud of this acclaim. The school leadership also includes Assistant Principal Nicole Herron; LaSonya King, Professional Development Lead Teacher; and Jennifer Roseboro, Regional Technology Coordinator.

The Imagine Schools' Mid-Atlantic Region operates four tuition-free public charter schools in Maryland—the other three are located on Joint Base Andrews, in Upper Marlboro and in Temple Hills.

Shawn Toler, Executive Vice Principal of the Imagine Schools, said “This achievement is a testament to the hard work of our teachers, the engagement of our parents, and the determination of our scholars. We remain committed to fostering an educational environment that nurtures academic excellence, character development, and strong community values.”

Imagine Morningside remains focused in its mission to continue developing character, enriching minds and instilling a lifelong love of education in their scholars.

Town of Morningside

You can still reserve a table to sell stuff (old lampshade, tight shoes, homemade fudge, ancient Christmas decorations) at Morningside's annual Fall Yard Sale. The event will be Saturday, September 21, at the Morningside Volunteer Fire Department. Fees are \$15 for one table or space; \$25 for two tables or spaces. Call 301-736-2301 to register or for more information.

VFW Sneaker Party to benefit cancer research

VFW 9619 invites you to their Pink & White Sneaker Party, in honor of Breast Cancer Awareness Month, on Saturday, Oct. 12, 8 p.m. to midnight. Cash bar, 50/50 raffle and door prizes. All proceeds will go to the VFW Auxiliary Fundraiser for cancer research.

Dress Code: Dope sneakers, pink & white attire. Music by DJMIXX.

The \$30 Admission (includes food) re-

serves a table (must be age 35 or older). Purchase advance tickets at the VFW, 6527 Suitland Rd., Morningside. Call 301-735-5200 for hours.

For more info: Tasha Thomas, 443-518-9388; Ann Wilcox, 301-455-2279; Terri Robinson, 757-414-7979; Bonita Hicks-Hardy, 202-753-9979.

Health & Wellness Outreach at Suitland Road Baptist

Dr. Kelvin M. McCune, Pastor, and Suitland Road Baptist Church invite you to their Annual Community Health and Wellness Outreach on Saturday, Sept. 28, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

The Women and Infant Nutrition Program (WIC) will be discussed. Also, there'll be free blood pressure screenings, Community Legal Services of Prince George's County, and the Prince George's County Police Department.

There'll be giveaways, and free food. All are welcome to this valuable program.

Suitland Road Baptist Church is at 6412 Suitland Road. If you have questions, call 301-219-2296 or 301-512-5527.

Neighbors & other good people

Jonathan Frank Stelmach, grandson of Lorraine Wright, of Camp Springs, graduated May 30 from Sandalwood High School, Jacksonville, Fla., with both a high school diploma and a college associate in arts degree, magna cum laude. His AA is in Specialization in Information Technology. He is the son of Jennifer and Paul Stelmach. Lorraine added that she and several family members attended the college graduation, while the rest of the family went to the high school graduation.

Wayne Neale emailed, “Thank you for running the tribute to Claude Pitts. It brought up many fond memories. He was my employer at both of his gas stations from my ages 15 to 22. He and his wife treated me like family for all that time. Their daughter, Pat, became one of my best teenage friends.” My older brother, Bruce, says Claude was the best football coach he ever had.

Father Phil Ilg, Pastor of Holy Family Parish, is the new Chaplain of the Knights of Columbus, St. Pius X Council, in Forestville.

MedStar Southern Maryland Center has

been named a “Best Regional Hospital for Equitable Access.”

Echoes of the Enslaved, at Darnall's Chance

Echoes of the Enslaved, is a free ticketed event at Darnall's Chance House Museum in Upper Marlboro, Saturday, Sept. 28, 4 to 9 p.m.. It's an evening commemorating Black women and discovering how archaeology can facilitate discussions on the lasting legacies of enslavement in Prince George's County.

The free ticket includes: 4-6 p.m., a new museum exhibit about the women enslaved at Darnall's Chance. 6:30 p.m., Listen to an all-women panel discuss the relationships of an 18th century household. 8:30 p.m., Join us fireside for continuing conversation.

Art Rehkemper, 30 years in Secret Service

Arthur Rehkemper, who spent his life in the law enforcement community, died August 5 at his home in Catonsville. He was 80.

Art was born in Pana, Ill., and spent his childhood as an Air Force “brat.” The family settled in District Heights in the '50s. He attended Mount Calvary, Gonzaga and Archbishop Carroll and graduated from the University of Maryland. He was a lifelong Terp fan and loved the Redskins and Nationals. His career was in law enforcement, first as a Prince George's County Policeman, then U.S. Secret Service for 30 years, and finally, Peace Corps Inspector General's office.

His happy place was the cottage on the Susquehanna River where he was Pop, cook, bartender, fixit man, boat captain and tour guide, searching for bald eagles.

Survivors include his wife of 57 years, Betty, their sons Andy and David, their families, and many friends.

Milestones

Happy Birthday to Elnora McCall, Sept. 15; Dolores McDonald, Steven Warren and Yolanda Dooley, Sept. 16; Kimberly Brewer, Everett Mason, Jr. and Joan Stakem, Sept. 17; Shirley Tull Smith, Sept. 18; Lee Burkhart, Sept. 20; and Linda Holbart Van Meter, Sept. 22.

Happy 36th Anniversary to former Morningside Council Member Russell and Carole Butler who were wed September 17, 1988.

REAL ID from A1

transition to REAL ID enforcement beginning May 7, 2025,” said TSA Administrator David Pekoske. “REAL ID provides an important security enhancement, and this rule allows us to plan for a range of scenarios to help minimize the potential impact to travelers, industry stakeholders and states during implementation.”

The REAL ID Act, which was enacted following the 9/11 Commission's recommendation, established minimum security standards for state-issued drivers' licenses and identification cards for the purpose of boarding federally regulated commercial aircraft, accessing certain federal facilities, and entering nuclear power plants. Identity verification is foundational to security. Enforcement of the REAL ID Act and regulations enhances TSA's ability to accurately verify a traveler's identity document.

For more information on REAL ID, please visit [TSA.gov/real-id](https://www.tsa.gov/real-id).

Around the County

ASD is Looking for Volunteers

Department of the Environment, Prince George's County Animal Services Division (ASD) is looking for volunteers to help walk and socialize dogs, play with cats, assist with feeding animals, cleaning, office work, off-site events, and more!

If you are 18 years old or older and are interested in helping with animals at the Animal Services Facility and Adoption Center (ASFAC), visit our website at www.princegeorgespet4us.com or call 301-780-7200 for more information.

Upcoming Orientation:

Saturday, September 21, 2024 at 10 a.m.

M-NCPPC Prince George's County Planning Board Schedules 2024 Budget Forums

LARGO, Md. (Sept. 9, 2024)—The Prince George's County Planning Board of The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission (M-NCPPC) will hold its 2024 Budget Forums this fall, to solicit comments on the M-NCPPC budget for planning, parks, and recreation in Prince George's County for the next fiscal year, which begins July 1, 2025.

The public budget forums will be held:

Wednesday, September 25, 2024—7 p.m.

In-Person Budget Forum

M-NCPPC Department of Parks and Recreation, Prince George's County Administration Building, 6600 Kenilworth Avenue, Riverdale, MD 20737

Advance Registration Deadline: 12 Noon | Tuesday, September 24, 2024

Onsite registration will be available at the in-person forum.

Wednesday, October 2, 2024—7 p.m.

Virtual Budget Forum

Registration Deadline: 12 Noon | Tuesday, October 1, 2024

The virtual forum can be viewed via live streaming service and a video recording will be available for review after the hearing at <https://www.pgplanningboard.org>. Public participation for the virtual forum is encouraged either through a phone bridge or by using GoTo Meeting (online video meeting software). Everyone who wishes to speak at the virtual forum MUST REGISTER ONLINE by noon, the day before the forum. Following the registration submission, an email will be sent with the GoTo Meeting information by 3 p.m. the day before the forum, including the phone number and a web address to connect to the meeting.

Register

To register to speak, visit <https://pgplan.org/2024budgetforms>. Complete the online form and submit. To submit documentation as a part of the forum, email information to PublicAffairs@ppd.mncppc.org.

Written Comments

Written comments will also be accepted until close of business, Wednesday, October 16, 2024, by mail, fax, or email. Comments may be addressed to Peter A. Shapiro, Chair, Prince George's County Planning Board, 1616 McCormick Drive, Largo, Maryland 20774. Comments may also be faxed to Chair Shapiro at 301-952-5074 or transmitted via email to PublicAffairs@ppd.mncppc.org.

Assistance

The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission encourages the participation of persons with disabilities in all its programs and services. Register at least a minimum of two weeks in advance of the program start date to request and receive a disability accommodation. Call the Public Affairs Office at 301-952-3038, email PublicAffairs@ppd.mncppc.org, or complete the online form.

Marietta House Museum Presents: “Indigenous People Mindfulness Walk”

Join us on **Sunday, October 6**, 2-3:30 p.m. for “Indigenous People Mindfulness Walk”. This is a guided walk on the lush green grounds at Marietta House Museum, with Susan West Montgomery, a certified Outdoor Mindfulness guide. She deepens the mindfulness experience by layering the nature-culture connection outdoors on Marietta House Museum grounds. Susan is an advocate for helping people connect through nature and history to promote social justice and foster good health and well-being.

The walk will include observing nature and meditative moments to reflect on the history imbued on the landscape. This is an in-person event. Please wear comfortable clothing and shoes.

Registration is recommended but not required. Walk-ins welcome. \$5/person, recommended for families with children 5 years & older, children must be accompanied by adults. Please register at this direct link: <https://tinyurl.com/2p9evfn3>

Call 301-464-5291 or email mariettahouse@pgparks.com for more information.

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.

Brandywine-Aquasco

SEPTEMBER BIRTHDAYS

Birthday greetings to Ayden Bell, Osayi Omoregbe, Chidinma Mbakwe, Mariama Davies, Ronald Jones, Pam Stahl, Donna Cain, Norman Noel, Alexis Proctor, Elijah P. Knight, Kirk Samuel, Beonie Pearson, Idena Thomas, Karen Taylor, Curt Falby, Annie Cokes, James Dorsett, IV, Kizzy Savoy, Umaru Davies, Rebecca Mosley, Paul Jeffrey Kerrick who are Clinton United Methodist Church members celebrating birthdays in September.

CLINTON UNITED METHODIST CHURCH REVIVAL

Clinton United Methodist Church 2024 Annual Revival will be held Saturday, September 21, 2024, 3 p.m. Rev. Melanie Trice, Pastor. Revival Theme: “New Beginnings”: Awakening to God's Presence.” Guest Speaker: Minister Kevin Bennett, Youth Minister, The Potter's House, Dallas, Texas. Refreshments after the service.

International Sunday, September 22, 2024. Speaker: Our Own Rev. Stella Tay, Retired Clergy of the Baltimore Washington Conference. Guest musicians: Trevor George and Robert Thwaites, Steel Pans, Sheldon and Isaiah Trice, Clinton United Methodist Men. International Potluck Luncheon after the morning worship service. Our morning worship service starts at 10:30 a.m. Evangelism Ministry Stephanie Samuel, Chairperson. Church address is 10700 Brandywine Road, Clinton Maryland 20735

MOVIES ON THE POTOMAC

Pack your chairs, grab food to go from one of our delicious dining establishments and meet at the plaza's big screen for a *FREE* evening of fun! Movies on the Potomac: My Big Fat Greek Wedding 3, Thursday, September 26, 2024, from 7-9 p.m. The address is 150 National Plaza, National Harbor, Maryland.

JUST DANCE FITNESS CLASS

Join us for FREE fitness classes on the Plaza this summer brought to you by Onelife Fitness Tuesday, September 24, 2024, from 7-8 p.m. Just Dance Class: A fun, energetic cardio dance class for all fitness levels that combines different styles of movement to sounds from across the world. Groove is in the heart and good vibes are in the air. The address is 150 National Plaza, National Harbor, Maryland.

UMC ANNUAL TRUNK OR TREAT

Providence-Fort Washington United Methodist Church Annual Trunk or Treat sponsored by the C.I.A. Ministry (Sunday School) event will be held on Saturday, October 19, 2024, from 12-3 p.m. Bring your treat bucket or bag and wear a fun, friendly costume. Free Comfort Carriage Horse rides for kids and adults from 12-2 p.m. In the event of inclement weather, the rain date is Saturday, October 26, 2024. Questions? Please call 240-755-9008. Event location: Providence-Fort Washington United Methodist Church, 10610 Old Fort Road, Fort Washington, Maryland 20744.

by Audrey Johnson 301-922-5384

ANNUAL HOMECOMING

Christ United Methodist Church will celebrate its Annual Homecoming on Sunday, September 22, 2024, at 11 a.m. You are cordially invited to come and celebrate this momentous occasion in the life of our church with us. This year our theme is “O Magnify the Lord with Me,” taken from Psalm 34:3. We have invited Rev. Dr. Denise Norfleet-Walker, Retired Minister of the Baltimore Washington Conference of the United Methodist Church to be our guest preacher for this special day. Following worship, a delicious luncheon will be served for everyone to enjoy. We hope that you will be able to join us as we magnify our Lord and Savior together. Rev. Shemaiah Strickland, Pastor. The church address is 22919 Christ Church Road, Aquasco, Maryland 20608.

GRANDPARENTS' DAY

“Grandparents' Day or National Grandparents Day is a secular holiday celebrated in various countries. It is celebrated to show the bond between grandparents and grandchildren. It occurs on various days of the year, either as one holiday or sometimes as a separate Grandmother's Day and Grandfather's Day.” Wikipedia. Date: Sunday, September 8, 2024. Event Length: 1 Day. Observed for 45 years.

HISPANIC HERITAGE MONTH CELEBRATION

Join us for a FREE, family-friendly event celebration Sunday, October 13, 2024, from 2-5 p.m. at Prince George's Publick Playhouse, 5445 Landover Road, Hyattsville, 20785.

CIAA BASKETBALL TOURNAMENT

Tickets for the 2025 Food Lion CIAA Championship Basketball Tournament February 25-March 1, 2025, CFG Bank Arena I Baltimore, Maryland are now available. Website: ciaatournament.org. Bowie State University is the host institution for the 2025 CIAA Basketball Tournament. Bulldog fans make sure you stay connected to the Office of Alumni Engagement & Stewardship to be among the first to know about CIAA events, hotel reservations and more. #FebruaryisCIAA.

KUDOS TO BSU ALUMNI

“Xiomara V. Medina (’17) associate director for clinical training in the Department of Counseling and Psychological Studies at Bowie State University has been appointed to the Maryland State Board of Education by Governor Wes Moore”. Office of Alumni Engagement & Stewardship. Join the Virtual BSU Alumni Community. Facebook: @BSUOAE, Instagram: @BowieAlum, X: @BSUAlumniOffice. If you have questions, please email alumni@bowiestate.edu.

COMMUNITY

Psi Epsilon Omega Chapter of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc.® Hosts Virtual Candidate Forum for Prince George's County Residents

By DARLENE SPEARS-REED

Psi Epsilon Omega Chapter (PEO) of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Incorporated®

WHO: Psi Epsilon Omega Chapter (PEO) of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Incorporated®

WHAT: Circuit Court for Prince George's County Candidates' Forum

WHY: In preparation for the 2024 General Election, the forum will help community residents learn about the candidates running for the Prince George's County Circuit Court. Likewise, PEO will facilitate a discussion on the importance of voting and encourage voters to complete the entire ballot or "down ballot" vote during this consequential election season.

This event is open to the public and will allow community members to ask questions to each candidate. Participants in the candidates' forum include: Judge Cheri Simpkins, Judge Donnell Turner, Judge Stenise Rolle and Judge Darren Johnson.

"Psi Epsilon Omega is excited to provide a platform for Prince George's County residents to learn more about the candidates who are currently running for Circuit Court and the importance of voting," said Karen Hicks, PEO President. "We encourage voters to verify their registration status and cast their ballot during this and every election."

WHEN: September 25, 2024 from 6:30 p.m. to 8 p.m.

WHERE: Virtual

REGISTER & JOIN: To join us, please use the following Zoom link information (<https://app.zoom.us/jc>) and enter the Meeting ID: 815 0293 0341 Passcode: 268847.

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 WATERMARK RETIREMENT COMMUNITIES

Several Sky Bridge associates and residents learn a traditional war dance.

Hawaiian from A1

heard that the Sky Bridge at Town Center was hosting a Hawaii-theme celebration, she was excited and began reminiscing. The decorations for the luau reminded her of her youngest son's graduation, who along with two of his close friends from Oahu had a ceremony incorporating native Hawaiian traditions, like traveling to the mountains to pick flowers for decoration. "Unity and inclusion; that was my experience in Hawaii. It made a big impression on me."

Norwood loves that as more residents are moving into the new community events like this happen regularly. "There was lots of laughter and fun. Even just seeing the others dressed up was fun!"

After all, she knows how stressful it can be to move to a new place. "Your first thought when you move in is, 'When am I going to get settled in?' I hope that the event makes people feel more comfortable and more at home here."

Festival from A1

tuosos band plays captivating arrangements that combine funky drum set patterns, soothing horn lines, soulful jazz vocals, and thought-stimulating hip-hop lyrics.

Ni Dembaya Drum Ensemble, Ni Dembaya's mission is to present traditional and modern rhythms, songs, and dances from African people worldwide as a tool to educate, inspire, uplift, promote wellness, empower, and connect people, especially those of African descent.

Elikeh Afropop, Elikeh uses elements of Togolese rhythms as a foundation for exploration into American-influenced blues, funk and rock to produce captivating Afro-pop tunes that are as listenable as they are danceable.

Urban Foli Afro Jazz Band, Menes Yahudah's soul stirring compositions serve to bridge the gap between traditional and contemporary musical expression. The band is comprised of traditional and modern instruments played by some of Baltimore's best musicians.

Master of Ceremonies, DJ Kweks The ultimate DJ and MC for multi-cultural events, DJ Kweks is one of the most sought-after international DJs with a large resume of influential brands worldwide including Guinness, BET, Universal, WorldBank, African Union, and others. He has been featured on BBC, ABC, Voice of America and several other media channels.

Celebrate Local Flavor and Music: Announcing the 2024 Unwine Festival With Local Bands

By PRESS OFFICER
M-NCPPC

RIVERDALE, Md. (Sept. 12, 2024)—The M-NCPPC, Department of Parks and Recreation in Prince George's County is proud to announce the 2024 Unwine Festival - set to return on September 28 at Patuxent River Park. The event brings together the finest local wineries, breweries, and an electrifying lineup of homegrown musical talent. This year's festival promises an exceptional blend of local flavors and sounds, showcasing the best the region has to offer.

The Unwine Festival is a cherished annual event known for its celebration of regional wineries, breweries, and artisanal foods. This year, the Department is thrilled to enhance the experience with live performances from some of the area's most talented local bands. Attendees can look forward to tasting premier

wines while enjoying the dynamic rhythms and melodies of DC Vybe, the Kim Michelle Experience, and Dupont Brass band—all hosted by the hilarious Joe Clair.

Event Highlights:

- **Local Tastings:** Explore a diverse selection from acclaimed local wineries and breweries. Each sip tells a story of our region's unique winemaking and brewing traditions.

- **Live Local Music:** Enjoy performances from top local bands. From Gogo to R&B to Jazz, the festival will feature a rich variety of musical genres that reflect our vibrant community.

- **Gourmet Local Cuisine:** Delight in delicious cuisine from local food vendors. Whether you're in the mood for savory bites or sweet treats, there's something for everyone to enjoy.

- **Educational Workshops:** Join interactive sessions on wine tasting, pairing, and the arts of winemaking and brewing.

- **Artisan Marketplace:** Discover hand-crafted goods and unique products from local artisans and vendors, perfect for finding one-of-a-kind souvenirs.

The festival will be held at Patuxent River Park, a beautiful and scenic location that offers the perfect setting for a day of wine, music, and community. Gates open at 11 a.m. and the festivities will continue until 5 p.m. Tickets are available for purchase online at pgparks.com and at the gate.

The Department invites you to the 2024 Unwine Festival to celebrate the exceptional talent and rich flavors of our local community. Don't miss out on this opportunity to enjoy great wine, fantastic music, and a lively atmosphere!

Chesapeake Life Center Offers a Variety of Grief Support Groups for Adults, Children, Teens

By ELYZABETH MARCUSSEN
Hospice of the Chesapeake

Adult grief support programs meeting this fall

PASADENA, Md. (Sept. 10, 2024)—Chesapeake Life Center will offer a variety of grief support groups for adults that will be meeting through December. Groups will meet in person at locations in Anne Arundel, Calvert and Prince George's counties, as well as virtually.

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 in Anne Arundel and Calvert counties as follows:

- **North Beach Senior Center**, 9010 Chesapeake Ave., North Beach, Maryland, from 1 to 2 p.m. Wednesdays, Oct. 2, Nov. 6 and Dec. 4.

- **Southern Pines Senior Center**, 20 Appeal Lane, Lusby, Maryland, from 2 to 3 p.m. Tuesdays, Oct. 8, Nov. 12 and Dec. 10.

- **Drop-In Grief Group for LGBTQIA+**

is for members of the LGBTQIA+ community. The group is facilitated by a licensed therapist and is loosely structured to offer an opportunity for participants to share their feelings and grieve with community. It will meet from 6 to 7:30 p.m. Tuesdays, Oct. 8, Nov. 12 and Dec. 10, on the John & Cathy Belcher Campus, 90 Ritchie Highway, Pasadena, Maryland.

- **Calvert Pines Senior Center**, 450 W. Dares Beach Road, Prince Frederick, Maryland, from 1 to 2 p.m. Tuesdays, Sept. 17, Oct. 15, Nov. 19 and Dec. 17.

- **Burnett Center for Hope & Healing**, 4559 Sixes Road, Prince Frederick, from 4 to 5 p.m. Tuesdays, Sept. 17, Oct. 15, Nov. 19 and Dec. 17.

- **Nature's Healing Power: A Grief Support Group Series** is a free nature-informed program that will include immersive walks in nature, time spent focusing on the cycle of the seasons and working with natural objects to both contain and express the grief experience. It will be held from 2 to 4:30 p.m. Thursdays, Oct. 3 through 24, at Governor Bridge Natural Area, 7600 Governor Bridge Road, Bowie, Maryland.

- **SoulCollage Studio**—In-person SoulCollage is back! Join in for a time to create

unique collages reflecting and expressing loss and the journey through life. It will meet from 2 to 5 p.m. Monday, Oct. 7 at 9500 Medical Center Drive, Suite 250, Largo, Maryland. The supply fee is \$10.

- **Loss of Life Partner/Spouse Evening Group** is a group for individuals grieving the death of a spouse or life partner. The cost is \$10 per session. It will meet on the John & Cathy Belcher Campus, 90 Ritchie Highway, Pasadena, from 6:30 to 8 p.m. Wednesday, Oct. 9, Nov. 13 and Dec. 11.

- **Loss of Parent or Parental Figure Support Group** provides space for those grieving the loss of a parent or parental figure to come together to feel supported in their grief. Groups offer participants an opportunity to share their feelings, obtain support from their peers and a licensed counselor, and participate in activities designed to aid with the grief process. It will meet on the John & Cathy Belcher Campus, 90 Ritchie Highway, Pasadena, from 6:30 to 8 p.m. Thursday, Oct. 10, Nov. 14 and Dec. 12.

- **Parenting While Grieving Workshop**—Gather with your peers for a two-hour event to provide and receive support from others who understand the unique challenge of parenting while grieving. In addition to honoring losses by sharing personal stories, participants will learn about David Kessler's "Six Needs of the Grieving" and will have the option to participate

See SUPPORT Page A4

Governor Moore Launches Second Maryland Corps and Service Year Option Cohort During 9/11 Day of Service and Remembrance

By PRESS OFFICER
Office of the Governor

ANNAPOLIS, Md. (Sept. 11, 2024)—Governor Wes Moore today attended the launch of the second Maryland Corps and Service Year Option cohort during the 9/11 Day of Service and Remembrance at the University of Maryland, College Park.

"This year will change you, and it will challenge you. There will be moments when the work gets hard—and may even feel like it's too much. But the work you do will make our state better," said Gov. Moore. "At a time when the world needs healing, you will offer healing hands. At a time when the world can feel dark, you will offer light. And together, we will make Maryland the best place in the world to change the world."

The 2024–2025 cohort includes more than 600 members—more than double the size of the inaugural cohort—including 500 Service Year Option members and 100 Maryland Corps members. Participants represent all 24 Maryland jurisdictions.

"I'm a believer in the idea that the two most important days of our lives are the day we are born and the day we find out why. 600 inspiring Marylanders raised their hand to serve and find their 'why' today, and we couldn't be more proud," said Lieutenant Governor Aruna Miller. "As Governor Moore says, 'Service will save us,' and launching year two of our incredible Service Year program on a day like today is symbolic. These selfless Marylanders representing all 24 jurisdictions from the mountains of western Maryland to the beaches of Ocean City, lead our next generation as beacons of hope and resilience."

The 2024–2025 cohort will serve with more than 150 host site partners, representing non-profit organizations, businesses and more than 20 government agencies. About 70% of the inaugural cohort site partners applied to host members again this year.

"A Wider Circle is thrilled to participate in a second year of the Maryland Corps/Service Year Option," said A Wider Circle President and Chief Executive Officer Amy Javaid. "We deeply value our partnership with DSCI and share in their commitment to offering enriching workplace opportunities for Marylanders. Our experience with the four members last year was inspiring and we are grateful for the chance to serve as a host again this year."



PHOTO COURTESY MARYLAND GOVERNOR'S PRESS OFFICE

Governor Wes Moore attended the launch of the second Maryland Corps and Service Year Option cohort during the 9/11 Day of Service and Remembrance at the University of Maryland, College Park.

In addition to a larger cohort, the most notable host partner expansion is the launch of the Maryland Climate Corps, made possible through partnership with the California Volunteers Fund. Part of the Biden-Harris Administration's American Climate Corps, the new service track establishes Maryland as a national climate leader on addressing the comprehensive community impacts of climate change.

"We are thrilled to see Maryland scale service opportunities with Maryland Climate Corps," said California Volunteer Fund Chief Service Officer Josh Fryday. "With Governor Moore's leadership, this program will help build a workforce for the green economy while empowering communities to take meaningful climate action."

The Chesapeake Bay Trust will serve as the Maryland Climate Corps regional operating partner, working with 22 host sites including the Baltimore Office of Sustainability, CivicWorks, and

See SERVICE YEAR Page A4

COMMUNITY

Glenarden Hills Opens Final Phase With Ribbon Cutting Ceremony

New Construction Affordable Housing Community Complete

By PRESS OFFICER
Housing & Redevelopment,
Prince George's County

LARGO, Md. (Sept. 11, 2024)—A Ribbon Cutting Ceremony was held today at Glenarden Hills, Prince George's County's comprehensive master-planned housing community that expands affordable housing for low-to-moderate income households. This final phase of the community finishes the neighborhood with three diverse housing types and amenities. The Redevelopment Authority of Prince George's County (RDA) and Pennrose Companies, LLC brings this 27-acre site to completion that includes senior and family affordable apartments, market rate and affordable rental townhomes, and homeownership townhomes, including those with affordable financing options.

"We are extremely excited that we are delivering the final phase of this long-awaited affordable housing community," said Prince George's County Executive Angela Alsobrooks. "The completion of Glenarden Hills marks a major milestone in our ongoing mission to expand affordable housing for our residents. From the start, my administration has been committed to driving equitable growth and ensuring the availability of quality, affordable housing. I'm thrilled to see these efforts come to life, creating more housing opportunities for Prince Georgians and strengthening our community in



PHOTO COURTESY HOUSING & REDEVELOPMENT, PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY

Elected Officials and Development Partners cut the ribbon opening Phase 3 of Glenarden Hills.

the process."

This previously vacant 27-acre property in Glenarden was the former site of the 578-unit Section 8 complex known as Glenarden Apartments. The former complex was foreclosed by HUD, then acquired and demolished by the RDA in 2014 and renamed Glenarden Hills. The RDA is the landowner and a partner with Pennrose Companies, LLC, who serves as the master developer.

The Glenarden Hills final phase delivers 158 high-quality, mixed-income rental homes to the 27-acre master

planned community. Phase III also adds on-site community amenities, including a sports court, children's splash pad, and additional open green space. Residents will also enjoy access to the amenities delivered in phases I and II, including the 5,700 square foot community clubhouse, fitness center, management suite, resource center, locker rooms, kitchenette, outdoor patio with a grill, tot-lot, theater room, wellness room, and more.

"The Glenarden Hills project represents the Alsobrooks' Administration's commitment to our economic



PHOTO COURTESY HOUSING & REDEVELOPMENT, PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY

Exterior of Glenarden Hills Phase 3

development priority of creating housing affordability and diversity of housing stock," said Jim Chandler, Assistant Deputy Chief Administrative Officer for Economic Development in the Office of the County Executive.

To develop Phase 3 of Glenarden Hills, Prince George's County utilized affordable housing funding including \$3 million from the Housing Investment Trust Fund (HITF) and \$1.5 million from HOME Investment Partnership. Both finance programs provide subordinate debt gap financing to affordable housing developers to build

and preserve affordable housing opportunities for low-to-moderate income households.

Contact Pennrose Companies, LLC for leasing opportunities at 410-497-6615 or visit <https://www.pennrose.com/apartments/maryland/glenarden-hills/>.

To review more affordable housing communities in Prince George's County, visit the Department of Housing and Community Development's 2024-2025 Affordable Housing Portfolio.

Service Year from A3

the Community Ecology Institute to host more than 40 members. Corps members will engage in work to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, build green infrastructure, and improve community resilience to climate disasters. The program will also prioritize implementation of strategies to help promote environmental justice.

"The Chesapeake Bay Trust is excited to be an implementing partner and

support DSCI and Governor Moore in the administration and training elements of the new Maryland Climate Corps program," said Chesapeake Bay Trust President Dr. Jana Davis. "This opportunity will continue to strengthen Maryland's green career pathways, support young people in accessing the green jobs of the future, and help the state meet its climate goals."

As part of today's program, Lt. Governor Miller also participated in a service project alongside roughly 1,000 vol-

unteers, including representation from Maryland Corps, Service Year Option, and AmeriCorps members; National Guard members; and veterans. During the project, participants assembled first aid kits and youth book bags for first responders and others in our communities.

"Here at the University of Maryland, we pride ourselves on pioneering ways to invest in people and communities and partner to advance the public good," said University of Maryland

President Darryll J. Pines. "Today is yet another example of how we are working to meet our obligation to our local community, our state and our nation by leveraging Maryland's tremendous talent to give back."

Following completion of their service year, participants in both programs earn a completion award of \$6,000. The inaugural class of members also emerged from the program well-equipped to contribute to Maryland's workforce, with more than 170 indi-

viduals earning registered apprenticeship credentials from the U.S. Department of Labor and more than 2,500 certified competencies in fields including project management and community outreach. Throughout the program, members of the inaugural cohort also completed more than 42,000 hours of related technical instruction.

More information about Maryland Corps and Service Year Option is available at serve.maryland.gov or by email at applytoserve@maryland.gov.

Support from A3

in group mindfulness activities, nature-informed activities, expressive arts, skill sharing and practice and more. The workshop will take place at the same time as the Breakfast with your Buddies workshop for children and teens: 10 a.m. to noon Saturday, Oct. 19, on the John and Cathy Belcher Campus, 90 Ritchie Highway, Pasadena. The cost is \$10. When registering, please indicate if your children will be attending the breakfast (*See Breakfast with your Buddies in the next column*).

• **Parenting While Grieving-Monthly Peer Support Group**—This free group provides the opportunity to give support to and receive support from those who are also navigating life while parenting while grieving the loss of someone dear to them. No matter the type of loss—spouse, child, anticipated or sudden—all grieving parents are welcome. It will meet on the John & Cathy Belcher Campus, 90 Ritchie Highway, Pasadena, from 5:30 to 7 p.m. Mondays, Oct. 21, Nov. 18 and Dec. 16.

The following groups will meet virtually via Zoom for Health-care:

• **Loss of Life Partner/Spouse Morning Group** is a free group for individuals grieving the death of a spouse or life partner. It will meet from 10:30 a.m. to noon Tuesdays, Oct. 8, Nov. 12 and Dec. 10 via Zoom.

• **SoulCollage Virtual Support for Loss and Transition** is a free group that has participants create a series of collages to commemorate lost loved ones and to visually journal the grief process. The group will meet from 6 to 8 p.m. Monday, Nov. 4 and Dec. 2 via Zoom.

Except for drop-in groups, registration is required 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.

Workshops will help adults, children and teens cope with the holidays

PASADENA, Md. (Sept. 10, 2024)—Chesapeake Life Center has once again made plans for its popular Living with Loss through the Holidays series. Additionally, there is a new event to help anybody who might find the holidays difficult to navigate.

Handling the Holidays is a workshop timed to happen before the holiday rush begins. The Chesapeake Life Center team and members of the local integrative arts community will offer activities for all ages. The workshop is not only for grievers, but also caregivers and anybody who struggles with the hustle and bustle of this season. Held at the beautiful Burnett Center for Hope and Healing, 4559 Sixes Road, Prince Frederick, Maryland, the workshop will offer support, honor memories, and explore coping strategies throughout the holiday season. It will be held from 10 a.m. to noon, Saturday, Oct. 26. The cost is \$10.

Then, in November, the center will offer the season's first **Living with Loss through the Holidays workshop** at its offices at 9500

Medical Center Drive, Suite 250, Largo, Maryland. Designed for grieving adults and teens ages 15 and older and led by grief professionals, participants can join in group activities that help them find a way to honor the memory of their loved ones while still granting themselves permission to grieve. It will be held from 10 a.m. to noon, Saturday, Nov. 16. The cost is \$10.

The final workshop offers activities for the whole family to participate. This Living with Loss through the Holidays session will be held on the John & Cathy Belcher Campus, 90 Ritchie Highway, Pasadena, Maryland, from 6 to 8 p.m. Thursday, Dec. 5. It will include breakout sessions for various age groups and other activities to help them find ways to honor their loved ones during this season. The cost is \$10.

Registration is required and can be completed by calling 1-888-501-7077 or emailing griefinfo@chesapeakecenter.org.

Creative grief support programs for children, teenagers and their families

PASADENA, Md. (Sept. 10, 2024)—Chesapeake Life Center has more than 30 years of experience using fun and friendship to help grieving children find a path to healing. Here is what is planned for children and teens through December:

• **Rhythm of Life: Drum Circle Support Group**—This free group allows kids and teens ages 6 to 18 to connect with one another through creative expression and the healing power of drumming. Drumming has been shown to produce relief from symptoms that accompany grief and loss, improve physical wellbeing, help to process and regulate emotions, and it's fun! The group will meet from 10 to 11 a.m. Saturday, Oct. 12, at the Burnett Center for Hope & Healing, 4559 Sixes Road, Prince Frederick, Maryland.

• **SoulCollage for Teens**—SoulCollage is a collage-making activity which allows grievers to express themselves in whatever way feels OK. Sometimes we just can't do that when we only talk about losing a special person. As the old saying goes, "a picture is worth a thousand words." This session is for kids ages 13 to 18 and will be held from 6 to 8 p.m. Tuesday, Oct. 15, on the John and Cathy Belcher Campus, 90 Ritchie Highway, Pasadena, Maryland. The cost is \$10 for supplies. Snacks will be included.

• **Breakfast with your Buddies**—Children and teens ages 6 to 18 will have the chance to share breakfast with friends and engage in guided activities to remember their special person through creativity and play. The breakfast will take place from 10 a.m. to noon Saturday, Oct. 19, on the John and Cathy Belcher Campus, 90 Ritchie Highway, Pasadena. The cost is \$10. A workshop for grieving parents will be held simultaneously. *See below*.

• **Parenting While Grieving Workshop**—Gather with your peers for a two-hour event to provide and receive support from others who understand the unique challenge of parenting while grieving. In addition to honoring losses by sharing personal stories, participants will learn about David Kessler's "Six Needs of the Grieving" and will have the option to participate in group mindfulness activities, nature-informed activities, expressive arts, skill sharing and practice and more. The workshop will take place at the same

time as the Breakfast with your Buddies workshop for children and teens: 10 a.m. to noon Saturday, Oct. 19, on the John and Cathy Belcher Campus, 90 Ritchie Highway, Pasadena. The cost is \$10. When registering, please indicate if your children will be attending the breakfast.

• **Living with Loss through the Holidays**: This family workshop will offer support, honor memories, and explore coping strategies through the holiday season. It will include activities for all ages and will take place from 6 to 8 p.m. Thursday, Dec. 5, on the John and Cathy Belcher Campus, 90 Ritchie Highway, Pasadena. The cost is \$10.

Registration is required for all programs 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.

CORRECTION: In a press release published on page A4 in the Sept. 12, 2024 edition, "Healthier Choices Food Distribution Launches to Combat Food Insecurity in Greater Riverdale", the incorrect start time of the food distribution program was listed. The Healthier Choices Food Distribution Program start time is 4 p.m., not 3 p.m.

The Prince George's Post

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Contents © 2023, The Prince George's Post

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Legal Advertising Assistant Robin Boerckel	Web Manager Kyler Quesenberry

Prince George's County, Md. Member National Newspaper Publishers Association, and the Maryland, Delaware, District of Columbia Press Association. The Prince George's Post (ISSN 10532226) is published every Thursday by the New Prince George's Post Inc., 15207 Marlboro Pike, Upper Marlboro, Md. 20772-3151.
Subscription rate: 25 cents per single copy; \$15 per year; \$7.50 senior citizens and students; out of county add \$1; out of state add \$2.
Periodical postage paid at Southern Md. 20790.
Postmaster, send address changes to Prince George's Post, P.O. Box 1001, Upper Marlboro, Md. 20773.

BUSINESS AND FINANCE

Social Security Matters

Ask Rusty:

About Widow's Benefits vs. Benefits From my Ex-spouse

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

Dear Rusty: In November I will be 60 and eligible for widow's benefits. My late husband's Social Security was approximately \$2,300 when he passed around 7 years ago. FYI, my ex-husband is still working and will probably receive the highest SS when he retires in about 5 years (we were married for more than 10 years). Either of these is more than my own Social Security will be, so how does this work? Will this turn into my Social Security? Can I start on one and switch to the other later? *Signed: Wondering Widow t*

Dear Wondering Widow: Provided you have not remarried before age 60, you have a choice which benefit to receive—either your deceased husband's benefit as his surviving spouse, or your ex-spouse benefit from your ex-husband while he is still living. Taking your survivor benefit from your deceased husband will likely be best because it is based on 100% of his SS amount when he died, whereas your ex-spouse benefit from your living ex-husband is based on 50% of his FRA entitlement. To get an ex-spouse benefit from your ex-husband (which you can't get until you are 62), your own SS retirement benefit would need to be less than 50% of your ex's FRA entitlement.

As you know, you will be eligible for survivor (widow's) benefits from your deceased husband when you are 60 but be aware that by taking your survivor benefit at 60, it will be reduced for early claiming. Rather than 100% of your husband's SS benefit, at age 60 you will get about 71.5%. Your surviving spouse benefit reaches maximum at your full retirement age (FRA) of 67 and will grow to that point but will be reduced if taken prior to that.

Also, if you are working, Social Security's "earnings test" will apply until you reach your full retirement age, so your plans for working may influence your decision on when to claim your widow's benefit. If you exceed the earnings limit (\$22,320 for 2024; it changes annually), Social Security will take away \$1 in benefits for every \$2 you are over the limit. They "take away" by withholding future benefits until the penalty is satisfied, which means you would go some number of months without benefits. And, if you substantially exceed the earnings limit you may even be temporarily ineligible for any SS benefits (until you earn less or reach your FRA - the earnings test goes away at your FRA).

If you claim your surviving spouse benefits from your deceased husband first, and your ex-husband later dies, you do have the option to switch to the higher survivor benefit from your ex-husband. In effect, if both husbands are deceased, you have a choice which benefit to take (and, obviously, you'd chose the higher of the two).

None of this, however, happens automatically. To claim your surviving spouse benefit you will need to contact Social Security directly at 1.800.772.1213 (or call your local SS office) to make an appointment to apply for widow's benefits.

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.

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.

Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development Announces Applications to Open for Business Boost Microgrant Program

Microgrants range from \$20,000 to \$50,000 to assist small businesses with growth and expansion

By PRESS OFFICER
Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development

NEW CARROLLTON, Md. (Sept. 9, 2024)—The Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development today announced the opening date of the next application round of the Business Boost microgrant program. Microgrants range from \$20,000 to \$50,000 to support small businesses who need capital for growth and/or expansion opportunities.

"A successful Maryland includes thriving businesses," said Secretary Jake Day. "A Business Boost microgrant will allow entrepreneurs to take the next step

to expand and create new job opportunities while strengthening the local economy."

The Department is offering up to \$2 million of Business Boost microgrants through its Neighborhood Business-Works program. The program assists small business owners seeking to expand or establish a location with preference given to home-based businesses establishing their first commercial location outside of the home.

To qualify for a Business Boost award, applicants are required to meet one or more of the priority impact attributes that contribute to Maryland's economic growth, such as supporting mi-

nority and women-owned businesses, driving innovation or technology advancements, growing new industries, or leveraging existing regional strengths.

Businesses must also be located within a Maryland Sustainable Communities area to be eligible to apply.

The application window opens on Monday, September 23, 2024 at noon. All applications must be submitted by Monday, October 14, 2024 by 5 p.m.

More information on the Business Boost microgrant program and the application process can be found here: <https://dhcd.maryland.gov/Business/Pages/Microgrant.aspx>.

Leadership Maryland Now Accepting Applications for Class of 2025 Programs

Deadline to Apply to Executive or Emerging Leader Programs is October 31, 2024

By PRESS OFFICER
Leadership Maryland

EASTON, Md. (Sept. 9, 2024)—Leadership Maryland, the professional development program dedicated to building a better Maryland by harnessing the strength of its local business and community leaders, is now accepting applications for its Class of 2025 programs. With two programs to choose from, Leadership Maryland now offers options for professionals at every level who want to further their leadership journeys.

Applications to the flagship Executive Program are open to senior-level executives with significant achievements in their careers and/or their communities. Ideal applicants will 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, communities, and state. Leadership Maryland's selection committee will choose 52 applicants for the Executive Program Class of 2025 to complete an eight-month hands-on learning program focused on the state's most vital social, economic, and environmental issues.

Now in its second year, applications to the Emerging Leader Program are open to individuals who are advancing in their careers, are actively involved in their communities, and desire to become stronger leaders in both areas. The selection committee will choose up to 30 applicants for the Emerging Leader Second Class to complete a six-month learning program focused on a holistic ap-



proach to leadership development, designed to help each applicant increase their self-awareness and gain behaviors, skills, and tools to become more adaptive, inclusive, strategic, and impactful leaders.

Both chosen classes will reflect a cross-section of the state by including diversity of geographic location, profession, ethnicity, age, and gender.

To be considered for the Class of 2025 for either program, application packages must include:

- Completed application, available online only at www.LeadershipMD.org;
- Paid non-refundable application fee;
- Two references;
- One letter of recommendation;
- Authorizing official statement from applicant's supervisor or CEO (unless applicant is self-employed or is their own supervisor);
- Professional color photo

Completed application packages and registration fees must be received by Leadership Maryland by 5 p.m. on Thursday, October 31, 2024. The selected Class of 2025 for the Executive and Emerging Leader Programs will be announced in early February 2025.

Before applying, candidates should know they will be able to attend program sessions on the dates outlined in the ap-

plication instructions, available on the Leadership Maryland website.

Full information regarding Leadership Maryland's application instructions, selection process, tuition, and financial assistance, 2025 program dates and locations, and attendance policy are available at www.LeadershipMD.org. Anyone with questions may contact Leadership Maryland at 410-841-2101 or Info@LeadershipMD.org.

Leadership Maryland is a statewide non-profit offering professional development programs dedicated to building a better Maryland by harnessing the strength of its business and community leaders. Established in 1992, Leadership Maryland's Executive Program selects as many as 52 diverse and accomplished senior-level leaders 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. Introduced in 2024, Leadership Maryland's Emerging Leader Program brings together a class of up to 30 of the state's rising stars and gives them the skills and tools they need to advance in their careers. With an alumni network comprised of leaders from all industries and regions of the state, Leadership Maryland has established thousands of Marylanders on their career leadership path, equipped with the knowledge, skills, and connections needed to influence positive change. Visit leadershipmd.org.

Governor Moore Joins U.S Department of Treasury and Federal Leaders to Announce \$10 Million Investment to Support Small Businesses

By PRESS OFFICER
Office of the Governor

ANNAPOLIS, Md. (Sept. 9, 2024)—Governor Wes Moore today joined the U.S. Department of Treasury to announce a \$10 million federal grant awarded to the Maryland Technology Development Corporation (TEDCO) to support small businesses through the State Small Business Credit Initiative Investing in America Small Business Opportunity Program. Governor Moore was joined by U.S. Treasury Deputy Secretary Wally Adeyemo; U.S. Senator Chris Van Hollen; Congressman Steny Hoyer; and TEDCO Chief Executive Officer Troy LeMaile-Stovall for the announcement.

"Turning an idea into a job-creator takes time, money, and support. By working together across the state and federal levels, we are helping entrepreneurs

and small business owners access all three," said Gov. Moore. "Maryland is grateful for the strong leadership of the Biden-Harris Administration, as we continue moving in partnership to make our state more competitive and leave no one behind."

"The Biden-Harris Administration is committed to expanding access to capital for communities across the country and creating opportunities for entrepreneurs to grow their businesses in thriving sectors of our economy," said U.S. Deputy Secretary of the Treasury Wally Adeyemo. "With this federal funding, the Maryland Technology Development Corporation will be able to provide critical services to small businesses in the region to help them succeed."

The State Small Business Credit Initiative Investing in America Small Business Oppor-

tunity Program is part of the Biden-Harris Administration's economic agenda to provide funding and to connect small businesses to the financing needed to participate in key Investing in America's supply chains, including electric vehicle manufacturing, semiconductor manufacturing, construction, transportation, and clean energy generation.

With this grant, Maryland will establish the Business Resource Information, Development, and Guidance Ecosystem (BRIDGE) program to provide legal, accounting, and financial advisory services to help small businesses build capacity and apply for loans or investments. The program will support businesses owned by socially and economically disadvantaged individuals and small businesses by enhancing their access to capital and resources. TEDCO will partner

with the University of Maryland for development and execution of the BRIDGE program.

"In passing the American Rescue Plan we committed not only to keeping our small businesses afloat amid the pandemic, but also to position them for long-term success," said U.S. Senator Chris Van Hollen. "As our Investing in America agenda continues to generate new opportunities across our state, this \$10 million investment in TEDCO's BRIDGE Program will help connect our local entrepreneurs with these opportunities and boost the resources available for them to capitalize on this moment to innovate and compete."

"The historic investments that Democrats made last Congress in manufacturing, infrastructure, research and development, green technology, and other key industries have fueled the greatest pe-

riod of small business growth in American history," said Congressman Steny H. Hoyer. "With Americans submitting a record 18.6 million applications to start new businesses under the Biden-Harris Administration, it's crucial that we help connect these entrepreneurs to the many economic opportunities that our Investing in America agenda continues to create across Maryland and America. This \$10 million grant will help Maryland small businesses take full advantage of the programs and policies we secured last Congress and stay competitive in the twenty-first century global economy."

"Working with our partners in Delaware, the District of Columbia, Virginia and Maryland, it is our privilege to lead the Mid-Atlantic regional Business Resource Information, Development, and Guidance Ecosystem Program supported by the Treasury," said TEDCO CEO Troy LeMaile-Stovall. "In a close-knit region like the Mid-Atlantic, state and district borders should not constrain access to programs supporting business growth because the economic impact of that growth does not recognize those borders.

BRIDGE will benefit each of our districts by strengthening our broader region."

This announcement reinforces the Moore-Miller Administration's commitment to making Maryland more competitive. This summer, Governor Moore announced 11 grants totaling \$9 million through the Maryland Department of Commerce's Build Our Future Grant Pilot Program. To support innovation infrastructure development in eligible technology sectors.

In partnership with TEDCO, the administration has awarded more than \$10 million through TEDCO's Builders Fund to support 43 startup companies owned by entrepreneurs who demonstrate a socially or economically disadvantaged background and \$1.6 million through TEDCO's Social Impact Fund.

Read more about how the Maryland Small Business Development Center's approved program will support small businesses here: <https://home.treasury.gov/system/files/136/State-Small-Business-Credit-Initiative-Technical-Assistance-Application-Approvals.pdf>.

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Pastor: Rev. Waymond B. Duke

EarthTalk® Q&A

How to Claim IRA Tax Incentives for Greening Your Home

By Isabel Eddy September 4, 2024

Dear EarthTalk:
How can homeowners make their homes greener and more efficient to cash in on rebates and incentives available under Biden's Inflation Reduction Act?

—Bill O., Dewey, OK

Joe Biden's 2022 Inflation Reduction Act created \$8.8 billion in tax credits and rebates to help lower- and middle-income homeowners contribute to the country's emission reduction goals. As with prior housing policy, the act defines lower- and middle-income Americans as those making 150 percent or less of their Area Median Income, or the midpoint of their local area's income distribution. The bulk of these incentives come from federal tax credits which, like the act's state-based rebates, are available through September 2031, and can be applied retroactively to purchases and installations after August 2022.

The Residential Clean Energy Tax Credit covers up to 30 percent of installation costs for alternative energy sources including solar panels, small wind turbines, geothermal heat pumps and battery storage systems. The \$3,200 Energy Efficient Home Improvement Credit, on the other hand, covers upgrades to

existing energy sources. The credit can be applied with a cap of \$1,200 to new windows and skylights (up to \$600), new doors (up to \$500), and improvements to insulation (up to 30 percent).

Out of the 23 total states that have applied for rebate program funding, eight have recently been approved: Arizona, California, Hawaii, Indiana, Maine, New Mexico, Rhode Island and Washington. Two more, New York and Wisconsin, have already begun distribution. The Department of Energy expects that several states will join them later in 2024 beginning with the Home Efficiency Rebate Program (HOMES), which will offer rebates of up to \$8,000 and \$4,000 respectively for low- and middle-income households that can cut energy usage by 35 percent or more.

The Home Electrification and Appliance Rebate (HEAR) boasts a cap of \$14,000 in rebates per household and is expected to follow implementation of HOMES. Under HEAR, low and middle income homeowners can expect 50-100 percent point of sale coverage on several appliances including up to \$8,000 for electric heat pumps; \$1,600 for insulation and air sealing; \$2,500 for electric wiring; and

\$840 for electric stoves, ovens and heat pump clothes dryers.

Energy upgrades have the potential to save homeowners money far beyond installation. For example, more efficient homes can mean reduced energy bills. Furthermore, green homes can qualify for benefits such as a \$5,000 tax credit if they meet the Department of Energy Zero Energy Ready Home (ZERH) standards. A qualified home energy auditor can help homeowners looking to cash in on the myriads of incentives determine which upgrades fit best with their homes and budgets.

CONTACTS: IRS.Gov <https://www.irs.gov/credits-and-deductions-under-the-inflation-reduction-act-of-2022>; Tax Form 5695 for Home Efficiency Credits (IRS): <https://www.irs.gov/pub/irs-pdf/f5695.pdf>; Energy Star https://www.energystar.gov/partner_resources/residential_new/program_reqs.

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