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Black Women Winemakers Are Breaking Tough Ground in Maryland

By ROBERT STEWART
Capital News Service

LANDOVER, Md. (Sept. 13, 2024)—Cyndi Campbell and her sister, Dalia Chambers, are working hard these days. Wine-making is laborious, weather dependent and replete with regulations, and it costs a pretty penny to start up.

But the two winery owners have got some help—other Black women owners who are also making headway in a tough industry. It's an informal network where the women encourage and serve as a resource for each other.

"I always joke that we're a rounding error," said Campbell, citing the fractional percentage of black-owned, women-owned wineries.

There are about 100 wineries and vineyards in the state of Maryland, less than ten of them Black-owned, according to Kimberly T. Johnson, a winery owner and current president of the Maryland Wineries Association. Nationally, more like 1 percent of the vineyards and wineries have Black owners, according to the Association of African American Vintners.

Last year was a big year for

the group. Campbell and her sister, based in Landover, officially launched the boutique winery, Narcisso Wine Cellar, a year after harvesting the grapes needed for their seven different wines. Boyd Cru Wines, a family-owned winery in Poolesville, also opened its doors. CEO Jon'll Boyd said she also found out that year that the company's wines would be sold in Target. Today, Boyd Cru has broken into two big chains and several stores in Washington D.C. and Maryland.

Clyopatra Winery & Vineyard opened the tasting room of its Black-owned commercial vineyard. Ifeoma Cleopatra Onyia owns the Laurel-based operation. (Her legal name is spelled differently than that of her vineyard brand.)

"When it comes to Black owners, we are the pioneers," said Onyia, who believes that creating a winery and vineyard as a business is one way to create Black generational wealth. She would like to see Maryland do better at marketing its wine. "Not only do we have wineries, but we produce really great quality wines," she said.

For Campbell, setting up a winery was not easy at first.



Campbell and her father, Wayne Narcisso, pause outside of the Cheverly Community Market on Sept. 7. Campbell credits her father for the family's winemaking passion.

"You feel kind of isolated sometimes," said Campbell. From navigating paperwork to planning distribution of the wine, Campbell believes networking is key.

"You can't do this on your own," she said, "you need to collaborate."

She said that's why she got involved with the Maryland Wineries Association, a trade association representing the network of wineries all over the state.

Among its many other functions, the wineries association is a resource for helping new

wineries figure out how to navigate the red tape and network with others in the field. The association also hosts several events and festivals including the Maryland Wine Festival, like their September event in Westminster.

Through the statewide association Campbell was able to meet other Black women owners. One of them reached out and invited her to get together, she said.

Earlier this month several of

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Latinas in Aviation Global Festival Wins 2024 AASLH Award of Excellence

By PRESS OFFICER
M-NCPPC

RIVERDALE, Md. (Sept. 13, 2024)—The M-NCPPC, Department of Parks and Recreation, Prince George's County, College Park Aviation Museum is the proud recipient of an Award of Excellence for its Latinas in Aviation Global Festival. The American Association for State and Local History (AASLH) Leadership in History Award is the most prestigious recognition for achievement in the preservation and interpretation of state and local history.

This groundbreaking festival unites Latinas from the aviation industry, allowing them to share their unique journeys and experiences. Inspired by the publication of the book "Latinas in Aviation" in 2020, the festival aims to bridge the gap between the museum and its local Latino community. The women participate in mentoring circles with community, donate aviation objects to the museum's permanent collection, and much more. The event fosters experimentation and creativity that bring together people from various backgrounds and industries—including

ing history, modern aviation, museums, and a community that didn't see themselves represented.

"The College Park Aviation Museum is proud to be recognized for the important and necessary community engagement work it is doing to impact our underrepresented communities," states former Museum Director, Kevin Cabrera.

Jackie Ruiz, founder of the Latinas in Aviation brand and museum collaborator states, "It is such an honor to have collaborated with the College Park Aviation Museum in the annual Latinas in Aviation Global Festival. For four years, we have shared the inspiration of books, scholarships, community events and impact in our communities. It is a pleasure to partner with the museum to share the inspiration of Latinas in Aviation and for the museum to be recognized with such a great honor for our work together."

The AASLH awards program was initiated in 1945 to establish and encourage standards of excellence in the collection, preser-

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City of District Heights Distributes Over 300 Uniforms to Local Elementary Schools

By PRESS OFFICER
The City of District Heights

DISTRICT HEIGHTS, Md. (Sept. 17, 2024)—In a continued effort to support local students and ensure they are equipped for the new academic year, the City of District Heights proudly announces the distribution of school uniforms to students at District Heights Elementary, North Forestville Elementary, and Longfields Elementary Schools.

This initiative, led by the partnership between the City of District Heights and N'Style Hair Grooming's non-profit, C.U.T (Cultivating Unlimited Talent), reflects the City's ongoing commitment to fostering education, equity, and community support. With the school year underway, this timely effort ensures that students are ready to focus on learning while alleviating the finan-

cial burden that purchasing uniforms can place on families.

"We are thrilled to be able to provide uniforms to our local students," said Cynthia Miller, Mayor of District Heights. "This initiative is about much more than clothing; it's about ensuring that every child in our community feels confident and ready to succeed as they return to school. Education is a pillar of our city's growth, and we are proud to invest in our future leaders."

The distribution of over 300 uniforms to District Heights Elementary, North Forestville Elementary, and Longfields Elementary aims to create a level playing field for students while enhancing school pride and unity.

"We've talked to the students about the importance of uniforms and what that represents," added Ryan Richardson, Assistant Principal at North Forestville Elementary. "It represents that we're all one

team. With these uniforms, we'll have the opportunity to support some families who might be in need."

"The partnership that we have with the City of District Heights and N'Style has been such a tremendous help for our scholars," said Jocelyn Casarrubias, Community School Coordinator at District Heights Elementary. "It gives our families and students one less thing to worry about, and [it allows the students to] concentrate on their academic successes. We could not continue to help our students without the support of our amazing partners."

The City of District Heights remains committed to initiatives that uplift and strengthen the community, especially through programs that prioritize the well-being and success of its youngest residents. The uniform distribution program is just one of many ways the city aims to support education and local schools.



PHOTO COURTESY THE CITY OF DISTRICT HEIGHTS

The uniform distribution program is just one of many ways The City of District Heights aims to support education and local schools.

"It's rewarding to know that we can help these kids by supplying uniforms," said Nate Crittenden, owner of N'Style Hair Grooming. "To further support them, we will be providing haircuts and styling at their schools once a month."

For more information on this initiative or other community programs, email publicaffairs@districtheights.org. For more information on N'Style and C.U.T., email management@nstylehg.com.

Hogan and Alsobrooks Battle for Jewish Voters

By JACK BOWMAN
Capital News Service

ANNAPOLIS, Md. (Sept. 19, 2024)—Republican Larry Hogan is looking to peel off Democratic-leaning Jewish voters in his race for the U.S. Senate seat in Maryland, as the current Israeli-Palestinian conflict nears its one-year anniversary on Oct. 7.

"The governor has said that he's looking to win the Jewish vote in this election," Michael Ricci, a spokesperson for former Gov. Hogan, told Capital News Service. "It's a big point of emphasis for him every day, and not just because it's about winning votes."

In the lead-up to the election, Hogan

has spoken to Jewish community groups, posted on social media and released official campaign statements that support Israel and Maryland's Jewish community.

But leading Democratic officials argue that the Republican play for Jewish voters is a calculated political move, meant to drive a wedge between Democrats and this constituency.

"It's pretty clear that some of the candidates would like to make that a wedge, but I don't think they will be successful," U.S. Sen. Chris Van Hollen, D-Maryland, told CNS in an exclusive interview. He argued that both candidates for Maryland's open Senate seat, Hogan and Democratic nominee Angela

Alsobrooks, strongly support Israel's right to defend itself, as does he.

Alsobrooks provided a statement to CNS via a spokesperson but her campaign did not grant a request for an interview with her or her staff.

The two candidates face different paths to winning the race. As a Republican, Hogan is free to address the Israeli-Palestinian conflict without worrying about alienating progressives increasingly concerned with the human toll in Gaza. Alsobrooks, on the other hand, faces the challenge of holding together an ideologically diverse Democratic coalition, reaching out to all Jewish voters as well as to progressives.

The Hogan campaign's focus on

Jewish voters represents an effort to pull from a generally strong Democratic base. According to the Pew Research Center, 71% of Jewish adults in the U.S. leaned towards or identified with the Democratic Party in a survey conducted between 2019 and 2020.

Democrats dominate voting in Maryland, where President Joe Biden beat Donald Trump by more than 33 points, taking home 65.4% of the state's votes to Trump's 32.2%. But recent polls suggest this race might be much tighter than that.

"I still think that the county executive [Alsobrooks] will win the majority of the Jewish vote," said Ron Halber, chief executive officer of the Jewish Community Relations Council (JCRC) of Greater Washington. "But, like I've said to others, it's whether she's going to

win 55% or 85%."

Still, Hogan is trying. He has repeatedly expressed support for Israel and its right to defend itself, making it a key part of his campaign platform.

In a March 2024 address to the JCRC, which represents Jewish organizations, synagogues and agencies, Hogan took aim at demonstrations in the aftermath of the Oct. 7 attacks that killed about 1,200 in Israel.

"[The protests] are attacking the legitimacy of the world's only Jewish state and its right to defend itself," Hogan said.

Hogan, in the same address, also said, "Maryland needs a pro-Israel champion in the United States Senate."

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To Be Equal:

Entertainment Icons James Earl Jones and Tito Jackson Helped Shift Perception of Black Culture and History

Tito Jackson was rarely the frontman, and James Earl Jones was rarely the leading man, but they managed in their own ways to influence American culture.
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Bowie Business Innovation Center Welcomes the 10th Cohort to its Signature 8(A) Accelerator Program

Purple Line Announces Schedule For Fall 2024 Community Advisory Team Meetings

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TOWNS *and* NEIGHBORS

In & Around Morningside-Skyline

Cecilio Torres, longtime Morningsider, dies at 84

Cecilio Pia Torres, Jr., long-time resident of Woodland Road in Morningside, died August 18. A Memorial Service will be held for him October 13 at the Morningside Town Hall, 6901 Ames St., 1 to 4 p.m.

He was born in Washington, son of Martha Jane and Cecilio Torres, Sr.

He attended Charlotte Hall Military Academy in his youth and became a skilled bodyman/mechanic. He belonged to several clubs, including the American Legion, Moose Lodge, the Elks and the VFW.

Cecilio is survived by his sons Mike Torres (Gwen) of Bushwood, Md. and Steve Torres (Cindy) of Brandywine, grandchildren Anthony Torres (Sabrina), Tiffany Crupi (Adam), Travis Torres and Brittany Torres. He is also survived by great-grandchildren Jenna Torres, Mason Torres, Jaxon Crupi, Myles Moss, Jianna Crupi, Cruz Torres, Axel Torres and Reid Torres.

Dance to the music of DJ MIXX, for cancer research

VFW 9619, Morningside, 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 go to the VFW Auxiliary Fundraiser for Cancer Research.

Dress Code: Dopesneakers, pink & white attire. Music by DJ MIXX.

The \$30 Admission (includes food) reserves a table. (Reminder: attendees must be 35 or older.) To purchase advance tickets, visit the VFW at 6527 Suitland Rd., in Morningside. Call 301-735-5200 for VFW 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.

Town of Morningside

Morningside's September meetings: Work Session on Tuesday, October 8, and the Town Meeting, Sept. 17, both starting at 7 p.m.

Looking ahead: Trunk-or-Treating will be held October 19 at the Town Hall, time to be determined.

If you need a hall for a special event—birthday party, baby shower, retirement celebration, reception, graduation—the meeting room at the Town Hall is available for rent. For more information, call 301-736-2301 or

email Morningsiderec@morningsidemd.gov.

Neighbors & other good people

Robert Leo Graves, Oxon Hill H.S. 1965, died September 7 after a brief illness. He retired from the Prince George's County Public Schools in 2002, following a 32-year career. His entire teaching career was at Parkdale HS where he met his future wife, Nina Grindlesperger. Following retirement, he became a full-time real estate agent. Services were at DeVol Funeral Home in Gaithersburg.

In last week's column, I ran an obituary for Art Rehkemper. Christina Ritzcovan sent a tribute: "To the Rehkemper family—I worked with Art at the Secret Service Washington Field Office. He was a lovely and fun person, and I enjoyed my time knowing him. May your good memories of Art help during this sad time. Rest in Peace, Art."

Morningside VFD

The Morningside Volunteer Fire Department has a Recruitment Event September 28–29 for new members. Interested? Call 301-736-4342.

They have purchased a replacement ambulance from the Silver Hill VFD. The department chose to purchase this unit because it has low road miles and is a fraction of the cost of a brand-new replacement ambulance. This unit will be able to provide basic life support and advanced Life Support to the Town of Morningside and the surrounding area.

Changing landscape

Years in the making, the 58-foot-long bronze sculpture follows the story of an unnamed World War I soldier, beginning the day he ships out and continues through the anguish of war and the nurses who tend his injuries, finally to homecoming. The sculpture now is the centerpiece of the National World War I Memorial and was unveiled Sept. 13 in a park at 14th Street and Pennsylvania Avenue NW, just blocks from the White House.

The National Zoo is awaiting the arrival of two new pandas. Helping make this possible, philanthropist David Rubenstein has pledged \$10 million to the Zoo's panda program.

The Biden administration has approved Baltimore-based US Wind's project to build offshore wind turbines about 10 miles off the coast of Ocean City, Md. The off-shore

by Mary McHale 301-735-3451

windfarm could generate more than two gigawatts of wind energy and power more than 718,000 homes, according to the Department of the Interior.

Starting September 23, the Washington Post's comic pages will be printed in full color seven days a week.

A home at 6021 Lucente Avenue, in Skyline, has sold recently for \$385,000.

Places to go & things to do

Did you know the first Wednesday in October is Maryland Walking Day? Anyway, you are invited to celebrate the occasion by heading to Watkins Regional Park Wednesday, Oct. 2, 8–10 a.m., and walk a few laps through the park on the beautiful Loop Trail. Walk as many laps as you can and earn prizes as you go! Also, learn walking safety tips from the Maryland Department of Transportation.

Enjoy Bingo? The Knights of Columbus hosts Bingo to help provide funds for the Council's causes, ranging from food pantries and Pro Life clinics and to their annual Clergy and Nuns' night. They have Bingo Wednesday nights between 6 and 10 p.m. at their hall, 3611 Stewart Road, Forestville. For more information, call Bingo Chairman George Hoehl, 301-599-0307.

The Dr. Samuel A. Mudd House Museum is open 1 to 4 p.m. Wednesday through Saturday and noon to 4 p.m. Sunday at 3725 Dr. Samuel A. Mudd Road in Waldorf. Admission is \$10 for a house/farm tour. Call for information, 301-645-6870. (And, yes, Dr. Mudd was my great-grandfather. I never knew him, but I love to visit his historic house and barns.)

Milestones

Happy Birthday to Morningside Clerk/Treasurer Karen Rooker, Judy Waby, and Teresa Kessler, Sept. 22; Elizabeth Long and Mary Kilbride, Sept. 23; Dottie Arehringer and Peg Richardson, Sept. 24; Alice Lucke, Sept. 27; Marshall Carson and Tim Ward, Sept. 28; my brother Tom Mudd and Janice Diggs, former Morningside Town clerk, Sept. 29; Peggy Nanney and Jessica (Williams) Proctor, Sept. 30; Jasmine Wade, Nola Thomas and my grandson, Sam Mudd, Oct. 2; John Ihrig, Oct. 3; and Marlene Titus, Oct. 4.

Happy Anniversary to André and Cynthia Jordan, their 61st on Sept. 28; Marvin and Lee Burkhart, Sept. 29; and Bill & Terry Ratliff, their 38th on Oct. 4.

by Audrey Johnson 301-922-5384

Brandywine, Maryland 20613. Hosted By: Peter A. Gross, Sr. Scholarship Committee.

All You Can Eat: Crabs, hamburgers, hot dogs, corn on cob, baked beans, potato chips. Donation is \$60.00 per person. "Proceeds go to future scholarships." Call 240-882-3369, 804-301-9530, 302-690-4260 for tickets. "No Tickets Sold at Door." Peter A. Gross, Sr. Scholarship/Memorial Fund Inc. 16905 Horsehead Road, Brandywine, Maryland 20613-8302 (301) 888-1475.

COOPERS UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

We are presently looking for a drummer on each Sunday of the month for our Sunday Worship Service, \$175 per Sunday. Services start at 10 a.m. and are typically over no later than 11:30 a.m. Coopers United Methodist Church, 9370 Southern Maryland Blvd, Dunkirk, Maryland 20754. Point of contact is Rodney Nelson Rodnel847@gmail.com

SPEAKOUT 2024 "I AM AWARDS"

Get ready for SpeakOut 2024 "I AM Awards"—a night of celebrating and honoring those who have spoken out and made a difference Saturday, October 5, 2024, at 7 p.m. See more information on Eventbrite. SpeakOut 2024 "I AM Awards" is the place to be this year! Join us at MGM National Harbor Hotel & Casino for a night of celebration and recognition. Get ready to be inspired by incredible individuals making a difference in our community. This in-person event promises to be unforgettable, so mark your calendars and get ready to be a part of something special. Do not miss out on this opportunity to honor those who are truly making an impact. Event lasts four hours. This year's event will also include a Pre-Show reception that will take place Friday, October 4, 2024, 7 p.m. at the MGM Grand.

Ticket Prices: General Admission \$175 (includes admission to the Pre-Show October 4th and Awards Show October 5th. Tickets :VIP Table \$2500 includes VIP Gift Bag, 2 complimentary drink tickets. Tickets: General Admission \$188.58 incl. \$13.58 fee, tables (10 seats) \$2,669.52 incl. \$169.52 Fee. Organized by SpeakOut, Inc.

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 call 240-755-9008. Event location: Providence-Fort Washington United Methodist Church, 10610 Old Fort Road, Fort Washington, Maryland 20744.

Greater Mt. Nebo A.M.E. Church Celebrates 147 Years of Faith & Community Connection

By PRESS OFFICER

Greater Mt. Nebo A.M.E. Church

BOWIE, Md. (Sept. 24, 2024)—September 28–29, Greater Mt. Nebo A.M.E. Church, a pillar of faith and service in the local community, will commemorate its 147th anniversary with a celebration this weekend.

Established on June 8, 1877, by a group of freed slaves, the church has grown from a small congregation in a log cabin to a dynamic spiritual home for thousands, deeply woven into the fabric of the Bowie community.

The church's first home—a humble log cabin built on one acre of land purchased for \$134.55—became a gathering place for a congregation bound by faith and a commitment to supporting one another. Over the years, the church has continued to embody these values, serving as a beacon of hope, service, and connection to the local community.

In celebration of this milestone, Greater Mt. Nebo Church will host a homecoming and church anniversary celebration on Saturday, September 28, at 11 a.m. and Sunday, September 29, at 10 a.m. Church Service, Combined Choirs -Majestics, Brotherhood, and Children's Choir.

The event will include historical reflections, moving musical performances, and messages of faith, unity, and community involvement.

As it looks toward the future, Greater Mt. Nebo remains focused on expanding its outreach and service to the community. Upcoming initiatives include:

- **Affordable Housing:** Aimed at providing secure, dignified homes for local residents in need.
- **Family Life, Wellness, and Inter-generational Center:** A space dedicated to fostering physical, mental, and emotional well-being for families of all ages.
- **Assisted-Care Living Facility:** Supporting the aging population with compassion and quality care.

"From our earliest days, we've been committed to not only uplifting our members but also meeting the needs of our neighbors," said Rev. Dr. Gerald Folsom, Senior Pastor of Greater Mt. Nebo. "As we celebrate this anniversary, we continue to focus on being a church that connects with the community and serves as a catalyst for positive change."

The church invites the local community to join in this celebration, which will honor its history, celebrate the present, and share its vision for the future.

Event Details:

Date: September 28–September 29, 2024

Location: 1001 Old Mitchellville Rd., Bowie MD 20716

For more information, please contact Rev. Donna Durham at churchoffice@gmnebo.org.

Luminis Health Doctors Community Medical Center Hosts Annual Pink Ribbon Rally to Celebrate Survivors and Raise Awareness

Date and time: Saturday, October 5, 2024; 11 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Description: In honor of Breast Cancer Awareness Month, Luminis Health Doctors Community Medical Center is hosting its annual Pink Ribbon Rally Saturday, October 5 on our Lanham campus. The event aims to spotlight the importance of breast cancer awareness and the crucial role of early detection through mammograms. The Pink Ribbon Rally will feature no cost mammograms and clinical breast screenings, as well as life-saving information about the signs, symptoms, and early detection of breast cancer. In addition to mammograms, the Pink Ribbon Rally will offer resources and guidance from local organizations, support groups, and healthcare professionals. There will also be inspirational stories from breast cancer survivors, bra fittings, live music, food, and games.

Cost: Free and open to the public

Location: Luminis Health Doctors Community Medical Center, 8118 Good Luck Road, Lanham

Award from A1

vation, and interpretation of state and local history throughout the United States. The awards not only honor significant achievement in the field of state and local history, but also bring public recognition of the opportunities for small and large organizations, institutions, and programs to make contributions in this arena. For more information about the Leadership in History Awards, visit aash.org.

With over 28,000 acres of parkland, trails, athletic fields, playgrounds and more, the M-NCPPC, Department of Parks and Recreation in Prince George's County provides an award-winning park system through progressive, quality, innovative leadership and a commitment to its community and environment. The Department delivers first-class recreational activities and programs for people of all ages and ability levels. It strives to improve the quality of life for residents in Prince George's County and the communities in which they live, work, and raise families. The Department's Formula 2040 Plan establishes a framework that will assure the Department can meet future parks and recreation programmatic and facility needs, fulfilling its mission to determine the combination of land, facilities and programs that will provide appropriate experiences for Prince Georgians in the future. To learn more, visit www.pgpc.org.

The American Association for State and Local History is a not-for-profit professional organization of individuals and institutions working to preserve and promote history. From its headquarters in Nashville, Tennessee, AASLH provides leadership, service, and support for its members who preserve and interpret state and local history in order to make the past more meaningful to all people. AASLH publishes books, technical publications, a quarterly magazine, and maintains numerous affinity communities and committees serving a broad range of constituents across the historical community. The association also sponsors an annual meeting, regional and national training in-person workshops, and online training.

Brandywine-Aquasco

40TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION

On Saturday, August 24, 2024, the Upper Marlboro/Waldorf (MD) Alumni Chapter of Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity, Inc. affectionately known as the "U"; celebrated 40 years of serving the Upper Marlboro and Waldorf communities through youth mentoring, Men's Health Awareness and community service. The black-tie gala was held at the Crown Plaza Hotel in Greenbelt Maryland. The occasion was used to highlight the many achievements garnered by the chapter. Many regional and local dignitaries honored the "U", including the Senior Grand Vice Polemarch of Kappa Alpha Psi, Fraternity Inc., Brother Robert Jenkins Jr, Esq.; the 30th Eastern Province Polemarch of Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity, Incorporated Brother Richard B. Mattox; the 29th Eastern Province Polemarch and Chief Administrative Officer to the Grand Polemarch of Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity, Inc., Brother Charles Exum; Guy Levis Grant Awardee and the 21st Eastern Province Polemarch Brother Anthony Hill, the 15th Eastern Province Polemarch and Elder Watson Diggs Awardee Brother Clarence Nelson; Province Senior Vice Polemarch Brother Paul Robinson; Eastern Province Keeper of the Exchequer Brother Eugene Fields; Eastern Province Region II Board Member Brother Brandon Craddock; Guy Levis Grant Awardee Brother Joseph Jimerson; President of the Charles County Board of Commissioners, Brother Reuben Collins; and Circuit Court Judge of Maryland the Honorable Scott M. Carrington.

The evening's master of ceremonies Brother Dr. Kevin Ahmaad Jenkins kept the festive occasion light but lovingly challenged members of the "U"; to increase their community involvement. Dr. Jenkins stressed to the chapter that their continued presence in the community is needed. With the absence of good role models in the community, Dr. Jenkins commended the chapter for its efforts through its Kappa League mentorship program. Other speakers for the evening included: the 30th Eastern Province Polemarch Richard B. Mattox, who applauded the chapter for its tireless community service and its social activities. He said the chapter's leadership has been vital to Kappa and to social action throughout the DMV. Following the Eastern Province Polemarch, Past Chapter Polemarchs Brother Shaun Alfred (20th) and Brother Keith Tyler (22nd) recognized the present charter members with plaques which thanked them for their vision of achievement.

After several presentations thanking the Upper Marlboro/Waldorf Chapter's civic and social partners, the members celebrated with singing and dancing with their attending family and friends. The event ended with a beautiful rendition of the Kappa Hymn sung by the attending 63 members. Written by Marcus V. Smith.

CRAB FEAST

There will be a CRAB FEAST October 13, 2024, from 2–5 p.m. at St. Philip's Church Hall 13800 Baden Westwood Road,

COMMUNITY

Marietta House Museum Presents: “Indigenous People Mindfulness Walk”

By STACEY HAWKINS
Marietta House Museum

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.



ROBERT STEWART/CAPITAL NEWS SERVICE

Vidal Blanc grapes ripen during harvest season on Maryland’s Eastern Shore.

Winemakers from A1

the women gathered at the tasting room at Oniya’s winery. They sampled each other’s wine and talked about business, she said.

Tia Clarke, based in Upper Marlboro, owns a wholesale wine business, Roman Clarke Wines. Clarke learned about the small group through Boyd. For Clarke, the group has helped her understand more about business models. Clarke aspires to get what is known as a Class 4 winery license, which means completing paperwork and ensuring at least 51% of her product is sourced from Maryland agriculture.

About five years ago, Kimberly T. Johnson and her business partner Denise Roles Matthews opened Philosophy Winery & Vineyard, breaking new ground as a Black- and woman-owned winery. They soon began winning statewide awards.

Philosophy has helped to pave the way for others, said Maryland Secretary of Agriculture Kevin Atticks.

“Sometimes it takes one to do it,” he said. “It illustrates to others that they can enter the space.”

Dealing with the costs

While starting a winery is expensive, starting a vineyard is even more so. The vines take years to grow before the vineyard owner can produce wine, potentially meaning years of not breaking even.

One way wineries like Campbell’s are circumventing the steep financial barrier to entry is by entering into business with established vineyards. They buy the grapes but create their own recipes to make their own wines.

For the vineyard owner, the agreement is about income and the quality of the Maryland wine. Roy and Judy Crow are owners of Crow Vineyard & Winery in Kennedyville, on Maryland’s agriculturally rich Eastern Shore.

“It helps with the local economy and helps the people that live and work here,” said Roy Crow. He said it’s good for the Maryland wine ecosystem if new businesses like Narcisso Wine Cellar have access to good-quality Maryland grapes.

Judy Crow said that’s also good for the reputation of the Maryland “terroir,” or the wine terrain.

“We want Maryland to be a destination where people can come and explore Maryland and enjoy the wines like they do in California,” she said. “Look at how the industry has taken off in California for tourism and restaurants and all around grapes. Virginia is the same way.”

Atticks said the growing diversity of Maryland wineries expands the market and the reach of a quality product.

“We’ve just expanded the tent. We’ve opened the wine shop a little bit further,” said Atticks. “Black consumers are seeing themselves in these winemakers for the first time, and that’s good for the industry. And that’s great for the community.”

Back in Prince George’s County, Campbell knows all about expanding the reach of Maryland wine. Before she and her sister launched the business, they did a series of focus groups and taste-testing sessions to help them better understand what people in the area would drink.

Erika Rodgers, an accountant based in Washington D.C., attended some of the tasting sessions. Rodgers said the session helped her develop a sense of the kinds of wine she likes.

“I definitely feel like they provide a ton of information for you to feel comfortable drinking and buying wine,” said Rodgers. “It makes me appreciate wine.”

As for Campbell, she has several events lined up throughout the fall. She wants to continue introducing new consumers to wine and educating them about the product.

“For us, it’s just really guiding people through and enjoying our wines,” said Campbell, “feeling more comfortable with that, making wine more approachable.”

Bob Hall Beverage Company Named Anheuser-Busch 2023 National Champion

Week-Long Celebrations in Southern Maryland Included Appearances by the Iconic Budweiser Clydesdales, Donations to Folds of Honor and Customer and Team Events

By PRESS OFFICER
Bob Hall Beverage Company

UPPER MARLBORO, Md. (Sept. 18, 2024)—Bob Hall Beverage Company, a 91-year-old family-owned beer and beverage distributor serving Calvert, Charles, and Prince George’s Counties, brought their local community, customers, and team members together for a week-long celebration that included a significant focus on and donation to the Folds of Honor foundation. Bob Hall Beverage Co. achieved great success last year and was named an Ambassador of Excellence for 2023—a feat achieved by only five percent of Anheuser-Busch’s nationwide wholesaler network. The longtime Maryland-based distributor also was recognized as the National Champion for 2023, signifying their place as the number one Anheuser-Busch wholesaler in the United States.

Achieving this elite status is a result of Bob Hall Beverage Company consistently demonstrating outstanding sales, service, customer support, and community involvement, combined with the hard-working, dedicated team that the company has built in its local Maryland community.

Southern Maryland is the heart and soul of our company, and we can’t think of a better way to celebrate this outstanding achievement than alongside the Budweiser Clydesdales right here in our hometown,” said Dan Hoose, General Manager at Bob Hall. “Our success would not be possible without the stellar team we have built and the unwavering support of our local community, customers, and partners. These parades are for them, along with our local military families and first responders who keep us free and safe every day of the year.”

Folds of Honor Recognition

This year, Anheuser-Busch, its brands and wholesaler partners celebrated 14 years of partnership with Folds of Honor, a nonprofit organization that provides academic scholarships to the families of fallen or disabled U.S. service members and first responders. To celebrate this milestone, the Budweiser Clydesdales embarked on a cross-country tour and joined the Bob Hall Beverage Company in Southern Maryland. Together, they hosted a series of festivities, including a VIP event to thank retailers, a grand team celebration, and parades featuring the



PHOTO COURTESY BOB HALL BEVERAGE COMPANY

Folds of Honor Representative, Rocky Sickmann, with Navy veteran and Folds of Honor recipients, Michael and Rose Lammey, accepting a donation from Bob Hall Beverage Company.

iconic Budweiser Clydesdales in Solomons Island and National Harbor.

During the visit, Bob Hall Beverage Company was proud to donate \$20K to Folds of Honor, which Budweiser matched for a total donation of \$40K. These events also honored a previous recipient and his family, Michael Lammey, a United States Navy Petty Officer who served our country honorably for over nine years during Operation Enduring Freedom.

Rocky Sickmann, Folds of Honor member and U.S. military hero, joined the festivities as well to further the organization’s mission. “Thanks to the unwavering support from Anheuser-Busch, its brands and its wholesaler partners like Bob Hall, they have donated \$28 million, which has funded over 5,000 scholarships for Folds of Honor recipients. We are incredibly grateful for the past 14 years of partnership and the profound difference we have been able to make for families. We look forward to many more years of partnership and ongoing impact within and beyond the Maryland community.”

Bob Hall Beverage Company was founded in 1933, the same year as the repeal of Prohibition. Since then, the 91-year-old family-owned beer and beverage wholesale distribution company has been a consistent supporter of Calvert, Charles and Prince George’s County communities. The company’s portfolio is composed of the Anheuser-Busch InBev family of beers, Constellation family of beers, high-quality

craft beers and non-alcoholic beverages. Bob Hall has a long history of corporate social responsibility, environment preservation and making a difference in the communities where its retail customers, consumers and team members live and work. Go to www.bobhallbeverage.com for more information.

Folds of Honor is a 501(c) (3) nonprofit organization that provides educational scholarships to the spouses and children of US military service members and first responders who have fallen or been disabled while serving our country and communities. Our educational scholarships support private school tuition or tutoring in grades K–12, tuition for college, technical or trade school and post-graduate work, including a master’s degree, doctorate, or professional program. Funds for a second bachelor’s degree or trade/technical program certification are also available. Since its inception in 2007, Folds of Honor has awarded over 52,000 scholarships totaling about \$244 million in all 50 states. Among the students served, 45 percent are minorities. It is rated a four-star charity by Charity Navigator and Platinum on Candid. It was founded by Lt Col Dan Rooney, the only ever F-16 fighter pilot (with three combat tours in Iraq) and PGA Professional. He is currently stationed at Headquarters Air Force Recruiting Service Detachment 1, at Joint Base San Antonio-Randolph, Texas. For more information or to donate in support of a Folds of Honor scholarship visit foldsof Honor.org.

First Lady Moore Announces Lady Brion as Maryland’s 11th Poet Laureate

By PRESS OFFICER
Office of the First Lady

ANNAPOLIS, Md. (Sept. 16, 2024)—First Lady Dawn Moore and the Maryland State Arts Council (MSAC) today announced the appointment of Lady Brion as Maryland’s 11th Poet Laureate. The first lady was joined by Maryland State Arts Council Executive Director Steven Skerritt-Davis and local members of the arts community in a ceremony at The Clifton House in Baltimore.

“Lady Brion uses her voice to speak up for those who have gone overlooked and been left behind for too long. She is an ambassador for those who need hope, an advocate for those who need a fighter—and she will be a champion for all Marylanders, no matter their background, zip code, or personal story,” said First Lady Moore. “As First Lady, I am committed to working within the Moore-Miller administration to ensure that the arts are not just celebrated but are elevated in this state.”

Based in Baltimore City, Lady Brion is a spoken word artist, writer, cultural worker, and activist whose efforts focus on women’s empowerment and telling the story of the Black experience. The author of several written and recorded publications, Lady Brion is a mainstay in state, national, and international spoken word scenes. In 2023, she performed before the inauguration ceremony of Governor Wes Moore and during the in-



PHOTO COURTESY MARYLAND GOVERNOR’S PRESS OFFICE

First Lady Dawn Moore and Lady Brion during the ceremony.

auguration ceremony for Comptroller Brooke Lierman.

“I am deeply humbled and honored to accept the appointment as Poet Laureate of Maryland, a role that allows me to pay homage to the extraordinary poet Lucille Clifton. It is my mission to build upon her legacy, using the power of words to spark dialogue while fostering greater creativity, empathy, and understanding across the state of Maryland,” said Lady Brion. “Special thanks to Governor and First Lady Moore, as well as the Maryland State Arts Council, for selecting me.”

Appointed by Governor Wes Moore, Lady Brion will serve as Poet Laureate

providing public readings and programs for the citizens of Maryland. The honorary state position was established by the Maryland General Assembly in 1959.

“Lady Brion exemplifies what it means to be Poet Laureate,” said Maryland State Arts Council Executive Director Skerritt-Davis. “Her talent, dedication to her craft, and innate ability to engage people make her a natural fit for this prestigious role.”

For history of the Maryland Poet Laureate program and more details on Lady Brion’s role and booking information as Poet Laureate, visit msac.org/programs/poet-laureate.

COMMENTARY

Marc Morial

President and CEO, National Urban League



To Be Equal:

Entertainment Icons James Earl Jones and Tito Jackson Helped Shift Perception of Black Culture and History

"I look at it this way: anybody can carry a picket sign, but I think you should be able to articulate what that sign means ... Don't get me wrong. I believe in the same things that all those people demonstrating believe in, but I just look for plays or movies that say the same thing and play characters in them."

—James Earl Jones

America lost two Black icons of the entertainment industry in recent days.

James Earl Jones was a generation older than Tito Jackson, but both hit the peak of their fame in the 1970s and played a major role in shifting perception of Black culture and history.

Jones' distinctive bass voice, which brought him his greatest fame in roles where his face was not even seen, brought a remarkable gravitas and

dignity to characters whose race was of pivotal importance.

Jackson, who performed with his brothers as the Jackson 5, was part of the first Black pop band to achieve mainstream teen idol status and paved the way for later "boy bands" of all races and ethnicities like New Edition, Menudo, and Backstreet Boys.

Some even cite the popularity of the Jackson 5 as a factor in the election of the first Black U.S. President, reasoning that the children who "got comfortable imitating a Black kid named Michael Jackson" grew up to be comfortable with voting for Barack Obama.

The second-oldest Jackson brother, after Jackie, Tito was just 17 when "Jacksonmania" exploded into the American pop scene, bringing with it a distinctively Black visual style. A Rolling Stone review of a raucous Madison Square Garden concert in 1970 noted in particular Tito's "enormous, hot pink shoeshine boy's cap with jumpsuit.

Although considered "the quiet one" of the group, it was Tito who was responsible for the formation of the Jackson 5. As a 10-year-old, he risked his father Joe's notorious wrath when he broke a string playing Joe's guitar. But after hearing Tito play,

bought him his own guitar, and convinced Tito, Jackie, and Jermaine to form a singing group.

While the Jackson 5 were breaking teenage girls' hearts in 1970, Jones was already an acclaimed theater actor in 1970 when he astounded film audiences with his performance as Jack Jefferson in *The Great White Hope*. The film was based on the life of the first Black world heavyweight boxing champion, Jack Johnson and the furor of racial resentment he ignited with his success, further stoked by his relationships with white women.

He further explored the role of racism in sports with his portrayal of Negro Leagues catcher Josh Gibson in *The Bingo Long Traveling All-Stars and Motor Kings*. Though the comedy "sometimes glides over the obvious pain and injustice these players went through," according to *New York Magazine*, Jones conveyed the "rage and hurt simmering underneath."

Tito Jackson was rarely the frontman, and James Earl Jones was rarely the leading man, but they managed in their own unique ways to influence American culture indelibly. While they are sorely missed, their art lives on and continues to inspire a new generation. —September 20, 2024

Maryland Lawmakers Ask NASA Why It's Cancelling Goddard Spacecraft Mission

By JAMES MATHESON AND SHAUN CHORNOBROFF
Capital News Service

WASHINGTON (Sept. 20, 2024)—Nine Maryland lawmakers wrote a letter earlier this week to NASA demanding answers regarding the agency's termination of a multi-billion dollar spacecraft program.

The project, known as OSAM-1, was developed at the Goddard Space Flight Center in Greenbelt, Maryland, and was expected to service existing satellites and expand their lifespans in space.

"NASA Goddard's OSAM-1 has the potential to offer an innovative solution for extending the lifespans of our satellites while keeping them in orbit," Sen. Chris Van Hollen, D-Maryland, said in a statement to Capital News Service. "Despite Team Maryland's efforts to preserve this important mission and renewed work at Goddard to keep it on track for a 2026 launch, NASA has decided to move forward on canceling this program. Given the abrupt nature of this decision and the lack of a sufficient explanation to Congress as to why it was made, we're seeking immediate answers from NASA."

The lawmakers' letter, dated Sept. 16 and addressed to NASA Administrator Bill Nelson, was signed by Van Hollen and fellow Democratic Sen. Ben Cardin, as well as Democratic Reps. Steny Hoyer, Glenn Ivey, Dutch Ruppersberger, Jamie Raskin, Kweisi Mfume, David Trone and John Sarbanes.

Rep. Andy Harris, the lone Republican in the Maryland congressional delegation, was the only state lawmaker not on the letter. Harris did not respond to Capital News Service's request for comment.

The United States currently has no technology that offers the services and quality that OSAM-1 was supposed to provide, according to the letter.

"We do have adversaries who are also operating satellites in that

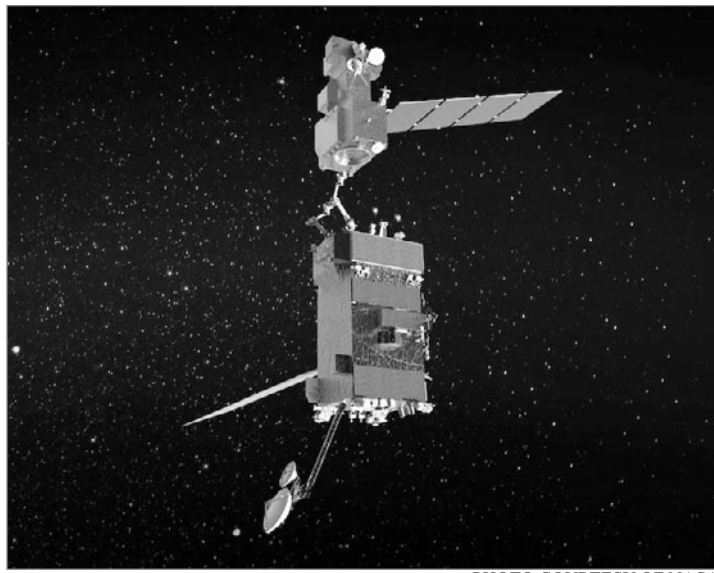


PHOTO COURTESY OF NASA

WASHINGTON—This is a rendering of the On-orbit Servicing, Assembly, and Manufacturing 1 (OSAM-1) spacecraft NASA is cancelling. Maryland lawmakers want the agency to provide details behind the decision.

zone: Russia, China and the like," Ivey told CNS. "It's important for the United States to develop its capabilities with respect to whether it's research or defensive applications that we might need."

Ivey, who represents Maryland's 4th District where the Goddard Space Flight Center is located, said ending the project would hurt many of his constituents.

"From a district piece, this could mean the loss of hundreds of jobs,

engineers, scientists, the backbone of the research quadrant that we have up there in that part of Prince George's County," he said. "There's 10,000 employees up there at NASA Goddard. We also have other assets that leverage what they do."

Since its start in 2015, the project has suffered substantial cost increases and delays.

On March 1, NASA announced a shutdown of the mission.

"Following an in-depth, independent project review, NASA has decided to discontinue the On-orbit Servicing, Assembly, and Manufacturing 1 (OSAM-1) project due to continued technical, cost, and schedule challenges, and a broader community evolution away from refueling unprepared spacecraft, which has led to a lack of a committed partner," NASA said in a statement.

Nevertheless, Congress provided \$227 million for OSAM-1 in the 2024 fiscal year budget and aimed for the spacecraft's launch in 2026.

The letter said that in April NASA received an updated plan that met both Congress' launch and budget requirements. However, on Sept. 4, members of the Maryland delegation were made aware of NASA's decision to proceed with canceling OSAM-1.

"We are currently witnessing a commercial boom in space launches, and it is critical that NASA commits to the priority of controlling the growth of orbital debris, especially during a time when private actors may not feel incentivized to do so," the lawmakers wrote.

The lawmakers added that some of the criteria NASA used to cancel the satellite were not based on congressional directives.

"We have concerns regarding the Agency's decision-making process," they wrote.

The delegation set a deadline of Monday (Sept. 23)—one week after the letter was dated—for NASA to respond.

"The bottom line of the request is, give us a scientific explanation for why you've done what you've done here," Ivey said. "Why have you called for this to terminate?"

NASA confirmed to CNS that it received the letter and will respond directly to the Maryland delegation, but did not respond when asked if the agency would meet the Monday deadline.

Governor Moore Tours Adventist HealthCare Fort Washington Medical Center

By PRESS OFFICER
Office of the Governor

ANNAPOLIS, Md. (Sept. 19, 2024)—Governor Wes Moore today toured the Adventist HealthCare Fort Washington Medical Center in support of the Moore-Miller Administration's efforts to build more equitable and accessible healthcare systems for Marylanders across the state. The governor was joined by Maryland Department of Health Secretary Dr. Laura Herrera Scott; Adventist HealthCare President and Chief Executive Officer John Sackett; Adventist HealthCare Fort Washington Medical Center President Eunmee Shim; and local elected leaders from the region.

"Today's visit to Adventist HealthCare highlights our commitment to strengthening healthcare access for all Marylanders. These investments are not just about facilities; they represent our dedication to building healthier communities and ensuring that everyone has the opportunity to thrive," said Gov. Moore. "Together, we are paving the way for a healthcare system that meets the needs of every resident in our state."

In the Fiscal Year 2024 budget, the state secured a \$5 million investment to Adventist HealthCare Fort Washington Medical Center matched with an additional \$5 million from the Maryland General Assem-

bly to support facility renovations. The Directors of Adventist HealthCare Fort Washington Medical Center, Inc. received a grant for the acquisition, construction, site improvement, and capital equipping of a new facility for Adventist Health in Fort Washington.

Adventist HealthCare Fort Washington Medical Center is a community-based hospital that provides comprehensive healthcare services to patients

in Fort Washington, Oxon Hill, Temple Hills, and parts of southeast Washington, DC. The center serves more than 40,000 patients annually with a dedicated staff of more than 400 employees. During the visit, Governor Moore met with hospital leadership and toured various areas of the facility, including the facility's new intensive care unit.

"Hospitals are important partners in improving the health outcomes of their community

members, and determining the needs of the community is the first step," said Maryland Department of Health Secretary Dr. Laura Herrera Scott. "My visit today made it clear that the leadership team at Adventist HealthCare Fort Washington Medical Center understands that critical component of community care."

"I would like to extend our deepest gratitude to Governor Moore for his interest in learning more about and helping us

address healthcare disparities in Southern Prince George's County," said Adventist HealthCare President and Chief Executive Officer John Sackett. "We can meet healthcare needs better and more effectively together with key stakeholders who share our commitment to the communities we serve. The governor's visit today underscores the importance of partnership between our state and county leaders and healthcare providers, and we are grateful

for his leadership, concern and encouragement."

"I am greatly appreciative of Governor Moore's support," said Adventist HealthCare Fort Washington Medical Center President Eunmee Shim. "From the beginning, we set out to reimagine healthcare in Southern Prince George's County. His support, and the support of our local and state elected representatives, strengthens our ability to provide world class care to those we serve."



PHOTO COURTESY MARYLAND GOVERNOR'S PRESS OFFICE

Governor Wes Moore toured the Adventist HealthCare Fort Washington Medical Center. The governor was joined by Maryland Department of Health Secretary Dr. Laura Herrera Scott; Adventist HealthCare President and Chief Executive Officer John Sackett; Adventist HealthCare Fort Washington Medical Center President Eunmee Shim; and local elected leaders from the region.

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BUSINESS AND FINANCE

Bowie Business Innovation Center Welcomes the 10th Cohort to its Signature 8(A) Accelerator Program

Award-Winning Hub in Collaboration with U.S. Small Business Administration Continues Commitment to Innovation and Growth For 8(a)-Certified Companies

By PRESS OFFICER

Bowie Business Innovation Center

BOWIE, Md. (Sept. 19, 2024)—After the five-year completion of 9 cohorts of the 8(a) Accelerator Program, Bowie Business Innovation Center (Bowie BIC), in collaboration with the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) and funded by Capital One, welcomes its 10th cohort of 8(a)-certified small businesses on October 4, 2024.

As America's first 8(a) Accelerator, the award-winning Bowie BIC 8(a) Accelerator Program combines practical business training in a cohort-based group setting, practical business training with access to mentors and structured net-

working activities to help federal government contractors in SBA's 8(a) business development program. Learn how to gain competitive advantage needed to successfully win more federal government contracts and generate more revenue for their companies.

"The 8(a) Accelerator Program is a game-changer for small businesses looking to break into the federal contracting space," said June Evans, Executive Director, Bowie BIC. "Over the past nine cohorts, we've seen the transformative power of the program, equipping 8(a) companies with tools, resources, and strategies they need to succeed. But more than just training and development, the program fosters a thriving 8(a) com-

munity where participants and mentors support one another, collaborate, and form lasting partnerships that continue long after the program ends. This sense of community is invaluable and a cornerstone of our commitment to driving sustainable business growth for 8(a)-certified companies. This unprecedented business development program is designed to equip companies with the competitive advantage needed to successfully secure government contracts."

The 10th cohort for the Bowie BIC 8(a) Accelerator will consist of 30 8(a)-certified small businesses who will learn from subject matter experts and various government contracting resources. In addition, participants will benefit from the

experience shared during the sessions by business executives, resource partners, and successful program graduates.

"I found the 8(a) Accelerator Program to be very beneficial for my organization as we were new entrants to the 8(a) program," said Tamika Looper, CEO, Looper Consulting LLC and Bowie BIC 8(a) Accelerator Program graduate. "This program helped me to strengthen my capture strategy and gave me valuable insights to help position the organization for future growth. I was able to connect with other participants and even gained some teaming partners along the way."

The 8(a) Accelerator program consists of a series of seven sessions con-

ducted over seven consecutive weeks. Cohort 10 begins on October 4, 2024, and runs through November 15, 2024.

The program provides targeted networking opportunities for new 8(a) government contractors, cohort-based training focused on the development of each company's capture management strategy, reviewing and providing feedback on each company's implementation strategy, and pitch opportunities for 8(a) companies to present their business capabilities to senior federal contracting officials.

For additional information about the 8(a) Accelerator Program and to apply online, please visit www.bowiebic.com/8a-accelerator/

Social Security Matters

Ask Rusty:

Should my Husband File and Then Suspend His Benefits?

By RUSSELL GLOOR,

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

Dear Rusty: My financial advisor used a computer program which told my husband to take his SS at age 68, then suspend it after a few months. What I understood was if my husband started and then stopped taking distributions, he would earn delayed retirement credits and thus get more at age 70. I know waiting increases SS amounts, by 8% a year, but does purposely starting and then stopping SS increase distributions even more? **Signed: Confused**

Dear Confused: Suspending receipt of one's SS benefits after their FRA (as in your husband's case) does result in him earning Delayed Retirement Credits (DRCs), but the DRCs earned accumulate at the same rate as if he simply waited longer to claim his SS benefit in the first place. DRCs are earned up to 70 years of age, at which point your husband's maximum SS benefit is attained (FYI, DRCs earn .667% of additional benefit for each month benefits are delayed or suspended, or 8% per year). But I see no advantage to your husband starting his benefits now (at 68) and then suspending them several months later to earn DRCs—the number of DRCs earned are the same in either case, so he could simply wait to apply for his Social Security benefits until he is 70 to get his maximum amount.

The only rationale I can think of to claim and then suspend after doing so is to get a few months of his benefit payments before suspending. But the few months he received benefits before suspending will be considered when he later unsuspends his benefit, so that his total payment amount will be a bit less at 70 than it would otherwise be if he simply waits longer to claim SS. And, just for information, he can't "file and suspend" his benefits so that you can receive a spousal benefit from him. That option (to file and suspend, enabling a spouse to receive benefits) was eliminated by the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2015—while your husband's benefits are suspended, you cannot receive a spousal benefit from him.

So, frankly, I see no advantage to your husband claiming his benefit now and then suspending them a few months later. If his goal is to maximize his SS benefit, then the best way to do that is simply wait longer to claim.

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.

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Purple Line Announces Schedule For Fall 2024 Community Advisory Team Meetings

Virtual Meetings will Provide Summer Construction Progress Reports

By PRESS OFFICER

Maryland Department of Transportation

RIVERDALE, Md. (Sept. 18, 2024)—The Maryland Department of Transportation Maryland Transit Administration today announced the fall 2024 series of Purple Line Community Advisory Team (CAT) meetings will be held throughout October. The virtual meetings include teams of representatives appointed by neighborhoods, residents, civic and business associations and local governments. This thirteenth round of CAT meetings will provide neighborhoods along the 16-mile alignment within Prince George's and Montgomery counties localized progress reports on construction activities.

"2024 is a year of momentum for the Purple Line with the project currently more than 68% complete," said Senior Project Director, Ray Biggs II. "Our team is excited to share details about recent project achievements, including the arrival of the light rail vehicles, the com-

pletion of major construction at the University of Maryland campus and future construction plans."

The Purple Line project team presenting during the CAT meetings includes representatives from Maryland Transit Administration, the concessionaire Purple Line Transit Partners and construction partner, Maryland Transit Solutions. Each meeting will provide time for CAT members and the public to ask questions. Virtual CAT meetings for the Purple Line project are hosted on Microsoft Teams, offering captioning services in multiple languages. The full meeting schedule and instructions on how to enable live captioning is posted to the project website meetings and event page. Past CAT meeting presentations and recordings can also be found on the project website.

All CAT meetings will take place from 6-7:30 p.m., and Microsoft Teams links will be posted at <https://www.purplelinemd.com/public-meetings-events/> by September 30. The schedule is as follows:

- Tuesday, October 1, Silver Spring
- Tuesday, October 8, College Park
- Thursday, October 10, Long Branch
- Thursday, October 15, Riverdale Park/New Carrollton
- Thursday, October 17, Greater Lyttonsville-Woodside
- Tuesday, October 22, University Blvd
- Tuesday, October 29, Bethesda/Chevy Chase

The Maryland Transit Administration is one of the largest multi-modal transit systems in the United States. The Purple Line is a 16-mile, 21-station light rail line that will extend from Bethesda in Montgomery County to New Carrollton in Prince George's County. It will directly connect to the Metrorail's Red, Green and Orange Lines at Bethesda, Silver Spring, College Park and New Carrollton. The Purple Line will also connect to MARC, Amtrak, and local bus services. To learn more, visit purplelinemd.com, and follow Purple Line on Facebook, Instagram, X/Twitter and YouTube.

Governor Moore Increases Procurement Goal for Veteran-Owned Small Business Enterprise Program Participants

By PRESS OFFICER

Office of the Governor

ANNAPOLIS, Md. (Sept. 18, 2024)—Governor Wes Moore today announced that the Governor's Office of Small, Minority and Women Business Affairs has increased the Veteran-Owned Small Business Enterprise Program's participation goal from 1% to 3%, effective immediately.

"The military teaches you not just how to serve, but also how to lead. Our veteran entrepreneurs are mission-driven, hard-charging, and deeply committed to making Maryland better. We have an obligation to answer their service with our support," said Gov. Moore. "Today, we take a critical step forward in our ongoing mission to build new pathways to wealth creation for Maryland veterans and military families."

Maryland's Veteran-Owned Small Business Enterprise Program was enacted in 2010 to enhance opportunities for veteran-owned small businesses to participate

in state-funded contractors. The Governor's Office of Small, Minority and Women Business Affairs administers the program across 51 participating agencies and departments.

Over the past fiscal year, the program has experienced a 41% increase in certified vendors. Today, more than 900 veteran-owned companies are certified in the program.

The Veteran-Owned Small Business Enterprise Advisory Committee, led by Governor's Office of Small, Minority and Women Business Affairs Special Secretary Y. Maria Martinez, was instrumental in advocating to align Maryland's veteran participation goals with surrounding jurisdictions. Goals are determined on a contract-by-contract basis. Only the work of a certified Veteran-Owned Small Business Enterprise, performing as either a prime contractor or a subcontractor, can be counted toward achievement of an established contract goal.

"Our veteran community is actively engaged in the growth and development of the state's VSBE Program," said Special Secretary Martinez. "The support and guidance we receive from the members of the VSBE Advisory Committee has been invaluable and inspiring."

"Raising the VSBE goal to 3% will unlock new opportunities for veteran-owned businesses, fostering innovation and prosperity," said Dobbs Defense Solutions President and Chief Executive Officer Erica Dobbs. Dobbs, who serves on the VSBE Advisory Committee, was named SBA's 2024 Veteran Business Owner of the Year. "I believe this aligns perfectly with the governor's 'Year for Military Families' initiative, significantly enhancing Maryland's support for veteran entrepreneurs and promoting a more inclusive business landscape," Dobbs said.

To learn more about the Veteran-Owned Small Business Enterprise Program, visit goMDSmallbiz.maryland.gov.

Battle from A1

Another way Hogan has sought support in the Jewish community is through emphasizing his track record as governor. In addressing the JCRC, Hogan spoke of his trade mission to Israel in 2016 and his enactment of an executive order in 2023 that prohibited Maryland agencies from entering contracts with businesses unless the businesses certify that they will not boycott Israel.

"Larry gets it," former Democratic Maryland State senator and co-chair of Democrats for Hogan Robert "Bobby" Zirkin told CNS. "He's been to Israel a number of times when he was governor."

Meanwhile, Alsobrooks and her campaign have focused more on the areas of common ground among Democrats. In her

own address to the JCRC in April, Alsobrooks focused on bringing home hostages and removing the threat of Hamas from the world while mitigating the civilian casualties in Gaza.

Similarly, in the statement provided to CNS this week, Alsobrooks emphasized her support of Israel, focusing on the hostages taken by Hamas.

"Our priority must be bringing home every single hostage and getting to a ceasefire," Alsobrooks said in the statement. "As a mother, my heart breaks for the families of the hostages and we must do everything in our power to bring them home now."

Alsobrooks also stressed the importance of protecting the civilians of Gaza, saying, "we need to ensure that the humanitarian crisis in Gaza is addressed, that aid is arriv-

ing, and that we are doing everything we can to ensure the flow of aid to innocent civilians."

Alsobrooks, who visited Israel in 2019, has been endorsed by U.S. Sen. Ben Cardin, D-Maryland, whom she hopes to replace. Cardin, who identifies as a "proud Jewish-American," has supported Israel's right to defend itself in the conflict.

Van Hollen has been outspoken in his concern about the civilian casualties in the Israel-Hamas war in Gaza, where the death toll has climbed to over 40,000, according to the territory's Health Ministry.

He says that Maryland's Jewish community is not homogenous in its views.

"There's a great diversity of opinion within the Maryland Jewish community," he said.

COUNTY CHURCH DIRECTORY

UNITED METHODIST

WESTPHALIA Christian Community Church

"A CHURCH ON THE REACH FOR GOD"

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Office (301) 839-1166
Fax (301) 839-1721
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Wed. Night Bible Study - 7:45 p.m.
Elder Willie W. Duvall, Pastor

Have a Safe Weekend

EarthTalk® Q&A Bee Populations Healthier Near Organic Farms

By Isabel Eddy September 11, 2024

Dear EarthTalk:
Is it true that bee populations are healthier in and around organic farms than elsewhere and if so, why?
—Martin Mason,
St. Louis, MO

According to experts from the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization, bees are responsible for a third of the world's food production. Flowering plants, which make up about 75 percent of agricultural crops, depend on pollinators like bees for seed production, thus ensuring the success of future crop generations. Concerningly, this critical insect faces a multitude of health threats.

Bees are mainly threatened by constant exposure to synthetic pesticides. Neonicotinoids, for example, are common insecticides that affect the receptors in a bee's nervous system. Consuming the nectar of treated plants, even in small amounts, can impair bees' motor skills and foraging behaviors. Other conventional insecticides including diazinon, acephate and pyrethrin are also correlated with declining bee health.

Regardless of whether farms use synthetic pesticides, pests and pathogens such as Deformed Wing Virus are constant threats

to bee health. The Varroa mite, which feeds on the blood and bodies of bees, affects nearly every hive in the U.S. As such, colonies untreated by either organic or non-organic beehive-specific pesticides can expect to survive for three years maximum against infestation before collapse.

Farming monocultures also pose a threat to pollinators, as the nutritional makeup of nectar and pollen varies between crops. When bees are exposed to a single crop, they can suffer from malnutrition and weakened immune systems. Monocultures also tend to be heavily affected by parasites.

Starting in 2006, the rate of Colony Collapse Disorder—the sudden flight of honey bees from seemingly healthy hives—has drastically increased to 31 percent of hives annually. Experts haven't yet identified a singular cause, rates trend lower on farms that meet the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA's) National Organic Program standards, suggesting that organic farms may be healthiest for their pollinators.

Primarily, bees inhabiting organic farms are exposed to fewer toxic substances; USDA's organic standards prohibit the majority of synthetic pesticides and

promote integrated pest management (IPM) techniques such as crop rotation which improves upon natural biodiversity. Organic farms also tend to implement more cover crops and multi-functional insectary hedge rows, benefiting bees nutritionally.

While nation-wide all-organic polycultures may be economically infeasible, techniques such as implementing hedgerows can promote bee health even when coupled with synthetic pesticides. Ultimately, however, an absence of toxic chemicals provides the greatest health benefits; as such, bee populations tend to be healthier in and around organic farms as opposed to conventional farms.

CONTACTS: Alphonse Aitable, co-author of The Beekeeper's Handbook; British Ecological Society, <https://besjournals.onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/1365-2664.13447>.

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