

# The Prince George’s Post



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## Peeking Behind the Curtain: Navy Chief From Seat Pleasant Leads New Training That Informs and Inspires

By SHELBY THOMPSON  
Strategic Systems Programs

MAGNA, Utah—Six Sailors were given a rare opportunity to peek behind the curtain of the development of the most lethal, accurate, and reliable sea-based strategic deterrent on the planet during a Reverse Strategic Weapons System (SWS) Week August 17–21.

The Sailors who attended SPF’s Reverse SWS Week were handpicked from ballistic missile submarine (SSBN) crews on the East and West Coasts and sent to Program Management Office (PMO) Flight Systems’ (SPF) detachment site in Magna, Utah (SPF(B)), where they had the opportunity to see first-hand how the Trident II D5 rocket motors are created.

Strategic Systems Programs is the command responsible for oversight of the Navy’s capabilities—currently the Trident II D5LE SWS onboard Ohio-class SSBNs—that serve as the sea-based leg of the nation’s nuclear triad. PMOs are the “eyes in the



Senior Chief Petty Officer Dwayne Chapman, Fleet Liaison and Senior Enlisted Advisor for Program Management Office Flight Systems, Strategic Systems Programs.

field” as the government representatives overseeing the design, development, production, installation, and testing of the

Trident II D5 SWS at industry partner sites. Reverse SWS Weeks bring a select group of SSBN crew members to SSP’s

PMOs and detachments—dispersed throughout the nation—to give them an exclusive behind-the-scenes look at the missiles these young Sailors maintain, operate, and even sleep next to, all while keeping the weapons at the highest standard of readiness.

For the Navy, the partnership between the fleet and PMO is a confidence builder for the sailors who are charged with operating the weapon system on strategic patrol knowing a real person is out there building the system and interested in understanding the Sailor’s experience operating in a real-world environment.

“I want the fleet to see behind the scenes, and get their buy-in for why the program is as rigorous as it is when it comes to things like changes and updates,” said Senior Chief Petty Officer Dwayne Chapman, a missile technician serving as the fleet liaison and senior

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## Pyramid’s Annual 10x10 Invitational Kicked Off Holiday Season on November 22

223 Artists | 380 Works | \$60 Prices | Special Holiday Programs

By KATE TAYLOR DAVIS  
Pyramid Atlantic Art Center

HYATTSVILLE, Md. (Nov. 18, 2025)—Pyramid Atlantic’s annual 10x10 Invitational open[ed] to the public Saturday, November 22. Pyramid’s gallery is tiled with 380 artworks donated by local and national artists who love the nonprofit art center. In this annual art bash, works each measure 10"x10" and are priced at \$60. The 10x10 is a great opportunity for collectors of all levels to purchase interesting pieces by talented artists at a remarkable price. In addition to prints, mediums include drawings, sculpture, paintings, glass, and mixed media.

10x10 open[ed] to the public on Saturday, November 22. It can be viewed in its entirety through December 4, after which it will be revised each week as works sells through January 4. Gallery hours are Wed–Thu 10–8 p.m., Fri–Sun 10–6 p.m. Pyramid Atlantic is located at 4318 Gallatin Street, Hyattsville, MD 20781. More information at pyramidatlantic.org or by calling 301-608-9101.

### 10x10 Artists:

Bruce Abrams | Christy M. Aden | Jessica Arends | Mosiah Ballard | Anne Barnes | Frank Baseman | Farah Bello | Tracy Benson | Janet Varga Berry | Nanette Bevan | Paige Billin-Frye | Barbara Bitondo | Chelsae Blackman | e bond | Rockin Bones | Margaret Boozer | Pamela J. Bozzi | Katherine Bramante | Servane Briand | Sally Brucker | Jo-Elle Burgard | Adjoa J. Burrowes | Kim Bursic | Ann Butwell | Amy Callner | Gerardo Camargo | Susan Wooddell Campbell | Stephanie Carpenter | Michele Casto | Mei Mei Chang | Nancy Chung | Eliza Clifford | Ellen Cornett | L.A. Crawford | Andi Cullins | Beth Curren | Michael Dal Cerro | Jared Davis | Georgia Lynn Deal | Elizabeth DeLuna | Kristine DeNinno | Leia Dickerson | Julee Dickerson-Thompson | Silvia



In this annual art bash, works each measure 10"x10" and are priced at \$60.

Dinale | Barbara DiSalvo | Elsabè J. Dixon | Pat Doyen | Ariane D’Souza | Cheryl Edwards | Lauren Emeritz | Juan Esparza | Hannah Longbottom Estrada | Michelle Evans | Rosemary Fallon | Judy Folkenberg | Martina Fornace | Annette Fortt | Helen Frederick | Jenny Freestone | Jon Gann | Marie B. Gauthiez | Roxana Geffen | Claudia Aziza Gibson-Hunter | Michele Godwin | Alisa Golden | Romello Goodman | AB Gorham | Maggie Gourlay | Eva Grandoni | Tanya Gutierrez | Megan Haidet | Ellen Reynolds Hall | Dana Hallman | Beth Hansen | Francine Haskins | Kristofer Heng | Meredith Henkelman | Carlos Hernandez | Francie Hester | Mary Welch Higgins | Ellen Hill | Lisa Hill | Tom Hill | Pattee Hipschen | Ennis R. Hodgson | Leslie Holt | John Horowitz | Bohdan Hoshovsky | Li Howard | Tina Hudak | Imar Lyman Hutchins | Annie Immediata | Brooke Ann Inman | Daphne Jackson | Yoshiko Jaeggi | Rose Jaffe | J. Jaffery | Pauline Jakobsberg | Fleming Jeffries | Cynthia Farrell Johnson | Bob Kantor | Ikumi Kayama | Richard Kegler | Trish

Kent | Josh Kery | Kristina King | Alice Kresse | Elaine Langerman | Pamela Harris Lawton | Lauren H. Lay | Khánh Lê | Naomi Le | Jun Lee | Susan Lefler | Sara Leibman | June Linowitz | Leah L-Rubin | Eric Lunde | Caroline MacKinnon | Suzanne Maggi | Bonnie Magness-Gardiner | Betsy Martin | Meredith Massey | Sarah Matthews | Melanie Mauro | Kerry McAleer-Keeler | Laura E. McClure | Sarah McCoy | Philip G. McQueen | Sam Yates Meier | Anna Meyer Zachurski | Jim Modrick | Margaret Molinari | Brittany Murray | Daniella Napolitano | Dominic Nash | Diana Baird N’Diaye | Mame N’Diaye | Sarah Kathryn Noble | Sarah Noreen | Cory Oberndorfer | Amie Oliver | Maya Ormsby | John Ortiz | Jen Pape | John Paradiso | Krista Park | Nicole Parker | Lara Payne | Susan Due Pearcy | Sylvie Phaelan | Holly Porter | Trinity Elena Pote | Lydia Prentiss | Lynn Putney | Cori Quirk | Dominick Rabrun | Randi

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PHOTO COURTESY PGCPs

Crossland High School students, along with their peers across the county, will have access to tuition-free college courses in their school building beginning next school year.

## New PGCPs, PGCC & County Partnership to Bring Tuition-Free College Courses Into Every High School

*‘Dual in the Schools’ expansion to increase equitable access to college credit in every school, save families thousands in tuition and create new growth opportunities for PGCPs educators*

By PRESS OFFICER  
Prince George’s County Public Schools

UPPER MARLBORO, Md. (Nov. 19, 2025)—Prince George’s County Public Schools (PGCPs), in partnership with Prince George’s Community College (PGCC), County Executive Aisha Braveboy and the Prince George’s County Council today announced an expansion of its Dual in the Schools (DITS) program, now slated to bring tuition-free college courses into every high school by the 2026–2027 school year.

The initiative lets students earn both high school and col-

lege credit during the regular school day. It’s now offered in five high schools and will expand to nine this school year, reaching all 25 high schools next school year. The program focuses on English, math, science, and social studies, with courses taught in high school classrooms by PGCPs educators credentialed as PGCC adjunct professors.

By expanding this program districtwide, PGCPs is increasing equitable access to college credit, reducing future tuition costs for families, and providing

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## Victory: Prince George’s County Ends 27-Year-old Breed Ban

By PRESS OFFICER  
Humane World for Animals

PRINCE GEORGE’S COUNTY, Md. (Nov. 18, 2025)—The Prince George’s County Council in Maryland voted in favor of ending the decades-old ban on pit bull-type dogs in the county. Council Bill 097-2025, a comprehensive modernization of the county’s animal control code was championed by Council Chair Edward Burroughs III and represents years of collaboration between local leaders, animal advocates and residents to create a fairer, safer and more effective animal control code.

“Today marks a monumental step forward for our county. This legislation not only prevents the inhumane euthanasia of countless dogs who pose no threat but also makes our communities safer by strengthening protections for residents against genuinely dangerous dogs,” said Burroughs. “By increasing accountability, raising civil penalties, and expanding both the definition and requirements for classifying a dog as dangerous,

we are taking a comprehensive approach to responsible pet ownership. This legislation holds irresponsible dog owners accountable, ensuring that the focus remains on behavior, not breed.”

Leading the effort was Prince George’s Pet Unity Project, a grassroots organization that brought together residents, animal advocates and local officials to identify how the animal control code could strengthen families, address the community’s concerns and improve public safety.

Under the prior law, most pit bull-type dogs entering the county’s animal shelter were automatically deemed unadoptable due solely to appearance. Countless dogs were confined to kennels for months, unable to be adopted or even taken outside. Persistent advocacy from shelter volunteers and PG PUP gradually opened small but meaningful doors. Official policy changes made by shelter leadership first allowed staff and vol-

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# TOWNS *and* NEIGHBORS

## Brandywine-Aquasco by Audrey Johnson 301-922-5384

### THANK YOU BULLDOG FAMILY

On behalf of the Office of Alumni Engagement & Stewardship, thank you to everyone who SUPPORTED our annual Alumni VIP Tent. Special thank you to everyone who lent a hand and a big shout out to those who cheered us on from afar during Homecoming 2025!

For those who volunteered, your energy, teamwork, and commitment helped make this years’ celebration seamless and unforgettable. From check-in and set-up to guest engagement and event support, you kept the Bulldog spirit alive and thriving.

For those who could not make it this time, we felt your support in spirit. There will be plenty of opportunities ahead to get involved, and we would love to have you join us at a future event or volunteer experience. LIVE IN THE MOMENTS WITH US THROUGH PHOTOS! Homecoming by Myles Anderson & Bowie I Boldly Re-united MIXER! Together, we are keeping Bowie strong, one event, one alum, and one act of service at a time.

Thank you again for being part of the BSU family and for helping us celebrate 160 years of excellence and 90 years of Homecoming pride. #BSU4LIFE.

### SPARKS HOLIDAY BASH

“You are invited to the Spark Holiday Bash at Nottingham Myers United Methodist Church on December 6 from 11 a.m.–3 p.m., featuring games, crafts, and holiday activities for children. Calling all parents, do you need to do some holiday shopping? Need a fun, safe place for your children to go? Do you need a quiet moment in your home?”

“The Parish Children’s Ministry will be holding a SPARK Holiday Bash. We will play games, do crafts, and various other activities that celebrate the Birth of our savior and the holiday Season. Please fill out an online registration form for your child to join us on this link!” <https://nottinghammyersumc.subsplash/t6km2ck>. Small Church Big Vision Bigger God. Catherine Watkins

### BOLD BUZZ

Alumni Spotlight: Sisters in Success: Bowie State Alumni Em-

power the next generation of Math Scholars. Bowie State University alumni and sisters Jesseki Kelly and Jasmine Tolson have come full circle, returning to their alma mater to inspire and guide future mathematicians. Once standout students themselves, they now play essential roles in the Department of Mathematics, helping strengthen programs, mentor students and create an environment where learning thrives. Their journeys reflect Bowie State’s enduring spirit of community, resilience and service.

### ALL STAR ATHLETE

Student Athlete BJ Mensah takes Bowie State to the World Stage. When BJ Mensah steps onto the mat, he carries more than just the pride of his sport. He carries Harlem, Bowie State and a message of representation. A power tumbler on the U.S. National Team, Mensah has been making waves nationally and internationally, proving that talent, effort and heart can make the impossible possible.

### CONGRATULATIONS

Bowie State University President Breaux named to the Daily Record’s 2025 Higher Education Power List. “The Daily Record recognized President Aminta H. Breaux among Maryland’s top higher education leaders for her vision, commitment and impact on student success.”

### STUDENT SPOTLIGHT

“When Allissa Barnes, a senior honors student majoring in criminal justice, arrived at Bowie State University, she did not yet know where her path would lead. She only knew she wanted to grow, explore and make a difference. Her first bold step came when she ran for Miss Freshman, an experience that did not end in a win but instead sparked years of leadership, purpose and service that would come to define her Bowie journey.”

### DISTRICT 9 COMMUNITY HOLIDAY MIXER

“The District 9 community is invited to a special Community Holiday Mixer hosted by Councilman Sydney Harrison and Our Sons Rise! Join us on Tuesday, December 2, 2025, from 7 p.m. to

10 p.m. at the brand-new Michael’s Restaurant in Upper Marlboro for an evening of connection, celebration, and live entertainment by the Walker Redds Project Band. Enjoy free admission, tasty hors d’oeuvres, and a festive atmosphere as we kick off the holiday season. Attire is dressy casual/holiday festive. Free admission.”

### LINE DANCING NIGHT

Line dancing night every Wednesday 5–11 p.m. Brandywine, it is UP! Wednesdays just got BETTER at Piano Keys Restaurant & Lounge. Each and every Wednesday, we are turning midweek into a whole vibe. WEAR YOUR DANCING SHOES! DJ Carlos on the 1s & 2s Bringing the Heat. Happy Hour Food & Drink Specials 5–7 p.m. So come early. Free Line Dancing lessons with LaShea Lyonna 7–10 p.m. FREE VIP TABLE, SO COME EARLY. RSVP or for more info: (240) 816-2211. Piano Keys Restaurant & Lounge, 7651 Matapeake Business Drive, Brandywine, Maryland. Tag your crew and let us pack the floor. RSVP OR VIP TABLE.

### UNITED WOMEN IN FAITH

“Displaying her hands for service by the way she willingly gives. Demonstrating the heart of a lady by the way she daily lives. Seeking out women and children to provide for their basic needs. Supporting whatever the mission. Some of the first to take the lead. Strong, dedicated, and faithful to the work both far and near, answering the call in many ways the soul purpose of why she is here. She stands beside the godly men of Clinton CUMC. Faithful follower, sister in Christ for whom the son set free. Only the work done for the Lord will count in the very end. The way she has given to the least of these. She shall truly be called a friend. No program, no service, no earthly reward. No activity under the sun can compare to the words of the Almighty saying, all my daughters, “Well done.” Words by Kendra Neal.

“WISHING EVERYONE A HAPPY THANKSGIVING”

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

### WSSC releases plans for Suitland Road Rehab Project

On October 27, the Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission (WSSC Water) released plans for their upcoming Suitland Road Sewer Rehabilitation Project (Project #CR7309A22 - CTO 113).

The repairs should add at least 50 years to the life of the sewer pipes!

The project is repairing, replacing, or upgrading old and damaged pipes, manholes and sewer mains. It will also address problems caused by corrosion, plant roots, and soil accumulation, in order to reduce sewer overflows and backups.

WSSC Water expects this to involve about 3.16 miles of pipes and 86 manholes, mostly using trenchless repair method.

How will it affect us? For the Morningside/Skyline area, all the work will be northeast of Suitland Road.

Affected roads in the Morningside/Skyline area include portions of Suitland Road, Pine Grove Drive, Maple Road, Boxwood Drive, Allies Road, Elgin Court, Larkspur Road, Morgan Road, Larches Court, Marianne Drive, Randolph Road, Poplar Road, and Pickett Drive, as well as Skyline Drive before Pine Lane Drive, south to Suitland Road (where I live.)

Work is scheduled to begin next month and last into spring of 2027. WSSC Water is planning to work Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.

They will not need access to homes to do this work, and for the most part, will not need to access private properties. Also, they promise to give 48 hours’ notice prior to any parking restrictions in a particular area.

If you have any questions or concerns as the work continues, the

contacts are several, including: Sherbert Hinds (240-638-6319). Walter Guzman (240-444-5803) is WSSC Water’s Customer Advocate for Southern Prince George’s County.

And, of course, if you have a more urgent problem, you can always call the 24/7 Emergency Services Center at 301-206-4002.

### Morningside Thanksgiving

I was among those who gathered at the Town Hall on Nov. 20 to celebrate the holiday. With me was my delightful daughter Kathleen in town from her home in Ohio. Sitting on the other side of me was Tyrone Dodson, who lives on Maple Road. I enjoyed his company.

We had a good lunch, followed by a drawing for assorted items. I was among the first to be chosen and chose a 40-ounce mug.

I want to thank those who planned and worked the event. They were great. The tables were festive. The lunch was delicious. It was a special time.

### Six Flags in Bowie closing

Six Flags America in Bowie closed on November 2. Originally founded in 1974 as The Largo Wildlife Preserve, the park changed ownership several times, evolving across the 1980s from a drive-through safari experience into a rollercoaster-based amusement park.

Six Flags purchased the park in 1999, making it the tenth Six Flags park.

After Six Flags merged with Cedar Fair last year, the Bowie location was the first victim of the new company’s reorganization.

Now our closest amusement parks will be King’s Dominion in

Richmond, Virginia, or Hershey Park in Pennsylvania.

The 515-acre property was put up for sale on November 5, aiming for residential development, mixed-use development, or, if Prince George’s is unlucky, a data center.

### Changing Landscape

The Washington Post’s “Home Sales” has a long list this week, among them: 6013 Elmendorf; 6703 Pine Grove Drive, 6300 Skyline Terrace; and even more. Must be a good season for new-residence shopping.

### Former priest at Holy Family dies

Father Charles H. Muzzy, longtime priest at several Archdiocesan parishes, including Holy Family in Hillcrest Heights, died October 6 at his residence in Laurel. He was 93. He had served at St. Pius X Parish in Bowie and later at St. Raphael in Rockville, St. Mark in Hyattsville, and St. Ambrose in Cheverly.

Viewing was held Oct. 14 at St. Ann Parish in Tenleytown, followed by Vigil Mass. Burial followed at a later date at St. Peter Cemetery in Pittsburgh, Pa.

### Milestones

Happy Birthday to Julie Koch-Michael and Darryl Moss, Nov. 26; Arthur Rose, Nov. 27; Thomas Shipman, Sr., Nov. 28; Devin Kane Blade, Nov. 29; Karen Windsor, Alexis R. Paige, Ramona Britt, Patricia Branch, and Kimberly White, Nov. 30.

Happy anniversary to Gary and Ivy Kline, Nov. 28.

## Promotions & Awards

### Joint Base Andrews National Guard Airman Receives New Rank, New Responsibilities

LATHAM, N.Y. (Nov. 19, 2025)—Air Force Major General Michael Bank, the commander of the New York Air National Guard, announces the recent promotion of members of the New York Air National Guard in recognition of their capability for additional responsibility and leadership.

**Jon Frys** from Joint Base Andrews, Md., and assigned to the 107th Attack Wing, received a promotion October 1, 2025 to the rank of senior master sergeant.

Air National Guard promotions are based on a Airman’s overall performance, demonstrated leadership abilities, professionalism and future development potential.

“The New York Air National Guard is built on a foundation of talented and motivated Airmen, and this month’s promotions are a shining example of that excellence,” Bank said. “I am honored to recognize and celebrate the accomplishments of our Airmen, and I look forward to seeing their continued growth and contributions to our organization.”

### Nuri Abdus-Salaam Named to 2025–26 Men’s Wheelchair Basketball Team at UW-Whitewater

WHITEWATER, Wis. (Nov. 17, 2025)—Nuri Abdus-Salaam from Bowie, MD, who is studying Criminology at the University of Wisconsin-Whitewater, is part of the men’s wheelchair basketball team for the 2025–26 season.

The UW-Whitewater men’s wheelchair basketball program is a club sport that competes nationally. The Warhawks have won 14 national championships since 1982, most recently in 2024 and including a three-peat in 2014, 2015 and 2016.

Many of the program’s alumni are Paralympic medalists, including five who claimed gold as part of Team USA at the Paris 2024 Paralympic Games. Current UW-Whitewater coach Jake Williams,

### 10x10 from A1

Reiss-McCormack | Deborah Remmers | Edgar Reyes | Corey Richardson | Sharon Robinson | Nanette Roche | Ashley Romero | Lisa Rosenstein | Nathalie Ryan | Tracey Salaway | Tyler Sanville | Karissa Scaffidi | Olivia Schrecengost | Adi Segal | Gail Shaw-Clemons | Daniel Shay | Jen Sheckels | Samantha Shelton | Noam Sienna | Elzbieta Sikorska | Susan Silva | Tanja Softić | Gloria Solomon | Milena Spasic | Emily Springer | Raychel Steinbach | Steven Stichter | Jan Stovall | Kamala Subramanian | Henrik Sundqvist | Lynn Sures | Terry Svat | Linda Samson Talleur | Tim Tate | Oluwatoyin Tella | Amanda Levendowski Tepski | Valerie Theberge | Shannon Thomas | Kim Thorpe | Erwin Timmers | Varvara Tokareva | Chadwick Tolley | Sandra Toro | Susan Tuberville | Mary Turpin | Tinam Valk | Roy Ricci van der Stok | Kevin Velazquez | Claudia Vess | Anastasia M. Walsh | Lori Walsh-Van Wey | Jenny Walton | Denise Wamaling | Mark H. Wamaling | Ellyn Weiss | Patricia de Poel Wilberg | Hadiya Williams | Clare Wilson | Tia Wilson | Ellen Verdon Winkler | Max-Karl Winkler | Clare Winslow | Jane Puryear Woodard | Kelley Yang | Lenora L. Yerkes | Rebecca York | Némesis Zambrano | Richard Zeid

Pyramid expanded its gallery in May of 2025 and now has room for larger exhibitions and additional programming. In addition to the 10x10, Pyramid is offering the following programs this holiday season:

### Family Make+Takes

Sundays from 11–2 p.m., Pyramid invites guests to grab a mug of hot cocoa and settle in for a little cottage-core. Open to all ages, these cozy winter-themed art sessions are great for the gift giving season. Work to create a unique art piece while gaining new skills. Good for families, friends, and solo creatives. Register for these events on Pyramid’s website. Drop-ins are also welcome (space permitting).

### Sunday, November 30

Colorful Collage Paper Ornaments | \$30

### Sunday, December 7

DIY Holiday Cards | \$35

### Sunday, December 14

Screenprinted Yeti Stuffie Pillow | \$45

### Sunday, December 21

Colorful Collage Paper Ornaments | \$30

### Pop Up Art Markets

Pyramid is partnering with friends to bring two unique pop-up markets to its gallery. These events are FREE and open to the public. RSVPs via Pyramid’s website are requested. (Note: some experiences may require purchase.)

### Saturday, December 13. 12–5 p.m. | FREE *Winter Solstice Holiday Market*

In partnership with Good Company

Featuring artists and makers who work celebrates the turning of the seasons. Expect art activities, tarot readings, a DJ, and seasonal beverages.

### Saturday, December 20, 12–5 p.m. | FREE *Cocoa & Cornbread Holiday Market*

In partnership with Nubian Hueman

Celebrate the comfort and craftsmanship of Black, woman-owned brands that feed the body, elevate everyday living, and nourish the soul. Expect vendors with interactive experiences, DJs, and, of course, cocoa inspired beverages.

*Founded in 1981, Pyramid Atlantic is a nonprofit contemporary art center. Our mission is to sustain and elevate a welcoming arts hub in Hyattsville, MD that champions contemporary printmaking, papermaking, and book arts. We equip, educate, and exhibit while prioritizing artistic integrity, creative growth, and inclusivity. Our vision is to anchor an arts community that recognizes and uplifts the importance of artists, the intrinsic values of working with your hands, and the economy of artist-made work. Visit [www.pyramidatlanticartcenter.org](http://www.pyramidatlanticartcenter.org)*



# COMMUNITY

## Victory from A1

unteers to handle them, then to walk them, bringing moments of care and normalcy to lives spent in limbo. Major progress was made when rescues were permitted to transfer these dogs safely outside the county, and a federal court challenge shed light on the broader harms of breed-specific laws. By early 2023, out-of-county adoptions were finally permitted, providing many of these dogs with their first real chance at a home.

Through community engagement across the county, PG PUP gathered first-hand stories from residents about how the outdated code affected their lives and their pets. These incremental changes laid the groundwork for today’s repeal, driven by residents across the county.

“We are thrilled to see this long-awaited change,” said Caitrin Conroy, executive director of the Prince George’s Pet Unity Project. “For years, residents have called for fair, effective laws, and this outdated policy has cost our community dearly in reputation and resources, in trust, and in lives. It has strained our animal services system and blocked meaningful progress. The Council’s vote shows real leadership, grounded in facts, evidence, and compassion, rather than fear and myths. At the Prince George’s Pet Unity Project, our mission has always been to help keep people and their pets together through support, education, and access to resources. We look forward to continuing to work together to build a safer, fairer community for everyone.”

### Key Provisions of CB-097-2025:

**Public Safety:** The modernized code strengthens leash-law requirements, updates and clarifies definitions, and increases civil penalties for repeat offenders.

**Efficient County Resource Use:** Prior to these updates, the county spent millions annually on an ineffective policy with no measurable safety benefit. The changes to the animal code replace the outdated, subjective rules with today’s best practices that better utilize staff and resources.

**Supports People and Pets:** The bill launches a pilot program that allows previously banned pit bull-type dogs to be adopted or fostered through the Animal Services Division. Participants must meet strict requirements to ensure public safety while giving more families the chance to welcome pets into their homes. The bill also grandfathers in dogs currently in the county, provided they are registered, and owners adhere to the county’s updated requirements.

### Looking Ahead:

With CB-097-2025 now enacted, the County will move into an implementation phase that emphasizes:

- Public education campaigns to inform residents about the new changes, when they are effective, and available resources.
- Continued partnerships with PG PUP, Humane World for Animals and other local groups to extend pet-care resources to families.
- Regular progress reports to ensure transparency, accountability, and public safety.

Humane World for Animals is supporting this transition by covering adoption fees for dozens of pit bull-type dogs at the Prince George’s County Animal Shelter, donating 1,000 microchips to help reunite lost pets with their families, and providing over \$150,000 in in-kind assistance to help residents care for their pets.

This historic update brings Prince George’s County’s animal code in line with modern best practices, creating safer neighborhoods, stronger families, and a more compassionate community for people and pets alike. The County now joins jurisdictions nationwide moving away from breed-specific laws in favor of evidence-based, equitable approaches to public safety.

*The Pet Unity Project is a local nonprofit of Prince George’s County residents and volunteers dedicated to re-imagining community collaboration around animal welfare. The organization provides education, community support, and policy advocacy to repeal breed-specific legislation (BSL), guide the safe reintegration of previously banned dogs into the community, assist local shelters and adopters, and ensure pets remain with their families whenever possible while keeping communities safe.*

## Fort Washington Medical Center’s Earns Second “A” Grade in Patient Safety

By PRESS OFFICER  
Prince George’s County Economic Development Corporation

LARGO, Md. (Nov. 17, 2025)—Prince George’s County Economic Development Corporation (PGCEDC) proudly celebrates Adventist HealthCare Fort Washington Medical Center (FWMC) for earning its second consecutive “A” grade from The Leapfrog Group, a leading national nonprofit dedicated to healthcare quality and patient safety. FWMC’s receiving the patient safety top for a second time is a significant achievement.

The Leapfrog Hospital Safety Grade—an initiative of The Leapfrog Group, a nonprofit designed to improve the quality and safety of American healthcare through transparency—is a letter grade for hospitals based on their record of patient safety. Grades are issued each spring and fall using transparent, evidence-based measures.

“Fort Washington Medical Center’s second consecutive ‘A’ grade is a win for patients and a win for Prince George’s County,” said Ebony Stocks, CEcD, Interim President & CEO of PGCEDC. “We congratulate the FWMC team for their continued dedication to patient safety and top-tier clinical care.”

Adventist HealthCare Fort Washington Medical Center President Daffodil Baez expressed pride in her team’s accomplishment, pointing to both diligence and professionalism behind the hospital’s strong performance.

“Receiving a second consecutive ‘A’ Grade from The Leapfrog Group is a tremendous honor,” Baez said. “It reflects our unwav-



ering commitment to delivering safe, high-quality care to every patient who entrusts us with their health. I am immensely proud of our staff for their expertise, compassion, and dedication.”

PGCEDC continues to champion healthcare innovation, business growth, and quality-of-life improvements across Prince George’s County.

Prince George’s County Economic Development Corporation (PGCEDC)’s mission is to cultivate and promote a strong local economy supporting entrepreneurs’ and businesses’ growth and prosperity. It is dedicated to strengthening communities through business development and job creation. For more information about PGCEDC’s services to local companies, visit [www.pgcadc.com](http://www.pgcadc.com).

## Maryland Transit Administration Advances Southern Maryland Rapid Transit Study With Second Series of Public Open Houses

Community Input Vital as Planning Efforts Continue to Improve Travel Time Along MD 5 (Branch Avenue)/US 301 (Crain Highway) Corridor

By PRESS OFFICER  
Maryland Transit Administration

BALTIMORE (Nov. 18, 2025)—The Maryland Department of Transportation Maryland Transit Administration will host a second series of public open houses for the Southern Maryland Rapid Transit (SMRT) Planning and Environment Linkages (PEL) Study. These meetings will present the latest technical project analysis, including projected ridership, cost, and environmental and economic impacts, and will help identify potential transit solutions for Southern Maryland. The SMRT project aims to provide an alternative travel option between Southern Maryland and the Washington, D.C. region.

“Public input is essential to ensure the SMRT project reflects the needs and priorities of the people who travel to and from Southern Maryland,” said Maryland Transit Administrator Holly Arnold. “This project represents an investment in the region—supporting access for jobs, education and economic opportunity.”

The study is evaluating multiple modes of transit, including Bus Rapid Transit (BRT), Light Rail Transit (LRT), Hybrid

Rail (YR) and other dedicated and mixed-traffic transit options, all focused on reducing congestion and providing access to employment centers, such as Joint Base Andrews and MedStar Southern Maryland Hospital Center, along the MD 5/US 301 corridor. The corridor extends from the Capital Beltway (I-95/I-495) near the Branch Avenue Metro Station in Prince George’s County south to the Waldorf-White Plains area in Charles County.

### Public Open House Schedule:

**Prince George’s County**  
**Thursday, December 4, 2025**  
6–8 p.m.  
Pareik at Brandywine  
16100 Cadillac Drive  
Brandywine, MD 20613  
Transit access via TheBus Route P84 (Branch Avenue – Brandywine), Brandywine Crossing Shopping Center stop

**Charles County**  
**Wednesday, December 10, 2025**  
6–8 p.m.  
Hilton Garden Inn  
10385 O’Donnell Place  
Waldorf, MD 20603

Transit access via VanGo St. Charles A Route (Waldorf West Library stop) and Indian Head Route (St. Patrick’s Street & St. Phillips Drive / Highgate Place stop)

**Virtual Open House**  
**Thursday, December 11, 2025**  
Details available at: [smrtmaryland.com](http://smrtmaryland.com).  
Comments from the open houses, online comment form and engagement survey will be accepted through January 11, 2026. For questions, accessibility accommodations or more information contact [SMRT@mdot.maryland.gov](mailto:SMRT@mdot.maryland.gov).

*The Maryland Transit Administration is one of the largest multi-modal transit systems in the United States, and operates local and commuter buses, Light Rail, Metro Subway, MARC Train Service, and a comprehensive Mobility paratransit system. The goal of the Maryland Transit Administration is to provide safe, efficient, and reliable transit across Maryland with world-class customer service. To learn more, visit [mta.maryland.gov](http://mta.maryland.gov), check us out on Facebook or YouTube and follow us on Twitter/X and Bluesky Social.*

## Training from A1

enlisted advisor for SPF responsible for coordinating the training event.

The role of SSP’s Fleet Liaisons is, “to provide the fleet perspective to the engineers and [industry] partners,” said Chapman, a Seat Pleasant, Maryland native.

Fellow missile technician Chief Petty Officer Taylor Phillips, the fleet liaison for Program Management Office Flight Systems detachment in Cape Canaveral, Florida (SPFC) who assisted Chapman with the event, also saw an opportunity to recognize the Sailors for their hard work, reinforce their role defending the nation and remind them that what they do day-in and day-out matters.

“The job is not easy by any means, and we need the best Sailors to perform it,” said Phillips. “We are the tip of the spear protecting families across the country, and I cannot think of a better reason to do something, knowing I am adding a stitch every day to the blanket of freedom my friends and family sleep soundly under each and every night.”

### What is a Missile Technician

The six Sailors gathered in a hotel lobby before sunrise on August 18, have a wide range of backgrounds and experiences in the fleet. From some of the newest enlisted submariners to those serving aboard SSBNs for nearly a decade, each have their own story that brought them to Navy service, but all with one thing in common. They occupy a unique role aboard their submarines—missile technician.

U.S. Navy enlisted personnel are identified by a combination of their rank and occupational specialty, known as a rate. Sailors in the missile technician (MT) rate primarily serve on or in support of ballistic missile submarines and receive extensive training in the operation and maintenance of advanced electronic equipment and computers and electromechanical support systems of the strategic weapons systems deployed on SSBNs.

“Missile technicians are responsible for operating and maintaining the whole strategic weapons system aboard the submarine,” said Petty Officer Second Class William Pulley, a missile technician on the USS Tennessee (SSBN 734). “We do a lot of work with the hydraulic

systems, hydro pressure, nitrogen and air, and missile tube heating and cooling, as well as a lot of nuclear weapons security, which is another facet.”

“When you’re on a submarine you’re not just doing your job – you’re doing multiple jobs,” said Petty Officer Second Class Ashlynn Spialek, referring to the multiple collateral duties that submariners are expected to be proficient in, given the small size of the crew.

“My parents were both in the Navy,” said Spialek, a missile technician on USS Wyoming (SSBN 742). “My mom was on a surface ship and my dad was a quartermaster. I grew up with them talking about the Navy and they made it sound really cool.”

“I wanted to do something different,” said Spialek when asked about what made her select the missile technician career path. “I wanted to bring something else to the table and experience a different side of the Navy.”

### Rocket Motors 101

Missile technicians are a rare breed of Sailor, and SLBMs are a rare breed of rocket. Designed to be launched from a submerged SSBN below the oceans’ surface

and able to achieve a flight trajectory into space at altitudes higher than the Space Station, the Trident II D5 SWS is a tangible representation of the U.S. Navy operating from sea to space.

The rocket motors powering space-bound missiles are notoriously large, and the rocket motor for the Trident II D5 missile is no exception. The Trident II D5 missile is a three-stage, solid-fuel, inertially guided missile, with a range of more than 4,000 nautical miles. At 44 feet and weighing more than 130,000 pounds, the Trident II D5 rocket motor packs enough power to propel the missile out of Earth’s atmosphere.

Each stage of the missile has a unique role. After the missile is launched from the submarine and broaches the ocean surface, the first stage rocket motor ignites, providing the initial burst of power needed to boost the missile into the air and propel it toward Earth’s atmosphere. Once the motor is spent, it is jettisoned—dropped—from the missile, reducing its weight and allowing the second-stage motor to ignite. The second stage continues to accelerate the missile, getting it to the perfect speed and

altitude for third-stage ignition. After the second stage separates, the third stage provides the final boost before the equipment section takes over to release its payload.

Each rocket motor assembly has three critical components: the nozzle, the ignitor, and the chamber. Only when all of these are present will a rocket motor function and help the missile achieve sustained flight. The manufacturing process to build these solid-fuel behemoths requires space—a lot of it. SPF(B) oversees the construction and assembly of each rocket motor stage at industry partner facilities scattered throughout Utah, with the government team primarily based in Magna.

“We are embedded with the contractor because we are the design engineer,” said Bart Hall, the lead explosive safety officer for SPF(B). “There’s a requirement to have government oversight here.”

With both SPF(B) and industry teams having a robust on-site presence, some of the smartest people in the world can be found working hand-in-hand on the lifecycle management of the Trident II D5 missile.

“Folks in this office are no-

kidding rocket scientists,” said Hall, as he introduced SPF and industry experts to the Sailors at the site.

Throughout their discussions, the Sailors valued the depth of knowledge and how willing the SPF(B) and industry representatives were to share their expertise. Sailors learned new details about the complexities of building these missiles, giving them a new-found appreciation for the SWS they support. For a few of the Sailors who had participated in flight tests, it added to the sense of awe they felt launching an unarmed Trident II D5 as part a flight test.

“Being able to put your guys’ rockets into space was the culmination of my job—I felt like ‘oh look, this stuff actually works!’” said Petty Officer 1st Class Jason Keller, a missile technician on USS Kentucky (SSBN 737), talking about his experience during a flight test he participated in aboard USS Kentucky.

In addition to an inside look at the more technical aspects of the missile, the Sailors gained important context and details

See **TRAINING** Page A4



# COMMENTARY

## Marc Morial

President and CEO, National Urban League



### To Be Equal:

## The Urban League Empowerment Center: Development With Purpose and With Passion

*“This project is befitting of the legacy of greatness that so many Black New Yorkers have built here in Harlem. It is Black-owned in a time when we are being taught as if the words DEI are that of a slur, when in fact what they are is a representation of the fulfillment of the ideals that make so many proud to be New Yorkers.”*

—New York City Mayor-Elect  
Zohran Mamdani

Harlem has always been more than a neighborhood—it’s a symbol of resilience, creativity, and the enduring fight for justice. [Recently], the National Urban League reaffirmed that

legacy with the dedication of the Urban League Empowerment Center, a transformative development that does more than add bricks and mortar to the skyline. It sets a new standard for what inclusive development should look like in America.

This is not development for development’s sake—it is development with purpose, and with passion. It is a bold declaration that equity and opportunity must be built into the very foundation of our communities.

The Empowerment Center is more than a building—it’s a vision realized. At its heart are 170 units of affordable housing for families earn-

ing between 30% and 80% of the area median income. In a city where housing insecurity is rampant, this commitment ensures Harlem remains a place where working families can thrive. Among its residents will be young adults aging out of foster care, supported by The New York Foundling’s program—a population too often left behind. Here, they will find stability, dignity, and a chance to build a future.

But housing is only the beginning. The Empowerment Center includes retail and office space for minority-owned businesses and non-profits, creating an ecosystem where entrepreneurship and community service intersect. The project is expected to generate over \$300 million in economic activity, with a pledge to hire local residents, women, and people of color. Jobs aren’t just being created—they’re being created with intention.

Perhaps the most profound element of the Empowerment Center is its role as a cultural and historical beacon. In 2026, the Urban Civil Rights Museum will open its doors within the Center, becoming New York City’s first museum dedicated to the American civil rights movement. Unlike traditional narratives that focus on the South, this museum will spotlight struggles and triumphs in Northern urban environments—stories that shaped Harlem and countless other communities. Through interactive exhibits and immersive experiences, it will invite visitors not

just to learn history, but to become agents of change.

The Center also houses the Whitney M. Young Center for Leadership and partners with cultural institutions like the Studio Museum in Harlem and the United Negro College Fund. Soon, organizations such as 100 Black Men of New York and Jazzmobile will join this vibrant hub. This is not just a development—it’s a movement, weaving together housing, culture, education, and economic empowerment.

In today’s climate, where civil rights protections are under siege and diversity initiatives face relentless attacks, the Empowerment Center stands as a defiant answer. It says: We will not be erased. Our history matters. Our communities deserve investment—not neglect. It is a physical manifestation of the Urban League’s enduring mission: to be a bridge between aspiration and achievement, policy and people.

Harlem’s story has always been one of transformation—of turning struggle into strength. The Empowerment Center honors that legacy while charting a course for the future. It reminds us that progress is not inevitable; it must be built, brick by brick, with purpose and passion.

As we look toward America’s 250th anniversary, this project offers a blueprint for what inclusive development can—and should—be. It is not just Harlem’s triumph. It is a national call to action.

—November 15, 2025

### Awards from A2

a former Warhawk student-athlete, was among the alums who competed in Paris. Current Warhawk AJ Fitzpatrick was also a member of Team USA.

Fitzpatrick, a two-time first team National Wheelchair Basketball Association All-American, returns to lead the Warhawks. He was among selections for the 2026 USA Men’s Wheelchair Basketball Tryout Camp, which will be held in January. Fellow returning Warhawk Zach Gorecki was named to the NWBA’s All-Rookie Team in 2025.

For more information on the Warhawk men’s wheelchair basketball program, visit [uwv.edu/rec-sports](http://uwv.edu/rec-sports).

### The Honor Society of Phi Kappa Phi Elects New Members

BATON ROUGE, La. (Nov. 17, 2025)—The following people recently were elected to membership into The Honor Society of Phi Kappa Phi, the nation’s oldest and most selective collegiate honor society for all academic disciplines.

**Elizabeth Curran** of Bowie at University of Maryland Global Campus

**Kimberly Johnson** of Glenarden at University of Maryland Global Campus

**Perri Beach** of Fort Washington at University of Maryland Global Campus

They are among approximately

20,000 students, faculty, professional staff and alumni to be initiated into Phi Kappa Phi each year. Membership is by invitation only and requires nomination and approval by a chapter. Only the top 10 percent of seniors and 7.5 percent of juniors are eligible for membership. Graduate students in the top 10 percent of the number of candidates for graduate degrees may also qualify, as do faculty, professional staff and alumni who have achieved scholarly distinction.

### Students Perform in McDaniel College Choir and Green TerrorTones Concert

WESTMINSTER, Md. (Nov. 14, 2025)—Students perform[ed] in the McDaniel College Choir and Green TerrorTones concert on Sunday, Nov. 23, in Baker Memorial Chapel at McDaniel College in Westminster, Maryland. Both the McDaniel College Choir and the Green TerrorTones a cappella ensemble are under the direction of Senior Lecturer Kyle Engler.

Students include:

**Rin Joseph** of Laurel (20707), a freshman Biomedical Science major at McDaniel.

**Reese Weaver** of Brandywine (20613), a senior Theatre Arts major at McDaniel. Reese Weaver is a member of the Green TerrorTones.

For more information about McDaniel College, visit [www.mcdaniel.edu](http://www.mcdaniel.edu).

### Partnership from A1

students a stronger, more seamless transition from high school to higher education.

“Expanding Dual in the Schools means expanding access, equity and readiness,” said Interim Superintendent Dr. Shawn Joseph. “Every student, in every high school, should have the chance to take college courses and earn credit toward their future. This program strengthens the bridge from high school to higher education and prepares students to graduate ready for one of the Four E’s—employed, enrolled, enlisted or an entrepreneur.”

Crossland High School senior O’Marie Barnes, the 2025–26 Student Member of the State Board of Education, said this initiative speaks to a reality students know well—opportunities are out there, but barriers often stand in the way.

“This helps answer the questions of how they’ll get there and how they’ll pay for it, while also allowing them to save money and time,” Barnes said.

Blending college coursework with high school instruction, DITS and the broader dual enrollment program give students a head start on their futures. Students gain confidence, earn transferable college credits, and in many cases, reduce time and costs toward a degree.

“The Dual in the Schools expansion

is another vision that has been made real as my administration prioritizes achieving a world-class education system for our young people, and one that demonstrates how we elevate the County when we work together,” County Executive Aisha Braveboy said. “Prince George’s County students are extremely talented and brilliant; they are our future and our first priority. They deserve strategic investments into their future and academic advancement, which is what Dual in the Schools is. I am thrilled by each new opportunity that we can provide for families and students pursuing higher education.”

DITS directly supports Blueprint for Maryland’s Future, advancing two pillars: Pillar 2, High Quality Teachers and Leaders, by offering educators new professional growth opportunities as PGCC adjuncts, and Pillar 3, College and Career Readiness, by expanding dual enrollment pathways that prepare students for success beyond high school.

High school educators selected for the program will teach college courses during the regular school day while continuing in their current roles, enhancing professional development and directly impacting student success.

“Public education is under attack by the Trump administration as it continues to eliminate grants and federal programs that help Black and Brown

students. Expanding DITS was a top priority for me because it’s needed in our county now more than ever,” said Prince George’s County Council Chair Edward Burroughs III. “Offering students college courses free of charge will save families thousands of dollars and provide students a jump start on their higher education. I’m so proud that our county government, PGCPs, and PGCC came together to make this a reality for our students.”

High school specialty program applications for the 2026–2027 school year—many which combine college coursework with internships and industry certifications—are open through December 12 for Career and Technical Education (CTE), Academy of Health Sciences (AHS), 3D Scholars, International Baccalaureate (IB), and P-TECH.

Prince George’s County Public Schools (PGCPS), *one of the nation’s 20th largest school districts, has 201 schools and centers, more than 133,000 students and nearly 20,000 employees. The school system serves a diverse student population from urban, suburban and rural communities located in the Washington, DC suburbs. PGCPS is nationally recognized for college and career-readiness programs that provide students with unique learning opportunities, including dual enrollment and language immersion.*

### Training from A3

about the restrictions and rules that govern how they maintain and handle the missiles aboard their SSBNs. SPF(B) representatives walked through some of the common issues and procedural frustrations that missile technicians have when conducting routine maintenance on the missiles and explained why the rules are set up that way. The Sailors came away with new information framing procedures in context and an understanding that requirements are carefully coordinated between SPF(B) and the fleet to ensure the highest standards of safety for the crew.

“We’re hearing from the horse’s mouth why these technical requirements are so important,” said Senior Chief Petty Officer Patrick Smith, the Submarine Squadron 20 representative who helped organize the week’s events from the fleet side.

### Handcrafting the Nation’s Sea-Based Strategic Deterrent

The opportunity for Sailors to come face-to-face with the Trident II D5 missile and to experience the production and disposal processes, is what truly sets SPF’s Reverse SWS Week apart from other events.

The tours and educational sessions the Sailors attended showed them that building the Trident II D5 missile is complex, and there is strong technical reasoning behind the procedures they follow when working on the missiles aboard the SSBN. Industry partners and SPF representatives, led by Lt. Cmdr. Justin Laddusaw, officer-in-charge for SPF(B), broke down how the configuration of the SSBN impacts how the missiles are built and explained how the PMO oversees industry as they carefully construct the missile.

At one stop on the tour, Sailors filed into a non-descript building, stopping in front of a machine responsible for the creation of the propellant that powers all 130,000 pounds of the missile into the air. Gazing at what was described as the “world’s largest kitchen stand-mixer,” the Sailors learned unique characteristics of the specialized equipment with the capacity and power to mix the amount of rocket propellant the Trident II D5 requires.

As Sailors took in the scope of the production, experts guided them from building to building, showing the infrastructure, tools, and workforce responsible for handcrafting the Navy’s strategic deterrent, much of which has been contributing to the SLBM

program for longer than the Sailors have been alive.

“It’s pretty amazing,” said Smith, learning about the equipment in-use since the first Trident II D5 rocket motor production started in 1985. “It’s crazy to think that we came up with all of this 40-plus years ago.”

Equally impressive to the junior crewmembers was how much of the rocket motor production process was done by hand. In a large warehouse, upbeat music played over the speakers as a group of industry employees hand-painted the missiles, frequently pausing to cast an expert eye over their work to find any imperfections. The painting is only one example of the work that is still done by hand at these facilities. The attention to detail and the expectation of perfection every time is one of the reasons that working on the Trident II D5 is a coveted role for many on the team.

That continuity of production is essential to maintaining the capability designed into the weapons system. One of SPF’s priorities during Reverse SWS Week is to give the missile technicians a sound understanding of why the technical standards and policies for the missiles they work on are so rigid. Even the smallest changes to procedures have to go through controls and

approvals, regardless of if those changes are being implemented during the construction of the rocket motor in Utah or during the maintenance and operation of the missile aboard a SSBN.

Bekah Moore, an operations director with Northrop Grumman that supports the Navy’s SLBM efforts, agreed the hands-on work continues to be a defining quality of the D5 rocket motor program.

“We really rely on the ‘technician feel,’” she said,” referring to the familiarity that seasoned technicians feel with the machinery that they operate, which allows them to pick up on the smallest of issues.

That ‘technician feel’ is something that resonated with the missile technicians in the group and it left them with a new level of respect for the craftsmen.

“We take it seriously at the plant,” said Laddusaw. He emphasized that what may seem like a minor technicality in a long procedure could actually have an outsized impact on the weapons system. “SSP takes change control seriously—everything comes into play. We’re not loosey-goosey.”

Hearing the same message from rocket scientists, experienced missile handlers, and senior officers struck a chord with

the Sailors.

“You can see that the same care for the missiles is given here as it is on the boat,” said Keller.

“A lot of people stay with the D5 program because it’s steady and it’s a really great program,” said Leo Reingauld, the tour lead for Northrop Grumman, the industry partner that handles the

day-to-day operations of the rocket motor facilities. “We’re proud of the people working on D5 here, and it makes a difference to see you [the Sailors] here.”

“The level of passion and

See **TRAINING** Page A5

## The Prince George’s Post

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# BUSINESS AND FINANCE

## Social Security Matters

Ask Rusty:

### If We Both Collect Social Security, will our Benefits be Affected?

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

**Dear Rusty:** I reached full retirement age back in June, but I have not yet filed to collect Social Security. My husband currently collects SS funds, and he waited until he had reached full retirement age a few years ago. I am considering signing up now to receive my funds, but I am a little confused about whether I will receive my full benefit or is there some kind of adjustment made based on both of us collecting?

We are a simple case. We have been married for 46 years, so there are no other exes involved in this equation. He did everything online when he was ready to start receiving his funds, but we didn't consult with any advisor when my husband claimed. Now I think that adding me as a spouse might trigger some other things I should consider. Thank you for your advice. **Signed: Concerned Wife**

**Dear Concerned:** Since you and your husband have both reached your respective SS full retirement age (FRA), you are both entitled to receive your full benefits without any reduction. And since you haven't yet filed, you are now accumulating Delayed Retirement Credits (DRCs) at the rate of .667% additional benefit for each month you continue to delay. You will get your full SS retirement benefit (plus any earned DRCs) when you claim. The only question you need to consider is whether either you or your husband will be entitled to a “spousal boost” (an increase) when you claim.

If the SS retirement benefit you were entitled to at your FRA is less than 50% the amount your husband was entitled to at his FRA, then you will get a “spousal boost” on top of your own SS retirement amount (the “boost” amount would be the difference between your FRA amount and half of his FRA amount). But if your SS amount at your FRA is more than 50% of your husband's FRA entitlement, then you will only get your own SS retirement benefit based on your own lifetime earnings record. Spouse benefits are always determined from each partner's FRA entitlement, and if one partner's FRA amount is less than 50% of the other partner's FRA amount, then a spousal boost will be given. And that also works if your FRA entitlement is higher than your husband's – if your FRA amount is more than twice your husband's FRA amount, then he will get a spousal boost from you. Otherwise, each of you will get only your personally earned SS retirement amount, and both of you collecting SS will not negatively affect each other's individual SS benefit.

FYI, the spousal boost amount stops growing at full retirement age, so if you are eligible for a spousal boost from your husband then you should claim your SS benefits now and ask for benefits retroactive to June (your FRA month). However, if you will not get a spousal boost from your husband, you have the option of delaying even further and earning more DRCs (thus a higher monthly benefit). You can earn DRCs up to age 70, at which time you will get the maximum possible Social Security benefit (about 127% of your personal FRA amount if you delay that long).

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The 2.4 million member Association of Mature American Citizens [AMAC] [www.amac.us](http://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](http://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](http://www.amac.us/join-amac).

## Training from A4

level of knowledge that you all put into your work is so impressive,” said Petty Officer 2nd Class Amacio Valenzuela, a missile technician on USS Kentucky (SSBN 737), speaking to workers on the production floor.

Petty Officer 1st Class Brendan Wood, a missile technician on USS Wyoming (SSBN 742) later reflected that reaching this understanding was the most valuable part of the training for him.

“It was the best part of the trip,” said Wood. “Just knowing that we’re not doing things on the boat for no reason.”

### Air Force Partnership

While SPF is the “cradle” where Trident II D5 comes to life, it is also the proverbial “grave” where the rocket motors are disposed when they reach the end of their service life.

“Like salmon swimming upstream, the motors come back home,” said John Dallimore, the Northrop Grumman D5 program production manager.

As the final step in disposal, SPF(B) partners with Air Force units of the 75th Air Base Wing at Hill Air Force Base. The wing executes oversight the U.S. Navy's submarine-launched ballistic missile rocket motor disposal initiative. Partnership and strong communication at every step of the disposal process is a hallmark of the team that accomplishes this final step in the SLBM life-cycle. As part of Reverse SWS Week, the Sailors were able to watch a thermal treatment disposal of a rocket motor, highlighting the full life-cycle of SSP's responsibility over the SWS.

That partnership and commitment to the nation's nuclear deterrent mission was also on display as Sailors and Airmen

participated in a joint tour with the Air Force 309th Missile Maintenance Group at Hill Air Force Base. The tour provided practical knowledge of the maintenance and testing for the Minuteman III Intercontinental Ballistic Missile (ICBM), the land-based leg of the nuclear triad.

Throughout the tour, Sailors learned about the similarities and differences between Air Force missile maintenance specialists and the Navy missile technicians and connected over their chosen career fields as keepers of two legs of the nation's nuclear triad.

Comparing the challenges of life aboard a SSBN and that of manning ICBM control rooms, Sailors and Airmen began sharing their similar experiences, shouldering the responsibilities for the nation's deterrent. One Airman thanked the Sailors for their service, recognizing that

their long strategic patrols, with limited contact with friends and family, was a unique challenge.

### Refilling the Tanks

“We all understand the job of strategic deterrence, but it can be very monotonous,” said Chapman, “The guys and gals in the fleet are doing a tough job, and I’ve been wanting to bring them out here to see the cool side – and it’s all been worth it. They’ve been holding each other accountable to the high standards of this program, and this gives them a refill in their tanks.”

Without reservation, each of the six Sailors expressed that they came away from the week with increased knowledge and enthusiasm for their roles, and for the Navy's strategic deterrence mission.

“It was great getting to see how everything was put together,” said Spialeck. “when you’re crawling around [on the

SSBN] and looking at the missile, you don’t get to see everything that we saw today.”

“I want to take the interesting things we learned here and take it back to my boat [...] if we could get more trips like this where missile technicians can see the production of everything and learn more about their job, and connect with the people around them, I think that would be very beneficial.

“These [missiles] have to be designed, engineered, and built, and these Sailors got to see the processes and talk to the people who do this. Hopefully the Sailors take away that the people here are just as interested in what they have to say as the Sailors are interested in learning more about the missiles. I’m thankful for the opportunity to do this,” said Chapman.

- Strategic Systems Programs is the Navy command that pro-

## M-NCPPC Prince George’s County Planning Board Welcomes New Commissioner Dr. Billy Okoye

By PRESS OFFICER  
**Prince George’s County Planning Board—M-NCPPC**

LARGO, Md. (Nov. 19, 2025)—The Prince George’s County Planning Board of The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission (M-NCPPC) welcomes Dr. Billy Okoye as a member of the five-member Planning Board. Appointed by Prince George’s County Executive Aisha N. Braveboy and confirmed by the Prince George’s County Council following a public hearing, Okoye was sworn in on Monday, November 17, 2025. Okoye succeeds former Prince George’s County Planning Board Vice Chair, Dorothy Bailey, whose four-year term will end on June 15, 2027. Okoye will join Chairman Darryl Barnes and Vice Chair Manuel Geraldo for the meeting scheduled for Thursday, November 20, 2025.

“On behalf of M-NCPPC and the Prince George’s County Planning Board, we welcome Commissioner Okoye to the Commission,” said M-NCPPC Prince George’s County Planning Board Chairman Darryl Barnes. “His experience in business, community advocacy, real estate, and technology will offer a new dynamic to our forward-thinking Planning Board and award-winning agency.”

“My professional journey has given me a practical ground-level understanding of our County’s vision for growth as outlined in the 2035 plan—the guiding framework for sustainable and equitable development across communities,” said Commissioner Okoye. “I look forward to our collaborative work to revitalize the inner beltway neighborhoods into vibrant, transit-oriented economic hubs that attract jobs and opportunities.”

In addition to serving on the Prince George’s County Planning Board, the

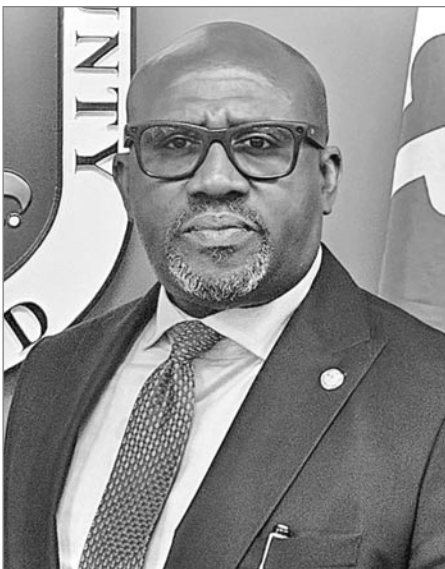


PHOTO COURTESY PRINCE GEORGE’S COUNTY PLANNING BOARD—M-NCPPC

### Dr. Billy Okoye

Planning Board members work with their colleagues on the Montgomery County Planning Board and meet monthly as the M-NCPPC’s full Commission. Together, the commissioners have oversight of decisions for the Montgomery and Prince George’s region.

### About Dr. Billy Okoye

Dr. Okoye possesses more than 20 years of experience in business, community advocacy, real estate, and technology. As founder and principal broker of Sold 100 Real Estate, Inc., he led a team of more than 50 agents and oversaw more than \$250 million in closed real estate transactions. Additionally, he serves as group managing director of BMO General Contractors and founder of Autograph Solar where he has advanced innovation in both the construction and clean energy sectors. He serves as Chairman of the United African Advisory Board under the Office of Prince George’s County Executive

Braveboy where he has been instrumental in strengthening community engagement and representation.

Dr. Okoye earned a bachelor’s degree in sociology and anthropology from Abia State University and a certificate in information technologies from the International Computer Institute. He received a professional doctorate in business administration from the Chartered Institute of Business Managers. In addition, Okoye holds multiple professional credentials including certifications from the Graduate REALTOR® Institute and EPRO Technology, as well as real estate broker licenses with the State of Maryland and District of Columbia.

*The Prince George’s County Planning Board, together with the Montgomery County Planning Board, make up The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission—a bi-county agency established by State law in 1927 to acquire, develop, maintain, and administer a regional system of parks and administer a general plan for the physical development of both counties. In Prince George’s County, the agency also administers the public recreation program. The Planning Board’s responsibilities include supervising preparation of land use plans and comprehensive zoning maps, advising the County Council on zoning map amendment and special exception applications, and reviewing and approving site plans and subdivisions. The Board also oversees the Commission’s work in the County, as carried out by the Parks and Recreation and Planning Departments. In Prince George’s County, the Planning Board’s full-time Chair and four part-time members are appointed by the Prince George’s County Executive and confirmed by the Prince George’s County Council, serving overlapping four-year terms. Visit [www.pgplanningboard.org](http://www.pgplanningboard.org).*

## Rising Layoffs in Maryland and U.S. Linked to Rise of Artificial Intelligence

By JOSEPHINE JOHNSON  
**Capital News Service**

Layoffs in Maryland are up nearly 30%, with about 2,000 more jobs being cut than this time last year. Nationally, this year has seen over one million layoffs—the highest amount for this time of year since the Covid-19 pandemic and the Great Recession.

This year, artificial intelligence is among the top ten reasons given by employers for job cuts, alongside cost-cutting, federal cuts and economic conditions, according to the October 2025 Challenger Report, a monthly job cut announcement report published by Challenger, Gray and Christmas Inc., a business consulting firm.

“We have to treat this as a transition period,” said Balaji Padmanabhan, the director of the Center for Artificial Intelligence in Business at the Robert H. Smith School of Business at the University of Maryland. “We are figuring out what AI can do.”

Looking at the first three quarters of

the year, job cuts are up 55% from 2024.

“There are so many things going on simultaneously, and that’s what’s making it harder to tease out purely the effects of AI,” Padmanabhan said.

Some of the big factors in this year’s job cuts may be more complicated. Technology companies, for example, have been overhiring in the last five years in a rush for talent. Now, they’re realizing there’s no longer a need for those extra employees, Padmanabhan said. As a whole, businesses are facing economic uncertainty and don’t know what the future will cost under the looming fear of inflation.

Earlier this year saw over 300,000 federal job cuts attributed to the Department of Government Efficiency (DOGE), totalling 28% of the total cuts so far. Looking at the beginning of summer onwards, there were few to no cuts still attributed to DOGE. In October, AI was the second most cited reason for cuts, according to the Challenger Report.

AI excels in text, data, summarizing and producing reports. It’s good in infor-

mation jobs, data analysts and customer service. A worker could use AI to do their tasks, and if their job consists only of tasks that AI can do, “then that becomes problematic,” Padmanabhan said.

At the moment, companies are seeing what jobs they can replace, but the type of jobs that people are doing will change to meet this.

“As companies figure out that AI can do new things, they’re going to have to hire people,” Padmanabhan said. “I think we will see a new type of job that starts getting created.”

For the month of October, AI was the second most common reason given for job cuts, right behind cost-cutting.

The Work Adjustment and Retaining Notification Act (WARN) requires employers to notify the Maryland Department of Labor of layoffs and closures. Companies mentioned in the published list of layoffs in Maryland include DAI Global, a

See **LAYOFFS** Page A6



EarthTalk®  
Q&A

Foolish to Rebuild After a Wildfire or Flood? It Depends...

By Grace Lee | November 13, 2025

Dear EarthTalk:  
*Isn't it foolish to rebuild millions of homes in areas ravaged by floods or wildfires given the likelihood that this extreme weather will keep occurring?*

—Mike Aspen, Baltimore, MD

In recent years, the continued global prevalence of climate change has increased the number of weather-related catastrophes. In fact, eight of California’s 10 largest wildfires have occurred in the past five years, resulting not only in the loss of lives but also significant property damage. Due to this repeated phenomenon, many climate experts suggest that towns at a high risk of weather-related catastrophes should be abandoned, not rebuilt. Financial, logistical and safety factors indicate that rebuilding in low-hazard areas can be significantly more beneficial than rebuilding in high-hazard areas.

Building new homes in areas at high risk of flood or wildfire contributes up to \$3 billion to disaster-related costs annually. At the current rate, experts predict that some 220,000 homes could be built in locations exposed to high wildfire hazards by 2030, making for unprecedented financial loss from property damage. In the case of Greenville, California, for instance, rebuilding is predicted to cost around \$1 billion, yet most residents do not plan to return, largely

because experts think the area could be destroyed again in the next 30 years. “Governments can save billions of dollars each year and keep people safe from disasters by building just a small percentage of new homes away from the highest-risk areas for wildfires and floods,” says Ryan Ness, Director of Adaptation at the Canadian Climate Institute.

To make matters worse, the use of fire-resistant material to rebuild is costly and thus not required by law, leading to increased risk. Though urban planners stress the need for fire-resistant design, officials often push for rapid reconstruction, thus waiving environmental permits and zoning regulations.

Beyond the lack of fire-resistant material, the location of rebuilt homes increases the dangers that residents face as the frequency of weather-related disasters such as droughts, floods and wildfires has increased fivefold since 1970 and have led to the deaths of 2 million people globally. Furthermore, wildfires do not just destroy homes—they degrade air quality, water supply and forests, causing permanent detrimental effects.

The Canadian Climate Institute recommends building housing and infrastructure in low-hazard areas, moving away from high-risk zones. Another recommendation is to create, maintain, and make public available maps that show where hazardous areas are to warn potential residents. Moreover, the Institute also suggested re-forming disaster assistance programs as a way to deter risky urban development.



PHOTO CREDIT: PEXELS.COM

In cases where fires or floods are likely to pass through again, it might be better to move on to a less risky spot.

**CONTACTS:** Building new homes in the path of floods and wildfires could cost billions, threaten affordability, <https://climateinstitute.ca/news/building-new-homes-climate-disasters-cost-affordability>

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