

The Prince George's Post



A COMMUNITY NEWSPAPER FOR PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY *SINCE 1932*

Vol. 93, No. 52 December 25 — December 31, 2025 Prince George's County, Maryland Newspaper of Record Phone: 301-627-0900 25 cents



PHOTOS COURTESY BOB HALL BEVERAGE COMPANY

Bob Hall Beverage Company presented their \$20,000 Folds of Honor scholarship donation to Calvert County recipient Jaiden Chambers, recognizing the service and sacrifice of her father, retired US Air Force Master Sgt. Ernest Berlin Chambers, Jr.



Decked out for the holidays, the Budweiser Clydesdales hitch featured 10 horses, the iconic red, white and gold beer wagon, professional drivers and the ever-present Dalmatian mascot, bringing joy to the Southern Maryland communities served by Bob Hall Beverage Company.

Bob Hall Beverage Company Helps Deliver Holiday Magic as Budweiser Clydesdales Delight Thousands Across Southern Maryland

By PRESS OFFICER
Bob Hall Beverage Company

UPPER MARLBORO, Md. (Dec. 18, 2025)—Bob Hall Beverage Company, a 92-year-old family-owned beer and beverage distributor serving Calvert, Charles and Prince George's counties, proudly helped bring the world-famous Budweiser Clydesdales to two Southern Maryland holiday parades this season—marking a historic first appearance at the Calvert County Christmas Parade in Prince Frederick and the much anticipated return of the Budweiser Clydesdales Parade through North Beach.

Both events drew huge crowds of families and neighbors who lined the streets to celebrate the holiday season, welcome the iconic horses and recognize local military and first responder families through Bob Hall Beverage Company's continued support of Folds of Honor.

"For more than 90 years, our communities have supported Bob Hall Beverage Company, and we never take that for granted," said Dan Hoose, General Manager

of Bob Hall Beverage Company. "Bringing the Budweiser Clydesdales to the Calvert County Christmas Parade for the first time and back to North Beach allowed us to celebrate with our neighbors, thank our communities and honor the military and first responder families who sacrifice so much for our safety."

The Calvert County Christmas Parade in Prince Frederick marked a milestone this year with the Budweiser Clydesdales' inaugural appearance.

"Welcoming the majestic Budweiser Clydesdales to our parade was a highlight for our community," said Commissioner President Todd Ireland. "Their presence added a new level of excitement to the beloved local tradition, and we're grateful to Bob Hall Beverage Company for helping make this moment possible."

Just a few days later, the Budweiser Clydesdales brought a sense of magic to North Beach, turning an ordinary winter evening into a shared celebration as families and neighbors lined the streets and gathered along the waterfront.

"The enthusiasm overflows when the Budweiser Clydesdales trot into North Beach," said Mayor of North Beach Mike Benton. "Their appearance brings incredible holiday spirit, and it's extra meaningful to pair this celebration with support for Folds of Honor. As a Marine Corps veteran, honoring the families of those who have served and sacrificed hits close to home for many in our community and we're proud to shine a spotlight on their important work. We're grateful to Bob Hall Beverage Company for helping create a moment that brought joy, connection and lasting memories to our town."

Honoring Folds of Honor Scholarship Recipient

As part of the North Beach celebration, Bob Hall Beverage Company recognized local Folds of Honor scholarship recipient Jaiden Chambers, honoring the service and sacrifice of her father, retired US Air Force Master Sgt. Ernest Berlin Chambers, Jr. The

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Hook & Reel Woodmore Celebrates 10 Years and a Fresh Remodel

By PRESS OFFICER
Hook & Reel Woodmore

WOODMORE, Md. (Dec. 16, 2025)—Hook & Reel Cajun Seafood & Bar at 9201 Woodmore Center Drive is celebrating its 10-year anniversary with a refreshed remodel and new ways to serve the community. The popular seafood boil restaurant is introducing lunch, catering & delivery options designed for making it easier than ever for guests to enjoy their favorite dishes at home, work, or special events.

The remodel brings a fresh, welcoming look to the dining space while keeping the same lively atmosphere that has made Hook & Reel a neighborhood favorite. Along with the updates, the restaurant is also emphasizing birthday celebrations, featuring a new selfie wall and special birthday tables that encourage guests to make lasting memories while enjoying great food, music and drinks.

Hook & Reel Woodmore continues to show its commitment to the community by part-

nering with local schools, businesses, and organizations to host fundraisers. Their most recent event with Phyllis E. Williams Elementary School in Largo last week raised over \$300 to support school programs. A tradition the team hopes to continue with other local groups throughout Prince George's County.

"Thank you, Prince George's County for letting us be your home away from home. To another 10 more, here we come!" said by store owner Shaun Carson, Hook & Reel Woodmore.

Catering orders are now available for lunch, dinner, and late-night gatherings, providing the same bold Cajun flavors in convenient, shareable portions. Whether it's a family party, office lunch, or community event, Hook & Reel is ready to deliver or prepare orders for easy pickup or delivery.

For more information, visit Hook & Reel Woodmore or call 301-773-7779 or visit: <https://hookreel.com/location/lanham/> to place a catering order, schedule a fundraiser, or reserve a birthday table.



PHOTO COURTESY HOOK & REEL WOODMORE

Hook & Reel Woodmore representatives present a \$300 fundraiser donation to Phyllis E. Williams Elementary School.

Governor Moore Statement on the Election of Joseline Peña-Melnik as the Next Speaker of the House

By PRESS OFFICER
Office of the Governor

ANNAPOLIS, Md. (Dec. 16, 2025)—Governor Wes Moore today released the following statement on the election of Joseline Peña-Melnik as the next Speaker of the Maryland House of Delegates.

"The members of the Maryland House of Delegates have elevated a leader who defines public service in every beautiful sense of that phrase. Joseline Peña-Melnik is a fighter—someone who doesn't just believe in the dignity of all Marylanders, but who actively channels that belief into action.

"I've had the privilege of calling Chair Peña-Melnik an ally and a friend for years. We've stood shoulder-to-shoulder on issues that touch all Marylanders, from protecting reproductive freedom to fighting back against a White House that wants to make health care more expensive. I look forward to our continued partnership as she assumes this new role.

"Former Speaker Adrienne Jones leaves big shoes to fill. But I have complete confidence that Joseline Peña-Melnik will carry forward—and build on—Speaker Jones' profound legacy of leadership, while also building a legacy of her own."

Hoyer Statement on Majority Whip Jazz Lewis Stepping Down From the Maryland House of Delegates

By PRESS OFFICER
Congressman Steny Hoyer

WASHINGTON (Dec. 17, 2025)—Congressman Steny H. Hoyer (MD-05) released the following statement after House Majority Whip Jazz Lewis announced his upcoming departure from the Maryland House of Delegates:

"I am sorry to hear that my dear friend Jazz Lewis will depart the Maryland House of Delegates in the coming weeks. He is a public servant of the highest quality.

"From his time on my staff to his impressive tenure in the Maryland General Assembly as a Delegate and as the youngest Majority Whip in the history of the institution, Jazz's leadership and service has benefitted our entire state. For the past eight years, Jazz has been instrumental in securing

numerous legislative accomplishments for our people. That includes many of the Moore-Miller Administration's recent policy achievements. I know Marylanders across Prince George's County and beyond will miss having Jazz in Annapolis. I certainly will.

"Fortunately, Jazz will remain a key player on Team Maryland in his new role as Director of State Government Relations for the University of Maryland, College Park—our alma mater. A proud Terp with unrivaled experience at every level of government, Jazz will excel in that position, just as he has in every other.

"I look forward to continuing to work with Jazz to help our people, our communities, and our great university become even more excellent."

Hoyer Announces \$4.6 Million in Community Project Funding for the Fifth District in FY2026 Appropriations Bill

By PRESS OFFICER
Congressman Steny Hoyer

WASHINGTON (Dec. 18, 2025)—Today, Congressman Steny H. Hoyer (MD-05) issued the following statement announcing \$4,697,000 in Community Project Funding that he secured for projects in Maryland's Fifth District through the recently enacted Fiscal Year 2026 Appropriations Minibus. The House Committee on Appropriations allowed each Member of Congress to submit up to 15 Community Funding Project requests for their districts in the Fiscal Year 2026 funding cycle. As part of that process, Congressman Hoyer solicited requests on his website and submitted 15 projects to the House Appropriations Committee. Five projects were included in the recently-enacted continuing resolution (CR) and minibus appropriations package enacted in November. The remaining ten projects are included in appropriations bills still awaiting final

passage. The combined value of all the FY 2026 Community Project Funding that Congressman Hoyer requested is \$11,890,000.

The funded projects include: **\$1,015,000 for Bowie State University Greenhouse for Advanced Agriculture and Biotechnology Research:** This funding will help BSU create a modern research greenhouse that will give students practical learning experience and bring partners in academia and industry together to advance agricultural and biotechnology research vital to meeting future local and global food needs.

\$800,000 for Town of Eagle Harbor Welcome Center: This funding will go toward the town's construction of a welcome center, containing bathroom facilities, a concession area, and giftshop for visitors and tourists. The center will support local economic development and create a long-term revenue stream for the community.

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FUNBOX Launches Largest Indoor Bounce Park Yet in Maryland

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Healthy Everyday Recipes for Real Life

Nutritious, energy-boosting, egg-inspired breakfasts that save time.

- Turkey Bacon and Spinach Quiche with Sweet Potato Crust
- Broccoli and Cheese Egg White Scramble on Whole-Wheat English Muffins
- Egg "Muffin" Cups with Turkey Sausage and Mushrooms.

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TOWNS *and* NEIGHBORS

Brandywine-Aquasco by Audrey Johnson 301-922-5384

NEW YEAR’S EVE 2025 AT NATIONAL HARBOR

Ring in the New Year at National Harbor! From special menus to all-inclusive events and dueling piano shows, there is something for everyone to celebrate. For New Year’s Eve 2025 at National Harbor, the main event is the massive Big Night DC Extravaganza at the Gaylord National Resort which is one of the largest New Year’s Eve galas in the country. A tradition for 17 years, the gala features multiple party zones, open bars, DJs, 15+ bands, and a big midnight countdown, with tickets selling fast. Expect other local restaurant celebrations (like steak houses offering special menus) and potential fireworks over the Potomac, but the Gaylord party is the central ticketed event for a huge party atmosphere. For more information and tickets visit www.bignightdc.com. Use Promo Code “Harbor 10” to save on all main events & VIP tix.

TRIBUTE TO RUTH HARPER TURNER

Ruth Harper Turner was married to James Garnell Turner of Brandywine, Maryland for over 60 years. She matriculated through Prince George’s County Public Schools and was a graduate of Douglass High School in Croom, Maryland. Upon her high school graduation, she was instrumental in opening the PX Exchange Services at Andrews Air Force Base in Camp Springs, Maryland, and served as its first manager. In 1964, she received a Licensed Practical Nursing Degree from Prince George’s Community Hospital School of Nursing in Cheverly, Maryland, where she served in the surgical wing as the post operating Charge Nurse. Because of her leadership and academic achievement, she was awarded the 1964 Honor Bar for attaining the highest-grade point average in Theory and Practice for Obstetrical Nursing.

After a successful tenure at Prince George’s Community Hospital, Ruth went on to work at Clinton Community Hospital in Clinton, Maryland. Possessing solid nursing skills, Ruth entered the Prince George’s County Public Schools system to serve as a school nurse at Bethune and Gwynn Park Middle Schools until her retirement in 1988.

Within her church, she served on the board of Trustees as a member and secretary. She served on the Usher Board for 21 years with 20 years as President. She was a Chairperson on the Communications Ministry and Chairperson on the Health and Welfare Ministry. Serving at the Health and Welfare Ministry, she offered blood pressure screenings and taught CPR.

During her years as a United Methodist Woman, Ruth was President of the Washington East District Auxiliary and Volunteer Service of the N.M. Carroll Home in Baltimore, Maryland.

A highlight of her church life at Christ United Methodist Church was serving as a Certified Lay Speaker who used her gifts to share God’s Word in sermons and acts of ministry.

A core belief in Ruth’s life was giving back to her community. Her commitment to volunteer and community work was acknowledged by her receiving numerous certificates and awards. Among those recognitions were: Service Ministry Award in Christian Education, Certificate of Merit from Regency Nursing and Rehabilitation Treatment Center, a Certificate of Appreciation for the Food Distribution Program for Prince George’s County, Maryland. Ruth was also awarded the State of Maryland Governor’s Volunteer Service Certificate from Governor Paris Glendening in 1999. This particular recognition was fondly cherished by her. Ruth was a columnist for the Prince George’s County Post Newspaper for many years.

Ruth was a pillar in her community, highly respected. She was always willing to help people. She had a very caring and giving heart. Ruth possessed all the qualities of a loving wife, mother, grandmother and great-grandmother.

AQUASCO, MARYLAND

Aquasco, Maryland offers rural charm with activities focused on farms, wineries, history, and outdoor fun, including visiting P.A. Bowen Farmstead, wine tasting at Robin Hill Farm & Vineyards, exploring history at the Dr. Samuel Mudd House, enjoying the outdoors at Cedarville State Forest, and cooling off at the Edward T. Hall Aquatic Center, plus nearby day trips to markets and historical sites.

Aquasco is an unincorporated area and census-designated place in southeastern Prince George’s County, Maryland, United States, surrounding the town of Eagle Harbor and bordering Charles County. As of the 2020 census, the CDP had a population of 913. Aquasco was home to the Aquasco Speedway. Information from “Wikipedia.”

ROOTS & LEGACY: ANCESTRY & HERITAGE DAY

Dates for Ancestry & Heritage days are Friday, January 23, 2026, at 3 p.m., Friday, February 27, 2026, at 3 p.m., Friday, March 27, 2026, at 3 p.m. Address: National Harmony Memorial Park, 7101 Sheriff Road, Hyattsville, Maryland 20785. Free and multiple dates.

HAPPY NEW YEAR

“Wishing Everyone a Very Prosperous and Happy New Year”

In and Around Morningside-Skyline

With Mary McHale, will return soon!

Cedar Hill Funeral Home Unveils Extensive Renovations

Second chapel, other key elements to assist grieving families, now open

By PRESS OFFICER
Memorial Planning

SUITLAND, Md. (Dec. 15, 2025)—Everstory Partners, one of the nation’s largest deathcare providers, is transforming its funeral homes to emphasize hospitality and comfort for families.

Recently, Cedar Hill Funeral Home became the latest Everstory Partners location, under the Memorial Planning brand, to be transformed in this new direction.

“We want our guests to feel as comfortable as possible as they say goodbye to someone they love,” said Matt Sobon, senior vice president of operations, Everstory Partners. “We have researched death-

care approaches around the world, and everything shows our industry needs to focus on hospitality and how we care for our customers.”

Cedar Hill Funeral Home is one of the busiest locations in the Memorial Planning network. Serving Cedar Hill Cemetery, Lincoln Memorial Cemetery, and Washington National Cemetery, the funeral home hosts nearly 1,400 services each year.

“Cedar Hill Funeral Home provides a welcoming and caring space,” said Reverend Jerome (Sam) Tarver, pastor, Maple Springs Baptist Church and emcee of the December 13 ribbon cutting. “More importantly, a haven for peace and hope. It’s more than

bricks, mortar, and fresh paint; more than a Java bar or new meeting rooms. It’s about ministry that walks with families in difficult times.”

Throughout the funeral home, the renovations introduce modern design elements, including updated colors, furniture, and fixtures, to create a warm, inviting atmosphere.

The highlight of the renovation is a second chapel, doubling the existing capacity and now accommodating services for up to 200 guests.

Key renovation highlights include:

- Redesigned reception areas that create a warm, welcoming first impression.
- A dedicated family suite offering a private, intimate

space for loved ones.

- Well-appointed meeting rooms designed for planning funeral and cemetery services.
- A Java bar where guests can relax and enjoy refreshments.

“Cedar Hill Funeral Home and its cemeteries have been a central part of this community for more than a century,” said Sheria Jennings, funeral home manager, Cedar Hill Funeral Home. “These renovations show our commitment to this area, providing comfort for families during their times of need.”

Memorial Planning, *the parent brand of Cedar Hill Funeral Home, is a family-focused network of cemeteries and funeral homes, offering personalized end-of-life services. With over 450 locations, Memorial Planning providers proudly serve over 66,000 families a year. Visit www.memorialplanning.com to learn more and for a list of locations.*

Everstory Partners’ mission is to create supportive spaces where individuals and families can find solace, meaning, and hope in the midst of loss. Since 1999, the company has grown to include 463 cemetery, funeral, and crematory locations serving more than 65,000 families a year across the United States (including Puerto Rico) on both a pre-need and at-need basis. Everstory is the brand promise, created in April 2023 to destigmatize death care with a unique blend of long-standing traditions of caring for the deceased with a fresh perspective that death is a natural and beautiful part of the human experience that should be planned and celebrated. Visit www.everstory-partners.com.



PHOTO COURTESY MEMORIAL PLANNING

December 13, 2025 ribbon cutting: Cedar Hill Funeral Home became the latest Everstory Partners location, under the Memorial Planning brand, to be transformed to emphasize hospitality and comfort for families.

Honors for Local Students

Kayla Asgaralli Named to Belhaven University’s Fall 2025 President’s List

JACKSON, Miss. (Dec. 19, 2025)—Congratulations to Belhaven University student Kayla Asgaralli, of Largo, MD on being named to the Belhaven University Fall 2025 President’s List.

Asgaralli is among a select number of students named to the President’s List. To be eligible for the President’s List, a student must achieve a 4.0 grade point average while taking a full course load of at least 12 semester hours.

Local Students Receive Academic Honors From Mercy College of Health Sciences

DES MOINES, Iowa (Dec. 17, 2025)—The following students have received academic honors for the fall 2025 quarter and semester terms at Mercy College of Health Sciences in Des Moines, Iowa. To qualify for the Dean’s List, students must attain a grade point average (GPA) between 3.50 and 3.749 for a minimum of six semester credit hours or four quarter credit hours in their most recent academic term.

To qualify for the President’s List, Mercy College students must attain a minimum grade point average (GPA) of 3.75 for a minimum of six semester credit hours or four quarter credit hours in their most recent term.

To learn more about the health science programs offered at Mercy College, visit our website at <http://www.mchs.edu>. Mercy College is the only Catholic college in Central Iowa and is accredited by the Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools.

Bladensburg, MD: **Syntyche Teche**, Dean’s List
Bowie, MD: **Adeline Chofong**, Dean’s List

The Honor Society of Phi Kappa Phi Elects New Members

BATON ROUGE, La. (Dec. 15, 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.

Doreen Johnson of Accokeek at University of Maryland Global Campus

Jade Hackley of Bowie at University of Maryland Global Campus

Paola Chavarria of Laurel at University of Maryland Global Campus

Rebecca Oshokoya of Glendale at University of Maryland Global Campus

Caitlin Brown of Lanham at George Mason University

Staci Jones of Fort Washington at University of Maryland Global Campus

Tracy Owens of Upper Marlboro at George Mason University

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.

Phi Kappa Phi was founded in 1897 under the leadership of undergraduate student Marcus L. Urann who had a desire to create a different kind of honor society: one that recognized excellence in all academic disciplines. Today, the Society has chapters on more than 300 campuses in the United States and its territories. Its mission is to “cultivate a community that celebrates and advances the love of learning.”

McDaniel College Students Participate in Model European Union 2025

WESTMINSTER, Md. (Dec. 12, 2025)—McDaniel College students participated in the Model European Union 2025 Simulation conference in Washington, D.C., held Nov. 13–15. A delegation of eight students represented Portugal and were accompanied to the conference by Christianna N. Leahy, professor in the Political Science and International Studies department at McDaniel.

Students included:

Nishant Manda of Bowie, a junior Political Science and Arabic and Middle Eastern Studies major. Manda also was elected as the chair of a Parliamentary Committee.

Venice Hernandez of Bowie, a junior Political Science major. This was the 25th year that McDaniel participated in the Mid-Atlantic Model European Union Simulation, which engages students in discussions and debates that are both current and topical on the European Union (EU)’s agenda. About 100 students from 15 colleges and universities throughout the mid-Atlantic region participated.

In addition to the Model European Union, McDaniel students are involved with the Model United Nations, Model Arab League, and the Maryland Student Legislature.

McDaniel also offers the National Security Fellows Program, which pairs with any program of study to provide McDaniel students with robust knowledge, skills, and experience in national security as well as the ability to specialize in an area of interest, such as interstate conflict, intra-state political violence, cybersecurity, ethics, and human rights.

For more information about McDaniel College, visit www.mcdaniel.edu.

Local Student Graduates From UT Tyler

TYLER, Texas (Dec. 11, 2025)—The University of Texas at Tyler recognize[d] fall 2025 degree candidates during UT Tyler’s Fall 2025 Commencement December 12–13.

Upper Marlboro, MD: **Timileyin Sofola**, School of Nursing, Bachelor of Science in Nursing

BUSINESS AND FINANCE

Social Security Matters

Ask Rusty:

Why Won’t Social Security Give me my Benefits?

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

Dear Rusty: I called the Social Security office, as well as went with my husband when he went to collect his Social Security. Because I work full-time (at about \$800/week), they said I could not file for my Social Security. Yet I seem to read articles all the time about people doing so.

My husband just filed for his benefits and is now collecting them. Out of the two of us, his Social Security will be larger. Please advise me. **Signed: Wanting my Benefits**

Dear Wanting my Benefits: If you have not yet reached your SS full retirement age (FRA) and you are working full time, you are likely being affected by Social Security’s Annual Earnings Test, which limits how much you can earn while collecting Social Security prior to your FRA. Your FRA is somewhere between 66 and 67, depending on when you were born. The annual earnings limit for those collecting SS benefits prior to FRA in 2025 is \$23,400 (changes yearly) and, if that is exceeded, Social Security will take away benefits equal to \$1 for every \$2 you are over the limit. If you applied for your benefits and are still working, and were denied, it’s likely because Social Security determined that your current annual earnings considerably exceed the earnings limit and, thus, you cannot collect benefits. That’s because the penalty for exceeding the limit would be more than your benefit amount. FYI, the earnings limit will go away when you reach your full retirement age so, after FRA, you can claim your benefits even if you are still working. Or if you stop working before your FRA you can collect your SS benefits at that time.

None of this means you are losing money, because your monthly SS payment will continue to grow until you later claim (e.g., after you stop working, or only work part-time), or until you reach 70 years of age. When you later claim, your monthly benefit will be higher and, depending on your longevity, you may recover what you didn’t get now because you are working. And that includes both your own SS retirement benefit and any spousal boost you may be entitled to from your husband.

So, my suggestion is this: as long as you are working full time and exceeding Social Security’s annual earnings limit, continue to wait to claim your Social Security. Then, when you reach your full retirement age (again, between 66 and 67, depending on the year you were born), or if you stop working before that, go ahead and apply for Social Security again. At that time, your application will be approved, and you will be awarded your own earned SS retirement amount plus any additional amount you may be due as your husband’s spouse. To be entitled to a spousal boost from your husband, your own FRA entitlement must be less than 50% of your husband’s FRA entitlement. But the amount you get will be reduced if you claim before your full retirement age..

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.

Dr. Sharon Gibbs Cooper, DHA Graduates From Leadership Maryland’s Emerging Leader Program

By PRESS OFFICER
Leadership Maryland

EASTON, Md. (Dec. 2, 2025)—Leadership Maryland announced today that Dr. Sharon Gibbs Cooper, Senior Faculty Specialist at the University of Maryland Institute for Governmental Service and Research, has completed the Emerging Leader Program, the new professional development program targeting the rising stars within our state’s public, private, government, education and nonprofit sectors. Leadership Maryland honored Dr. Cooper, a resident of Laurel, and the entire Emerging Leader 2nd Class at its 32nd graduation ceremony held December 2 at the Westin Annapolis. Dr. Cooper is now a member of Leadership Maryland’s powerful alumni network, consisting of more than 1,600 esteemed leaders from all over the state.

Dr. Cooper was one of 37 individuals selected to complete the six-month hands-on learning program, consisting of monthly day-long sessions that included both interactive training led by a facilitator and panel discussions featuring leaders from across the state as guest speakers. The program’s curriculum offered a holistic approach to leadership development, designed to help each applicant increase their self-awareness and gain behaviors, skills, and tools to become more adaptive, inclusive, strategic, and impactful leaders. “On behalf of our staff, board, and



PHOTO COURTESY LEADERSHIP MARYLAND

Laurel resident, Dr. Sharon Gibbs Cooper, Senior Faculty Specialist at the University of Maryland Institute for Governmental Service and Research

membership, I congratulate the Executive Program Class of 2025 and Emerging Leader 2nd Class on their incredible achievement,” said David Fike ’16 (LM), president and CEO, Leadership Maryland. “The graduates of both programs have demonstrated an unwavering commitment to personal and professional growth, and I am confident they will continue to drive meaningful change in their communities and across Maryland as part of our alumni network.”

The Emerging Leader Program is open to individuals who are advancing in their careers, are actively involved in their communities, and desire to become stronger leaders in both areas. Ideal Leadership

Maryland members have a desire to learn more about Maryland’s most critical issues and a personal commitment to be a force for positive change in their organizations, their communities, and their state.

For more information about Leadership Maryland, please visit leadershipmd.org, call 410-841-2101 or email info@leadershipmd.org

Leadership Maryland is a statewide non-profit offering professional development programs dedicated to building a better Maryland by harnessing the strength of its business and community leaders. Established in 1992, Leadership Maryland’s Executive Program selects as many as 53 diverse and accomplished senior-level leaders from Maryland’s public and private sectors each year to come together as a class for an eight-month learning program focused on the state’s most vital social, economic and environmental issues. And new in 2024, Leadership Maryland’s Emerging Leader Program brings together a class of 30–40 of the state’s rising stars and gives them the skills and tools they need to advance in their careers. With an alumni network comprised of leaders from all industries and regions of the state, Leadership Maryland has established thousands of Marylanders on their career leadership path, equipped with the knowledge, skills, and connections needed to influence positive change. To learn more, please visit leadershipmd.org.

Leadership Maryland Announces 2026 Officers and Directors

By PRESS OFFICER
Leadership Maryland

MARYLAND (Dec. 10, 2025)—Leadership Maryland, the professional development program dedicated to building a better Maryland by harnessing the strength of its local business and community leaders, announces the election of its officers and board of directors for the coming year. These individuals will each begin a two-year term beginning January 1, 2026.

Newly elected officials:

- Chair: Eli Modlin ’19 (LM), chief of staff and vice president of public affairs & strategic initiatives, Salisbury University
- Vice Chair: Diane Devaney ’16 (LM), president & founder, Devaney & Associates, Inc.
- Secretary: Blair Brennan Slaughter, PhD ’19 (LM), CEO & founder, Delve Consulting and DelveHR
- Treasurer: Chris Borgal CSM ’16 (LM), vice president of asset management, The Peterson Companies/National Harbor

Newly elected directors:

- Steve Blair ’24 (LM), president, Lyceum Insurance Services, LLC

- Elaine Chang ’22 (LM), former director, Department of Partnerships Unit, Montgomery County Public Schools
- Leah Gregg EL 1st Class (SM), vice president and director, Deposit Services, First United Bank and Trust
- Jackie Lopez ’24 (LM), president, Premier Enterprise Solutions, LLC
- Vonica Molock ’23 (LM), director, IT Strategy & Planning, Perdue Farms Inc.
- Michael J. White EL 1st Class (SM), assistant fire chief, Prince George’s County Fire/EMS Department
- Jeremy Goldman ’22 (LM), executive director of business development, Choptank Electric Cooperative
- Kirkland Murray ’22 (LM), president & CEO, Anne Arundel Workforce Development Corporation

Leadership Maryland also extends its gratitude to former board members Mindy Lehman ’14 (LM), chief government relations & policy officer, Maryland Technology Development Corp. (TEDCO); Rhea Harris, MBA, J.D. ’13, deputy chief – legislative affairs, Office of The Attorney General; Dr. Patricia W. Simpson ’19, former superintendent, Queen Anne’s County Public Schools; Reggie Turner ’21, president, Turner Wealth Management; and Charles Gayle ’22 (LM), assistant United States attorney, United States Attorney’s

Offices.

For more information about Leadership Maryland or program application information, please visit www.leadershipmd.org or call 410-841-2101.

Leadership Maryland is a statewide non-profit offering professional development programs dedicated to building a better Maryland by harnessing the strength of its business and community leaders. Established in 1992, Leadership Maryland’s Executive Program selects as many as 53 diverse and accomplished senior-level leaders from Maryland’s public and private sectors each year to come together as a class for an eight-month learning program focused on the state’s most vital social, economic and environmental issues. And new in 2024, Leadership Maryland’s Emerging Leader Program brings together a class of 30–40 of the state’s rising stars and gives them the skills and tools they need to advance in their careers. With an alumni network comprised of leaders from all industries and regions of the state, Leadership Maryland has established thousands of Marylanders on their career leadership path, equipped with the knowledge, skills, and connections needed to influence positive change. To learn more, please visit leadershipmd.org.

Clydesdales from A1

company proudly supports the Folds of Honor mission, which provides educational scholarships to the families of fallen or disabled military service members and first responders, and contributed \$20,000 to the organization this year, marking its fifth consecutive year of giving.

A Tradition Nearly a Century in the Making

The Budweiser Clydesdales have been part of American tradition since 1933, when August A. Busch Jr. and Adolphus Busch III surprised their father with a six-horse Clydesdale hitch to commemorate the repeal of Prohibition. Today, three traveling hitches—each with 10 horses, the iconic red, white and gold beer wagon, professional drivers and a Dalmatian mascot—bring smiles and joy to communities across the country.

Through these appearances in Calvert County and North Beach, Bob Hall Beverage Company continues its long-standing commitment to honor those who serve and celebrate with the Southern Maryland community it has called home for 92 years.

Founded in 1933, the year Prohibition was repealed, Bob Hall Beverage Company is a 92-year-old family-owned beer and beverage distributor serving Calvert, Charles and Prince George’s Counties. Its portfolio includes the Anheuser-Busch InBev and Constellation families of beers, along with leading craft and non-alcoholic beverages. Bob Hall is deeply committed to corporate social responsibility, environmental stewardship and supporting the communities where its customers and employees live and work. Learn more at www.bobhallbeverage.com.

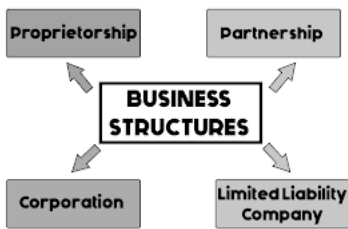
Folds of Honor is a 501(c) (3) nonprofit organization that provides educational scholarships to the spouses and children of US military

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 nearly 73,000 scholarships totaling over \$340 million in all 50 states. Among the students served, 43 percent are minorities and 57 percent female. A total of 91 percent of expenses fund our mission of providing educational scholarships to the families of our nation’s heroes. 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 serving as Commander of Recruiting for the Oklahoma Air Guard. For more information or to donate in support of a Folds of Honor scholarship visit <https://foldsofhonor.org>.

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Maryland Small Business Development Center

Choosing The Right Legal Structure for Your Business



January 20, 2026 • 10 a.m. to 11 a.m.

Location: Online •
Cost: Free of Charge-**Registration Required:**
<https://mdsbdc.eccenterdirect.com/events/18418>

Forming a business can be confusing with regards to choosing the appropriate tax structure that works for your individual situation. This discussion will cover the various choices available to business owners and the income tax implications of each. Presenter, Cindy Sentelle, CPA MST President, Sentelle Corporate Solutions, LLC

COMMUNITY

FUNBOX Launches Largest Indoor Bounce Park Yet in Maryland

By PRESS OFFICER
FUNBOX

BOWIE, Md. (Dec. 18, 2025)—It’s time to bounce! FUNBOX, the company behind one of the largest indoor bounce parks, is bringing its biggest location yet to Bowie, Md. with a high-energy grand opening on Dec. 20, 2025. Packed with immersive attractions designed for all ages, FUNBOX invites guests to bounce, climb and play their way through endless fun.

Located at 3861 Evergreen Pkwy., the massive 20,000-square-foot indoor playground includes a 10,000-square-foot inflatable bounce park, six birthday rooms, a prize and redemption room and arcade games. It’s the perfect year-

round destination for families looking to stay active, celebrate special moments and have fun, rain or shine.

“Our Bowie location is the biggest FUNBOX yet,” said Timi Omatayo, franchisee owner. “We’re thrilled to bring this all-ages experience to Maryland. Whether you’re here for a birthday party, school outing or just an afternoon of fun, FUNBOX is all about bringing people together in a vibrant, high-energy space.”

When it’s time to party, FUNBOX delivers more than just bounce, it brings the ultimate celebration experience! With flexible party rooms and endless customization options, everything from birthdays to spirited school outings can be transformed into unforgettable

events, complete with food, decor and themes.

Walk-up and scheduled jump times are available. FUNBOX will welcome guests seven days a week. For more information, please visit funbox.com/bowie.

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FUNBOX, *one of the largest indoor bounce parks, features slides, obstacle courses, climbing walls and more. It is an affordable experience for all families. FUNBOX is dedicated to providing year-round fun for guests of all ages. In addition, FUNBOX is an ideal location for birthday parties, company parties, school field trips, and fundraisers. FUNBOX has every guest bouncing with joy. Visit funbox.com/bowie.*



PHOTO COURTESY FUNBOX

FUNBOX, in the company behind one of the largest indoor bounce parks, celebrated its biggest location yet in Bowie, Md. with a high-energy grand opening on Dec. 20, 2025.

Slim Chickens Gears Up for New Restaurant Opening in Clinton

Owners, Darrin and Dennis Atlas, and Rob Kidwell continue to grow the better chicken concept throughout Maryland with the new Clinton Opening

By PRESS OFFICER
Slim Chickens

CLINTON, Md. (Dec. 15, 2025)—Slim Chickens, a leader in the “better chicken” segment of fast-casual restaurants, will continue expansion of its 100% fresh chicken and unrivaled flavor in Maryland, with its newest opening at 6444 Coventry Way in Clinton on December 15.

Slim Chickens franchisees Darrin and Dennis Atlas and Rob Kidwell have been part of the Slim Chickens family since 2018 and bring extensive experience in the restaurant industry, including ownership of additional Slim Chickens locations in Bowie, California, and Gambrills, MD, as well as Firehouse Subs franchises. Before joining the brand, Dennis worked in commercial construction while Darrin operated Firehouse Subs franchises.

“The people, the food, and the direction Slim Chickens is taking the brand really drew us in,” said Darrin. “Our favorite items on the menu have to be the tenders and fried mushrooms. We’re especially excited to bring Slim Chickens to the Andrews Air Force Base community. We can’t wait to serve them and give back to the community

that has supported us over the years.”

Aside from bringing its famous, delicious fried chicken and Southern-inspired sides to the area, the new Slim Chickens location in Clinton will also make a positive economic impact with 60+ new jobs anticipated in the community.

The Clinton opening is one piece in Slim Chickens’ larger growth story. Since its founding in 2003, the brand has celebrated over 250 locations opened and a fanatical following in 34 U.S. states, as well as international locations in the United Kingdom and Germany, with an overall goal of opening 600 restaurants within the next decade. In Maryland alone, the brand has already grown quickly to five locations.

“Our freshly made southern dishes and homemade recipes create loyal guests who feel good about the food they’re eating and we’re proud to be able to grow our loyal fan base into the Clinton market,” said Slim Chickens Chief Operating Officer Sam Rothschild.

By focusing on providing only 100% fresh chicken tenders that are buttermilk-marinated, hand-breaded and always cooked fresh-to-order, the brand has com-

mitted to providing a “better chicken” experience that can’t be found anywhere else. In addition, a choice of 14 housemade sauces adds exceptional flavor and has earned admiration from both guests and critics alike. Slim Chickens also offers fresh sandwiches, salads, wraps and its signature chicken and waffles. To offset the savory side of the menu, rotating desserts served in Mason jars are also available.

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Slim Chickens opened in 2003 in Fayetteville, Arkansas, with a focus on fresh, delicious food with a southern flair in a fast-casual setting. Guests can always expect fresh chicken tenders and wings cooked to order and served with housemade dipping sauces. With more than 250 locations opened and a fanatical following in 34 U.S. states, as well as international locations in the United Kingdom, the eternally cool brand is an emerging national and international franchise leading the “better chicken” segment with a goal to grow over 600 restaurants over the next decade. Southern hospitality is not just for the South; everyone, everywhere can appreciate honest food to socialize with friends and neighbors. Visit <https://slimchickens.com>.

Marietta Historic Site & Museum Presents: Program for Families: Yoruba Language and Culture

By STACEY HAWKINS
Marietta Historic Site & Museum

Please join us on **Saturday, January 10, 2026**, 11 a.m.–1 p.m. for an energetic and fun “Program for Families: Yoruba Language and Culture”.

Dr. Taiye Ayoola-Adedeji is the author of the interactive bilingual (English and Yoruba) book “The Yoruba Sound Book for Children”. She will engage children and adults in fun cultural activities including music and play about the Yoruba people and culture. She engages families in using Yoruba words for colors, animals, foods, greetings, and seasons.

Recommended for ages 4-12 with an accompanying adult. All ages under 18 must be accompanied by an adult. FREE event. Registration is requested. Please register at www.pg-parksdirect.com and use ticket code: MHM-SPEC-GA-20260110. Walk-ins are welcome.

For more information, please call 301-464-5291 or email mariettahouse@pgparks.com

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



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Contents © 2025, The Prince George’s Post

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Prince George’s County, Md. Member National Newspaper Publishers Association, and the Maryland, Delaware, District of Columbia Press Association.

The Prince George’s Post (ISSN 10532226) is published every Thursday by the New Prince George’s Post Inc., 15209 Marlboro Pike, Suite 209, Upper Marlboro, Md. 20772-3151.

Subscription rate: 25 cents per single copy; \$15 per year; \$7.50 senior citizens and students; out of county add \$1; out of state add \$2. Periodical postage paid at Southern Md. 20790.

Postmaster, send address changes to Prince George’s Post, P.O. Box 1001, Upper Marlboro, Md. 20773.

HEALTHY EATING

Healthy Everyday Recipes for *Real Life*



Nutritious, Energy-Boosting, Egg-Inspired Breakfasts That Save Time

FAMILY FEATURES

When planning meals, particularly breakfasts, there are a few critical factors many families consider: taste, simplicity and nutrition. Eating healthier doesn’t have to be complicated or out of reach. With the right inspiration, healthy food can be delicious, nutritious and convenient.

By choosing ingredients like eggs, which are easy to use and versatile, you can make healthy living fit into your life at the breakfast table as part of a balanced diet. For example, these egg-inspired recipes are part of the American Heart Association’s Healthy for Good Eat Smart initiative, nationally supported by Eggland’s Best.

In addition to the social and emotional benefits of dining together, shared family meals can help promote healthier choices at the table. Backed by expert nutrition guidance, recipes such as Turkey Bacon and Spinach Quiche with Sweet Potato Crust are wholesome, flavorful and fast, perfect for busy weekdays or anytime you need a nutritious boost. The sweet potato crust offers a better-for-you twist on ready-made or traditional crusts made with butter, and it can be served with slices of honeydew or berries for an added touch of sweetness.

For a protein-rich dish any day of the week, Broccoli and Cheese Egg White Scramble on Whole-Wheat English Muffins can help you solve the morning rush. Or for a true timesaver, these Egg “Muffin” Cups with Turkey Sausage and

Mushrooms can be made over the weekend and frozen or refrigerated for quick, go-to meals throughout the week.

Remember, healthy eating isn’t just about one food – it’s about a combination of wholesome ingredients to make well-rounded meals. For example, eggs can be included as part of a heart-healthy diet that emphasizes vegetables, fruits, beans, nuts and seeds, whole grains, lean protein and fish, according to the American Heart Association. Eating eggs alongside foods high in saturated fat – like bacon – is different than eggs eaten with steamed veggies, whole grains or a side of fruit.

To find more healthy eating tips and recipes that help you eat smart, move more and live healthier, visit Heart.org.

Turkey Bacon and Spinach Quiche with Sweet Potato Crust

Recipe courtesy of the American Heart Association with support from Eggland’s Best

Servings: 5

- Nonstick cooking spray
- 1 medium sweet potato, peeled
- 1 teaspoon canola or corn oil
- 1 medium yellow onion, diced
- 6 slices uncured, nitrate-free turkey bacon, thinly sliced
- 10 ounces frozen chopped spinach, thawed
- 3/4 teaspoon dried dillweed, crumbled
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 1/4 teaspoon freshly ground pepper
- 4 large egg whites
- 2 large eggs
- 1/4 cup fat-free milk
- 1 1/2 tablespoons fat-free feta cheese

Preheat oven to 400 F. Lightly spray 9-inch pie pan with nonstick cooking spray.

In medium bowl, using box grater, grate sweet potato. Measure out 2 cups. Gently press sweet potato on bottom and up sides of pan, forming crust. Sweet potato will be loose but will hold together once cooked.

Bake 20 minutes, or until crust is cooked. Remove from oven. Let stand to cool. Reduce oven temperature to 350 F.

In medium skillet, heat oil over medium-high heat, swirling to coat bottom. Cook onion 6 minutes, or until almost translucent, stirring frequently. Add turkey bacon. Cook 3-4 minutes, or until onion and bacon begin to brown, stirring frequently. Add spinach, dillweed, salt and pepper. Cook 1-2 minutes, or until water from spinach is released. Remove from heat. Transfer mixture into sweet potato crust.

In medium bowl, whisk egg whites, eggs and milk. Pour over mixture in crust. Sprinkle feta over top.

Bake 35-40 minutes, or until knife inserted into center comes out clean. Transfer to cooling rack. Let cool 10 minutes before cutting into wedges.

Broccoli and Cheese Egg White Scramble on Whole-Wheat English Muffins

Recipe courtesy of the American Heart Association with support from Eggland’s Best

Servings: 4

- Nonstick cooking spray
- 1 1/2 cups finely chopped fresh or frozen broccoli florets, thawed if frozen
- 1/4 cup water
- 8 extra-large egg whites
- 1/2 cup fat-free milk
- 1/4 teaspoon freshly ground pepper
- 1/4 cup shredded fat-free cheddar cheese
- 2 whole-wheat, low-sodium English muffins

Lightly spray large skillet with nonstick cooking spray. Heat over medium-high heat. Cook broccoli and water 4-5 minutes, or until broccoli is tender. Remove from heat. Transfer broccoli to dish. Using paper towels, wipe skillet clean.

In large bowl, whisk egg whites, milk and pepper until combined.

Lightly spray skillet with cooking spray. Heat over medium-high heat. Pour in egg white mixture. Cook 2-3 minutes, or until almost firm, stirring constantly with spatula. Stir in broccoli and cheddar cheese. Remove from heat.

Just before serving, split and toast English muffins. Transfer to plates. Spoon egg mixture onto muffins.



Egg “Muffin” Cups with Turkey Sausage and Mushrooms

Recipe courtesy of the American Heart Association with support from Eggland’s Best

Servings: 6

- Nonstick cooking spray
- 1/2 tablespoon canola or corn oil
- 1 yellow onion, finely chopped
- 1 package (8 ounces) sliced white mushrooms

- 1 package (6.4 ounces) frozen, cooked, nitrate-free turkey sausage links, thawed
- 7 large eggs
- 1/4 cup fat-free milk
- 1/4 teaspoon pepper
- 1 cup shredded fat-free cheddar cheese

Preheat oven to 350 F. Lightly spray 12-cup muffin pan with nonstick cooking spray.

In medium nonstick pan, heat oil over medium-high heat. Cook onions

and mushrooms 10 minutes, or until soft, stirring occasionally.

Warm turkey sausage according to package directions. Chop turkey into bite-size pieces. Stir into onion mixture until well blended. Spoon into muffin cups.

In small bowl, whisk eggs, milk and pepper. Pour egg mixture into muffin cups. Top with cheddar cheese.

Bake 25 minutes, or until eggs are set. Remove from oven. Let cool slightly.

To easily remove muffins from pan, run knife around edges of each muffin.

EarthTalk®
Q&A

AI Data Centers Erasing Energy Efficiency Gains

By Enhan Yuan | December 10, 2025

Dear EarthTalk:
What’s being done to make data centers more energy efficient today, given increased demand from the growth in Artificial Intelligence (AI)?

—Paul B., Reston, VA

The modern world hums with data, over 2.5 quintillion bytes generated every day, driving a growing network of data centers that consume one to two percent of global electricity. These centers operate around the clock, using tens of thousands of gigawatt-hours of power monthly. As AI expands, the energy demands of the digital economy will push tech companies to seek cleaner and more efficient solutions.

One advance comes from the University of Waterloo, where researchers developed ultra-efficient “code kernels” to speed internet traffic while cutting power. Data centers rely on the Linux operating system to route information. Computer scientist Martin Karsten and Fastly engineer Joe Damato created roughly 30 lines of code that could cut energy use by as much as 30 percent. Karsten estimates that widespread adoption could save considerable electricity world-wide—affecting nearly every online service request.

Companies are also rethinking how data centers are powered. Wind and solar offer clean energy, but their intermittency complicates matters. Google and Microsoft are investing in nuclear en-

ergy as a steady, carbon-free power source. Despite high upfront costs and public concern, nuclear’s reliability and low emissions make it an increasingly attractive option. Hardware efficiency is also improving. Nvidia’s new “superchips” can train AI models more quickly using less electricity per task. But with over 400 billion transistors packed onto a single chip, these processors generate enormous heat—creating another environmental burden: Heat is a major byproduct of data centers, and removing it takes huge amounts of water. In 2022 alone, Google and Microsoft consumed a total of 32 billion liters, largely for cooling. To reduce water dependence, some companies are testing liquid cooling systems that circulate oil-based fluids directly over hot components, conserving water and use much less energy than air cooling.

AI amplifies all of pressures. A single chatbot query can require up to 10 times the power of a standard web search, and some estimates suggest models like GPT-3 can consume a liter of water for every 40–100 responses. Large AI models are especially energy-intensive. Shifting to smaller, more efficient models, companies can reduce both costs and environmental impacts.

So, what can people do? For one, use less data. Efficiency alone often boosts consumption rather than reducing it. Cutting screen time, limiting unnecessary AI queries, and prioritizing real-world interactions can all help slow demand. Instead of endless scrolling, the most powerful response may be stepping outside—before the energy sustaining our virtual habits overwhelms the landscapes we seek to protect.



PHOTO CREDIT: PEXELS.COM.

If we don’t make data centers for artificial intelligence more efficient soon, the environmental consequences could be dire...

CONTACTS: Will AI reduce emissions or increase power demand? <https://www.weforum.org/stories/2024/07/generative-ai-environmental-emissions/>

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