

The Prince George's Post



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Andrews Federal Credit Union Empowers Future Leaders Through Invest in Girls Event

By PRESS OFFICER
Andrews Federal Credit Union

SUITLAND, Md. (Dec. 29, 2025)— Andrews Federal Credit Union recently hosted a group of career-driven young women for the Invest in Girls Industry/Role Model Exchange program. This event was conducted in partnership with Prince George's County and the Maryland Council on Economic Education.

During the event, a panel of business leaders, including 10 leaders from Andrews Federal, shared their experiences in the work world and provided advice and guidance for navigating future career planning.

Participants in the program came from Crossland High School, Oxon Hill High School, and Dr. Henry Wise, Jr. High School in Prince George's County. In addition to the role model exchange sessions, the Andrews Federal leadership team shared their expert advice and guidance. The girls heard from Andrews Federal Board Chair Col. (Ret.) Kenneth McKinney about his career experiences in the military and as a civilian, and they also had the opportunity to interact with Andrews Federal President/Chief Executive Officer Kenneth Orgeron and Chief Operating Officer Damita Robinson.

According to credit union leadership,



PHOTO COURTESY ANDREWS FEDERAL CREDIT UNION

Andrews Federal Credit Union recently hosted a group of career-driven young women for the Invest in Girls Industry/Role Model Exchange program.

this program continues to be an outstanding opportunity for partnership and for developing future leaders. "At Andrews Federal, we recognize the power of education to build bridges and to create opportunities," said Damita Robinson, Chief Operating Officer for Andrews Federal. "Through Invest in Girls, we provide young women with opportunities to see others in action and to define the next steps needed to reach their desired career goals. The future is

bright for these young women, and we're honored to play a part in shaping it."

Founded in 1948, Andrews Federal Credit Union has grown to serve more than 148,000 members in the District of Columbia, Maryland, Virginia, New Jersey, and military installations in central Germany, Belgium, and the Netherlands. For more information about Andrews Federal, visit andrewsfcu.org.

Del. Jazz M. Lewis Tapped to Lead State Government Relations

2-Time Alumnus' Experience Includes Nearly 9 Years in General Assembly

By PRESS OFFICER
University of Maryland

The University of Maryland on Wednesday, December 17 named Maryland Del. Jazz M. Lewis '11, M.P.P. '14 as its director of state government relations.

Lewis, the House majority whip, resigned from his role in the state legislature on Tuesday during a special session; starting Jan. 5, he will lead the university's engagement with state, county and local government partners in support of UMD's mission and priorities.

He brings with him more than a decade of experience in state, federal and national public policy, including senior leadership roles in the Maryland General Assembly, on Capitol Hill and in one of the country's most influential labor-environment coalitions. The Prince George's County native has spent his career advancing economic oppor-

tunity, strengthening Maryland's communities and championing policies that support working families.

As director, Lewis will serve as the university's primary liaison to state and local officials, working closely with senior leadership, faculty and campus partners to advance UMD's priorities. He will help shape the university's overall governmental engagement strategy, strengthen relationships in Annapolis and across Maryland, and advocate for policies and investments that support UMD's teaching, research and service mission.

Lewis is a two-time graduate of the University of Maryland, earning a Bachelor of Arts in government and politics and a Master of Public Policy degree. As an undergraduate, he participated in College Park Scholars' Public Leadership Program, an experience he credits with launching his career in public service.

Most recently, Lewis served as leg-

islative director for the BlueGreen Alliance, where he led its national legislative strategy on clean manufacturing, workforce development and industrial policy, including work supporting implementation of the Inflation Reduction Act and the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law.

Earlier in his career, Lewis worked for U.S. Rep. Steny H. Hoyer '63 (D-Maryland) as a senior policy adviser. He was first elected to the Maryland House of Delegates in 2017 to represent District 24, which includes communities such as Lake Arbor, Capitol Heights and Glenarden. In 2023, he was appointed majority whip, becoming the youngest member to serve in that position.

Lewis will replace Ross Stern, who will retire at the end of this year after more than 25 years of service leading the university's government relations efforts.

M-NCPPC Prince George's County Planning Board and Department Announce January 2026 Events and Meetings

By PRESS OFFICER
M-NCPPC

LARGO, Md. (Jan. 2, 2026)—The Prince George's County Planning Board and the Prince George's County Planning Department of The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission (M-NCPPC) announce their upcoming public events and meetings for January 2026. For more details, review the list of events and meetings below or visit www.pg-planningboard.org and [ning.org. Events and meetings are subject to change.](http://www.pgplan-</p></div><div data-bbox=)

Prince George's County Planning Board Meetings

Thursday, January 15 | 10 a.m.
Thursday, January 22 | 10 a.m.
Thursday, January 29 | 10 a.m.

Online and M-NCPPC Largo Headquarters (Auditorium), 1616 McCormick Drive, Largo, MD 20774

The Prince George's County Planning Board meets on Thursdays to consider planning, zoning, subdivision, and

other matters within its jurisdiction. The meetings may be viewed in person at the M-NCPPC Largo Headquarters and via live streaming video. Public participation is encouraged. Everyone who wishes to speak virtually or in person at the Planning Board meeting must register online by noon on the Tuesday, two days prior to the Planning Board meeting. Written comments, documents, and exhibits must be received via email,

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Prince George's County Council Unanimously Appoints Wala Blegay as Council Member At-Large

By PRESS OFFICER
Prince George's County Council Media

The Prince George's County Council on Monday, December 29 voted unanimously to appoint Wala Blegay to serve as Council Member At-Large, filling the vacancy created by the resignation of Calvin Hawkins.

"I am deeply honored by the unanimous vote of my colleagues and grateful for the trust placed in me," said Council Member Blegay. "Former Council Member Hawkins has long been known as the People's Champion, and I am committed to carrying forward that legacy—championing the voices and needs of residents across every district in Prince George's County. I am ready to serve, ready to listen, and ready to continue building a stronger Prince George's County for everyone."

Council Member Blegay was elected to the Council in 2022, representing District 6, and has since built a record of people-centered leadership focused on community engagement, responsible development, healthcare access, and economic opportunity. She previously served as Vice Chair of the Council, helping advance a people-driven agenda rooted in equity, accountability, and transparency.

As Chair of the Board of Health, Council Member Blegay has prioritized improving health outcomes by addressing long emergency room wait times, advocating for expanded access to primary care, and elevating mater-

nal and family health as critical county priorities. Her legislative work also includes advancing HOA transparency and hearing process reforms, supporting rental stabilization efforts, strengthening small business access to county procurement opportunities, and promoting quality development standards that protect neighborhood character and quality of life.

In District 6, Council Member Blegay has led efforts to move forward major community-centered development initiatives, including Downtown Largo and Westphalia, while remaining deeply engaged with residents through town halls, legal clinics, small business engagement events, and community forums focused on development and quality-of-life issues.

As Council Member At-Large, Blegay will expand this work countywide, with a continued focus on listening, accessibility, and results-driven leadership. Her office will be launching Town Hall 2026, a series of community town halls across Prince George's County to ensure residents remain at the center of County decision-making.

Pursuant to the County Code, when there is a vacancy in the Office of a Council Member that occurs during the last year of a term, a majority of the remaining Council Members will appoint a qualified person to fill the vacancy.

Pathway to Purchase Homebuyer Assistance Program Expands Benefits With New Guidelines

Prince George's County Now Offers Up to \$50,000 in Down Payment and Closing Cost Assistance for First-Time Homebuyers

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

LARGO, Md. (Dec. 23, 2025)—Prince George's County has elevated its commitment to expanding access to homeownership with the release of updated guidelines for its Pathway to Purchase Homebuyer Assistance Program. Under the enhanced program, eligible first-time homebuyers may now receive up to 100% more than previous assistance, from \$25,000 to up to \$50,000 in financial aid to support down payment and closing costs, significantly reducing barriers to purchasing a home in today's competitive housing market.

Pathway to Purchase allows qualified buyers to purchase homes anywhere in Prince George's County, supporting community stability and wealth-building opportunities across the jurisdiction. Eligible residential properties include new construction homes, resale properties, and foreclosures, offering flexibility and choice to participating households.

Administered by the Prince

George's County Department of Housing and Community Development (PG-DHCD), the program is further strengthened through a partnership with the State of Maryland's Mortgage Program. Through this collaboration, eligible homebuyers may receive an additional \$6,000 toward down payment and closing costs. Buyers who participate in the State's Partner Match Program may also qualify for a dollar-for-dollar match of up to \$2,500, increasing the total financial assistance available.

"This important partnership with the Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development and private-sector lenders allows us to take a meaningful step toward expanding affordable homeownership," said Jonathan R. Butler, Director of the Prince George's County Department of Housing and Community Development. "This dedicated funding helps families overcome financial barriers and move confidently onto the path to homeownership. We remain commit-

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TOWNS *and* NEIGHBORS

Brandywine-Aquasco by Audrey Johnson 301-922-5384

JANUARY BIRTHDAYS

Happy Birthday to Steven Carter, Dr. Sandra Jones, Davion Dorsett, Veronica Quarm, Khadija Hakim-Hinton, Nurbert Hughes, Jr., Walter Joiner, Bernestine Bryan, Lyra Rojas, Mwezi Nsimba Mbakwe, Okezie Nzuzi Mbakwe, Nicole Falby, Abu Davies, Judanne Thomas, Brandon Holmes, Lawrence Omoregbe, Jordan Joseph, Marian Thomas, Ethel Cooke, Rachelle Jackson, Roseline Omoregbe, Yannick Bourne, William Terry, Donovan Cain, Anne Kauffman, Rev. Stella Tay, Florella Wallace who are Clinton United Methodist Church members celebrating birthdays in January.

JANUARY WEDDING ANNIVERSARIES

Congratulations to Elvin and Joan Falby, Oiuwa and Assiatu (Lilly Jalloh) Adeyemo, Macon and Avis Balkcom-Williams, George and Mildred Rucker, Nurbert and Carol Hughes, Walter and Theresa Lindsay Joiner who are Clinton United Methodist Church members celebrating Wedding Anniversaries in January.

MARTIN LAWRENCE

Comedy Legend Martin Lawrence is back on stage with his Y’all Know What it is! From his iconic stand-up specials to blockbuster films and the hit TV series, Martin Lawrence has been making audiences laugh for decades with his unmatched energy. Fans can expect a night full of hilarious new material, classic Martin humor, and the kind of unforgettable performance that proves why he remains one of the greatest to ever do it. Do not miss your chance to see Martin Lawrence live, this is comedy you do not want to miss. The dates are Thursday, January 15, 2026, at 8 p.m., Friday, January 16, 2026, at 8 p.m. Box office hours: On Show Days: 3 hours prior to ticketed event. MGM National Harbor, Oxon Hill, Maryland.

SYMPHONY OF SOUL INSTRUMENTAL AUDITION DAY

Ready to bring your talent to Bulldog Nation? High school seniors and transfer students are invited to audition for Bowie State University’s world-class Symphony of Soul Marching Band. Connect with our band leadership to schedule your audition: bbennett@bowiestate.edu or msimmons@bowiestate.edu. Dates are Saturday, January 10, 2026, from 8 a.m.–12 p.m. (EST) Bowie State University Fine and Performing Arts Center, Room 2235A, 14000 Jericho Park Road Bowie, Maryland 20715-9465.

WOMEN OF COLOR NETWORK CONFERENCE

The 20th Anniversary of the Maryland Women of Color Network Conference is Friday March 6, 2026, 9 a.m.–4 p.m. at Bowie State University in the Student Center Ballrooms, 14000 Jericho Park Road Bowie, Maryland. Price \$60.00. Join Bowie State University for a conference where professionals in public health, government, nonprofit, and education come together to discuss sexual violence prevention and response. Connect with staff from rape crisis centers, government agencies, faith-based

and community organizations, and students who are dedicated to supporting survivors and building safer communities. Learn more: <https://mcasa.org/providers/mwoen>.

BADEN RECREATION CENTER

Baden Elementary School Park and Community Center located at 13601 Baden Westwood Road, Brandywine, Maryland, a suburb of Washington DC. Email: badencc@pgparks.com. Phone: (301) 888-1500. The Center has a licensed before and after school Kids’ Care program that is available for students at Baden Elementary School. Hours: Mon-Thu: 2–9 p.m. Fri: 2–7 p.m. (Teens) Sat: 9 a.m.–2 p.m. Sunday closed. Please contact the Community Center directly for more details and rental information.

Amenities are Basketball Courts, Baseball/Softball Fields, Bike Rack, Billard’s Room, Child Care Programs, Classrooms, Family Changing Room, Picnic Shelters, Picnic Tables, Full Basketball Courts, Game Room, Horseshoes, Fitness Equipment, Kitchen, Parking Lot, Playground Equipment, Soccer/Futsal.

HISTORIC SITES IN PRINCE GEORGE’S COUNTY

Melwood Park in the Upper Marlboro vicinity was built c. 1750 by Ignatius Digges and raised to its present irregular two stories by his widow c. 1800. This unique dwelling was visited by George Washington on several occasions. The British Army camped near here during their march on Washington in August 1814. (Courtesy of the University of Maryland Libraries, Special collections; information obtained from the Illustrated Inventory of Historic Sites in Prince George’s County by Maryland National Capital Park & Planning Commission.

The Magruder House, also called “The Old Stone House” or “the William Hilleary House,” is on the National Register of Historic Places and the nationwide Historic American Buildings Survey. William Hilleary built the house c. 1746 and sold it to Richard Henderson. George Washington dined there on May 9, 1787. In August 1814, invading British troops passed the house on their way to the Battle of Bladensburg. Unverified tradition maintains that the only American civilian resistance offered at Bladensburg came from that house. After battle that day, the house was used as a hospital for wounded troops. Prince George’s Heritage received it in 1979, and the restoration of the property occurred in 1982. (Courtesy of the University of Maryland Libraries, Special Collections).

The George Washington House in Bladensburg was built c. 1760. It was built originally as a store, part of a commercial complex that included a tavern and a blacksmith shop. From the mid-nineteenth to the mid-twentieth century, it served as a tavern. Presently, it houses offices (Submitted by Prince George’s County Historical Society; information obtained from the Illustrated Inventory of Historic Sites in Prince George’s County by Maryland National Capital Park & Planning Commission.)

In and Around Morningside-Skyline

With Mary McHale, will return soon!

Program from A1

ted to helping residents build stability, equity, and generational wealth through the pursuit of the American Dream.”

Pathway to Purchase assistance is provided as a 0% interest, deferred loan. The loan becomes due only when the home is sold, transferred, or no longer serves as the buyer’s primary residence. Importantly, the loan is fully forgiven after 10 years of continuous owner occupancy, at which point the lien is released—making the program both affordable and homeowner-friendly.

Under the program guidelines, the maximum allowable purchase price is \$448,000 for resale homes and \$485,000 for new

construction homes. All properties must successfully pass a Housing Quality Standards (HQS) inspection as part of the application process to ensure safe and livable housing conditions.

PG-DHCD administers Pathway to Purchase in coordination with approved mortgage lenders, and eligible buyers must work with a participating lender to apply.

For eligibility requirements, participating lenders, and application details, visit the Pathway to Purchase website or contact the Prince George’s County Department of Housing and Community Development’s Pathway to Purchase Office on (301) 883-5456.

Suitland Cultural Arts Implementation Strategy Community Charette

Saturday, January 24 | 9:30 a.m.–11:30 a.m.
Suitland Community Center, 5600 Regency Lane, Forestville, MD 20747

The Prince George’s County Planning Department will host a community feedback session to review and respond to the outcomes and concepts for Suitland’s Cultural Arts District’s opportunity sites. Community members are invited to explore renderings of each opportunity site created from prior community engagement sessions, provide feedback, and help shape the future of cultural arts in Suitland. For more information on the Suitland Cultural Arts Implementation Strategy and to register in advance for the event, visit the website: <https://pgplan.org/suitland-cultural-arts>.

Prince George’s County Historic Preservation Commission

Tuesday, January 20 | 6:30 p.m.
Hosted by the Prince George’s County Planning Department, the Prince George’s County Historic Preservation Commission meeting will be held virtually on the third Tuesday of the month. For meeting details, visit <https://www.pgplanning.org/county-wide-planning/historic-preservation> or call 301-952-3680, or email HistoricPreservation@ppd.mnccppc.org.

M-NCPPC Full Commission Meeting

Wednesday, January 21 | 10 a.m.
The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission will hold its Full Commission meeting in a hybrid format from the M-NCPPC Headquarters in Wheaton and via video conference. Agenda packets will be available online: <https://www.mnccpc.org/meetings/>.



PHOTO COURTESY NATIONAL SOCIETY OF THE DAUGHTERS OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

Renowned singer Marian Anderson performing in DAR Constitution Hall in 1943. Students studying music can apply for a one-time \$5,000 scholarship honoring her legacy through Jan. 31.

DAR Marian Anderson Legacy Scholarship Now Accepting Applications, Apply by Jan. 31

By PRESS OFFICER

National Society of the Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR)

WASHINGTON (Dec. 30, 2025)—Undergraduate and graduate students studying music can apply for the DAR Marian Anderson Legacy Scholarship through January 31, 2026. Sponsored by the National Society Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR), the scholarship provides a one-time \$5,000 award to one student annually who is pursuing undergraduate or graduate study in music.

Marian Anderson (1897–1993) was a groundbreaking African American contralto and an inspiration for civil rights. “This scholarship pays tribute to Marian Anderson’s life, and the Daughters of the American Revolution seeks to honor her legacy through aspiring musicians. Her legacy lives on in others who aim for excellence in musical studies, are committed to their communities, and willing to stand up for what is right,” said Ginnie Sebastian Storage, DAR President General.

Applicants should be accepted or currently enrolled in an accredited university or college in the United States and have a concentration in music in their course of study. Music performance, composition, theory, or education are all areas that students may be specialized in to qualify for the scholarship. They should have a minimum grade point average (GPA) of 3.0 on a 4.0 scale or the equivalent GPA on the scale used by the institution.

Applications are available here: <https://www.dar.org/outreach/education/scholarships>

Applications require references sent through the application system, so students need to request their references ahead of the Jan. 31 application deadline.

In honor of Ms. Anderson’s commitment to the community throughout her life and her willingness to share her incredible talent with the world, applicants are asked to write a personal statement describing their humanitarian or volunteer contributions on behalf of their community and/or country.

To recognize the city Marian Anderson called home, preference is given to students from the Philadelphia, Pennsylvania metropolitan area, even if they are not pursuing music studies in the Philadelphia area.

While this scholarship is not automatically renewed, recipients may reapply for consideration each year for up to four consecutive years.

The scholarship is supported by the Daughters of the American Revolution’s Marian Anderson Legacy Fund. Learn more about the relationship between Marian Anderson and the DAR, and the organization’s on-going efforts to honor her memory at www.dar.org/MarianAnderson

One of the largest patriotic women’s service organizations in the world, National Society of the Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR) has 190,000 members in approximately 3,000 chapters across the country and several foreign countries. DAR members promote historic preservation, education and patriotism via commemorative events, scholarships and educational initiatives, citizenship programs, service to veterans, meaningful community service and more. For additional information about DAR and its relevant mission, visit www.dar.org.

The Prince George’s Post

Your Newspaper of Legal Record

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Serving Prince George’s County Since 1932

HEALTH *and* WELLNESS

Super Foods for a Nutritious Diet

(Family Features)
The health community has long praised the benefits of vitamins and nutrients derived from natural sources. For those looking to improve their health or take preventative measures, these 10 natural super foods can be incorporated into your daily diet to help support your health:



PHOTO COURTESY OF GETTY IMAGES

- 1. Green Tea**—Armed with a special type of antioxidants called polyphenols, green tea can decrease plaque formed in the arteries and can fight prostate cancer.
- 2. Rosemary**—Studies have shown this powerful spice can reduce the risk of stroke, as well as protect against Alzheimer’s disease.
- 3. Almonds**—Full of plant sterols and amino acids, almonds can help lower high cholesterol and promote muscle growth. These handheld treats are also rich in vitamin E, which can protect skin from sun damage.
- 4. Fatty Fish**—Rich in omega-3 fatty acids, fatty fish such as salmon, flounder and sardines can lower the risk of heart disease.
- 5. Bananas**—This easy, portable snack is loaded with essential potassium, which regulates the nervous system. Bananas also offer loads of vitamin B-6, which aids immunity and metabolism.
- 6. Whole Grains**—These powerful body defenders have been known to boost immunity, protect against various cancers and reduce cholesterol.
- 7. Eggs**—These energy-packed breakfast favorites contain a special type of protein that helps build muscle strength more than other proteins. When compared to other breakfast foods, eggs can also keep you feeling fuller longer with fewer calories and fat.
- 8. Spinach**—Chock-full of magnesium, potassium and various vitamins and nutrients, spinach can prevent clogged arteries and protect against prostate and colon cancers.
- 9. Soy**—This protein-packed food contains isoflavones, which can aid in treatment and prevention of prostate cancer. Also, research from the Food and Drug Administration shows that 25 grams per day can help lessen the risk of heart disease.
- 10. Dark Chocolate**—Satisfy your sweet tooth and improve blood flow to the brain at the same time. Dark chocolate can also lower blood pressure and increase skin’s resistance to UV rays.
- Find more health-conscious tips at eLivingToday.com.

Source: *eLivingToday.com*

Health Awareness: The Quiet Epidemic: Why People With Diabetes Lose Their Sight

(NAPSI)—For the nearly 40 million Americans living with diabetes, the threat to their vision unfolds quietly, often without warning. Diabetic retinopathy, a complication that damages blood vessels in the retina, has become the leading cause of blindness among working-age adults in the United States. Yet what makes this epidemic particularly tragic is that it doesn’t have to be this way.

“The vast majority of severe vision loss from diabetic retinopathy is preventable,” said Janice C. Law, MD, retina specialist in Tennessee. “Studies show that regular eye examinations and timely interventions can reduce the risk of severe vision loss by 90 percent.”

Still, many Americans are falling through the cracks. Only about 60 percent of people with diabetes receive the annual dilated eye examinations recommended by the American Academy of Ophthalmology, a shortfall driven by lack of access, awareness, and time.

Expanding Access to Care

If you or someone you care about has diabetes, schedule a dilated eye exam today. Uninsured or underinsured? See if you qualify for a no out-of-pocket cost medical eye exam through EyeCare America®. This public service program matches volunteer ophthalmologists, physicians who specialize in medical and surgical eye care, with eligible patients aged 18 and older who need eye care. Visit www.aao.org/eyecare-america to learn more.

When to See a Doctor

In its early stages, diabetic retinopathy often presents no symptoms at all—a fact that underscores the importance of preventive screening rather than waiting for problems to emerge.

“Even if your vision seems fine, a yearly dilated eye exam is important,” said Dr. Law. “By the time patients notice flashing lights, blurred vision, floating spots, or other warning signs, the disease may have already progressed significantly.”

When should a person with diabetes have an eye exam?

If you have type 1 diabetes, you should have eye examinations at least yearly beginning 5 years after being diagnosed with diabetes. Your ophthalmologist may recommend more frequent examinations.

If you have type 2 diabetes, you should see an ophthalmologist at least yearly as soon you are diagnosed, re-

gardless of your age. Follow your eye doctor’s recommendation about how often you should be rechecked, as this varies for every individual. You may need to have your eyes checked more often than once a year.

But diabetes isn’t the only reason to see an ophthalmologist. All healthy adults should have a comprehensive eye exam by age 40 when early signs of cataract, glaucoma, and age-related macular degeneration may begin to emerge.

“Forty is typically when subtle signs of eye disease begin to emerge,” Laura C. Fine, MD, chair of EyeCare America, explained. “Many times, people don’t even notice any changes to their vision during these early phases of disease. However, vision-saving treatments are most effective when the disease is caught early.”

The Treatment Gap

Ophthalmologists have more tools than ever before for diagnosing and treating eye diseases. But these innovations



PHOTO COURTESY NAPSI

People with diabetes are particularly at risk for vision problems and should see an eye doctor regularly.

cannot help patients whose disease goes undiagnosed or who remain unaware of their condition’s severity.

The message is clear: The technology to save sight exists. What’s needed now is making sure that everyone who needs it can access it in time.

If you’re uninsured or underinsured, EyeCare America may be able to help you, too. See if you qualify for a no out-of-pocket cost medical eye exam at www.aao.org/eyecare-america.

—Thursday, December 11, 2025

SUPERCHARGE WORKOUTS with Watermelon Smoothies and Shakes

FAMILY FEATURES

If you’re tired of the same bland protein bars and powders, there’s a tastier way to rehydrate and replenish after exercise: fresh fruit.

With a delicious solution like watermelon, you can look forward to post-workout recovery snacks, smoothies and shakes. While watermelon satisfies your sweet tooth, it’s also a nutrient-dense food, according to the FDA, which qualifies foods and beverages as nutrient-dense when they contain vitamins, minerals, dietary fiber and other beneficial substances that may have positive health effects.

Plus, watermelon is 92% water, making it a delicious way to rehydrate and boost daily fluid intake since you don’t need to rely only on what you drink to meet hydration needs. Every day, you lose water through breathing, perspiring and more, and even mild dehydration can drain your energy. For your body to function properly, it’s important to replenish your water

supply with water and foods that contain water.

Incorporating a variety of healthy ingredients like turmeric, kefir and collagen can help round out post-exercise recipes for both everyday athletes and active lifestyles. Consider this Watermelon Beet Post-Workout Smoothie as a convenient option for boosting energy or rehydrating after a long workout. Blend and enjoy watermelon, banana, beet, kefir and more to stay motivated day after day.

Loaded with superfood ingredients that provide a beneficial boost, a Rosy Red Superfood Smoothie combines watermelon, raspberry, hemp, kefir and agave for a perfect post-workout beverage. Or, to ensure your protein fix doesn’t become a bore, turn to a Watermelon Protein Shake that just might become your new go-to recovery drink with watermelon, mango and tart cherry juice.

To find more wellness-inspired smoothies and shakes, visit Watermelon.org.

Watermelon Beet Post-Workout Smoothie

Recipe courtesy of the National Watermelon Promotion Board
Servings: 2

- 1/2 medium cooked and peeled beet, chopped
- 1 cup chopped watermelon
- 1 banana, peeled
- 1/2 cup coconut water
- 1 cup low-fat, plain kefir
- 1/2 lime, peeled
- 2 tablespoons honey
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 2 tablespoons vanilla protein powder

In blender, blend beet, watermelon, banana, coconut water, kefir, lime, honey, vanilla extract and protein powder until smooth.



Rosy Red Superfood Smoothie

Recipe courtesy of the National Watermelon Promotion Board
Servings: 3

- 2 cups watermelon cubes
- 1 cup fresh or frozen raspberries
- 1 cup low-fat raspberry kefir
- 2 tablespoons orange juice concentrate
- 2 tablespoons hemp seeds
- 2 tablespoons agave syrup ice (optional)

In blender, blend watermelon, raspberries, kefir, orange juice concentrate, hemp seeds, agave syrup and ice, if desired, until smooth.



Watermelon Protein Shake

Recipe courtesy of Chrissy Carroll on behalf of the National Watermelon Promotion Board
Servings: 1

- 1 cup chopped watermelon
- 1 cup frozen mango, chopped
- 1/4 cup tart cherry juice
- 1/2 cup plain, nonfat Greek yogurt
- 1/2 scoop vanilla or unflavored protein powder
- 1 tablespoon honey or to taste (optional)

In blender, blend watermelon, mango, cherry juice, Greek yogurt, protein powder and honey about 30 seconds until well combined.



COMMENTARY

Marc Morial

President and CEO, National Urban League



To Be Equal:

Unrestricted and Unprecedented: How Mackenzie Scott’s Giving Model Is Transforming Higher Education and Empowering Communities

“It’s easy to focus on the methods of civic participation that make news, and hard to imagine the importance of the things we do each day with our own minds and hearts. Who nurtured a child in the kitchen; who was kind to a stranger in line at a grocery store; who gave fifty dollars to a local food shelter: these are not news stories. But all of it matters.”

—MacKenzie Scott

When MacKenzie Scott announced hundreds of millions of dollars in unrestricted donations to Historically Black Colleges and Universities—after record contributions to Urban League affiliates—it wasn’t just philanthropy. It was a game-changing reimagining of how resources can empower institutions that have long been underfunded and overlooked.

For generations, HBCUs have been engines of

Black excellence, producing leaders, innovators, and changemakers despite chronic underinvestment. Scott’s approach—trust-based, unrestricted giving—has allowed these institutions to dream bigger and act faster, without the strings that often limit traditional grants.

Howard University received \$80 million, including \$17 million for its College of Medicine. President Wayne A. I. Frederick called the gift “transformational,” saying, “It will allow us to expand our research footprint and provide more scholarships for students who will become the next generation of leaders.”

Spelman College used its \$38 million gift to increase scholarships and upgrade technology infrastructure. President Helene Gayle said, “This historic gift strengthens our ability to support talented students and ensure they have the resources to thrive.”

Morgan State University and Prairie View A&M each received \$63 million, bolstering research capacity and faculty recruitment. Morgan State President David K. Wilson said the donation positioned the university to compete at the highest level and build an endowment that secures the institution’s future.

Alcorn State University, with a \$42 million gift—the largest in its 154-year history—is investing in scholarships and campus improvements.

President Felecia Nave said the gift will impact “generations of students.”

Scott also gave \$70 million to the United Negro College Fund to create a pooled endowment benefiting 37 member schools, strengthening financial sustainability across the HBCU network.

While HBCUs build future leaders, Urban League affiliates address immediate needs in housing, workforce development, and entrepreneurship. Gifts like \$7.4 million to Seattle and \$6 million to Pittsburgh have expanded housing programs and connected thousands of families to jobs and child-care resources.

Since 2020, Scott has given away over \$26 billion to more than 2,500 nonprofits that support causes like racial justice, education, and economic mobility.

Scott’s model challenges the status quo of philanthropy. By removing strings, she empowers organizations to respond to local needs with agility and vision. This is not charity—it’s partnership. And it’s a blueprint for how transformational giving can dismantle systemic barriers.

If we want lasting change, more donors must follow Scott’s lead: trust the organizations closest to the work, fund them boldly, and let them lead. Communities thrive when resources meet vision without constraint.

—December 26, 2025

BUSINESS AND FINANCE

Social Security Matters

Ask Rusty:

My Wife Believes She Can Get a Spouse Benefit While I’m Still Alive; Can She?

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

Dear Rusty: A friend of my wife told her, and she believes, she could receive a Social Security benefit based on my SS benefit that I’m currently receiving while I’m still alive. I told her she could only receive spouse survivor benefits. Is there any truth to what she now believes? Would you settle this issue for us please? Thank you. **Signed: Uncertain Husband**

Dear Uncertain Husband: Well, surely don’t want to get in the middle of your marital discussion, but I’ll be happy to explain Social Security’s rules about your wife’s eligibility for spousal benefits while you are both still living. And just for awareness for both of you, the rules about spousal benefits are one of the most confusing areas of Social Security.

Per Social Security’s rules, a spouse (e.g., your wife) can receive a “spousal boost” from you—while you are still living—if the SS retirement benefit she is personally entitled to at her full retirement age (FRA) is less than 50% of the SS retirement benefit you are (were) entitled to at your FRA (full retirement age amounts are used to calculate living spouse benefits, regardless of when each of you actually claimed your Social Security).

So, if your FRA entitlement benefit amount is more than twice your wife’s FRA entitlement benefit amount, she can, indeed, get a “spousal boost” from your record while you are both still living. The spousal boost is added to her own SS retirement amount and will be based on the difference between her FRA entitlement and half of your FRA entitlement. Thus, in this discussion, your wife may be correct—she may be able to get a spousal boost from you while both of you are living, depending on how your personal FRA retirement amounts compare. The best way for your wife to find out is to contact Social Security on 1.800.772.1213 to inquire, and if she’s eligible, also make an appointment to apply for her spousal benefit.

And to clarify your wife’s options as your possible widow, a surviving spouse can also get a survivor benefit if their marital partner passes away, but only if the deceased spouse’s current benefit (at death) was more than the surviving spouse is already receiving. The surviving spouse receives the higher amount, instead of their own smaller Social Security retirement benefit.

But here is an important thing to know: Whenever any Social Security benefit (including a spousal or surviving spouse benefit) is claimed before the recipient’s full retirement age, the payment amount is permanently reduced (both spousal and survivor benefits do not reach maximum until the recipient’s full retirement age). And just to complete the picture for survivor benefits, a surviving spouse is also entitled to a one-time, lump-sum death benefit of \$255 if their marital partner dies, in addition to any other benefit they are entitled to.

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Governor Moore Welcomes First Samsung Biologics U.S. Manufacturing Site, With Facility to Open in Rockville

By PRESS OFFICER
Office of the Governor

ANNAPOLIS, Md. (Dec. 29, 2025)—Governor Wes Moore today welcomed South Korea’s largest biotechnology company, Samsung Biologics, as they announced plans to open their first United States manufacturing facility in Rockville, Maryland. The announcement comes after Governor Moore and Maryland Department of Commerce Secretary Harry Coker met with Samsung Biologics executives earlier this year during an international trade and investment mission to Japan and South Korea to promote economic growth and workforce development.

“We are thrilled that Samsung Biologics has selected Maryland for their first U.S. manufacturing facility, a testament to our state’s leadership in life sciences, our highly-skilled workforce and the commitment of our private and public sector to advance patient health around the globe,” said Gov. Moore. “During our Asia trade mission, we were excited to share with Samsung Biologics executives the many reasons why Maryland is an ideal foothold from which the company can execute its long-term strategy to expand in the U.S. market.”

Samsung Biologics—headquartered in Seoul, South Korea—announced earlier this month that it has acquired GSK’s Rockville manufacturing facility for \$280 million. The company plans to expand the site’s current drug substance capacity and upgrade the technology to support a growing demand for critical biologic medicines. As part of the acquisition, Samsung plans to retain more than 500 jobs currently at the site and create additional jobs, as well as new opportunities for local suppliers. The new U.S. facility will include expanded drug

substance manufacturing capacity and will be able to handle both clinical and commercial production.

“This landmark acquisition is a testament to our unwavering commitment to advancing global healthcare and bolstering our manufacturing capabilities in the U.S. The investment will enable us to deepen our collaboration with federal, state, and local stakeholders to best serve our customers and partners while ensuring a reliable and stable supply of life-saving therapeutics,” said Samsung Biologics Chief Executive Officer and President John Rim. “This marks an important step forward in our mission to achieve a better life through biomedicines, and we look forward to building on the legacy of this facility as we welcome experienced colleagues to the Samsung Biologics family and continue delivering innovative solutions that make a meaningful impact.”

“The acquisition of GSK’s Rockville manufacturing campus by Samsung Biologics represents a significant achievement for Montgomery County,” said Montgomery County Executive Marc Elrich. “This \$280 million investment brings the world’s largest contract drug manufacturer to Montgomery County, ensuring U.S.-based manufacturing continues, safeguarding over 500 current jobs, and setting the stage for further growth as Samsung boosts production capacity. It serves as a robust endorsement of the ecosystem we have cultivated, which is founded on talent, diversity, and enduring partnerships. We proudly welcome Samsung Biologics to Montgomery County, Maryland, and anticipate their contribution in enhancing our economy, workforce, and status as a global life sciences hub.”

In April, Gov. Moore led a Maryland delegation to Japan

and South Korea to promote economic growth and workforce development. In addition to addressing the Korea Trade-Investment Promotion Agency and Korea International Trade Association—two of Korea’s largest business organizations—and meeting with Samsung Biologics in Seoul, the governor also held a number of engagements in Japan to strengthen ties in quantum, life sciences, and artificial intelligence.

The announcement builds on a year of historic commitments from internationally-based companies to expand Maryland’s life sciences and biopharmaceutical sectors. Last month, Governor Moore and AstraZeneca announced a \$2 billion investment—the largest private capital investment in the state in the last decade—to expand manufacturing in Frederick and build a new clinical facility in Gaithersburg, supporting 2,600 jobs.

The Moore-Miller Ad-

ministration has also secured other key investments, including an agreement with the Maryland Technology Development Corporation, known as TEDCO, to mobilize up to \$50 million in international co-investments in the state’s innovation economy. Additionally, Korean biotechnology company Nature Cell announced plans to open a stem cell manufacturing facility in Baltimore City last month, creating an estimated 500 new jobs. Earlier this year, Governor Moore also welcomed Indian-based pharmaceutical developer Syngene International, which is launching its first U.S. manufacturing site in Baltimore City and creating 300 jobs, as well as global wellness solutions company SJ Incorporation, whose planned expansion in Washington County is expected to add another 300 skilled positions to Maryland’s world-class life sciences workforce.

The Prince George’s Post

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HEALTH *and* WELLNESS

Simple Recipe Swaps for a *Healthier You*

FAMILY FEATURES

If the idea of overhauling your family’s menu is stopping you from making healthier choices in the kitchen, you might find relief in knowing simple swaps are all it takes. Instead of sweeping changes that require all new recipes, just changing an ingredient or two in your favorite dishes can put you on a path toward better nutrition.

You can boost the nutritional value of meals and support your heart health by making smart substitutions – like using whole grains, healthy oils and lower-sodium options – to reduce saturated fat, added sugars and sodium while adding beneficial nutrients like fiber, protein and healthy fats.

Another nutrition-conscious swap you can make easily is opting for fat-free or low-fat plain Greek yogurt in place of full-fat sour cream and other dairy products. A single serving typically provides 10 or more grams of protein and roughly 13% of the daily recommended value of calcium. In fact, according to the American Heart Association, a balanced diet that includes regular consumption of unsweetened, nonfat, plain yogurt for individuals with hypertension may help improve blood pressure outcomes.

Start doing your heart a favor with these favorites that replace full-fat ingredients with low-fat or nonfat Greek yogurt, helping you reduce calorie intake and fat content without compromising flavor.

Mango and Pineapple Tropical Parfaits capture the flavors of ripe fruit, silky yogurt and crunchy granola in every spoonful of paradise while ruby-red pomegranate and coconut top off this island treasure.

Fruity Oatmeal Yogurt Parfaits provide a protein-packed breakfast to start busy days while Frozen Yogurt Bark – a chilled delight with less than 100 calories per serving – helps you indulge without overdoing it.

A diet that involves smart swaps like these may contribute to heart health, per the American Heart Association, by providing essential nutrients and supporting healthy blood pressure levels – meaning you’re just a few ingredient substitutions away from enjoying a more nutritious, yet still delicious menu.

These yogurt-inspired recipes were developed as part of the American Heart Association’s Healthy for Good Eat Smart initiative, which is nationally supported by Danone.

Discover more easy, flavor-packed ways to make your favorite recipes healthier for your heart at heart.org/eatsmart.



Mango and Pineapple Tropical Parfaits

Recipe courtesy of the American Heart Association
Servings: 4 (1 parfait per serving)

- 1 medium mango, peeled and chopped
- 2 cups nonfat plain Greek yogurt
- 1/2 cup low-fat, no-added-sugar granola
- 1/2 cup diced pineapple
- 1 medium banana, sliced
- 1/4 cup pomegranate seeds or arils
- 2 tablespoons unsweetened flaked coconut

In each parfait glass, layer 1/4 mango, 1/4 cup yogurt, 1 tablespoon granola, 2 tablespoons pineapple, 1/4 banana slices and 1/4 cup yogurt. Top with remaining granola. Sprinkle with pomegranate seeds and coconut. Serve immediately for peak flavor and texture.

Nutritional information per serving: 230 calories; 6 g total fat; 82 mg sodium; 33 g carbohydrates; 5 g fiber; 24 g total sugars; 13 g protein.



Frozen Yogurt Bark

Recipe courtesy of the American Heart Association
Servings: 8

- 1 1/2 cups low-fat, no-sugar-added vanilla Greek yogurt
- 2 tablespoons honey or pure maple syrup
- 2 tablespoons chopped unsalted almonds
- 1/2 cup finely chopped mango
- 1/2 cup blueberries
- 1/4 cup blackberries or raspberries, chopped if large

In medium bowl, whisk yogurt and honey until combined.

Line 13-by-9-by-2-inch baking dish with parchment paper. Using spatula or knife, spread yogurt mixture over paper as thinly as possible.

Sprinkle almonds over yogurt mixture. Using fingertips, gently press almonds into yogurt mixture.

Sprinkle with mango, blueberries and raspberries. Using fingertips, gently press fruit into yogurt mixture.

Cover dish with plastic wrap or aluminum foil. Freeze overnight.

For serving, remove baking dish from freezer. Gently lift parchment paper from dish and transfer to cutting board. Using hands, break bark into pieces or hit lightly on surface of cutting board. Serve immediately as bark begins to melt 15 minutes after removing from freezer.

Nutritional information per serving: 70 calories; 2 g total fat; 3 mg cholesterol; 15 mg sodium; 10 g carbohydrates; 1 g fiber; 9 g total sugars; 4 g protein.

Fruity Oatmeal Yogurt Parfaits

Recipe courtesy of the American Heart Association
Servings: 4 (1 parfait per serving)

- 2 cups fresh or frozen sliced, hulled strawberries, thawed and patted dry if frozen
 - 2 cups fresh or frozen blueberries, halved blackberries or both, thawed and patted dry if frozen
 - 1 tablespoon, plus 1 teaspoon, honey
 - 2 teaspoons ground cinnamon
 - 2 cups water
 - 1 cup uncooked rolled oats
 - 2 cups nonfat plain Greek yogurt
- In medium bowl, gently stir strawberries, blueberries, honey and cinnamon.
- In medium saucepan over medium-high heat, bring water and oats to boil. Boil 5 minutes, stirring occasionally.
- In each parfait glass, layer 1/4 cup oatmeal, 1/4 cup fruit mixture, 1/4 cup yogurt and 1/4 cup fruit mixture. Repeat layers.
- Nutritional information per serving:** 238 calories; 2 g total fat; 6 mg cholesterol; 47 mg sodium; 42 mg carbohydrates; 6 g fiber; 21 g total sugars; 16 g protein.



EarthTalk®
Q&A

Rivers Turning Orange in the Arctic

By Vicky Zhang | December 18, 2025

Dear EarthTalk:
Why are Arctic rivers and streams turning orange?
—Will Mortimer, Largo, FL

Over the past decade, an increasing number of orange rivers and streams have been found in Arctic Alaska’s Brooks Range. These waters tend to be more acidic, turbid, and have higher concentrations of iron than their clearwater counterparts. As the Brooks Range is one of the least populated regions of North America, the typical cause of coloration of these water sources, namely excessive mining, is not probable.

More broadly, these orange rivers and streams are part of the Arctic Network, a larger regional area containing 19.3 million acres of land. In 2018, the National Park Service received reports of one of the first orange streams in the Brooks Range. By utilizing crowd-sourced observations from bush pilots, wilderness guides, other scientists, and rural and Indigenous communities, they found that over 75 streams had become orange in the Arctic Network. The findings of such an extensive number of orange rivers and streams led to growing research into the cause of the issue.

After extensive research using what scientists call the Redness Index, researchers determined that the coloration of the rivers and streams was caused by the thawing of permafrost, which is ground that has remained frozen for extended periods of time, due to global

warming. As a result, water and oxygen are able to easily enter the soil, breaking down sulfide-rich rocks to create excessive amounts of sulfuric acid that leaches naturally occurring metals into water sources. In particular, researchers found that oxidized iron was what turned the river streams, not unoxidized iron, nickel, zinc, cadmium or copper.

The most obvious effect of orange streams and lakes is the lack of habitat for subsistence fish, such as Dolly Varden, chum salmon and whitefish. In addition, the change in color of these water sources also reduces the amount of light that reaches the bottom, lowering insect larvae numbers. As fewer fish and insects are available, there is an increased amount of stress placed on organisms directly above and below in food chains. Another potential impact of orange streams and lakes are the contamination of drinking sources in the surrounding areas, as there are higher levels of dangerous chemicals.

“There’s no fixing [permafrost melting] once it starts...It’s another irreversible shift driven by a warming planet,” reports Timothy Lyons, a biogeochemistry researcher at the University of California, Riverside. But ordinary people can help by changing small, everyday actions to protect the planet. From using more eco-friendly transportation options to conserving electricity, people can take on multiple approaches to reducing global warming to eliminate the root of the issue.

CONTACTS:
Rivers Are Turning Orange. The Effects Are Disastrous.



PHOTO CREDIT: U.S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY / JOSH KOCH

Rivers in Alaska’s Brooks Range run orange due to iron leaching out of melting permafrost combined with toxic concentrations of heavy metals.

https://www.popularmechanics.com/science/environment/a6605605/6/orange-river/; Timothy Lyons, https://profiles.ucr.edu/app/home/profile/timothy1.

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