

# The Prince George's Post



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## Andrews Federal Credit Union Partners With Prince George's County Executive Aisha Braveboy's 311 On The Go Program

Credit Union's \$50,000 Donation Will Fund Services and Connection for Prince George's County

By PRESS OFFICER  
Andrews Federal Credit Union

SUITLAND, Md. (Feb. 12, 2026)—Andrews Federal Credit Union is strengthening its commitment to community engagement through a new partnership with Prince George's County and County Executive Aisha Braveboy's 311 On the Go (311OTG) Program.

311 On the Go is a mobile initiative designed to bring county services directly to residents by connecting them with essential resources, partner organizations, and support programs. The unit travels throughout Prince George's County, providing convenient, responsive access to county services where residents live and work.

As part of this partnership, Andrews Federal Credit Union has provided \$50,000 in funding to support the 311 On the Go program and its mission to deliver accessible, community-centered solutions that address local needs and strengthen connections across the county.

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PHOTO COURTESY ANDREWS FEDERAL CREDIT UNION

Andrews Federal Credit Union has partnered with Prince George's County and County Executive Aisha Braveboy's 311 On the Go (311OTG) Program through \$50,000 in funding to support the 311 On the Go program and its mission to deliver accessible, community-centered solutions.

## Strathmore Announces Finalists for 2026 Bernard/Ebb Songwriting Awards

Nine DMV Songwriters—Ranging from Ninth Graders to Seasoned Performers—Compete for Top Prizes at 10th Anniversary Finalists Concert & Awards Ceremony at the Music Center on April 24

Two Prince George's County Songwriters Among Finalists

By PRESS OFFICER  
Strathmore

NORTH BETHESDA, Md. (Feb. 5, 2026)—Strathmore today announced the nine finalists for the 10th annual Bernard/Ebb Songwriting Awards, a competition honoring outstanding composers and lyricists from Maryland, Virginia, and Washington, D.C.

This year's finalists range from a 14-year-old who released her first single in middle school to established artists who've opened for Grammy winners and performed with jazz legends. They represent genres spanning indie folk-pop, jazz, rap, and musical theater, united by a commitment to authentic, story-driven songwriting.

"This milestone year brings together some of the most compelling voices from Silver Spring to Charlottesville," said Joi Brown, Artistic Director and Vice President of Programming at Strathmore. "These nine finalists represent what makes the DMV special: authentic storytelling, musical diversity, and artists who pour their hearts into their craft. We invite the community to witness their artistry firsthand."

Established in honor of Broadway lyricist Fred Ebb, the awards spotlight local songwriting talent through an annual competition and showcase. Ebb's collaborations with composer John Kander produced some of Broadway's most enduring works—including Cabaret, Chicago, and "New York, New York"—earning him three Tony Awards and an Academy Award nomination. His niece, Cathy Bernard, founded the awards in 2015. Bernard, a Bethesda resident, also established the Bernard Family Foundation, which supports arts, education, and cancer advocacy organizations.

Finalists will showcase their original compositions at the 10th Anniversary Finalists Concert & Awards Ceremony on Friday, April 24, at 7:30 p.m. at the Music



Left to right, Sam McCormally of Mount Rainier and Integriti Reeves of Upper Marlboro

Center at Strathmore, located at 5301 Tuckerman Lane in North Bethesda. Adult finalists will perform two songs and youth finalists will perform one. The evening includes real-time feedback from industry judges and the announcement of the winners.

This year's finalists include:

### Adult Category:

Laura Brino is an indie folk-pop singer-songwriter from Arnold, Maryland, whose music blends the warmth of folk, the drive of rock, and the shimmer of pop. She has been writing songs for 25 years and crafts emotionally honest, narrative-driven music. A 2025 Bernard/Ebb Songwriting Award Adult Finalist, she has released six albums and captivated audiences nationwide.

Sam McCormally is a singer-songwriter from Mount Rainier, Maryland, whose six-piece ensemble, Sam McCormally and the Plan, blends rock 'n' roll, folk, and R&B. A mainstay in the D.C. music scene, he has been writing songs for 30 years, drawing on diverse influences to craft narrative-driven music about connection, culture, and community.

Erynn McLeod is a singer-songwriter based in Charlottesville, Virginia, whose



PHOTOS COURTESY STRATHMORE

music blends folk, pop, and musical theater. She has been writing songs for 18 years and performs with voice and acoustic guitar. Drawing on her theatrical upbringing and formal training, she creates music that is story-driven and emotionally honest.

Integriti Reeves is a singer-songwriter from Upper Marlboro, Maryland, whose genre-fluid sound blends jazz, Brazilian, and folk influences with poetic, narrative-driven storytelling. A Howard University-trained jazz artist and 2025 Bernard/Ebb Songwriting Award Adult Finalist, her music explores love, presence, and intentional living with emotional honesty and carefully crafted narratives.

She-unO is a rapper and songwriter from Silver Spring, Maryland, whose music blends rap, R&B, and soul influences. Writing since fifth grade, he has performed widely, opening for Mali Music, Ndelible, and Lecrae, and has released multiple projects over the past decade, including his latest, (T)here, in 2025.

Marissa Zechinato is a singer-songwriter based in Brooklyn Park, Maryland,

See FINALISTS Page A3

## National Harbor to Celebrate Black-Owned Businesses During Black History Month

By PRESS OFFICER  
Prince George's County Economic Development Corporation

NATIONAL HARBOR, Md. (Feb. 9, 2026)—National Harbor is celebrating Black History Month with The Black-Owned Business Collective Bazaar, a vibrant marketplace taking place on Saturday, February 21, from 1 to 5 p.m. at 151 St. George Blvd. The community is invited to shop, connect, and celebrate Black entrepreneurship and culture.

The Bazaar will feature retail booths from Black-owned restaurants and specialty shops at National Harbor and will offer guests the opportunity to purchase products, enjoy samplings, and experience live demonstrations by business owners. A live DJ will set the tone for the celebratory atmosphere throughout the afternoon.

The event aligns with National Harbor's ongoing commitment to cultural celebration, inclusion, and community-focused programming. The event is also in partnership with Prince George's County Economic Development Corporation.

"We are excited to be able to celebrate and support our many Black-owned businesses," said Lauren Fells, marketing content manager at National Harbor, who also organized the event. "There are so many unique shops, restaurants, and experiences available at National Harbor. The program is an incentive for guests to discover something new and meet the owners."

Participating businesses range from restaurants like The Brass Tap to the brand new Wigenton Candles Co, and experiences like Sip & Develop and Thread and Sole by Ki-netics Lab. For the full list of Black-owned businesses, visit [www.nationalharbor.com/black-owned-businesses](http://www.nationalharbor.com/black-owned-businesses).

For more information on National Harbor, go to [www.nationalharbor.com](http://www.nationalharbor.com).

## Council Member Ivey Launches 'Love Shouldn't Hurt' Domestic Violence Awareness Campaign

By PRESS OFFICER  
Prince George's County Council Media

As we celebrate Valentine's Day, Council Member Jolene Ivey (At-Large) is launching her annual Love Shouldn't Hurt domestic violence awareness and prevention campaign. In an effort to reach a wider audience, this year's campaign takes a multi-week virtual outreach approach instead of one in-person event like previous years.

Council Member Ivey has already shared the introduction video (on Instagram) of the Love Shouldn't Hurt social media campaign. She will continue to post more videos throughout the remainder of the month featuring interviews, connecting viewers with resources from local nonprofits, and sharing the human experiences of survivors. Some of her guests include Michelle Valora, House of Ruth; Thee Melanie Johnson, The Storehouse; Tiffany Turner-Allen, Non-Profit Prince George's; Ivy Finkinstadt, Esq., Community Legal Services; Dr. Denise McCain, Family Justice Center; and several others.

"I have been hosting an annual event for the past seven years, and this year, I wanted to do something different and hopefully more impactful," said Council Member Ivey. "I believe a social media campaign will help achieve that goal. Scrolling social media is one of the easiest ways to receive—and share—information. These platforms can reach people of all ages and are a great way to amplify domestic violence resources, survivors' stories, and the message to each and every resident in our county, and beyond, that Love Shouldn't Hurt."

The campaign aims to educate people about how to spot domestic violence, offer tips for those who are experiencing it, and call attention to the help available in Prince George's County.

Videos will be accessible on all of Council Member Ivey's social media, including Instagram, Facebook, TikTok, YouTube, and on her website.



GRAPHIC COURTESY  
[HTTPS://BEACONS.AI/JOLENEIVEY](https://beacons.ai/joleneivey)

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# TOWNS *and* NEIGHBORS

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

### BRUCE BRUCE

Bruce Bruce is bringing the Cool Since Day One Tour to the Theater. Do not miss his larger than life stand-up show live Saturday, March 7, 2026, at 8 p.m. On Show Days: 3 hours prior to ticketed event. Box office hours on show days open 3 hours prior to ticketed event. Address is 101 MGM National Ave., Oxon Hill, Maryland.

### BOWIE STATE UNIVERSITY

Bowie State University mourns the passing of Vice President for Intercollegiate Athletics and Recreation Clyde Doughty, Jr. Doughty died unexpectedly Monday night (Feb. 2) at age 66 after serving the university for 11 years.

"Clyde Doughty was a beloved member of the Bowie State University family, and our entire community is stunned by this loss," said Bowie State University President Aminta Breaux. "He was devoted to the university, especially the students. His passion, dedication and impact are part of Bowie State's legacy." Doughty often encouraged others to "enjoy the moment," a message he shared with an unforgettable smile.

### BLACK-OWNED BUSINESS COLLECTIVE BAZAAR

National Harbor is proud to present The Black-Owned Business Collective Bazaar, a vibrant celebration spotlighting the destination's Black-owned businesses in honor of Black History Month February 21, 2026, 1–5 p.m. The FREE Bazaar, in partnership with Prince George's County Economic Development Corporation, will feature retail booths from Black-owned restaurants and specialty shops at National Harbor, giving you the opportunity to purchase products, enjoy samplings, and experience live demonstrations led by business owners. With sounds from DJ Valet Jay, this outdoor marketplace invites you to connect and celebrate Black entrepreneurship and culture.

### AFRICAN AMERICAN HEROES

African American Heroes are Booker Washington, Ida B. Wells, Rosa Parks, Sojourner Truth, Harriet Tubman, John Lewis, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., Thurgood Marshall, Benjamin O Davis, Jr., Frederick Douglass, Katherine Johnson, George Washington Carver, Shirley Chisholm and Bessie Coleman. Wikipedia.

### VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL 2026

Vacation Bible School at Clinton United Methodist Church will be held Monday, July 13, 2026–Friday, July 17, 2026. 9 a.m.–Noon. Stay tuned for more information to follow in March about registration. Contact: Audrey Johnson, Vacation Bible School Director at 301-922-5384 or ajohnson12906@yahoo.com.

### NATIONAL SWEATER DAY

National Sweater Day was celebrated February 4, 2026. It is a day that we honor one of the most appreciated garments of the winter months and raise awareness about climate change.

### BLACK HISTORY MONTH PROGRAM

Clinton United Methodist Church's Children & Youth Ministry presents learning, fun and refreshments Saturday, February 28, 2026, from 11 a.m.–1 p.m. Clinton United Methodist Church, 10700 Brandywine Road, Clinton, Maryland 0735. Light refreshments will be served. Please reply by calling (301) 868-1281.

### WHY IS FEBRUARY SO SPECIAL?

"February's significance stems from its Roman roots and purification rituals (Februa), its role as the shortest month to build on marking winter's end, and its cultural celebrations like Valentine's Day, Black History Month and various other observances such as LGBTQIA+-History Month, highlighting love, heritage, and transition as spring approaches, alongside significant historical events [such as] Groundhog Day." Historical & Linguistic Roots

### WHY IS FEBRUARY BLACK HISTORY MONTH

Black History Month is in February because historian Carter G. Woodson chose the month to build on existing celebrations around the birthdays of Abraham Lincoln (February 12) and Frederick Douglass (February 14) both significant figures in Black History, starting with a week-long observation in 1926 that grew into a month-long celebration.

### WE ARE ONE

Join Bowie State University Alumni Engagement (BSUAE) & Bowie State University National Alumni Association (BSUNAA) for the Inaugural Kick Off to CIAA. Ballroom 101: Bulldogs at the Hilton. Location: Hilton at Baltimore Harbor. Check in at the lobby for a complimentary drink, then CELEBRATE Bulldog Style with BSU ALUM \$25 Scholarship Initiative Thursday, February 26 from 7 p.m.–12 a.m. Bowie State University National Alumni Association. Inc. "There's A Spot in My Heart" 1939 1940.

### TRIBUTE TO TWO SPECIAL LADIES

"A very special warm tribute to my Mother Ruth Harper Turner and my sister Brenda Turner Johnson. Both ladies, who were born in February, showed an abundance of love in this world to their families, community and church. I truly miss them. They both had a heart of gold and were religious ladies who are deceased. They left a beautiful legacy in this world." Audrey Turner Johnson.

### ST. PHILIP'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH

You are invited to St. Philip's Episcopal Church Hall, Sunday, February 22, 2026, for our 9:30 a.m. Praise and Worship Service. Address is 13801 Baden Westwood Road, Brandywine, Maryland 20613.

## Around the County

### Prince George's County Resumes Regular Hours of Operation at its Residential Drop-off Convenience Centers

LARGO, Md. (Feb. 11, 2026)—Prince George's County has resumed its regular hours of operation at its residential drop-off waste management facilities as of Wednesday, February 11, 2026. Those facilities include:

The Brown Station Road Residential Convenience Drop-off Center in Upper Marlboro, Monday through Saturday from 7 a.m. to 6 p.m., and the Missouri Avenue Residential Convenience Drop-off Center in Brandywine open Monday, Wednesday, and Friday from 6:30 a.m.–3 p.m.; Tuesday and Thursday from 10 a.m.–6:30 p.m., and Saturday from 7:30 a.m.–4 p.m.

For the latest service updates and alerts, residents are encouraged to visit mypgc.us and sign up for Alert Prince George's at alert.mypgc.us to receive weather and emergency notifications by text, phone, or email.



PHOTO COURTESY BOWIE STATE UNIVERSITY

Coach Dawson Odums

### Bowie State University Announces Dawson Odums as New Head Football Coach

BOWIE, Md. (Feb. 9, 2026)—Bowie State University President Dr. Aminta H. Breaux announces the hiring of Dawson Odums as the university's next head football coach, marking a new era for the Bulldogs.

"I am pleased to welcome Coach Dawson Odums into the Bowie State University Bulldog family," said Dr. Breaux. "He has more than 25 years of coaching experience and a proven track record of developing student-athletes into successful players on the field and scholars in the classroom."

A native of Shelby, North Carolina, Odum brings extensive collegiate coaching experience and a championship pedigree to Bowie State. He spent the past four seasons at Norfolk State from 2021–24, guiding the Spartans to a 6-5 record in his first season, the program's first winning campaign since 2007. His reputation for rebuilding programs and developing competitive teams is well recognized throughout the HBCU community.

"We are confident that Coach Odums will ignite a new spirit in our football program," said Dr. Jolisa Williams, interim Vice President for Athletics and Recreation. "He brings a proven record of competitive success, a deep commitment to mentoring and developing young people, and a clear vision for building a championship culture grounded in discipline, accountability and academic excellence."

Before Norfolk State, Odums enjoyed a 10-year run in the Southwestern Athletic Conference (SWAC) at Southern University in Baton Rouge, Louisiana. He led Southern to a winning record in each of his eight full seasons as head coach, including a 5-1 mark during the spring season. Over his final five seasons, the Jaguars posted a 29-6 SWAC record, and He compiled an overall mark of 63-35. In 2013, he led the Jaguars to a conference championship and was named SWAC Coach of the Year. The team won four SWAC West Division titles in 2013, 2014, 2018 and 2019, respectively.

"To the Bowie State University community, I am honored and grateful to formally accept the position of head football coach," Odums said. "I want to thank President Breaux for her confidence and leadership throughout this process. I also thank Dr. Jolisa Williams for the opportunity to lead this proud program. I am truly appreciative of the trust placed in me to guide Bowie State Football into its next chapter. I firmly believe that discipline, character, leadership and citizenship are the foundations of sustained success. Those principles shape young men and prepare them for life beyond football and ultimately create a winning culture. When those standards are upheld, championships follow."

Odums' teams at Southern excelled in all three phases of the game. During the abbreviated 2021 spring season, Southern ranked first nationally in blocked punts, third in third down conversions, sixth in sacks and 15th in total offense, finishing No. 19 in the final FCS Coaches Poll. The Jaguars also posted Top 200 total offenses in 2015 and 2016 and ranked No. 13 nationally in rushing offense in 2019. Odums' teams ranked in the FCS Top 10 in punt return average four times, including a national best mark in 2017, and twice ranked in the top 10 in kickoff return average. Six players coached by Odums signed with NFL or CFL teams.

His coaching background also includes stops at North Carolina A&T and Bethune-Cookman of the Mid-Eastern Athletic Conference, as well as Clark Atlanta, Georgia Southern and Gardner-Webb. His experience spans roles as assistant head coach, interim head coach, defensive line coach, special teams coordinator, defensive coordinator, outside linebackers coach and defensive ends coach.

Odums played linebacker and quarterback at Crest High School in Boiling Springs, North Carolina, before competing collegiately at North Carolina Central University (NCCU). A defensive lineman at NCCU, he was a team captain, earned All-CIAA honors as a senior and received a bachelor's degree in physical education.

## In and Around Morningside-Skyline

With Mary McHale, will return soon!

## Grant Fuels Push to Investigate Maryland's Reform School for Black Boys

By MIRA BEINART  
Capital News Service

The Maryland Department of Juvenile Services was awarded a \$200,000 grant to begin searching for the remains of hundreds of boys in the woods near the Cheltenham Youth Detention Center, the first step toward formal recognition of the boys' deaths.

Funds will pay for a ground-penetrating radar survey and restoration of the cemetery grounds, according to the Maryland Historical Trust.

"I want to find some decent way to restore dignity to these boys and to give some level of healing to their families," said Crystal Foretia, a former Juvenile Services researcher who helped draft the grant. The Maryland Historical Trust and Maryland Commission on African American History and Culture announced the grant on Jan. 28.

The survey should show how many boys are buried in an unkept wooded area adjacent to the Cheltenham State Veterans Cemetery. An estimated 230 boys are buried there, according to the Maryland Historical Trust.

"That's all necessary pre-work to do before you can restore the cemetery properly because you need to know what's there before you're trying to fix it," Foretia said.

The grant comes as legislation is being considered in Annapolis to push for an independent investigation into the House of Reformation, a priority for the Black caucus.

Capital News Service has analyzed 142 death certificates from the detention center, formerly known as the House of Reformation for Colored Boys at Cheltenham, the first juvenile detention center for Black



PHOTO CREDIT ROB WELLS/CAPITAL NEWS SERVICE

The marker of William Jones, 17, in an unmarked grave site in Cheltenham, Md. State officials say hundreds of youths are buried in this area.

boys below the Mason-Dixon Line. An estimated 300 Black youth died while in custody at the House of Reformation between the facility's founding in 1870 and 1941.

The cemetery is divided into two sections and sits on land owned by the Department of Veterans and Military Families.

The first section has four identifiable headstones, though only three are legible, and was likely established in the mid- to late-nineteenth century. The second, much larger section from the early twentieth century has eight rows of broken cinderblock markers peeking out from the ground by approximately five inches. Most of the markers are unidentifiable without excavation, according to the Maryland Historical Trust.

Maryland's Department of Juvenile Services is working with local historians

to uncover the truth about the abuse and neglect at Cheltenham. Telephone messages and an email query to a department spokesman were not immediately returned.

The Cheltenham grant was part of \$5 million awarded to 29 groups by the Commission on African American History and Culture and the Maryland Historical Trust for projects aimed at preserving African American culture and history.

"This year's awards will assist threatened places that are often overlooked but are deeply significant to Maryland's Black history, including cemeteries and sites associated with fraternal organizations," Elizabeth Hughes, director and state historic preservation officer at the Maryland Historical Trust, said in a statement.

—Molecule Jongwilai and Rob Wells contributed to this report

# COMMUNITY

## Black History Month Program: The American Revolution and the Fate of the World

By STACEY HAWKINS  
Marietta Historic Site & Museum

Please join us on **Saturday, February 28, 2026**, 1–3 p.m., as author, historian, and professor Dr. Richard Bell discusses his book *The American Revolution and the Fate of the World*.

In his book, Dr. Bell offers a fresh look at the impact of the American Revolution by focusing on disenfranchised people and minorities in the colonies, including free and enslaved Black people. Dr. Bell conveys the impact of these developments at home and abroad by grounding the narrative in the grip-

ping stories of individuals.

Book signing and sales, as well as a Q & A will follow. This is a FREE program. Please register on [www.pgparksdirect.com](http://www.pgparksdirect.com) and use the ticket code: MHM-SPEC-GA-20260228. Walk-ins are welcome. This program is in partnership with Prince George's County Historical Society.

For more information, please call 301-464-5291 or email [mariettahouse@pgparks.com](mailto: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.

## Frederick Douglass Foundation Named America250 Supporting Partner

By DORIAN B. FRANCIS  
Frederick Douglass Foundation

The Frederick Douglass Foundation (FDF) is honored to announce its designation as an America250 Supporting Partner as the nation prepares to commemorate the 250th anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence in 2026.

America250, the nonpartisan organization charged by Congress to lead the commemoration of the signing of the Declaration of Independence, is working to engage Americans nationwide in meaningful reflection, education, and civic participation leading up to the Semiquincentennial.

Through this designation, the Frederick Douglass Foundation will support Amer-

ica250's efforts by contributing educational programming and public engagement initiatives that reflect the enduring legacy of Frederick Douglass and the expansion of liberty in American history."

As Chairman of the Frederick Douglass Foundation, I'm honored to serve as an America250 Supporting Partner," said Troy Rolling, President of FDF. "This partnership gives us a national platform to highlight the contributions of Black Americans and to remind the country of the promise of America that Frederick Douglass championed. As we approach the Semiquincentennial, our focus is to help communities stay informed, inspired, and engaged in our nation's civic life."

"America250 is proud to welcome the Frederick Douglass Foundation as a Sup-

porting Partner as we prepare to commemorate our nation's Semiquincentennial. Frederick Douglass challenged America to live up to its founding ideals, and this partnership helps ensure that his legacy—and the ongoing expansion of liberty in our history—remains central to our national reflection as we approach 2026," said Jennifer Condon, Executive Vice President at America250.

America250's mission is to celebrate and commemorate the 250th anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence, marking America's Semiquincentennial. Visit [www.america250.org](http://www.america250.org).

Dorian B. Francis is Communications Director for the Frederick Douglass Foundation. He graduated from Bowie State University with B.A. in Communications.

### Finalists from A1

whose jazz-inspired music blends soul, pop, and experimental vocal textures. She crafts intimate, honest songs on piano and hand percussion. A Howard University graduate in jazz voice, she has performed at the Kennedy Center, for NPR's Tiny Desk, and throughout the country.

### Youth Category:

Erin Leberknight is a 12th-grade singer-songwriter from Ellicott City, Maryland, who blends folk and pop influences. She crafts observational, story-driven piano songs inspired by Joni Mitchell, Nick Drake,

Olivia Rodrigo, and Bob Dylan. A 2023 Bernard/Ebb Songwriting Award Youth Finalist, Leberknight plans to release an EP and pursue a bachelor's degree in musical theater.

Saanvi Purohit is a ninth-grade singer-songwriter from Clarksburg, Maryland, who blends pop influences with emotionally resonant lyrics. She has been singing since she was a toddler and released her first single, "Did You Know?" in middle school. She later released "Fourteen" before turning 15. She plays the piano, guitar, and ukulele.

Nate Stern is a 12th-grade songwriter based in Washington, D.C., whose music blends indie

pop and alternative influences. He began writing songs in elementary school and has spent six years creating playful, story-driven work inspired by artists such as Fountains of Wayne, The Magnetic Fields, and They Might Be Giants. Playing guitar, bass, keys, and drums, he approaches songwriting as a creative puzzle rooted in curiosity and joy.

The panel will be led by head judge Angela Sclafani, a three-time Great American Songwriting Contest champion and 2019 Fred Ebb Award winner for Musical Theatre Songwriting who was named a 2022 Woman to Watch on Broadway. She will be joined by Kyshona, a Nashville-

based artist and former music therapist whose song "Listen" became an anthem during 2020's racial justice protests, and Ryan Montbleau, a road warrior who has performed more than 200 shows annually for three decades and whose "eloquent, soulful songwriting" has been compared to Bill Withers and James Taylor by NPR.

### Prizes and Recognition:

The adult category winner will receive a grand prize of \$10,000, 25 hours of recording studio time, and two hours of music business strategy consulting with producer Dave Mallen at Innovation Station Music in Annandale, Virginia. The sec-

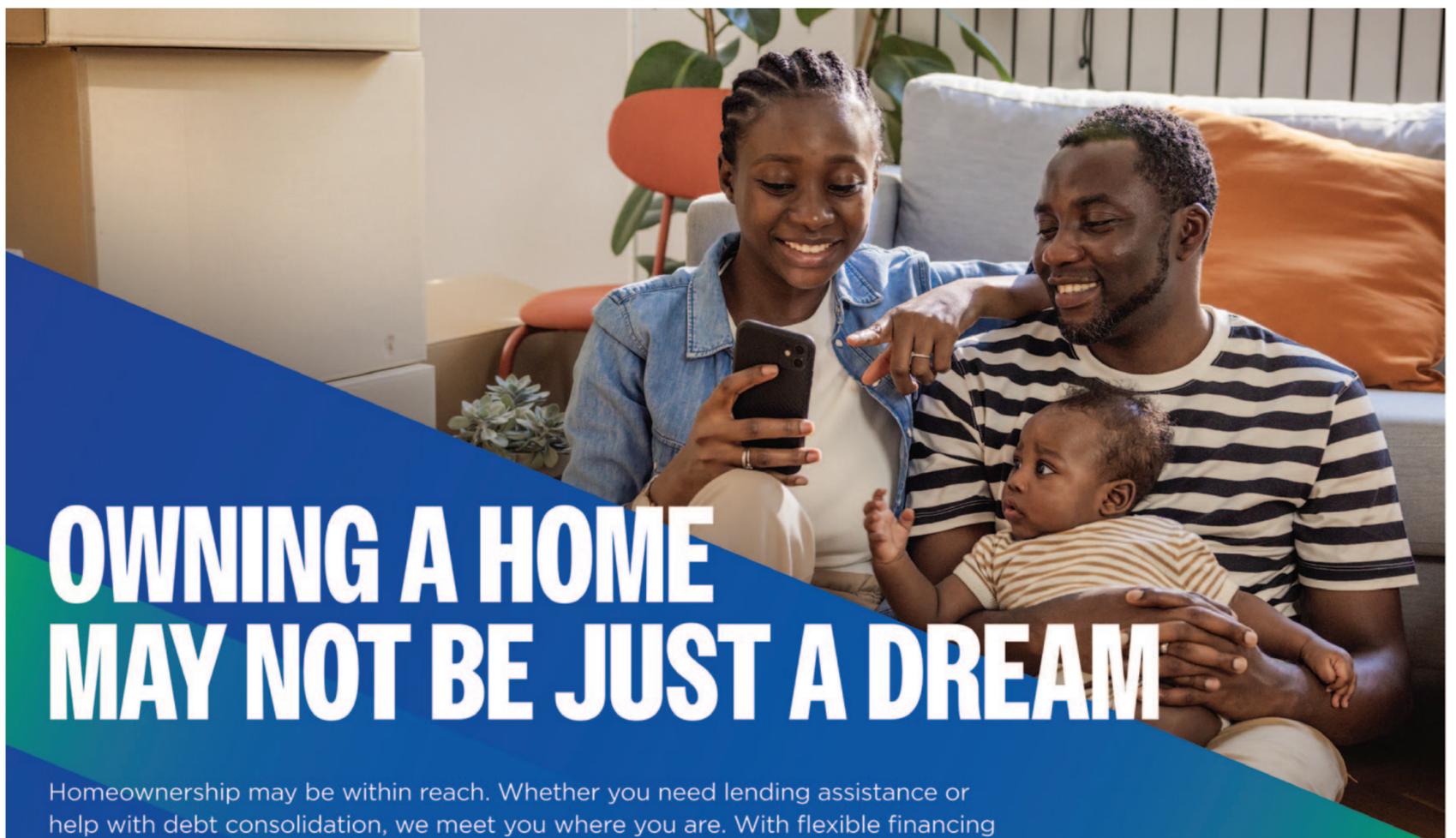
ond-place winner will receive \$2,500, and all other adult finalists will receive \$1,000. In the youth category, the top young songwriter will earn \$2,500, and the other finalists will receive \$500. Additionally, all finalists will be featured on Strathmore's digital platforms.

In 2025, Baltimore-based poet and songwriter Wordsmith won the adult category, while singer-songwriter Aaron Swibel of Rockville, Maryland, took top honors in the youth category.

Tickets for the Bernard/Ebb Songwriting Awards 10th Anniversary Finalists Concert & Awards Ceremony are on sale now, with prices ranging from \$20 to \$40. For tickets and more

information, visit [strathmore.org](http://strathmore.org) or call 301-581-5100.

Since 1983, Strathmore has enriched lives through transformative artistic experiences and meaningful community connections. Based in North Bethesda, Maryland, this nonprofit cultural institution showcases world-class talent, supports emerging artists, and offers diverse programs at its Music Center and Mansion, as well as across Montgomery County. Strathmore fosters creativity and community through performance, educational initiatives, and accessible arts programming. Experience the magic of Strathmore, where the arts are everywhere.



# OWNING A HOME MAY NOT BE JUST A DREAM

Homeownership may be within reach. Whether you need lending assistance or help with debt consolidation, we meet you where you are. With flexible financing options, including our STAR (Steps Toward Achieving Results) program, we offer mortgage, home equity and personal loans with affordable terms. Work with people who care, and take the next step with confidence.



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# BUSINESS AND FINANCE

## Social Security Matters

Ask Rusty:

### I'm Still Working; Why Didn't my Benefit Amount Increase

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 have been working somewhat consistently since commencing my Social Security benefit income. I've been collecting since my full benefit age of 66, approximately. I'm now 81, and customarily, in about October of each calendar year, Social Security notifies me of additional benefits from my additional work. Not this year.

I earned some \$18,000–\$19,000 in 2025. SS advised I did not meet some 35-year formula. I thought that formula just applied to the original benefit calculation. Otherwise, one seems cheated given the SS taxes paid on income received after applying for benefits without any consideration for that income. Please advise me. **Signed: Feeling Cheated**

**Dear Feeling Cheated:** FYI, your Social Security benefit is always based on the highest 35 years of your lifetime earnings (with your early years' earnings automatically adjusted for inflation). And that formula continues even after you start receiving benefits. Social Security will look at your earnings each year to see if your recent earnings are among your highest. If so, they will automatically recalculate your benefit to give you a higher amount (and pay you retroactively to the first of that year). Apparently, in past years, your more recent earnings were among the highest over your lifetime, which is why you received those notifications in the fall of each previous year saying your benefit was adjusted based upon recent earnings. That you didn't get a similar notification this year, means that your earnings in 2024 were not among the highest over your lifetime, so no adjustment to your monthly benefit was appropriate.

Now, to clarify, those annual notices you received in the past always referred to the preceding year—that is, if you received a notice in October 2024 of a higher SS benefit, that was a result of your 2023 earnings. If you got no such notice in October of 2025, that means that your 2024 income was not among the highest over your lifetime. And your 2025 earnings of \$18,000–\$19,000 will likely not be among your lifetime highest either, so you probably won't get a notice next year either.

It's important to understand that your contributions to Social Security (i.e., the SS payroll taxes you pay while working) are not put into a separate account for you—rather, they are used to help pay benefits to all beneficiaries. In other words, just contributing to SS with payroll tax from your work earnings doesn't necessarily mean you get a higher benefit. Your SS benefit is always based upon the 35 years in which you earned the most, including recent years if you continue to work. So, you weren't "cheated"—that is simply how the program works—your SS benefit is always based on your highest 35 years of work earnings, including recent years, with earnings from the early years adjusted for inflation.

*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.*

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## David Martini Sworn In as Chief of Police for Town of Cottage City



Above, Cottage City Commissioner Chair Wanda Wheatley administers the oath of office to Chief David Martini as his wife Tamara looks on.

Right, At Large County Council Member Jolene Ivey with Chief David Martini and Cottage City Commissioner Chair Wanda Wheatley. The Swearing In Ceremony took place on Wednesday, February 11, 2026.



PHOTOS COURTESY TOWN OF COTTAGE CITY

## Prince George's County Economic Development Corporation Celebrates IonQ Securing Two Spots on Washington Business Journal's Top 20 Largest M&A Deals of 2025

By PRESS OFFICER  
PGCEDC

LARGO, Md. (Feb. 6, 2026)—Prince George's County Economic Development Corporation (PGCEDC) proudly congratulates IonQ Inc., headquartered in College Park, Maryland, for earning two placements on The Washington Business Journal's list of "The 20 Largest M&A Acquisitions by Greater Washington Companies in 2025," ranked by purchase price.

The recognition highlights IonQ's continued leadership in quantum computing and its growing influence within the global technology and innovation ecosystem. According to research conducted by Carolyn M. Proctor of The Washington Business Journal, IonQ secured the 8th and 16th largest deals on the 2025 list:

### #8—\$1.08 Billion Acquisition

On September 17, 2025, IonQ acquired Oxford Ionics Ltd., a quantum computing company based in Kidlington, United Kingdom, in a deal valued at \$1.08 billion. The

acquisition strengthened IonQ's capabilities in advanced quantum hardware and accelerated its global expansion strategy.

### #16—\$157 Million Acquisition

On April 30, 2025, IonQ acquired ID Quantique SA, headquartered in Geneva, Switzerland, for \$157 million. The purchase enhanced IonQ's portfolio in quantum-safe networking and cybersecurity technologies, reinforcing its leadership in next-generation secure communications.

"These achievements reflect the remarkable growth and global impact of IonQ and reinforce Prince George's County's position at the forefront of quantum innovation," said Ingrid S. Watson, President & CEO of the Prince George's County Economic Development Corporation. "IonQ's strategic investments in advanced technology and international partnerships demonstrate how companies in our region are shaping the future of computing, cybersecurity, and scientific discovery. We are proud to support a business ecosystem where innovation, research, and commercialization converge."

IonQ's continued expansion underscores the strength of Prince George's County's technology and research corridor, anchored by the Discovery District in College Park and supported by partnerships across academia, industry, and government. The company's global reach and strategic acquisitions contribute to regional job growth, investment attraction, and the advancement of cutting-edge technologies with applications in healthcare, finance, national security, and scientific research.

PGCEDC remains committed to fostering a dynamic innovation economy by supporting high-growth technology companies and promoting Prince George's County as a premier destination for research, advanced manufacturing, and quantum computing.

Prince George's County Economic Development Corporation's mission is to cultivate and promote a strong local economy supporting entrepreneurs' and businesses' growth and prosperity. It is dedicated to strengthening communities through business development and job creation. Visit [www.pgcdec.com](http://www.pgcdec.com).

### Partners from A1

"Through the 311 On The Go Mobile Unit, the County is working to provide greater engagement with citizens, and greater access to the County's resources," said Damita Robinson, Chief Operating Officer for Andrews Federal Credit Union. "Just like 311 On The Go, we believe in providing meaningful support at the community level. We have a shared goal of improving quality of life in Prince George's County and are proud to be a partner in creating connection and meeting local needs."

As part of the credit union's support of 311 On The Go, Andrews Federal will provide financial education resources to guide youth and families in the community. Employees and volunteers will be actively involved in community events, including celebrations for the 330th anniversary of Prince George's County, summer community events, and youth and family support programs. "Our credit union has a longstanding commitment to serving Prince George's County and empowering our community," Robinson said. "Through our partnership with County Executive Brave-

boy and the 311 On The Go program, we look forward to strengthening local connections, providing financial education tools, and helping residents navigate life's challenges with confidence."

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 [www.andrewsfcu.org](http://www.andrewsfcu.org).

## Governor Moore Secures Win From PJM, Saving Marylanders From Billions on Electricity Bills

Extension of price collar through 2030 will save consumers across the region an estimated \$27 billion, building on the Moore-Miller Administration's comprehensive strategy to lower energy bills and ensure grid reliability.

By PRESS OFFICER  
Office of the Governor

ANNAPOLIS, Md. (Feb. 13, 2026)—Governor Wes Moore today announced that the Board of Managers for grid operator PJM Interconnection released a decision to extend the capacity market price cap through the end of the decade. This decision follows sustained advocacy from Governor Moore and a coalition of 13 governors who demanded the grid operator take action to protect families and businesses from volatile rate hikes while long-term market reforms are implemented.

This extension is a significant win for consumers, protecting them from runaway costs that have driven recent increases in electricity prices across the region. The move is projected to save 67 million Americans

across the PJM region—including millions of Marylanders—an additional \$27 billion on their energy bills. When combined with savings secured through earlier interventions supported by the Governor, the total regional savings now reach an estimated \$45 billion.

"For too long, the personal impact on the people and families we represent has taken a back seat at PJM to the interests of companies and their shareholders," said Governor Moore. "This decision highlights why decisions impacting the people's lives and wallets must be made with us, not at us. By extending this price cap, we are preventing billions in unnecessary costs from being passed down to our residents, ensuring that we don't have to choose between keeping the lights on and making ends meet."

"The extension of the price cap marks a

major step toward protecting Marylanders from unrelenting price increases. The existing price cap has already saved consumers billions of dollars; Governor Wes Moore's continued success in pressuring PJM will further ease the strain on Marylanders' electricity bills," said Maryland Energy Administration Director Kelly Speakes-Backman. "But our work is not yet complete. We will continue to advocate at PJM for all residents to have access to affordable energy, especially as regional and national electricity demand from large loads such as data centers continues to surge at an unprecedented rate."

The PJM Board has indicated it will file the necessary amendments with the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) shortly to ensure the price collar is in place for the upcoming 2028/2029 auction.

## The Prince George's Post

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# ENVIRONMENT

## EarthTalk® Q&A

### Beware if You Live Near a Golf Course

By Rachel Berliner | February 10, 2026

Dear EarthTalk:

Should I be concerned for my health if my property is right near a golf course?  
—Wilma Forrest, via email

Golf courses make up about 2.3 million acres of land in the U.S., according to the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America. Despite many Americans' affinity for golfing, some are becoming increasingly concerned about living near golf courses. Many are worried that living on or near one can create health issues, and others are anxious about golf courses' environmental impact.

Their concerns are legitimate: The grass on a golf course is not natural. Maintaining the large area of uniform, vibrant green grass requires a significant number of pesticides, herbicides and other chemicals, many that are released into the air and seep into local water supplies. This constant exposure can indeed lead to health issues. Medical experts believe that there is a link to Parkinson's disease, changes in endocrine functioning, and even certain forms of cancer. Dr. Brittany Krzyzanowski, an assistant professor at Barrow Neurological Institute conducted studies about the link between golf courses and Parkinson's disease; findings suggested that "pesticides applied to golf courses may play a role in the incidence of Parkinson's disease for nearby residents," says Krzyzanowski.

Beyond human health, golf courses pose other threats. Obtaining a plot of land large enough for a golf course often requires clearing land and subsequently removing an existing ecosystem. Because of this, golf courses lead to local deforestation and destruction of natural habitats. The maintenance of golf courses also pays a heavy environmental price. Aside from chemicals, they also use large amounts of water, some 312,000 gallons a day, according to Audubon International.

Some golf courses are taking steps to lessen their ecological impact. The Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary Program for Golf Courses encourages responsible and sustainable practices on golf courses across America, providing guidance on how to protect the wildlife around the golf course. An organization called Monarchs in the Rough focuses on planting milkweed on golf courses in order to restore the naturally abundant monarch butterfly populations. Additionally, some golf courses have implemented birdhouses that attract insect-eating birds instead of using pesticides.

If you are interested in helping to ensure healthy decisions and responsible environmental practices on golf courses, you can support organizations such as the Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary Program for Golf Courses and Monarchs in the Rough, which work to improve natural habitats and lessen the use of dangerous chemicals, helping to reduce both the impact on human health and the environment.

**CONTACTS:** Living Near a Golf Course Might Raise Your Risk of Disease, <https://www.vice.com/en/article/living-near-golf-course-parkinsons-disease-risk/>; The Environmental Impact of a Golf Course Is Sky High, <https://www.greenmatters.com/p/golf-courses-environmental-impact>.

EarthTalk® is produced by Roddy Scheer & Doug Moss for the 501(c)3 nonprofit EarthTalk. See more at <https://emagazine.com>. To donate, visit <https://earthtalk.org>. Send questions to: [question@earthtalk.org](mailto:question@earthtalk.org)

## Maryland Transit Administration Launches Third Annual Earth Day Youth Art Competition

Winning Designs from Youth Ages 5 to 17 to Appear on Specially Wrapped Bus

By PRESS OFFICER  
Maryland Transit Administration

BALTIMORE (Feb. 12, 2026)—The Maryland Department of Transportation Maryland Transit Administration is now accepting submissions for its third annual Earth Day Art Competition. Youth across the state are encouraged to use their creativity, imagination and insight to submit artwork that highlights sustainability and how transit connects people to opportunity. The finalists' artwork will be featured on a specially wrapped bus, transforming the buses into a moving display of their vision for a sustainable transit future. The deadline to submit artwork is March 13.

In addition to the wrapped bus, the selected finalists' pieces will be displayed in the Maryland State

Department of Education Superintendent's Student Gallery on Baltimore Street.

### Key Contest Details:

- Eligibility: Open to all youth ages five (5) through seventeen (17)
- Theme: Public Transportation is a Climate Solution
- Submission Deadline: March 13, 2026
- Submission Process: Details available at <http://www.mta.maryland.gov/EarthDayArt>

Over the first two years of the program, the Maryland Transit Administration has received more than 100 submissions from across the state with finalists representing Baltimore City, and Anne Arundel, Baltimore, Montgomery, and Prince George's counties.

## LOCAL WARMING: CLIMATE CHANGE IN MARYLAND

### Maryland's Offshore Wind Project Faces Legal Pushback From Ocean City, Trump Administration

By MATT KAUFFMAN  
Capital News Service

Attracting 8 million annual visitors to its popular beach and bustling boardwalk, Ocean City, Maryland, is a cornerstone of the state's culture and economy—but the view from the beach will change if the state government has its way.

Instead of looking out at just the sky and waves, visitors could one day see tiny toothpick-like structures—windmills, actually—on the horizon. That prospect has prompted a fierce political battle over an ambitious, 114-turbine wind energy project that aims to generate renewable power for over 700,000 homes.

Offshore wind developer US Wind leased the federal waters after winning a 2014 auction. The U.S. Department of the Interior approved the company's construction and operations plan in December 2024, greenlighting the Momentum Wind project, which could generate over 2,000 megawatts of clean energy in addition to the MarWin turbines.

Maryland Gov. Wes Moore has defended the project as a key way to increase the local energy supply in a state that historically imports about 40% of its electricity.

"Maryland is serious about offshore wind—not just because of what it means for our environment but also because of what it means for our economy," Moore said last year.

Yet while the state attempts to implement offshore wind capable of paving the way for a clean energy future, opponents on two fronts have fought to stop the project.

The founder of the Stop Offshore Wind campaign—Kevin Gibbs, owner of the Dough Roller restaurants in Ocean City—contends the presence of the windmills will hurt tourism and fishing in the region.

"You're going to have an economic impact on families that have been here for generations," he said.

In addition to local pushback from community members like Gibbs, President Donald Trump issued an executive order during his first month in office withdrawing leases for offshore wind projects. A federal judge overturned that order in December, but US Wind has paused design work on the project as it awaits the resolution of a separate federal court case in which Gibbs' group and the Trump administration argue the federal permit for the project should be withdrawn.

"No law would impose civil or criminal liability on US Wind if it continued to develop the project," U.S. District Court Judge Stephanie A. Gallagher wrote in a recent decision in the case. "It simply has made a business decision not to do so in light of the political headwinds it perceives."

### How it works

To hear Julie Lundquist tell it, offshore wind makes sense off Maryland's coast.

"This is a technology that we know how to build," said Lundquist, professor of mechanical engineering at Johns Hopkins University. "It's only getting more efficient, and it's very well-suited for deployment in many locations."

Lundquist likened the technical process to that of old-school windmills with modern blades similar to airplane wings. The rotation of the blades generates an electric current which travels through a hub into the grid.

Offshore wind tends to cost about 50% more than onshore wind, according to a study from the University of Maryland—with certain studies estimating an even greater difference. But Lundquist pointed out two key advantages. Population centers tend to be on coasts, which simplifies the transmission of offshore electricity. The ocean surface also helps produce steadier, more efficient winds.

A supporter of the project, Maryland Del. Lorig Charkoudian, said offshore wind takes some pressure off the challenging storage of other forms of energy like solar power.

"It blows harder at night when there's no solar, and it blows harder in the winter, when there's less solar," said Charkoudia, a Democrat from Montgomery County. "The more you have complementary pro-



IMAGE COURTESY CAPITAL NEWS SERVICE

A visualization of what US Wind's Ocean City project would look like from the 84th Street Beach at 1 p.m. on a sunny summer day. This image, prepared by THC Companies, was included in the environmental impact statement that US Wind filed with the federal government.

duction, the less storage you're going to need."

Lundquist also said studies in Europe indicate the ecological footprint of the turbines may not be entirely negative. Research in the North Sea shows the underwater structure can act as a reef, attracting barnacles and other small marine creatures.

While the U.S. trudges forward on offshore wind, Europe has installed over 6 gigawatts of offshore energy capability in the past two years, bringing the total number of operating offshore farms to over 150.

"We would like to make sure that the U.S. develops a viable industry, so that American workers can participate in this industry and take part in building that going forward," Lundquist said.

If completed, Maryland's project will be a significant step toward former President Joe Biden's goal of establishing 30 gigawatts of energy potential via offshore wind by 2030. Biden's plan would see 10 million homes powered with clean energy, enough to avoid 78 million metric tons of carbon dioxide added to the atmosphere.

But that goal in Maryland is in trouble for both local and national reasons.

### Local pushback

For many Marylanders, Ocean City is a vacation destination. Situated on the easternmost part of Worcester County, the town's population swells to about 300,000 during the peak travel season.

Business owner Gibbs is one of the 7,000 year-round residents who call Ocean City home.

"It's where I want to raise my kids," he said. "I've got a daughter on the way and I want her to have clean oceans and fresh seafood."

Gibbs owns and operates The Dough Roller, a popular restaurant with three locations. Gibbs' father founded the restaurant in 1980 and it quickly became a recognizable staple for vacationers and locals alike.

Working with local business owners, nonprofit organizations and residents, Gibbs started the Stop Offshore Wind campaign, which Ocean City and Worcester County have endorsed.

The group is primarily concerned with the impact an impeded view could have on the tourist economy and with potential harm to fishing and marine life. According to city documents, the 938-foot-tall turbines will be 10.7 miles offshore, close enough to be in plain view from the beach.

"You're going to have hundreds of red blinking lights in the middle of your moon," Gibbs said. "Your sunrises are going to be blocked with it."

Gibbs said he is worried Ocean City may struggle to compete on the global stage of tourism if visitors are unwilling to rent homes in plain view of offshore turbines.

However, proponents of offshore wind argue the impact on tourism would be either nonexistent or minimal. US Wind maintains that economic studies in places where offshore turbines have been installed show no adverse effects on tourism.

The Block Island Wind Farm in Rhode Island was even linked to an increase in nightly reservations and occupancy rates during peak tourism months, according to

a study from the University of Rhode Island.

Some wind farms have even become tourist destinations themselves. Vineyard Wind in Massachusetts offers field trips to its facility, and at least five companies offer boat tours of wind farms in Great Britain.

### The legal battle

Local opponents of the wind project now have a friend in the White House.

In October 2024, Ocean City and several co-plaintiffs filed a lawsuit challenging federal approvals for the project's construction and operations plan. The motion alleged the Department of the Interior failed to adequately consider the environmental impact, violating the Administrative Procedure Act and several environmental laws. In July, a federal judge allowed five of the plaintiffs' claims to continue.

A few months later, Trump ordered the withdrawal of all offshore leases set aside for wind development until agencies could conduct further review, endangering Maryland's project as well as others along the coast.

Seventeen states and Washington, D.C., challenged the order under the Administrative Procedure Act. In a major victory for supporters of wind energy, a federal court in Massachusetts struck down Trump's order in December on the grounds it was arbitrary and capricious.

"Indeed, the agency defendants candidly concede that the sole factor they considered in deciding to stop issuing permits was the president's direction to do so," wrote U.S. District Court Judge Patti B. Saris.

Work on similar offshore projects in Virginia, New York and Rhode Island resumed in January after recent judicial victories for offshore wind.

But in Maryland, the Trump administration has also joined Ocean City's lawsuit against the Department of the Interior and US Wind, in which the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management is seeking to back-track its previous approval for the project. The bureau claims that after a comprehensive review of the permit, its officials underestimated the impact the turbines would have on search and rescue operations as well as commercial fishing.

In response, Charkoudian and other Maryland lawmakers joined to form the Offshore Wind Alliance to support the project.

Charkoudian said Trump's avid opposition to offshore wind is indicative of its strength.

"Trump, who is doing everything he can to line the pockets of his billionaire fossil fuel buddies, is going particularly hard after offshore wind," she said.

Charkoudian emphasized in addition to lowering rates, offshore wind has the ability to revitalize manufacturing jobs.

US Wind is currently developing a factory to produce monopiles—large, steel foundations driven into the sea floor to support turbines—at Sparrows Point in Baltimore County, which the company said could support over 500 jobs. The location was previously home to Bethlehem Steel, a faded manufacturing giant

# EarthTalk® Q&A Worsening Shrimp Fraud Drives Overfishing

By Shriya Surti | February 12, 2026

Dear EarthTalk:

What is "shrimp fraud?" Why is it bad for the environment and local economies and how are we combating it?

—Michelle G., Seattle, WA

Shrimp is one of the most popular seafood choices worldwide. "We eat over one billion pounds of shrimp [annually in the U.S.]," Kimberly Warner, senior scientist of Oceana, tells The Guardian. Producers mislabel or misrepresent shrimp products to deceive buyers about their species, origin or sustainability. This deceptive practice misleads consumers and harms the environment, the economy and public health.

Shrimp fraud takes various forms, including species substitution, where lower-quality or cheaper shrimp species are sold as expensive varieties. Some producers mislabel shrimp origins to disguise unsustainably harvested shrimp. Some misrepresent sustainability claims to appeal to eco-conscious consumers.

When producers misrepresent shrimp harvesting, they drive overfishing, depleting wild shrimp populations and disrupting marine ecosystems. Shrimp farmers clear mangroves for unsustainable shrimp farming, destroying coastal habitats and reducing biodiversity. Shrimp farmers also pollute local water systems by releasing excess nutrients and chemicals, harming aquatic life. Fraudulent shrimp sourcing supports unreported and unregulated fishing, weakening efforts to manage global fisheries responsibly.

Honest shrimp fishers suffer financial losses when their legally harvested shrimp must compete with fraudulent alternatives. Mislabelers deceive consumers, charging them premium prices for falsely advertised products. This results in financial losses and raises health concerns because some mislabeled shrimp are contaminated, exposing customers to potential allergens or harmful chemicals.

Organizations and consumers have increased efforts to combat shrimp fraud in recent years. Governments have implemented



PHOTO CREDIT: PEXELS.COM

**Shrimp fraud takes various forms, including species substitution, where lower-quality or cheaper shrimp species are sold as expensive varieties.**

seafood labeling laws and regulations requiring accurate product descriptions. "An immediate fix would be traceability and better labeling, allowing people to choose their seafood confidently and responsibly," Kimberly Warner says. Regulators and advocacy groups have developed DNA testing and traceability initiatives to verify shrimp species and origins more effectively. Consumer awareness campaigns have exposed fraudulent practices and pushed for industry-wide reform.

Consumers can fight shrimp fraud by making informed purchases and choosing trusted sources like certified sustainable fisheries. Support stronger labeling laws and traceability programs. Stay informed and advocate for ethical sourcing to foster a more sustainable shrimp industry.

**CONTACTS:** A third of U.S. shrimp is 'misrepresented', the-guardian.com/environment/world-on-a-plate/2014/oct/30/shrimp-prawns-seafood-fraud-oceana-sustainability-overfishing.

EarthTalk® is produced by Roddy Scheer & Doug Moss for the 501(c)3 nonprofit EarthTalk. See more at <https://emagazine.com>. To donate, visit <https://earthtalk.org>. Send questions to [question@earthtalk.org](mailto:question@earthtalk.org)

## Offshore Wind from A5

that was dissolved in 2003.

Charkoudian encouraged the state to continue its support for the project and plan for future offshore wind sites in the hope that a future federal administration will support the technology.

### The future

With the Trump administration determined to stop offshore wind, the technology's future in Maryland—and the United States—remains uncertain. While many lawmakers and academics point to it as one of many solutions to reduce the state's energy deficit in a sustainable manner, the lengthy process to approve and construct offshore farms is susceptible to delays from the executive branch.

The U.S. lags significantly behind Europe on offshore wind. While only three farms have started operations along the U.S. East Coast (with more in the permitting and construction phase), the United Kingdom alone has 51 farms operating, leading the way for Europe's 37 gigawatts of energy capacity.

With the current opposition at the federal level, it's unlikely the U.S. will catch up soon. But according to author Jim Beach, who wrote "The Real Environmentalists," turning a profit is the key to providing clean energy.

"Entrepreneurs are already solving the problem," he said. "They're not sitting around waiting on grants."

However, Beach said the increasing cost of constructing offshore wind turbines has limited private investment in the sector, while entrepreneurs have doubled down on nuclear power.

"The big companies that sell these huge installs are only going to make it work if there's a subsidy and government involvement," he said.

While data from S&P Global points to growing private equity investment in offshore wind, these funds typically come once most of the legwork has been done and the project is nearing the finish line.

In Maryland, much of the legwork is done—but the future of offshore wind remains in the hands of the courts.

Nancy Sopko, US Wind's vice president of external affairs, said in a statement that the company "remains confident in the validity of all permits issued for our project, and we will continue to vigorously defend them in court."

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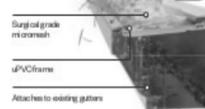
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