

# THE **Business** MONTHLY

March 2019 Volume 28 Number 3

The Business of Howard + Anne Arundel Counties and the BWI Business District

## YOUR FREE ISSUE

**STEPPING OUT**  
Lively music scene happens nightly

**WOMEN AT WORK**  
By the numbers reveals trends

**CLEANING UP**  
Who picks up messes on our roads?

# GOING GOLD

## *Businesses build muscle for the Special Olympics*

By Susan Kim  
Staff Writer

Two area residents will soon be on their way to the Special Olympic World Games in Abu Dhabi.

In addition to their hard work and conditioning, local businesses have helped make it possible for these two athletes to join more than 7,500 others from over 190 countries who will compete in 24 different individual and team sports at the 2019 games from March 14-21.

Columbia resident Jena Jones has been training and competing with the Special Olympics since 2002. Now in her mid-30s, she's most proud of landing one gold and three silver medals at the 2018 National Special Olympics in Seattle in July 2018.

After more than two decades, she can still say she loves swimming, though she acknowledges that, sometimes, she has to remind herself it's about the joy of competition.

"I think the hardest aspect of competing and practicing is when you mess up your stroke, or do the wrong stroke," she said. "You have to say to yourself

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photo by Emily Calkins

These joggers at Centennial Lake in Columbia are ready to welcome spring

# What's next for historic Laurel?

By Mark R. Smith  
Senior Writer

The City of Laurel is at an significant juncture in its history.

Recently, Pure Hana Synergy retracted a much-discussed application to redevelop the Tastee Diner site at 118 Washington Boulevard and turn it into a medical cannabis dispensary.

The diner has been owned since 1976 by Gene Wilkes. He also owns the attached (and recently shuttered) TD Lounge, an adjacent small hotel and a small residence on the property, which is located in a blighted area in the median of Route 1 – about a block from Main Street and just across from the MARC station.

The site, which has been a diner since 1951, also lies less than a mile south from another medical cannabis dispensary that's just over the Howard County line. However, the city's municipal code states that dispensaries must be at least a mile from each other and also cannot be within 1,000 feet of a public or private school or a church.

"Those facts made the Pure Hana effort illegal, anyway," said Richard Friend, a native and one of the Laurel History Boys, a civic group. In addition, another dispensary will soon open (barely) a mile south of the diner in Tower Plaza, at Route 1 and Cherry Lane.

With the diner back up for sale, questions abound about rejuvenating that area. They include how the diner, a historic Commack model, might be relocated to a Main Street that features some nice attractions, but lacks the sizzle to become the destination the locals want it to be.

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## INVESTING IN WORKERS

Howard Community College  
and employers  
unite to teach workers English

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## CELEBRATING CMC

Central Maryland Chamber  
businesses unite for growth  
and advocacy

Special pullout section

## MVA FRUSTRATION

Long lines and confusion anger  
drivers who are perplexed by new  
rules for renewing a license

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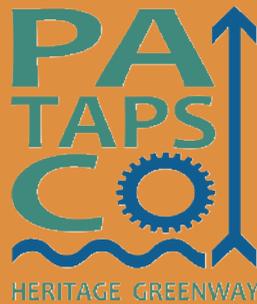
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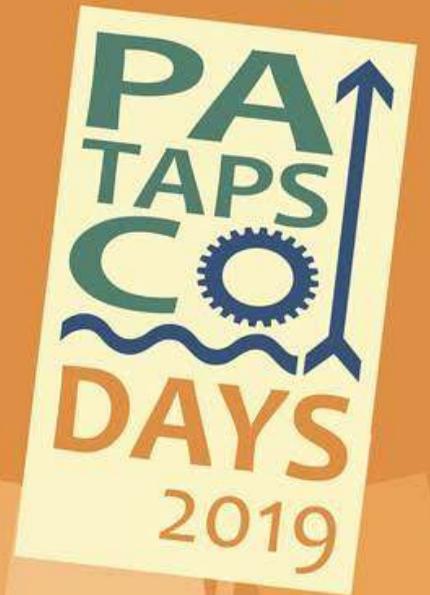
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# Businesses invest in English skills

## Howard Community College offers customized programs

By Susan Kim  
Staff Writer

Area businesses are investing in English language skills for their workers, giving them better on-the-job performance in the short-term and expanding their career potential in the long-term.

In a partnership with Howard Community College (HCC), Jessup-based Next Day Blinds has been offering a workplace program to improve employees' English language skills. The 13-week-long class, held twice a year, three days a week, accommodates 15 students.

While the class is a workforce development program for the firm that has been providing custom window coverings since 1993, the intention isn't to learn only English related to work tasks.

"Are we focusing the curriculum on the types of machinery or work they do? Absolutely not," said Keisha Stevens,



Luis Silva, shown here participating in a mock interview, is now employed in the banking sector.

vice president of human resources for Next Day Blinds. "Our belief as an organization is that once we invest in an employee with education and training, it helps in the workplace as well as the community."

She said, "We provide a training room and HCC provides the teacher."

The idea first formed two years ago when the company began researching existing programs to help its workers learn English. Employees participate in the program for free. To be eligible to enroll, they must have worked for Next Day Blinds at least six months.

"For our workers, attending existing

programs was hard because of the hours that they work," said Stevens. "When English is your second language, everything becomes harder."

### Banking sector success

Other workplace development efforts are flourishing in HCC's Multicultural Banking and Finance Training Institute, which is attracting already-credentialed immigrants who want to get jobs in the U.S. banking sector.

Rosie Verratti, director of the English Language Center at HCC, which is the umbrella over both the Next Day Blinds program and the banking institute, recalled one student from Colombia who recently graduated from the institute.

"He had already earned an MBA in Colombia, his English was strong and he was super personable," said Verratti. "The transition to the banking sector should have been relatively easy for him but he didn't know the system for getting in front of people."

The graduate is now working in banking.

Classes at the institute focus not only on the mechanics of the U.S.

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# Combined reporting legislation targets retail and restaurants

## Out of state firms may be saving millions in taxes

By George Berkheimer  
Senior Writer

A proposal that the author says provides a level playing field for small businesses in Maryland is stirring controversy.

Maryland Sen. Ron Young, a Democrat from Frederick County, has proposed a bill titled the Small Business Fairness Act (SB76) that would require multi-state restaurant and retail chains operating in Maryland to use combined reporting in calculating state corporate income taxes.

"There have been and will be [other] combined reporting bills for everything," Young said during a Jan. 30 legislative hearing. "I cut it back to these two [industries] for a reason ... [I]t's meant to put out-of-state retail businesses and restaurants on a level playing field with Maryland's small businesses."

The Maryland Chamber of Commerce and other organizations that represent these corporate entities are crying foul, charging that the bill unfairly targets certain businesses while giving others a pass. They also say it introduces uncertainty into revenue planning at the state level and makes surrounding states without combined reporting more attractive for

**Combined reporting comes up before the General Assembly year after year. Passions run high.**

corporations looking to expand or relocate their headquarters.

Young admitted that studies conducted by the Maryland Comptroller's Office indicate that combined reporting could produce "a lot more revenue" in some years but could wind up costing revenue in others, but he's willing to take the risk.

"By just doing out-of-state retail and restaurant chains, it's estimated that this bill will generate approximately \$50 million a year in new state revenue at no expense to any Maryland companies or taxpayers," he said. "You are already paying for the products you are buying from these stores, it's just, they transfer the profits back to their home state."

### Competitive advantage?

Under current law, affiliated groups of related corporations file income tax returns that consider only the isolated income and business activities of each separate legal entity operating within the state. Young's legislation would require retail and restaurant corporations to account for subsidiaries in other states when filing Maryland taxes.

Randy Marriner, whose family owns and operates a brewery and three dining establishments in Howard County, said he's not sure whether any of the out-of-state chains they compete with have any empirical advantages.

"I've been too busy keeping track of our own operations to actually sit down and try to figure it all out," he said.

Wecker Hospitality Group Principal Steve Wecker, who owns five dining establishments in Howard and Anne Arundel Counties in partnership with his brother Rob, took a slightly more pragmatic view of the legislation.

"[Multistate corporations] have way too many ways to try to get an advantage over us," he said. "We have always tried to be legitimate in the way

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# THE STATE OF THE WORKFORCE

## *New commerce secretary promotes Maryland's future*

By Susan Kim  
Staff Writer

Kelly Schulz, Maryland's new secretary of commerce, has been on the job for little more than two months and she's preparing for the 21st century.

"Maryland has many business-friendly assets, first and foremost of which is Governor Hogan's commitment to our state being Open for Business," she said, describing why Maryland is a business-friendly state.

Schulz, previously secretary of labor, licensing and regulation, served in the House of Delegates for District 4, which includes Frederick and Carroll counties. She replaced the popular R. Michael Gill Jan. 1.

She said, "We're fortunate that Maryland has world-class research universities, numerous federal laboratories and facilities, and major military installations. Our universities are outstanding sources of talent, and that's one of the reasons why Maryland's workforce is one of the most highly-educated in the country."

Those universities, labs, and military bases serve as launch pads for discoveries and innovative technologies that fuel private-sector business growth, and they employ the services of an array of contractors and private companies, noted Schulz.

Schulz urged businesses to check out the state's efforts related to access to capital, training for incumbent workers, tax credits for hiring new employees and guidance on site selection.

"We also offer a variety of incentives to make sure that businesses – from brand-new startups to family-owned small businesses to major corporations – have the resources they need to succeed."

### Out of the gate

Schulz plans to build on the solid foundation that her predecessor began. "Partnering with other state agencies, my goal is to make sure that every company, in every region of the state, has access to the resources they need to expand here or to set up shop in Maryland," she said.

Schulz said she sees a demand for even more talented and skilled workers. "All jobs today are 21st century jobs," she said. "We have in place several



Kelly Schulz

programs to help ensure that our workforce – men and women who are smart, passionate and ready to learn – are able to acquire new skills."

The rise of technology has impacted even those jobs in so-called

"traditional" fields, she added, increasing the demand for workers with a science, technology, engineering or math (STEM) education or background. "It's imperative that STEM instruction begin at an early age," she said.

It's time to let go of the perception that only those jobs in healthcare, biotech, cybersecurity and similar fields are the jobs of the future, she said. "We need workers in every occupation and every field. We need plumbers and electricians as much as we need pharmacists, engineers, and scientists."

The skills may be different but they all require knowledge of and skills in STEM fields, Schulz said.

"We're looking at all jobs and all occupations, knowing that as they evolve to meet the needs of the 21st century – and beyond – so, too must the workforce evolve to fill those positions," she said. "We're taking steps to ensure that 21st century fields have a 21st century workforce."

### How work is changing

Schulz, who has studied the workforce in rural, suburban and urban settings over the years, believes a strong workforce depends on ensuring a variety of jobs are available and accessible throughout the state. "We've traditionally seen more technical jobs in urban areas, and more skilled trades in rural areas," she said. "Yet as we see every day, work as we know it is changing."

The key is to approach workforce development from several angles that can be applied in any setting, she said. "Training is a major component of this approach, as are degree and literacy programs. An essential component of all of these efforts is engaging employers."

## Can these workforce development efforts help you?

**Open for Business.** A statewide initiative encouraging businesses to relocate, move an international business or start a small business in Maryland.

**Maryland WorkSmart.** A partnership between the Maryland Department of Commerce and Maryland's 16 community colleges to develop and deliver customized training.

**Employment Advancement Right Now (EARN).** A state-funded, competitive workforce development grant program that identifies the skills needed in high-demand fields such as cybersecurity, manufacturing, and healthcare, and trains workers in those skills.

### ACCESS Initiative (Achieving Computer Science Collaboration for Employing Students Statewide).

Designed to strengthen computer science education in order to meet the need for skilled workers in computer fields.

**Pathways in Technology (P-TECH) Early College High School program.** Enables students to graduate with a high school diploma and – at no-cost – a two-year associates degree in a STEM field in six years or less.

**More Jobs for Marylanders Act.** Effective as of 2017, a plan to boost manufacturing in the state by offering tax credits to companies that create new jobs.

Photo by Maureen Kilcullen

# Chambers unite to serve small business

The Maryland Chamber of Commerce has announced a new membership model designed to organize thousands of businesses as a unified force while also forging closer collaboration with the dozens of local chambers of commerce throughout the state.

Under the terms of the Maryland Chamber Federation, any business with 10 or fewer full-time employees that is a current paid member of a participating local chamber will receive free Federation membership with the Maryland Chamber.

“The Maryland Chamber Federation is a partnership with local and regional chambers to ensure that the voice of business is heard with minimal investment and maximum impact,” said Maryland Chamber President and CEO Christine Ross.

The Howard County Chamber of Commerce (HCC), Central Maryland Chamber (CMC) and Anne Arundel County Chamber of Commerce (AAACCC) are among the initial group of 14 chambers that have joined the Federation.

“It really does expand the participation of business and creates more business-to-business opportunities for members,” said Maryland Chamber Board Vice Chair Stephen Woerner. “This is important during the legislative session when we can focus on combining our lobbying efforts with one voice. The knowledge gained at the local and regional chambers around Maryland will be tremendously beneficial ... to have a consistent voice that’s well-informed from both a



Chambers of Commerce in the state have united to form the Maryland Chamber of Commerce Federation. Among the 14 charter members at the announcement in Annapolis Jan. 22 are Chambers from Howard and Anne Arundel counties.

## “The Howard County Chamber and Central Maryland Chamber are among the 14 chambers that have joined the Federation.”

small and large business perspective.”

HCC President and CEO Leonardo McClarty has had experience with a similar model in Georgia, where he previously served 10 years at the DeKalb Chamber of Commerce.

“As an executive, you’re pulled in various directions,” McClarty said, adding that many chambers don’t have the staff to dedicate to legislative policy issues. “This allows us to leverage our relationship with the

Maryland Chamber in a more formalized manner, at the same time allowing us to truly enhance services to our members, particularly to our small businesses.”

Approximately 450 of HCC’s 700 members have 10 or fewer employees, “and I think that same percentage speaks to the vast majority of my colleagues,” he said. “We’ve always worked together with the Maryland Chamber, but I think now we’re taking it another step further.”

According to Ross, the Maryland Chamber will work over the course of the next year to add more members.

“We haven’t put a formal federation plan together yet for the General Assembly, but we will for the future,” she said. “We believe that the strength of the chamber brand in Maryland is going to be significantly strengthened by this.”

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# Workforce housing tops agenda

## Anne Arundel officials predict busy year ahead

By George Berkheimer  
Senior Writer

Speaking at the Anne Arundel County Chamber of Commerce (AAACCC)'s 20th Annual Legislative Breakfast, state and local elected officials gave regional business leaders an insight into their issues for 2019.

Held at the Crowne Plaza Annapolis, the annual event provides an early look at legislative issues that affect business and commerce.

Anne Arundel County Executive Stuart Pittman campaigned on a slow growth platform, but said that responsible growth still needs to occur and will be guided by the county's ongoing General Development Plan.

He cited a document produced by AAACCC in 2006 that identified an impending crisis in workforce housing.

"Recommendations in that report haven't been implemented and we're going to take a look at," Pittman said. "I really believe that the housing construction we do in this county needs to start to focus on the working people who are here."

The county executive said he will enhance transparency by moving more county information and data online.

Priorities for the Anne Arundel County Council include improvements in infrastructure and support for small businesses, said District 4 County Councilman Andrew Purski.

Aside from evaluating its low interest loans and encouraging technology innovation, the county could also consider the merits of reopening its business incubator, he said.

"Maybe we need to consider a regional transportation authority," Purski added, bringing together the Annapolis, BWI Thurgood Marshall Airport and Odenton services under the same operation to provide better connectivity to Annapolis, Arundel Mills Mall, Fort Meade and other major employment areas.

### Capital Vision

According to Annapolis Mayor Gavin Buckley, the need to mitigate nuisance flooding around City Dock presents unique opportunities for the city.

A site has already been selected for one of two pump houses called for in the city's \$10 million Flood Mitigation Plan, but plans for locating the second house next to the Harbormaster's Office are less than ideal.

"Now that the Sailing Hall of Fame has dumped us



Elected officials from Anne Arundel County addressed the business community at a recent legislative forum. Participants included (from left) Del. Pam Beidle, Anne Arundel Councilman Andrew Purski, Annapolis Mayor Gavin Buckley, Anne Arundel County Executive Stuart Pittman and Maryland House Speaker Michael Busch

... I'm asking the state to surplus the Burtis House to the city so we could use that to relocate the Harbormaster, the bathrooms, the pump house and to create a small sailing center in that environment to open up the whole of City Dock," Gavin said.

He proposes coordinating construction with the Naval Academy's levee project and the departure of the Sailing Hall of Fame, and also rebuilding Hillman Garage in a way that would not only accommodate displaced City Dock parking, but also allow for conversion to residential or commercial space should predictions of fewer privately owned vehicles come true.

**“One of the things that really could affect our county and this district is if we bring the Preakness to Laurel Park.”**

State Sen. Pam Beidle

### Big Issues

"One of the things that really could affect our county and this district is if we bring the Preakness to Laurel Park," said State Sen. Pam Beidle, who represents District 32. "The cost to rebuild Pimlico is huge. I know [Baltimore] doesn't feel this way, so it's going to be a little contentious."

As part of their redevelopment strategy, the owners of Laurel Park are seeking legislation that would allow liquor sales beyond race days to enable the restaurants at the track to expand. "My constituents in Russet and Maryland City are tired of fast food places," Beidle said. "They don't really have [restaurants] in the west part of the county and are heading out to Laurel and Howard County and Prince George's County instead of keeping

their business in Anne Arundel."

Recreational marijuana might also be up for discussion this year, in addition to sports betting, which may not require a constitutional amendment, Beidle said.

"That's being examined, but I hope we move forward on sports betting so we can compete with surrounding states that have already begun to put that process in place," she said. "People are betting anyway, so let's take advantage of it and maybe get some tax dollars."

If the state revisits living wage legislation this year, Beidle recommends looking at the issue in different ways as opposed to an across the board increase.

"It may be done regionally, it may be a training wage. We need to look at youngsters, part-time workers, whether businesses can afford to pay everybody a \$15 minimum wage," she said. "If we took the wage I earned when I was in high school or college and put a cost of living adjustment on it, we'd be at \$15, but we froze minimum wage."

### Fundamentals

From the perspective of Maryland House Speaker Michael Busch, the fundamentals that demand attention this year are the K-12 education system and the state's healthcare delivery system.

"Last year the governor and legislature worked very hard to come up with the solution of a reinsurance pool, which worked very well," Busch said. "We still have to continue working on that. Our goal is to have as many people insured in the state of Maryland as we can."

Another statewide issue will be the continued transformation of the former Sparrows Point steel mill into Tradepoint Atlantic, a growing intermodal, global logistics hub.

"There are a lot of opportunities there," Busch said.

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Howard County Sheriff Marcus Harris (left) and Clerk of the Court Wayne Robey (right) presented Michelle Rosenheim with a proclamation from Governor Larry Hogan to mark the start of her Board term.

### Governor appoints Ellicott City resident

Michelle Rosenheim has been appointed to the State Board of Examiners of Nursing Home Administrators. Governor Larry Hogan made the appointment on Jan. 22.

Rosenheim is the executive director of The Lutheran Village at Miller's Grant, a continuing care retirement community in Ellicott City, and is a licensed nursing home administrator.

The State Board of Examiners of Nursing Home Administrators is responsible for licensing and certifying nursing home administrators; receiving and hearing complaints against individual nursing home

administrators; and setting standards for nursing home administrators.

"I'm looking forward to increasing and applying my knowledge and experience in the field of aging services," she said. "What an honor to serve the State and my profession."

Rosenheim, an Ellicott City resident, has two decades of experience in senior living management. She is also a certified preceptor of the nursing home Administrator-In-Training Program.

She holds a Bachelor of Science in Healthcare Management with a minor in Business Administration from Towson University.

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The mission of The Business Monthly is to tell the story of people, products and services in the business community – for profit, non-profit and government-- in Howard and Anne Arundel Counties and the BWI Business Corridor and to celebrate our community as a great place to do business. The Business Monthly fosters a positive discussion of identifying and solving problems and to recognize those who excel at enterprise and commitment to the betterment of our community.

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# Q&A With: Larry Richardson

## Maryland Chamber vice president for government affairs

By Mark R. Smith  
Senior Writer

Larry Richardson joined the Maryland Chamber of Commerce in late 2016 after spending more than three decades as a government affairs representative, most recently as a claim attorney/jurisdictional specialist for State Farm Insurance. He spends his days advocating for job creation and working to reduce Maryland's well documented (and excessive, to hear some tell it) regulations to make the state's business climate more competitive.

### What issues are key for the Chamber during the session?

There will be many, given our varied membership. One concerns the increase in the minimum wage. A business like WalMart or Amazon can afford it, and that's great, but that would be very hard on your average small business, like a pizza restaurant and coffee shop, to handle.

There was a study conducted in Seattle in 2017 that indicated its \$13-an-hour wage resulted in less hours for employees, which is often the case in such circumstances, as are fewer jobs.

### What are your goals to reduce business regulations?

The Maryland Chamber has always been a supporter of reducing what is seen in various quarters as excessive state regulation on business; Gov. Hogan has been progressive in reducing unnecessary regulations.

On that note, two new bills (Senate Bill 173 and House Bill 157) that would help small businesses (less than 50 employees) and trade associations would require state agencies to offer

earlier notifications of proposed state regulations. That would allow businesses time to act on them in a more expedient manner, as well as avoid fines and penalties if a violation is corrected in 30 days.

### What's the Chamber's take on Second Chance legislation?

Employment supports Maryland's ex-offender population and helps ensure new opportunity for these individuals. However, for some employers, it is challenging to hire an ex-offender. That's because, under current law, an employer could be held civilly liable for a negligent act committed by an employee, solely because of that employee's criminal past – irrespective of whether the prior criminal offense bears any relation to the current act.

The business community can provide an ex-offender a second chance, but in order to ease the aforementioned concerns, legal safeguards for the employer must be enacted.

### What are your thoughts on sports betting?

Part of our argument has always been that Maryland needs to be

competitive to attract business. Part of the issue we face again is that, if every state around us has sports betting and we don't, we'll be behind in the game.

To the point of competing with neighboring states, we're also concerned about the Maryland corporate tax rate, which was raised in 2008 by the former governor, Martin O'Malley, to 8.25 percent. Virginia is currently at 6 percent and it just submitted legislation that would bring the rate down to 5 percent; if that passes, the straw that breaks the camel's back would be the minimum wage bill passing, especially if most of its exemptions go away.

However, we are also closely monitoring a bill in for this session to take Maryland's rate down to 7 percent.

### What tweaks are being made in the medical cannabis industry?

One topic we're keeping an eye on is developments to workplace rights. If someone who is taking medical cannabis works for an employer that has a drug policy, that can present an issue. There is already a U.S. District Court case in Delaware concerning this topic.

Also, rumor has it that, during the 2020 session, there will be a more concerted effort to address the legalization of recreational marijuana.

### What do you think will happen concerning the affordability of prescription drugs?

A bill has been submitted to address that issue, too. From our member's perspective, obviously the less expensive they are, the less expensive health care coverage will be; but from a state level, there is a question of constitutionality. Prescription drugs are regulated on a federal level to ensure they are cost effective, while also promoting research and development.

However, if the overall effort to address this problem is approached piecemeal in a state, a manufacturer may not sell a certain product in that state. That's why we feel this topic needs to be more comprehensively approached on a federal level.

### What are your thoughts concerning the Clean Energy Jobs Act?

Maryland is at 25 percent clean energy generation and we have to be



at 50 percent by 2030. We understand the importance of creating a clean environment. Part of the issue is that you will see an influx of farmland taken over by solar panels and wind turbines; and know that the powers that be in Ocean City, for instance, are worried about how offshore turbines would impact tourism.

On a related topic, there is a paper mill in Western Maryland that employs 200 people that creates black liquor, a tar by-product that is burnable and can be sold. They need to continue operating to keep jobs – but they may not be able to.

### What are your thoughts on the Kirwan Commission?

The Chamber is a strong supporter of education but our main issue concerns whether the state can afford \$4 billion to fund all of the Kirwan Commission's recommendations. Its goals are laudable, but there are concerns about the state providing the funding without raising taxes.

### Will there be more opportunity zones in Maryland?

There is legislation in this year to hopefully make that happen.

### What stood out to you the most about last year's session?

The increased animosity. When I got involved in this field, I could get into spirited debates with whoever; but at the end of the day, we'd go grab a beer. Now, some of the activists and legislators want to fight. Now it's, "If you don't agree with me, not only are you wrong, you're evil." So, there's no middle ground.

### What's your biggest personal challenge during the session?

The intensity. It's a 90-day period and I'm charged with delivering the message of my employer in a way that's informative and truthful. That demanding research and delivery involves using plenty of shoe leather. There is no eight-hour day. But when we get to Sine Die, my word is my bond.



# Howard team aims to change autism education

By **George Berkheimer**  
Senior Writer

Educators encounter significant challenges when teaching students with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD), particularly when trying to reach those identified as nonverbal.

Two Howard County Public School System (HCPSS) colleagues have found a way to improve on current models and are pursuing their own breakthrough method that has captured global attention and interest.

Kristina John-Gabriel, a 20-year teaching veteran who teaches technology at Running Brook Elementary School, and Shari Lorch, an occupational therapist who has helped John-Gabriel tailor and deliver programming to support special needs students, explained that it was actually a student himself who pointed them in the right direction.

In this case, John-Gabriel's efforts in helping the student code a knock-knock joke were rewarded with laughter – his first real response, and an indication that he comprehended the humor behind the joke.

"I thought, 'Wait! That is abstract thinking! This is really working and could really be disproving what scientists say we know about ASD,'" Lorch said. "I realized that code was a language of activity, and knowledge could be demonstrated through the activity."

Speaking at last year's State of the Howard County Public School System address, John-Gabriel illustrated the significance of the breakthrough: "We went from hoping he would comprehend directions like right, left, up and down to him showing understanding of language through jokes and his latest accomplishment, story telling."

With a little development, John-Gabriel and Lorch think they could use code to eventually help some previously unemployable students find a place in the workforce.

## Playing To Strength

Together, Lorch and John-Gabriel developed a program they call Acquisition of Block Code as a Modality for Students with Autism Spectrum Disorder in Attaining Their Individualized Educational Plan Objectives, or ABC4ASD for short.

A Bright Minds Foundation grant enabled them to purchase Osmo Coding Kit games, Dot and Dash robots, Scratch and Swift Playground

software and other tools and resources to support their work.

"We were able to service roughly 60 students over the last three school years, including peers working in small groups, and have supported children in preschool through 5th grade," Lorch said. "We created tools to help us identify skill sets and how to better support children. We saw true growth in the areas addressed and even worked with a student who showed what we believed was a gifted ability."

Experimentation led them to discover what worked in regard to specific student needs, John-Gabriel said, improving their ability to match tools with students based on interest and ability.

"We are challenging what learning

**A lot of what we have accomplished has not been math but rather reading skills with an added focus on addressing social and interpersonal skills.**

**Kristina John-Gabriel**

can look like for children who cannot exhibit work through other trialed means," Lorch said. "Is it truly such a big jump to show understanding as a video story or created game? We need to play to student strengths. The ability to utilize technology for students who are visual learners is an area we should continue to support in education."



Kristina John-Gabriel (left) and Shari Lorch are leading a breakthrough program educating students with ASD in the Howard County Public School System address.

## Continued Development

Since proving their hypothesis that code can support students to meet IEP objectives, interest in the concept has spread, garnering Lorch and John-Gabriel an invitation to present their findings and programs at Johns Hopkins University's annual Maryland Assistive Technology Network event and at the recent International Society for Technology and Education (ISTE) Convention in Chicago. They are currently on the waitlist to speak at the ISTE in Philadelphia this summer.

"We continue to work toward moving forward in the development of this program," said Lorch. "We're hopeful that one day this could be another tool for all educators to help engage learners at Howard County public schools and throughout the world."

They continue to present their findings to teaching and therapy communities as their own schedules allow, at their own expense.

And although companies have reached out to explore marketing partnerships, "none have been the right fit," John-Gabriel said. "Some companies have reached out to us in regard to employment. We love working for HCPSS and continuing to do extensive additional work does not fit into our teaching schedules right now."

John-Gabriel and Lorch are finishing work on a book to share their story.

## Impacting the Tide

At present, the program has been scaled back to a bare minimum, in part because HCPSS no longer uses the Elementary School Model.

In response, Lorch and John-Gabriel are preparing a continuing professional



development course to educate others in what they feel the program could look like in classrooms and pullout sessions for children using the current educational model.

"Course development is not a typical part of our day, it's what we do for fun on the weekends," Lorch said. "It's time consuming, and we want to do this well."

John-Gabriel considers the experience the highlight of her teaching career. "I have watched [these students] grow and develop skills that no one realized they could," she said. "I love being able to go to IEP meetings and share these accomplishments with parents."

For Lorch, the possibilities of uncharted territory show even more promise in the future.

"The more involved we become and discover in regard to artificial intelligence and technology, the more applications there can be to education," she said, noting that reports suggest a surprising number of autistic adults who complete school do not go on to work or college.

**A Bright Minds Foundation grant enabled them to purchase Osmo Coding Kit games, Dot and Dash robots, Scratch and Swift Playground software.**

"The offering of learning a skill like code opens the door to the attainment of meaningful work, personal life fulfillment, and the ability to contribute further societally," Lorch said. "If it stopped here we know we have done something very good, but I really hope it doesn't stop."

"I'm hopeful for support moving forward globally for all students who demonstrate a need," John-Gabriel added. "We have the technology and we have the method, now we just need the opportunity to educate others to plan and provide this instruction for children. We do this for people who cannot do this for themselves. They and we create the ripple that impacts the tide. This is how we make a difference, and also how we sleep at night."

## BY THE NUMBERS

By Susan Kim, Staff Writer

# Women at work

We've got good news and bad news.

The good news first: Women in Maryland are making perceptible progress in workplace equality, according to the Institute for Women's Policy Research. The gender wage gap in Maryland has narrowed and a higher percentage of women have bachelor's degrees.

Now the bad news: A larger share of women in Maryland live in poverty compared to ten years ago. And women still don't get equal pay in the workplace.

Here are numbers worth considering when discussing gender equality at work.



Studies of women in the work place indicate there is growing diversity and improved upward mobility.

## 2043

The year women will see equal pay in Maryland if current trends continue. According to Lisa Benson, president and CEO of Mary Kraft Staffing in Hunt Valley, "Opportunities for

women to take more responsibility and leadership have absolutely grown but compensating them for doing so has grown much more slowly."

## \$10,000

The current difference between women's and men's median annual earnings in Maryland.

## 83.3

Percent of wages earned by women in Maryland compared to men.

## 2nd

Maryland's 2018 rank among states for women's employment and earnings. Other top-ranking states include the District of Columbia (first), Massachusetts (third), Connecticut (fourth) and New York (fifth). The worst-ranking? Mississippi, West Virginia, Idaho, Louisiana, and Alabama.

## 61 cents

The amount African-American women are paid for every dollar paid compared to white men. American Indian/Alaskan native women are paid 58 cents for every dollar while Latinas are paid just 53 cents for every dollar paid to white men, according to the American Association of University Women (AAUW).

## 64.1%

Labor force participation rate by women in Maryland in 2018 and for men it was 72.5%

## 39.4

Percent of women in Maryland with a bachelor's degree or higher and for men it was 38.9%

## 39.3%

The percentage of business in Maryland owned by women, up from 32.6% in 2007. "I meet many female entrepreneurs," said Benson. "One in particular, from a banking background, was motivated to strike out on her own because there was such a gap on compensation."

## \$782

Weekly average income of retired women over 65. Retired men in the same age range make \$1,016 a week.



Photo courtesy of the Department of Labor Women's Bureau, circa 1940.

Evelyn T. Gray and Pearlyne Smiley complete repairs to a section on a bomber.

# Coming to grips with problem gamblers

By Mark R. Smith  
Senior Writer

A gambling court has been established in Nevada. That's new, but it's an idea that obviously could have happened many moons ago.

The establishment of the court made national news and immediately got some gears churning around the United States. With the continued inroads the gaming industry is making nationwide, might gambling courts start to pop up elsewhere?

There is no such court in Maryland – the state's District Court confirmed that the judiciary does not have a gambling treatment program – but could it happen here, too?

Maybe. Judge Cheryl Moss, the presiding judge in Clark County, Nev., has already been “talking to people in Seattle and the state of Louisiana.”

## Going Nationwide

While Moss said “it's early to tell how many cases we'll get,” in Clark County, it won't be a surprise if it's busy: An estimated 142,000 adult Nevada residents, ages 18 and older, are problem gamblers, according to the state's only problem gambling prevalence study, which was conducted in 2017.

Nevada has had the diversion program since 2009, said Jennifer Roberts, associate director of the International Center for Gaming Regulation at the University of Nevada Las Vegas. “What happened is that some observers felt there were inconsistent applications and allowances for the program, so now they use it in the confines of a specialty court,” which is much like drug or veteran's court, she said.

The difference, Roberts said, is the program is now being applied within a designated court, and will be overseen by Moss.

**“How effective was gambling court? None of the 250-300 people who went through it reoffended.”**

“To my knowledge, this is the only gambling court program in the country. We now have gambling in 40 states and that decision [to follow suit] will be up to each one,” she said, adding that a “more uniform application” will help stem problem gambling.

## The Home Front

In Maryland, Travis Lamb, general manager of Live! Casino, in Hanover, offered the organization's stance on identifying and assisting problem gamblers. “Every member of our staff is trained each year to recognize problem gambling and how to offer assistance,” he said.

“If a customer requests information about the program or wants to voluntarily sign up, we facilitate the process with Maryland Lottery officials on site,” he said. “There are signs and brochures available at every



photo credit Emily Calkins

customer service location” and “notices are posted on ATMs and ticket redemption machines.”

The casino also has signage posted at all entrances/exits, as well as digital messaging on every slot machine and electronic table game position; in addition, the Responsible Gaming Committee reviews the policies and procedures set forth by the Maryland Lottery & Gaming Control Agency, which oversees the casinos.

With Maryland a fairly recent addition to the gaming industry, would the adoption of a gambling court be a good idea?

“Yes,” said Keith Whyte, executive director for the National Council on Problem Gambling (NCPG), in Washington, D.C.

Gambling court “has been proven highly effective,” he said, noting that the first was in Amherst County, N.Y., from about 2001-10, when Judge Mark Farrell (now retired and an NCPG board member) presided over the program.

How effective was it? “None of the 250-300 people who went through his court during that period reoffended,” said Whyte. “They were more likely to pay back money owed and, since they received treatment, had much better financial and family relationships.”

A system such as a court, assessment or something similar, would be a good idea, especially for first-time offenders,” said Mary Drexler, program director with the Maryland Center of Excellence on Problem Gambling, in Columbia, which estimates that 150,000 state residents have a gambling problem.

“Though [Clark County] recently got the new court up and running, the legislation in Vegas passed in 2010, and will be held in Friday sessions of family court only,” said Drexler, adding, “I think you'll see other states follow suit. That way, people who are addicted can get help early, not after total devastation” of their finances, careers and families.

## Spread the Word

The news from Nevada was timely, too, as March is

**“March is National Problem Gambling Awareness Month. Resources are available for gamblers and their families, including a help line, no-cost treatment and no-cost assessment with peer support recovery specialists.”**

National Problem Gambling Awareness Month. “It helps to increase awareness of the resources that are available for problem gamblers and their families,” said Drexler, pointing out a help line, no-cost treatment – regardless of insurance – and no-cost assessment, with peer support recovery specialists who are themselves in recovery.

In March, she said, the center will market its services by broadcasting PSAs, and via billboards, social media, [www.helpmyproblemgambling.org](http://www.helpmyproblemgambling.org) and 1-800-GAMBLER. Working with the National Alliance for Mental Illness's state chapter is part of the equation, as is the voluntary self-exclusion program offered by the Lottery.

Drexler said that the light at the end of this tunnel doesn't always flick on on its own.

“Often with substance abuse or mental health, as well as financial difficulties, we try to tie in treatment of gambling disorders with other addictions,” she said. “Problem gambling wasn't recognized as a separate addiction until 2013, so we are only recently understanding it as a separate issue.

“Gambling addiction is easy to hide and thought to be invisible,” she said. “You can often see when someone's drunk, for instance. That's why it's sometimes hard to stop gambling until it's too late.”



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# Gettin' in tune

## Seeking new ways to keep

By Mark R. Smith  
Senior Writer

It's a typical weekend night at the Maple Lawn location of Looney's Pub, the Baltimore area restaurant chain. Music is blaring, the line is long and there are plenty of music-loving patrons waiting to get in, even with a cover charge.

That scene may sound commonplace of locales suburban and urban, here, there and everywhere. But, it isn't, really.

Looney's and other area restaurants feature live bands, as do a smattering of clubs. However, due to market shifts and a world that constantly demands attention in other areas, there aren't as many places to play as there once were.

Live music fans from back in the day might have become more sedentary and content to watch their big screens; the younger generation might rather play video games or keep their noses in their tablets and phones, and play what they want to hear, when they want to hear it.

Those aren't the only parts of live music evolution; today's live music fans might more often hear a duo or a solo performer playing acoustic sounds.

### Under the Covers

While the scene for live bands ain't what it used to be, "They definitely help business," said Sherry DeRose, general manager of the local Looney's, which also offers acoustic sounds during Friday Happy Hours. "Their crowds depend, as does what we pay for the band. The bigger groups, such as the Amish Outlaws, The Reagan Years and Kristen & The Noise, are more expensive."

"We charge a \$10 cover for those three and \$5 for other bands," said DeRose, noting that there used to be more competition in Howard County from Nottingham's and the Downtown Columbia Union Jack's, adding that she "wouldn't be surprised to see more local competition soon."

Gary Hutson and his partner Rob Baier run Starleigh Entertainment, of Baltimore, and have been booking bands in the region for more than 30 years, and work extensively with Looney's locations. Hutson said the business "couldn't be any more different than it used to be.

"Going to see live bands is no longer



A new band based in Columbia, Dancing Room Only during a recent music video shoot. The performance

a lifestyle," said Hutson. "That's what people did for entertainment; many of them wanted to become musicians. Now, there's more to do, due to the Internet, social media, big screen TVs and the [extensive] amount of broadcast sports. So, the average music fan from the '80s doesn't see live rock bands as often as they did."

He called today's scene "all over the place, with live music lovers listening to everything, from hip hop to rock to country," also citing the accessibility of solo/duo acoustic acts.

"They're everywhere," said Hutson. "There are quality good duo acts out there in the 'menu venues,'" meaning restaurants that offers music, like Looney's, as opposed to nightclubs.

As for full bands, he said 90 percent of what people go see is cover bands. "There aren't as many venues that feature original bands. Those types of clubs, like the 9:30 Club (in Washington) and the 8x10 Club (in Baltimore) are the exception," he said. "That's the toughest part of the live music market."

### Talent Rich

Scott Hymes also has seen the changes. Based in Severna Park, he's been playing in bands in Maryland since 1977 and remembers "when it was all about the bands and there were plenty of places to play."

But that changed "about 10 years ago," Hymes said. "Today, there is often a preference for acoustic music that people want for background. They don't always want to be blown out by a loud band."

So, what does a bandleader do when the market shifts? He shifts with the

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In this special pullout section, you will learn more about this up and coming star in the **vibrant business community of Central Maryland**.



# SPECIAL PULLOUT SECTION

# One Chamber, three counties

By Raj Kudchadkar

I welcome you to the Central Maryland Chamber's annual insert in The Business Monthly. This special section of the publication has been designed to give you an overview of the chamber, a better understanding of how we support the regional business community, and insight into what we have planned for the future.

The Central Maryland Chamber (CMC) is the State's *only* truly regional chamber equally covering three counties: Anne Arundel County, Howard County and Prince George's County. The chamber is uniquely positioned to support a healthy economic environment across these three jurisdictions with the ultimate goal of making the Central Maryland Region the best place to live, work, play, and run a business.

We are lucky to be in such a thriving region, which is at the heart of the fourth-largest marketplace in the United States. Our area is home to nearly 50% of Maryland's population and a similar percentage of all the jobs in the State. In addition, our region has a very skilled workforce and a strong business environment. This all leads to the Central Maryland Region being a key economic engine for the State, and the chamber will continue to be a prime driver of its economic growth.

With several new hires over the last year, the Central Maryland Chamber has formed a new team ready to support the needs of all the businesses that are members of the chamber. Our dedicated team of professionals continues to support businesses through four core services:

## Advocate

- Being the voice for the region's business community.

## Promote

- Providing information about member businesses to those who can use their services.

## Inform

- Keep our members updated on support and trends that will help their business grow.



## Connect

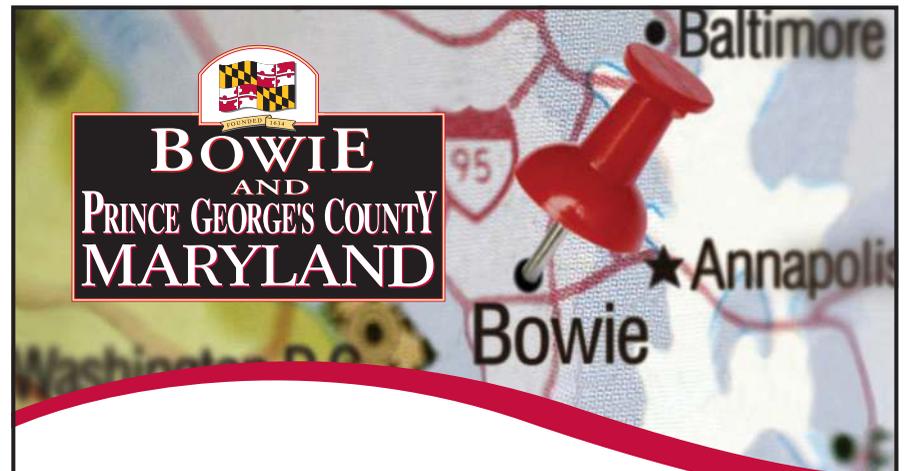
- Offer opportunities for members to network, as well as, support community needs.

Over the coming year, members will have access to nearly a hundred events and committee meetings. From small business seminars to large-scale signature events, there will be many venues for chamber businesses to learn, connect, and grow.

We are also committed to a strong slate of initiatives that will provide businesses the extra resources they need to succeed. We recently launched a partnership that will give all small businesses with ten or less employees automatic free membership in the Maryland State Chamber. The CMC also entered into an exclusive agreement to be the first chamber that gives all its members free premium access to Treble – a new and advanced digital networking platform.

These are exciting times for the Central Maryland Chamber and I am pleased to share some of it with you in this special section. I hope you find this section beneficial in better understanding the chamber and how we work to support businesses and a stronger community.

*Raj Kudchadkar is president and CEO of the Central Maryland Chamber.*



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# Q&A With: Mary Bello

## CMC board chair plans for the future

By Mark R. Smith  
Senior Writer

Mary Bello, manager of physician relations at Anne Arundel Health System (AAHS) and the new board chair of the Central Maryland Chamber (CMC), has come to an interesting crossroads: She has a career's worth of information about navigating the nation's ever-more-complicated (and expensive) health system, as well as her CMC platform. So, at this juncture, her days are about connecting physicians with the hospital, while her new duties include connecting CMC members to their best health care options.

### What is the current state of the CMC?

We are excited for our future. We have an engaged board comprised of professionals from key industries who have a shared level of commitment and enthusiasm. The direction of CEO Raj Kudchadkar, who has a depth of expertise and experience in our region's development, has been a crucial asset post-merger; and Kim Wirt, our director of operations, has also employed her talents to help us move forward.

### What are your goals?

The CMC is working on our first strategic plan since the merger and we're looking forward to sharing the results. First, we'll be reaching out to our members, assessing their needs and understanding their concerns, which I'm looking forward to. Their feedback will be essential as we develop initiatives to support our goals.

### The West County Chamber and the Baltimore Washington Corridor Chamber merged two years ago. How did the merger affect membership?

After the merger, we had 550 members. Since, we've had some fluctuation, which was expected, as we combined two smaller chambers into a new, larger organization. Now, with Karen Russell on board as our membership director, we'll be able to focus on member growth and retention.

### What is the CMC doing to boost membership?

We will be building initiatives that are not so much focused on chamber growth metrics, but on continuing to grow long-term, sustainable relationships with local and regional businesses and communities. If we can continue serving, providing value, it will reflect in our membership growth and retention.

### Are there any new programs you want to implement?

One is supporting young professionals who are currently in, or preparing for, the workforce; another is working with government contractors. Supporting Fort Meade will continue to be a top priority.

### What are hot button topics as Session 2019 gets underway?

Our Legislative Committee is looking at minimum wage legislation, which is sure to be introduced, as it was last year. If the proposal to raise the state's minimum wage to \$15 an hour passes, what will then be key to the chamber will be the timetable for phasing it in. We will also be looking at modifications to the prevailing wage that could authorize employees under public work contracts to sue without first filing a complaint, which is currently required.

Sports betting, renewable energy and modification of paid sick requirements are issues we will probably take positions on as session moves forward.

Obviously, the chamber will oppose those bills that put undue burdens on businesses, particularly small businesses, and support initiatives that help business growth (like tax incentives).

### Given your day job, what should the public know about health care?

People can play a pivotal role in controlling rising costs. We have an opportunity to improve health literacy, which will guide people to spend wisely on their health care. Education on appropriate utilization and empowering people to make choices about their care that are evidence-based, and use high quality, low cost services options is essential.

For employers, there is an opportunity to identify cost-savings by right-sizing benefit packages so they accurately reflect the unique needs of their employee.

### What do you hope to have accomplished when your tenure as board chair is over?

Generally speaking, using the definition of "synergy" is a perfect way to answer that question: I'm looking to achieve "the benefit that results when two or more agents work together to achieve something either one couldn't have achieved on its own. It's the concept of the whole being greater than the sum of its parts."

Know that the health of any business community and its workforce is vital to the health of the greater community. So, understanding that vital synergy means expanding our scope beyond traditional business advocacy to playing a key role



Mary Bello CMC Board Chair

in supporting the health of both.

### What are your duties at your day job?

I work primarily outside the walls of AAHC. Our team builds relationships with community practices, spanning from Cambridge, in Dorchester County on the mid-Eastern Shore, to Howard County and southern Maryland to support the goals of AAHS's annual operating plan.

We also serve a large patient population from our building in Odenton that sits by the traffic circle that we operate in a joint partnership with Johns Hopkins Health System. That location helps us give patients better access to our specialists.

### What do you find most rewarding about your work?

That the bottom line used to be about patient volume, but it's become more about coordinating care and focusing on patient navigation. That's being done via building relationships, through network development and by working with community physicians. Combined, those value-based efforts result in better outcomes and result in optimal experiences for the patient.

### What's your biggest challenge in working for AAHS?

There is a challenge, nationally, in integrating care systems beyond the walls of the hospital – which is where hospitals have traditionally focused. As we shift from volume-based to value-based health care, coordinating care across the spectrum continues to be an opportunity for all involved to coordinate efforts that will improve the patient experience.

### What are you working on now at the hospital?

Considering our nation's aging population, we're examining ways to address Healthy Aging as well as the challenges that caregivers, who will go from a 7:1 to a 4:1 ratio by 2030, will have to address. As a health system, we are focused on keeping communities healthy.



Photo courtesy of CMC

Karen Russell (left), Central Maryland Chamber (CMC), Beth Brekke, Maritime Conference Center, and Melanie Graw, Coldwell Banker, share a word with new CMC Board Chair Mary Bello, Anne Arundel Medical Center, before a recent board meeting at the chamber's Odenton office.

## *Personal letter connected CMC with global business*

# Oceaneering: International, yes, local, for sure

By Susan Kim  
Staff writer

Even with 60 locations across the world and 9,500 employees, Oceaneering International, Inc., is still a company that values local connections.

Years ago, Walt Townshend, former CEO of the Baltimore Washington Corridor Chamber, sent a handwritten letter introducing the chamber to the CEO of Oceaneering at the company's headquarters in Houston, Texas.

"Back then, the Baltimore Washington Corridor Chamber stood out because Walt Townshend took the time to send that handwritten letter," recalled Mark Carpenter, manager of Business Development for Oceaneering's Advanced Technologies Division located in Hanover, Maryland, "Walt wanted to help make connections for us locally. Who sends a handwritten letter anymore?"

Today, the Central Maryland Chamber of Commerce carries that spirit of personal connection forward, said Carpenter, who noted: "After the merger of the Baltimore Washington Corridor Chamber and the West Anne Arundel County Chamber, we hosted Raj Kudchadkar for a visit."

Kudchadkar, current president and CEO of the Central Maryland Chamber, appreciated Oceaneering's spirit of sharing.

### Oceaneering gives back

Globally, Oceaneering, which began as a small diving company, provides engineering services and products primarily to the offshore energy industry. The company also uses applied technology expertise to serve the defense, entertainment, material handling, aerospace, science, and renewable energy industries.

Locally, in Hanover, Oceaneering employs about 500 people, and most of the business comes from contracts with the U.S. Navy. "We are not your typical company that joins a local chamber of commerce," Carpenter reflected. "In the Central Maryland Chamber, we go to the networking events to meet and, if possible, help the small businesses by giving them advice in an informal way."

For Oceaneering, the Central Maryland Chamber also serves as a center of dialogue for area hotels such as Marriott and Hilton. "Through the chamber, we have been able to talk to hotels about how they can best support us as a regional entity," Carpenter explained.

In another example of local connections, the Central Maryland Chamber also introduced Oceaneering to the Maritime Institute of Technology and Graduate Studies (MITAGS) in Linthicum Heights. MITAGS is a nonprofit trust dedicated to enhancing mariner professionalism through the development of programs in leadership, education, training, and safety.



An M1A1 Abrams tank drives over an advanced light-weight ramp during an Office of Naval Research demonstration held at Oceaneering in Hanover, Md.

### Continuing the legacy

Carpenter, who has worked for Oceaneering for 18 years and at the Hanover location since 2005, said that Kudchadkar has continued that feeling of personal, sincere connection by phoning and emailing regularly with ideas and news.

"That personal touch has remained the entire time we have been involved with the Central Maryland Chamber," Carpenter said. "That's why we will continue to support the chamber. The chamber continues to reinvent itself and offer up new ways of helping."

## What's new at Oceaneering?

Specializing in vehicles for visitor attractions, Oceaneering Entertainment has developed a new trackless self-driving vehicle, the REVO-GT™, which had its world premiere in November 2018 at the IAAPA Attractions Expo in Orlando, Florida. Oceaneering describes the REVO-GT™ as an "automatic guided vehicle for transit applications." The first vehicles are scheduled to start shipping in 2019.

Oceaneering is the world's largest provider of remotely operated underwater vehicles. Robotic operation is possible from a pilot thousands of miles away.

Oceaneering International, Inc., has recently announced that its subsidiary Oceaneering Australia Pty. Limited has joined Supply Nation, an organization that works to develop procurement policies that modify and redirect spending to include the traditionally underutilized indigenous business sector.

Nat Spencer, director of Global Renewable Business Development for Oceaneering, has joined the board of directors for the Business Network for

Offshore Wind.

Oceaneering International GmbH has entered into a strategic collaboration agreement with F&M Private Ltd. (F&M Inspections) to explore opportunities for collaborating on asset integrity projects within Pakistan. The aim is to provide customers with a modernized approach for delivering asset integrity services within Pakistan's oil and gas and industrial sectors, through a full life-of-field capability that supports both CAPEX and OPEX projects in the region.

Oceaneering has secured a three-year Provision of Inspection Enactment Services contract with Petrofac's Engineering and Production Services division in the Western Hemisphere ("Petrofac"), growing its asset integrity portfolio within the U.K. Continental Shelf. Oceaneering will retain its existing contract on one of Petrofac's Duty Holder assets, while expanding its service scope to include two additional North Sea facilities.

# Central Maryland means business

## Anne Arundel County

**\$36 billion**

While Anne Arundel County is the fifth most populous jurisdiction, it's actually the state's third largest economy generating \$36 billion dollars per year and supporting approximately 52,000 businesses and over 275,000 employees.

**NSA**

If the National Security Agency (NSA) was a business it would rank in the top 10 percent of Fortune 500 companies.

**70%**

Last year over 70 percent of Anne Arundel County households earned more than the national average for household income.

## Howard County

**#4**

Ellicott City was ranked #4 in Money Magazine's "Best Places to Live 2018" list!

**#2**

Of the 3,144 counties in the United States, Howard County is the second wealthiest county based on median

household income, according to the U.S. Census Bureau.

**College degrees**

Howard is one of just seven counties nationwide in which at least 60% of adults have a four-year college degree.

## Prince George's County

**515,000**

Prince George's County is the second largest county in Maryland with 27 local municipalities and a workforce of 515,000 workers.

**\$81,240**

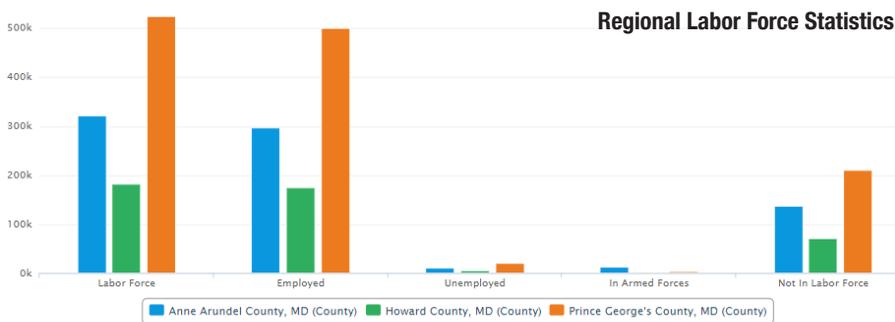
The median household income for Prince George's County is \$81,240 compared to a United States median household income of \$60,336.

**9.7%**

Prince George's County has a lower proportion of residents living below the federal poverty line (9.7 percent) than the entire state of Maryland (10 percent) and the nation (15.6 percent).

**+ \$20,000**

Median household income for the Prince George's County is over \$20,000 more than the average for the entire United States.



<p><b>ANNE ARUNDEL COUNTY</b></p> <p>Total Population: <b>573,235</b></p> <p>Total Households: <b>204,829</b></p> <p>Median Age: <b>38</b></p> <p>Median Household Income: <b>\$91,918</b></p>
<p><b>HOWARD COUNTY</b></p> <p>Total Population: <b>321,113</b></p> <p>Total Households: <b>109,872</b></p> <p>Median Age: <b>38.6</b></p> <p>Median Household Income: <b>\$113,800</b></p>
<p><b>PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY</b></p> <p>Total Population: <b>912,756</b></p> <p>Total Households: <b>306,711</b></p> <p>Median Age: <b>36.7</b></p> <p>Median Household Income: <b>\$75,925</b></p>

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# Signature Events

## March 25: Spirit of Community Awards Dinner

A celebration of people who make our region special, this dinner honors educators, public safety officers, and military personnel for their community contributions. Live! Casino & Hotel, 6 -9 p.m.

## May 13: Annual Meeting & Hall of Fame Business Awards

Celebrating accomplishments, highlighting upcoming plans and proudly showcasing our Annual Hall of Fame award winners. The Hotel at Arundel Preserve, 11:30 a.m.

## Sept. 19: Tour & Taste of the Region

Restaurants showcase their delicious foods for free and attract future diners. A delicious, fun and productive evening of networking for attendees. Tipton Airport, 1 p.m.

## Nov. 4: Economic Forecast

This annual event features expert economists who share their national and local outlook for the new year. Business leaders attend to gain valuable insight that helps them plan and budget for the new year. Marriott - BWI Airport, 11:30 a.m.

## Dec. 4: Holiday Party & Silent Auction

A very popular holiday event with great food and networking. Bring your whole team and have your holiday party with us! The Great Room at Historic Savage Mill, 5-7 p.m.

# You Are Invited

- March**
- 20** Small Business Seminar, 9 AM, Conference Room
  - 21** Membership 101, 9 AM, Conference Room
  - 27** Women Mean Business, 11:30 AM, Conference Room
- April**
- 9** Networking Mixer, 5 - 7 PM
  - 18** Membership 101, 9 AM, Conference Room
  - 24** Women Mean Business, 11:30 AM, Conference Room
- May**
- 15** Small Business Seminar, 9 AM, Conference Room
  - 16** Membership 101, 9 AM, Conference Room
  - 22** Women Mean Business, 11:30 AM, Conference Room
- June**
- 5** Multi-Chamber Luncheon at Yellowfin hosted by Southern AA
  - 11** Networking Mixer, 5 -7 PM, Staybridge Suites
  - 20** Membership 101, 9 AM, Conference Room
  - 26** Women Mean Business, 8:30 AM, Conference Room
- July**
- 18** Membership 101, 9 AM, Conference Room
  - 24** Women Mean Business, 11:30 AM, Conference Room
- Aug.**
- 14** Power Connections Networking Breakfast, 7:30 AM, Maritime Conference Center
  - 15** Membership 101, 9 AM, Conference Room
  - 28** Women Mean Business, 8:30 AM, Conference Room
- Sept.**
- 18** Small Business Seminar, 9 AM, Conference Room
  - 25** Women Mean Business, 11:30 AM
- Oct.**
- 8** Networking Mixer, 5 - 7 PM
  - 10** Multi-Chamber Luncheon
  - 17** Membership 101, 9 AM, Conference Room
  - 23** Women Mean Business, 8:30 AM
- Nov.**
- 5 or 6** Army/Navy Tailgate Party, 3 PM, Fort Meade
  - 20** Small Business Seminar, 9 AM, Conference Room
  - 21** Membership 101, 9 AM, Conference Room
- Dec.**
- 18** Women Mean Business, 11:30 AM, Conference Room
  - 19** Membership 101, 9 AM



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# Big results from small adjustments

## One Stone Consulting targets impact

**By George Berkheimer**  
Senior writer

From new startups to established enterprises, every business needs help finding efficiencies and improving profitability.

Since 2015, One Stone Consulting of Columbia has been stepping into the breach to help companies create strategic solutions and find ways to automate and improve business operations.

CEO Walt Jones founded the one-man operation to give focus to his expertise, strengths and passions, drawing on his experience as a financial analyst for such luminary companies as J. P. Morgan Chase & Co. and T. Rowe Price and as a project manager for the nonprofit Maryland Business Roundtable for Education.

Formerly operating as the SEQ Advisory Group, a rebranding as One Stone Consulting more accurately reflects the company's consulting focus and its philosophy, he said.

"My approach is that the smallest development can create the greatest of impacts," Jones explained. "A stone can ripple an ocean, a stone defeated Goliath, and a stone can build an empire. I challenge growing and emerging companies to utilize their size, agility and adaptability to enhance their competitive advantage."

### Spectrum of service

Jones's clients range from single-owner companies to large corporations that have included the Capital One Financial Corp. He has also been active throughout the United States and internationally, working with companies as far away as India and in St. Thomas in the U.S. Virgin Islands.

"My sweet spot is small to mid-range companies," he noted, with a capacity of up to five simultaneous clients "For larger initiatives I have a few other

consultants and other key partners that I've worked with through the years."

His specific services fall into the categories of operational assessments, business turnaround, strategic planning execution, Chief Operating Officer services and budget management.

"The goal with any project is targeting the dollar value that a company will see as a benefit, whether through increased revenue, increasing profits or reducing costs," Jones said. "We do top-down evaluations, looking at everything holistically, from how a company serves clients to human resources, financials and leadership."

Any company can create its own strategic plans, "but I've seen a number of those plans become nothing more than a paperweight," he said. "Implementation and execution is critical to all the work I do."

### Freelance COO

In his role as an on-loan COO, Jones provides a service for companies that lack the position or are in the process of replacing their COO or looking for assistance in crafting the role within their organization.

"Organizations with large scale initiatives are often looking for someone bringing an outside perspective to move a project forward and focus 100 percent of their time on it," he said. "Project managers frequently work on multiple projects, meaning many projects take longer and cost more than they should, or fall by the wayside because there's nobody dedicated to them."

Much of One Stone's work focuses on companies experiencing growing pains as they move up into the mid or large market space, raise their level of business and go after larger competitors.

### CMC Engagement

Jones serves on the Central Maryland Chamber (CMC)'s Small

Business Committee.

"This is actually my first year of membership and my first ever chamber membership," he said.

"The first time I went to a Membership 101 class, something about CMC just stood out to me that it's a great organization and something I want to be actively engaged with," he said. "Raj [Kudchadkar] has been really good with connecting me and helping me navigate the chamber."

Committee work has enabled Jones to utilize his strengths and experience to benefit others, he explained.

"I've connected with a lot of great people, and the Small Business Committee has been able to strategize on a lot of great ideas," he said. "I'm definitely looking for other [CMC] groups to work with or sit on. The legislative side has had some interest to me as well, especially the question of how we can help improve the business climate at the next level up, at the local or state government level."



CEO Walt Jones of One Stone Consulting

Looking to the near future, Jones anticipates releasing a white paper on his website by the end of March that will focus on the food service industry.

"Since the last recession the restaurant industry has boomed," he said. "I'm putting focus on it because I believe we're probably heading into another economic downturn within the next 12 to 18 months, and I think the food service industry is going to be hit significantly hard."



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# Chamber partner for 33 years

By Susan Kim  
Staff Writer

Courtney Edmonds has a favorite workplace mantra: “Diversity is just the way we do business.”

As acting director of the Office of Supplier Diversity & Inclusion for the Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission (WSSC), Edmonds oversees one of the oldest Supplier Diversity programs in the country.

“Our Minority Business Enterprise Program celebrated its 40th anniversary last year and continues to be successful today because of the vision and leadership of our general manager/CEO Carla A. Reid and our commissioners,” said Edmonds. “Their unwavering support and commitment to supplier diversity has created an environment where diversity is just the way we do business.”

Edmonds’ team works daily to increase opportunities for diverse businesses to compete and win WSSC contracts. “Specifically,” she said, “we advocate for the inclusion of minority-owned, women-owned, and small and local firms on WSSC contracts by creating a level playing field.”

The Office of Supplier Diversity & Inclusion helps diverse firms “tap in” to contract opportunities and connects firms with resources to help them thrive and sustain success.

The online WSSC Supplier Portal provides a mechanism for doing business with WSSC, reducing the use of paper forms and streamlining the bidder registration process. Registration is free for the supplier community. WSSC advertises formal and informal solicitations on the Supplier Portal.

## Critical business resources

WSSC has been a member of the Central Maryland Chamber since 1986.

Edmonds currently serves as a chamber board member. “WSSC is pleased to partner with the Central Maryland Chamber on its mission to provide critical business resources to area businesses in Central Maryland,” she said. “WSSC has worked alongside the chamber to connect central Maryland businesses to opportunities to help their businesses grow and succeed.”

WSSC also partners annually with the chamber as a sponsor for the



The WSSC Supplier Diversity Office at work.

Photo by Susan Kim

## History of the WSSC

The WSSC was established on May 1, 1918. The concept of a bi-county water/sewer agency was first suggested in 1912 following complaints from the neighboring District of Columbia about the streams within the nation’s capital being fouled by waste from Montgomery and Prince George’s counties.

WSSC was the brainchild of public health officials and the era’s version of civic activists. Through the efforts of civic leaders E. Brooke Lee, a Montgomery County politician, and T. Howard Duckett, a Prince George’s County attorney and entrepreneur, WSSC transformed thoughts into action.

Engineer Abel Wolman worked on the original surveys that led to the creation of WSSC. Known as the father of modern sanitary engineering, Wolman developed chlorination, which made possible the adoption of simple, effective methods to curb waterborne diseases, particularly typhoid and cholera.

In 2016, WSSC appointed its first female general manager and CEO, Carla A. Reid. In September 2018, WSSC selected Arthur A. Elkins, Jr., as inspector general.

## Tapping the WSSC numbers

**Established:** 1918.

**Network of pipelines:**

nearly 5,768 miles of fresh water pipeline and over 5,578 miles of sewer pipeline.

**Service area:**

Nearly 1,000 square miles in Prince George’s and Montgomery counties.

**Residents reached:**

Nearly 1.8 million through 475,000 customer accounts.

**Water main breaks and leaks in extremely cold January 2018:**

Just over 800. That’s close to half the number of water mains fixed over a whole year by WSSC.

Economic Forecast Luncheon held in November.

WSSC’s management has a focus on

building strategic partnerships within the business community. “As one of the largest water utilities in the country,

WSSC needs the private sector’s help in fulfilling our clean water mission, and working with the chamber offers us access and networking opportunities with many of the suppliers we’re looking to do business with,” said Edmonds. “Working with a regional chamber has provided a unique opportunity to connect with small, mid- and large-scale companies right here in central Maryland.”

WSSC operates and maintains three reservoirs: Triadelphia, Rocky Gorge, and Little Seneca. Together, the reservoirs have a total holding capacity of 14 billion gallons. In addition, WSSC shares the Jennings Randolph Reservoir, which holds an additional 13 billion gallons, with Fairfax Water and the Washington Aqueduct.

WSSC operates two water filtration plants, the Patuxent and Potomac,

“WSSC has worked alongside the chamber to connect central Maryland businesses to opportunities to help their businesses grow and succeed.”

Courtney Edmonds

which together have the capacity to produce a total of 390 millions of gallons per day of safe drinking water.

WSSC also operates water resource recovery facilities – including Western Branch, Piscataway, Parkway, Seneca, Damascus, and Hyattstown – with a total capacity to produce 95 million gallons of wastewater per day.

The Blue Plains Advanced Wastewater Treatment Plant, operated by DC Water, handles as much as an additional 169 millions of gallons per day under a cost-sharing agreement with the WSSC, treating on average approximately 65 percent of the commission’s wastewater annually.

# with local music toes tapping and taps flowing



Invited revelers on stage to shake their groove things was held at Sonoma's in Columbia.

market. Hymes plays in three groups and also solos. He plays keyboards and sings with Radio City, a nine-piece group with horns, Music Room, which has five members, a third group is a trio.

Bookings aren't always about the clubs and venues. "Some bands do weddings, community dances, corporate events, etc." Hymes said, and the Baltimore-Washington region offers ample opportunity. "We're rich with good musicians and musical variety."

However, it's still at least partly about the bottom line for the musicians, who work in a business that's often notorious for miniscule pay. "If people appreciate what we have," he said, "they need to support live music at least once a month."

## Now Hear This

Hymes added one more key about live performance: to attract a good crowd, "bands need to get people dancing. That's very important."

Mike Robinson agrees. As guitarist and founding member of a new band based in Columbia – Dancing Room Only – he knows that the listeners will groove to the songs they know.

And he, too, lamented the lack of places for bands to play. "I agree with Gary about the business being cyclical," Robinson said, "and I'll add that you can watch any act you want to hear on your phone, 24/7. So the only reason people would come and see a live band is to dance and party, or if they're single maybe hook up. You can't do that electronically."

He knows that getting a band together and booked is only half the battle, too. "If you're in a local band and

you want to be successful, you have to market really hard. Hang flyers, send texts, post social media, send email, call every single person you know. Most bands fail because they don't do that, he said. "Your responsibilities when your band has a show is to build a big party for everyone to enjoy and to ensure that the venue has a profitable evening."

## Next Trend?

For successful acts, the next step – moving up the music chain to a venue that focuses on independent regional, national and international acts that play original music, like The Fillmore, in Silver Spring; or The Sundry, on the Columbia Lakefront – can await.

That doesn't mean those venues won't book a cover band with a following, too, "like Yellow Dubmarine (a Beatles tribute group) and Superfly Disco," said Demitian Gilbert, assistant general manager at The Sundry. "We're open to having local acts. Vanessa Collier [an R&B singer who plays the sax] sold out two shows here."

But until reaching those heights, it's the area circuit and venues like the Union Jacks Annapolis location, which features a larger stage than its Columbia location to accommodate cover bands. "It's done well," said General Manager Rich Cutair, who also noted in recent years how the venue, which accommodates up to 600 fans, has booked more regional and even national concerns, like Baltimore rock legends Kix.

Those bookings usually come on the weekends, however. "We can sometimes book the 'A' (regional) bands like The Reagan Years, Amish Outlaws, Weird Science and the New Romance," said Cutair, "and sometimes you can get them on a Thursday."

The hope in the business is that such cover bands will once again be able to draw well during the week, too. At a time when people are starting to understand that it's O.K. to turn the technology off sometimes, there could be a boost in demand for live music.

"I think we'll get back to a more thriving market for live bands," Hymes said. "People want to be moved by music they know."

"Music will always be healthy," added Hutson. "Remember, these trends go in cycles."

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# Live from Annapolis, delegation hashes out bills

Howard County's nine delegates and three state senators are doing what no committees in Annapolis do and apparently no other local delegations but Montgomery County's do either.

For the first time, the Howard County delegation is now live-streaming and archiving its work sessions on Facebook, since its meeting room is not wired for video the way the large General Assembly hearing rooms are.

This may not sound like a big deal, but it is, even though the sound and images are a bit fuzzy as they work out the bugs.

While legislative hearings are live-streamed and recorded, committee work sessions on bills are not. It's in the work sessions, with few outsiders present, that bills are hashed out, amended and voted on. That's when some of the most important and delicate work of the legislature takes place – deals are made, compromises are forged – not that there isn't back-room deal-making as well.

Also, atypical of other county delegations, the local delegates and senators meet and vote together, as they've been doing for years now. Most other delegations meet separately by chamber, delegates and senators on their own.

Only in late January did House of Delegates Speaker Michael Busch and Senate President Mike Miller announce that floor sessions of the House and Senate would be live-streamed – something they've been pressured to do for years. The House will go live in 2020 and the Senate in 2021, finally moving into the 21st century as more than 40 other states have already done.

The delegation's live streaming means that people



## FROM THE STATE HOUSE

by Len Lazarick

like me who have trouble making it to Annapolis by 8:30 a.m. on Wednesdays can watch “democracy in action,” as they sometimes call it, or less elegantly the legislative sausage being made – or thrown out, as the case may be.

### Bag it

The 10 Democrats representing Howard County at the State House voted Feb. 6 to authorize the Howard County Council to tax the use of disposable plastic bags up to five-cents a pop. The environmental community came out in strength at a November hearing to support the measure.

The council and County Executive Calvin Ball were non-committal in the process, and had not asked for the authority.

Bill sponsor Del. Terri Hill said the legislation is designed “to change behavior,” nudging consumers to use less plastic that shows up flapping on trees and in landfills.

Sen. Guy Guzzone added an amendment to the bill that any money from a bag tax could only be used for the environment. “It's my firm belief that if we're going to do this it should not go to the general fund,” Guzzone

said.

“I don't love this bill,” he said. “I don't think it's ultimately what we should be doing.”

“I do believe that there should be a ban” on not only bags, but single-use plastic bottles and other items even though “I'm guilty of using them. ... I think it is important.”

But ultimately, “I think [the measure] is moving things more in the right direction,” Guzzone said.

That was the wrong direction for Del. Warren Miller, the conservative Republican from Glenwood. He pointed that Howard is a small county, and people can go elsewhere to shop. “This is putting our stores at a disadvantage,” Miller said.

Republican Del. Trent Kittleman joined Miller in opposing the bill.

Now introduced as HB1166, the legislation must still have a hearing in the environment committee, and pass both the House and Senate before it lands on the governor's desk.

Typically, “local courtesy” prevails, giving the nod to the local representatives when it affects only their county and simply authorizes county officials to take action.

About the only voice of opposition to the legislation has come from website consultant Scott Ewart, who does a consistently informative political blog. Bottom line for Ewart is that he actually favors a ban on the bags because a nickel tax is not about to change behavior.

“People will tell you that this tax works,” Ewart said in a January blog post, “but of course if you look at the actual data from Montgomery County or Washington, D.C. [which have a bag tax] they cannot point out a data point that shows the number of bags distributed at checkout going down year over year... the number of bags only goes up year in and year out.”

### Impact fees put off

The delegation has had a much harder time agreeing to legislation to allow Howard County to quadruple impact fees on homebuilders to provide for new schools and ease overcrowding.

Del. Vanessa Atterbeary, sponsor of the bill to raise the fee from \$1 per square foot of house to \$4, was clearly frustrated at the Feb. 13 delegation work session.

“We've been talking about it for well over a year,” including during the election campaign, Atterbeary said. “I just think it's critical we get this done.”

The delegation has repeatedly delayed voting on the bill, with a work group set up to make changes.

“I've been saying all along we're intent on passing this bill,” said Guzzone, who represents the same District 13 as Atterbeary. But “there are so many pieces to get this right,” with the County Council, executive and school board all involved.

A \$4-per-square-foot fee on a 2,000-sq.ft. house raises its cost by \$8,000, for instance.

“We don't want houses to be overly expensive,” Guzzone said. “This is not easy.”

Dels. Shane Pendergrass and Courtney Watson, like Guzzone, former members of the Howard County Council, favored giving the council more say in the fee.

But said, Del. Jen Terrasa, who also served on the council, said, “This can't wait for another year.”



The Community Action Council of Howard County (CAC) announced the establishment of the L. Earl and Mary T. Armiger Nutrition Center at the Howard County Food Bank, which will support CAC's existing food assistance program and provide for the addition of nutrition education programs, taste tests and cooking demonstrations. Those who attended the announcement included (left to right) Councilwoman Liz Walsh, Councilwoman Deb Jung, Mary T. Armiger, CAC President Bitia Dayhoff, Earl Armiger, Senator Clarence Lam, Councilwoman Christiana Rigby and CAC Vice President Anne Brinker.

# Frustration at the MVA

## *New license requirements anger drivers*

By Len Lazarick

The new driver's license requirements demanded by federal law are not only producing long lines at Maryland Motor Vehicle Administration offices but anger and frustration for many who are having their documents rejected to get a compliant REAL ID.

The process seems to be worse for older citizens who are having their original birth certificates rejected, and for women of any age who have had their last names changed by marriage or divorce.

On the other hand, getting a compliant license is brief, smooth sailing for people like myself who come with the right documents – a minimum of four papers, and five or six for others – and make an online appointment with the MVA.

But even people with valid, current U.S. passports – a fully compliant federal ID acceptable for air travel – are having their passports rejected for lack of a full middle name as shown on their driver's license.

After October 2020, people without a compliant REAL ID from a state or a federal ID like a passport will not be able to get through airport security to get on a commercial aircraft.

Even if you have a driver's license with the small star in the upper right corner, you need to submit the same documentation to the MVA.

### Long waits

Here are some of the stories we got in reaction to our Feb. 8 story "Maryland drivers facing longer lines, frustration on license renewal to comply with federal law."

On MarylandReporter.com's Facebook posting, John Hartnett wrote "I waited almost 3 hours at a supposed 'Express' office before I left. Word to the wise: Make an appointment! ... Try finding your birth certificate from another State after 71 years! Imagine the hoops one has to go thru if they are a LEGAL immigrant."

MVA "appointments" are assigned



Long lines and confusion have made some driver's license renewals take longer than expected.

times to show up at an office.

Then again, Vince Nappi reported, "It took no longer than in years past, a little overboard on the documents but the mail clearly said what to bring."

Said Stephen Haller online, "I just renewed late last month. I had scheduled online for an appointment. I was called within 5 minutes of the requested time and was out the door within 20 minutes. Scheduling the appt online is the way to go."

This was my experience recently at the crowded MVA office in Columbia as well. With a special line for appointments, I and the woman ahead of me were out the door in 20 minutes.

Others at other offices were not so lucky, Michael Golden, director of external affairs at the state pension system, said, "I waited three hours at the MVA yesterday to get my renewal."

Longtime TV reporter Scott Broom on Twitter said, "Huge 4hr wait at MVA Glen Burnie today. 60% of Marylanders will need to go through this to comply with Real ID Act. You'll need all kinds of documents and A LOT of patience to renew your license."

Ruth Feeser Taylor said on Facebook, "The new requirements are ridiculous. You should be able to use your passport to get a driver's license. What the hell is wrong with the bureaucrats at the Maryland Department of Motor Vehicles!"

Beside proof of age and identity, the additional requirements for proof of a Social Security number and two proofs of residence are actually in the federal law initially passed in 2005, and implemented over the years by regulations

from the U.S. Department of Homeland Security.

### Rejecting original birth certificates

The most common cause for problems with REAL IDs renewal seems to be MVA's rejection of original birth certificates from older residents, including those issued by hospitals.

In a letter to the Calvert Recorder and Del. Mark Fisher, Patricia Dennis of Chesapeake Beach wrote about her experience in the Prince Frederick office.

"The lady behind the desk stated that the MVA wouldn't accept my birth certificate because they don't accept the old ones issued by the state of Maryland. Mine was issued in 1955. She instructed me to go the health department and have them print off another copy of the birth certificate and bring it back. I did that – it cost me \$20 to get a copy of a document that I already had."

And Dennis pointed out, she had used the original birth certificate for many purposes, including her first driver's license.

"I sat in there for hours and watched elderly person after elderly person be turned away from renewing their licenses for the very same reason: The MVA wouldn't accept their original birth certificates. I saw this as a form of discrimination. We seniors have no control over the type of birth certificate that was issued, legally, by the state of Maryland, or anywhere else, when we were born. How much money is the state sucking away from its senior citizens by forcing them to pay \$20 apiece to get a copy of a document they already have?"

### Rejecting valid passports

More curious is MVA's rejection of valid, current U.S. passports – proof of age, identity and citizenship all over the world.

On Feb. 7, Timothy Westmoreland of Takoma Park wrote to MVA Administrator Christine Nizer about his three-hour wait at the White Oak office.

"The MVA staff person looked briefly at my passport, showed it to his supervisor, and then told me it was inadequate for MVA. My passport has my first name, middle initial, and last name," Westmoreland said. He did not mention that the passport has his picture as well.

"I was told that MVA now requires documents to show first name, full middle name and last name. The staff person said this is a new requirement of the State of Maryland, effective in December of last year. He also said that I was the third person today he had turned away because of this issue. (He was one of about 20 clerks, so I assume there were quite a few more and, of course, White Oak is only one of several offices). When I asked to speak to his supervisor, she simply told me that it was a requirement and that I should get a birth certificate with my middle name."

Westmoreland cited an article in the Albuquerque Journal from 2017 about how the state of New Mexico had changed its policies about middle names for REAL ID.

### Married names

Then there is problem with married names. Married women have had original marriage certificates rejected. Divorced women need to have copies of divorce decrees.

On a Facebook posting, Robin Beswick reported:

"I needed to renew my ID in 2017. But they wouldn't keep it in my married name because I never changed my social security info. So ... maiden name. Then off to Reisterstown for my birth certificate because the thing MD issues is no longer valid. Then to Social Security to take care of that. Then back to Motor Vehicles with ALL of those documents PLUS all the other ones they wanted (proof of address etc.). Pay for another ID & get it issued in my married name. My ID card looks EXACTLY like the one in the picture above. It's good until 2025. When you run my # through MVA's Real ID checker ... oh you need to come in with documents. Are you #)#%#()\* kidding me?!?!?"

# Ball creates Human Rights Review panel

Following a recommendation of his Transition Team, Howard County Executive Calvin Ball signed an Executive Order in February creating an Office of Human Rights Review Committee.

The Office of Human Rights (OHR) is responsible for administering and enforcing provisions of the Howard County Human Rights Law, investigate complaints and attempt to eliminate violations by conference, conciliation and persuasion.

“It’s time to thoroughly review the operation of OHR and review the existing investigation process,” said Ball. “This is an opportunity to identify ways we can strengthen the office, so it becomes the gold standard for all local Civil Rights agencies.”

Ball named Candace Dodson-Reed to chair the committee, which must issue its final report by March 15. He also appointed Janssen Evelyn as acting administrator of the Office of Human Rights. Evelyn has served as the county’s assistant chief administrative officer since 2017.

## Development Regulations

The Howard County Council approved legislation in February removing necessary disturbance exemptions for development near wetlands, streams and steep slopes.

Supporters praised the bill for its environmental considerations. “We would love to see even more of this type of tightening of gray areas in our regulations and stop having so many blanketed areas of administrative allowances on the books,” said citizen activist Lisa Markovitz, of Ellicott City.

Opponents included Joe Rutter, a developer and former Howard County Department of Planning



## EYE ON HOWARD

by George Berkheimer

and Zoning (DPZ) director, who termed the legislation “a feel-good bill that ignores the realities of property rights and the ability to develop property in accordance with county law. In reality, it just adds an unnecessary step of requiring the Department of Planning and Zoning to process a separate application in order to come to the exact same conclusion.”

The council tabled an accompanying bill (CB-3) that would remove certain exceptions for a certificate of approval for new development in historic districts.

Howard County Historic Preservation Board Member Drew Roth said the bill could prevent historic districts from becoming “a patchwork of modern subdivisions intermingled with historic properties” that could threaten loss of their National Register Historic District designation.

Land Use Attorney Sang Oh, however, said the bill attempts to give the Historic Preservation Commission veto power over DPZ and Planning Board decisions.

CB-3 threatens to derail a Lawyer’s Hill subdivision plan that includes new single-family home construction on 8.75 acres of land within an approved historic district.

“Some of [landowner Edmund] Pollard’s neighbors are not content to let him develop his land as is his

right under the current zoning,” said Land Design & Development President Don Reuwer, who is the developer. “They wish to deny him his rights that Howard County promised him he’d have when the Lawyer’s Hill Historic District was created.”

## Clarksville Streetscape

Clarksville residents attending a Howard County Office of Transportation presentation on Jan. 31 provided input on draft plans for streetscape improvements that focus on a shared use pathway running from Ten Oaks Road to Trotter Lane. Office of Transportation officials presented two continuous pathway options for public discussion, one on either side of MD 108 and separated from the roadway.

Currently in the conceptual design phase, the Office of Transportation is working with the Maryland State Highway Administration (SHA) to address safety issues at the Ten Oaks Road intersection and is also looking into the structural challenge of widening the sidewalks on the bridge crossing over MD 32.

“Since the state is dualizing MD 32, cyclists are no longer allowed on that road,” noted Office of Transportation Planning Manager David Cookson. Mitigation support from the SHA could come in the form of financial support or taking over parts of the project, which could hasten its completion.

The newly designated MD 32 bike route follows Ten Oaks Lane and utilizes MD 108 to reach Great Star Drive.

“There are locations where we’re looking to reduce some MD 108 lanes to 11 feet,” said Vice President Bryan Townsend of Whitman, Requardt & Associates, the firm hired to develop the design. “We have 12-foot lanes now, that’s more of a freeway width. Eleven feet is more appropriate for a more developed corridor.”

The Office of Transportation will consider public input from the presentation and try to incorporate suggestions as it works on finalizing preliminary plans, Cookson said.

## Housing Affordability

Also, in late January, the Association of Community Services (ACS) launched its new Howard County Housing Coalition, which aims to achieve community understanding, policy-making and regulatory decisions that will lead to an increase in and equitable access to Howard County housing affordability.

Members of the Housing Affordability Coalition Planning Committee include housing advocate Paul Casey, ACS Executive Director Joan Driessen, Heritage Housing Partners Executive Director Grace Morris, Howard County homeless advocate Joe Willmott, Maryland Building Industry Association representative Paul Revelle, and other community stakeholders.



Howard County Executive Calvin Ball enjoys lunch with former County Executives Ken Ulman, James Robey, Ed Cochran and Council Chair Christiana Mercer Rigby at La Palapa Grill & Cantina in Ellicott City prior to kicking off Winter Restaurant Weeks. More than 30 restaurants in and around Howard County offered 15 days of warm and hearty chefs’ multi-course, specialty plates. The kickoff coincided with the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of charter government in Howard County.

# Chamber fights against \$15

Jobs will be lost, barriers to employment will increase and Maryland will find itself at a regional disadvantage.

Those are just three of the negative impacts that could result from raising our state's minimum wage to \$15 per hour, if HB 166 is passed.

While the 2019 Legislative Session is far from over, the Chamber, and our members, have spent the past few weeks making sure the voice of business is being represented in Annapolis. In early February, we put out the call by email and on social media, along with our partners in the Maryland Chamber Federation, asking our members to join us in Annapolis, and testify against HB 166 at a hearing Feb. 8.

Pete Mangione, general manager of Turf Valley Resort, Greg Clark, president of Med-Electronics, Inc., and Bob Claire, general manager of Mobern Lighting, all spent hours in Annapolis to have the opportunity to testify. More than a dozen other business owners, who are also part of the Maryland Chamber Federation, testified as well.

Our voices were impossible to ignore, but the fight against HB 166 is not over yet.

## Chamber support government contractors

While the longest partial federal government shutdown in history is behind us, many small federal government contractors are still suffering the consequences.

On Jan. 31, Chamber President Leonardo McClarty, Howard County Executive Calvin Ball, Howard County Economic Development Authority CEO Larry Twele and U.S. Congressman John Sarbanes gathered with about a dozen local small federal government



Pete Mangione, of Turf Valley County Club (left), Delegate Trent Kittleman and Greg Clark, of Med-Electronics, discussed issues related to raising the minimum wage at the Capitol.

contractors, to talk about the impact of the shutdown.

The meeting, which took place at one of our GovConnects members, Sparksoft Corporation, was informative and productive. Many contractors present expressed the need for some kind of legislation that would require that they be paid during a shutdown.

Some contractors even explained that they are now asking for shutdown clauses before entering into new contracts. Some of the contractors also shared that

they are afraid they will lose good employees to other employers who don't have to deal with instability like the shutdown.

All parties involved walked away from the meeting with new information and perspective. The Howard County Government has continued to provide support for the government contractors in our community who have been affected by the partial shutdown. You can find more information about those services at [www.howardcountymd.gov](http://www.howardcountymd.gov).

## Patience, purpose, peace and perseverance

The 2019 Women's Leadership Conference (WLC), "HERStory: The Power of Perseverance," will be held March 7 at Maryland Live! Hotel & Casino. If you have already reserved a seat, you are in for a day full of powerful women, who will energize, empower and inspire you.

The morning keynote will be given by Rayna DuBose, motivational speaker and Marriotts Ridge High School coach, who survived a viral meningitis infection that landed her in a 97-day coma, and left her a quadruple amputee. We dare you not to be inspired by incredible story of

The afternoon keynote could not be any more appropriate for our current debate dominating the country's political conversation. Sheela Murthy, founder of Murthy Law Firm, has become one of the most respected voices in the field of U.S. immigration law.

There are only a few seats left for this can't miss conference. You can find more details at [www.howard-chamberwlc.com](http://www.howard-chamberwlc.com).

*Leonardo McClarty is president of the Howard County Chamber.*

# Spirit of community: honoring our local heroes!



Our civil servants – teachers, firefighters, police officers, and military service members – are the backbone of our community. They have dedicated their careers to improving our lives, and for that, they deserve our admiration and appreciation.

This is the reason why the Central Maryland Chamber is always so excited to hold its annual Spirit of Community Awards Dinner.

Our civil servants don't always quite get the recognition they deserve, which is why we are honored to recognize those who have dedicated their lives to the greater good. The businesses in the Central Maryland Chamber recognize the important role a robust civil service plays in shaping a region that is one of the best places to play, live, work, and run a business. U.S. Treasury Secretary Jack Lew



According to Melanie Graw, Coldwell Banker and CMC member, the Spirit of the Community awards dinner is "The best feel-good day you will have in the entire year!" Photos are from the 2018 event.

once stated: "There's no higher calling in terms of a career than public service, which is a chance to make a difference in people's lives and improve the world."

Our civil servants do not get enough recognition and if you feel the same as us, we welcome you to attend The 2019 Spirit of Community Awards Dinner. This special event will be held Monday, March 25 from 6 p.m. – 9 p.m. at Live! Casino & Hotel. We encourage you to visit the Central Maryland Chamber website to learn more and register: [www.CentralMarylandChamber.org](http://www.CentralMarylandChamber.org)

The Spirit of Community Awards Dinner presents a real opportunity for businesses throughout the region to demonstrate their support for our civil servants. We hope you can join over 300 business executives and guests in honoring our local heroes. It's one great night to recognize the important contributions that these hardworking community members make to our families, our business community, and our region!

*Raj Kudchadkar is president and CEO of the Central Maryland Chamber.*

# Businesses support Special Olympians

*Continued from page 1*

that it's about doing your best and having fun."

Another local Special Olympics veteran, 28-year-old Charles Gaines from Jessup, will also travel to Abu Dhabi to compete in track and field. He earned a gold medal in the 400-meter run in Seattle.

Gaines works as a courtesy clerk at Safeway, a job he's held for 17 years.

## A growing field

"Special Olympics is offered at no cost to the athletes," explained Marilyn Miceli, assistant director for Special Olympics Maryland Howard County. "Costs for training sites, uniforms, and travel have increased, as have our athlete numbers. Each Special Olympics county program must raise their own funds to run the program in their area,"

Special Olympics Howard County recently received a one-time \$38,800 grant from CarMax Laurel Toyota. The grant is part of the CarMax's regional giving program focusing on children's healthy living.

In addition to their financial support, the associates of CarMax Laurel Toyota volunteer at Special Olympics Howard County's annual Inspiration Walk as well at various one-day competitions.

"CarMax associates know the importance of being a good neighbor and make it a priority to give back to the communities where we live and work," said Tom Webb, location general manager of CarMax Laurel Toyota. "The Special Olympics Howard County is a great community partner and we are honored to award them with this grant."

CarMax is one of many businesses who support the Special Olympics, which relies heavily on such support to provide the funds needed for year-round



*Photo by Special Olympics Maryland*

**Jena Jones will travel to Abu Dhabi to compete in swimming at the Special Olympics World games.**

sports training and competitions for children and adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

Special Olympics Howard County offers 20 different sports in addition to a Motor Activities Training Program at Cedar Lane School and a new effort, the Young Athletes Program for children under 8 years of age.

Young Athletes introduces basic sports skills such as running, kicking and throwing through a curriculum available to families, teachers and caregivers.

## Volunteer-driven

On April 27, Special Olympics Howard County will hold its annual Inspiration Walk – a tradition observed by many local Special Olympics organizations – at Centennial Park.

The walk raises about 50 percent of Special Olympics Howard County's annual operating budget and, since the organization is volunteer-driven, these donations directly impact the athletes.

Miceli said the Special Olympics is still looking for sponsors. "We also look for direct donations, in-kind donations of gift cards, raffle prize donations, and fundraiser prizes," she said.

"The donations can be for general support, for a specific competition or sport, or for our annual Inspiration

Walk. In addition, Nearly 25 percent of Special Olympics Howard County's revenue comes through in-kind services or product donations, including sports equipment and gift certificates, web design and assistance, and facility usage. Businesses are also welcome to provide volunteers for special events and competitions," said Miceli.

Miceli said she wishes more businesses would bring teams of people to volunteer for the Special Olympics. "By engaging in team building activities, employee morale will go up and people will see their employers as caring members of the community."

## Special Olympics Rundown

**Held:** Every two years

**This year:** March 14-21 in Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates

**Recognized by:** International Olympic Committee

**Athletes:** More than 7,500 from 190 countries

**Maryland athletic delegation:** Jena Jones (Columbia), Charles Gaines (Jessup), Calvin Massenburg (Capitol Heights), Kegan Zimmerman (Callaway)

**Spectators expected:** 40,000 at the Zayed Sports City arena

**Opening ceremony:** The Olympic flame will be carried by law enforcement officers who began their journey on Mount Olympus in Athens.



*Photo by Special Olympics Maryland*

**Charles Gaines will travel to Abu Dhabi to compete in track and field at the Special Olympics.**

# What's next for historic Laurel?

Continued from page 1

## Low Vacancy

Pure Hana yanking its application in January for the diner presents new opportunities, said Friend.

"It would fit perfectly in the vacant lot where Petrucci's Dinner Theatre used to be," he said. "Now, the city can take advantage of its availability. I think the city [considers] that section of Route 1 as a blighted, and occasionally crime-riddled area that it wants to renovate."

Robert Love, deputy director of the city's Department of Economic and Community Development. Love said how Main Street would integrate into the Tastee Diner area is "in our bigger scheme of having Main Street branch out. We want to make Laurel a destination, and more than a suburb between Baltimore and Washington with a dual train stop."

He noted that, "Anything new that happens at Laurel Park would have impact on what goes on on Main Street, which is about a mile away from [the horse racing track's] back entrance."

While the city has not engaged outside consultants, last October it



**Richard Friend (left) and Pete Lewnes, two of the three self-ordained Laurel History Boys, pose with a framed poster for Tastee Diner Appreciation Day. The historic eatery is again for sale after a recent offer was pulled off the table.**

garnered Maryland Main Street designation, which allows access to grants and advertising. "For now, one of our focuses is Main Street, which has a 4 percent vacancy rate," said Love. "Later, we'll branch off to the diner area," which is also where the old Sportsman's Club has been renovated to about 7,000 square feet of retail and office space.

He added that he understands why people are so attached to the diner, "but from our planning and zoning perspective, we had to ensure that it met the criteria for the use of medical cannabis. It did," he said. "That's why we recommended approval."

## Due Diligence?

Despite Love's comments, Carl DeWalt, city councilman for Ward 1, agreed with Friend that the Pure Hana effort was for naught.

Since Pure Hana pulled its application, that will hopefully give us some time and, as a group, we can find some solutions and save the structure," he said, "either where it is or by moving it to Main Street."

Karen Lubieniecki, board chair for the Laurel Historical Society, said, "From our standpoint, I'm glad that we got a reprieve, especially given that the diner is [an historic] Commack model.

"There are a lot of people who are

interested in saving at least the aluminum part of it, at least as a sight," she said.

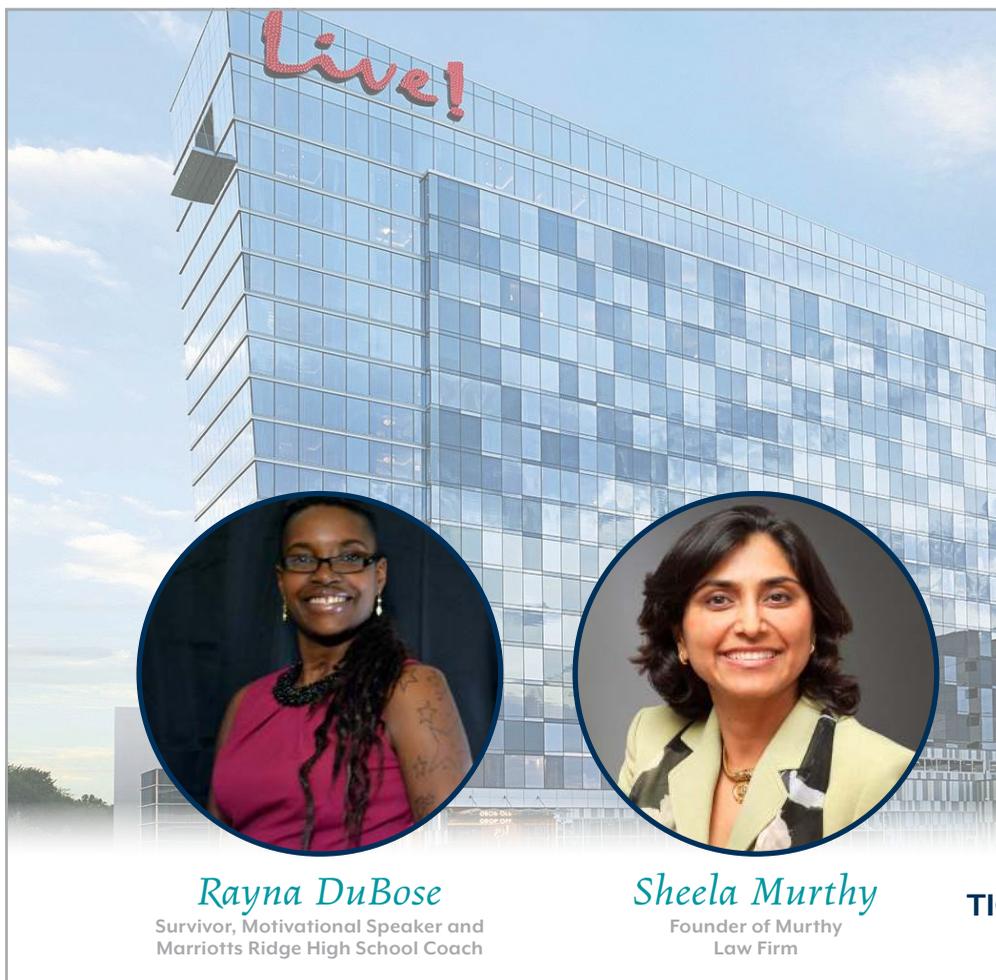
## 'Not Much Left'

As for the city purchasing the property, "Its default response is that it doesn't have the money, even though I don't think they've looked into the cost," said Friend, noting that the Laurel History Boys are thinking of creating a nonprofit, "to give us more leverage. But there are groups that are eager to help, like Preservation Maryland, which voiced its interest to me, in addition to Main Street Maryland."

Main Street and the diner represent "pieces of Laurel's history and there isn't much left," Friend said. "If you went to Laurel, what would you tell people you saw?"

For Friend, today is about this new opportunity for the diner and to accentuate the offerings on Main Street, with more varied offerings "and perhaps with a small grocery store, like Trader Joe's.

"The diner is still relevant, but there's a better use for it. I don't expect the city to run it," he said, "but they can help find somebody maybe even someone who's operating on Main Street."



2019 WOMEN'S LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE

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Survivor, Motivational Speaker and  
Marriotts Ridge High School Coach



**Sheela Murthy**  
Founder of Murthy  
Law Firm

**TICKETS at [HowardChamberWLC.com](http://HowardChamberWLC.com)**  
MEMBERS: \$175 | NON-MEMBERS: \$200



# CA kicks off 'Healthy Eating' plan

One of the four overarching goals for Columbia when the community was being planned was to provide for the growth of people, which ultimately would improve humanity. That means addressing the "whole person" – the body and the mind.

More than 50 years later, Columbia Association (CA) continues its efforts to assist individuals in their daily pursuit of a healthier lifestyle – efforts that go beyond our sport and fitness facilities, and beyond a pathway system used for exercise and recreation.

This month, CA, in conjunction with its Medical Advisory Board, will host the kickoff event for a new Healthy Eating Series. It will feature a presentation by Rip Esselstyn, a former firefighter who has since become a noted author and nutritional guru. His books highlight the connection between a plant-based diet and good health. He has also appeared on The Today Show, CBS Sunday Morning, Good Morning America, and Dr. Oz.

The kickoff event will be held on Monday, March 25 from 6-9:30 p.m. at The Jim Rouse Theatre for the Performing Arts, 5460 Trumpeter Road, adjacent to Wilde Lake High School in Columbia. There is no charge to attend the event, but registration is required. Esselstyn's presentation will begin at 7 p.m.

There also will be a Q&A panel session with three local nutrition experts – Dr. Jyothi Rao of Shakthi Health and Wellness Center, pediatrician Dr. Lisa LaBorwit, and registered dietitian Melanie Berdyck of Giant Food – as well as on-site screenings provided



**FROM CA  
PRESIDENT**

by Milton Matthews

by health organizations, and educational materials provided by wellness vendors.

To register for the kickoff event, please visit [healthyeating2019.eventbrite.com](http://healthyeating2019.eventbrite.com). Those unable to attend can watch a live-stream at [ColumbiaAssociation.org/healthyeating](http://ColumbiaAssociation.org/healthyeating).

But the Healthy Eating Series is more than just this one event. It is part of a larger initiative. Looking ahead, the series will also include more education about healthy eating as well as several interactive cooking classes. For more information, contact Shawni Paraska, CA's director of community health, at [Shawni.Paraska@ColumbiaAssociation.org](mailto:Shawni.Paraska@ColumbiaAssociation.org) or 410-715-3128.

Keeping the community informed about a healthier lifestyle – and helping individuals attain it – is an essential element of CA's mission and one of the many roles fulfilled by CA as a community services provider.

And, as with many of the attributes that make Columbia and Greater Howard County such a great place to live, Columbia Association does not work alone.

This initiative was developed in collaboration

with Dr. Harry Oken, a primary care physician with a practice in Howard County. Dr. Oken is CA's medical director and one of several area medical and nutrition experts who serve on CA's Medical Advisory Board. Two of the nutrition panelists (Dr. Rao and Dr. LaBorwit) are also on the advisory board.

Members of the Medical Advisory Board help inform our fitness, wellness and nutrition programs and services.

CA also offers medically-based programs to which physicians refer their patients: Fit Beginnings, an eight-week introduction to exercise; Columbia Optimal Health, for individuals whose weight is contributing to health issues; and Columbia Optimal Health for My Baby & Me, which focuses on improving the health of prenatal through postnatal women and their babies.

Fit Beginnings is open to non-members only, but the other two programs are open to both CA members and non-members.

CA also joins with several of our community partners – the Horizon Foundation, Howard County General Hospital, and the Howard County Health Department – on the biennial Howard County Health Assessment Survey.

By working together, we can use our combined resources to encourage healthy and active lifestyles.

*Milton Matthews is president and CEO of the Columbia Association.*

# DOD proposal cuts out small businesses

The Section 809 Panel just released the final Volume III Report, in which it makes a market-killing recommendation to eliminate most current small business set-asides for Department of Defense (DOD) acquisitions and replace with a five percent price preference option. This is a game-changing recommendation that could eliminate the \$61 billion small business market in the DOD, if adopted by Congress and enacted into law.

The report states that the current small business set-asides actually hurt small business because once the small businesses are successful, they may grow out of the size-standard and then need to compete for full and open competition contracts where companies of all sizes can bid on contracts. It mentions that small businesses will "...make extraordinary efforts to remain small..." in order to stay within the perceived protected set-aside bidding environment where only small businesses may compete.

According to official government reports at FPDS.gov, in the last full fiscal year 2017, DOD awarded \$61,372,431,842 in prime contracts to small businesses in 1,416,194 contract "actions" actually exceeding its self-assigned 22 percent goal by reaching 22.53 percent. The 809 Panel recommendations would essentially eliminate this DOD voluntary goal.

The 809 Panel was created by Congress in the FY 2016 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) and charged with "identifying ways to streamline and



**GOVERNMENT  
CONTRACTING**

by Gloria Berthold Larkin

improve the defense acquisition system..."

Members of the Section 809 panel include current and former military service members, civilian DoD acquisition professionals, and industry representatives such as a current corporate vice president of contracts and pricing at Boeing Company, a senior vice president of acquisition support at CACI International, and a former executive vice president and chief operating officer of ABM Facility Solutions Group, all multi-million dollar government contracting companies.

The U.S. federal government has supported small business competition with policy stated in the Small Business Act 15 U.S.C. 631 where it begins with "The essence of the American economic system of private enterprise is free competition. Only through full and free competition can free markets, free entry into business, and opportunities for the expression and growth of personal initiative and individual judgment be assured. The preservation and expansion of such

competition is basic not only to the economic well-being but to the security of this Nation."

The Act continues to say that in federal contracting specifically, "...to ensure that a fair proportion of the total purchases and contracts or subcontracts for property and services for the Government ...be placed with small-business enterprises, ... and to maintain and strengthen the overall economy of the Nation."

The 809 Panel argues that small businesses will continue to win contracts because of the 5 percent price preference. This means that the contracting officer will agree to pay up to 5 percent more for services or products than a price quoted by a large business. As an example, of a large business was selling something to the government for \$100, a 5 percent preference means that a small business could charge \$105, and the contracting officer may choose the \$105 purchase.

Of the 98 recommendations the 809 Panel made to change the overall structure and operations of defense acquisition both strategically and tactically, this specific recommendation does not support the Small Business Act in theory or action and instead has the ability to harm the thousands of small businesses and tens of thousands small business employees serving our government and military operations throughout the nation.

*Gloria Larkin is president of TargetGov and an expert in business development in the government markets.*

# Tax proposal riles interstate business

*Continued from page 3*

we operate, running tips through payroll, going above the matching requirements for FICA and social security withholding, and providing medical benefits for full-time equivalent employees. All of those things add up. At the end of the year, they're making a hell of a lot more than me because they have so many opportunities to move money around that I don't have."

## Excessive Reach

James McKittrick, senior policy analyst for the Maryland Chamber of Commerce, said the Chamber "vehemently opposes" the Small Business Fairness Act.

"The Augustine Commission Report was very clear that for a robust business climate, we need to stop hovering this specter of combined reporting over businesses that operate in Maryland," McKittrick said. "Studies have shown that it may actually be devastating when we have an economic downturn."

Speaking for the Maryland Retailers

Association, Legislative and Membership Director Maddie Voytek said the legislation targets industries that employ thousands of people in the state.

"In 2004 and 2007, the legislature closed what were perceived loopholes in the tax code," she said. "We believe that after that, the state [has] received its fair share of tax revenue."

Melvin Thompson, senior vice president of government affairs for the Restaurant Association of Maryland, said combined reporting would mean an increase of \$100,000 in Maryland corporate income tax for the Clyde's Restaurant Group.

Four of its 13 restaurants are located in Maryland, comprising nearly 20 percent of Clyde's total operations. He said the Group pays corporate income taxes in Maryland, Virginia and the District of Columbia.

"It would require their Maryland tax return to include almost 20 percent of the taxable income from their DC and Virginia locations," Thompson said. "There is absolutely no good basis for crossing state lines for tax purposes on income that is not related to Maryland transactions."

## Traditional Fight

Combined reporting legislation is something of a tradition in Maryland, coming up before the General Assembly year after year. Passions run high, with advocates on each side of the argument concerned primarily with the issue of fairness.

"I'd like to see everyone operating in Maryland paying their fair share to fund the roads and services that they're using," said Wecker.



Employees at Next Day Blinds can enroll in an English language program on the job site.

# HCC offers programs for workplace English

*Continued from page 3*

financial system but also cultural education. Learning "the system" – culturally and professionally – helps people make that transition successfully.

Gary Fernandes, division executive of Human Resources at Sandy Spring Bank, said the bank's been involved with the Multicultural Banking and Finance Training Institute since the its inception three years ago.

In a very hands-on way, Sandy Spring Bank helped shape the institute. The bank's human resources team helps conduct mock interviews and classes also tour the bank to learn about different aspects of operations.

"When HCC partners with local businesses and understands what we need, it really is beneficial for both parties," said Fernandes.

The bank has extended job offers to three graduates who learned how to interact with clients, use workforce-specific language and write in a professional setting, among other skills.

represent more than 15 percent of the total population. Forty percent of them have limited English proficiency.

On a local level, in Howard County, almost 20 percent of residents are foreign-born and 38 percent of those have limited English, according to the U.S. Census Bureau.

At the ELC, which includes students from over 70 different countries, 50 percent of students taking intermediate or higher-level classes hold university degrees from their home countries, 30 percent in business and another 30 percent in science, technology, engineering or math fields.

Despite the education and skills these immigrants bring, many of them face limited English proficiency; unfamiliarity with the U.S. job search process and local labor markets; or they find the cost and complexity of re-licensing prohibitive.

Providing workforce development programs that address their unique needs can lead to tapping into a significant talent pool.

## Deepening the worker pool

Looking at trends in the local population, employers that invest in English-speaking or cultural education programs can choose from a larger pool of qualified workers.

Currently, more than 2,000 noncredit students are enrolled in the English Language Center (ELC).

In the last few decades, the foreign-born population in the United States has increased dramatically from 14.1 million in 1980 to 43.7 million in 2016, according to the Migration Policy Institute.

In Maryland, foreign-born people

## Seeing eye-to-eye culturally

The ELC also provides one-on-one tutoring for employees of local companies, said Verratti.

Businesses are also increasingly interested in the ELC's cultural proficiency workshops for people who work with a lot of international clients or have a large population of foreign-born workers.

Businesses should become aware that their local community college can be a resource for workforce development, urged Verratti. "We are here at HCC – and we are out there in the community – helping prepare the workforce."

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## Howard joins Trade Zone

Howard County has received approval from the U.S. Department of Commerce's Foreign Trade Zones Board to be included in the service area of Foreign Trade Zone (FTZ) No. 74 as part of a recent expansion.

FTZ No. 74, which is administered by the Baltimore Development Corp. (BDC), already included Baltimore City and the Maryland counties of Baltimore, Harford, Cecil and Anne Arundel.

FTZs are designated areas where international goods can be stored and fabricated [while deferring certain taxes], but are still considered part of international commerce. Goods are not subject to U.S. taxes or duties until transferred to the U.S. market outside of FTZ designated areas; companies are

allowed to build, manufacture, manipulate components into finished products for U.S. sale or re-export.

The BDC prepared FTZ No. 74's expansion request to the FTZ Board and U.S. Customs Border Protection (CBP) in conjunction with Howard and Queen Anne's County's economic development leadership to meet the growing requests from existing industry. Baltimore's FTZ No. 74 is one of four zones in Maryland and is the most active, with 18 operators managing facilities supporting 193 warehouse/distribution companies throughout the existing service area.

Maryland ranked eighth in FTZ merchandise received, with FTZ No. 74 directly supporting more than 750 jobs across the service area.

## Summit selected for cybersecurity

Summit Business Technologies (Summit) has been selected as an expert resource to help Maryland defense contractors comply with NIST 800-171 cybersecurity standards.

The expanded NIST standards define what contractors must do to protect sensitive defense information that passes through their IT systems.

The Maryland Defense Cybersecurity Assistance Program (DCAP) named Summit, located in Millersville, to a team of cybersecurity providers with the experience and expertise to help contractors become compliant with NIST cybersecurity standards. Contractors and subcontractors found out of compliance will lose eligibility for Department of Defense (DOD) business, under the Defense Federal Acquisition Regulations

(DFARS) that govern DOD contracts.

"The process of complying with NIST 800-171 regulations can be intimidating for small and mid-size contractors," said Leo Minegishi, Summit's director of Information Security. "We remove the complexity by helping them draft policies, process changes, and secure the configuration of their IT systems to remediate security gaps that would put their federal contracts at risk."

DCAP provides funding and support to help suppliers safeguard classified and sensitive unclassified defense-related information that is processed, transmitted or stored in their IT systems. The assistance program is funded by the DOD through the Maryland Department of Commerce and coordinated by the MD Manufacturing Extension Partnership (MDMEP).

## Belmont Manor honored by Wedding Wire

Belmont Manor and Historic Park in Howard County has received the 2019 Couples' Choice Award for venues from WeddingWire.

The award recognizes Belmont's commitment to "quality, service, responsiveness and professionalism." Winners are determined by the reviews from more than one million WeddingWire couples.

"Historic Belmont Manor has become one of the premier wedding and event facilities in our region," said Howard County Executive Calvin Ball. "In 2018, nearly 70 couples chose Belmont as the backdrop to their special day and we already have over 60 weddings on the books for this year. Weddings often attract family and guests from out of

town and hopefully once they see all that Howard County has to offer, they will return again."

"Since the Department acquired the property in 2012, we have done extensive renovations," stated Department of Recreation & Parks Director John R. Byrd. "Thanks to the great staff there it has established a reputation as a premier venue for weddings, meetings and other events."

Located at 6555 Belmont Woods Road in ElkrIDGE, the County purchased this 68-acre property to ensure the property remained in the public trust. The estate features a tree-lined driveway, exquisitely decorated Manor House and pristine, formal gardens.



Photo courtesy of BGE

Karen Murphy (left), principal at Resurrection-St. Paul School, fourth grader Aaliyah and Kate Johnston, a fourth grade teacher, celebrate winning BGE's gas safety contest and receiving a \$10,000 donation to the school.

## Howard County school wins contest Resurrection-St. Paul School gets \$10,000

Resurrection-St. Paul School in Ellicott City was the winner of "The Adventures of Captain Mercaptan", BGE Natural Gas Safety Hero Challenge and received a \$10,000 award.

The annual contest challenges public and private elementary students to illustrate gas safety messages featuring Captain Mercaptan, BGE's fictional natural gas safety superhero.

The first-place comic strip drawn by Aaliyah, a fourth-grade student, will be featured in a BGE natural gas safety advertisement in February.

In addition, a teacher from Resurrection-St. Paul School received a \$500 gift card.

"This BGE program is a great example of how the STEM curriculum can be taught in a creative way that allows students to use their gifts to illustrate

the importance of natural gas safety. I commend teacher Kate Johnston for taking advantage of this opportunity," said Principal Karen Murphy.

"Educating our customers, especially children, on how to remain safe around natural gas is a priority at BGE. These important gas safety messages benefit their schools, families, and the communities that we serve," said Christopher Burton, vice president of Gas Distribution, BGE.

Captain Mercaptan teaches kids how to recognize a natural gas leak, and the steps they need to take when they smell gas BGE traces its roots back to 1816 and is the first natural gas utility in North America. Today the company provides natural gas service to more than 650,000 gas customers in central Maryland.

## Clyde's 10K taking registrations

Clyde's of Columbia, Rip It Events and the Downtown Columbia Partnership are teaming up for the 2019 Clyde's 10K race on Sunday, April 14.

The 41st installment of the race will run through the streets of Downtown Columbia and will feature a post-race brunch on the Columbia Lakefront.

"We've been proud to be part of the

greater Columbia neighborhood since we opened in 1975, and we're excited to bring in Rip It Events to help make our annual 10K an even better community event," said Clyde's Restaurant Group President Tom Meyer.

For more information about this event and to register, visit [www.ripitevents.com/clydes10k](http://www.ripitevents.com/clydes10k).

# Horizon Foundation grants \$1.8 Million

The Horizon Foundation awarded \$1.8 million in grants to 63 community programs in 2018 as part of its work to improve health and wellness for people who live or work in Howard County.

The grants focus on advancing the Foundation's three strategic priorities – promoting healthy kids and families, encouraging healthy aging and ensuring a more equitable community – and include a significant emphasis on local mental health. Nine organizations also received “community opportunity grants” designed to support and strengthen nonprofits to carry out their missions more effectively.

“We are building partnerships with

**“We are building partnerships with committed organizations and people who share our vision.”**

committed organizations and people who share our vision of a Howard County where everyone has the opportunity to life a long, healthy life,” said Horizon Foundation President and CEO Nikki Highsmith Vernick. “Our community is fortunate to have many health champions in these grantees,

and we look forward to their future impact.”

Organizations receiving more the \$100,000 in funding included:

Howard County Public School System: \$386,586 to expand mental health services in 28 schools.

Howard County Recreation and Parks: \$150,000 to plan for more students to engage in expanded after-school sports programs.

Howard County General Hospital: \$200,000 to support the hospital's patient care pavilion and physical plant renovation.

Maryland State Medical Society (MedChi): \$200,000 to support Sugar Free Kids Maryland.

Howard County Government: \$100,000 to support Howard County Bikeshare in Downtown Columbia.

Institute for Healthcare Improvement: \$145,000 to provide guidance to primary care and other health care professionals to integrate advance care planning and end-of-life care conversations into their work with patients.

Since 1998, Horizon has invested nearly \$50 million in community programs, including grants to more than 250 diverse organizations serving the county, from school-based programs to faith-based organizations to health care providers.

Learn more about the Horizon Foundation's grantmaking at [thehorizonfoundation.org/grants](http://thehorizonfoundation.org/grants).



The Howard Tech Council hosted a networking Happy Hour for Health Tech Innovators Jan. 22 at Aida Bistro and Wine Bar in Columbia. Among the attendees were Ronny Nativ, Howard County Chamber, Kathy Berlin, The Business Monthly, John Joubin, Data Canopy and Jeremy Raichle of Wells Fargo,

## Gay to rep PickUp USA Fitness

PickUp USA Fitness has announced that Rudy Gay, NBA veteran and Archbishop Spalding High School graduate, will be opening PickUp USA locations in Maryland and Florida. PickUp USA gyms are full-service fitness clubs with services focused on basketball. They clubs offer group and private basketball training, weight and

cardio rooms, and the company's main attraction – pickup basketball with referees.

Gay was selected eighth overall in the 2006 NBA draft, and is currently the starting forward for the San Antonio Spurs. His PickUp USA locations are projected to start opening in the second half of 2019.



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# Spilling, spewing, scattering

## Who cleans it up?

By Susan Kim  
Staff Writer

Overtaken milk trucks, ruptured tankers, smashed food carts. Spilling, spewing scattering.

Considering more than 800,000 shipments of hazardous materials move each day in the United States, it's no surprise that the Anne Arundel County Fire Department Special Operations Team responded to 125 hazardous spill calls last year, an average of more than two per week.

By far the most common spill is diesel fuel that leaks out of the saddle tank of a wrecked truck, said Lt. Carl Yetter, who has been with the Special Operations Team for 12 years.

The first responder to any spill is usually a local fire department, which quickly brings trucks onsite, determines if anyone is injured, and looks for sources of ignition to stop any potential fires.

Then, the hazmat team – Yetter's group – steps in, using three main types of cleanup essentials. First, bags of cellulose-based absorbent that act like giant mops. Second, round "booms," or barriers used to block the spread of a spill. (You've likely seen images of them floating around oil spills but they can be used on land, too.) Finally, pop-up pools that the crew can install underneath a leak to contain it.

In Anne Arundel County, hazmat responders typically carry 30 bags of absorbent and close to 100 feet of boom.

A typical tanker carries 100 to 200 gallons of liquid, whether it's milk, corn syrup, molasses or diesel fuel. If the hazmat crew isn't sure what's been spilled, Yetter said, "we'll go in with air monitors and testing papers to try to characterize the hazards."

### Summer spillin'...

Would you rather have a diesel spill in the winter or summer? Cooler temperatures help keep diesel vapors at bay, explained Yetter. "By mid-summer, the road temperatures will be

warm enough that the diesel vapors will be very volatile."

In a large spill, local fire departments get help from the Maryland Department of Environment (MDE), which has access to greater quantities of absorbent and boom. "We are also happy to have their technical expertise," said Yetter.

The MDE's Emergency Response Division prepares for and responds to emergencies involving oil and hazardous chemical spills, nuclear power plant incidents, and other environmental crises.

### Can you help prevent spills?

Most spills are accident-based, although occasionally a spill occurs

when a tank is filled too close to the top, then travels through warmer temperatures that cause the liquid inside to bubble out. As a driver out there on the highway, you might try to put yourself in the shoes of the tanker truck driver, suggested Yetter.

"It's different when you're driving as your career, rather than to get from one spot to another," he reflected. "Drivers and businesses that ship hazardous materials are subject to many, many regulations and most have to do with safety."

### Detective work

Serving on a hazmat response sometimes involves solving a mystery on the spot. On one call, the Anne Arundel

Special Operations Team assisted Fort Meade with a spill in a recycling center. "The week prior, they had a household hazardous collection drive, and one of the barrels received chemicals that weren't compatible," recalled Yetter. "When the recycling center staff came in on Monday, that barrel had ruptured."

After evacuating the building, response crews went to work with instruments plus recorded data of recycle drop-offs to determine the barrel contained drain cleaner and fertilizer. They had to remove the barrel with a forklift and seal it in a drum. "A little bit of detective work required a lot of information," said Yetter. "It ended up being an eight-hour cleanup operation."

### Getting into special operations

To have a career in special operations, it helps to have a desire to learn and a curiosity about what may be out there.

"We train every shift on something, whether it's new material or practicing responses we already know," said Yetter. "It also helps to keep your fitness level up because some calls get very long and some get physically demanding."

### 100 years ago...

One of the most famous spills in history occurred in 1919, when a 58-foot-tall tank of molasses burst in downtown Boston, unleashing 2.2 million gallons of sticky syrup on a low-lying area of Commercial Street. A 30-foot wave of viscous molasses tore through the neighborhoods at 35 mph, leaving 21 people dead and 150 injured.

