

# THE BALTIMORE TIMES

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## Delegate Adrienne Jones Continues to Write 'Herstory'

### First African American Speaker Pro Tem receives House's Highest Award



Speaker Pro Tem Adrienne A. Jones accepts the Casper R. Taylor Founder's Award from House Speaker Michael Busch. The award recognizes House Delegates who serve with integrity and a focus on public service, and is the highest award given to sitting House members. "I don't do things to be honored. I do things because it's the right thing to do," said Jones. "My emphasis has always been to do what's best for those in the 10th Legislative District who have sent me to Annapolis to serve." (See article on page 8) Courtesy Photo

# Free family-friendly events set for Harriet Tubman Day

Dorchester County, Md.— In celebration of Harriet Tubman Day on Sunday, March 10, 2019, the Harriet Tubman Underground Railroad State Park and Visitor Center invites the public to free, family-friendly programs. The park, located in Dorchester County, marks its second anniversary on this Harriet Tubman Day, a national observance with special significance in Maryland.

Beginning at 10 a.m., the park's expert staff and special guests will lead hourly programs to honor the life and legacy of Maryland native Harriet Tubman and the struggle for freedom that she embodied. "Symbolism in Harriet; Symbolism in Me" begins at 10 a.m. The entire park, beginning with the life-sized bust of Harriet Tubman, was designed with meaning at every turn. Visitors can create their own piece of art while learning about the hidden symbolism of the park and visitors center.

"Behind the Scenes of Harriet Tubman: Soldier of Freedom" begins at 11 a.m. Actor B. Cherie Patterson will share her preparation process to become Harriet

Tubman in the upcoming orientation film "Harriet Tubman: Soldier of Freedom."

At noon in the research library, a ranger will share stories of Minty— Harriet Tubman's childhood name— during her youth and time on the Underground Railroad.

At 1 p.m., writer and producer Rona Kobbell and Smithville native Keith Cornish will show their film "Smithville," a story of this small town, and will discuss the importance of community preservation.

At 2 p.m., visitors can learn how to play the board game Mancala, an ancient game of strategy that takes a minute to learn and a lifetime to master.

The celebration will conclude with a 3 p.m. program, "The View North," featuring architectural firm GWWO Inc.'s story-based design approach to the Visitor Center.

The Harriet Tubman Underground Railroad State Park and Visitor Center entering its third year of operation on March 10, 2019 has hosted hundreds of thousands of visitors from 70 countries and territories and all 50 states. This state-of-the-art, green facility is man-



*The Harriet Tubman Underground Railroad State Park located in Dorchester County will mark its second anniversary on this Harriet Tubman Day, a national observance with special significance in Maryland. Many free, family-friendly activities are planned at the park in celebration of Harriet Tubman Day on Sunday, March 10, 2019. (Above) Mural of Harriet Tubman*

*Courtesy of Maryland Department of Natural Resources*

aged in partnership with the National Park Service.

The Harriet Tubman Underground Railroad State Park is located at 4068 Golden Hill Road, Chrich Creek in Dorchester County, Maryland. The facil-

ity and park is open daily from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. and houses an exhibit hall, immersive displays, a museum store and an information desk. For more information, visit: [dnr.maryland.gov/publiclands/pages/eastern/tubman](http://dnr.maryland.gov/publiclands/pages/eastern/tubman).

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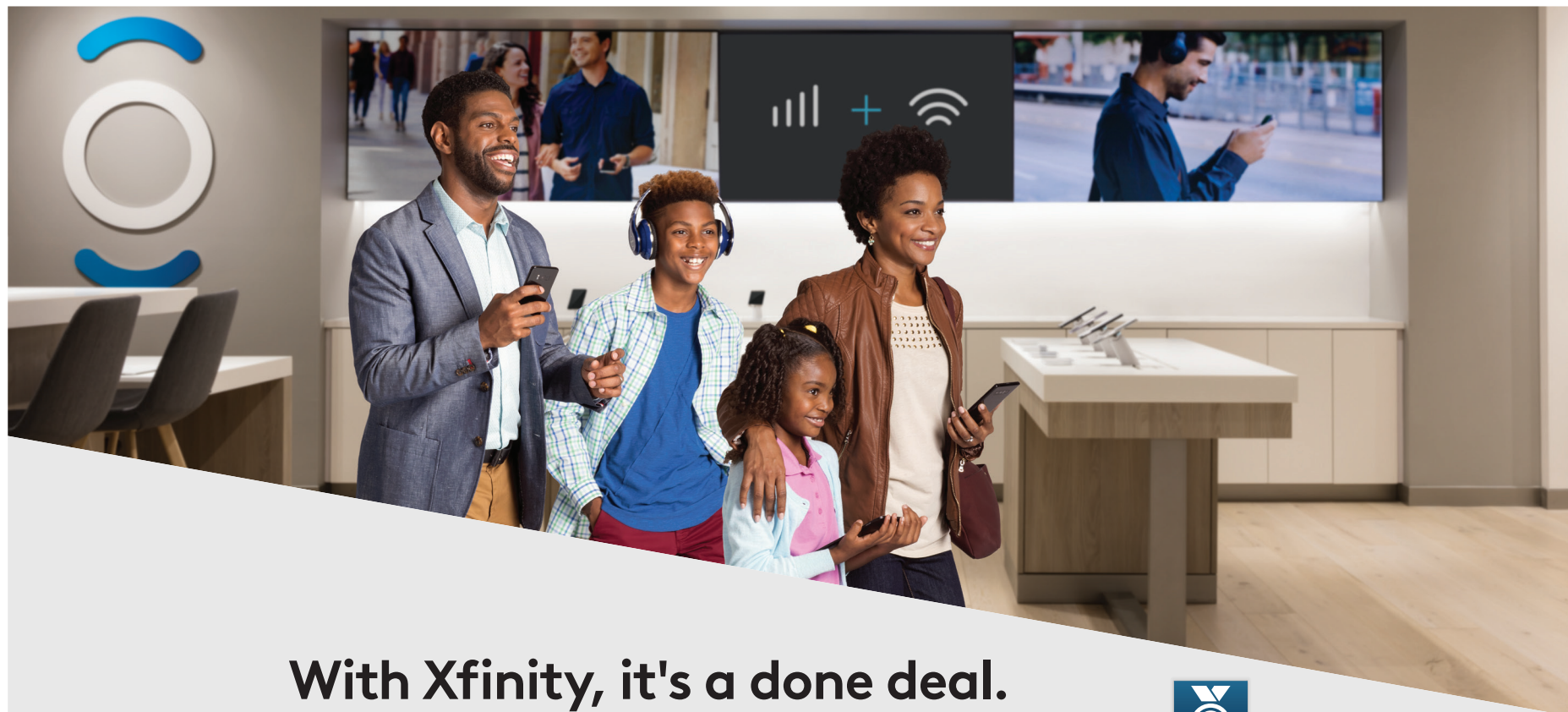
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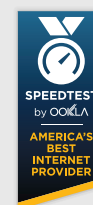
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# Guest Editorials/Commentary

## New Baltimore City Health Commissioner takes over this month

"We are fortunate to have attracted a candidate of Dr. [Letitia] Dzirasa's caliber and broad experience to advance our agenda to improve the health prospects of all Baltimore residents," Mayor Catherine Pugh announced as she introduced Baltimore's newest city Health Commissioner.

Dr. Letitia Dzirasa will take over the nation's oldest continuously-operating municipal health department this month, established in 1793, overseeing a department of 800-plus employees and a \$150 million annual budget.

Dr. Dzirasa, a pediatrician by training, earned her doctorate of medicine from Meharry Medical College in Tennessee and did her residency at Johns Hopkins School of Medicine. Most recently she worked as "health innovation officer" at a Baltimore-based software company, Fearless Solutions, which she founded with her husband, Delali. Dzirasa was formerly director of the Baltimore Medical System. As a pediatric specialist, her expertise will well serve Baltimore's 130,000 youth under 18.

Dr. Dzirasa's leadership role at the Baltimore Medical System was a precursor to her elevation to lead the Health Department. During her tenure, the doctor oversaw a substantial health and medical organization that employed 350 personnel and serviced more than 45,000 patients.

The Baltimore Medical System morphed from four existing City Health Department clinics in East Baltimore in 1984, transferred to the community-based, independent non-profit System's management, which has since grown to six locations.

Designated as a school-based community health provider since 1987, Dr. Dzirasa, in her former post, administered services to eight public schools, elementary through high school, across seven city zip codes.

The Baltimore City Health Department has established behavioral health as its number one priority with the focus on attacking the Opioid epidemic. Baltimore has arguably the highest rate of heroin use and overdoses in the country, exacerbated by Fentanyl, and outpaces murder as a cause of annual deaths in the city.

Dr. Dzirasa faces one of the most challenging caseloads of any big city health department. Here is a snapshot of municipal health and health-related crises awaiting the new commissioner when she assumes office this month:

- 30 percent of children in Baltimore have Adverse Childhood Experience (ACE) scores of 2 or more, meaning that they have experienced more than two incidences of events such as domestic violence, living with someone with an alcohol/drug problem, the death of a parent, or being a victim/witness of neighborhood violence
  - Leading causes of death in Baltimore City are heart disease, cancer, stroke, accidents, and chronic lower respiratory diseases
  - Life expectancy differs by up to 20 years between city neighborhoods
  - Baltimore's HIV diagnosis rate is more than twice that of the state—57.93 versus 24.64 per 100,000 residents
  - African Americans constitute 63 percent of the City's population but account for more than 83 percent of those living with HIV in the City
  - One in three high school students is either obese or overweight
  - Less than half of middle school students have access to breakfast on a daily basis
  - Asthma-induced emergency department (ED) visit rate is three times the state rate
  - 12.3 percent of babies born in the city are low birthweight, compared to the national average of 8 percent
  - 23 percent of adults living in Baltimore are current smokers, compared to a state average of 15 percent
  - 11 percent of Baltimore City residents (aged 12 or older) are estimated to abuse and/or be dependent on illicit drugs or alcohol
  - There are approximately 20,000 active heroin users in Baltimore City
- Dr. Dzirasa takes over as Baltimore City Health Commissioner from Dr. Leana Wen, who left this post to become president of the Planned Parenthood Federation of America.



## Community Affairs

### BCPL collecting new, gently used formalwear for "Prom Closet" giveaway event

Baltimore County, Md.— The Baltimore County Public Library is accepting donations of formalwear for "Prom Closet," a one-day event where teens can take dress clothes home for free. The goal of this event is to get prom clothes into the hands of high school students who may otherwise not be able to afford to attend their end-of-year dances.

Gently used dresses of all sizes, along with suits, dress shirts, ties, shoes and other accessories are being accepted.

The branches will accept donations through March 22, 2019.

Prom Closet will be held on Saturday, April 13, 2019 from 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. at



the Owings Mills Branch. Teens will be able to try on clothing and leave with one free ensemble.

Donations can be dropped off at all 19 Baltimore County Public Library branches. Each location has a bin on display with "Prom Closet" signage.

For a list of all locations, visit: [www.bcpl.info/locations/index.html](http://www.bcpl.info/locations/index.html).

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## *Pseudo tough guys can't rattle calm collected Cummings*

By Regi Taylor

Kenan Thompson is a world-class professional funny man. The longest serving cast member of 45-year-old Saturday Night Live is a proven comedic quantity with the awards, credits and pay grade to prove it.

However, despite his best attempts, Thompson struggled to get more than a grin or chuckle from viewers during last Saturday's show when he labored to convincingly channel Baltimore Congressman Elijah Cummings as a caricature.

The Saturday Night Live skit featured Representative Cummings, chairman of the House Oversight Committee, presiding over the hearing of President Donald Trump's former lawyer and "fixer," Michael Cohen.

Although Thompson's superb makeup job uncannily transformed him into Cummings visually, he could not quite transcend the congressman's serious, commanding demeanor into raw humor.

Thompson's ability to mimic some of the great contemporary pop-culture char-

acters of our time in his 15-year SNL career precedes him, but when the subject was Elijah E. Cummings of Baltimore the complexity, intensity, and depth of this particular man overshadowed attempts to portray him as the butt of lighthearted humor.

Despite a couple of amusing wisecracks from Kenan's Cummings persona, anyone familiar with the congressman's actual countenance

Although Congressman Cummings' hearing was conducted by-the-book without partisan grandstanding or malice, it was equally clear he was no pushover. Cummings was carefully chosen for this committee chairmanship, leapfrogging over another Democrat who exceeded his seniority on Oversight, to command the chair.

New York Rep. Carolyn Maloney with three years congressional seniority over

Cummings reverent, judicious demeanor could not be upstaged even by a skillful comic like Thompson.

For these reasons it should be no surprise that while Cummings overall performance as the hearing's chair was given plaudits because he maintained decorum and civility, it was his closing remarks that garnered the most praise.

Rep. Cummings never lost sight of the big picture. He advised the hearing that this too shall pass. That the country must pull together to overcome the current national political crisis in a way that assures Democracy will prevail intact. Cummings refrain, "We're better than that!" as Americans, strongly reverberated throughout the media and political circles.

Despite the seemingly no holds barred disrespect and the demeaning conduct Democrats suffered at the hands of Republicans these last two years while the GOP controlled the House, this very first oversight hearing under Democratic control was run with fairness, evenhandedness and congeniality under Elijah Cummings leadership.

Baltimore voters who have sent Elijah Cummings to Capitol Hill 12 times know the measure of the man. Yes, he smiles. He has a keen sense of humor and a very hearty laugh. However, when he presents legislation, votes on a bill or gavels his committee into session, he is all business.

In fact, the Center for Effective Lawmaking (CEL), just last week ranked Congressman Elijah E. Cummings second for effectiveness among all House Democratic lawmakers, 196 members, for the 115th Congress (2017 - 2018 session).

*Regi Taylor is a West Baltimore native. The married father of four is an artist, writer and media professional specializing in political history.*

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***“Despite Kenan Thompson's best effort, the Elijah Cummings who coolly resisted and prevailed over the Republican's political sleight-of-hand at the beginning of the Cohen hearing, and subsequent attempts to coerce him, found its way into Saturday night's comedy sketch.”***

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would clearly recognize the comedian's relatively no-nonsense exhibition being more comparable to the actual committee chairman who wielded authority at the outset of last Wednesday's televised Capitol Hill proceeding.

Republican Oversight Committee member, Rep. Mark Meadows of North Carolina, leader of the conservative House Freedom Caucus, tried an abrupt bullying tactic to postpone the Cohen hearing before it started, followed-up with aggressive maneuvering by Ohio Rep. Jim Jordan, Ranking Republican member, in an apparently scripted tough-guy intimidation ruse that backfired when street-savvy Cummings, quickly recognizing an attempt to punk him, called for a procedural vote that shot down the Republican's weak pseudo-thug strategy without a second thought— and without losing his Baltimore cool.

Cummings campaigned for the top spot with the support of the immediate past Democratic chair, Edolphus Towns, also from New York.

Media consensus suggests that congressional leadership chose Cummings in 2011, as a stronger counter against powerful incoming Republican oversight chair, Darryl Issa of California, whom it was believed would attempt to wreak partisan havoc on the Obama Administration.

Despite Kenan Thompson's best effort, the Elijah Cummings who coolly resisted and prevailed over the Republican's political sleight-of-hand at the beginning of the Cohen hearing, and subsequent attempts to coerce him, found its way into Saturday night's comedy sketch.

A champion of the moral principles of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., which were honed and fortified by his Apostolic preacher-father's religious teachings,

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**Phone: 410-366-3900- Fax 410-243-1627  
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# Baltimore State's Attorney explains new policy at community forum

By *Demetrius Dillard*

Baltimore City State's Attorney Marilyn Mosby, along with community partners and local public officials, hosted a community forum to educate the public about the new Marijuana Prosecution Policy and to discuss the impact of marijuana convictions on the black community in particular, as well as to provide an update regarding the policy implementation and the State's Attorney's Office's work in Annapolis.

"Court In The Community: Rethinking Marijuana Prosecutions" forum held at Baltimore City Community College on February 27, 2019 in the campus's Fine Arts Auditorium was fashioned to yield spirited, informative exchange about the much-needed policy change drafted by Mosby.

"We learned through extensive research that prosecuting marijuana cases has no public safety value, erodes public trust and is a costly and counterproductive use of limited resources," Mosby said in a statement. "For these reasons, I have announced that my office would no longer prosecute marijuana possession cases regardless of weight or an individual's criminal history."

However, the State's Attorney's Office will still prosecute possession of marijuana with intent to distribute if there is overwhelming evidence.

Mosby opened the evening by reiterating her policy (introduced on January 29, 2019), adding that first-time drug offenders will have the chance to be admitted to the Aim to B'More program, an alternative to incarceration for low-level felony drug offenders.

After providing a descriptive overview of her policy and presenting the State's Attorney's 2019 Legislative Agenda, Mosby introduced the panel: Michael Collins, director of the Office of National Affairs of The Drug Policy Alliance; Susan Francis, deputy director of the Maryland Volunteer Lawyers Service; Sonia Kumar, staff attorney, ACLU of Maryland; Olivia Naugle, legislative coordinator for the Marijuana Policy Project; Chief Deputy State's Attorney Michael Schatzow; and Caryn



*Baltimore City State's Attorney Marilyn Mosby (at podium) hosted a community forum on February 22, 2019, in an effort to inform the public about the new Marijuana Prosecution Policy with six panelists (left to right) Chief Deputy State's Attorney Michael Schatzow; Caryn York, executive director, Job Opportunities Task Force; Olivia Naugle, legislative coordinator for the Marijuana Policy Project; Sonia Kumar, staff attorney, ACLU of Maryland; Susan Francis, deputy director, Maryland Volunteer Lawyers Service; and Michael Collins, director, Office of National Affairs of The Drug Policy Alliance.*

**Photo by Demetrius Dillard**

York, executive director, Job Opportunities Task Force.

The panelists, all of whom have backgrounds in social justice and community activism explained why Mosby's new Marijuana Prosecution Policy is so important to the Baltimore community because in the past it appeared that there was "one set of laws for black residents and another set for white residents."

The panel pointed out that the racially biased enforcement of laws and petty drug charges have led to barriers for employment, housing and education, among other opportunities.

The audience had the opportunity to participate in the discussion during the question and answer portion of the forum, which followed the panel discussion.

Other concerns raised during the community forum included public health, public safety, mental health, overdose treatment, policy reform, the job industry, cannabis business industry, racist policing and imminent marijuana legalization in Maryland.

Past forums— held on a quarterly basis over the past four years— covered

topics such as domestic violence, rebounding from a criminal conviction and sexual assault. They were geared to helping the community to break down barriers of distrust and explaining the intricacies of the criminal justice system, according to Mosby.

"We wanted to really be able to ensure that people really understood what the policy was. There was some confusion in light of the fact that the police department indicated that they were still going to arrest people, but I'm not going to be prosecuting people," Mosby said following the event. "I think it was really important for us to make that distinction and clarification for folks, as well as to understand the collateral consequences and the role that the community plays."

More than half of the Maryland state prison population is comprised of individuals charged with nonviolent drug offenses, according to panelist Caryn York, executive director, Job Opportunities Task Force.

"I am here because we are so reliant on the criminal justice system to address drug use and possession, it's now become a workforce challenge," said

York, explaining how communities have suffered hindrances to employment due to being over policed and underserved. "The significance [of today's forum] is that we're talking about these issues in a global manner, it's not so nuanced. We're actually talking about how we can change it and not keep things the same."

Mosby, who assumed office in January 2015 says the primary purpose of the Court in the Community forum was to gain the trust of the community.

"One of the things that we attempt to do is that we have to rebuild the trust of the community. We rely on the community. And so when you have discriminatory enforcement of certain laws, and you have laws that are applicable to white folks that are different from black folks, all that does is exacerbate distrust," Mosby said. "What we're attempting to do is to say 'we have one standard of justice in the city of Baltimore' and if the police department are going to enforce laws discriminatorily, that's something that we, as the State's Attorney's Office, will not be complicit with."

# Morgan State offensive lineman selected to participate in NFL Combine

By Tyler Hamilton

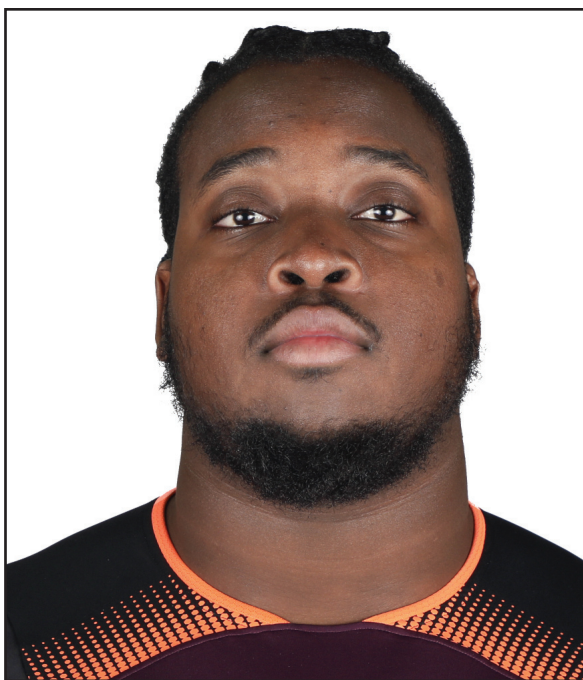
Various college players make the trip to Indianapolis every year for the NFL Combine. Most fans are well aware of the prospects from schools like Notre Dame and Alabama but there are also a handful of lesser-known prospects as well. Morgan State offensive lineman Joshua Miles, a Western Tech (Baltimore) grad was one of them.

Miles, a standout left tackle who dominated the Mid-Eastern Athletic Conference (MEAC) enough to become the first player in Morgan State University's history to compete in the East-West Shrine game. The scouts are well aware of his talent, which led to him being selected to participate in the Combine.

While well-known prospects stood at podiums during media availability, Miles sat among a group of players at tables waiting to be interviewed. It seemed like an uncomfortable situation but being able to thrive in those situations is what Miles feels will make him successful as a pro, even if he is playing a new position.

"I feel comfortable in awkward situations. I feel like I can excel where maybe others can't," Miles said at the Combine. "It's a matter of mindset. I am confident about my talent and who I am, and I will just go out there and play my game."

Coming from a smaller school, Miles says he has a



Standout left tackle Joshua Miles from Morgan State University dominated the Mid-Eastern Athletic Conference (MEAC) enough to become the first player in Morgan's history to compete in the East-West Shrine game. Courtesy Photo/NFL.com

chip on his shoulder. The mild-mannered giant (6' 6" and 315 pounds) says the chip makes it easy for him to flip the switch and become the aggressive person he has to be to excel on the football field. There is a certain degree of pride that Miles has from playing at Morgan State.

"HBCU football has so much talent. The MEAC is a hotbed for that. We've pumped out several big names over the last few years. Darius Leonard was an All-Pro. Tarik Cohen also an All-Pro. There are really talented guys, and the conference has always been competitive. There's a lot of pride playing black college football."

The measurables worked out in Miles' favor. His 84" wingspan along with his 6' 6" height shows his length. The 36-inch vertical and nine-foot broad jump shows his explosiveness. Pair that with the athleticism that he developed from playing assorted sports growing up, and you have a prospect that coaches are anxious to get their hands on.

Miles is projected to be a guard in the NFL but offers value as a tackle as well. Growing up on Baltimore, he is a long-time fan of the Ravens and lists Jonathan Odgen as one of his favorite players. Who knows, maybe his versatility and athleticism could lead him to follow in Odgen's footsteps and put on a Baltimore Ravens jersey in the pros.

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## *Delegate Adrienne Jones Continues to Write ‘Herstory’*

# First African American Speaker Pro Tem receives House’s Highest Award

By Ursula V. Battle

Speaker Pro Tem Adrienne A. Jones was recently presented with the Casper R. Taylor Jr. Founder’s Award. The award is given to sitting members of the House Delegates who serve with integrity and a focus on public service. It is the highest award given to a member of the House, and is named after Casper R. Taylor Jr., who served as Speaker of the Maryland House of Delegates from 1994–2003.

“I am humbled and honored to be the recipient of this award,” said Delegate Jones, noting Taylor’s effectiveness as House Speaker. “My focus has always been public service. I consider myself an elected official, and my emphasis has always been to do what’s best for those in the 10th Legislative District who have sent me to Annapolis to serve.

“I was quite surprised to receive the award. I don’t do things to be honored. I do things because it’s the right thing to do. But it’s nice when others recognize you for the work that you do.”

Delegate Jones has been a member of the Maryland General Assembly since 1997, representing the 10th Legislative District of Baltimore County. On January 9, 2019, she was once again unanimously elected by the full House of Delegates to serve as Speaker Pro Tem. This is the 17th time she has been selected to serve in this position.

Delegate Jones holds the distinction of being the first African American woman to serve as Speaker Pro Tem in the Maryland House of Delegates. There are 12 women in the country who serve as Speaker Pro Tem, and she is the longest serving woman in a State House Leadership position in the country.

“I became a delegate when Joan Neverdon Parker passed away in 1997,” recalled Delegate Jones. “I was encouraged to run for the remainder of her term. Prior to running for the seat, I served on several committees and helped out on political campaigns. Quite frankly, when I became a delegate, there were not many African American



*Speaker Pro Tem Adrienne A. Jones, House of Delegates*

women— there were mostly white males.”

She added, “I didn’t think it would be the arena for me. I would see white males get up on the House Floor, and think of the James Brown song, ‘Talking Loud and Saying Nothing.’”

But a shift in political power would lead to a phone call.

“Bob Ehrlich would become the first Republican governor in 30 years, and Casper R. Taylor Jr. lost his seat as

Speaker of the House of Delegates,” she said. “Michael Busch would become Speaker. He called me on November 20, 2002 at 8:30 p.m.— which was on my birthday, to ask if I would serve as Speaker Pro Tem. I told him I would do it.”

She added with a smile, “There was a trust factor Michael Busch had in me. I didn’t serve on Michael Busch’s committee, but he was observing me. I tell young people all the time, you never

know who is observing you, and you never know when circumstances for opportunity will present themselves.”

Speaker Pro Tem Jones serves on the House Appropriations Committee, and is Chair of the Capital Budget and Education and Economic Development Subcommittees. She serves as the House Chair of the Joint Committee on Fair Practices and Personnel Oversight, and is a member of the Spending Affordability Committee, Legislative Policy Committee, House Rules and Executive Nominations Committee, and the past Chair of the Joint Committee on Legislative Ethics. She is also a member of the Commission on Innovation and Excellence in Education and the 21st Century School Facilities Commission. She is also the Founder of the Annual Baltimore County African American Cultural Festival, which is now in its 21st year.

“I wear many hats,” she said. “In addition to being Speaker Pro Tem, I’m going to be honest and work with you. I’m not going to say something and do something else. I want everyone to be successful.”

Speaker Pro Tem Jones was born in Coddensville, Maryland, a historic African American community located near Arbutus in Southwest Baltimore County. She attended Baltimore County Public Schools and received her Bachelor of Arts Degree in Psychology from the University of Maryland Baltimore County (UMBC) in 1976. She attended The National Security Seminar, U.S. Army War College in 2007. In 2008, she received an Honorary Doctor of Law Degree from Goucher College in Towson, Maryland.

The successful leader is the mother of two adult sons and grandmother of two grandchildren, Jalen and Janelle Jones.

“I want to make sure that no matter what profession you are in, you are doing something in which you are giving back,” said Delegate Jones. “It’s not about you. It’s about people who can use the talents you have. You get rewarded three-fold in terms of making a difference in someone else’s life.”



# Youth Advocate Program Helps Teens with Education and Employment

By Stacy M. Brown

Cheers and loud applause greeted ten young Baltimore men who walked across the stage and accepted graduation certificates.

It was not a typical graduation, but the Feb. 28 ceremony at Coppin State University still was special.

The graduates were ten youth who just one year ago faced the prospect of jail. Instead, they're at home, in their communities going to school and work.

The graduation recognized their completion of YAWORX, a new tool in the resource kit developed by Youth Advocate Programs (YAP), Inc., a Maryland Department of Juvenile Services community-based alternative to youth incarceration.

Jasper, 18, the ceremony's keynote speaker, said he had been in and out of locked facilities prior to enrolling in YAP.

"Going back to school," Jasper said, explaining what he's doing now. "I'm in college," he said.

Another graduate, Miguel, said the program changed his life.

"It was a good experience for me, it helped to keep me out of trouble, to keep my mind right and to learn to work on the outside," he said, adding that he also learned how to wake up in a timely manner and maintain a daily routine.

The men worked with YAP's Advocate-mentors who are trained to help them identify and realize their strengths while connecting them and their families with accessible resources and tools that help firm their foundation.

Baltimore counts among the 100 communities in 23 states and the District of Columbia that YAP serves.

YAP Advocate Tim Rich helped Jasper apply for a learner's permit and supported him as he prepared for his GED exam.

Rich and his YAP colleagues also walked Jasper through his community college application process and job search.

Through YAPWORX, Jasper got a job as a DJS Green Cadet and later, in security, where he leans on his YAP experi-



*L-r: Anthony, Jasper, Miguel and Clifton are graduates of YAP, Inc.*  
Photo credit: Youth Advocate Programs (YAP), Inc.

ence to deescalate potentially confrontational situations with compassion and positive encouragement.

Miguel was selected for a Hispanic Advocates project to apply his bilingual translation skills to support non-English speaking families during the Baltimore City Public Schools Middle School High School Choice Fair in December 2018. He teamed with interpreters of Arabic, Nepali, French and Spanish languages and continues to develop his interpreting skills with his eye on employment with the Hispanic Advocates staff.

"Many young people who've been involved in the justice system are facing substance abuse, mental health and trauma-related issues that if not addressed and treated properly make it extremely difficult for them to complete job readiness program," said YAP Regional Director Craig Jernigan.

"YAP's uniqueness is how it builds relationships with employers, recognizing that some are hesitant to hire these young people."

YAP has partnered for 44 years with youth justice and social services systems to give communities safe, effective, economical institutional placement alternatives.

Baltimore YAPWORX youth work in

ables businesses to provide jobs while YAP serves as employer. It also makes it possible for neighborhood businesses like barbershops, startup entrepreneurs, print shops, and others to participate in YAPWORX.

"Through these partnerships, YAP provides individualized, relevant career information and experiential learn-work activities and helps youth invest in their social capital to make real-world-work connections," said Baltimore YAPWORX/Workforce Coordinator RaEmaa Hill.

"Developing these connections is imperative, as it promotes knowledge exchange and spurs the discovery of mutual interests that support communities."

Towson-based cyber security company Reasonable Tech owner James Mitchell, 39, worked for 15 years at Comcast and Verizon before being laid off in 2002.

Building his business was difficult as he struggled with limited income from small contracts while battling a heart condition and raising three children.

"Through those challenges, I learned to persevere," he said.

Today, he has three offices, providing basic IT services, security, routing and switching, and tech training. Mitchell considers it his responsibility to provide opportunities to YAPWORX participants, saying it builds Baltimore City communities from the inside out.

"The first YAPWORX kid who worked for me told me when he met me at my office, he wasn't expecting me, an African-American man, to be the owner. He relaxed and wanted to know everything about the business.

"It almost made me tear up. It makes me feel great," Mitchell said. "I showed him around; told him this place was completely empty when I rented it. I told him I wired this place up. He couldn't believe it. He said, 'are you serious?' I told him never let anybody tell you that you can't do something. When YAP Supported Work ends for these kids, if they decide technology is what they want, I'll hire them and pay them as my own employees."



*Towson-based cyber security company Reasonable Tech owner James Mitchell considers it his responsibility to provide opportunities to YAPWORX participants.*

hospitality and food service, on DJS Green Cadets maintenance crews, and in positions with Baltimore Tree Trust (arborists); Reasonable Tech Solutions (cybersecurity); Michael & Sons (HVAC); Healthy People Juice Bar; and The Food Project (manufacturing and produce).

The YAP Supported Work program en-

# Rambling Rose

**Gospel Series comes to Hollywood  
Casino, Charlestown Races**



*Rosa Pryor Trusty*

Hello everyone, I want to first thank everyone, all my friends, my Facebook family, “Rambling Rose” fans, and all my musicians for the emails, the cards, condolences, gifts and phone calls relating to the passing of my brother, Joseph Pryor. You have helped so much in my loss. I want to especially thank Greg Hatza and Marshall Booze who played at the funeral services; and Rev. Henry Turner for presiding over the service. I also want to thank my Eastern Star Chapter, “Trinity No5 at Prince Hall Masons for the beautiful plant. You all are a part of my family.

For the first time ever, Hollywood Casino in Charlestown, Virginia is showcasing a “Gospel Series” featuring some of the top gospel artists in the country. I know some of you are in pure shock, saying— “What!; Are you serious?; and What the hell!”— and I understand, but girlfriend, I am so excited about this! Yes, it’s true! The first of this series kicks off with one of my favorite gospel singers; Donnie McClurkin on Friday, March 8, 2019 at 9 p.m.; followed by Fred Hammond and Hezekiah Walker. Now, you all know that I am just loving this— to be able to enjoy a gospel show and play my slots too. Honey Child! I am in heaven!

One of my favorite spots in Baltimore when it comes to night clubs, the

Corinthian’s Lounge located 7107 Windsor Mill Road is hosting “Malibu Mondays” with free admission, “Happy Hour” from 3 p.m. until midnight, serving wings, clams and oysters; music by DJ Rico, soul food dinner specials and so much more. So check it out. There is no doubt in my mind that you will enjoy it so much, you will be going every Monday. Tell Carlos Hutchins I said hello.

For those of you who have been calling me about our Baltimore legendary jazz singer, Ethel Ennis-Arnette’s funeral services who passed away on February 17, 2019, I want you to know that there will not be a viewing or funeral services for her. A memorial service is in the planning stages by her husband and family and I will let you know as soon as they let me know the place, the date and the time. Ethel Ennis will be truly missed by folks all over the country and especially here in her hometown. Please keep her husband Earl, her brother Andy and the rest of her family in prayers.

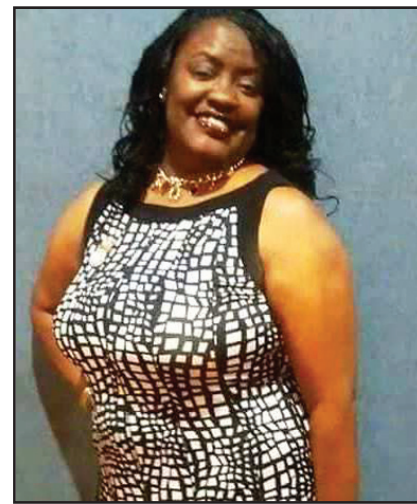
Well my dear friends, I am out of space and out of time, enjoy the rest of your week, but remember if you need me, call me at 410-833-9474 or email me with your photos, press releases, flyers, notes, etc to rosapryor@aol.com. UNTIL THE NEXT TIME, I’M MUSICALLY YOURS.



*Donnie McClurkin, one of the top selling gospel music artists selling over 12 million CDs world-wide and is known as the tall raspy tenor who commands your attention with his powerful sounding vocals will be performing at the Hollywood Casino at Charles Town Races on Friday, March 8, 2019 at 9 p.m.*



*Baltimore’s own and world renowned saxophonist, Gary Thomas “The Divide” will be performing at the “An die Musik Live!” located 409 N. Charles Street on Saturday, March 9, 2019. For more information, call 410-385-2638.*



*Renowned comedian Mrs. Maybelle hosts the 12th Annual Full Figured Fashion Show on Saturday, March 16, 2019 from 5 p.m. to 9 p.m. at the Forest Park Senior Center located at 4801 Liberty Heights Avenue in Baltimore. The event is BYOB! There will be lite fare. For more information, call 443-226-8895.*



*Jazz Expressways Foundation features Baltimore’s own Brad Collins, internationally known saxophonist and his band at this year’s Jazz/Blues Breakfast fundraiser show on Saturday, March 8, 2019 at the Forest Park Senior Center, 4801 Liberty Heights Avenue on Saturday, March 9th from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. For tickets information, call 410-833-9474.*

*Families that pray together also party together! The Ridgley family celebrates their father Reverend Jo-Jo Ridgley Thomas’s birthday. The Ridgley children: Deborah Waters; Tee Sheffield; Carla Corbett; Anton Holt Sr.; and Craig Ridgley.*

# Method Man & Redman Show Review: An Onstage Perspective

By Imani Wj Wright

As the saying goes, there are always two sides to every story. And yeah, I have to say that's pretty true because I was about to really experience that for the first time being a performer and a reviewer of the same show.

I've always been heavily involved in music. My involvement with music hasn't just been from a standpoint of listening and critiquing, but also the culture, style, and idiosyncrasies that come along with each artist and genre.

On Friday, February 22, 2019, my band SwanoDown and I had the opportunity to be on the same bill as hip hop legends Method Man & Redman at Ram's Head Live! as part of One Koast Entertainment's Frozen Harbor Music Festival.

Ram's Head is one of the most respected venues on the East Coast and one of my career goals was to perform there, and now I've had that chance.

Recently, I saw Mos Def, H.E.R., and Jorja Smith on that same exact stage.

Even though one my dreams came true, there is one aspect of the dream that wasn't in the original plan—being an entertainment writer. I was in a unique situation because I had to focus on our band's performance while maintaining the mindset of a critic. This ended up being very beneficial because everything that I'd critiqued in the past prompted me to pay attention our band's performance. This included the lighting, set-up and most importantly, the SOUND.

After long hours of preparation, it was finally time for us to perform. Everything went as planned, and the audience seemed to truly enjoy themselves.

Once our set was complete and we headed backstage and it suddenly hit me that I wouldn't be having a typical day



(Left) Method Man (Right) Redman with Imani Wj Wright. Imani and his band SwanoDown were on the same bill as hip hop legends Method Man & Redman at Ram's Head Live! on Friday, February 22, 2019. Photos by Madeline McQuillan

at the office. For every live concert that I have reviewed, my point of view was always from in front of the artists, the same place that the rest of the audience views the show.

The vibe and anticipation waiting for the headlining act to appear is completely different from behind the scenes. In all honesty, the feeling may even be a bit more intense. Instead of just waiting to see the performers simply hit the stage, you're waiting to see their dressing room door open and see them make their way into the spotlight.

Method Man walked to the stage in a heavy navy blue winter coat with white fur. His confidence could be felt with every Staten Island bop he took closer to the forefront. His control and demand of the venue could be felt even before he uttered a single word. All eyes were on him and an immense level of respect rose throughout the backstage hallway.

Photographers began to capture pre-show moments that are unique to every

individual performance and finally it was show time! The voices of about one thousand people erupted exuberantly as they saw the legendary duo together.

I was on stage during the entire hour and a half set and there was never a dull moment. Musically and visually, Redman and Method Man kept the crowd engaged. They performed Wu-Tang classics, including: "C.R.E.A.M.," "M-E-T-H-O-D Man," and "Shimmy Shimmy Ya."

What mostly impressed me about their set was the obvious preparation and rehearsal that had taken place between the two. Every move they made, and every word they spoke had some form of relevance to the show. There were even a few choreographed dance moves that came off very fluid and genuine. There were two DJs on the stage, one of them happened to be the creator of the iconic Wu-Tang "W."

During Method Man and Redman's "break," they ignited the DJs to flaunt

their swift and flashy turntable skills. Even though they were not the center of attention for a good five to eight minutes, the show's energy did not miss a beat. The stage was literally bouncing.

During the show, Method Man and Redman actually signed autographs, and Redman took it to a whole different level once the show ended. He hopped off the stage and began to engage with the audience for another 35-40 minutes. The jubilation and disbelief on the faces and in the eyes of the audience was incredible to see. From my vantage point on stage, it was beautifully organized chaos that seemed to have no end in sight and Redman was down for every minute of it.

It felt like one big happy family at the end of the night and nothing but love resonated throughout the building.

Follow Method Man on Instagram @methodmanofficial and Redman @redmangilla.

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NOTICE OF OPPORTUNITY FOR  
PUBLIC HEARING**

Baltimore City's Department of Transportation hereby notifies the general public and all other interested parties that a three-week period has been established during which they may request a public hearing on the Fiscal Year 2020 Annual Transportation Plan (ATP) grant application. The annual application requests \$2,000,000.00 for the Charm City Circulator's operation for the next fiscal year from the large Urban Operating Assistance project from the Maryland Transit Administration and Federal Transit Administration. This is an existing grant that will allow continued fixed transit services in and around the Central Business District of Baltimore City.

This three-week period will commence on **March 4, 2019** and end on **March 25, 2019** at 5:00 p.m. If requested, the Public Hearing on the above mentioned programs will be held on **April 2, 2019** starting at 5:00 p.m. and ending at 6:30 p.m., in Assembly Hall of the Baltimore War Memorial building, 101 North Gay Street, Baltimore, Maryland 21202.

The request for a public hearing must include your name, address, and if any organization or business name, reason (s) or issues of your request, and send to:

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The Housing Authority of the City of Hagerstown, Maryland, 35 W. Baltimore Street, Hagerstown, MD 21740 will receive bids from qualified, responsible roofing contractors until 2:00PM current time, Tuesday, March 26, 2019 for new roof replacement at Potomac Towers (North), 11 W. Baltimore Street, Hagerstown, MD 21740. Potomac Towers is a 326 unit, 14-story residential high-rise building. Anticipate award of contract to successful contractor by mid-April 2019. Construction period is sixty (60) calendar days. Actual construction start date will be established by mutual agreement between the owner and the contractor. Davis-Bacon wages for Washington County, Maryland and Liquidated Damages apply to this solicitation.

Electronic drawings and specifications are available upon request. Contact Debra Miller, Modernization Coordinator, at telephone 301-733-6911 Ext. 139 or email: [dmiller@hagerstownha.com](mailto:dmiller@hagerstownha.com) for contract documents.

Sean Griffith  
Contract Officer

E.E.O.

## March is Red Cross Month:

# Be a hero in your community

*Volunteer, give blood, learning lifesaving skills or donate to #help1family on American Red Cross Giving Day*

Baltimore— March is Red Cross Month, and the Greater Chesapeake Region of the humanitarian organization asks individuals to be a hero for families in Maryland, Delaware and Virginia by becoming a volunteer, learning lifesaving skills, giving blood or donating to #help1family on Red Cross Giving Day, March 27, 2019.

“During Red Cross Month, we are proud to recognize our volunteers who provide hope and urgent relief to families in need every day,” said American Red Cross Greater Chesapeake Region CEO Scott R. Salemme. “These heroes are our neighbors who give blood, save lives with skills like first aid and CPR, or provide care and comfort to families devastated by crises like home fires. We honor our volunteers and ask you to join them and make a difference.”

More than 75 years ago, March was first proclaimed Red Cross Month in 1943 by President Franklin D. Roosevelt to raise awareness of the organization and its humanitarian mission. All



U.S. presidents since Roosevelt have designated March as Red Cross Month to recognize how the American Red Cross helps people across the country and around the world through its workforce powered by more than 90 percent volunteers.

Every eight minutes in the U.S., the Red Cross connects with a family who has lost everything to a home fire or other disaster—the roof over their heads, their clothes, and their most cherished possessions. This past year was no exception—and the need continues today.

Last year, Red Cross volunteers helped millions of people reeling from a second consecutive year of record wildfires, hurricanes, tragic shootings and other large disasters across the country. More than 70 volunteer heroes from the Greater Chesapeake Region deployed 103 times, responding to deliver urgent relief and care in people's darkest hours in the aftermath of Hurricane Lane in Hawaii, Hurricane Florence in the Carolinas, Hurricane Michael in Alabama, Florida and Georgia, and Typhoon Yutu in Saipan. Following the effects of Hurricane Florence in Maryland/Delaware, more than 57 volunteer heroes worked around the clock to deliver urgent relief and care.

This winter, home fires continued to upend lives—when there's often an increased risk of home heating and cooking fires. Since last fall, local volunteers assisted more than 1,690 people, mostly affected by home fires in the region.

To learn more about how you can help, visit: [www.redcross.org/local/maryland-delaware.html](http://www.redcross.org/local/maryland-delaware.html).

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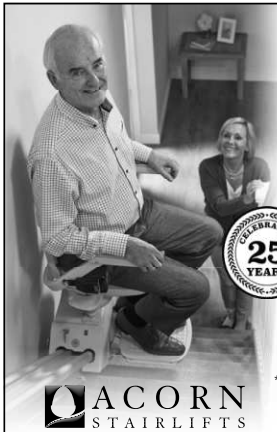
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