

Kids Idea Tank Seeking Baltimore Entrepreneurs



Kierra Perkins, a 13-year-old from Tennessee, took home first prize for her “Kandle” business. Kierra began her business, Kandles By Kierra,” at the age of 11 after making a “kandle” for her dad for Father’s Day. (See article on page 8) Courtesy Photo/Kids Idea Tank

UMMS Appoints System's First Chief Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Officer

Baltimore— The University of Maryland Medical System (UMMS) has recruited a physician with deep roots in addressing healthcare inequities over a career spanning nearly three decades, and lived experiences in inner city America, to serve as the System's first-ever Chief Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Officer (CDEIO).

Roderick K. King, MD, MPH will join UMMS this summer and will be tasked with working collaboratively across the System to develop a long-term roadmap for diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) that aligns with the System's strategic plan.

"One of the things that excites me most about this position is the kind of far-reaching impact my role could have on the health of people in the state of Maryland," said Dr. King. "In addition, because this role is one of the first of its kind in a large health care system, UMMS is at the forefront of leading a movement. I believe that increasingly, health care systems are recognizing the importance of a role like mine in their C-suite. We have an opportunity here to demonstrate measurable results in health improvements in diverse populations that can lead to the adoption of best practices nationwide. I have done a lot of work with hospitals, health plans and community-based organizations during my career and am encouraged that UMMS is making great strides to integrate strategies for diversity, equity and inclusion into hospital planning at the highest levels."

Dr. King currently serves as Chief



Dr. Roderick K. King joins the health system this summer to begin implementing a long-term roadmap addressing health inequities in communities across the state.

Courtesy Photo/UMMS

Executive Officer of the Florida Institute for Health Innovation and in multiple roles at the University of Miami Miller School of Medicine, where he is Senior Associate Dean of Diversity, Inclusion and Community Engagement; Director of the MD/MPH Program; and an associate professor in the Department of Public Health Sciences and the Department of Pediatrics. He also serves as an associate professor at the University of Miami Business School in the Department of Healthcare Management

and Policy. Dr. King will join UMMS this summer.

"With his breadth of experiences as a practicing clinician, a professor and an administrator at an academic medical institution, and in health policy with the federal government addressing underserved communities, Dr. King stood out among the candidates," said Mohan Suntha, MD, MBA, President and CEO of UMMS. "His personal experiences with diverse and underserved communities will be invaluable in leading our efforts at building individual, institutional and community excellence in health equity across the communities we serve."

Among Dr. King's responsibilities will be building organizational goals and fostering institutional change; integrating DEI work into the operations of the System and providing executive level guidance and direction to incorporating DEI best practices. He will also be charged with developing and executing a training and education strategy focused on increasing awareness, knowledge and skills of UMMS staff for diversity, equity and inclusion.

"My passion for this work stems from my lived experiences," said Dr. King, a native of Brooklyn, NY. "I grew up in the inner-city, at a time when youth violence and health issues, particularly in communities of color, were a huge challenge." Dr. King's father was a

primary care physician in Brooklyn for more than four decades, caring for the underserved and addressing issues of health inequalities his patients experienced when treated at larger health systems.

"The issues around access to care and having providers as a trusted messenger have been around for decades," Dr. King added, noting the COVID-19 pandemic has "lifted up the rock so we can see all of the inequalities that exist and that we as a health system need to tackle if we are going to truly be committed to improving the health of the people and communities we serve."

Dr. King said among his biggest challenges, will be tackling issues of health inequality in communities and counties across the UMMS footprint that is very different. "The key will be assessing what the equity and diversity issues are in each of the System's service areas and identifying strategies unique to each in order to move the needle on addressing these health inequalities and optimizing health and wellness."

"My experience is that if you've seen one community, you've seen one community," Dr. King added. "If you are truly going to tackle equity and diversity and effect long-standing change, you have to address the challenges and problems that are unique to each geographic area."

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Guest Editorials/Commentary

Paul Robeson, a renaissance man of the twentieth century

By Dr. Ken Morgan

Paul Robeson's birthday, (April 9, 1898) ignites a unique spirit in me. Robeson's name remains underground with a black mark through it in the annals of history even today.

Robeson's Somerville High School prowess in Princeton provided an inkling of why he now characterizes the moniker as the twentieth-century Renaissance man. He excelled academically, becoming the class valedictorian and winning a statewide scholarship to Rutgers University. In the arts, he sang in the choir and performed in *Julius Caesar* and *Othello*. As an athlete, he lettered in football, basketball, baseball, and track.

Robeson became a Rutgers University scholar-athlete from 1915-19 and tabbed as an All-American twice. After graduating from Rutgers, he trained to become a lawyer at Columbia University. He played in the NFL for several years and continued to reach the heights of a world-leading concert singer and actor in the 1920s, 1930s and 1940s. Brother Robeson recorded almost 300 songs, primarily spirituals, and work pieces worldwide in his deep baritone voice. "We Are Climbing Jacob's Ladder" and "Old Man River" still resonate with his name.

The plays, *Emperor Jones* and *Othello*, forever continue to be synonymous with the name of Paul Robeson. On film, he received acclaim for movies such as *Show Boat* and *Sanders of the River*.

Robeson raised funds to fight back against Franco of Spain fascism. He supported the allied forces in WWII against fascist Adolph Hitler's regime. During the middle 1930s to 1940, he became involved in the Council of African Affairs, a group that called for colonized Africa's independence from European colonial, plunder and rule.

According to the book *Paul Robeson Speaks*, on his first trip to the Soviet Union, he said, "Here I am not a Negro but a human being for the first time in my life ... I walk in full human dignity,"

In the summer of 1946, Robeson met with President Harry Truman and admonished him for his failure to repress lynchings, saying that Blacks would do it themselves if he could not do it.

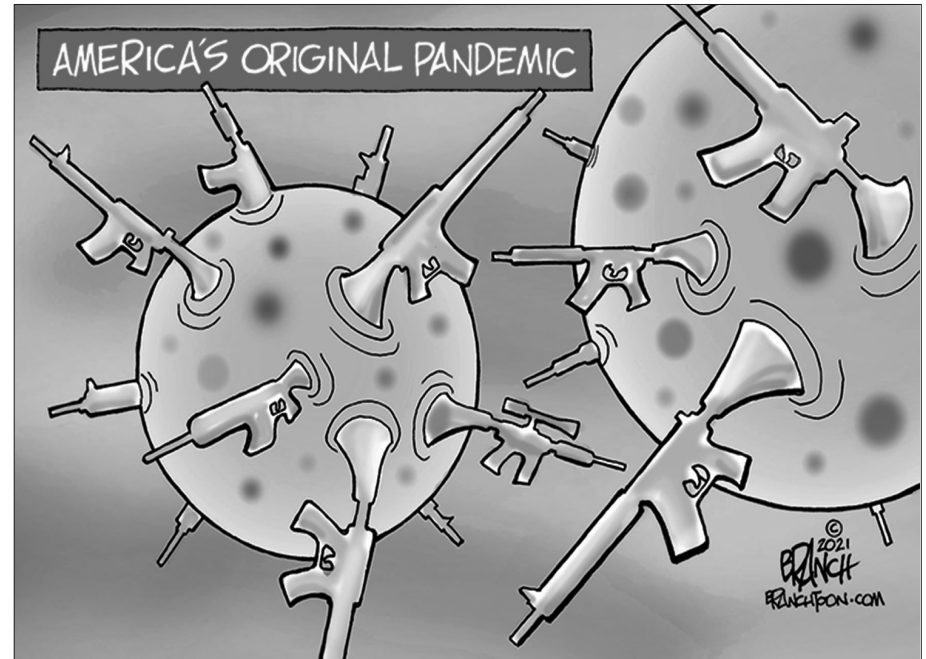
The U.S. Congressional House Un-American Committee member said if he liked Russia so much, why did he not stay? Robeson told in his book *Here I Stand*, "Because my father was a slave, and my people died to build this country, and I am going to stay right here, and have a part of it just like you."

He earned the McCarthy-era scorn because of his outspokenness against Black oppression through oppressive Jim Crow practices, and his continued praise of the Soviet Union.

If you do not know about Paul Robeson, read his autobiography, *Here I Stand* and the book, *Paul Robeson Speaks*. Search for him in Google and YouTube. If you do know about him, read and look at them again for reference.

Former Coppin State University Professor, Dr. Ken Morgan is a human rights activist. He can be reached at: btimes@btimes.com

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Community Affairs

Maryland Department of Health re-launches CovidCONNECT

Site provides more streamlined user experience, expanded access to COVID-19 clinical study information, community support and mental health resources

Baltimore— The Maryland Department of Health (MDH) relaunched its CovidCONNECT website, offering more streamlined access to comprehensive resources to support Marylanders who have firsthand experience with COVID-19.

Through CovidCONNECT, users are able to find guidance and support from peers who share similar experiences and access resources to promote physical, emotional and mental health.

"As Marylanders continue to get vaccinated in record numbers, we see hope for the future—but we still need ways to come together to cope with the losses of the past year," said MDH Acting Secretary Dennis R. Schrader. "We hope CovidCONNECT can help more Marylanders who are struggling with this

pandemic by finding support and building community."

Re-launching CovidCONNECT opens the site to the public and allows for more expansive reach of resources, including new features like CovidCONNECTIONS—stories from real Marylanders who have personally felt the impact of the virus. The site will soon feature COVID stories from all 24 Maryland jurisdictions and will also increase its mental health support offerings, including a regular webinar series on coping with the pandemic.

CovidCONNECT first launched in May 2020 as a registration-only platform for people who tested positive or who recovered from COVID-19.

"Many Marylanders are experiencing significant mental health impacts as a result of having had COVID-19, prolonged isolation, financial stresses, grief from losing loved ones and general life disruption," said BHA Deputy Secretary Dr. Aliya Jones. "We can find renewed strength and learn how to move forward by sharing our experiences, resources and support with one another."

Learn more at covidconnect.health.maryland.gov.

The American Rescue Plan:

Changing the Course of the Pandemic for All Americans

By U.S. Congressman James E. Clyburn (D-SC-6)

It has been a little more than a year since COVID-19 was officially discovered within the boundaries of the United States. It has been devastating to communities of color.

The statistics are sobering. Blacks represent only 13-percent of the U.S. population, but account for nearly 24-percent of age-adjusted COVID-19 deaths. In January, nine percent of Black workers or 1.8 million people in our communities were unemployed. One in five Black households are struggling with food insufficiency, and more than a third of Black renters are behind on their rent payments.

President Joe Biden has responded to this worldwide pandemic with The American Rescue Plan (ARP), which he signed into law last month, just 51 days after he took office. The ARP will help

change the course of the pandemic and deliver immediate relief for hard-hit communities of color. This transformative law invests in a national vaccination program and the safe reopening of schools. It distributes \$360 billion in emergency funding for state

The first \$600 payments per eligible person were distributed in December and January. These two direct payments deliver on the \$2,000 per person in pandemic relief that Democrats campaigned on last November.

The American Rescue Plan also

consultants. And, it provides \$28 billion for a new grant program to revitalize hard-hit small restaurants and other food and drinking establishments.

The American Rescue Plan is the first piece of legislation passed by the 117th Congress and signed by President Biden to rescue our economy and repair some of our faults that are being exasperated by COVID-19. On March 30th President Biden rolled out his American Jobs Plan. That plan proposes to: Fix highways, rebuild bridges, upgrade ports, airports and transit systems; deliver clean drinking water, a renewed electric grid, and high-speed broadband to all Americans; build, preserve, and retrofit more than two million homes and commercial buildings, modernize our nation's schools and child care facilities, and upgrade veterans' hospitals and federal buildings.

These actions demonstrate President Biden's and Congressional Democrats' commitment to building America back better than it was before the virus visited. This is not the end of his build back better plan. There is a third iteration on the way.

During his victory speech last November, President Biden pledged to always have the backs of the African American community. We will continue fighting to ensure that, in the short term, Black communities have access to all the tools necessary to recover from the economic and personal devastation wrought by this pandemic; and in the long term, address the impacts of historic disparate treatment against communities of color.

“The American Rescue Plan also addresses inequities in access to pandemic resources by making significant investments into small, Black businesses by providing \$50 billion for new and existing small business relief programs. This legislation bolsters the Paycheck Protection Program with an additional \$7.25 billion in funding to support small businesses and non-profits that were previously excluded.”

and local governments to keep front line public workers on the job and help maintain essential services. These targeted investments will directly benefit your communities and help them return safely to normal.

The ARP also provides direct benefits for you and your family. It delivers immediate relief to families by devoting \$1 trillion towards economic recovery for working families including direct relief payments, extension of unemployment insurance benefits, increasing child and earned income tax credits, and increasing SNAP benefits.

Many of you may have already received the \$1,400 direct payment per eligible member of your household. Because of misinformation that is being shared via social media, I want to clarify that this is the second of two payments.

addresses inequities in access to pandemic resources by making significant investments into small, Black businesses by providing \$50 billion for new and existing small business relief programs. This legislation bolsters the Paycheck Protection Program with an additional \$7.25 billion in funding to support small businesses and non-profits that were previously excluded.

It allocates \$15 billion in flexible grants to help the smallest; most severely impacted businesses persevere through the pandemic. It deploys community navigators to increase awareness of and participation in COVID-19 relief programs for small business owners who currently lack access, especially underserved entrepreneurs without banking relationships, lawyers, accountants, and

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National Association of Black Accountants welcomes new president

By Stacy M. Brown

The National Association of Black Accountants, Inc. (NABA), a nonprofit membership association dedicated to bridging the opportunity gap for Black professionals in the accounting, finance, and related business professions, is continuing its work to bridge existing gaps for people of color—particularly women—in the accounting and finance industry.

The organization recently announced the selection of Guylaine Saint Juste as president and CEO.

Saint Juste succeeds Walter J. Smith. “As the CEO of NABA, Inc., we are reimagining how our next 50 years will look as we continue to advocate for diversity, equity, and inclusion, not only in the accounting and financial sector but in corporate America,” Saint Juste said in an email. “We have made great progress, but there is a long journey ahead of us as we strive to attain fair and equitable representation.”

Guylaine formerly worked as the managing director, Employer of Influence Strategy at Year Up.

This nonprofit organization provides students of color the opportunity to experience careers in business and technology.

“Guylaine is a transformational leader who will lead NABA into the next 50 years,” NABA, Inc. board chairman Herschel Frierson remarked in a news release. “We are excited and honored to have Guylaine lead this great Association we love. Her skills, dedication, and commitment will build upon the already solid foundation of ‘Lifting As We Climb.’”

At NABA, Saint Juste plans to design and execute the organization’s multi-year strategic plan.



(Left) Guylaine Saint Juste is president and CEO of the National Association of Black Accountants, Inc. She has more than 25 years of experience in financial services. She has served as the Business Banking Virginia Market Executive with Capital One Bank.

She will provide primary oversight for NABA’s national office in Greenbelt, Maryland.

A Haitian-American, Saint Juste has more than 25 years of experience in financial services. She has served as the Business Banking Virginia Market Executive with Capital One Bank.

At Year Up, she increased revenue by over 30 percent, doubled the number of students in the program, and grew corporate partnerships by 31 percent.

NABA officials are expecting more of the same from Saint Juste.

“We are dedicated to bridging the wealth and income gap in America by creating initiatives that build a pipeline to increase representation in the field,” Saint Juste said. “Representation at every level is important. NABA will continue to create dynamic and game-changing programming that supports the



development of 21st-century skills that foster the promotion and advancement of Black leaders and identify innovative paths to increase representation in the C-Suite and beyond.”

She noted that companies play a significant role in bridging the gap in the accounting and financial industry.

“Along with our partners that are committed to diversity and inclusion, we offer ever-evolving programs, networking opportunities, scholarships, and meaningful career connections to our members,” Saint Juste said.

Saint Juste also touted the Women of NABA Network (WONN) as a means to helping achieve the organization’s goals. The WONN is a professional and personal development program focused on our women members.

“Our Women of NABA Network equips women with the needed tools to

achieve their goals while navigating the challenges of being a professional woman in today’s world,” Saint Juste said.

NABA officials called Guylaine a leader in the boardroom for her executive roles and her activist spirit.

They said she fights issues in the industry such as tackling colorism in the workforce, the “four-year degree required” for entry-level to middle-skills jobs, pedigree as a barrier to advancement for opportunity youth, and the interdependence of equity and economic mobility.

“I am honored to join NABA Nation and look forward to serving this great organization,” Guylaine said. “I welcome the opportunity to connect with many as we chart the path for the next five years.”

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Tyus Bowser happy to be back with Ravens

By Tyler Hamilton

Entering the free agent period with multiple pass rushers with expiring contracts was an unforgiving situation for the Baltimore Ravens. Defensive coordinator Don 'Wink' Martindale likes to get after the quarterbacks. The outside linebackers play a key role in executing Martindale's plan.

All was not lost when Ravens' free agent pass rushers Matthew Judon and Yannick Ngakoue signed free agent deals with the New England Patriots and Las Vegas Raiders, respectively. That's because the Ravens were able to bring back a young, up and coming player in Tyus Bowser.

Bowser signed a four-year, \$22-million contract with the Ravens last month. This comes after he finished last season with 34 tackles, two sacks and a career high three interceptions go along with 14 QB hits.

The goal for Bowser is to pickup where he left off last season.

"With the defense that we had [and] the



Tyus Bowser signed a four-year, \$22-million contract with the Ravens last month after he finished last season with 34 tackles, two sacks and a career high three interceptions go along with 14 QB hits. Courtesy Photo/BaltimoreRavens.com.

.scheme, I fit in so well with that defense. Just the culture, the guys there [and] the family atmosphere with the

organization, I definitely wanted to stay and be with [that]," Bowser said at a press conference after he was re-signed by Baltimore. "Fortunately, we were able to work it out. We were able to work out a deal. It's nice to be back for another four years. I'm happy."

The Ravens selected Bowser with the No. 47 overall pick in the 2017 NFL Draft. He became a starter last season. Entering his fifth year, Bowser has set his sights on becoming a team leader.

"Yes, I feel like that would be a big step for me coming into this year, being a fifth-year guy [and] a fifth-year vet with a young team. To be able to lead that group, lead this defense and also lead this team to where we want to be, and that's to win a Super Bowl. So, I feel like I'll definitely be moving to a bigger role, which I feel like I'm ready for," Bowser said.

Bowser singled out past leaders such as Judon, Pernell McPhee and Terrell Suggs as players he learned from when he first entered the NFL. He is confident that they taught him the necessary qualities to move into a bigger leadership role with the Ravens— and he welcomes the opportunity.

"All of these guys that have been here before," Bowser explained. "Just learning from them and piggybacking off of what they've been doing these past couple of years. I feel like after learning from them, I feel like I'm ready to move into that role."



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Kids Idea Tank Seeking Baltimore Entrepreneurs

By Stacy M. Brown

While on a book tour, children's book author Lowey Bundy Sichol routinely found herself approached by young ones with great ideas.

"So, it came to me," Sichol explained. "That entrepreneurial lightning can strike at any age."

Recognizing that, Sichol started The Kids Idea Tank, where kids up to age 13 can compete for a grand prize of \$1,000. The "Shark Tank"-like finale for the top 20 submissions is scheduled for June 23, 2021.

Sichol says any invention or business concept is eligible, from a germ of an idea to a product prototype. The grand prize will be awarded by a panel of judges, which includes some of the nation's most successful executives and entrepreneurs.

"Because the audience doesn't always agree with the judges, we have an audience favorite prize of \$500 this year," Sichol noted.



The event last year featured more than 20 children who presented their inventions remotely.

Kierra Perkins, a 13-year-old from Tennessee, took home first prize for her "Kandle" business. Sichol said Kierra began her business, "Kandles By Kierra," at the age of 11 after making a "kandle" for her dad for Father's Day.

"She now has a thriving business," Sichol noted.

Sichol says that young ones from around the country, including in Baltimore, are encouraged to participate.

"You have got to have an idea, and it can be anything," Sichol remarked. "We're not looking for rocket ships and going to Mars, but something that can be a reality. We are looking for ideas that can become a business."

Ultimately, Kids Idea Tank counts as a summer entrepreneurship competition for kids age 13 years or younger. It takes place over Zoom, and Sichol says the

mission is to inspire, educate and support future entrepreneurs.

Judging this year's competition are Alli Webb, the co-founder of DryBar and Squeeze, Nykia Wright, the CEO of the Chicago Sun-Times, and Stacy Madison, the founder of Stacy's Pita Chip Company and BeBOLD Bars.

"All you need is a phone or a computer and get online and pitch your ideas," Sichol said. "The judges will assess and come back and announce the winner."

There's no fee to enter, and teamwork is encouraged. "The most successful business founders are those who had more than one person start the business," Sichol stated. For more information and to register, visit <https://www.loweybundysichol.com/kids-idea-tank>.

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Meet the U.S. Naval Academy's First Black Woman Brigade Commander

By Andrea Blackstone

Making it to the United States Naval Academy is already an ambitious feat, but Midshipman First Class Sydney Barber took an extra big leap or two. Barber, a mechanical engineering major who hails from Lake Forest, Illinois, became the first Black woman brigade commander. The ambitious 21-year-old woman will oversee all 4,000 midshipmen within the brigade, until she graduates in May.

"It's the first time that there has been a Black woman who's held this position, and I am extremely humbled, knowing the struggles before me," Barber said. "Being here in this position, I'd say I [have] never also seen someone be a brigade commander, or hold a high position of leadership that was African-American, or female, just in my time here. So what I hope is that people who come after me can look and see themselves I me, and see themselves, not just in the way that I look, but in the way that I lead, and in the way that I conduct myself," Barber said, in an interview with The Baltimore Times.

Barber also remarked that when she came to the Naval Academy, it was not initially on her radar to become the brigade commander. She was on a path to better herself and develop as a leader in the manner in order to be the best version of herself. However, along the way, any opportunity that caused her to stretch and work for new achievement became a part of her journey. Becoming a Navy track and field athlete was one component. In her junior year, she pursued the Truman Scholarship.

The U.S. Naval Academy reported that Barber completed a seven-week internship with the Department of Energy's Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory two summers ago. While there, she was instrumental in doing breakthrough research on bio-electrochemical uses for carbon nanotubes. It was also mentioned that her research in developing legislative strategies to address education disparities in minority communities earned her selection as a 2020 Truman Scholar national finalist.



Midshipman First Class Sydney Barber made history as the U.S. Naval Academy's first Black female brigade commander. Her duties include carrying out the commandant's intent, in addition to the superintendent's. She also reports on what occurs within the brigade. Barber has been actively involved in humanitarian efforts plus she initiated a program to mentor girls of color in STEM. When Barber graduates in May, she strives to commission as a Marine Ground Corps officer.

Courtesy Photo/U.S. Naval Academy

"Sydney stands out among her peers, for not only for her exemplary record, but for her clear vision of how she intends to make the world a better place and her accompanying bias for action," said Lt. Cmdr. Darby Yeager, a member of the U.S. Naval Academy's Truman Scholarship selection committee, adding that they were incredibly proud to have Barber represent the Naval Academy in her Truman Scholarship interview.

Barber remained focused and driven. She continued taking advantage of every opportunity to better herself and when

position, Barber says she felt that there was no better way for her to make an impact on individuals around her.

Barber remains committed to her career and humanitarian service interests, which began with church mission trips to help build houses in the Dominican Republic. She also traveled to India during her formative years. Barber says that giving back to her country was the best avenue to pursue her goal to make an impact on the world at large as best she could.

Although military service is in Barber's blood since her father graduated from the Naval Academy in the class of 1991, this doesn't mean that she hasn't faced her own unique challenges. The loss of a classmate and unexpectedly being faced with leading fellow midshipmen during the pandemic have been two challenging hurdles she has faced as brigade commander. There is no book that could teach her how to be the leader during trying times. She says that she was tasked with finding ways to show people that she cared, while unifying the team.

"There's no leadership book that can tell you exactly what to say, but you have to speak with your heart," Barber said.

Barber gets back to the basics to stay grounded. Sleeping, exercising, meditating and praying are habits she utilizes to push forward and upward.

"My faith is my number one strength for me. I feel like I am nothing without the grace of God."

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Rambling Rose

**Uplifting Minds II Entertainment
Conference Celebrates 22 Years!**



Rosa Pryor Trusty

Hello everyone, I truly hope you enjoyed your Easter weekend. I pray that you and your family are in good health and safe.

This week, I want to talk about a young lady from Baltimore, Eunice Moseley who I have worked with for over 20 years at The Baltimore Times newspaper. Moseley is a syndicated entertainment columnist, singer and president of Freelance Associates, a public relations and business management consulting firm that she moved to Long Beach, California. Moseley has worked as a consultant and adviser on such film projects as "Sister Switch" for co-star singer/actress, Neenah Taylor and Agent Hollywood for lead actor and filmmaker Anthony Michael Hobbs.

Eunice Moseley was born and raised in Baltimore and has helped many talented children with her organization. When she relocated to the Los Angeles area in 2004, she founded and hosted the "Uplifting Minds II" Entertainment Conference annually in Los Angeles as well as her hometown of Baltimore. It's a free entertainment conference.

Moseley holds a Bachelor of Arts degree in Telecommunications from Morgan State University, a Masters in Management Technology/Public Relations

and an M.B.A. from University of Maryland's University College and is pursuing a PhD in Management Leadership and Organizational Change at Walden University. Now is she BADDDEDDDDDD! Or Not? There is still so much more about this fantastic talented young lady. I am not finished yet. As a syndicated entertainment columnist, Eunice has an estimated weekly readership of ¼ million people who read her column, "The Pulse of Entertainment," which appears on its website at ThePulseofEntertainment.com and on the website of legendary former radio Jock Lee Bailey's at EURweb.com.

Okay, now that I have given you some background on my dear friend, I want to invite you to her event that I will be a part of as a guest panelist. On Saturday, April 17, 2021, the 22nd Annual Baltimore "Uplifting Minds II" Entertainment Conference takes place virtually via Zoom from 1 p.m. to 3 p.m. Baltimore's own Doreisa Harvey from Magic 95.9 FM will host the event, which opens with industry professionals in a Q&A Session, a professional talent show case and a talent competition with vocals, songwriting, dance and acting.

The industry panelists include: Rosa Pryor (aka) "Rambling Rose" entertainment journalist and columnist with

The Baltimore Times for over 32 years; Paul Gardner, II, the Gardner Law Group in Baltimore; Cheryl Warfield, a Broadway Opera Singer from NY; Nadiyah Kareem, performing arts instructor from NJ; C.I.P., music producer/songwriter & former ULMi winner from Baltimore; Dr. Kerri Moseley-Hobbs, Artist Manager/Film Producer at Imagination Lunchbox, LLC; D. Baldwin, artist manager/producer at Underground Hits Production; Anthony Michael Hobbs, SAG.AFTRA award winning actor/filmmaker; Derek Price, Director Eubie Blake Center and Morris Dickerson, Youth Development Specialist. There will be live entertainment followed by the talent showcase and national talent competition. The conference includes five singers, songwriters, dancers or actors who get four minutes to perform. The industry panel will select a winner from each category to receive the "ULMII Best Artist Award" and over \$16,000 valued in prizes (products and services). So do your thing and check this out.

Well my dear friends, I think I have run out of space, I got to go. If you need me, call me at 410-833-9474 or email me at rosapryor@aol.com. **UNTIL THE NEXT TIME, I'M MUSICALLY YOURS.**



The 22nd Annual Baltimore "Uplifting Minds" Entertainment Conference, will take place virtually on Saturday, April 17, 2021 via Zoom and will be hosted by Baltimore's own Magic 95.9 FM Doreisa Harvey.



Eunice Moseley is the Founder/Publisher of "The Pulse of Entertainment" and "Uplifting Minds." See her event on Saturday, April 17 via Zoom video. Congratulations to you Eunice with much love.



Baltimore Jazz artist, Vincent Gross along with other artists such as R&B artist, Shardella Sessions will perform at the 22nd annual Baltimore "Uplifting Minds" Entertainment Conference's Professional Talent Showcase on Saturday, April 17, 2021 held virtually via Zoom from 1 p.m. to 3 p.m. For more information, call 562-424-3836.

AMFM is accepting applications for \$5,000 scholarship for a music performance major

Annapolis— Annapolis Musicians Fund for Musicians, Inc. (AMFM), a nonprofit organization that supports professional Annapolis-area musicians and music programs for youth, is accepting applications for its fourth annual Tim King Music Performance Scholarship.

Candidates must meet the following basic criteria:

- *Be a current high school student attending school in Anne Arundel County and scheduled to graduate in May/June 2021;

- *Be a musician who was active in high school chorus, band, orchestra, jazz band, or other school-sponsored performance group(s) prior to the COVID-19 pandemic;

- *Have a minimum cumulative GPA of 3.0;

- *Intend to pursue a bachelor's degree in music performance in the fall of 2021.

Candidates will be evaluated using a system that awards points for (1) active membership in a school band, orchestra, choir, chorus, or other school-sponsored musical performance group prior to the COVID-19 pandemic; (2) volunteer music participation prior to the COVID-19 pandemic; (3) participation in special school performances prior to the COVID-19 pandemic (and presently, if the school sponsors such opportunities); (4) selection in All County/All State/Regional performance groups prior to the COVID-19 pandemic; and (5) participation in private music lessons.



Candidates must also submit and will be evaluated on a performance video of up to three minutes in length and either a three-minute narrative video or a 350- to 500-word written essay to support their application. The narrative video or essay should address the questions “What role has music played in my life, and how will it shape and influence my future?”

and “How will the scholarship assist me?” Candidates must also include one letter of recommendation from a music teacher, music coach, or music mentor, and are encouraged to submit a second performance video that reflects their diverse musical styles or interests.

The scholarship application deadline is April 15, 2021, and the awardee will be

chosen on or about May 15, 2021. To apply, and for details: <https://www.amfm.org/music-performance-scholarship/>.

Tim King was a beloved Annapolis musician, actor, and writer, and a gifted guitar teacher. This \$5,000 scholarship honors his legacy by providing support to future musicians.

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Five key factors to consider if you want to work remotely forever

News & Experts— Working from home is the new normal for millions of Americans, and many companies are planning to make the move permanent even if vaccines bring an end to the pandemic.

Whether that's the case at your company, your bosses are giving you an option, or if you want to make a case to them to work remotely, there are important matters to consider, says Cynthia Spraggs (www.virtira.com), a veteran of working remotely and author of *How To Work From Home And Actually Get SH*T Done*.

"The pandemic may result in something I've advocated for years – more people working remotely," says Spraggs, also the CEO of Virtira, a completely virtual company that helps other businesses work virtually. "But making this kind of transition permanently, whether full-time or part-time, can have a major impact on both your career, finances, and your personal life.

"It's more than just the dynamics of getting your home workspace set up properly for the long haul and having the right mindset to perform even better than you would in the office. Will your work relationships suffer? Your family and personal relationships? Your career trajectory? Is relocating a good idea financially?"

Spraggs offers these key points to consider about working remotely on a permanent basis:

Consider possible salary changes and tax implications if relocating. "You need to ask this question if you're considering relocating to work remotely," Spraggs says. "Some employers will base compensation on location, and that means employees moving from a high cost-of-living area to a less expensive one could see their salaries reduced. Also, employees need to do their homework and see how their take-home pay will be impacted by taxes in their new location."

Determine your home-or-office comfort level. Is your life better in the long run working from home? "That question should include whether you



Due to the corona virus, working from home is the new normal for millions of Americans, and many companies are planning to make the move permanent even if vaccines bring an end to the pandemic. Author and a veteran of working remotely, Cynthia Spraggs offers five key points to consider about working remotely if you are thinking about working remotely permanently.

Photo Credit: ClipArt.com

miss your work colleagues and team synergy enough that Zoom doesn't cut it," Spraggs says. "Maybe social isolation is catching up with you and you need a hybrid-type balance, or you realize you want to be back in the office after all. The bigger question is how well can you manage your time working from home, or do family dynamics interfere?"

Plan your pitch thoroughly. "If you have to sell your leadership team on working remotely full-time," Spraggs says, "have specific examples of your work performance since you started working from home during the pandemic. And if you want to relocate, you can inform leadership about what advantages that might have for the company, like giving them a new presence in a certain region."

Keep an eye out for other job prospects. If you relocate, Spraggs says

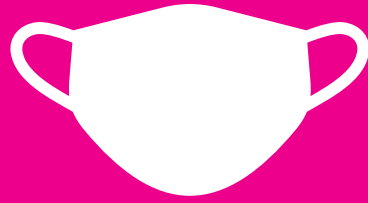
it's important to consider what the job opportunities are in your new market, because layoffs are always a possibility. "And wherever you are," Spraggs says, "remember that your next employer might not be on board with remote work."

Beware it could hurt your career prospects. If most of your company will be returning to the office, those who work from home either part-time or full-time might be at a disadvantage in terms of promotions or performance evaluation. "It's important to be proactive about communicating with your manager and having a plan to keep them informed of your progress," Spraggs says. "It's a good idea to come to the office occasionally. You have to have some in-person time to build relationships with teams."

"Now is a good time to reevaluate your current work environment and how it

could be if you continue working remotely," Spraggs says. "A lot of people have enjoyed the freedom of it, but there's much to consider if you want to make the new normal a permanent reality."

*Cynthia Spraggs (www.virtira.com) is the author of *How To Work From Home And Actually Get SH*T Done: 50 Tips for Leaders and Professionals to Work Remotely and Outperform the Office*. She is CEO of Virtira, a completely virtual company that focuses on remote-team performance. Before taking leadership of the company in 2011, Spraggs worked with large consulting and tech companies while completing her MBA and research into telecommuting.*



KEEP CALM

—AND—

**MASK
ON**



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BGE urges customers to stay vigilant against new utility scammer activities

Baltimore— As the COVID-19 pandemic continues to financially impact many Maryland residents, BGE is reminding customers to always be on alert for potential scams targeting utility customers. Scams occur throughout the year, but in the recent weeks, the company has seen increases in scam reports where scammers attempt to use this health crisis to trick utility customers. In the first week of February, BGE received over 160 scam complaints from our customers, which is a dramatic increase compared to the entire month of January when the company received 405 scam complaints from customers.

Currently the most prevalent scam calls are robo-calls asking customers to pay immediately in order to avoid disconnection. As a reminder, BGE will never send a single notification to a customer within one hour of a service interruption and will never ask customers to make payments with a pre-paid debit card, gift card, or any form of cryptocurrency.

It is important to remind our customers about energy assistance that is currently available to help meet their energy needs. BGE's Customer Care Center received nearly 70,000 calls related to billing and collections matters in January, a 20% increase in call volume compared to January 2020. BGE has many programs in place to help customers through temporary or extended financial hardship due to the pandemic. Additionally, BGE is working with customers who may be currently in arrears with their utility bill. Those customers should contact the company immediately at 800-685-0123. BGE representatives will work with customers to help identify assistance programs that can supplement bill payments and can help ensure service remains on during any economic adversities.

"It is so disheartening that these



scammers continue to use this time of health and financial uncertainty to attempt to deceive our customers," said Chima Chijioke, vice president of customer operations for BGE. "These scammers are constantly changing their tactics and it's important that our customers are made aware of these latest efforts in order to stay vigilant to avoid becoming victims. We also want to remind customers that disconnection is a last resort, and we want to help customers who may be behind. Any customer who is experiencing a hardship or difficulty with their bill should call BGE immediately at 1-800-685-0123."

BGE also continues to see calls where scammers claim, "Your meter needs to be switched out immediately or your power will be turned off." These claims are followed by a demand for immediate payment that includes Cashapp, Bitcoin, Zelle or Green Dot payment methods, and some of those calls end with scammers texting a barcode to the

customer for immediate payment.

Some scammers are continuing to use caller ID "spoofing" to replicate BGE and Exelon phone numbers. Often in these cases, a recorded message that customers typically hear has been duplicated by scammers, so when customers call the number provided by the scammer, it sounds like an actual business—but it is **not**.

Here are some tips and red flags that customers should look out for to prevent them from becoming victims of utility scammers.

Five Quick Tips:

1. BGE will never ask a customer with a past due balance to purchase a prepaid debit card to avoid disconnection.
2. Customers will never receive a single phone call claiming they have one hour before they are disconnected unless they pay immediately. If a customer has a past due balance, they will receive multiple notifications requesting payment.

3. BGE will never ask customers for information BGE already has, including choice ID numbers, social security numbers or any other personal information.

4. BGE will not call customers to offer a discount or rebate.

5. Trust your instincts. If a call does not seem like it is from BGE, customers should hang up and call BGE immediately at 1-800-685-0123.

Red Flags for Scam Activity:

*The scammer often becomes angry and tells a customer his or her account is past due, and service will be shut off if a large payment isn't made – usually within less than an hour.

*The scammer instructs the customer to purchase a prepaid debit or credit card— widely available at most retail stores— then call him or her back to make a payment.

*The scammer asks the customer for the prepaid card's receipt number and PIN number, which grants instant access to the funds loaded to the card.

*The scammer asks for a copy of the customer's utility bill.

Always Remember:

*Never provide your social security number or personal information to anyone initiating contact with you claiming to be a utility representative or requesting that you send money to another person or entity other than your local utility provider.

*Always ask to see a company photo ID before allowing any utility worker into your home or business.

*Do not give payment in any form— cash, check, or credit— to anyone coming to your door without calling BGE first at 1-800-685-0123.

Any customer who believes he or she has been a target of a scam is urged to contact their local police and call BGE immediately at 1-800-685-0123 to report the situation.

**To place Legal Notices in The Annapolis Times,
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