



# The Annapolis Times

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A Baltimore Times/Times of Baltimore Publication

*Citywide Youth Development's Rasheed Aziz*  
**The Man Behind the E.M.A.G.E**



*Rasheed Aziz, executive director of Citywide Youth Development, looks forward to continuing his quest to provide training and job opportunities to Baltimore youth. Citywide Youth Development provides solutions for crime and poverty through utilizing the tools of manufacturing and entrepreneurial skills. Citywide Youth Development is headquartered at the E.M.A.G.E. Center, 2132 W. North Avenue. The E.M.A.G.E. Center houses two entrepreneurial programs – Frozen Desert Sorbet & Café and Made in B'more apparel. Some of their products will be among the merchandise to be sold at the “1st Annual Times Community Services Baltimore Maker Marketplace,” Saturday, September, 18, 2021, 10 a.m. – 4 p.m. at Coppin State University, 2500 W. North Avenue. (See article on page 9) Courtesy Photo*

# Adapt, not conform

By Nikki Abraham, Nucleus Team Member, Positively Caviar, Inc.

Now is the time that many have anticipated—the world is starting to open up again. While this moment has been highly anticipated it's also extremely nerve wrecking for multiple reasons. When the stay-at-home order went into effect, our entire lives were upended, as many were forced to step into what became a new state of normalcy.

One common theme I found when discussing among friends how the pandemic affected them was the mindset shift. While this moment in time was filled with the unknown, which sometimes led to stress and anxiety, also allowed us the opportunity to explore our minds in a new way. For many, connecting with inner self led to new revelations and as a result showed us that we have the ability and capacity to vibrate on higher levels.

As things get back to “normal” it's important to realize that the new you with your elevated mentality cannot step out into the world the way you used to be and expect to flourish. This season is going to require something different from you. As the world opens up, you

will have to be intentional about who you are and who you were called to be.

The more you have in person interactions with others you will recognize the difficulty that comes with following your own path and the steps ordained for you with the influence of others. Be cognizant about separating positive influence from the negative influence that will cause you to stray away from your goals.

Take a moment to reflect on the peace and clarity that has come from spending time with your own self. It's pivotal for your growth to recognize the importance of self-care and alone time. Always be super, intentional about the time you have to yourself. While I agree that binge watching your favorite reality show while eating a bowl of popcorn sounds like a great time, using my free time to clear my mind through other activities such as meditation and writing will be more beneficial to me in the long run.

The mindset shift that got us through this difficult time is exactly what will allow us to consider a new way of interaction. While it may be easier to conform to societal standards, it's more important that we show up as ourselves on all levels in all rooms. One of the



Nikki Abraham  
Nucleus Team Member,  
Positively Caviar, Inc.  
Courtesy Photo

“What you're around is what you become.” What we watch, what we listen to and the rooms we are in, all contribute to what we digest. Monitor your intake in order to renew your mind, body and spirit.

During this time, through every moment and every interaction be intentional about who you were called to be. Don't conform to meet someone else's standards, instead create your own lane. Moving forward, make sure your decisions are aligned with all the beautiful things that are destined for your future. The universe is preparing you for the greatest comeback of your life— your time is now.

*Positively Caviar, Inc. (PCI) is a grassroots nonprofit organization focused on instilling mental resilience by way of positive thinking and optimism. Each month, a member of the Nucleus Team features a column focused on mental and physical health tips, scientific studies, nutrition facts and stories that are positive in nature to support a positive and healthy lifestyle. To learn more about how you can support, volunteer or donate to Positively Caviar, Inc. visit: [staybasedandpositive.com](http://staybasedandpositive.com).*

reasons I love Jay-Z is because he always shows up as himself despite what table where he is seated. He shows up in the boardroom as his authentic self with his incredible mind and ideas, which is ultimately why he is as successful as he is today.

As you step into this new “normal” pay close attention to what you feed yourself. One of my favorite quotes:

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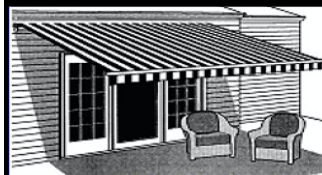
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# BALTIMORE Makers Marketplace



**Are you a craftsperson who makes unique, one-of-a-kind pieces?  
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Applications to participate in the first annual Times Community Services' Baltimore Makers Marketplace are now being accepted!

**Complete and submit your application before the 08/07/2021 deadline.** This is a juried vendor event. Submission of your application does not guarantee acceptance. All applicants will be notified by email by 08/16/2021 of their acceptance. If your application is accepted, the Vendor Fee of \$100.00 will be due no later than 08/18/2021.

For more information and to get the process started, complete the application here: <https://bit.ly/B2Mvapp> or scan our QR code:



## EVENT DETAILS

When: Saturday, September 18, 2021  
Where: Coppin State University, Tawes Center  
2500 W. North Ave, Baltimore, MD 21216  
Event Hours: 10:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.  
Set-up: 7:30 a.m. – 9:30 a.m.  
Breakdown: 4:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.

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# Guest Editorials/Letters

## Biden's plan helps America compete in a digital world

By Kip Eideberg

Even as Democrats and Republicans continue their negotiations, there is one aspect of infrastructure that still continues to enjoy broad support—and it also happens to be the most important part of the plan: billions of dollars in broadband infrastructure. This investment would ensure every single American has access to high-speed Internet.

For the sake of our country's economic wellbeing, leaders in Washington must make broadband expansion a priority. Doing so will change millions of lives for the better. Expanding Internet may feel secondary to funding improvements for roads, bridges, and highways. But as the pandemic made clear, Internet is essential for nearly every aspect of daily life. Our economy simply cannot run without it.

But we're lagging behind other countries when it comes to Internet access. Around 23 percent of Americans lack a high-speed Internet connection. Among the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) countries, a club of developed nations, the United States ranks 15 out of 37 in fixed broadband subscriptions per 100 inhabitants.

Even if Americans do have broadband lines in their areas, the connection may be spotty or non-existent. According to a Wall Street Journal analysis, poorer neighborhoods have Internet speeds 40 percent slower than those in high-income neighborhoods. In rural counties, 65 percent of households connect to the Internet, compared to 78 percent of households nationwide.

Americans of all ages miss out on opportunities when they don't have adequate broadband connections.

Even before schools closed for in-person instruction, a third of K-12 students didn't have a strong Internet connection, a digital device, or both. Without Internet, many students cannot complete basic assignments.

And they're missing out on important skills needed in the modern workforce. Between 2002 and 2016, the need for digital skills increased by 95 percent for workers in all occupations and cities. Today, 70 percent say they can't do their job without an Internet connection at home. Experts speaking at the World Economic Forum last year estimated that by 2030 nine-in-ten jobs will need digital skills.

Universal broadband would help close the digital divide between rich and poor Americans while keeping America competitive internationally.

For example, broadband investment will help the Americans employed in the agricultural sector. As of 2019, a quarter of farmers did not have access to the Internet—even though up-to-date information about the weather, the economy, and USDA reports is vital to a farm's success. According to a report from the Breakthrough Institute, expanding rural broadband would allow farmers to adopt new technologies that could lead to a 60 to 70 percent increase in corn yields and generate up to \$65 billion in economic revenue annually.

A new Brookings Institution report further underscores the benefits of expanded broadband. It concluded that increased Internet usage is "associated with higher incomes, lower poverty rates, and higher levels of education."

That's not surprising. Reliable Internet grants workers access to thousands of job postings, educational resources, and other networking opportunities. It provides business owners working from home with a gateway into e-commerce, which accounts for 14 percent of national retail sales.

None of that can happen without investment into new broadband infrastructure. As Democrats and Republicans work toward a deal on infrastructure, they need to make sure that they close the digital divide and ensure all Americans can participate and thrive in the 21st century economy.

*Kip Eideberg is the Senior Vice President of Government and Industry Relations at the Association of Equipment Manufacturers. This originally ran in The Hill.*



## Letters to the Editor:

**Editor:**

**Re: Southwest Drought Causing Water Shortage**

Lake Mead at the Hoover Dam is at 37 percent capacity, which is the lowest level since the 1930s. It provides water to about 40 million people in Nevada, Arizona and California, but a severe drought and diminished snowfall in the Rocky Mountains have significantly reduced the supply of water. Other lakes in the region are at historically low levels as well.

It appears current water conservation measures will have to continue and probably be expanded in the Southwest along with the reuse of treated wastewater for agriculture.

Although seawater desalination plants are costly—typically about \$4 billion—the people in the Southwest need drinking and agricultural water to survive. There are about 20,000 plants

in the world, including a plant near San Diego providing 50 million gallons of water per day to 10 percent of residents. Another 10 plants operate in California and 10 more are proposed.

Drawbacks of desalination plants include construction costs, high cost to produce the water, disposal of briny residue water and impacts on sea life, but the cost of running out of water far exceeds the costs associated with desalination plants.

Although desalination plants might only provide 10 percent to 20 percent of water consumption, the plants and pipeline delivery systems in the southwest region are needed to help replace the lower supply from the Colorado River.

**Donald Moskowitz**  
Londonderry, NH

*When sending letters to the editor, your correct name, address and telephone number must be included with your submission.*

*Please send your letter to: Letters to the Editor*

*The Annapolis Times*

*2530 N. Charles Street, Suite #201, Baltimore, MD. 21218*

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## Big Mama Said, 'If the Lord Says the Same, Then I Will Too'

By Terry Allen, CEO 1016 Media, Founder, Sister CEO Small Business Camp, Columnist for Texas Metro News

Like Big Mama's 'more than a notion,' I know so many other mothers, grandmothers, sisters, aunts and Black women who have uttered that statement, "If the Lord says the same I will too." The phrase is a staple thought in our community.

Maybe it came off as just a catchphrase to you or maybe you thought it was an easy response for a churchgoer to say instead of "Hello" or "Goodbye."

I decided that since Lucille "Big Mama" Allen said it, then I would unravel my understanding of it. The statement definability has religious connotations not like some of the phrase, including "If Fate decrees," and "Anyway the wind blows it is ok

with me," or "What a blessing, it must be my lucky day," all of which relate to the future but does not have the religious connotation that "If The Lord Says The Same..." has.

The idea is, "If the Lord permits." The spiritual Christian submits himself to the will of God. He keeps God's

unforeseen act or occurrence that God does NOT bless me through, then things will work out and I will be here."

I do recall when on a family visit to one of my Big Mama's 21 siblings, like Aunt Rosa, Aunt Lillian or Aunt Mary, as they ended the visit they

had a better chance for the best future outcomes. She knew a spiritual presence ensured a Godly viewpoint on life by dependence on God's will and our ability to implement divine decision-making.

Lucille "Big Mama" Allen knew that God governs what we accomplish. Not only are our lives in His hands, our success is in His hands.

Some people use the shortness of life as their reason not to act under God's will. Big Mistake! We are still in a state of turmoil as some pundits unravel years of social justice, destroy gains in voting opportunity and create revisionist history.

I say to you, let us honor the truth of God in the way we think about our truth and the way we talk about the fullness of God.

In closing, my question is, "Do you think you can choose to create a positive interaction for 30 days. My answer is "If the Lord says the same I will"

Got a story to tell? Email me at [terryallenpr@gmail.com](mailto:terryallenpr@gmail.com).

*Terry Allen is an award-winning media professional, journalist and entrepreneur. He is also the founder of City Men Cook and 1016 Media*

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***"Lucille 'Big Mama' Allen knew one thing. If we lived under God's will, we had a better chance for the best future outcomes. She knew a spiritual presence ensured a Godly viewpoint on life by dependence on God's will and our ability to implement divine decision-making."***

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viewpoint on his whole life. We say, "The Lord willing; I will do this or that." This attitude demonstrates submission to God's will. It should be more than a jingle but an orientation of life that accepts God's providence for my life. "I accept what God chooses to do with me."

This is far from a magic formula for one's life. Big Mama told us many times that our way is not our way yet, it is God's way. What I understood from Big Mama's statement fell along the lines of God and Fate. I evaluated what she meant: "...barring some

would say, "'Cille,' you coming back right?" She would always respond with, "If the Lord says the same I will!"

My French quarter family customized the phrase when we visited with them. They would answer with, "If God is willing and the creek don't rise!" Amen!

What I do know is "If the Lord says the same I will" was tied to two important factors. It was tied to 1) the future and 2) God's will.

Lucille "Big Mama" Allen knew one thing. If we lived under God's will, we

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# Protecting Your Home from Medicaid Estate Recovery

By Timothy Chance, Esq.

**Question:** My mom passed away. I am still living in her house and now Medicaid has placed a lien on her house. I'm worried about whether our family could lose the house.

**Answer:** Many Marylanders wish to age in place, maintaining their independence while remaining in the comfort and familiarity of their home. Oftentimes, adult children may move into the home with their parents and step into the role of caregiver for as long as possible. If further assistance is needed, the parent may apply for Medicaid benefits and move into a nursing facility, leaving the child as the home's only resident. Unfortunately, this may significantly interfere with the family's plan for the passing the home down to the next generation. When that parent dies, Maryland law requires that Medicaid attempt to recover the cost of providing care—a process known as estate recovery.

Medicaid, under Federal and Maryland Law, is permitted to file a claim against the estate of a deceased Medicaid recipient for medical services it provided to the recipient. Additionally, Medicaid is allowed to place a lien on the homes of benefit recipients when it is determined that the parent will not be able to return home from a nursing home facility. This creates a major barrier for many Marylanders, as the home can be the only asset of value and the family is forced to sell the home. The family home, instead of going to the caregiver children, is instead sold to satisfy Medicaid's claim. Instead of being a tool for building and maintaining



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intergenerational wealth, the home is forever lost to the family.

## **When Medicaid Cannot File a Recovery Claim:**

There are some situations in which Medicaid cannot file a recovery claim. Medicaid cannot file a claim if there is a surviving spouse, an unmarried child younger than 21, or a child who is blind or disabled living in the home. If none of these three exemptions apply, recovery may be waived due to a substantial hardship. Hardship can be established if there is a dependent whom lived in the property at the time of the Medicaid recipient's death and lived there continuously for a period of two years before the Medicaid recipient's death

and cannot find another place to live.

To establish that the dependent lived in the property prior to the recipient's death and during, the recipient will need to send proof, such as old mail, to the Maryland Department of Health. The Maryland Department of Health will also consider the dependent's household income to determine if the dependent can find another place to live. For example, if a caregiver child moved in to take care of their mother and three years later, the mother went into a nursing home, the child could seek a hardship exemption if they have nowhere else to live. Sometimes, when all those conditions are not met, Medicaid will allow the dependent to

continue to live in the property but may place a non-interest-bearing mortgage on the property. Medicaid, based on the dependent's ability to pay, determines monthly payments.

## **Life Estate Deeds:**

An additional way to safely pass the property to the next generation is through a life estate deed without powers. A life estate deed without powers allows the parent to retain ownership of their home throughout their lifetime and upon their death, the property would automatically pass to a named beneficiary. Specifically with a life estate deed, if five years pass from the date of the creation of the life estate deed without applying for Medicaid benefits, the home would be exempt from Medicaid recovery and could safely pass to the recipient's heirs.

If you are facing Medicaid estate recovery or want to draft a life estate deed to safely pass your home on to your loved ones, you can contact Maryland Volunteer Lawyers Service for free help at 410-547-6537, Monday through Thursday from 9 a.m. to noon. Visit [www.mvlslaw.org](http://www.mvlslaw.org) to learn more.

*Timothy Chance, Esq. is the Tangled Title Staff Attorney at Maryland Volunteer Lawyers Service. His practice focuses on estate planning, estate administration and housing issues for Marylanders of limited means.*

*Do you have a question you would like to see addressed in this monthly column? Email [ask@mvlslaw.org](mailto:ask@mvlslaw.org) to submit your question to the Baltimore Times' legal tip column.*

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Swimming

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## Calling All Maker Entrepreneurs!

# Register for the 1<sup>st</sup> Annual Baltimore Maker Marketplace

By Ursula V. Battle

Constance Mann-Leonard, owner of GIRGI (God's Ideas Are Good Ideas) Ltd., creates unique clothing, accessories, dolls, and other items, utilizing Crochet. Her "crafty" items also include jewelry and other unique items she makes by hand. An upcoming event will bring "makers" like Mann-Leonard and consumers together under one roof.

It's the "1<sup>st</sup> Annual Times Community Services' Baltimore Maker Marketplace." The event will take place Saturday, September 18, 2021, 10 a.m. – 4 p.m. at Coppin State University located at 2500 W. North Avenue. The event will feature products made and sold by Baltimore-based businesses.

The event is being presented by Times Community Services, Inc. and The Baltimore Times, in collaboration with The Baltimore Development Corporation (BDC), the Coppin State University Center for Strategic Entrepreneurship (CSE), MCB Real Estate, LLC, and Catalyst Enterprises.

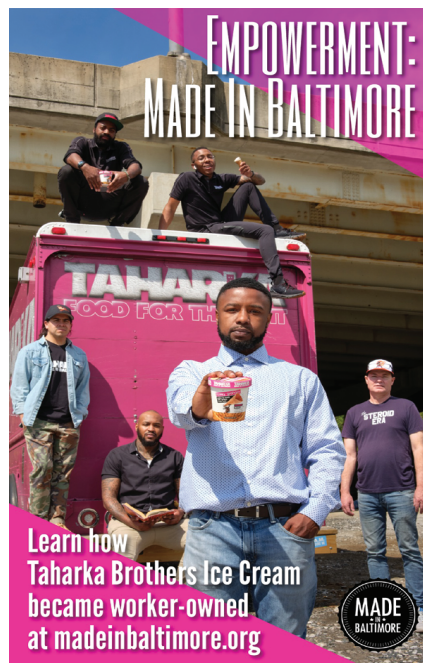
"COVID-19 affected many small businesses," said Joy Bramble, founder and publisher of The Baltimore Times. "We want people to come out, buy and support small businesses. The event will also feature demonstrations. Through these demonstrations, people can see the things people are making in Baltimore. The demonstrations will also provide attendees with a chance to meet the owners of these businesses."

She added, "The Baltimore Maker Marketplace will be a free, fun, family-oriented event. It will also provide a gateway for consumers to come out and see first-hand, the wonderful things being manufactured right here in our community. We are encouraging makers to submit applications to be a part of this wonderful expo of talent and entrepreneurship. This event presents a phenomenal opportunity for participants to showcase their brand."

Interested businesses need to submit applications before the August 7, 2021



*Constance Mann-Leonard, owner of GIRGI (God's Ideas Are Good Ideas) Ltd models one of her hand-crafted hooded sweaters and showcases her crochet art. Courtesy Photo.*



deadline. Submission of an application does not guarantee acceptance. A jury will review the applications and select vendors for the event. If selected, a vendor fee of \$100.00 is required. The vendor fee includes one six-foot table with two chairs, promotional mentions in The Baltimore Times newspaper and



on its website <http://baltimoretimes-online.com>.

All applicants will be notified by email by August 16, 2021 of their acceptance.

The event will also feature live entertainment, and selected Baltimore Maker Marketplace businesses will also have an opportunity to apply for a grant.

Andy Cook is the executive director of "Made in Baltimore," a community of manufacturers, retailers and maker spaces working together to create and promote locally-made products.

"We are excited to partner with Coppin and The Baltimore Times," said Cook. "It's the right thing to do and this is our first public event with Coppin. We have a reputation as an organization that does maker market events, so we are often contacted by groups putting them on. This event fits in with the work we do. Our message is always about getting people to support local businesses."

Made in Baltimore was founded by Cook with the intention of supporting local entrepreneurs and advocating for reinvesting resources back into the Baltimore community.

"We are always very involved in the marketing of the 'Buy Local' concept," said Cook. "We often receive feedback from our audiences and partners. We also partner with the media trying to gauge what is the reach of the 'Buy Local' message. Having identity with the communities they live in resonates with people."

He added, "This is a city of entrepreneurs per-capita, and that gives Baltimore so much character. People in Baltimore are really willing to do whatever it takes to make their vision come to life. Do It Yourself is big here. I started Made in Baltimore with the intention of highlighting and showcasing those companies. Oftentimes, entrepreneurs don't have a lot of time to promote, market and publicize their businesses. Our role is to step in and be a marketing driver for the small businesses we work with in our network. Events like the Baltimore Maker Marketplace helps us to achieve those goals."

For more information call (410) 366-3900 ext. 3022. To apply to be a vendor at the Baltimore Maker Marketplace event, visit <https://bit.ly/B2Mvapp>.



# *Citywide Youth Development's Rasheed Aziz*

## The Man Behind the E.M.A.G.E

By Ursula V. Battle

In biology terminology, an ecosystem is a community of living organisms in conjunction with the nonliving components of their environment, interacting as a system. In entrepreneurship terms, Rasheed Aziz, executive director of Citywide Youth Development, defines an ecosystem as “things that interact in an environment that does not necessarily have to be organisms.

It can be ideas of that ecosystem, intermingling as parts of that one network, interconnected and working together to produce a result.”

Aziz's “ecosystem” has produced results. Citywide Youth Development, whose mission is to provide solutions for crime and poverty through utilizing the tools of manufacturing and entrepreneurial skills, has been credited with putting hundreds of local youths on the path to entrepreneurship. Citywide Youth Development is headquartered at the E.M.A.G.E. Center located 2132 W. North Avenue.

The E.M.A.G.E. Center houses two entrepreneurial programs – Frozen Desert Sorbet & Café and Made in B'more apparel. Frozen Desert Sorbet & Café sells all-natural fruit-based sorbet, salads, pizza, smoothies, and other items. Made in B'more apparel specializes in jackets, hoodies, hats, and other urban “athleisure” clothing manufactured at the facility.

Some of these products will be among the merchandise to be sold at the “1<sup>st</sup> Annual Times Community Services' Baltimore Maker Marketplace,” Saturday, September 18, 2021, 10 a.m. – 4 p.m. at Coppin State University located at 2500 W. North Avenue. The event will feature products made and sold by Baltimore-based businesses.

The event is being presented by Times Community Services, Inc., and The Baltimore Times, in collaboration with The Baltimore Development Corporation (BDC), Coppin State University Center for Strategic Entrepreneurship (CSE), and Catalyst Enterprises, BDC's programs include “Made in Baltimore.”

Andy Cook is the executive director of Made in Baltimore, a community of man-



*Citywide Youth Development offers a Sewing Program.*



*Frozen Desert Sorbet & Café*



*Rasheed Aziz, executive director of Citywide Youth Development.*

*Courtesy Photos*

ufacturers, retailers and maker spaces working together to create and promote locally-made products.

“This marketplace will bring awareness to manufacturing,” said Aziz. “The Baltimore Development Corporation is doing a great job creating opportunities for a lot of minorities. Many of those opportunities would not have happened without a program like Made in Baltimore.”

He added, “Coppin State University is our neighbor. So, when Andy called and informed me about the event, I felt it was an absolute honor for me to participate in. It's essential for us to understand the impact that manufacturing products can have in creating opportunities.”

According to Aziz, the E.M.A.G.E. Center came to fruition after he saw a need to give aspiring young entrepreneurs training and space.

“In Baltimore City, you have so many people that have been incarcerated. Job

opportunities are not blended, so you must be creative. People still have to eat, and people still have to take care of their families. Entrepreneurship and manufacturing products have to be a key strategy to deal with crime and poverty. If we can eliminate or at least neutralize some of the poverty, inevitably crime will go down. I believe this amazing event will open a lot of eyes and create a lot of opportunities.”

Aziz's own vision is also about creating opportunities.

“Many countries have built their nations on manufacturing,” said Aziz. “I looked at that and thought, ‘hey, if industry can transform countries, surely building and developing industry can transform the inner-city. Berry Gordy did it through Motown. He built the system, cultivated talent, created a process, and created a lot of millionaires and multimillionaires from the talent that existed in the community.”

He added, “I wanted to build a new age Motown. So, I left Florida over a decade ago with that vision and was heading to Washington, DC. But my real estate agent convinced me to come to Baltimore for a weekend, and I never left. I came with that mission in mind, and a system to engage young adults to create job opportunities.”

The 46-year-old talked about his humble beginnings.

“I had a pushcart model,” he recalled. “I brought three pushcarts up here with me from Florida. I also brought my sewing machine and screen print machine. In essence, I bought my own factory with me. The week after I arrived in Baltimore, I got young people involved.

Within three or four days, I had a crew of young people. We made our own sorbet. We began selling our products at the Inner Harbor through our mobile cart enterprise, which is now one of the largest cart companies in Maryland.”

Today, FDS distributes via mobile carts, wholesale, stadium concessions, and Frozen Desert, and Aziz continues to “churn out” his vision through the 10,000 square foot E.M.A.G.E. Center.

“We wanted to change the image of how some people perceive the Black males of Baltimore. We are viewed negatively, like we have no value. We wanted to change that image, which is why we spell it E.M.A.G.E., which stands for Entrepreneurs Making and Growing Enterprises, and we are headquartered right here in the city.”

He added, “We also teach our youngsters about apparel manufacturing and garment construction. There's also a job placement component. We also help mentor different product brands and provide domestic production private labeling for seven different brands in the city. Previously those brands were going to Pakistan and China to have their product made, but now they are being manufactured by people right here in the community.”

For more information about Citywide Youth Development, follow them on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/CitywideYouthDevelopment](https://www.facebook.com/CitywideYouthDevelopment).

To apply to be a vendor at the Baltimore Maker Marketplace event, visit <https://bit.ly/B2Mvapp>



# Rambling Rose

*Baltimore is wide open  
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Hello everyone, I have so much to write about this week. I'm just trying to get it into one column. It's amazing. I am so excited and you will be too when you see what I have lined up for you.

I first want to start off by wishing a Happy Anniversary and Happy Birthday to a few of our friends: Bishop Ronald and Bishop Candace Willis— Happy 26th Wedding Anniversary; Larry and Deana Gibson, celebrating 48 years of marriage; and Sterling Sylvester, Sr. and wife Shirley celebrating 23 years of marriage. Congratulations to all of you and may you all have many more.

Well now, the Greater Catonsville Chamber of Commerce is hosting the Catonsville's Frederick Road Friday Concerts again— starting on Friday, July 9 and running until Friday, August 27, 2021, from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. These concerts bring live music to Catonsville's village while benefiting a different local nonprofit organization each week. Located in the Shops on Mellor parking lot at 15 Mellor Avenue, the series offers free outdoor musical performances within walking distance of local merchants and restaurants.

Honey Child! There is so much more. Check this out! Magooby's House located at 9603 Deereco Road in Lutherville-Timonium, Maryland is hosting the Paul Mooney Love Tribute Comedy Show and Celebration on Sunday, July 18, 2021 from 5 p.m. to 8 p.m. featuring Eartha Harris, Troy Rawlings, and Larry Lancaster. For more information, call 443-655-7198.

No honey, I am not finished! The first Wednesday of every month from 6 p.m. to 10 p.m., one of my favorite DJs— DJ Mike Jones, will be playing at the City View Bar and Grill, 6700 Security Blvd.

Moving right along; City View 1<sup>st</sup> Annual Crab Feast under the tents is Sunday, July 18 from 5-9 p.m. food and beverages included, DJ Mike Jones will be playing for this event as well.

Marvin Cheatham invites you to an Olympic Skateboard Viewing Party and Competition on July 24, 2021 at 8 p.m. at 1515-57 N. McKean Avenue in Baltimore. For the first time ever Olympic Skateboarding Event which will be available for view on a big screen in the park. Free refreshments and cupcakes, by Raven's Sweet Treats. Open at 7 p.m.

One of my favorite activities is the Randallstown's Annual Farmer's Market in Randallstown Plaza Shopping Center (corner of Liberty & Offutt Roads) next to CCBC. It jumps off every Wednesday from now through October 27, 2021 from 1 p.m. to 5 p.m. Come out and support local farmer, Jen Pamela Boyle Phal's farm and others. I will see you there.

Believe it or not, there is more but I am out of space and out of time, It is so wonderful to write about something to put a smile on your face and to look forward to instead of a column full of death and obituaries. Thank God!

Well, my friends, as I said, I am out of space. But remember if you need me, call me at 410-833-9474 or email me at [rosapryor@aol.com](mailto:rosapryor@aol.com). My website: [www.rambling-rose.com](http://www.rambling-rose.com). **UNTIL THE NEXT TIME, I'MUSICALLY YOURS.**



*Anthony McCarthy and Cara Williams are hosts for for the daily talk show, "Two Way Talk" on WEAA 88.9 FM, Monday through Friday from 5 p.m. to 7 p.m. They will discuss education, business, music, art, food and much more. Congrats my friends!*



*He is doing it again! Grand Opening Event on Friday, July 23, 2021 hosted by the one and only Carlos Hutchins at the "Not Just Crab" located at 8731 Liberty Road in Randallstown. Performing live entertainment with "SLAGZ" starting at 6 p.m. Free admission! For more information, call Carlos at 301-296-0885 and "Tell him Rambling Rose told you!"*



*Lou Fields is presenting and hosting a Happy Birthday Tribute to Baltimore's own, a member of the internationally known singing group Temptations, Damon Harris on Saturday July 17, 2021 at 7 p.m. ZOOM ID. 88113183843, pin 817033. For more information, call 4439837974.*



# Fourteen-year-old first African American to win Scripps National Spelling Bee

By Stacy M. Brown  
 NNPA Newswire Senior National  
 Correspondent @StacyBrownMedia

Zaila Avant-garde twirled around in a spin, her smile radiating from the clear braces covering her teeth as confetti fell from the ceilings. The 14-year-old from Harvey, Louisiana, had reason to twirl and spin, and most importantly, she had more than enough reasons to smile.

After spelling the word “Murraya,” a genus of tropical Asiatic and Australian trees, Zaila became the first African American to win the Scripps National Spelling Bee. The contest has existed for nearly a century.

“Now I get to get a nice trophy, which is the best part of any win,” Zaila exclaimed in an ESPN interview right after her history-making victory.

Zaila also took home the \$50,000 first prize.

“Not only has she competed in spelling bees for two years, she already holds three Guinness World Records for dribbling, bouncing, and juggling basketballs. All



*Zaila Avant-garde made history as the first African American student to win the Scripps National Spelling Bee. She spelled the word “Murraya,” correctly, which is a genus of tropical Asiatic and Australian trees to win.*

**Photo Credit: Screen Capture from PBS News Hour Video/YouTube**

before the ninth grade,” New York Times writer Maria Cramer noted.

In an interview with “Good Morning America,” Zaila remarked that she hopes that more African American students would participate and fare well in the Scripps Spelling Bee.

“It is a gate-opener to being interested in education,” Zaila proclaimed.

Celebrities and others praised Zaila for her victory.

“Three Guinness World Records and now the national spelling bee champ! Congrats, Zaila—your hard work is paying off. We’re all proud of you,” former President Barack Obama tweeted.

“There’s a Black girl from New Orleans named ZAILA AVANT GARDE currently competing in the Scripps National Spelling Bee today, and no one talks to me about anything else,” movie producer Franklin Leonard tweeted just before Zaila’s victory.

“Remember to twirl like Zaila Avant-garde today,” White House Deputy Press Secretary Karine Jean-Pierre stated.

The website: [www.latestcelebarticles.com](http://www.latestcelebarticles.com) celebrated the victory by adding Zaila to the A-list. The site’s authors detailed Zaila’s journey, noting that she was the regional spelling champion in New Orleans in 2019.

She is the IJA Juggling Silver Medalist

and Kaplan Hexco Bee Champion, according to her Instagram bio. Zaila achieved her first world record in 2019 for the most bounce juggles with three basketballs in one minute at 231.

Zaila classified spelling as a “side pastime” despite having practiced for seven hours each day.

“She is a basketball prodigy who aspires to play in the WNBA one day and owns three Guinness World Records for simultaneously dribbling several balls,” the website noted.

The Spelling Bee championship came down to Zaila and Chaitra Thummala, a 12-year-old from San Francisco.

Chaitra spelled the word “fewtrils,” and Zaila followed up by spelling “retene.”

Chaitra misfired on the word “neroli oil” and opened the way for Zaila to claim the title.

An official told her to spell “Murraya” and explained that it meant a genus of tropical Asiatic and Australian trees having pinnate leaves with imbricated petals.

“Does this word contain like the English word ‘Murray,’ which would be the name of a comedian?” Zaila asked.

She then asked for the language of origin before nailing it.

“I got it,” Zaila exclaimed.



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## Local resident to compete for Miss Maryland USA 2021

Baltimore— Kayla Morgan, 27, of Baltimore will compete for the title of Miss Maryland USA 2021 on July 24 and July 25, 2021 at The Bethesda North Marriott Hotel & Conference Center in Bethesda.

Morgan graduated Magna Cum Laude from The Maryland Institute College of Art with a Bachelor of Fine Arts. She was a 2019 cohort member of the Urban Arts Leadership Fellowship, an initiative of the Greater Baltimore Cultural Alliance, receiving a citation from the Mayor of Baltimore for her work in her local community. Most recently, she was honored with a citation from the Secretary of Commerce for her dedication and contributions while working at the Maryland State Arts Council.

“As an artist, arts administrator and educator, my goal is to inspire others to realize their own potential through creativity, service, and education for myself and my community,” Morgan said.

Morgan mentors young girls in Baltimore, regularly volunteers at the Women’s Law Center of Maryland, and assists in fundraising and programming initiatives for several non-profits across the state. She says that if she were to win the title of Miss Maryland USA



**Kayla Morgan**  
Courtesy Photo

2021, she would, “leverage her title to promote positive change and inclusivity for historically resilient communities by utilizing the transformative power of the arts.”

Morgan would also leave a lasting legacy as the first openly LGBTQ+ Miss Maryland USA.

Her sponsors for the pageant are Esteem Beauty Boutique and Cash Captures, both local women-owned small businesses. The Miss Maryland USA® and Miss Maryland Teen USA® pageants are the Official Preliminaries to the Miss USA® and Miss Teen USA® pageants.

## New novel centers on colorism

Baltimore— In her 1983 book, *In Search of Our Mother’s Gardens*, celebrated author Alice Walker, defined colorism as “prejudicial or preferential treatment of same-race people based solely on their color.”

This is the central topic in *The Color of Pretty*, the fictionalized memoir of debut author Michelle Williams. The book’s main character Lola, is faced with many life challenges including an absentee father, bullying, low self-esteem and colorism because of her dark-skinned complexion that follows her from childhood to adulthood. Despite her struggles she chose happiness over self-doubt— she began reflecting as she embarked on her journey of healing.

“I want my book to encourage people to know that it is okay to seek help, dig deep and find out where or when did the feelings start, it may be hard, tough and painful but you have to do the work,” said Williams. “Confidence is like a game, to gain your confidence, you need to take more action.”

Williams’ childhood was both exciting and adventurous but also filled with complicated memories and loneliness because of the colorism she experienced.

She persevered and earned a B.S. in Business and Healthcare Administration, and a graduate degree in Human Resources Management and Public Administration. With twenty-four plus years of experience in human resources, she is seen as a leader in her industry.



**Baltimore author Michelle Williams shares her experiences with being dark-skinned in her debut novel *The Color of Pretty*. She will be signing her book at the “Confidence Looks Good on You” conference on Saturday, July 24, 2021. For more information, visit: [www.thecolorofpretty.com](http://www.thecolorofpretty.com)**

Courtesy Photo

Michelle Williams will be signing her book *The Color of Pretty* at the upcoming 1st annual conference for women, “Confidence Looks Good on You” on Saturday, July 24, 2021, from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. at Cellar2 @ Parkville, 7631 Harford Road in Baltimore. Registration is \$20.

To learn more about *The Color of Pretty* and the upcoming “Confidence Looks Good on You” conference, visit: [www.thecolorofpretty.com](http://www.thecolorofpretty.com).



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## TruSo, a Black-owned social networking App set to launch

By Stacy M. Brown, NNPA Newswire  
Senior National Correspondent  
@StacyBrownMedia

A new app could end the so-called “Black Twitter” experience and allow African Americans their own social media platform. Backed by celebrities Sway Calloway, Kareem Grimes, Terrell Owens and Miki Barber, the Black-owned social networking app, TruSo, is poised to debut.

“I believe in the power of community— especially cultural communities,” Matthew Newman, the founder and CEO of TruSo noted in a news release. “As it relates to the Black community, the entire world has witnessed what we can accomplish when we join together behind a cause— we create a phenomenon.

“Now, we are introducing a social community that is built and funded by Blacks for Blacks and has monetization built-in so that everyone wins. Those who use the app should also benefit financially. That’s what we’ve built.”

Reportedly, TruSo is designed to “empower and advance personal and career aspirations.”

It includes a content calendar that engages prominent individuals within several categories: Arts & Culture, Business & Marketing, and more.

Calloway says his partnership with the app was a strategic one and one that he felt others would use very well.

“I got involved with TruSo because this technology is truly disruptive in the social networking space,” he said.

Grimes said Newman “has a clear vision and go-to-market strategy. I’ve worked with him on other projects, so I’m well-aware of his business acumen, and I welcomed the opportunity to get involved.”

Upon launch, TruSo will be available for both Apple and Android users.

The app is free, and individuals who join the waitlist in July will receive a complimentary six-month premium membership. Sign up at [JoinTruSo.com](http://JoinTruSo.com) and enter the referral code TruSoPR21.

# Five ways to make failure the best thing that ever happened to you

News & Experts— Steve Jobs once said that getting fired from Apple – the global tech giant he co-founded – was the best thing that could’ve ever happened to him.

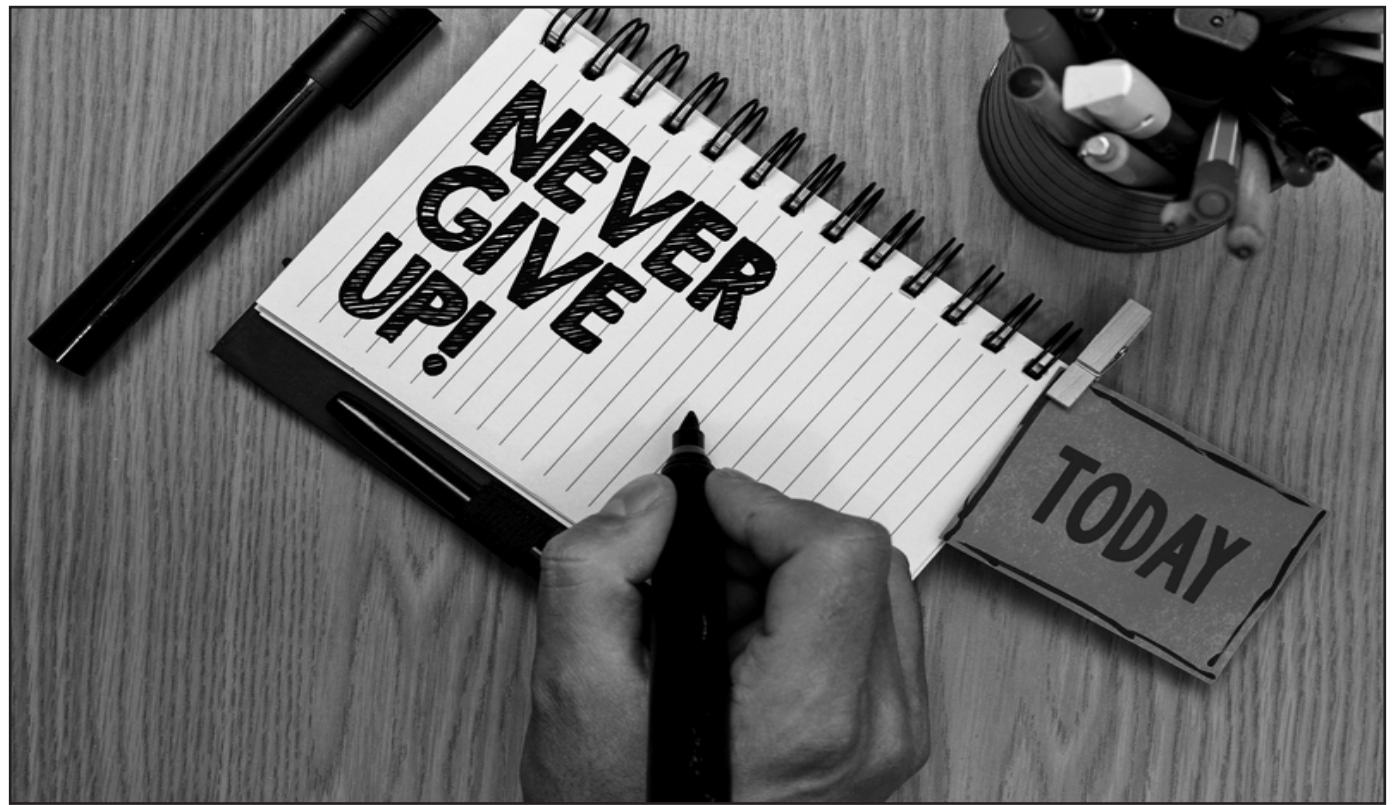
In Jobs’ case, starting anew removed the burdens of success that he felt at Apple and freed him to enter a new and productive creative period. Jobs’ reflection on his career path illuminates the adage, “When one door closes, another door opens” – but with a twist that applies to many people trying to move on from a major setback, says Chuck Crumpton, author of *The Jagged Journey: A Raw & Real Memoir about the Non-Perfect Path of Life & Business*.

“The key,” Crumpton says, “is not getting stuck in the long hallway between the closed door and new door opening. That can happen due to the piled-up mental clutter of your failures. “Don’t let that happen. Instead, learn from those failures and let that knowledge free you to be your best. Ask yourself, ‘Have you had enough failure in your life to understand what success really is?’”

Crumpton offers five ways to learn from past failures and find lasting success:

**Do a deeper dive than you did last time**— “Too many people take big jobs with good salaries while not thoroughly researching the company and the extent of the challenge they’re getting themselves into,” Crumpton says. “You might like the thought of overcoming and making it work, but you have to do the homework and honestly assess if there are too many headaches involved.”

**Know who you are**— What have your failures told you about yourself? Crumpton says be honest with yourself. Was the position a poor fit, did you overreach, or did the experience shed light on your strengths and weaknesses and what you need to be productive, happy and successful? “Sometimes failure is a matter of simply falling short, and from that realizing where our real strengths lie for the next and better



*Author of “The Jagged Journey: A Raw & Real Memoir about the Non-Perfect Path of Life & Business,” Chuck Crumpton says, the key to moving on from a major setback is not getting stuck in the long hallway between the closed door and new door opening, which can happen due to the piled-up mental clutter of your failures. Instead, learn from those failures and let that knowledge free you to be your best.*

**Photo Credit: ClipArt.com**

opportunity,” Crumpton says. “One of the best things about failure is it can give us a clearer sense of who we are and what we want. And that realization can be energizing and inspiring.”

**Know who your friends are— and aren’t**— Crumpton says your first rule should be to treat everyone the way you want to be treated. But that’s not always reciprocal. “You can’t forget who treated you poorly, who you couldn’t trust, and what you learned from that,” Crumpton says. “The friends you make and the work relationships that worked help us learn more about the type of people we want to be associated with. Who challenged you in a good way? Who made you think and grow as a result? And just as important are knowing the toxic types you don’t want to be around and drag down the culture.”

**Remember your survival instincts**— “Even in an experience that ended up in failure, we can draw strength and confidence from memories of making the best of a tough situation,” Crumpton says. “And if people blamed things on you but you gave your best effort at the time, you can build on that focus toward success in your next opportunity.”

**Don’t share your secret**— “Many people have been burned by telling someone near the top of a company their innermost desires for personal growth, future plans, etc.,” Crumpton says. “Keep it to yourself until you’re ready to go. Otherwise, as I was, you may get kicked out the door before you really have a plan for what’s next. I had an itch to go out on my own, but the scratch wasn’t of my own making.”

“As a society, we put so much focus on

success,” Crumpton says. “Yet failure often unlocks the door to success, and for many who learn from failure, the best is yet to come.”

*Chuck Crumpton is the founder and CEO of Medpoint, LLC, a global consulting firm serving medical device and pharmaceutical companies in the U.S., Europe, Asia, and Latin America. He is the author of The Jagged Journey: A Raw & Real Memoir about the Non-Perfect Path of Life & Business. He’s a featured keynote and session speaker at multi-industry events in the U.S., Europe and Asia for global organizations. For more information, visit: [www.chuckcrumpton.com](http://www.chuckcrumpton.com).*

**“Success is the result of perfection, hard work, learning from failure, loyalty, and persistence.”**  
—Colin Powell



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