

## Linda Felder House of Etiquette, Inc. Helping to 'Design' Brighter Tomorrows



Cherry Hill Elementary/Middle School Springboard Scholars participated in a program conducted at the school by the Linda Felder House of Etiquette. The scholars are pictured with teacher MyRhanda McDaniels and volunteers. All program participants received a certificate. Founded in 2006, Felder House is a 501C3 non-profit organization that seeks to provide inner-city youth with etiquette skills and talents to help enable them to grow into nurtured and professional young adults. Since its inception, Felder House has taught over 500 children etiquette skills and partnered with more than 20 organizations. A March 2011 article about Linda Felder House of Etiquette, Inc. (foreground) was on display at the closing ceremony, and the publication was honored during the event. (See article on page 11) Photo: Ursula V. Battle



# Public input sought as 'Baltimore Together' maps out a new economic vision for city

By Stacy M. Brown

Baltimore Together, a public-private initiative led by the Baltimore Development Corporation (BDC) to support creating a shared vision of inclusive economic growth in Charm City, serves as the city's Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy over the next five years.

Through a year-long process, a diverse group of stakeholders developed a comprehensive economic development strategy that officials from the initiative say builds on Baltimore's strengths, acknowledges its challenges and identifies a range of steps that will help create an inclusive and vibrant economy for all.

"We've taken what we've done in the past to create this strategy document and expanded the scope and amount of engagement around this topic to make it, hopefully, a much more community-wide plan people can get involved with," said Colin Tarbert, the president and CEO of the BDC.

Tarbert serves as part of Mayor Brandon Scott's administration.

"Before, this was more of a government-type publication," Tarbert remarked. "This time, we're making it into a collaborative and participatory effort."

Officials are now conducting a public review of the important document. They are inviting all in the city to comment at [www.baltimoretogether.com](http://www.baltimoretogether.com). The comment period ends on September 30, 2021.

Tarbert and city officials assert that the goal is to build an equitable economy in Baltimore. The plan identifies critically important goals to strengthen the city's economy and outlines strategies for reaching them.



The vision would allow the city to demonstrate on a global scale how to create an urban economy based on diversity, inclusion, and resiliency and uplift historically excluded residents.

All while attracting investment, businesses, individuals, and corporations committed to contributing to an equitable economy.

"We took a lot of time to work on the vision statement and it's really focused on Baltimore as a diverse and inclusive economy," Tarbert insisted. "We call out a couple of specific things. First, we talk about uplifting historically excluded Baltimoreans, which is part of what makes this plan different."

"We talk about attracting new investment and people, but we want people who are committed to an equitable vision. We talk about the

history of systemic racism; we call out that we want to focus on policies that serve underserved businesses. We want to make sure that minority leaders are

part of growth sectors like technology and logistics."

The plan recognizes the city's history of racialized economic disinvestment, according to Tarbert.

He further said the plan also recognizes the damage done to Black residents because of systemic racism. Ultimately, city officials said work must occur collaboratively to address significant challenges and competitive imbalances that hold Baltimore back.

Officials say that challenges such as racial disparities, crime, high taxes, and an inaccurate national profile must be tackled as part of an economic development strategy.

"For me, as Mayor and as a son of Baltimore, 'Baltimore Together' represents developing collaborative and holistic approaches toward building a more equitable economy and ultimately a better city for all of our residents," Mayor Scott noted in a statement.

To comment or provide input, visit: [www.baltimoretogether.com](http://www.baltimoretogether.com).

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# Guest Editorials/Letters

## Ben & Jerry's new cold brew

By Stacy M. Brown, NNPA Newswire

You don't have to be a barista to enjoy Ben & Jerry's newest Limited Batch flavor—a cool combination of cold brew, coffee ice cream, marshmallow swirls, and fudge brownies.

"Change is Brewing" was created to help transform the nation's approach to public safety to one that prioritizes community needs.

Change is Brewing is part of Ben & Jerry's ongoing work to advance racial justice, calling for the nation to divest from a broken criminal legal system and invest in services that help communities thrive, like mental health treatment, counseling, substance use treatment, and healthcare.

Ben & Jerry's is joining more than 70 other organizations in supporting The People's Response Act, landmark legislation introduced by Congresswoman Cori Bush, which was written to transform a system that disproportionately criminalizes Black and Brown people into a system that provides resources to help every community, and especially communities of color, thrive.

The People's Response Act was developed in partnership with community organizers, grassroots organizations, and movement partners, including the Movement for Black Lives (M4BL).

"The Movement for Black Lives welcomes Ben & Jerry's support of The People's Response Act, which would expand a new vision for public safety rooted in public health; and their investment in local organizations working every day in service of a new future for Black people," said Monifa Bande, member of the leadership of M4BL's Policy Table. "Now is the time for Congress to embrace bold, courageous leadership and join Congresswoman Cori Bush in co-sponsoring The People's Response Act and ensuring its final passage."

"We appreciate Congresswoman Cori Bush for having the courage and vision to introduce the People's Response Act, legislation that would boldly transform public safety in America," said Jabari Paul, US Activism Manager for Ben & Jerry's. "We've come to understand that public safety is also a matter of public health. Congresswoman Bush's legislation begins to make that important link by creating a public safety division within the Department of Health and Human Services."

The deep, rich coffee flavor in Change is Brewing is from BLK & Bold, the first Black-owned, nationally distributed coffee company that gives five percent of its profits to initiatives that support youth in need.

Greyston Bakery, a values-led supplier and longtime Ben & Jerry's partner, provides the scrumptious fudge brownies. The bakery has an "open hiring" policy that provides opportunities for people facing barriers to employment.

On the pint, Black multi-disciplinary artist Laci Jordan paints a colorful picture of what the world might look like when Black people feel safe and all communities can thrive.

Change is Brewing will be available as a Limited Batch flavor at participating Ben & Jerry's Scoop Shops and on store shelves for a suggested price of \$4.49-5.69.

A portion of the proceeds from the sale of Change is Brewing will go to grassroots groups working to transform public safety in America.

To learn more, visit: [benjerry.com/change](http://benjerry.com/change).

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## Letters to the Editor:

### Editor:

While it's hard to know what historical figures would think of modern circumstances, I suspect founding father Benjamin Franklin would be enthusiastic about the development of cultured meat. For those who don't know, cultured meat is grown from cells, without slaughter. It's better for the environment and public health, in addition to animal welfare.

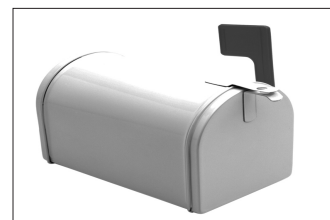
According to his autobiography, Franklin was a vegetarian who viewed killing our fellow creatures as "unprovoked murder." That is until he smelled an especially tempting bit of fish. The founding father gave up his compassionate stance, noting animals

eat other animals. "So convenient a thing it is to be a reasonable creature, since it enables one to find or make a reason for everything one has a mind to do," he wrote, clearly not convincing himself.

I think cultured meat would have made it easier for Franklin to align his values and actions. For the sake of animal welfare, as well as public health and the environment, our legislators should support federal funding for cultured-meat research. Such an investment will help bring this revolutionary protein to market faster, at a competitive price.

**Jon Hochschartner**  
Granby, CT

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## President's new rule is deliberate and targeted discrimination

By Paris Denard

Years ago, my grandfather, a staunch conservative Democrat, told me that he hated to hear U.S. Presidents say “my fellow Americans” because he felt they were not talking about him based on his experiences growing up ostracized in the Jim Crow South.

I never understood what he felt until Joe Biden's dark and divisive attack on all unvaccinated Americans. So, let's examine who he was lecturing when he decreed his latest round of draconian mandates. President Biden devoted an entire speech to lecture and demonize minorities about COVID-19.

Unvaccinated Americans are disproportionately: Black, Hispanic, Independent, those without college degrees, the young, rural Americans, and lower-income workers. Only 43 percent of Black Americans and 48 percent of Hispanic Americans have taken the vaccine, compared with 52 percent of White Americans.

President Biden talked with such contempt about minorities— who make up a disproportionate amount of unvaccinated Americans— when he said, “the vast majority of Americans are doing the right thing. Nearly three-quarters of the eligible have gotten at least one shot, but one quarter has not gotten any— that's nearly 80 million Americans, not

workers. For years there was a successful push to ban discriminatory housing practices that prevented minorities from owning homes. For years there was a push to end measures that would force Black Americans from passing a ridiculous— and in many instances unpassable— test to vote.

President Biden's new rule is deliberate and targeted discrimination, a clear

take the vaccine. President Biden's rules ignore that some have religious objections and simply do not trust the federal government forcing minorities to take a vaccine given the past experiences with forced sterilizations and the Tuskegee Experiment.

Joe Biden ran for president as a “uniter.” His angry and blame-filled speech will only further divide our country and stoke fear in Americans who already have become frustrated, confused, and worried about the future of our country. President Biden has violated the Constitution, and I am proud the RNC has already committed to suing this Administration on behalf of the freedoms of millions of minorities in America.

In his speech, Joe Biden made it clear he has no qualms with discriminating against Black Americans using his ever-expanding power and authority as president.

Who would have thought that in 2021, the Democrats would be back to their old tricks with President Biden now telling Black people that if you want to work in the public or private sector, you must take the vaccine? The Biden-Harris administration knows but does not care about how their new national forced vaccination plan will impact Americans.

Like my grandfather felt years ago about past leaders, I feel that President Biden attacked my community, infringed on our rights, freedoms, and publicly made so many minorities feel like second-class citizens.

*Paris Denard is the National Spokesperson and Director of Black Media Affairs for the Republican National Committee (RNC). Follow him on Twitter: @PARISDENNARD.*

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***“The scope of forced vaccinations does not stop at federal employees. President Biden declared that almost all private employers are now subject to a new Department of Labor rule requiring every one of their workers to get the vaccine, or they will have to require weekly mandatory testing at the expense of the employee or employer.”***

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vaccinated. And in a country as large as ours, that's 25 percent minority. That 25 percent can cause a lot of damage— and they are.”

By forcing all unvaccinated federal workers and contractors to take the vaccine to remain employed, President Biden is forcing them to make an unfair choice: get the shot or get fired. According to the most recent government data, more than 364,000 civilian federal workers are Black. That represents nearly one in five federal workers.

The scope of forced vaccinations does not stop at federal employees. President Biden declared that almost all private employers are now subject to a new Department of Labor rule requiring every one of their workers to get the vaccine, or they will have to require weekly mandatory testing at the expense of the employee or employer.

For years there was a push to “ban the box” from preventing employers from discriminating against applicants who checked that they were convicted of a past felony, a practice that disproportionately hurt minority

barrier to entry for new employment, and a deterrent to return to work.

Despite polls showing that the majority of Black Americans support election integrity efforts like showing an ID to protect their vote, Joe Biden and the Democrats have been against it, calling it racist. Now, President Biden is pressuring large entertainment, concert, and sporting venues to use a vaccine passport or test people for COVID-19 to enter.

Allowing people to take a test to enter an establishment is just as problematic because there is no doubt that like the private employer that cost will be passed on to the unvaccinated patron or worker. “More than half of unvaccinated Americans” come from households with incomes of less than \$50,000, according to Census Bureau data. Americans with household income under \$40,000 are the least likely to be vaccinated, according to Kaiser Family Foundation data.

These demands are void of exceptions and ignore natural immunity. They do not take into legitimate consideration those with compromised immune disorders that the CDC says should not

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# Aunt Kelly's Cookies: Fresh, Old-School Flavor to the Delight of Customers

By Stacy M. Brown

Many people fondly remember, adore and revere the old-school packaged cookies they craved before and after the lunch bell rang in elementary school.

The taste of chocolate chip or even butter crunch cookies was something most couldn't resist. And, while some still long for the authentic taste that's so hard to find, Kelly Simmons has baked up the perfect recipe.

After owning a beauty salon for 13 years and then working as an educator in Jessup, Maryland, Simmons founded and opened Aunt Kelly's Cookies, a bakery where customers brag—"you can taste the homemade goodness in every bite."

"I only use the freshest, highest quality ingredients, and we bake on site every day to ensure that the cookies taste as fresh as they look," Simmons remarked.

Located at 857 N. Howard Street in Baltimore City, Aunt Kelly's Cookies has earned acclaim for its butter crunch, chocolate chip, and butter pecan cookies. One of the more popular varieties is the butter crunch and chocolate chip combination.

"That's my favorite," Simmons exclaimed. "I thought, 'why hasn't anyone put those two together?' I wondered why they were never married."

The combination proved so popular, Simmons included it in her "Cookie of the Month" selections. However, that wasn't the only flavor that customers—both in Baltimore and those ordering online—craved.

"I did another one called butter pecan, and I brought it out as a Cookie of the Month," Simmons recalled. "When I



**Located at 857 N. Howard Street in Baltimore City, Aunt Kelly's Cookies has earned acclaim for its butter crunch, chocolate chip, and butter pecan cookies. One of the more popular varieties is the butter crunch and chocolate chip combination.**

**Courtesy Photo/Aunt Kelly's Cookies**

took it away, my customers hounded me for almost eight months to bring them back."

Simmons' journey into the bakery business began in the 1980s as a young girl living in Baltimore.

"I was in grade school, and like many of my peers, I would make sure I had change for buying butter crunch cookies. As the years passed, I searched for but could never find that same butter crunch taste I remembered," she explained.

"That is until I started baking my own cookies in 1999. I had finally discovered the key ingredients that make this

memorable cookie. I couldn't wait to share my discovery with my family, and now I want to share that experience with everyone."

While working as an educator, she noted that she would sometimes bake cookies for her students, and they fell in love with the taste.

"I have had people from Pennsylvania, Maryland, Virginia tasting the cookies," Simmons said. "Where I am, the cookies follow me, and I share them with everyone. People say they remind me of the cookies they used to get in elementary school."

So, what's the secret?

"First of all, I hate tasting chemicals," Simmons reflected. "I'm trying to taste the same cookies that we tasted going back to my grandmother's days. So, I stick to the basics like my grandmother showed me, and that's why I make the cookies fresh every day. We mix and bake onsite each day so that our customers are getting the freshest and purest cookies."

Simmons opened Aunt Kelly's Cookies in 2018, and she says she "mixes every batch with love" using locally sourced ingredients, including Domino Sugar. The cookies are made daily from scratch to ensure they taste as fresh as they look.

"We bake our last daily batch two hours before closing," Simmons continued. "Because of this, our customers say they taste like their grandmother's kitchen and bring back feelings of nostalgia and happiness."

Simmons has quickly established herself as a successful Black woman-owned business in the Baltimore area, and she says she can't wait to make Aunt Kelly's Cookies a household name.

Aunt Kelly's Cookies have already been voted a five-star bakery in over 100 local reviews. She has expanded upon her famous butter crunch cookies and offers a variety of options. While folks can order online, she still hopes to expand to other areas.

"I'd love to open up in D.C.," Simmons said. "I sold some cookies there before, and people loved it. So, it's my goal to open Aunt Kelly's Cookies in D.C."

To learn more about Aunt Kelly's Cookies or to place an order, visit <https://www.auntkellyscookies.com/>.

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# LRF Shining The Light on Lymphoma during Blood Cancer Month

By Ursula V. Battle

September is Blood Cancer Awareness Month. According to the Lymphoma Research Foundation (LRF), Lymphoma is the most common type of blood cancer. Specifically, lymphoma is a cancer that affects lymphocytes, which are a type of white blood cell. Lymphocytes travel through the blood and lymphatic system to defend the body against foreign invaders like bacteria and viruses.

Lymphomas usually develop when a change, or mutation, occurs within a lymphocyte, causing the abnormal cell to replicate faster than or live longer than, a normal lymphocyte. Like normal lymphocytes, cancerous lymphocytes can travel through the blood and lymphatic system and spread and grow in many parts of the body, including the lymph nodes, spleen, bone marrow, and other organs.

To help bring attention to the disease, LRF, the nation's largest nonprofit organization devoted exclusively to funding innovative lymphoma research, partnered with The Capital Wheel in National Harbor to light it the color red as part of LRF's 'Light It Red for Lymphoma' campaign.

Light It Red for Lymphoma is LRF's grassroots Blood Cancer Awareness Month initiative that brings attention to lymphoma and in the global conversation by lighting buildings, landmarks, bridges, monuments, and homes red. The wheel, which soars 180 feet above the Potomac River was recently lit for the campaign.

LRF's Ambassadors are also a huge part of the Light It Red for Lymphoma campaign. These Ambassadors are lymphoma patients and survivors who help share LRF's mission and resources for others in need. Erica Campbell is Maryland's Ambassador.

"This is a great initiative not only as a survivor, but to be able to raise



**Erica Campbell is the Lymphoma Research Foundation's Maryland Ambassador** Courtesy Photo

awareness," said Campbell. "My role is to inspire others. "This is also a great initiative in bringing awareness to individuals that don't know much about blood cancers or lymphoma."

According to LRF, signs and symptoms of the cancer are not specific to lymphoma and are, in fact, similar to those of many other illnesses. People often first go to the doctor because they think they have a cold, the flu or some other respiratory infection that does not go away. Common symptoms of lymphoma include swelling of lymph nodes, which may or may not be painless, fever, unexplained weight loss, sweating (often at night), chills, lack of energy, and itching.

In November of 2012, I had this persistent cough," Campbell recalled. "I took over the counter medications for a couple of weeks, and that didn't work. So, I decided to make an appointment with my primary physician, and he said I had a dry cough cold. Seven days later, after taking all the antibiotics, I was still

coughing. I thought it might be more than a cold, so I went back to see my physician again. He sent me to do a CAT Scan."

According to Campbell, she would eventually learn the lymph nodes around her lungs were enlarged. She eventually found out in March 2013, she had bone cancer.

"My journey began from that day," said Campbell who was 27 at the time of her diagnosis and is now 36. "Wow, everything was going through my mind. I had cancer. Hearing that word automatically frightened me. I felt like I was in a twilight zone. I was scared. I was angry with God in that moment. I was confused.

"I got through that with my faith, family, friends, and a whole lot of encouragement. A social worker also gave me information about the Lymphoma Research Foundation. They were very supportive during my journey. Now here I am, an ambassador with the organization. I just celebrated eight years since my initial diagnosis. I want to inspire others and give hope and

encouragement."

LRF is the nation's largest non-profit organization devoted to funding innovative research and serving the lymphoma community through a comprehensive series of education programs, outreach initiatives and patient services. To date, LRF has awarded more than \$67 million in lymphoma-specific research.

"I want to help inspire others and give hope and encouragement," said Campbell. "I want to be a blessing. I also want others to know they can overcome their battle and to never give up. I want them to understand they too can have a disaster they are going through such as being newly diagnosed with cancer and make it. I want to encourage others through my survivorship."

Campbell is also the author of a new book entitled, *I Survived: From Cancer to the Runway*. The book is available on Amazon. For more information about the Lymphoma Research Foundation (LRF) visit: [www.lymphoma.org](http://www.lymphoma.org).



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# Howard County Executive honors rangers for saving two lives

By Ursula V. Battle

*Jurisdiction has seen a 70 percent decrease in fatal overdoses*

Two park rangers responding to a medical emergency call find two people unconscious from a heroin overdose. Neither one of the men are breathing, nor have a pulse, and bluish in color around the lips. The quick-thinking rangers heroically come to their rescue, administering one dose of Narcan (naloxone) and providing chest compressions. Eventually, both men show signs of life. The rangers have saved the day!

While this may sound like a scene in a movie, this is a real-life incident and took place on Saturday, August 7, 2021 at approximately 6:19 p.m. at Rockburn Branch Park located in Elkridge, MD. The real-life hero and heroine are Rangers Ian Smith and Tabitha Kanagie.

On Tuesday, September 14, 2021 Ranger Smith and Ranger Kanagie were honored for their heroics by Howard County Executive Dr. Calvin Ball.

“In 2021, Narcan was administered in every case of a non-fatal overdose,” said Dr. Ball. “During the pandemic, our Health Department has continued to work with community partners and government departments to train more people in overdose response, including how to administer Narcan in an emergency. These efforts have resulted in real results and lives saved. This situation could have ended much differently if these two rangers had not been trained in our Overdose Response Program and how to administer Narcan. Thank you to our Rangers for their quick action, and to the many others who



**Ian Smith, Howard County Park Ranger; Calvin Ball, Howard County Executive; and Tabitha Kanagie. Troopers Smith and Kanagie were honored for saving the lives of two individuals who overdosed.** Photo by Ursula V. Battle

arrived on the scene to help save lives that day.”

Howard County Fire and Rescue arrived at approximately 6:32 p.m. and took over life-saving procedures. They delivered more doses of naloxone to the patients and transported both patients to Howard County General Hospital.

In honoring the rangers, Dr. Ball also provided a comprehensive opioid update, highlighting continued efforts to combat the opioid crisis in Howard County by ensuring access to care and harm reduction initiatives. County Executive Ball noted the measurable progress in Howard County’s efforts to combat the opioid crisis prior to the pandemic, with a continued decrease in both non-fatal and fatal overdoses from

2017 to 2019. Additionally, nonfatal overdoses fell from a high of 132 in 2018 to 99 in 2020—a 25 percent decrease.

Dr. Ball noted the COVID-19 pandemic brought many challenges to those facing substance misuse. In 2020, Howard County saw a 43 percent increase in opioid related deaths compared to 2019, part of a national and statewide trend as the COVID-19 pandemic exacerbated opioid and substance misuse. The state saw its highest opioid fatality number to date in 2020, at over 2,500 deaths statewide. While fatalities at the State level continue to rise, Howard County has seen a drop in fatal overdoses from last year, down over 70 percent, from 47 to nine.

“For today’s event, I’m very pleased that we were able to not only convey to the public, the dire situation, but remind them that there is hope, that there are heroes, that each and every one of us can be a hero, and with the right training, and we can save lives,” said Dr. Ball, who honored the rangers in the pavilion where the incident took place.

“As a Howard County resident and a member of the Elkridge community, I would like to express how grateful I am for the positive outcome of this incident,” Park Ranger Smith. “I am grateful for the opportunity to give back to my community and grateful to everyone here for their support.”

In being honored, Park Ranger Kanagie said, “We could not have accomplished what we did without the quick and skillful response of Howard County’s Police and Fire and Rescue and the Narcan provided by the Howard County Health Department. I’d also like to thank County Executive Ball and the Recreation and Parks Director Delorme, for their continued support of the Park Ranger Program.”

Delorme applauded the rangers’ efforts. “Tabitha and Ian are true life savers,” said Delorme. “Their extensive training from the Department prepared them to react quickly in a stressful situation where seconds made the difference between life and death.”

Fire Chief Louis Winston also praised the work of Park Rangers Smith and Kanagie.

“Our Park Rangers’ quick response, recognition, and delivery of Narcan prior to EMS arrival certainly saved lives that day,” Chief Winston. “Their actions demonstrate how the community can be the first link in the chain of survival during an overdose crisis.”

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# How Real Life Among The Elite Prepared Yaya DaCosta for Role in "Our Kind Of People"

By Nadine Matthews

In a recent interview, actress Yaya DaCosta "*Chicago Med*" tells *Baltimore Times* that a few personal experiences exposed her to people like those depicted in her new series, "*Our Kind Of People*." She states, "My character Angela is going to Martha's Vineyard for the first time, and she's not from that world."

The world to which DaCosta refers was memorably chronicled in Ivy League-educated lawyer and author Lawrence Otis Graham's 1999 nonfiction book of the same name. The series, which co-stars Morris Chestnut ("*The Resident*"), Joe Morton ("*Scandal*," "*Justice League*"), Debbi Morgan ("*Eve's Bayou*"), and Nadine Ellis ("*All American*"), is loosely based on Graham's book.

New York City native DaCosta attended elite Massachusetts boarding school Northfield Mount Hermon and Ivy League Brown University. "I've had friends and roommates who would vacation at Martha's Vineyard, or were members of Jack and Jill growing up so I was able to hear some stories of their communities and families," she states.

The experiences allowed her some insight into a version of Black life almost never explored in the media. "I gained an understanding of what it means to be nurtured by a set of expectations about who you might be when you grow up, what you might do for work, who you might marry. That world seemed to have more of a consensus about those expectations."

As "*Our Kind Of People*" begins, DaCosta's character Angela Vaughn, is relocating to Martha's Vineyard, specifically the upscale, historically Black enclave of Oak Bluffs. There, along with her aunt and her teen daughter (played by Alana Bright) she sets out to establish her hair care business and finish what her now-deceased mother started years ago.

Vulnerability, DaCosta asserts, is what she feels is Angela's greatest strength.



Yaya DaCosta (far left) in promo image for "Our Kind Of People"  
Courtesy Photo

"Angela has had experiences of heartbreak and neglect over and over again. That can really make a person cold and detached, so the fact that she's still able to have moments of vulnerability, really does show her humanity and her softness." DaCosta points to Angela's fiery disposition as her biggest fault. "She is a hothead. Her temper is her greatest weakness."

There's no question that Angela doesn't exactly fit into the Martha's Vineyard crowd. And she makes a few missteps when trying to do so. DaCosta says she has never really had that issue. "I have always mostly accepted that I'm different and have always been grateful for that."

The series reunites DaCosta with veteran actress Debbi Morgan, whose daughter she played in the iconic daytime soap "*All My Children*."

They're family once again in "*Our Kind Of People*"; this time with Morgan as Angela's wise and gregarious Aunt Piggy. States DaCosta, "I've grown so much since then, this is an entirely different experience. She is such a young-spirited person, so even though she's playing my aunt, we feel more like sisters. It's lovely. She's a powerhouse and I'm so excited to be working with her."

In May 2021, DaCosta announced her departure from drama "*Chicago Med*" where she played nurse April Sexton for six seasons. "Six seasons is a long time to be on a show fostering relationships with the other actors. So it was bittersweet." DaCosta states. "I loved playing a character who was in service."

As much as she loved the character, cast, and fans, DaCosta hints she felt her character had probably gone as far as she was going to go. Fans often told her they wanted April to have more of a storyline. "At a certain point, I realized," says DaCosta, "she may have a new love interest, but when it comes to her and her career, she's not necessarily going anywhere different." The experience of working on "*Chicago Med*" though, will always be meaningful for her. "I'm so grateful to everyone that I worked with. I learned and grew so much."

If the first episode is any indication, "*Our Kind Of People*" is going to be very juicy and very scandalous, offering everything nighttime drama fans expect from the genre. Additionally, DaCosta says she would like fans to come away feeling that they are seeing something new. "In the past it's been easy to fall into a certain cadence, or way of delivering lines. A certain energy or attitude is expected because that sells and or that's considered quote unquote Black." DaCosta says she is "proud 'Our Kind Of People isn't falling into those traps. "None of the characters is just a new version of something already played out. We're actually bringing living, breathing characters to the screen who get to be all the things."

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# Linda Felder House of Etiquette, Inc. Helping to ‘Design’ Brighter Tomorrows

*“Etiquette is just a way of life—being able to communicate with others, go out to dinner at a nice restaurant, do well on a job interview, or travel anywhere in the world. It’s the foundation that allows us to feel comfortable in all different environments.”*

—Linda Felder, Founder and CEO  
Linda Felder House of Etiquette, Inc.

By Ursula V. Battle

Linda Felder, founder and CEO of Linda Felder House of Etiquette, Inc. recalled a conversation with a youth who didn’t understand why he needed to learn about table setting: “I asked him, ‘Well what is your future career?’” reflected Felder. “He told me he liked sports and wanted to play basketball. I told him that if an organization picked him up to play basketball and wanted to take him to lunch, that knowing about table setting was very important. I explained that people are always watching the way in which an individual conducts him or herself. Therefore, good etiquette skills, which includes being knowledgeable about table setting is essential.”

Founded in 2006, Felder House is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization that seeks to provide inner-city youth with etiquette skills and talents to help enable them to grow into nurtured and professional young adults. Since its inception, Felder House has taught over 500 children etiquette skills and partnered with more than 20 organizations.

“When you first meet these children, you have to gain their trust, because they don’t know you,” said Felder. “And that takes a lot of work and sincerity. I just believe in being sincere and honest, and showing the children that I have their best interests at heart. I also illustrate to them that I care about how they live their lives and about their future.”

Linda Felder House of Etiquette recently wrapped up a summer program with Springboard Scholars at Cherry Hill Elementary/Middle School with a

closing ceremony. The vision of Springboard is to close the literacy gap between home and school. The ceremony included lunch, an awards ceremony, and a drone demonstration. Each of the scholars, along with teachers and volunteers received certificates. Felder also presented certificates to *The Baltimore Times* during the program, which was attended by relatives and friends of the scholars, along with school staff.

“The program started June 28, 2021, and was conducted Mondays through Thursdays,” said Felder. “I reinforced good manners and the importance of having good posture. The scholars also learned about hand sewing, eye contact, listening skills, and using all their senses. They also had an extensive learning class program about drones and learned about jewelry making.”

Tracey Garrett, who recently retired as principal of Cherry Hill Elementary/Middle School after nearly 35 years in education – 12 of them at Cherry Hill Elementary/Middle, talked about Linda Felder House of Etiquette.

“Springboard Summer Program allowed schools to select which enrichment program they wanted this year, and of course I selected Linda Felder House of Etiquette to be a part of this,” said Garrett. “We wanted to bring this type of service to our scholars.”

Garrett who said she attended Cherry Hill Elementary/Middle School as a child, added, “We wanted that extra touch of the etiquette piece and for the students to learn skills that are no longer a part of school. It’s about reading, writing, math and science, and we need kids to know about survival skills as well.”

Felder is a native of Baltimore and grew up in Cherry Hill. In 2004, she cashed in her 401k from the Transportation Security Administration to launch Linda Felder House of Etiquette, Inc. A seamstress and fashion designer, she established a school in Catonsville, Md., where she taught youth sewing, modeling, physical education, and etiquette. Linda Felder



Linda Felder going over presentation information with three of her students.

Photos by Ursula V. Battle



Felder (far right) pictured with a scholar and volunteers.

House of Etiquette has continued to grow over the years, and now touts a mobile learning center, which travels throughout communities teaching etiquette, life skills, and fashion. The mobile learning center also offers financial literacy, health and wellness and other information. Felder is also a Warnock Foundation Fellow.

“It’s all about the children,” said Felder. “I will continue to do everything in my power to empower them.”

For more information, visit [www.felderhouseinc.com](http://www.felderhouseinc.com).



During the ceremony at Cherry Hill Elementary/Middle School, scholars were given the opportunity to ask questions. Here they are pictured with teacher MyRhanda McDaniels.



# Comcast appoints West Baltimore native Government and Community Affairs Director for Beltway Region

Baltimore— Comcast announced the addition of Dawn Kirstaetter as Director of Government and Community Affairs for its Beltway Region. A native of West Baltimore and former Deputy Mayor for the City of Baltimore, Kirstaetter will be responsible for leading Comcast’s government and community affairs efforts for Baltimore City, Baltimore County and Carroll County.

In her new role, Kirstaetter will leverage her expertise in partnering with city and community leaders to build upon Comcast’s decade-long commitment to close the digital divide for residents and businesses in need through programs including Internet Essentials, Lift Zones and Comcast RISE, while also managing relationships with policy makers and community organizations.

“We are thrilled Dawn is joining our team as her proven leadership and passion for the communities we serve will add to our ongoing efforts to keep our customers connected, informed and supported throughout the Baltimore area,” said Misty Allen, Vice President of Government and Regulatory Affairs for Comcast’s Beltway Region.

Prior to joining Comcast, Kirstaetter served as Deputy Mayor of Baltimore,



**Dawn Kirstaetter**  
Courtesy Photo/Comcast

where she worked closely with the Mayor and City Schools on various efforts to expand educational opportunities for Baltimore’s children and youth, including the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools Project. During her tenure as Chief Operating Officer and Vice

President of Strategic Partnerships and Advancement at Baltimore City Community College, she led the institution’s community engagement, marketing, and fundraising efforts. As Chief Operating Officer at Associated Black Charities, she led the day-to-day

operations of the organization and convened large scale events to spotlight local leaders, provide networking opportunities for women, and create awareness about systemic racism and social justice.

“Baltimore gave me a strong foundation for success, and I’ve committed my life to giving back by empowering young people and advocating for programs and resources to help them achieve their dreams,” added Kirstaetter. “Comcast shares my commitment to Baltimore, and that’s why I’m proud to join this team and work with the Mayor’s Office, the City Council and community leaders to build solutions tied to digital equity, workforce development, and digital skills training.”

Kirstaetter is a graduate of Baltimore City Public Schools and received a Bachelor of Arts degree from Georgetown University and a Masters of Social Work from Clark Atlanta University. She serves as a board member for several Baltimore-based organizations including the Sinai Hospital of Baltimore, Parks and People, and the Visit Baltimore Education and Training Foundation. She is also a trustee for The SEED School of Maryland.

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# Rambling Rose

**Baltimore Festivals are Jumping!**



*Rosa Pryor Trusty*

Hello my dear friends I hope my words will find you in good health, happy and having fun. Speaking of having fun, my Boo-Boo and I just got back from our vacation. We drove to Irmo, South Carolina, a little town in Columbia to visit our son, Keith Hendricks and his wife as well as our other son, Kelvin Atkinson who live in Ocean City, New Jersey. Kelvin flew down there a week before we got there and it was absolutely wonderful. Being with our sons and daughter-in-law out of town was just what the doctor ordered after being in the house for over a year and a half. We thank God for bringing us back safely and with no incidents.

As soon as I got back last week, I realized that the festivals were jumping up and down like James Brown. I was so excited! But remember folks, please wear your mask, no matter whether you are out doors or indoors. If people are less than six feet from you it is still dangerous. I have already been to a couple, but so far my favorite is the Baltimore County African American Cultural Festival. It was really nice. The entertainment was awesome— there were many vendors all over the courtyard. We wanted to see more than we did, but our back and knees just wouldn't let us. Okay no more about the past festivals.

This is what's coming up; check this out. The Chesapeake Arts Center is hosting an outdoor concert for the whole family to enjoy on Thursday, September 23, from 6 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. Well! That is not long at all, I mean by the time they set their stuff up, it will be time to take the duck-plucking thing down; Terrible situation!. Well, anyhow! It will be held at the Chesapeake Arts Center, 194 Hammonds Lane, Brooklyn Park, Maryland. There will be a lineup at this outdoor concert for the whole family to enjoy and it's free! Take your blankets or

lawn chairs, a picnic basket, some desert, not that you will have time to eat or drink it before you have to leave. You will hear the Island Breeze Band providing you with a mix of Hawaiian, classic rock, pop, country and reggae music. They are really very good.

We have another outdoor concert for you at the Corner Community Center, 5802 Roland Avenue in Baltimore on Saturday, September 25, 2021, from 2 p.m. to 6 p.m. Here you can enjoy listening and dancing to music of the 1920s and 1930s with special guest host, Johnathan Palevsky from WBJC. The 12-piece band specializes in early jazz and dance tunes from 1920 to 1935. Music conducted by Jari Villanueva and Lynn Summerall. If this is your thing, then enjoy. Well at least it will last more than an hour. OH! Did I tell you that this is also free and open to the public?

No! No! Sweetie, I am not finished yet. There is more— another free musical event given by the Chesapeake Arts Center on Thursday, September 30, 2021 from 6 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. at 194 Hammonds Lane, Brooklyn Park, Maryland. They will host a terrific lineup on outdoor concerts for the whole family. Again take your blankets, lawn chairs, picnic basket the same as you did the last time. This time they will be featuring Domenic Cicala, from out of Washington, D.C. He is a singer/songwriter, largely influenced by Hank, Elvis and Bruce.

Now this last one I going to tell you about will be held at the B&O Railroad Museum, 901 W. Pratt Street in Baltimore City. They call it the B&O Food Truck Oktoberfest and it will be held on Saturday, October 2, 2021 from noon to 6 p.m. Now this is my kind of festival, the kind with good food and good music. At this festival, there will be an amazing amount of local food trucks and the autumn pastime of Oktoberfest to



**Legendary Pianist Dave Burrell will perform his "Harlem Renaissance on Saturday, September 25, 2021 at 7 p.m. at the An Die Musik Live, 409 N. Charles Street, 7 p.m. Dave Burrell will perform compositions from his new extended work "Harlem Renaissance" and much more. For more information, call: 410-385-2638.**

present a day of food, music, drink and a hell-la-VA lot of fun for the whole family. There will be live music by Rufus Roundtree and Da B'more Brass Factory and Kraken Duo. Drinks from The Back Yard and Lone Oak Farm Brewery, face painting and a variety of delicious dining options including the Queen's Food Truck; Mex on the Run; So Beachy Haitian Cuisine; Craving Potato Factory; and Crown Foods Fried Oreos & Funnel Cakes also there will be other vendors selling jewelry, arts and crafts. I will see you there.

Now look my dear friends, I really have to go now. I am out of space, but enjoy your week, stay safe and remember, if you need me, call me at 410-833-9474 or email me at [rosapryor@aol.com](mailto:rosapryor@aol.com). UNTIL THE NEXT TIME, I'M MUSICALLY YOURS.

**Just look who I had the opportunity and honor to pose with at the Baltimore County African American Cultural Festival last week among many other of my fans, the one and only Louis S. Diggs, born April 13, 1932 in Baltimore and is an African-American writer and historian specializing in the African-American legacy. His work illuminates the historic past of its Black communities. In addition, Diggs has published on Baltimore African-American military records from the American Civil War and the Maryland Army National Guard.**

*Photo by Anderson Ward*



**Randy and Tanya Dennis and Victor Green calls all the Line Dancers to meet with them on Wednesday, September 29 at Crafty Crab, 8606 Liberty Road in Randallstown, Maryland for Happy Hour, 6-9 p.m. No cover. Photo by Anderson Ward**





## Nearly half of Americans want to change jobs — Do you?

Pinkston News Service— New research by Prudential finds that one quarter of all American workers want to change their jobs immediately after the pandemic ends, while 48 percent of American workers want to change their job type altogether. The report further found that 53 percent of people would change industries if they were confident they could be retrained.

There is no denying that American workers are eager for change. After more than a year of seismic shifts in the American economy, many of them brought on by the coronavirus pandemic, Americans have departed significantly from the status quo. Already by September of last year, about half of Americans were saying that their lives were permanently changed by the pandemic.

But the pandemic has also provided many Americans with more time to reflect on their lives and consider what they truly want to do. Americans are in a prime position to make major life decisions, like changing their job type or industry.



Pastor Tim Yee, author of “Finding Your TruCenter,” a six-week small group study program for the TruMotivate personality self-assessment tool by Barna Group (<https://www.barna.com/trumotivate>), thinks that the time is right for millions of Americans to dig down and reconnect with their deepest motivations.

“The COVID-19 pandemic has sparked a huge movement of change in the way people think,” said Yee. “People today are thinking a lot more about the why behind what they do. In this context, it’s more important than ever before that people learn to ask the right questions and access the deep-seated motivations that truly drive them.”

Yee thinks that asking different questions may help Americans make better life changes after the pandemic. By last year, Americans were the unhappiest they had ever been in 50 years, with only 14 percent of U.S.

adults saying they were “very happy.” For Yee, that’s a red flag.

“Understanding your core motivations can help you approach your job in a new light. Perhaps you don’t necessarily need to change your job, or perhaps you do. But knowing your motivations helps you to find a deeper purpose in your work, whatever it is.”

To Yee, one of the biggest problems with the way most Americans approach major life decisions is they fail to find the intersection of what they are good at and what they love to do.

“Based on past Barna research, we know that Christians who find high satisfaction in their work are twice as likely to find high satisfaction in their lives. I believe this applies whether someone is a Christian or not. We’ve seen a direct connection between satisfaction in work and satisfaction in your overall life,” said Yee.

To find that satisfaction, Americans need to take time to connect with what they really value and identify what will make their lives meaningful. For many, that can be their faith traditions, local communities and families, or even just their longest-held dreams. The important thing, according to Yee, is to find what gives you a sense of calling and purpose, and then pursue it with passion and a sustainable plan.

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## Maryland Book Bank provides books to children and educators returning to classroom

Baltimore— The Maryland Book Bank (MBB), a Baltimore-based non-profit dedicated to cultivating literacy in children from under-resourced neighborhoods, is helping teachers fill their classroom libraries amidst the back-to-school rush as many educators and children across Maryland return to in-person classroom instruction.

Educators, children, and families have been streaming through the doors for the past month, picking out books and reveling in the joy of curating a classroom library after a long and difficult year.

During one busy Saturday, MBB Program Manager Kim Tabb remarked, “we have heard from many educators that students have experienced learning loss over the past year and that the ability to have a fully stocked classroom library can be the difference between a child excelling or falling even further behind. That is exactly why the resources we offer are so important.”

Educators are welcome to visit the Book Bank on select days during the week to browse and pick from the Book Bank’s huge selection of children’s books and a variety of membership options are available to fit everyone’s needs. The Book Bank posts updated hours on their website weekly. In addition, contactless pick-up options are available for a convenient and safe way to receive books.



“Our goal is to distribute over 400,000 books this year between our Book Bank distribution and expanded Story Kit program. That would put us on par with where we were prior to the pandemic and let us know that we have made a huge impact on educators and children this year,” said MBB Executive Director Mark Feiring about the Book Bank’s goals for the rest of the year.

The Maryland Book Bank distributes over 450,000 books a year to teachers; librarians; care-givers; and families throughout Maryland. It operates the book bank, a volunteer-organized collection of books open to the public, as well as the Ravens Bookmobile, a free mobile bookstore in partnership with the Baltimore Ravens that travels to local schools. In addition, the MBB operates a social enterprise program that sells adult fiction and non-fiction titles online in order to support its children’s program. Throughout the pandemic, the Book Bank has continued to provide resources for children and educators through their Story Kit and Educator Box programs.

### Free monthly support group for caregivers offered via Zoom

Pasadena, Md.— Chesapeake Life Center will offer a free support group specifically for caregivers that will meet online beginning in October. The Caregivers Monthly Support Group is designed for those actively caring for a loved one with a chronic illness. This group will provide attendees with an opportunity to connect with other caregivers and learn about resources, coping strategies and more, all in a safe, therapeutic space. The group will meet virtually via Zoom for Healthcare from 10:30 to 11:30 a.m. Wednesday, October 6; November 3; and December 1, 2021.

Registration is required and can be completed by calling 888-501-7077 or emailing [griefinfo@chesapeakelifecenter.org](mailto:griefinfo@chesapeakelifecenter.org). For a complete list of in-person and virtual groups and workshops, visit [www.hospicechesapeake.org/events](http://www.hospicechesapeake.org/events).

## Seventh Annual Lifeline 100 Community Bicycle Event Registration to Support Anne Arundel County Food Bank

Annapolis— Please join Anne Arundel Department of Recreation & Parks, Anne Arundel County Police and Bicycle Advocates for Annapolis and Anne Arundel County (BikeAAA) on October 3, 2021 for the seventh annual Lifeline 100 Community Bicycle Event, which starts and ends at Kinder Farm Park.

This year marks the 7th Anniversary of the “Anne Arundel County Lifeline 100” with scenic trails and roadways to spotlight cycling awareness, safety and its benefits. The event typically attracts more than 800 participants from age 4 to 84 of all levels and abilities, a wide range of bikes including road bikes, hybrids, mountain bikes, cruisers, tandems, recumbents, adaptive and trikes. Over the past six years the event has generated more than \$200,000 in proceeds for non-profit beneficiaries and has won an Award from the Maryland Recreation & Parks Association.

Since March 2020, AACFB has witnessed a 482 percent increase in the number of people seeking assistance at food pantries and, in response, distributed nearly 7.4 million pounds of food throughout Anne Arundel County. Today, AACFB continues to see an average of 64,000 people per month that rely on its food and basic necessity programs. The need for food donations in Anne Arundel County remains high. In recent months, AACFB has experienced a 76 percent drop-off in food donations. Furthermore, due to the pandemic, AACFB saw one of its largest food drives cancelled for the second year in a row which typically generates roughly 40,000 pounds in food donations for the people of Anne Arundel County.

AACFB is also a partner with BikeAAA, Anne Arundel County Police, Anne Arundel Medical Center and Crofton Bike Doctor in the Wheels of Hope program, which collects used



bikes that are refurbished by volunteers and provided with new helmets to adults and children in need. Many adult bikes are placed with people without cars and in need of transportation. Anne Arundel County Recreation & Parks has partnered with AACFB with the Donation Trailers in the Parks, an award-winning program to collect food and other essentials.

The 2021 Lifeline 100 will be on Sunday, October 3, 2021 with 100 and 65 mile scenic routes with views of the Severn River, Chesapeake Bay, historic Annapolis and more. The 30 and 15 mile flat, paved trail routes are great for riders of all ages and abilities including families, adaptive bikes and people with special needs who can register at a 2 for 1 rate with their accompanying rider thanks to our generous Ride Leader sponsor Prophasys. All routes are fully-supported with route maps and markings, rest stops and SAG vehicles.

The free “Children’s Bike Rode” for ages 4-10 provided by PedalPowerKids return on October 3 from 1 p.m. to 3 p.m. for a fun and educational experience. The Bike Rodeo will include a short bike safety check, helmet instruction and safe riding tips followed by a kids’ obstacle riding course that includes turns, stops and crossings. Reserve your free time slot at [www.lifeline100.com/rodeo](http://www.lifeline100.com/rodeo).

For full event details and registration information, visit [www.lifeline100.com](http://www.lifeline100.com).





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# New 211 Health Check Program Provides Proactive Mental Health Support

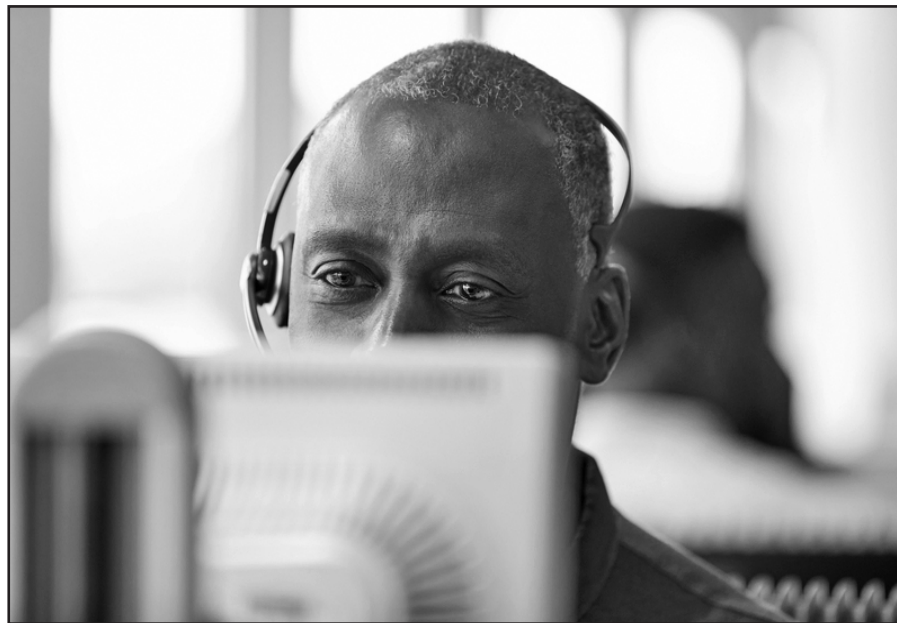
*Created by the Thomas Bloom Raskin Act, the new service is the first of its kind in the U.S.—providing one-on-one outreach to participants from trained and caring specialists*

Baltimore— 211 Maryland, the central connector to health and human services for the State of Maryland, officially launched its new Health Check program the eve of World Suicide Prevention Day— September 10, to empower all Maryland residents to access weekly, proactive mental health check ins. September is also National Suicide Prevention Month.

The 211 Health Check program was created by the Thomas Bloom Raskin Act during the 2021 legislative session in honor of Congressman Jamie Raskin's late son.

"For National Suicide Prevention week especially, it is important for Marylanders to know that you are not alone," said Maryland Senator Craig Zucker, the original sponsor of the bill in the state senate. "I encourage anyone who needs mental health assistance to utilize the Thomas Bloom Raskin mental health check in program. The program is here to help and to save lives."

As part of a soft launch earlier this summer, the 211 Health Check program began pre-enrollment in July. The 146 participants who pre-enrolled began receiving proactive outreach from 211 specialists on August 16, 2021. Any Marylander who is feeling sad, lonely, stressed, anxious or just in need of some extra support can enroll in the program by texting HealthCheck to 211MD1 (211631). Later this fall, people will also be able to enroll by calling 211.



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Photo Credit: ClipArt.com

After enrolling in the program, a trained 211 specialist will reach out for an initial call and then once every following week. During weekly check-ins, the specialist will also connect the participant to local mental health resources. Participants can continue receiving weekly calls until they decide to opt out of the program.

211's Health Check is one of several new services and programs to support individuals during all stages of a mental health or substance use crisis— from prevention efforts to immediate help for those in a crisis. 211 Maryland's partnership with the Maryland Department of Health's (MDH) Behavioral Health

Administration (BHA) makes these services and programs available for free to all Marylanders who need mental health support.

"Our country is in a state of crisis from the pandemic as we've seen how the stressors of a loss of a job, loss of a loved one or loss of a home have created a surge in mental health needs," commented Quinton Askew, president and CEO of 211 Maryland, Inc. "These trigger moments can cause mental health issues, like depression, thoughts of suicide and increased substance use."

Mental health has been one of the top reasons people call 211 for the last five years. In the past year, 211 has received more than 18,000 calls for mental

health, suicide and crisis support. The new 211 Health Check Program, created by the Thomas Bloom Raskin Act, is one of several mental health services that 211 Maryland provides:

\*211 specialists are available 24/7/365 by **dialing 2-1-1** – to help connect Marylanders with local services for housing assistance, employment assistance, utility assistance and more challenges that can cause stress and strain on one's life, leading to mental health issues.

\*Through the uplifting push-alert texting program, #MDMindHealth, Marylanders can receive inspirational text messages directly to their mobile phones as regular reminders to take care of their health and well-being, and to seek help if needed. Nearly 3,000 Marylanders have subscribed to the MindHealth program. **Text #MDMindHealth to 898-211 to get started. Para español, texto MDSaludMental a 898-211.**

\***211, Press 1** connects those contemplating suicide or suffering from drug and alcohol use with a trained crisis specialist who will talk with them openly and quickly get them the help they need.

"We are laser focused on bringing to life new programs and services that can help Marylanders on their mental health journey, including the new 211 Health Check and having more specialists on staff to help address immediate concerns," said Askew. "We look forward to helping more Marylanders get the mental health support they need in the exact moment they need it."

To learn more about 211 Maryland's mental health programs, please visit [www.211md.org](http://www.211md.org).

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