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Morgan State University Students Gain Exposure in Financial Services, IT Through Unique Partnership



Lincoln Financial Group brought a 24-hour student hackathon called codeLinc to Baltimore-based Morgan State University from April 2-3, 2022. During the special opportunity, 35 students were able to showcase their coding and programming skills. Lincoln's own veteran developers and volunteers aided enrolled students. The winning team took home \$4000 in prize money. Scott Roth (Lincoln's Senior Vice President and Divisional Chief Information Officer, Workplace Solutions), David Bogunjoko-Benjamin, Bikesh Regmi, Saad Nadeem, Lerone Joyner and Devona Jackson (Lincoln) appear on the top row. (Kneeling):Dinesh Shet (from Lincoln) Anthony Madu ,and Vinothraj Thanikasalam (from Lincoln). (See article on page 2) Courtesy photo by Scott Richardson, Lincoln Financial Group

Morgan State University Students Gain Exposure in Financial Services, IT Through Unique Partnership

By Andrea Blackstone

People of color and women are underrepresented in the financial services industry although the field is extremely technology-dependent, per reported findings provided by the United States Government Accountability Office. Lack of diversity in high tech fields remains a longstanding issue. Ironically, high-demand Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) occupations remain on the rise. Since jobs in STEM are often regarded as having higher than average median salaries, overlooking employment in financial services or IT industries could lead to missed financial gains for minorities.

“Black workers make up 9% of the STEM workforce, smaller than their share of all employed U.S. adults (11%). They comprise just 5% of those in engineering and architecture and 6% each in life and physical science jobs,” according to Pew Research’s U.S. government data analysis.

To better address a goal of increasing workforce diversity, Lincoln Financial Group (Lincoln) formed a partnership with Morgan State University (MSU) in 2021. Lincoln’s headquarters are based in Radnor, Pennsylvania. “Retirement, insurance and wealth protection expertise” is provided to customers, per information provided by the company. To date, two events have been hosted with MSU. A Professional Development Competition was held along with Lincoln’s Financial Distributors. However, the codeLinc for IT event was the first one which was held at MSU from April 2-3, 2022 for students who attend the university.

When 22-year-old Saad Nadeem found out about the codeLinc hackathon which was scheduled to occur at MSU, the ambitious junior from Dubai took advantage of an opportunity to learn during competition and simultaneously earned extra credit. Nadeem is a Computer Science major



Ogooluwasubomi Popoola and Nanfwang Dawurang, work around the clock on their application, EZ Match. Both students attend Morgan State University.

Photo credit: Scott Richardson, Lincoln Financial Group

who benefited from the experiential learning opportunity.

According to a press release, the codeLinc hackathon is one of “two unique professional development competition-oriented initiatives designed to cultivate talent and foster an increasingly diverse workforce within the financial services sector.” The program affords high school and college students a chance to utilize coding skills and “earn credit toward tuition and books.”

The MSU event raised awareness about Lincoln as an employer. Students who are enrolled at the college were afforded an opportunity to work with Lincoln coaches who mentored them while they were challenged to build an improved job-seeking tool.

“We created an app that was called NetMe. The whole point of the application was to match appropriate employees to organizations and vice versa,” Nadeem said. “To water it down, it was basically Tinder, but not where you find love, it’s where you find your dream job. It took us 22 hours to make NetMe and the Power-Point presentation.”

The junior mentioned that two “amazing mentors” named Vinothraj Thanikasalam and Dinesh Shet

assisted “Team Godspeed” with the development process of the application. The group placed first in the competition. An added perk was that the honor came with \$4000 in prize money. Two other teams were awarded \$2,000 and \$1,000. Cash prizes were reportedly divided in equal portions for team members.

Beyond the financial incentives, the codeLinc hackathon was more than a one-time event. Scott Roth, Senior Vice President and Divisional Chief Information Officer, Workplace Solutions at Lincoln underscored this thought.

“CodeLinc provides a unique opportunity for Lincoln to connect with the next generation of IT talent.

We were especially excited to bring this event to Morgan State as part of a multifaceted partnership with the university. The enthusiasm and innovation displayed by each team made this event a truly engaging experience for students, coaches, and volunteers alike,” Roth said.

According to information provided by Lincoln, the company offered three internship opportunities to MSU students who participated in the recent hackathon. Verbal acceptances were provided for three while a fourth one is pending. A bonus is that a Leadership Preparation Program is already in place at Lincoln. MSU’s students may also benefit from it, depending on career goals, and how close they are in completing their degrees.

Although Nadeem already had secured a different internship opportunity before the event, he was able to leverage use of his technology skills, work with fellow students, and network.

“I had a genuine conversation with Alisha Bell-Campbell who is a Senior Diversity Recruiter at Lincoln about the hackathon, studies and just life in general,” Nadeem said. “I was honored when she told me she wanted me to come and try working with Lincoln, but I had already accepted the offer at Exelon, and it was too late. We still stay in touch on LinkedIn, so at the end of the day, I built some great connections.”

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Honoring our nurses

The last 2 years have changed us. We mourn those we've lost to this pandemic, including the nurses who selflessly cared for those battling COVID-19. We see and feel things differently because of what we've experienced together – in health care and in our country.

Through it all, the 65,000 Kaiser Permanente nurses and more than 4 million nurses across our nation have reminded us what it means to **heal**, the importance of **dignity and grace**, and the power of **hope**.

This National Nurses Month we recognize and celebrate our nurses – leaders, clinicians, researchers, innovators, and scientists. We see your long hours, deep compassion, and true humanity.

Thank you for choosing to be a nurse, and for leading us through the last 2 years with your heart and professionalism. You honor those who came before you – and provide an example for those who will follow in your footsteps.

With deep gratitude,

Greg A. Adams
Chair and Chief Executive Officer
Kaiser Permanente



Guest Editorials/Commentary

Statement by President and Mrs. Obama on the Draft Supreme Court Decision to Overturn Roe v. Wade

Today, millions of Americans woke up fearing that their essential freedoms under the Constitution were at risk. If the Supreme Court ultimately decides to overturn the landmark case of Roe v. Wade, then it will not only reverse nearly 50 years of precedent — it will relegate the most intensely personal decision someone can make to the whims of politicians and ideologists.

Few, if any, women make the decision to terminate a pregnancy casually — and people of goodwill, across the political spectrum, can hold different views on the subject. But what Roe recognized is that the freedom enshrined in the Fourteenth Amendment of the Constitution requires all of us to enjoy a sphere of our lives that isn't subject to meddling from the state — a sphere that includes personal decisions involving who we sleep with, who we marry, whether or not to use contraception, and whether or not to bear children.

As the court has previously determined, our freedoms are not unlimited — society has a compelling interest in other circumstances, for example, in protecting children from abuse or people from self-harm — and the framework constructed by Roe and subsequent Court decisions allowed legislatures to impose greater restrictions on abortion later in pregnancy. But this draft decision doesn't seek to balance these interests. Instead, it simply forces folks to give up any constitutionally recognized interest in what happens to their body once they get pregnant. Under the Court's logic, state legislatures could dictate that women carry every pregnancy to term, no matter how early it is and no matter what circumstances led to it — even rape or incest.

The consequences of this decision would be a blow not just to women, but to all of us who believe that in a free society, there are limits to how much the government can encroach on our personal lives. And this decision is unlikely to significantly reduce abortions, which have been steadily going down over the past several decades thanks in large part to better access to contraception and education. Instead, as we've already begun to see in states with restrictive abortion laws, those women with means would travel to states where abortion remains legal and safe. Meanwhile, those without enough money or access to transportation or ability to take off from school or work would face the same circumstances most women faced before Roe, desperately seeking out illegal abortions that inevitably pose grave risks to their health, their future ability to bear children, and sometimes their lives.

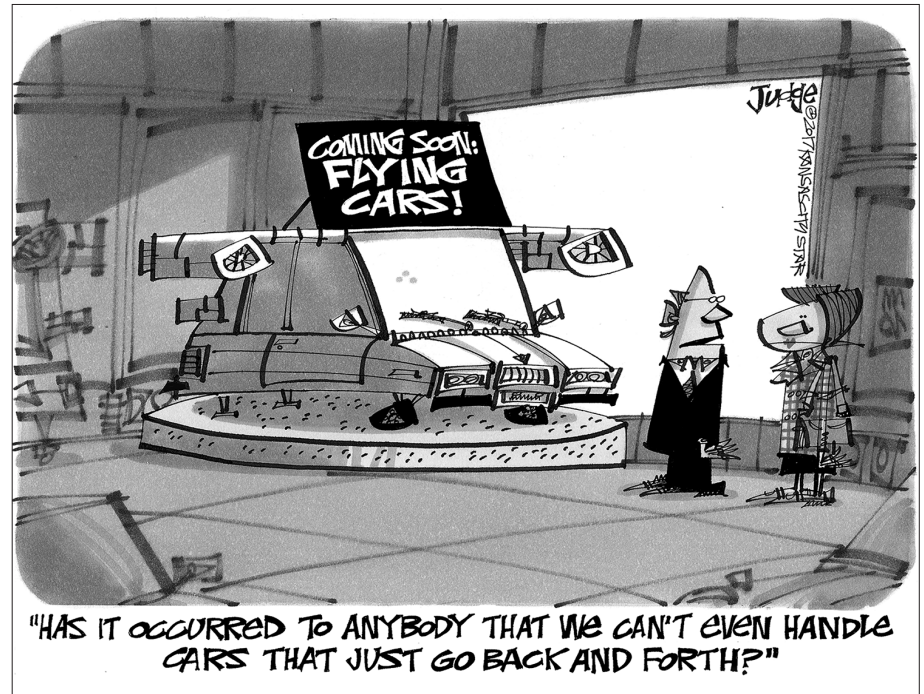
That's a result none of us should want. But it should serve as a powerful reminder of the central role the courts play in protecting our rights — and of the fact that elections have consequences.

A clear majority of Americans support Roe. Yet we recognize that while many are angry and frustrated by this report, some of those who support Roe may feel helpless and instinctively turn back to their work, or families, or daily tasks—telling themselves that because this outcome may have been predictable, there's nothing any of us can do.

If that's you, we ask you to think about the college student waking up after her date forced her into unprotected sex. Think about the couple that tried to have children for years, who are without any options when faced with the tragic reality of an unviable pregnancy. Think of any of the hundreds of thousands of women each year who deserve the dignity and freedom of making a decision that is right for their bodies and their circumstances.

You might be one of those people. Or you might know some of them by name. If you don't, ask yourself if you know everyone's whole story.

But we're not asking you to just think about these people. We're asking you to join with the activists who've been sounding the alarm on this issue for years — and act. Stand with them at a local protest. Volunteer with them on a campaign. Join with them in urging Congress to codify Roe into law. And vote alongside them on or before November 8 and in every other election. Because in the end, if we want judges who will protect all, and not just some, of our rights, then we've got to elect officials committed to doing the same.



Community Affairs

HONOR Exhibit Opening

Celebrate Mother's Day weekend by enjoying this powerful women's themed art exhibit opening reception

Saturday, May 7, 2022

12:00- 3:00pm

Banneker-Douglass Museum

84 Franklin Street, Annapolis, MD 21401

Light refreshments will be served. Treat yourself to a mini-massage by Sun & Soul Massage. Program starts at 1:00 p.m. Program speakers include Chanel Compton, Executive Director of Banneker-Douglass Museum; Rev. Dr. Tamara Wilson, Chair of Maryland Commission on African American History and Culture; Maryland State Delegate Shaneka Henson; Exhibit co-curators Schillica Howard and Darin Gilliam; and selected exhibit artists.

HONOR is a group art exhibition featuring six emerging and mid-career Black women artists from Maryland: Abena Apatu; Bria Edwards; Greta Chapin-McGill; Gina Marie Lewis; Sasha-Loriene; and Kennedy Trusty. This exhibit honors Black women's artistic expression of the body, soul, movement, and culture. The exhibit is co-curated by the Banneker-Douglass Museum and ArtFarm Studios. The exhibit runs through June 27.

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Black Activists Hope Supreme Court Abortion Rumor Holds True

While Leaked Opinions Set Poor Precedent, Possible Ruling Applauded

Washington, D.C. - Members of the Project 21 black leadership network expressed cautious optimism regarding a leaked document indicating that the U.S. Supreme Court may overturn *Roe v. Wade* and return the issue of abortion back to the states. They also criticized apparent political motivations behind the leak.

“Along with the rest of America, I am waiting for verification and confirmation that this is the justices’ true decision,” said Project 21 member and pro-life leader Day Gardner. “However, I was immediately overcome with tears of joy - giving praise and glory to God in Christ for even the slightest possibility, the slightest hope of ending the horrible practice of killing preborn children.”

A draft of the majority opinion in the case of *Dobbs v. Jackson Women’s Health Organization* was leaked to the



media this week, leading many to speculate that the Court plans to overturn two cases - *Roe v. Wade* and *Planned Parenthood v. Casey* - to allow state law to again dictate the legality of abortion.

“Finally, the disproportionate murder of preborn black babies can come to an end,” said Project 21 member Mike Hill. “Per capita, more preborn innocent black babies are murdered in the womb than any other segment in America. Margaret Sanger’s eugenics agenda and its devastating effect on black America is coming to its bloody end. Now the battle shifts to the state level.”

According to a report by Politico, an initial draft of the majority opinion in the Mississippi-initiated abortion case, authored by Justice Samuel Alito, will overturn the *Roe* and *Casey* rulings that are central to federal protection of abortion. Alito is credited with having written in the opinion: “It is time to heed the Constitution and return the issue of abortion to the people’s elected repre-

sentatives.”

“According to a draft, it looks like the Supreme Court is going to send abortion back to the states. I am not surprised,” said Project 21 member Marie Fischer. “The basis of *Roe v. Wade* was privacy, but the COVID pandemic and government mandates threw out privacy for millions of Americans. The left ultimately could not have its cake and eat it too. Either push mandates and vaccines that strip privacy rights from individuals or keep privacy for all.”

This is the first time in modern history that a draft opinion in a pending Supreme Court case has been leaked. Because this is the most controversial case before the Court in decades, the leak has further politicized the issue and raised concerns about undue influences being put on justices to changes their votes or alter their opinions.

“An initial draft of this Supreme Court opinion should not have been released publicly. Releasing drafts of Court deci-

sions could undermine the ability of the justices to decide future cases,” said Project 21 member Derryck Green. “Having said that, and if the news is correct, Justice Alito is both morally and politically right in his legal analysis. Morally, *Roe* was a terrible decision. It lacked legal expertise and seems to violate the Equal Protection Clause of the 14th Amendment. Legally, it’s wrong because abortion clearly isn’t found in the U.S. Constitution. Therefore, the decision regarding its legality should be left to the individual states to decide.

“The hope is that, despite this leak, the justices who are in favor of overturning this legal precedent will hold firm and steadfastly refuse to change their minds,” added Green. “This has the moral potential to save an untold number of lives - particularly black lives - since non-Hispanic black women generally have higher rates of abortions than their multiethnic peers.”

“*Casey* and *Roe* were unfounded and wrongly decided,” said Project 21 member Patrina Mosley. “We look forward to an official opinion release that ends the tragedy of abortion. If so, this will be the second greatest reversal in our country after slavery.”

Project 21, a leading voice of black conservatives for over 25 years, is sponsored by the National Center for Public Policy Research. Its members have been quoted, interviewed or published over 50,000 times since the program was created in 1992. Contributions to the National Center are tax-deductible and greatly appreciated, and may be earmarked exclusively for the use of Project 21.

Follow Project 21 on Twitter at @Project21News for general announcements.

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One Courageous Woman's Story of Becoming a Mother Figure to Her Biological Sister

By Andrea Blackstone

As the landscape of American family life continues to change, the number of non-traditional mothers who deserve recognition during Mother's Day and beyond is increasing. Jessica Jones is one example of a caring sibling who stepped up to raise a sister in April of 2012, after a devastating emergency was thrown into her family's lap.

Jessica Jones—a native Annapolitan who resides on the Eastern Shore—never cared about statistics extracted from studies or naysayers who did not believe that she could successfully parent her little sister, Imani Wilson. She immediately embraced a parental role when Sandra Wilson's life ended unexpectedly due to cancer. Wilson was the mother of Jones and Imani. To complicate matters, their father, Jesse Wilson, passed away when Jones was a freshman attending Washington College in Chestertown. Imani was left without a living parent who could rear her. Jones regarded the experience as “scary,” but she “never looked back” and “hit the ground running,” when extenuating circumstances led to parenting her sibling.

“I was 21 when my mom got sick, so when she passed away, I was 22. I've had legal guardianship of my sister (Imani) since I was 22,” Jones said. “It was hard because... I had no idea that my mom was dying until she got into the ICU (intensive care unit).”

Imani discovered that her mother passed away at the age of 13 years old, when family members picked her up from school. Since she lives with a learning disability, Sandra's unfortunate death was even more challenging for her to process. Jessica married Darnell Jones in 2019. However, the couple was together when Sandra passed away. Jessica had Darnell's support with caring for her mother and sister.



Jessica Jones stepped up to raise her younger sister, Imani Wilson, after their mother died in 2012. Jones grew up in Annapolis. She endured a series of life changes at just 22 years old. Despite her young age, Jones knew that she was the best person to parent Imani. She prioritized the development of her sister who is now almost 25. Jones evolved into a successful business owner who provides destination wedding planning and floral design services.

Photo courtesy of Jessica Jones

“My mom didn't really tell us how sick she was,” Jessica said. “She kind of just... didn't want to hurt us because we were all that she had.”

Today, Imani is nearly 25 years old. She acknowledges that her sister had a major role in raising her.

“Although no one can ever take my mom's place, Jes has been a second mom to me by stepping into my mom's shoes without hesitation. I never had to worry about the what ifs because she took care of everything and has always had my back,” Imani said.

Imani and Jessica illustrate what family unity looks like. Although extensive research is lacking about older siblings who volunteer to pick up pieces after parental death, exploration of the topic is no less significant. An older sibling who becomes a caretaker

for a fellow brother or sister deviates from what appears to be commonplace. Jessica still figured out how to balance the delicate role of serving as a mother figure and sister. She specifically mentioned that Imani never gave trouble, despite what happened to their parents.

“Emotionally, I think that the strength that she showed during that time for a 13-year-old... is completely unmatched,” Jones said.

A couple years after Sandra's passing, Jessica became a Towson University graduate. Additionally, her journey to become a wedding

planner who also specializes in decor began because she accepted employment to help with bills, when her mother became ill.

“My part time job was as a florist. I got really good at floral design. It became a passion that I didn't know I had,” Jessica said. “And I just got randomly thrown into a wedding styled shoot. The girl asked me to do bouquets for the styled shoot that she was photographing. And then honestly after that, it was like a blessing fell into my lap. People just started booking me for weddings.”

Jessica continued the journey by establishing Jessica Jones Events. Sandy Oath Destinations is named after her mother. Through the second business endeavor, Jessica provides destination wedding planning services for clients



Imani's graduation- Jessica Jones, Imani Wilson, and Darnell Jones celebrate Imani Wilson's graduation from Severna Park High in 2016. Photo courtesy of Jessica Jones



Jessica Jones, left, and Imani Wilson, right, share a special moment in 2019. Imani was her big sister's bridesmaid. She describes Jones as selfless, loving, resilient and caring. Photo by Texas Charm Photography

all over the country.

While cleaning up financial challenges after the deaths of both parents, Jessica was paying for everything from graduation expenses to putting herself through college again, and even saving her home from foreclosure.

“That's why I always worked for myself, because I knew that if I work for myself, there's no salary cap,” Jessica said.

The entrepreneur was driven to honor the path God called her to walk while learning about giving unconditional love as a young adult.

“I would not be who I am today if I did not go through that,” Jessica said. “I also wouldn't be who I am today without Imani because everything that I did, I did with her in mind.”

Nontraditional Mothers Matter

A Tribute to a Loving Aunt Who was Determined to Keep a Brother and Sister Together

By Andrea Blackstone

Angela Young, 50, is a Baltimorean who unexpectedly learned that a woman does not have to be a biological predecessor to provide unconditional motherly love. On December 20, 2019, Young's sister, Lorretta Young, suddenly passed away. When Lorretta was called to bid farewell to this world, Angela's expedition as a full-time mother commenced.

"I learned that God gives the most challenging task to his strongest individuals," Angela said.

Armed with a simple desire to do the right thing after a crisis unfolded, the stand-in mother embraced uncharted territory. She sprang into action to take care of her sibling's two children, Heaven Moye and Cedric Love, in addition to a much-loved puppy named Maddie.

Angela, currently works as a Compliance Officer in the Financial Sector, now stays busy raising and caring for 17-year-old Heaven, and 23-year-old, Cedric. When Angela first stepped up to the plate to keep the family unit together, Heaven was just 15. The teenager had already lost her father. Her brother, who has special needs, was 20.

"I began caring for and supporting the kids since December 2019," Young said. "It was my purpose from God to ensure that these kids and the puppy were not separated."

Young further explained that she felt compelled from the heart to do her duty out of love. A big goal was to keep Heaven from being placed into the Baltimore County Foster Care system. She also wanted to prevent Cedric from heading into a special needs group facility through the state of Maryland.

"The kids grew up living together all of their lives," Angela said. "I could not see them being separated at any cost."



When Angela Young's sister passed away in 2019, the Baltimorean began a new journey raising her sibling's children, Heaven Moye and Cedric Love. Photos courtesy of Angela Young

Angela also did not want Maddie to be taken by the Humane Society either. She welcomed the family pet to accompany Heaven and Cedric. An aunt's desire for two young people to "flourish and live a fulfilling life" in a safe environment despite the loss of their mother was bigger than living as a single professional and business owner. Angela had carved out a well-rounded life as a single woman who enjoyed being a stylish, "world traveler." Another change was leaving an active social life behind. Love mattered most.

"I gave up my entrepreneurial goal as a businesswoman and designer, my career as a traveling Compliance Officer in the financial sector, and I moved out of my home and found a home for us to live near Cedric and Heaven's schools and community of friends," Angela said.

Angela's compassion and loyalty was threaded with selfless consideration.

The devoted aunt knew that Heaven and Cedric's needs required redefining her priorities. In addition to making major lifestyle changes, Angela discovered Cedric needed additional resources to thrive, due to his special needs and other conditions which were discovered. She educated herself about how special needs children function, then worked judiciously to connect her nephew to proper accommodations.

Instead of complaining about heavy and new responsibilities, Angela remains full of pride.

"The joy comes when I know they (Heaven and Cedric) are safe and surrounded by unwavering love, with structure and guidance," Angela said. "The joy is seeing them together and not separated by any fault of their own."

The family leader's hard work is paying off. Cedric is continuing to improve and function well. Heaven is a twelfth grader who is gearing up to graduate from high school. The young woman who is an avid swimmer, fan of fashion, performing arts, music, and Tik Tok has grown to notice her aunt's efforts and sacrifices.

"Aunt Angee has made a positive



Cedric Love, Angela Young, and Heaven Moye bond during a family outing.



Angela Young and the late Lorretta Young share a fun moment of bonding as sisters.

impact on my life by opening up new opportunities for me and making me more independent. I have learned special tools from her about life and especially learning how to cook," Heaven said. "I would like others to know that my aunt works hard to live the lifestyle she has. She is always multi-tasking and taking care of the family. She can be a sergeant at times, but it works out in the long run, because she shows me that the world isn't gonna give me anything and that I have to strive to get it."

Let's Get Closer to Home

Forget the global, financial landscape. What's happening at your house?

By *Brigitt Thompson*

In the past two years, we've survived incredible uncertainty and unexpected changes. When it comes to financial news, we've seen it all: escalating home prices and steep increases at the grocery store; news of the Great Reshuffle (a.k.a. the Great Resignation), remote work, and the changing workplace; and questions about education, student loan debt, and how to prepare for a rapidly evolving world. It seems that there's always another crisis around the corner, and we're constantly bracing for a new round of question marks.

If you're stressed out by the dizzying ping-pong game of financial details you hear every day, you're not alone. I'm right there with you. We endure a constant flood of information, and what we hear one day seems to contradict what we hear the next.

Here's the good news: there's a stream of data you can rely on, clear information you can track. It's not contradictory, confusing, or hard to understand. It's the truth of what's happening in your own life—in your own bank account. It's what's happening at your house.

Here's what I mean: you spent money last week. You spent money yesterday. Maybe you spent money today. What do you have left? When is more money coming in and how much? How is money flowing in and out of your life? What bills are due this week? What is the source of your frustration when it comes



Brigitt Thompson, author
Courtesy photo.

**trust
yourself
with
money**

build financial
confidence through the
simple art of saving

brigitt thompson

Photo courtesy of author

to money? Are you underearning?

Overspending? Do you know? What are your goals and dreams? What do you hope to achieve and create?

This is the data of our own lives, questions only we can answer. The practice of turning inward and inquiring about our beliefs, habits, and behaviors can help us build confidence and stability in the face of external chaos.

Here's the best part: we can start small. The first step? Simply pay attention to what is already happening—what you are already doing—in your own life. Become curi-

ous. Keep records. Take notes. Open up a digital document or grab a sheet of paper. Write down everything that's happening in your life with money: the good, the bad, and the ugly. Keep track of your expenses, even the tiny ones. Keep lists of things you want but can't afford. Keep track of all the ways money bounces around your life: what's coming in, what's going out, what you want, and what you need.

I call this practice "keeping a money update." My money update lets me know where I am and where I'm going. It's part budget, part journal, and part wish list. It's where I crunch the numbers and make plans. It's how I learned to push back on my assumptions that my financial situation was hopeless, and that I couldn't change my behavior. It's how I became familiar with my own habits and decisions. Even before I figured out how to

transform my finances, the simple act of keeping track of my behavior gave me a sense of personal agency.

Personal agency is the degree to which we believe that we can influence our own experiences. There are many things outside of our control, systems that have an impact on how we live and what we have access to at any given time. Even so, the question is worth asking, "What do I have control over right now, in this moment?" We can become curious about what we're doing and keep track of our choices. It's a simple practice with a powerful outcome.

As you take in the news of the day—not only from your favorite media sources, but from your employer, clients, customers, colleagues, friends, and family—it can be hard to remain grounded. It's enough to make your head spin. Just remember: if you narrow your focus, just for a while, and zero in on what's happening at your house, you'll be engaged with something you can control. You might discover that you have some cleaning up to do, but the effort can yield great results.

So, whether for an hour or a day, unplug the glaring, flashing neon signs around you, the narratives about what you should think and why. Look at the quiet, incontrovertible data offered up by your own life. Start there. The hard choices that follow may not be easy, but they are doable—and they are yours to make.

Brigitt Thompson is the author of *Trust Yourself with Money: Build Financial Confidence through the Simple Art of Saving*.

Learn more: www.trustyourselveswithmoney.com

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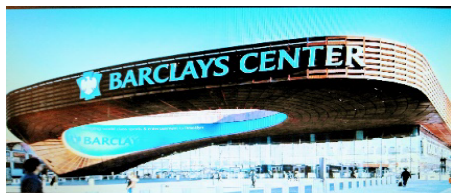
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“The Beacon” brings light and artistic expression to the East Baltimore Community

New art installation points to brighter Baltimore future

By American Community Trust

On Monday, May 2, 2022, Mayor Brandon Scott, State Senator Cory V. McCray with China Boak Terrell, CEO of nonprofit American Communities Trust, and over 100 Baltimoreans dedicated the first permanent artistic light installation of Last Mile Park, entitled “The Beacon.” “The Beacon” is sixteen light totems that glow in vibrant blue and amber that will provide a welcoming path for drivers, pedestrians, residents, and workers. Located along North Gay Street through the Amtrak overpass, it is

an artistic gateway that connects neighborhoods, improves safety, and serves as a reassuring sign of more to come in Charm City. “Showcasing inspiring local art is a great way to express our pride in Baltimore and its communities. I’m excited to see the Last Mile Park project kick off with this creative installation to light up our neighborhoods. This initiative will continue helping to spotlight the heart, culture, and talent of Baltimoreans from all parts of our city,” said Senator Van Hollen.

“The Beacon” is it is the first permanent artistic light installation of Last Mile Park. Residents and American Communities Trust are planning a one-mile urban ecological and public art trail that will loop through Amtrak’s eight overpasses. “We are completely rewriting the standard for what’s possible and should be expected in working-class neighborhoods,” says China Boak Terrell, project lead and CEO of American Communities Trust, Inc. “The Beacon is the first of its kind because of where it is. Completing projects like Last Mile Park are how we build value for working-class residents. This must be the beginning.”

With The Beacon, the overpasses that serve as boundaries for neighborhoods will become entry points. The lights



(First Row, l-r) Dr. Gary Rodwell, Executive Director of Coppin Heights CDC; Cori Ramos, City Council President Nick Mosby’s Office; Councilmember Antonio Glover; Councilmember Mark Conway; Elonna Jones, US Senator Van Hollen’s Baltimore Director; Anthony Jones, Congressman Kweisi Mfume’s District Director; Delegate Chanel Branch (District 45, Funder); Ella Durant, Board Chair, City Life Community Builders; Carole Gilbert, Assistant Secretary, Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development (Funder); Tienielle Blue, Temple of God Baptist Church; Tracey Barbour, Abell Foundation (Funder)
(Second Row, l-r) Community Resident; Austin Merritt, PNC Bank; Glenn Shrum, Flux Studio (Artist Team); Chris Ryer, Director of Planning; Erica McClammey, Comptroller Bill Henry’s Office; Kevin Seymore, Fabricator, Seymore Welding and Mechanical (Artist Team); Brian Tarantino, Tarantino Engineering Consultants (Artist Team); Councilmember Robert Stokes; Thomas McFall, MC Dean, Electrical Engineer, General Contractor (Artist Team); Ryan Carver, Sixty Forty Design (Artist Team); Rev. Paula Williams, Temple of God Baptist Church; Courtney Richeson, PI.KL (Artist Team)
The American Community Trust wanted to acknowledge those not pictured but were both instrumental and supportive in the completion of this project, they include Kuo Pao Lian, PI.KL (Artist Team); Senator Cory McCray (District 45, Funder); Delegate Stephanie Smith (District 45, Funder); Mary Miller (James and Mary Miller Charitable Gift Fund, Funder); Dick Cass (Baltimore Ravens, Funder); and Nanette Smith (Bloomberg, Funder)

will help link the Oliver, Broadway East, and Berea neighborhoods in the north with the Eager Park, EBDI and the Johns Hopkins University communities in the south. Mayor Brandon M Scott, who joined in the ceremonial activities of sharing with residents and elected officials, the cutting of the

ribbon and the opening of this artistic gateway, shared his excitement, “This beautiful installation will literally and figuratively light up our East Baltimore communities,” said the Mayor. “We are showing our residents that they deserve to have world-class parks and public art. These amenities are

essential to improving the well-being of residents in these communities.”

Every neighborhood deserves to be safe and walkable,” said State Senator Cory V. McCray who was supportive of this project. “To keep the promise of investing in our neighborhoods, the 45th Legislative district introduces The Last Mile Park Project: to provide opportunities of neighborhood connection, through creative lighting, and the establishment of a new concept in Baltimore.”

Each year one of The Beacon’s light totems will be dedicated to an individual or organization that has been a source of hope and change by serving Baltimore. Pastor Dantwan Broady and the Temple of God Baptist Church



Councilmember Robert Stokes and Mayor Brandon Scott cut the ribbon on the first of “The Beacon’s” sixteen light totems.

are the first honorees for their selfless service in helping to get the project completed. They will also award future honorees for their service going forward. “I’m honored that our work has meant so much to our community. The lights are breathtaking and inspiring. We need more. Our community is ready to push for that,” said Pastor Dantwan Broady.

Ms. Ella Durant, community leader and chair of City Life Community Builders’ Board of Directors is among the residents involved in the project with ACT from the beginning. “Pedestrians need safe, lighted pathways. As this evolves, Last Mile Park will

continued on page 14

Nurses Week: Honoring Home Health Care Professionals Who Stepped Up During the Pandemic

By Andrea Blackstone

National Nurses Week is held annually from May 6 – May 12, 2022. KCBD News explored the history of recognizing nurses who work tirelessly to provide healthcare and make invaluable community contributions. Findings indicated that although the U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare's Dorothy Sutherland wanted President Eisenhower to proclaim a "Nurse Day" in 1954, but it did not immediately come to fruition. In February of 1974, the White House determined that a National Nurse Week would finally be established. President Nixon followed through with issuing a proclamation for it.

The pandemic revived the need to appreciate nurses more. They have recently been tasked with caring for ill patients in high-risk situations, often under extremely challenging conditions. Nurses, and other healthcare workers, put their lives on the line through the COVID-19 pandemic.

Charronne Jones, owner of Aamira Home Care (AHC), stands tall among unsung heroes who contribute to offering diverse health options in the community. Jones founded the concierge-based business for private care patients to fulfill her dream of helping seniors and others needing assistance with daily living activities, without requiring them to leave their homes. The registered nurse and certified case manager with more than thirty years of experience in the healthcare field, has owned Annapolis-based AHC for at least 13 years. Along with her husband, Seth Jones, Charronne opened Benevolent Home Health Care. The 21-year-old business is primarily run by Seth. County and state contracts for Medicaid are the focus of this enterprise.

Charronne's extensive nursing experience is tied to the couple's healthcare operations. Her nursing career commenced in 1985. Through



**National Nurses Week is held annually from May 6 – May 12, 2022.
Charronne Jones is a registered nurse and business owner who founded
Aamira Home Care.**

Photo credit - Seth Jones Sr. and Seth Jones Jr.

AHC, Charronne employs approximately 120 individuals who provide everything from personal care services to meal preparation. Home health care is provided to clients in Anne Arundel County, the Baltimore metropolitan area, and Prince George's County. She remarked that during the pandemic, diverse home health care requests increased.

"I think the main change with us during the pandemic was that people wanted more short-term care," Jones said, mentioning the shift in some of AHC's patient's needs. "Whereas during the pandemic, people wanted services during the time that they were in the COVID crisis, so it may have been two weeks to maybe two

months."

Additionally, a portion of Medicaid patients were running out of food. AHC's health care providers addressed food needs and drove them to doctor's appointments. Now that the pandemic has improved, AHC health professions are getting back to serving people who need medical support on a longer-term basis. Although 70% of clients are seniors, 30% are people who have chronic conditions or illness.

"Traditionally with dealing with people who have chronic diseases, we usually provide services for several years, and our care plans are really authorized at a year at a time," Charronne said, noting that these clients' health conditions rarely improve.

Amid nurses being charmed to work for big contracts during the COVID-19 crisis, certified nursing assistants who were potential new hires wanted higher work rates. Charronne was challenged by the reality of being able to afford the change, during the pandemic. Others preferred to continue working with patients one on one. In these cases, their loyalty remains despite the potential to make more money. AHC primarily hires mostly certified nursing assistants and licensed practical nurses. A lesser number of registered nurses hold supervisory positions.

"When you do home (health) care, it's something that you really like. Not only do you like it, you get really invested in what you do," Jones said. "When you work in nursing homes and hospitals, your patients are in and out... and you really don't... get to know the patients. So, I think aside from just... the people being very loyal to us, we're very loyal to them as well."

In addition to recognizing nurses who continue to work during the pandemic, it is important to acknowledge a trailblazer who was the first professional African-American nurse in the U.S.

"The profession began to change when Mary Eliza Mahoney, often noted as the first black nurse in history, graduated from nursing school and was the first African American nurse to be licensed," Chamberlain University reported.

Additionally, MinorityNurse.com provides statistics indicating that only 9.9% of registered nurses are African American or black. With this in mind, Charronne's journey of providing resources and support with her staff for clients who desire to receive service at home health care is even more special.

"And when I do, that really makes me happy," Charronne said.

Ain't Too Proud: The Life and Times of The Temptations Broadway Musical Playing at The Hippodrome Through May 8

By Ursula V. Battle

Last year, Dr. Otis Williams, a founding member of the legendary musical group The Temptations and the sole surviving member of the original Temptations was interviewed by The Baltimore Times. During the interview, he shared his thoughts about a celebration marking the 60-year history of The Temptations.

“Well, first and foremost, I thank God for letting me get to be 79 to turn 80 because when I stop and think about it, and I don’t mean to put it on the dark side, but I’m the only Temptation that has made it to this milestone of turning

80,” said the legendary artist. “I lost my wonderful friends David, Paul, Melvin, and Eddie and here I am still carrying the banner those brothers helped me to do create. It’s an honor to still do it, do it on such a high level, and keep the standard of the Temptations hopefully up to where our fans have come to always want to see.”

Motown auditioned and signed the original Temptations - Otis Williams, Melvin Franklin, Eddie Kendricks, Paul Williams, and David Ruffin in May of 1961.

During his interview with this publication, Williams also shared his excitement about the re-opening of the Broadway musical, “Ain’t Too Proud: The Life and Times of The Temptations, based on his personal journey. Now, audiences all over the country are sharing in that excitement as the musical makes its way across America. The hit Broadway show sang and danced its way into The Hippodrome this week. “Ain’t Too Proud: The Life and Times of The Temptations,” opened May 3, 2022 and will run through May 8, 2022.

The show follows The Temptations’

extraordinary journey from the streets of Detroit to the Rock & Roll Hall of Fame. With their signature dance moves and silky-smooth harmonies, they rose to the top of the charts

creating an amazing 42 Top Ten Hits with 14 reaching number one.

Nominated for 12 Tony® Awards and the winner of the 2019 Tony Award for Best Choreography, “Ain’t Too Proud” tells the thrilling story of brotherhood, family, loyalty, and betrayal, as the group’s personal and political conflicts threatened to tear them apart during a decade of civil unrest in America. The unforgettable story of this legendary quintet is set to the beat of

the group’s treasured hits, including “My Girl,” “Just My Imagination,” “Get Ready,” and “Papa Was a Rolling Stone”.

Marcus Paul James narrates the production, portraying Otis Williams.

“As the narrator in the show, I guide us through a little history of The Temptations,” said James. “It’s all about the creation and celebration of The Temptations, and I bring us through the timeline of the story. It’s been really wonderful. Motown music is in the fabric of American history. To have the opportunity to perform this music and celebrate the men that did it and tell their stories is unreal.”

James talked about Dr. Williams, whom he said the cast refers to as “Uncle O.”

“He’s been a part of our process since the beginning,” said James. “About two weeks ago, he called me to check-in on how we’re doing. He’s always checking in on us.”

The show is written by three-time Obie Award winner Dominique Morisseau.

“The tour has been incredible,” said James. “I think people know

that they love this music. But when it starts to play, I think it surprises them how much they enjoy it, love it, and remember it.”

He added, “We get to be on that journey with them. We take them back to a time when we didn’t have Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram, and they learn about what happened behind the scenes, and how The Temptations got from point a to point b. We get to relive and tell the story of The Temptations. Some stories people may know about, and others people don’t know about.”

James said he was a part of the original Broadcast cast as a swing.

“When they offered me the opportunity to play this role and tour around the country, I did not hesitate. Playing the narrator is a big role, and its big shoes to fill, but how could I not tell this story? Especially during this time when telling stories is super critical. One of the biggest personal takeaways from this show for me is that in Ameri-



Ain't Too Proud: The Life and Times of The Temptations runs through May 8, 2022 at The Hippodrome.

Photo Credit: Sub Urban Photography

ca at that time, so much was happening including a war and segregation. But at the same time, Motown was creating this amazing sound and having so much success.”

He added, “When people come to see this show, they should be ready to clap their hands, sing along, and maybe get up and dance a step if they need to. That’s what we love to do, and we will meet you right there.”

For performance times, tickets and other information, visit <https://baltimore.broadway.com>.



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The 'WOW' Factor of Positive Hip-Hop

William M. March authors song on Grammy-nominated album

By Ursula V. Battle

Baltimore's own William M. March, A.K.A 'DJ Willy Wow' is "wowing" audiences all over the globe with his musical talents. The composer specializes in "profanity-free" children's music, and has performed at The White House, South Africa's Comic-Con, Home Depot Backyard at Mercedes-Benz Stadium and other events. His impressive resume also includes performing for Target, Kellogg's, and Porsche.

The accomplished artist wrote, arranged, and recorded "Nothing Wrong with the Black Crayon." The song is featured on the Grammy-nominated album "All One Tribe," by 1 Tribe Collective, released by Bob Marley's record label, Tuff Gong International. The album features songs in varying styles from 26 Black children's artists, and earned him a trip to the 64th Grammy Awards last month in Las Vegas.

"The Grammy Awards was an amazing experience," said DJ Willy Wow. "It was also a historical experience because it was the first time over twenty five Black children's artists came together to create an album, and show the world that Black voices are needed and are here to represent Black voices in the children's music genre. It was also a historical event because a Black compilation has never been nominated before."

He added, "The experience was very fulfilling. I've been writing children's music and doing children's entertainment for over 15 years. In my career, I've performed at the White House under the Obamas, and I've worked with major brands such as Delta Airlines, but being Grammy-nominated was really something special."

The popular performer is the grandson of March Funeral Homes founder William March, and the son of Erich



William M. March, A.K.A 'DJ Willy Wow' at the 64th Grammy Awards. Courtesy Photos

March. He talked about the meaning behind "Nothing Wrong with the Black Crayon."

"That song was supposed to go on my album that I was planning to release right before COVID hit, and I ended up not putting it out," he said. "And then, I got the call to submit a song to the 1 Tribe Collective. I thought, I would give them 'Nothing Wrong with the Black Crayon,' because it actually fit. The concept of the song was for the entire world, and to let everyone know there's nothing wrong with being different, there's nothing wrong with being Black, and when we all come together, we can all paint a beautiful world."

He added, "And I just wanted to

use crayons, because, the first time I ever wrote with anything, [it] was with a crayon. When people think of crayons, they think of children, they think of family-friendly restaurants, and they think of arts and crafts with kids. What better way to paint a picture for children and families than to give them the metaphor of crayons...not leaving anything out of the box, and not leaving anything in the box."

DJ Willy Wow has over 200 songs for kids, and also has a weekend show on Sirius XM.

"I'm a jack of all trades," he said. "I work hard, and if somebody can't do something, I pick up the ball and do it myself. Having that approach, I learned how to do a lot of things when I couldn't depend on others. I couldn't find a deejay, so I started deejaying. You have to be resourceful and use all the God-given talents you have. You can't leave anything on the table."

The Baltimore native talked about his lifelong interest in music.

"I've always loved music," he said. "I grew up in a house where music was always played. And when Hip Hop came along, I was all over it. Music has always been my happy place."

DJ Willy Wow says after graduating from high school, he moved to Atlanta, Georgia, where he graduated from Morehouse College.

"I felt my creativity would always relate to children's music because I've always been a storyteller," he said. "I thought, 'What better way than Hip Hop to get my music out there and to make an impact on children with positive messages and education?' Everybody from eight to eighty can relate to my music, because it's going to teach you something."

Through songs such as "Nothing Wrong with the Black Crayon", DJ



DJ Willy Wow's Hip Hop music is geared towards children.



The Baltimore native also hosts a show on Sirius XM.

Willy Wow plans to continue to make his "mark" on the world.

"I want to continue to entertain children and families," he said. "The goal is serve as an example that you can have a positive impact on the world with good music that is clean and can touch any person, no matter their race, color, or creed."

This summer, he will be releasing a new album entitled, "Hip Hope for Kids."

For more information about DJ Willy Wow visit <https://www.djwillywow.com>.

Taking a look at the Ravens 2022 draft class grades

By Tyler Hamilton

The 2022 NFL Draft was critical for the Baltimore Ravens. Their franchise is somewhat at a crossroads.

The Ravens didn't make the playoffs for the first time with Lamar Jackson as their quarterback. It's been three years since Baltimore had seen the postseason.

The 2022 NFL Draft is critical for the Ravens success.

"I think we've spent a lot of time thinking about this Draft and the opportunity that it presents. We had a good plan," Ravens GM Eric DeCosta said during his post-draft press conference.

This year's draft could yield some players that will help the Ravens return to the postseason. The list of Ravens draft picks include the following:

(1/14) Kyle Hamilton, S, Notre Dame
(1/25) C Tyler Linderbaum, C, Iowa
(2/45) David Ojabo, OLB, Michigan
(3/76) Travis Jones, DT, Connecticut
(4/110) Daniel Faalele, OT, Minnesota
(4/119) Jalyn Armour-Davis, CB, Alabama
(4/128) TE Charlie Kolar, TE, Iowa State
(4/130) Jordan Stout, P, Penn State
(4/139) Isaiah Likely, TE, Coastal Carolina
(4/141) Damarion Williams, CB, Houston
(6/196) Tyler Badie, RB, Missouri

Let's take a look at how various NFL Draft analysts graded Baltimore's draft class this year:

Mel Kiper Jr., ESPN

Talk about a class of value. This is an outstanding haul, even if we don't consider that Baltimore used all six of its Round 4 picks. Of those fourth-rounders, tackle Daniel Faalele (110) and tight end Isaiah Likely (139) were my favorites. Likely could be a red zone weapon for Lamar Jackson. I also see sixth-rounder Tyler Badie (196) making the team because of his special teams ability. This team did a great job filling needs. Grade: A



*Kyle Hamilton, drafted by the Baltimore Ravens
Photo credit: David Becker/Getty Images.*

Vinnie Iyer, The Sporting News

The Ravens had only first-round pick to start but ended up with three studs, with Hamilton and Linderbaum set to have immediate starting impact and Ojabo set up to play off Odafe Oweh well. Jones and Faalele were ideal picks for both fronts. They also managed to add strong depth behind Mark Andrews and a replacement for fading Sam Koch. GM Eric DeCosta built up the volume well to address many positions and made a shrewd move in dealing wide receiver Marquise Brown. They even got some fresh injury contingency for J.K. Dobbins and Gus Edwards. GRADE: A+

Matt Miller, ESPN

In the 2022 draft, the Ravens drafted three of my top 30 players and four in the top 40 overall. Each came at a position of need and represented an incredible value where they were selected. ... The award-winning class continued on Day 3 with Minnesota offensive tackle Daniel Faalele (No. 58) being selected at No. 110 overall -- one of the best values in the entire draft -- and filling an immediate need at right tackle. Even in Round 4, selecting a high-upside cornerback in Alabama's Jalyn Armour-Davis was a steal. In its first six selections, each player drafted by Baltimore was

ranked as a top 100 player on my final rankings. That's how you own a draft class. GRADE: A

Chad Reuter, NFL.com

With their six fourth-round picks (most in a single draft since 1970), the Ravens found a new massive right tackle in Faalele (similar to Orlando Brown), two corners to rebuild their depth, two tight ends (Kolar is a Mark Andrews clone), and Stout, a bit of a surprise pick given Sam Koch is still on the roster. Given the injuries Baltimore suffered at running back last year, getting the nimble and speedy Badie in the sixth round made sense. Grade: A

Chris Trapasso, CBS

Over the weekend, I tweeted "I want to marry this Ravens draft," which should give you a sense how I felt about it. Soon thereafter, they drafted a punter in Round 4, which I didn't love, but now that the draft is over, I still have deep adoration for what Baltimore did. Kyle Hamilton was my No. 1 prospect, Ojabo was a tremendous stash. Charlie Kolar gave me Mark Andrews vibes on film, and Daniel Faalele is an Orlando Brown type. Jalyn Armour-Davis has No. 1 CB abilities. But no receiver? GRADE: B+

continued from page 10

"The Beacon"



Charity Kenyall and Yolanda "Yo-Yo" Famba of HeartSmiles join China Boak Terrell, CEO of nonprofit American Community Trust and Project Owner, in presenting the first "The Beacon" light totem dedication to the Temple of God Baptist Church whose selfless service helped to get the project completed. Temple of God Baptist Church Pastor Dantwan Broady accepted the award along with members of his congregation.

connect more prominent communities to communities that were once overlooked," said Ms. Durant.

Artist-designers from the architectural firm, PI.KL led the work. They were supported by engineers from MC Dean, Flux Studio, Sixty Forty Design, and Tarantino Engineering Consultants and fabricator Seymore Welding & Mechanical. The Beacon's artistic team was minority-led. Additionally, Ms. Boak Terrell said that at least 65% of all design and construction spending went to Black- and minority-owned firms.

Funding support for this nearly \$600,000 investment comes from the State of Maryland, the Abell Foundation, Bloomberg Philanthropies, Baltimore Ravens, and the James and Mary Miller Charitable Gift Fund.

Baltimore City agencies, especially the Departments of Planning, Transportation and Public Works provided valuable technical support.

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**CITY OF BALTIMORE
DEPARTMENT OF GENERAL SERVICES
NOTICE OF LETTING**

Sealed Bids or Proposals, in duplicate, addressed to the Board of Estimates of the Mayor and City Council of Baltimore and marked for **GS 20802 – Engine 55 Fire House Electrical Upgrade**, will be received at the Office of the Comptroller, Room 204, City Hall, Baltimore, Maryland until 11:00 A.M. on **WEDNESDAY, June 22, 2022**. Board of Estimates employees will be stationed at the Security Unit Counter just inside the Holliday Street entrance to City Hall from 10:45 A.M. to 11:00 A.M. every Wednesday to receive Bids. Positively no bids will be received after 11:00 A.M. Bid tabulation sheets detailing the bids received will be publicly posted to the Comptroller's website by COB on the date of bid opening.

The Contract Documents may be purchased for a non-refundable cost of **\$50.00** by sending a letter to the Department of General Services, Capital and Energy Projects Division, Suite 204, 200 Holliday Street, Baltimore, Maryland 21202, Att. Ms. Azza Rizkallah as of **FRIDAY, May 06, 2022**. In the letter, include a \$50 check addressed to the Director of Finance, and a Fedex Acc. No. in order to ship the documents to your office. Also, e-mail azza.rizkallah@baltimorecity.gov to indicate your interest in the bid and request the contract documents **Conditions and requirements of the Bid are found in the bid package.**

All contractors bidding on this Contract must first be pre-qualified by the City of Baltimore Boards and Commissions. Interested contractors should call 410 396-6883 or contact the Office of Boards and Commissions at 4 South Frederick Street, 4th Floor, Baltimore, MD 21202. **If a bid is submitted by a Joint Venture ("JV"), then in that event, the documents that establish the JV shall be submitted with the bid for verification purposes.** The Prequalification Category required for bidding on this project is **F16000 – Electrical**.

The Cost Qualification Range for this work shall be **\$100,000.01 to \$500,000.00**. A "Pre-Bidding information" session will be conducted at the site: **1229 Bush St, Baltimore, MD 21230 on TUESDAY, May 17, 2022 at 10:00 a.m.**

Principal Items of work for this project are:

**Electrical
Demolition**

The MBE goal is **29%**

The WBE goal is **10%**

CONTRACT NO. GS 20802

APPROVED:
Erika McClammy
Clerk, Board of Estimates

APPROVED:
Chichi Nyagah-Nash
Director, Department of
General Services

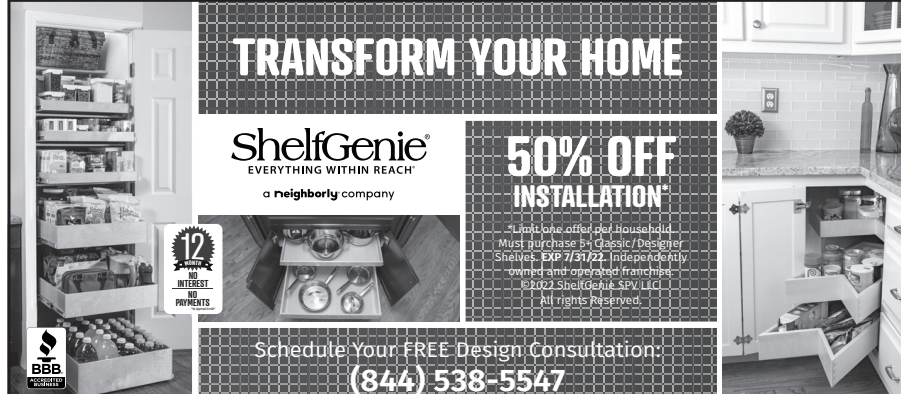
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**CITY OF BALTIMORE DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS
DEPARTMENT OF FINANCE
WATER RATES**

The Board of Estimates is requested to hold a hearing on proposed rate increase for water, wastewater, and stormwater charges. If adopted, the proposed rates will become effective beginning on July 1, 2022. A public hearing is requested for June 15, 2022.

PROPOSED RATES

Fund	FY 2023	FY 2024	FY 2025
Water	3.0%	3.0%	3.0%
Wastewater	3.5%	3.5%	3.5%
Stormwater	3.0%	3.0%	3.0%

Pursuant to Ordinance 941, which implements the City Charter Amendment, approved by the voters in 1978, the water and wastewater utilities must be maintained as self-sustaining operations. In addition, Ordinance 13-143 implemented City Charter Amendment to establish the stormwater utility as a self-sustaining enterprise. It is therefore the duty of the Director of Finance and the Director of Public Works to recommend to the Board of Estimates rates and charges to keep the utilities self-sustaining.

The demands of an aging infrastructure and compliance with Federal and State mandates require the city to continue investing in the Utilities to maintain the expected level of service.
Capital Improvements Program

The Water Utility serves over 1,800,000 people by supplying approximately 70 billion gallons of water annually to a service area that is approximately 220 square miles. The distribution system has approximately 4,500 miles of mains ranging in size from 4 inches to 144 inches in diameter. The Wastewater Utility provides for the treatment and disposal of sanitary sewage flow. The Wastewater Utility maintains approximately 1,360 miles of sanitary interceptors and main line sewers, which convey wastewater to two treatment plants. The Stormwater Utility maintains approximately 1,146 miles of storm drain pipes and approximately 52,438 storm drain inlets, which clean and convey stormwater runoff to the City's waterways.

The proposed fiscal Year 2023 Capital Improvement Program (CIP) for the Utilities totals approximately \$361 million. This includes \$61 million for the Stormwater Utility, \$161 million for the Wastewater Utility, and \$127 million for the Water Utility.

The total proposed 6-year CIP for Fiscal Year 2023 through Fiscal Year 2028 totals approximately \$2.3 billion. This includes \$249 million for the Stormwater Utility, \$1.2 billion for the Wastewater Utility, and \$919 million for the Water Utility.

Each of the projects within the proposed CIP will help preserve and enhance capacity and capabilities of the Utilities. Water Utility capital funding will allow for the required maintenance and rehabilitation of our water system by supporting projects such as water main replacements. Wastewater Utility capital funding will allow for the required maintenance and rehabilitation of our wastewater system by supporting projects such as sewer main replacements and treatment plant rehabilitations. Stormwater Utility capital funding will provide for the protection, enhancement, and restoration of coastline and streams through green infrastructure projects.

Consent Decree

In 2002, the City of Baltimore executed a Consent Decree with the U.S. Department of Justice, the EPA, and MDE to address discharges from the City's wastewater collection system. A Modified Consent Decree was accepted by the parties in 2017. The Consent Decree is similar to those entered into by other major cities such as Miami, New Orleans, Atlanta, Birmingham, and Cincinnati. One of the major components of the Consent Decree is that it requires that the City eliminate Sanitary Sewer Overflows (SSO) and SSO structures.

Consent Decree work will be completed in two phases. Phase I was completed in 2021. The City will submit a Phase II plan that incorporates input from the Phase I project results by December 31, 2022, identifying an optimized mix of sewer system rehabilitation and capacity projects that shall be completed by December 2030. At the conclusion of the Phase II, a monitoring and assessment period will be initiated to conclude by December 2032 when the Modified Consent Decree will be closed.

After conducting a comprehensive study and inspection of the entire collection system, the costs of remedial measures were estimated to be approximately \$2.2 billion as of October 2021, which is accommodated via the CIP. A total of \$1.4 billion has been spent or encumbered to date and \$790 million is the projected cost for the completion of Phase I and II projects through December 2030. The total amount is dependent on negotiations with EPA and MDE to define additional capacity-related improvements for the collection system.

Proposal Rate Increase

The proposed Water and Wastewater Utility rate increase apply to three components: fixed charges, volumetric charges, and all other miscellaneous charges and fees. The proposed **annual** increase are 3.0% for the Water Utility and 3.5% for the Wastewater Utility. The Stormwater fee is based on the amount of impervious area on a property. The proposed rate increase for the Stormwater Utility is 3.0%.

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The following chart details the proposed monthly rates:

FIXED CHARGE COMPONENTS

	FY 2023	FY 2024	FY 2025
Effective	July 1, 2022	July 1, 2023	July 1, 2024
Account Management Fee (per bill)	\$4.46	\$4.59	\$4.73

Infrastructure Charge	Water per month	Sewer per month	Water per month	Sewer per month	Water per month	Sewer per month
Meter Size						
5/8"	\$ 13.48	\$ 11.28	\$13.89	\$ 11.68	\$ 14.31	\$ 12.09
3/4"	\$ 24.24	\$ 20.28	\$ 24.97	\$ 20.99	\$ 25.72	\$ 21.73
1"	\$ 53.85	\$ 45.06	\$ 55.47	\$ 46.64	\$ 57.14	\$ 48.28
1-1/2"	\$ 94.22	\$ 78.83	\$ 97.05	\$ 81.59	\$ 99.97	\$ 84.45
2"	\$ 215.36	\$ 180.17	\$ 221.83	\$ 186.48	\$ 228.49	\$ 193.01
3"	\$ 376.84	\$ 315.28	\$ 388.15	\$ 326.32	\$ 399.80	\$ 337.75
4"	\$ 861.34	\$ 720.58	\$ 887.19	\$ 745.81	\$ 913.81	\$ 771.92
6"	\$ 1,547.70	\$ 1,294.79	\$ 1,594.14	\$ 1,340.11	\$ 1,641.97	\$ 1,387.02
8"	\$ 2,422.47	\$ 2,026.61	\$ 2,495.15	\$ 2,097.55	\$ 2,570.01	\$ 2,170.97
10"	\$ 3,431.84	\$ 2,871.01	\$ 3,534.80	\$ 2,971.50	\$ 3,640.85	\$ 3,075.51
12"	\$6,123.46	\$5,122.78	\$ 6,307.17	\$5,302.08	\$ 6,496.39	\$ 5,487.66

VARIABLE RATE COMPONENTS

	per Ccf	per Ccf	per Ccf	per Ccf	per Ccf	per Ccf
Volumetric Rate (all units)	\$3.74	\$9.81	\$3.85	\$10.15	\$3.97	\$10.51

STORMWATER CHARGE

Stormwater Charge (per ERU)	\$ 6.70	\$ 6.95	\$7.20
Tier 1 Residential	\$ 4.45	\$ 4.60	\$4.80
Tier 2 Residential	\$ 6.70	\$ 6.95	\$7.20
Tier 3 Residential	\$13.40	\$13.90	\$14.40

The proposed rate increase is the first year of a transition to inflationary adjustments that support operations and sustainable capital investment. The Utilities are in stable financial health with an Aa2 Bond rating, which represents high quality and very low risk. The City of Baltimore has also had access to low-cost funding through programs such as State Revolving Loan Funds and Water Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act (WIFIA) funds, which have saved over \$100 million in financing costs. The agency expects to save more on its capital costs in the future with the implementation of the \$1.2 trillion Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act.

In addition, the Fiscal 2023 proposed rate increases will represent an average 3.2% increase to a typical household bill or estimated \$3.76 on 6 CCFs of consumption

Proposed Customer Bill Impacts

Monthly Charges for 5/8" meter and 6 Ccf

	FY 2022	FY 2023	FY 2024	FY 2025
		Current	Proposed	Proposed
Account Management Fee	\$4.33	\$4.46	\$4.59	\$4.73
Water Infrastructure Charge	\$13.08	\$13.48	\$13.89	\$14.31
Water Volume Charge	\$21.78	\$22.44	\$23.10	\$23.82
Sewer Infrastructure Charge	\$10.89	\$11.28	\$11.68	\$12.09
Sewer Volume Charges	\$56.88	\$58.86	\$60.90	\$63.06
Stormwater Charges	\$6.50	\$6.70	\$6.95	\$7.20
Bay Restoration Fee	\$5.00	\$5.00	\$5.00	\$5.00
Total Bill	\$118.46	\$122.22	126.11	\$130.21

Water Rates Cont'd on page 18

In-person grief support groups for children and teens meeting this spring

Pasadena, Md.— Chesapeake Life Center's grief support programs for children and teens are meeting in-person on the John & Cathy Belcher Campus, 90 Ritchie Highway, in Pasadena. The schedule through June is as follows:

Phoenix Rising, a monthly support group for teens ages 13 to 18 grieving the loss of a loved one, meets from 6:30 to 8 p.m. on the third Wednesday of the month, May 18 and June 15. A meal is provided along with games and other activities. The cost is \$10 per participant, with a maximum of \$20 per family.

Pre-Teen Group is a monthly support group for pre-teens and early teens to connect and share with others who have lost a loved one. It meets at the same time but in a different room as the Phoenix Rising group – from 6:30 to 8 p.m. on the third Wednesday of the month May 18 and June 15. A meal is provided along with games and other activities. The cost is \$10 per participant, with a maximum of \$20 per family

Family Movie Night is a free event that invites families to watch the popular animated film "Encanto," which tells the tale of an extraordinary family, the Madrigals, who have endured a lot of loss. We will watch the film and then talk about grief from a family perspective, exploring how people in the same family and across generations grieve. It will be held from 6 to 8 p.m., Friday, June 3, hopefully outdoors, but if the weather doesn't allow it, it will be held indoors. Popcorn and other refreshments will be served.

Attendance restrictions and requirements will be updated using the most recent Centers for Disease Control guidelines and organizational policies prior to each event.

Registration is required and can be completed by calling 888-501-7077 or emailing griefinfo@chesapeakecenter.org. Visit www.hospicechesapeake.org/events for a complete listing of in-person and virtual groups and workshops for adults and children.

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The proposed rate increase is the lowest since at least 1998.

Historic Rate Increases

Date	Water	Wastewater	Stormwater
Jun-98	8.00%	8.00%	
May-00	19.00%	15.00%	
Apr-02	16.00%	10.00%	
Apr-03	9.00%	9.00%	
Apr-04	9.00%	9.00%	
Apr-05	9.00%	9.00%	
Apr-06	9.00%	9.00%	
Apr-07	9.00%	9.00%	
May-08	4.00%	4.00%	
Jun-09	9.00%	9.00%	
Jul-10	9.00%	9.00%	
Jul-11	9.00%	9.00%	
Jul-12	9.00%	9.00%	
Jul-13	15.00%	15.00%	
Jul-14	11.00%	11.00%	
Jul-15	11.00%	11.00%	0.00%
Oct-16	9.90%	9.90%	0.00%
Jul-17	9.90%	9.90%	0.00%
Jul-18	9.90%	9.90%	0.00%
Jul-19	9.90%	9.00%	9.00%
Oct-20	9.90%	9.00%	9.00%
Jul-21	9.90%	9.00%	9.00%
Jul-22	3.00%	3.50%	3.00%
Jul-23	3.00%	3.50%	3.00%
Jul-24	3.00%	3.50%	3.00%

County Rates

The City provides retail potable water service to Baltimore County, wholesale potable water service to parts of Howard, and wholesale raw water is provided to Harford and Carroll Counties. If adopted, the proposed rates will be effective on July 1, 2022. The increased cost of water and wastewater service will be passed on to Baltimore County through City-County Agreements in which Baltimore County establishes its own water rates with City concurrence. Howard County, Harford and Carroll Counties have Board of Estimates approved agreement with the City.

Conclusion

The Department of Public Works and Department of Finance thank the Board of Estimates for the opportunity to share this historic public notice. Representatives of the agency will be prepared to address any questions you may have and receive comments from the public at the proposed June 15, 2022 hearing.

The Historic Hosanna School Museum Hosts Annual Upper Bay Juneteenth Festival

Darlington, MD – The Historic Hosanna School Museum will celebrate Juneteenth – a nationally recognized day that commemorates the end of slavery in the United States and celebrates African American history, culture and achievement. This annual Upper Bay Juneteenth Festival is the longest running Juneteenth celebration in the Lower Susquehanna and Upper Chesapeake Bay regions.

As part of this year’s celebration, there will be “edu-tainment” for the entire family with music, dance, crafts, Buffalo Soldiers, a genealogy workshop, book signings, horse rides, a puppet show, lectures, vendors and other fun events.

There also will be a special “Transition to Freedom Concert” performed by Rhema Praise.

For details, to register or to make a donation, visit

HosannaSchoolMuseum.org. This year’s Juneteenth festival is sponsored in part by Harford County Government, Harford County Public Library and Visit Harford Maryland.

WHEN: Saturday, June 18, 2022, from 12 p.m. to 6 p.m.

Transition to Freedom Concert – 4:30 p.m.

WHERE: Hosanna School Museum
2424 Castleton Road
Darlington, Maryland 21034

COST: \$18.65 (in recognition of Juneteenth – June 19, 1865)



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