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# The Annapolis Times

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## *Celebrating Our Mothers*



*Aja Page Hill and husband, Walter Hill, III took baby Ryder along when they travelled to Rome, Italy. Aja says, "before becoming a mommy I would not have dared taking a trip to Rome with an infant, but the real mommy in me knew as long as he was with his parents, he would be safe and well cared for. Celebrate Mother's Day on Sunday, May 10, 2015. (See article on pages 14-15)*

*Courtesy Photo*



# Local psychiatrist offers tips for managing stress

By Andrea Blackstone

As Baltimoreans and Marylanders settle back into their regular routines there are still unsettling reminders of the violence of Freddie Gray's death and related events that are difficult to process. Dr. Sean P. Heffernan, is a board certified psychiatrist who specializes in the treatment of mood disorders, such as major depressive disorder, bipolar disorder type I, and bipolar disorder type II and people with chronic medical illnesses. He offered timely stress management tips, while sharing the value of learning de-escalation techniques.

"Stress affects everybody no matter age, gender or sex," Dr. Heffernan said. "I think now is certainly a time to really think about how everybody is managing their own kind of internal sense of stress, and finding outlets that are productive and ultimately helpful to the people, and to the people around them."

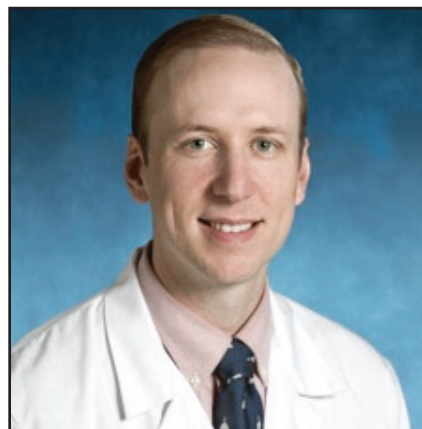
Heffernan notes everyone has experience the adrenaline rush that comes with

the fight or flight instinct at some point. Ramping up the stress hormone in the body can lead to medical concerns.

"You experience it with a rapid heart rate. Some people can feel nauseous or really tense. That's kind of like a micro-level of what stress can do to the body in the acute setting, but if you imagine an increase of what we would call sympathetic tone, or meeting toward having that kind of activation at all times, then it can really affect different parts of your body, whether it be the cortisol or the adrenal system, blood sugar, cardiac stress certainly leading to anxiety (and even digestive and sleep problems," Heffernan said.

As an Alexander Wilson Schweizer clinical fellow, Dr. Heffernan currently works in the Affective Disorders Consultation Clinic at Johns Hopkins Hospital. He recommends paying attention to how your body reacts to stress.

"I think it is important for one to be able to recognize what kind of behavior that you can participate in to help your-



**Dr. Sean P. Heffernan is a board certified psychiatrist who currently works in the Affective Disorders Consultation Clinic at Johns Hopkins Hospital.**

Courtesy Photo

self relax. There's a lot that has been said and written about mindfulness and relaxation techniques or progressive muscle contraction relaxation, mindfulness sitting or lying (down) or focusing on yourself and your interactions with the rest of the world. Gardening, cooking, reading or exercising can also be relaxing experiences. The key is to really find something that works for you and...commit yourself to it," Heffernan said.

Thinking positively can help people to cope with stressful situations.

"It might also be helpful for anxiety symptoms to challenge any persistent negative thought that you might have, when you are feeling overwhelmed. This is kind of cognitive behavioral therapy basics, where you might challenge yourself by examining the evidence for them being true," Heffernan said. "Sometimes part of this is repeating to yourself encouragement, or telling yourself it is not as bad as it seems, or that you are better

able to handle this than you think you are. You've been through an experience like this before and you've come out no worse for it. Keep in mind that that the worst-case scenario rarely happens, but it is something that we think about a lot."

Heffernan reminded that people should avoid behaviors that can compound stress, such as excessive drinking, drug use or gambling. Another tip the psychiatrist provided is that when people are feeling burdened by severe financial stress, taking out short payday loans should be avoided. Delaying major life decision-making while feeling overwhelmed is advantageous.

"Be mindful of the big picture," Heffernan said.

When teenagers or adults feel overwhelmed and unable to help themselves, Heffernan recommends talking to a trusted adult or leader. A counselor, psychologist or psychiatrist does not necessarily have to be the first person you seek.

"I think it's always good to look for the lowest level of help that you need that can be effective for you. For some people, that can be talking to a neighbor, a parent or a peer. I think that's a fine place to start. I think those people can also be helpful to transition to a professional provider or guide you to somebody within your community or church that perhaps has been helpful to them," Heffernan said.

The expert noted that the time to think about seeking the help of a mental health professional, or getting an evaluation is when impairment aspects become evident in personal relationships, job performance or your health.

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

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# Guest Editorials

## How we make Baltimore great!

By Staff Sgt. Stephen Scott, 29th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

I moved to Maryland from the Midwest in the early 2000s when I was 19. I wouldn't necessarily say it was a culture shock, but I saw marked differences between St. Louis and Baltimore.

What struck me most about the city of Baltimore was its diversity. In the Inner Harbor, for example, I encountered interracial couples and homosexual couples openly holding hands and displaying affection. I saw kids in baggy pants and white T-shirts walk past businessmen and women in professional attire, and neither group seemed uncomfortable.

I was pleasantly surprised with the level of cultural acceptance in my new home. Despite the variety of communities, I felt just as comfortable traveling through East Baltimore as I did traveling through Remington. In short, the biggest difference I saw from my previous residence was the acceptance of those who were different.

Fast forward to December of 2006, when I entered the Maryland Army National Guard. I thought the Army thrived on uniformity, so I expected all soldiers to be carbon copies with like aspirations and thought processes. I was wrong.

In Basic Combat Training, I met people of all races and backgrounds from across the U.S. No matter our differences, we all came together to serve our nation. I came to realize that our unity of purpose was even more powerful than any uniformity required by our profession.

As a member of the Maryland National Guard for nine years, I think it's been interesting to work with Marylanders who have different backgrounds and views. My teammates come from Dundalk; West Baltimore; Western Maryland; the Eastern Shore; Reisterstown; Havre de Grace; and many other places as well. The learning experiences and opportunities to expand my horizons are always there, even if the road isn't always easy. However, when we drew on our diverse backgrounds and directed them toward accomplishing our missions, we were able to achieve great things.

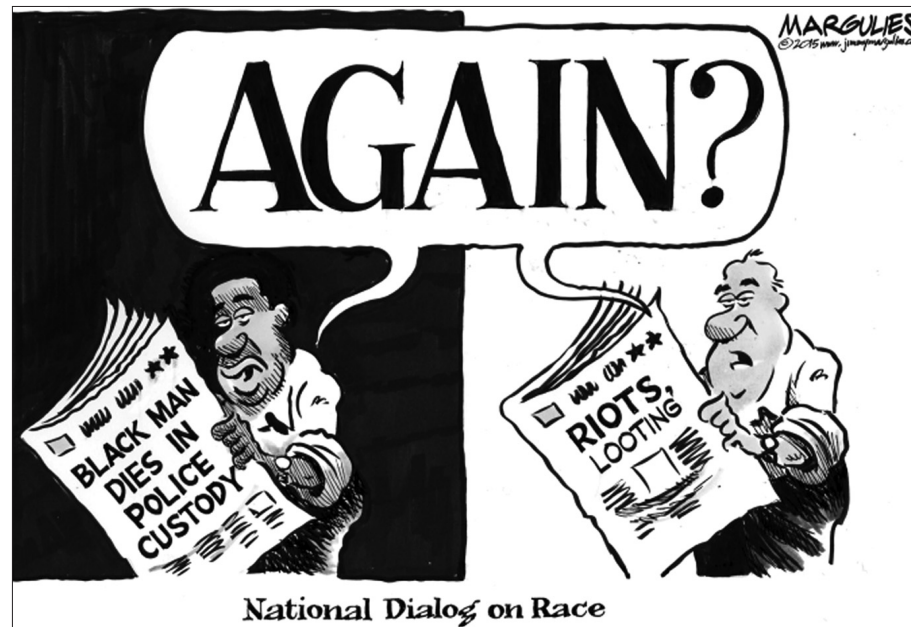
When I was a young man finding my place in the world, Baltimore showed me that respect for diversity should be the norm. Later, the National Guard showed me that diverse populations thrive when they have a shared purpose. The greatness of our city and state relies on us—whether we're civilians, soldiers or government officials—to focus on unity, not uniformity, and to enjoy the well roundedness that diversity brings. If we follow these principles, our common goal to provide a safe and healthy environment for all of Maryland's citizens is a very real possibility.



**Staff Sgt. Stephen Scott**  
29th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment  
Photo Credit: Staff Sgt. Mitch Miller  
29th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

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**National Dialog on Race**

## Baltimore mother could save this nation!

By Glenn Mollette

Three cheers for the Baltimore mommy who was slapping and whipping the heck out of her son. Mommy Toya Graham saw her 16-year-old son Michael in the rioting crowd with a hoodie and a mask this past week and immediately went to him and took him off the street. She should be America's poster mommy this Mother's day for parenting.

Kids in this country are starving for a mommy and a daddy to step up to the plate and be real parents. As much as ever before the youth of America need to be loved, mentored, tutored through school, spend time with loving parents and then a good kick to the backside every now and then.

My mother slapped my face once. She slapped me hard enough that I honestly don't remember what I sassed her about. She took me out to the peach tree and whipped me with a peach tree limb (switch) on more than one occasion.

My daddy gave me the belt more than once. Honestly, these are not my fond family memories. However, they were on the scene. They weren't missing in action. They were at home being parents. They cared enough about me to try to drive me in the right direction.

I regret every spanking I gave my two sons. I wish I could go back and undo every swat I ever gave them on the rear end. I never enjoyed that.

However, they both finished school, never have been arrested and both are serving our country today in the military. We had some tough times like all families do but God by his grace gave me enough strength and wherewithal to stay with my family and stay with my boys.

Looking back, I know they needed even more than what I gave but I am so glad I gave everything I did.

During her childhood our youngest daughter would occasionally threaten that she was calling social services on us. This was usually due to our insistence that she do some homework, clean her room a little or just go to bed. It was amusing but we encouraged her to go ahead if she thought she could find a better deal. She backtracked on that threat.

Like Toya Graham moms and dads are the answer to many of America's problems. We must step up to the plate and be adults. Take responsibility for our families welfare, education and what they are doing and when necessary go to the war zone like Mommy Graham and take action in order to save our children and this nation.

*Glenn Mollette is the author of eleven books and his column "American Issues" is read across the country. To contact him, go to <https://www.facebook.com/GlennMollette>*



## *The Urgency of Holistic Criminal Justice Reform in Baltimore*

By Michael Pinard

Congressman Elijah Cummings asked the key question at Freddie Gray's funeral: "Did anyone recognize Freddie when he was alive?" He is right. What are we doing for the countless nameless and faceless young black men, women and children, who interact with the criminal justice system and law enforcement officers every day?

One of the lessons of Ferguson, North Charleston and Baltimore (among other places) is that minor crimes saturate courtrooms and drench individuals with criminal records that stand in the way of employment, housing, family stability and peace of mind. We must ask this question at each and every stage of the criminal justice system—a system that I define broadly to include all that relates to it. Law enforcement training, culture, accountability and transparency are all relevant to the question, as are the circumstances that lead to involvement with the criminal justice system and the impact of that involvement on individuals, families and communities. Most

importantly, we must search for and work toward answers constantly and proactively, rather than in response to unthinkable yet sickeningly repetitive tragedies. The micro and macro issues behind these tragedies must be unpacked, examined and addressed.

Baltimore's criminal justice system ran amok long ago. The same is true for the various systems in other cities and towns that have received attention and scrutiny in response to police killings and beatings of black men, women and children.

dismissed or result in acquittal); to the additional fact that each of these Maryland criminal records is plastered on the internet, available for anyone to look at, peruse and judge; to the stigma of these records on individuals long after their encounters with the criminal justice system; and to the everlasting impact of all of these experiences on Baltimore's poor black residents as well as the neighborhoods into which they are clustered, such as Freddie Gray's Sandtown-Winchester. For many of Baltimore's citi-

aimed at scaling back the economic and civic hardships that stem from criminal records have been successful in recent years, as Baltimore's City Council and Maryland's General Assembly have passed laws that have chipped away at some of the unnecessary, counterproductive and simply mean-spirited aspects of these records. However, most of the work remains ahead, as it does in so many other areas impacting individuals, families and communities.

Freddie Gray's death is a stark reminder of many things, including that holistic criminal justice reform is essential and, indeed, urgent. While reforming a particular aspect of the system is important, it does not have much of the desired impact if other aspects remain untouched. Thus, implementing measures to help individuals move past their criminal records enhances justice in significant and transformative ways, but these measures are blunted by the sheer numbers of individuals—overwhelmingly black and poor—who pass through Baltimore's criminal justice system each year, who flood Baltimore's courts, who are abused by the hands, feet, voices, nightsticks, vans, and guns of police officers and who, in so many ways, live with the micro-aggressions, the macro-aggressions and the stigma that lead to and follow these various experiences.

*Michael Pinard is a professor at the University of Maryland Francis King Carey School of Law and co-director of the Clinical Law Program. His email address is [pinard@law.umaryland.edu](mailto:pinard@law.umaryland.edu); Twitter: @ProfMPinard.*

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***“The criminal justice system here is also unacceptable. For decades, individuals, families, communities, faith leaders and advocates of all stripes have pushed for meaningful change of all aspects of Baltimore’s criminal justice system in every possible venue.”***

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As many have learned in light of Freddie Gray's death, Baltimore's criminal justice system bears down on its black residents with particular might and fury: from street encounters between police officers and residents; to arrest; to excessive bail determinations that lead to and prolong pretrial incarceration; to the charges that are filed and force individuals to stand in front of judges; to the ease with which individuals charged with crimes can waive their right to counsel and be made to represent themselves at trial; to the fact that any encounter with the court results in a criminal record (even when cases are

zens, the criminal justice system here is all encompassing and unrelenting.

The criminal justice system here is also unacceptable. For decades, individuals, families, communities, faith leaders and advocates of all stripes have pushed for meaningful change of all aspects of Baltimore's criminal justice system—each and every aspect of it—has been studied and scrutinized at the local, state and national levels by courts and policy organizations alike. Thus, the wild array of issues is well known and well worn. Take criminal records for example. Several efforts

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# ‘Black Words Matter’ write-in gives Baltimore students needed forum

By Andrea Blackstone

After five days, Sunday, May 3, 2015 marked the day that Baltimore’s curfew was lifted and the National Guard began to leave the city. Six officers were charged in the death of Freddie Gray a few days prior. Protests, looting, rioting and police brutality attracted constant media coverage. But where could youth in Baltimore turn to be heard and cope without the threat of unrest?

On the same Sunday, an impressive lineup of Baltimore’s young writers was granted a quiet space to write poetry and dissect multi-layered conversations about race. The forum for low-income middle school students to express themselves on paper has existed since 2008, when Patrice Hutton founded Writers in Baltimore Schools (WBS). The program primarily serves students through summer camps and weekly writing workshops.

Pizza, poetry and mentorship intermingled in an old church located at 2640 Space on St. Paul Street. Approximately 15 contributing volunteers like Dora Malech, an assistant professor of poetry in the writing seminars program at Johns Hopkins University assisted the students, during a write-in called “Black Words Matter.”

Khaliah Williams, a teacher who works at Friends School of Baltimore assigned writing prompts that fostered self expression. Students stood to share words that erupted into thoughtful prose. Various guests, like Lawrence Brown, an assistant professor in the school of public policy at Morgan State University listened to heartfelt expressions that were shared by youth.

“I think it was cathartic. I think it was more a step toward healing. This is trauma that I think we’ve all gone through, particularly those black youth that were in there,” Brown said.

Poetry authored by youth will be added to the blog, <http://blackwordsmatter.org>, where students in Baltimore have previously written poetry about Ferguson, Michael Brown, Eric Garner and Tamir Rice.

Kelly McNeely accompanied her 16-year-old daughter, Jaida Griffin, who



attends The Bryn Mawr School, a predominantly white private school. Jaida revealed that she had not had an opportunity to discuss recent events. The mother and daughter quietly wrote alongside each other, but when Jaida revealed thoughtful words, her mother listened.

“Behind the camera they tell you that blue lives matter, and new lives matter, but tell me, does mine?” Jaida said, as she ended her poem.

“I came with her to hear about how she was feeling about what was going on, and to see how other kids felt. I just really want to make sure that my child is not out here trying to do stuff the wrong way. That she still knows he has a voice and that her voice is to be heard,” McNeely said, reflecting on events where youth clashed with police at Mondawmin Mall.

Sharing poetry helped some attendees to feel acknowledged. Nekia Hampton, 21, a senior who attends the University of Baltimore, found out about the event through a coworker. Hampton said that others do not typically listen to young people, or appear to care what they have to say, if they are not located in the Inner Harbor or Fells Point area.

“There are lot of people who don’t get these opportunities because they haven’t been reached out to,” the West Baltimore resident said. “I think this was useful to me because I’m going to take this back home and try to share it with people who were not here or couldn’t get there but needed to know about it. It’s nice to be



*(Top left) Kelly McNeely listens to her 16-year-old daughter, Jaida Griffin recite her original poetry at the “Black Words Matter” write-in, which was held on Sunday, May 3, 2015 in Baltimore. (Top right) Students and adults at the write-in. (Above right) Khaliah Williams, a teacher and volunteer for Writers in Baltimore Schools (WBS) provides writing prompts to students and guests. (Above left) A college student from Denver, who attends Howard University joined Baltimore students, educators and writers at the write-in. Photos by Andrea Blackstone*

around people who feel kind of the same way as me. Even if they don’t, they have their own perspectives that I can respect. I love when Baltimore comes together as a community.”

Hampton attended peaceful protests, helped to clean up Penn-North after the riots, and visited Franklin Square Elementary/Middle School. She wants to focus on connecting with younger people to help them to process feelings in a positive way.

Hutton and volunteers have also been investing in youth on an ongoing basis. The poetic forum began with Hutton—a

graduate student finishing up her masters degree in writing at Johns Hopkins University. She serves as the fulltime director of WBS.

“We run creative writing workshops in Baltimore City Schools on middle and high school level. In the past year...this group of high school kids called ‘Black Words Matter’ really formed themselves. This is the second write-in they’re holding,” Hutton said. “We just want to give students a space to talk about these things. Hopefully, this is just the beginning of a conversation.”





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# It's been a long time coming but change has come for Ravens Javorius "Buck" Allen

By Turron Davenport

The Baltimore Ravens selected University of South Carolina (USC) running back Javorius "Buck" Allen with their second of three picks in the fourth round. Being selected in the 2015 NFL Draft was the culmination of the hard work that was fueled by the everyday struggle that Allen's life has been in the past. He now has the chance to be able to provide for his family and ensure that he never has to return to the difficult lifestyle that he experienced as he was growing up.

Buck Allen was raised by his grandmother in Miccosukee, Florida just outside of Tallahassee. His father wasn't around and he had a strained relationship with his mother. The one person who served as a father figure to Allen was his brother Devon. Unfortunately, Devon went to prison when Buck was only 12 years old. Despite being in prison, Devon continued to have an impact on his younger brother's life.

College wasn't always something that Buck Allen was interested in. He may not have gone to college if it wasn't for a phone call he got from Devon. Allen reflected on that conversation he had with his brother that changed his life.

"One day he called me and I talked to him," Allen said. "He said that he heard I was doing good and asked me about college. I said, 'man I don't even think that I want to go to college' and then he hung up on me. We had a long talk a couple of weeks later and it hit me, this was the turning point. I knew that I had to make things happen."

Allen used to hang out at the Carrie Wilson Boys and Girls Club in his hometown Miccosukee. It was a place that offered refuge.

"When I was up there, I never worried about things like how to get the next meal or how am I going to get home," he said. "I would just enjoy myself, and when that time came for it to close, I just figured it out from there."

Mickey Cullen became the director at the Boys Club and took a special interest in Allen. He and his wife Alice would have Allen and his younger brother at



**South Carolina (USC) running back Javorius "Buck" Allen was chosen in the fourth round of the 2015 NFL Draft by the Baltimore Ravens.**  
Courtesy Photo/www.usctrojans.com

their house for dinner frequently. They even gave him rides to practice and monitored his progress with teachers. Allen graduated from Lincoln High School in Tallahassee and was offered scholarships to Alabama, Auburn and USC. He chose USC.

Allen was the first person in his family to attend college. Football was the tool by which he would be able to blaze a new trail for the Allen family. Like many young men in the inner city, football provided structure. Buck always loved football even before he had the opportunity to own an actual football. He said that he used to play outside all by himself, using a pinecone for a football when he was younger. His grandmother saw him playing with the pinecone and put together enough money to buy him a football that he subsequently carried with him everywhere. Things got rocky once again when Buck first got to USC. He struggled in the classroom and was stuck at the bottom of the depth chart on the football team. Allen was able to turn things around in the classroom where he majored in sociology. He was also able to get his opportunity on the football field thanks to a coaching change. He took full advantage

of it by becoming a threat as both a runner and pass catcher.

Allen is driven by his love for the game and how it will allow him to put his family in a better situation. He said that it hurt him to go home and see the situation that his family was in and he felt that everyone was counting on him. That's a high degree of pressure for a young man but Allen uses it to fuel his burning drive to be great.

Allen is convinced that the path that he has traveled has prepared him for the next step in his career.

"Pretty much, I had to fight to get what I want. Stuff was never handed to me," Allen said. "Even growing up as a kid, living with my grandmother, it was never handed to me as a kid. You always had to figure out a way."

Allen says that he never gave up on himself, even when he struggled in the classroom at USC and wasn't getting a fair shot on the football field. He would receive encouragement from former USC greats such as Marcus Allen and

Curtis Conway whose words hit home for Allen. Conway told him to believe in himself and know that he gave 100 percent. He told Allen to stay true to himself because that's what he has done his whole life and it's what got him to this point. Allen always believed that God wouldn't give him more than he could handle.

Getting the phone call saying that the Ravens were going to draft him was a dream come true. Like many other little kids, Allen always dreamed of playing in the National Football League. He called it a blessing to be there with his younger brother and hear the Ravens say that he was their guy. Back when he was going through the struggle, Allen always believed that God would put him in great situations.

One of Allen's favorite songs is "A Change is Gonna Come" by Sam Cooke. That is a very fitting song for Allen and his change has finally come. "My time came, and I'm going to take full advantage of it. It is an unbelievable feeling."





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# UMBC president relates civil rights experiences in new book

By Stacy M. Brown

Dr. Freeman Hrabowski has been working with inner-city youth in a variety of programs for a number of years and has rarely fallen short in his goal of reaching impressionable young individuals.

Like so many others, Hrabowski, the president of the University of Maryland Baltimore County (UMBC), watched with great interest the demonstrations and the protests by local residents— particularly the youth— in the aftermath of the death of Freddie Gray.

Because of his work, Hrabowski was perhaps one of the few who could really lend insight into the mindset of those who took to the streets demanding justice.

“We have been working with first-time offenders, nonviolent offenders and primarily African-American males in the UMBC Choice Program,” Hrabowski said of the university’s community-based, family-centered program that offers a case management approach to delinquency prevention and youth development.

The program assists youth and families through multiple services and it seeks to foster resiliency in young individuals by promoting protective factors to help mitigate risk in their daily lives.

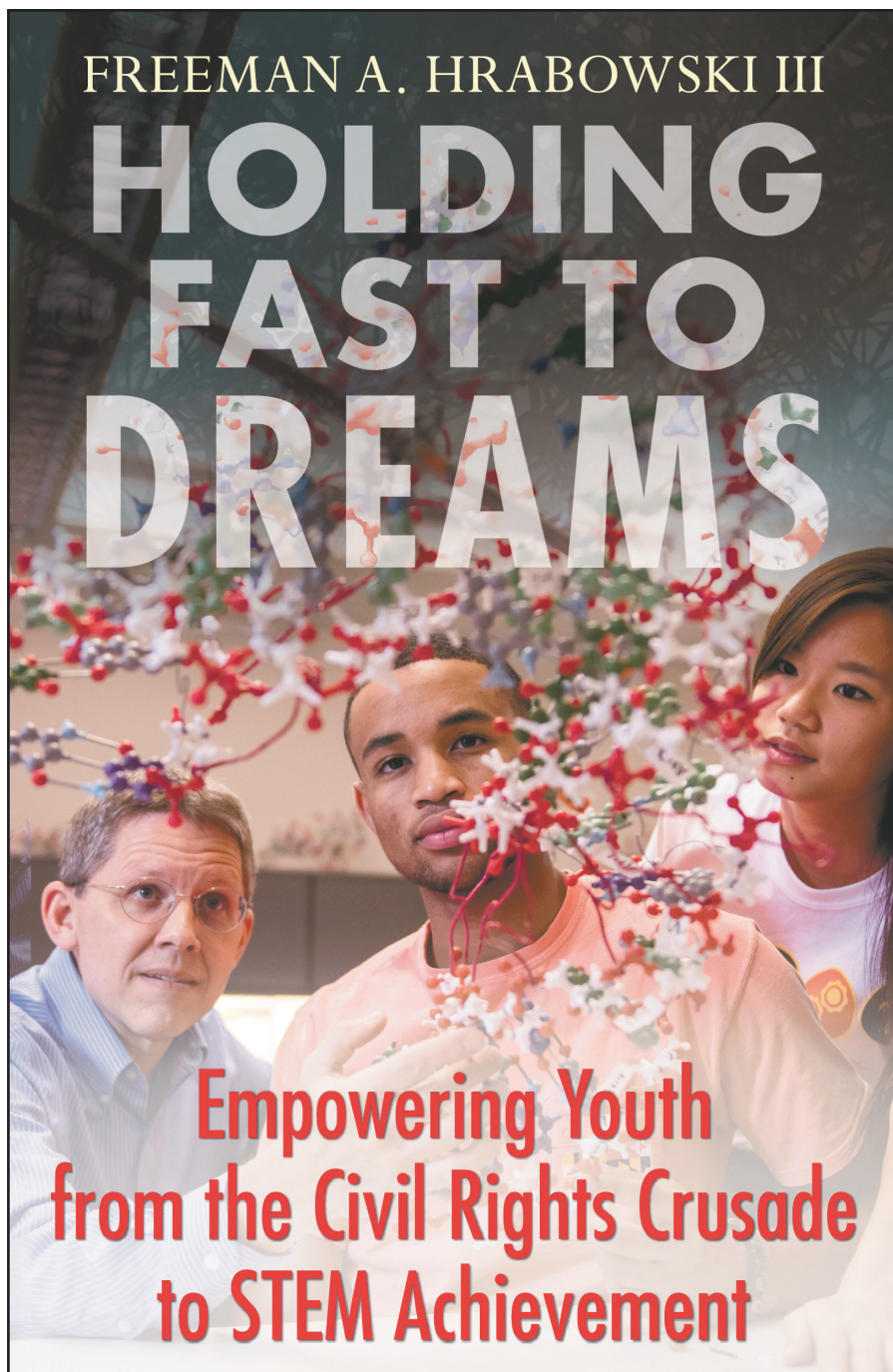
“We supervise them seven days a week and I get a chance to spend a lot of time with the children and I’ve had a lot of conversations with the staff,” Hrabowski said.

Hrabowski called the protests a fundamental American right and he said peaceful demonstrations should always be encouraged.

“When Americans show their strong belief in need for change, society usually responds. We have to teach not just the children, but college students and others the relationship between people expressing their views, the state of public policy, and the ways that we can bring about change in the overall way of working with families and working within the communities,” he said.

Hrabowski isn’t just talking the talk, he is certainly walking the walk.

His new book, “Holding Fast to Dreams: Empowering Youth from the Civil Rights Crusade to STEM Achievement,” hit book stores this week and it details not only the importance of STEM



and other education, but also the persistent marches for justice.

The book, which is available on Amazon.com, Barnesandnoble.com, and other bookseller websites and stores, reveals Hrabowski’s five-day stint in a Birmingham, Alabama jail at 12-years-old after being arrested with Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. He said it was a memorable experience that he’ll forever hold onto.

President of UMBC since 1992, Hrabowski was named to Time Maga-

zine’s 2012 list of the 100 Most Influential People in the World and U.S. News & World Report recognized him as one of America’s best leaders. Hrabowski also was featured in famed director Spike Lee’s documentary, “Four Little Girls,” about the bombing of the Sixteenth Street Baptist Church in Birmingham in 1963.

“The subtitle of the book, ‘Holding Fast to Dreams,’ is especially germane today in that it’s empowering to youth,” Hrabowski said. “



**Dr. Freeman Hrabowski**  
*President*  
*University of Maryland*  
*Baltimore County*  
**Courtesy Photos**

“The message that I was taught as a child as I participated in the Children’s March was that we as children have the opportunity to express ourselves,” he said. “If we felt schools were not adequate or that we had hand-me-down books we had the right to express our point of view. That was our fundamental civil right and we can empower the youth today to believe that their actions and their habits and values can shape their destiny and the destiny of our society.”

The actions of demonstrators in the 1960s led to major public policy change, Hrabowski said, adding that, at that time, only 10 percent of Americans held college degrees including a very small amount of blacks.

“Today, up to 80 percent of Americans and 20 percent of blacks have degrees. We have made much progress and it’s important to understand that the more skills one has the greater the change they will be in a safe environment and take care of their families,” he said.

As far as STEM education, which educators in just about every corner are pushing, Hrabowski said while it’s important, so are the arts and humanities.

“The lesson from my book is that we want young people to be curious and willing to work and to solve problems,” he said. “We want them to be able to overcome barriers, to beat the odds and be willing to never give up and have that resilience so if they get knocked down, they will get right back up.”



# Baltimore man inspires hope for prostate cancer survival

By Stacy M. Brown

Robert Ginyard doesn't have a cure for cancer nor does he have a concrete solution for preventing the dreaded disease. However, the Baltimore city employee and prostate cancer survivor has been quite successful in providing a crucial tool for those who are recovering from serious illnesses, setbacks and whatever else might be a source of chagrin.

"My message is that you really shouldn't have to face something like cancer or something catastrophic for you to go after your dreams," said Ginyard, the creator of DiBi DiBi Nation, an awareness campaign that encourages all to live out their dreams.

DiBi DiBi stands for "Dream it. Believe it. Do it. Be it," Ginyard said, noting that it's a model he developed about one year after the radiation treatment he received.

He made a vow to God that he would live up to his dreams of not only being successful but helping others to achieve or at least reach out for their long held desires, he said.



**Robert Ginyard**  
Courtesy Photos

"A year had passed since the radiation treatment and I couldn't sleep because I didn't fulfill the promise," he said. "So, this is really about second chances and to really not take one day for granted. One of the things I try not to do is to be a motivational speaker where I'm trying to lift



people up for the moment. My goal is to inspire all to reach within themselves to come up with their own stories and when they leave my speaking engagement they can draw on their own experiences and search within their own soul."

Applying the DiBi DiBi concept to his own life, Ginyard says he has now fulfilled his pledge and has become a prostate cancer advocate, appearing before Congress and the Senate Appropriations Committee to share his story.

He has advocated for increased funding for prostate cancer research and has been featured on ABC News, The Wall

Street Journal, The New York Times and The Michael Eric Dyson Show.

Ginyard also serves as a board member and spokesman for ZERO—The Project to End Prostate Cancer, a non-profit based in Alexandria, Virginia. At Zero, officials have noted that prostate cancer is the second leading cause of death in African-American men, but funding for research lags considerably behind other illnesses like breast cancer.

Further, statistics reveal that black men are more than twice as likely as white men to die of prostate cancer and African-American men are 60 percent more likely than white men to be diagnosed with the disease. Nearly 100 percent of black men diagnosed with early stage prostate cancer are still alive five years after diagnosis.

"When I'm talking to folks at board meetings, they get that DiBi DiBi is universal," Ginyard said. "Whether you are in Australia, China or Mexico everybody can look up and say, 'Hey, my dream is this or that.' That's what's been so amazing about the campaign because it crosses all racial and ethnic lines because everybody has a dream." Ginyard's advocacy work primarily is geared toward helping to identify new research that could lead to a cure for prostate cancer and identify treatments options to improve the quality of life for men living with the disease."

A one-time banker and director of marketing for a national trade association before launching his own tote bag business, Ginyard has also created DiBi DiBi T-shirts, which individuals can purchase and wear as part of the self-proclaimed DiBi DiBi Nation.

"I know I've finally found my path, [which] is to motivate and inspire others to live their lives to the fullest and inspire others along the way," Ginyard said. "The DiBi DiBi Nation is a group of strong, driven people and I am proud my message motivates others to pursue their dreams to bring about happiness and fulfillment in their lives and to the lives of others."

For more information about DiBi DiBi Nation or to purchase a T-shirt, visit: [www.dibidibination.com](http://www.dibidibination.com).

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# Annapolis organization pitches in with others to help Baltimore

By Andrea Blackstone

Octavia Brown was at the University of Maryland, Baltimore (UMB) wrapping up her final week of school in preparation for graduating with a Master's in Social Work, when chaos erupted in the city on April 27, 2015.

Brown, age 27, founded Empowering Our City Committee (EOCC) to promote positive local change in Annapolis and Anne Arundel County. She prayed for Baltimore and returned home safely to Anne Arundel County after UMB was evacuated. Later that day, Brown connected with UMB's School of Social Work through social media and plans to help Baltimore quickly began to take shape.

"I had one last paper to do, but I was so emotionally connected to what was going on in Baltimore City that I couldn't even focus on finishing my final paper. I ended up being very involved with trying to get donations together and collaborate...to help out as much as I can. I ended up doing my paper the night before," Brown said.

Baltimore is like a second home to Brown and with members of EOCC and fellow classmates at UMB, they volunteered to clean up on Pennsylvania and North avenues. The No Boundaries Coalition, a community organization in Baltimore, led the effort.

"Me and Landis Harwell went to clean up in Baltimore City and donated food to the No Boundaries Coalition," Brown said.

Brown wanted to do more to help Baltimore. She notified Facebook friends that donations to assemble care packages would be accepted through EOCC. In response, her home became a drop-off point. She picked up items from Broadneck High School classmates who have stayed in touch. Other volunteers who did not know Brown personally began to emerge, too.

Anne Arundel County residents like Ivan Morris, Jr. met Brown with donations in hand on Saturday, May 2, 2015. He happened to see Brown's call to action on social media and was the first person to respond to Brown's weekend effort. Morris ended up helping to accept donations at Annapolis Regional Library on West Street.

"I am always down to support any cause giving back to the community," Morris said. "The whole week when all of the incidences were happening, I was just looking for anybody or any outlet. I was just praying to God for something to do. I went to prayer rallies at my church, but I wanted to physically give something to the city of Baltimore."

Morgan Staley—a member of EOCC and longtime friend of Brown—waited for cars to drive up to drop off donations in front of the library, along with Brown and Morris. Just before the trio loaded bags and boxes into Brown's car, another car drove up to donate additional items. Before their departure, Brown's movement to help Baltimore had grown to a trunk full of donations.

By Monday, May 4, Brown collaborated with Julie Drake, a professor at UMB, and a fellow student who helped to collect donations in a student lounge. Drake had been helping to support first responders in Baltimore, so Brown decided to divide donations that were collected in Annapolis between police who had been working long hours on the streets, and residents who live in West Baltimore.

Through her network, Brown connected with Reverend Edward Robinson, the CEO of Agape House on North Dukeland Street in Baltimore. He confirmed that area residents have been greatly affected. Drug stores have been burned down in what Robinson described as "a very deprived community." Agape House is an outreach ministry center offering a comprehensive feeding program and food pantry that is utilized by community members in need each Wednesday. According to Robinson, many residents living in the area where he serves do not have transportation to travel to stores that are located long distances away from home.

"We're adjacent to a public housing complex," Robinson said. "A lot of food and personal hygiene items are needed. We'll distribute them this Wednesday from our pantry."

Donations will be put to good use but as Brown explained collecting donations is not enough to solve long-term prob-



*Annapolis and Anne Arundel County residents like Morgan Staley (left), Octavia Brown (middle) and Ivan Morris, Jr. (right) have not forgotten Baltimore in a great time of need. They collected donations at Annapolis Regional Library on West Street on Saturday, May 2, 2015. Brown and volunteers helped to clean up Baltimore.*  
Photo: Andrea Blackstone

lems so she invited Baltimore City leaders and Annapolis leaders to meet together in Annapolis to make changes in both cities. A collaborative meeting was

held on May 6 at the American Legion Cook-Pinkney Post No. 141 on Forest Drive in Annapolis.



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## **Library of Congress, Mid-Atlantic Public Libraries kick off summer essay contest**

*Rising fifth and sixth graders asked to write about “A Book That Shaped Me”*

Washington, D.C.— The Library of Congress has launched its annual summer essay contest, in conjunction with public libraries in the Mid-Atlantic region, to encourage rising fifth and sixth grade students to reflect on books that have made a personal impact on their lives.

The "A Book That Shaped Me" Summer Writing Contest is administered as part of summer reading programs at participating public libraries in Washington, D.C.; Maryland; Virginia; Delaware; Pennsylvania; and West Virginia. Prizes will be awarded and top winners will be invited to present their essays during a special presentation at the Library of Congress National Book Festival, Saturday, September 5, 2015 at the Walter E. Washington Convention Center in Washington, D.C.

The festival ([www.loc.gov/bookfest](http://www.loc.gov/bookfest)) will mark its 15th anniversary since its establishment in 2001. The theme of this year's festival is "I cannot live without books," a famous statement by Thomas Jefferson.

Students entering 5th and 6th grades in the fall of 2015 are eligible. Essays, focused on a single book, should be one page in length and must be submitted with an entry form, in person, at participating public library locations. The dead-

line for entries is Friday, July 10, 2015.

"A Book That Shaped Me" will award prizes to five finalists and one winner per state, and to three overall grand-prize winners. The 30 finalists will be selected by a panel of scorers composed of members of the American Association of School Librarians, a division of the American Library Association. The three grand-prize winners will be selected by a panel of judges assembled by the Library of Congress, including educators, children's authors and Library of Congress staff.

Submission forms are available at the Library of Congress Young Readers Center in Room G-29 of the Thomas Jefferson Building, 10 First St. S.E., Washington, D.C., or at participating public library locations. The list of participating libraries is available at [www.loc.gov/bookfest/kids-teachers/booksthatshape/](http://www.loc.gov/bookfest/kids-teachers/booksthatshape/).

Launched in 2012 with the D.C. Public Library, "A Book That Shaped Me" has since expanded throughout the Mid-Atlantic region with the help of public libraries in Washington, D.C., Maryland, Virginia, Delaware, Pennsylvania, and West Virginia. More than 300 public libraries are registered to participate in this, the fourth program year.

More information is available at [www.loc.gov/bookfest/kids-teachers/booksthatshape/](http://www.loc.gov/bookfest/kids-teachers/booksthatshape/).

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# Life In Baltimore: Celebrating Our Mothers

By Brenda Bowe Johnson  
Part I

The modern American Mother's Day holiday was first celebrated in 1908 when Anna Jarvis held a memorial for her mother in Grafton, West Virginia. Her campaign to make "Mother's Day" a recognized holiday began in 1905. Several states officially recognized Mother's Day in 1910, however in 1914, President Woodrow Wilson signed a proclamation to honor mothers with a national holiday to be held on the second Sunday in May.

Mothers are unique individuals who exhibit unconditional love and support. They are the natural strength of the family, like a tree trunk that supports the branches of a tree, mothers support the dynamics of the family. A mother is someone who loves her children and in many cases loves the children of others. She spreads her wings of joy, comfort and compassion. During this beautiful month of May, new mothers, mothers, grandmothers and great grandmothers will be highlighted. Each one has a different approach to child rearing, but there is a common thread among them, which is love. Celebrate our Mothers!

New mom, Arnelle Renae Boglin feels that her outlook on life changed as soon as she became pregnant. Now she takes time to think before making decisions to ensure that it will have a positive effect on son, Joshua. Watching Joshua grow, learn new skills and take his first steps is a beautiful experience to witness.

While working, Arnelle's mother and grandparents assist with child care because she is uncomfortable putting a twelve month old in care of someone outside of family. Arnelle states "Most of all, I enjoy spending my time being an active mother. I come from a very large and very close family who spend lots of quality time together. My mother has been the perfect example of motherhood to me, so I know that I have a great foundation to follow which comes from my grandmother. That's three generations. I have a little



Arnelle Renae Boglin and son Joshua

boy who smiles whenever he sees my face, which brings so much love and joy to my heart. Motherhood is a responsibility that I don't take lightly. I cannot imagine my life without my precious baby. He is truly a blessing!" Before becoming a mom, Aja Page Hill had the impression that being a mom was for women who were ready to stop life and solely focus on being a great parent. She thought Sunday brunches with friends, weekly manicures and trips would come to a screeching halt. Thankfully, she got over that with the arrival of new baby, Ryder. She realizes that being a mom means being the best person possible

in order to mold a responsible, caring and intelligent child. Aja makes time for baby, husband Walter, and herself. Four months into being a new mommy, the Hills had the opportunity to travel to Rome, Italy and guess who they took. Yes, baby Ryder. Aja states "before becoming a mommy I would not have dared taking a trip to Rome with an infant, but the real mommy in me knew as long as he was with his parents, he would be safe and well cared for. Being there helped to reaffirm my notion that just because you have a baby life doesn't stop, it begins. As a new mom in my thirties, maybe even considered a millennial

mom, my baby has seen more in his now five months of life that I saw even into my twenties. To me, that's what being a mommy is about."

Being a mother is quite challenging under the best circumstances. By some standards in the late 1970's Patricia Richardson would be considered to be somewhat "old" to start having children. Her first pregnancy was at the age of 30 ended in a miscarriage. Two subsequent pregnancies at the age of 33 and 36 ended with two beautiful children. Patricia states that it is amazing how attached you become to an unborn child. You are already bonded for life. She expresses "I've been fortunate enough to have two beautiful children, a boy and a girl, a step daughter, and three beautiful grandchildren, one boy and two girls. I feel as being a middle school teacher, I was "mom" to many of them. I felt often as if I was a gigantic magnet and they were paper clips. Whenever I would send them away, they would come right back seeking love, attention and whatever else was needed at that time. It could be overwhelming at times."

Patricia's biggest challenges as a mother came after the birth of her daughter. She had a normal pregnancy and delivered a healthy child. At the age of four months, the baby was given the DPT shot as part of her immunization. Unfortunately, she had a severe reaction to the shot, which resulted in an extremely high fever, inconsolable crying and seizures. The seizures left her brain damaged. She explains "talking about feeling helpless and not knowing what to do for your child makes you feel like a failure." Her daughter is currently 32 years old but functions as an infant under the age of a year. Needless to say, her care became a priority. She was able to keep her home until age 19. By then Patricia was physically unable to provide the care her daughter required. Her daughter was placed with Chimes, Inc. where she lives in a group home only 5 minutes from away from



Patricia Richardson

her mother. Patricia sees her often and tries to make all of her appointments. She has been pleased with her care.

Even though her daughter demanded a lot, it was just as important for her son to have a life as normal as possible. So it was a priority to make sure he felt loved, wanted and needed. It was important to develop his emotional, physical and spiritual sides. Weekends were spent at baseball, soccer, lacrosse practices or games. Patricia states "Motherhood is challenging within itself, even if you do not have a disabled child. Making sure each child gets what he or she needs can often be exhausting. But I wouldn't change it for the world. It's frightening knowing you are responsible for another life. You have that life in the palm of your hands. As they develop, so do you and you

rise to the challenge?"

May is a very special month for Regina Bernard... Why? April 30th is her birthday; her oldest son's birthday is six days after hers and in close proximity to Mother's Day. Also, her mother's birth date is May 19th. She states "this lovely spring month speaks to me of love, celebration and family. May is an ideal time to reflect on motherhood." Regina is an only child raised by loving and protective parents in Vienna, Maryland, a small rural town in Dorchester County on the Eastern Shore. Vienna was a town of strong families and where both of her parents could trace their roots for generations. She is currently working to document this ancestral history for her children.

Regina has four children, five



Regina Bernard

grandchildren and two great grandchildren who share a special place in her heart, home and motherly affections. Regina believes the mothering of her children started long before their first child was born. It started with our ancestral mothers generations ago both maternal and paternal. She exclaims, "I salute the generations of mothers who formed an ongoing village of love, caring sacrifice, faith, knowledge, patience, hope, happiness, joy, discipline, mindfulness, talents, and intelligence as a legacy for our parenting."

Like most mothers, when her first child was born, she had no prior knowledge of child care but with the village behind her, husband beside her and Doctor Spock's book on child care in her hand, parenting began and continues. Her greatest resource as a mother was the love she felt for each child and how blessed she was to share in the development of such precious human beings. Regina states "one of the greatest challenges was to teach my sons to be responsible, strong, competent and confident individuals. However, this was an era when I had to let them know that black boys and men exhibiting these qualities were often treated with suspicion by the police. This dualism presented a challenge for our family. My children and grandchildren are wonderful loving, caring, strong, competent, confident and productive adults and my great grandchildren are growing and developing beautifully as their parents love and protect them. Motherhood can only be described as a labor of love."



# Rambling Rose

Happy Mommy Day



Rosa Pryor Trusty

Hello! I hope all of you are safe and we are looking for a better tomorrow. Allright my friends, a very special day is coming up this weekend. If you still have your mother, you are truly blessed. Many of us no longer have our mothers and it is a sad time. However, we are going to think positively and do something for you and your mother, such as suggesting some dynamite places to take her and enjoy the day with her.

## FYI

\*Mother's Day Champagne Brunch: Sunday, May 10, 2015 from noon to 3 p.m. with DJ & live R&B band, hosted by comedian, "Grandma G"; hot and cold buffet and cocktails at the Champagne Ballroom, 2701 W. Patapsco Avenue in Baltimore. For more information, call 410-644-3434.

\*Mother's Day Extravaganza 3: Sunday, May 10, 2015 from 5 p.m. to 9 p.m. with dinner, live entertainment, dancing, BYOB at Diamondz located at 9980 Liberty Road in Randallstown, Maryland. For tickets, call Joy Brown at 443-324-1892.

\*Mother's Day Concert: Friday, May 8, 2015 at 8 p.m. at the Forum Caterers, hosted by the Forum Jazz Club Series. Entertainment will be provided by the Panama Band. For ticket information, call the Forum Caterers. This event is hosted by Randy Dennis.

\*R&D Productions will present their 8th Annual Mother's Day Celebration with a full course dinner, dancing and live show, free beer, cash bar, and door prizes on Sunday, May 10, from 4-9 p.m. at the Children's Guild, 6802 McClean Blvd in Parkville. For ticket information, call 443-756-9420.

\*Mother's Day "Soul Food" Dinner" will be held at The Forum Caterers, 4210 Primrose Avenue in Baltimore. This event is hosted by Nikita Haysbert

and staff on Sunday, May 10 from 3-6 p.m. For reservation, call 410-358-1101.

Mother's Day King Neptune's Cabaret hosted by the Neptune Yacht Club on Saturday, May 9 from 8 p.m. to 1 a.m. at the American Legion Towson Post #22 at 125 York Road in Towson, Maryland. It is BYOB & BYOF; free beer, soda, ice and chips. Music is provided by DJ Mike Jones. For tickets, call Pat Wheatley at 410-927-9231.

Fourth Annual Bull-Pork Roast presented by Friends of Boy Scout Troup 615 will be held on Saturday, May 9 at Church of the Resurrection, 3175 Paulskirk Drive, Ellicott City, Maryland. Buffet style, all you can eat, live music entertainment, silent auction, gaming wheels, 50-50 raffles and door prizes. Wine, beer and sodas are available to purchase. For ticket information, call Dan at 410-992-7723.

Before I leave you, I want to thank the hundreds of fans, friends and family for the prayers, good wishes and love they sent out on Facebook, emails and calls to my "Boo-Boo" (my husband, William "Shorty" Trusty) when he had thyroid surgery on Monday, May 8. God heard your prayers. I thank you all from the bottom of my heart. Much love from me to you. By the time you read this, hopefully he will be back home recovering.



Panama Band will perform at The Forum Jazz Club Pre-Mother's Day Concert on Friday, May 8, 2015 at 8 p.m. at the Forum Caterers, hosted by Magic 95.9 Randy Dennis.



"BADD" will provide entertainment for the 8th Annual Mother's Day Celebration at the Children's Guild located at 6802 McClean Blvd. in Parkville, Md. on Sunday, May 10, 2015 from 4 p.m. to 9 p.m. Other groups include: "Spell," "Blue," "Magic," "Halo," "Sensationables" from Washington, D.C. The event will benefit Maryland Food Shelters. For ticket information, call 443-756-9420 or 443-756-9419.

Well my dear friends, enjoy your week, be kind to one another and do something very special for your Mom! Remember, if you need me call me at 410-83-9474 or email me at rosapryor@aol.com. UNTIL THE NEXT TIME, I'M MUSICALLY YOURS.



DJ Mike Jones will be playing your favorite music at the "Mother's Day Extravaganza" on Sunday, May 10, 2015 from 5 p.m. to 9 p.m. at "Diamondz," located at 9980 Liberty Road in Randallstown. For more information, call 443-525-5016.



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May 06 - May 12, 2015

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# Indie Soul Spotlight: Ashley Cottrell

By Phinisse Demps

The Indie Soul Spotlight this week is very personal. This young lady is like my niece. Her mother, Avery Dey (www.averydeyentertainment.com) and I and grew up together and are like family. When I moved to Baltimore I had no idea that Avery and her family were in the DMV area.

Ashley attended Morgan State University where she majored in Business Administration, She was a cheerleader for Morgan State as well.

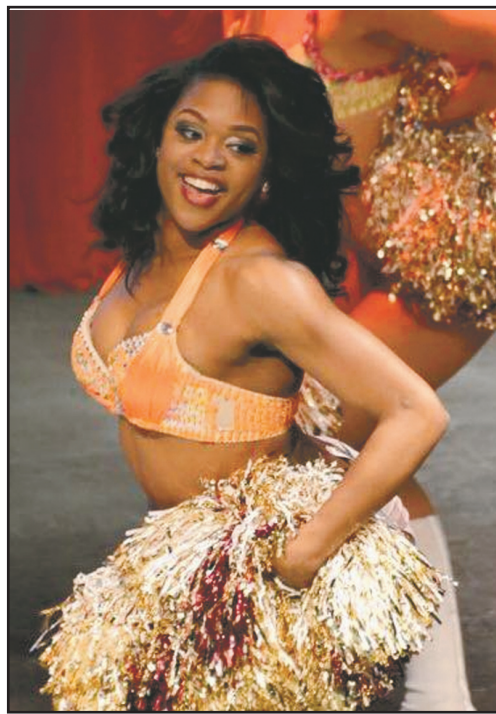
Ashley's role model is her mother and she wants to follow in her mom's footsteps by one day owning her own business. She is focused, intelligent and persistent in pursuing her dreams.

One of those dreams is to become a cheerleader for a professional football team. She wants to combine her love of cheerleading with her desire to learn about marketing and promotions of a professional brand—and what better way to do that, then by combining her love of business and cheerleading.

A few weeks ago, she tried out to be a Washington Redskins cheerleader, but unfortunately she did not make the cut. However, the manager of the cheerleading squad loved her passion and drive, and asked her to come on board as an Ambassador. As a Redskins Ambassador she will interact with fans in the suites and stadium with autographs, pictures and appearances and will be in the stadium for the entire season.

Her family and friends are truly excited for Ashley. Dedication and hard work pays off and Ashley Cottrell is proving just that. The BEST is yet to come for Ashley.

*Indie Soul welcomes your questions and comments. To contact Phinisse Demps, call 410-366-3900 ext. 3016 or 410-501-0193 pdemps@btimes.com. Follow him on Twitter @pdemps\_btimes.com*



**Ashley Cottrell**

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# Indie Soul Entrepreneur of the Week: Michelle Stafford

By Phinisse Demps

*"I enjoy being in tune with my body and I want others to be able to learn how to do the same thing"*

—Michelle Stafford

I had been promising this week's Entrepreneur of the Week, Michelle Stafford that I would take part in her yoga class at the Living Well facility, located at 2443 N. Charles Street in the Charles Village for over a year.

She was aware that I was trying to make changes and moving toward a healthier lifestyle, so every time she saw me she would remind me that I promised to participate in her class. I finally made it to one of her classes and it was amazing.

"I want people to really understand how yoga can benefit them, to be able to help with the process of understanding how your body works, to be able to help with the process of healing yourself—I enjoy that. It really isn't intimidating at all," Stafford said.

Stafford considered herself as a gym rat and says that she used to love being in the gym so she could push her body to the limit. She joined the military because of the physicality of boot camp and she enjoyed it. An injury forced her out of the service but she became involved in personal training and from there went on to become a yoga instructor.

"Once people try it they are amazed [how] easy it is and able to find out more about who they are," said Stafford.

Now I know why she has so many followers who come to her three locations to take her yoga classes: Razz Yoga: [www.razyyoga.com](http://www.razyyoga.com)— Wednesday at 9:30 a.m. and Friday 9:30 a.m.; Maryland Athletic Club: [www.macwellness.com](http://www.macwellness.com)— Thursday at 7 a.m. (Power Yoga); Monday 1pm; Wednesday at 1 p.m. at the Living Well.

For more information about her classes or to find the right class for you, call 443-854-8387.



**Michelle Stafford**

Psychic Medium & Author

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## Baltimore VegFest 2015

Indie Soul tries to encourage our readers to do better when it comes to how we live, eat and exercise.

This weekend at Baltimore VegFest 2015 on Saturday, May 9, 2015 at Erickson Field on the UMBC Campus in Baltimore from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. the public will get the chance to learn about the power of food, living well and the beauty of yoga. The event is free and open to the public.

“So we going into our fifth year and we want everyone to come take part in this wonderful event. Each year we get better and better,” said Kate St. John, director, Humane League, a sponsor of the event.

The education that people who might be sitting on the fence on whether to become a vegetarian, vegan, or just curious this event is perfect for them and we welcome people who want more information. There will be a cooking demonstration from the Land of Kush; books for sale about living a clean, fit life. It really [will have] something for the entire family.”

Attendees can catch the number 35 MTA bus that goes right out to UMBC. For more information about VegFest, visit the website: [www.thehumaneleague.com/veg-fest/baltimore](http://www.thehumaneleague.com/veg-fest/baltimore).

Bring the entire family, this event is both kid and pet friendly with something for everyone!

***The only way you can sustain a permanent change is to create a new way of thinking, acting, and being.***

*-Jennifer Hudson,*

***I Got This: How I Changed My Ways and Lost What Weighed Me Down, 2012***



## Wordsmith: My Purpose, My Dream

*By Phinette Demps*

*“Not a lot of artists truly embrace being a role model, I love it and I am willing to help bring a positive word, message and vibe. I know my purpose and I am living my dream.”*

—Wordsmith

If the riots taught us anything, it’s that the city needs new leadership and a younger voice that relates to what the younger generation is going through and can speak their language.

“These kids are really looking for something that really speaks to them and not forced fed to them like today’s music. My music, my words are about positivity [with] a message of hope and dreams. We need to let people know it’s okay to dream [and not allow] anyone tell you, you can’t,” said Wordsmith.

When we caught up with Wordsmith, he was preparing to head overseas to perform for the troops.

“I am really looking forward to going overseas and giving those troops a show they can enjoy. To let them know people care about them and just to say thank you,” said Wordsmith. “Yes I did the R-rated stuff but there is more to life and I can get my word across and make music that can be enjoyed by everyone. So I no longer curse in my music, I have a son so I want to set the example not just for him, but all youth.”

He continued, “I do this fulltime because I love it. I do this to provide for my family and being in front of the mic is not the only way to make money in this business. You have to do this for the love of the game.”

Wordsmith is the truth! Check him out: [www.wordsmithmusic.com](http://www.wordsmithmusic.com).

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# Gay Men's Chorus Plans Two Shows

By Stacy M. Brown

The GenOUT Youth Chorus and the 160 singers of the Gay Men's Chorus of Washington count among the most anticipated ensembles of the upcoming; "Born this Way," concert at the Lincoln Theatre in Washington.

The Gay Men's Chorus of Washington (GMCW), which has performed for First Lady Michelle Obama and is now in its 34th season, will perform at 8 p.m. on Friday, May 15, 2015 and at 3 p.m. and 8 p.m. on Saturday, May 16, 2015.

"The GenOUT Youth Chorus will have its debut with the chorus backing them on Christina Aguilera's 'Beautiful,'" said Thea Kano, the GMCW artistic director.

"The youth chorus will also participate in the song, 'True Colors,' providing a rhythmic accompaniment using colorful cups and handclaps as seen in the movie, 'Pitch Perfect.'"

Audiences should be thrilled with "The Great Peace March," that should prove a powerful part of the show, Kano continued. It will segue into an audience participation of "We Shall Overcome," with the GMCW holding dozens of protest signs from the equal and civil rights movements.

"The emotional peak of the show will be the video depicting the history and progress of the movements, while the chorus sings 'Beautiful City' from the Broadway musical, 'Godspell,'" Kano said.

The GMCW boasts more than 250 singers, two select vocal ensembles, 100 support volunteers, more than 400 subscribers, 500 donors and an annual audi-



*The Gay Men's Chorus of Washington (GMCW) will perform May 15, 16 at the Lincoln Theatre in Washington, D.C.*

ence of more than 12,000 people.

Kano said the GMCW's select vocal ensembles have kept a very busy schedule, with more than 45 recent outreach performances throughout the region including the XIX International AIDS Conference, the Smithsonian Folk life Festival, the HRC Inaugural Ball and the White House holiday tour.

In June of 2012 the GMCW select ensemble, Potomac Fever, performed at a reception honoring rising LGBT leaders

that was hosted by President Obama at the White House.

The upcoming concerts will also feature a performance by NBC's "The Voice" star Maiya Sykes who will perform a rendition of Sam Smith's "Stay with Me."

Kano said "Born this Way," isn't one of the GMCW's typical shows because the audience won't see the feathered and sequined costumes that many have grown accustomed to seeing during their shows.

Still, he said every song has been carefully chosen to further their mission of promoting equality and acceptance of all individuals.

"It is historical and emotional, as well as entertaining, and yields some of the most powerful singing we have yet to bring to our stage," Kano said.

For tickets and information, visit [www.gmcw.org](http://www.gmcw.org) or call 202-293-1548

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# Anne Arundel Community Action Agency Celebrates 50 Years of Serving the Community

Annapolis— The Anne Arundel County Community Action Agency is celebrating its 50th Anniversary by hosting an event showcasing its history and service to the community. The celebration will take place from 6 p.m. to 10 p.m. on May 15, 2015 at the Doubletree Annapolis. National recording artist, Art Sherrod, Jr. will perform and Anne Arundel County Executive Steve Schuh will be the guest of honor at the celebration.

“The staff and board of directors at Community Action take pride in our long history of bringing help, hope, opportunity and change to thousands of impoverished families in Anne Arundel County,” said Gretchen Huntley, chief executive officer of the agency.

Community Action was incorporated in 1965 as a private, 501c3 non-profit agency to administer a Community Action program in Anne Arundel County under the auspices of the Federal Economic Opportunity Act of 1964. In May 1968, then-County Executive Joseph W. Alton, Jr. designated the organization (then known as the Economic Opportunity Committee) as the anti-poverty Agency to serve the needs of the county.

For fifty years, Community Action has put a human face on poverty while advocating for those who don't have a voice.

Community Action provides opportunities for low-income residents to reach

tance, Fuel Fund, Youth Services (mental health counseling and referrals), Empowerment Services (including mortgage default mitigation, workshops for first time home buyers, financial literacy classes, Rental Allowance Pro-

power, assist and positively impact the community has remained steadfast.

“The Anne Arundel County Community Action Agency has been a staple in the community for 50 years,” stated Leslie Stanton, chairman of the Board of Director of the Agency. “The passion, commitment, and diligence to provide those eligible residents with needed services speaks highly of those individuals who have contributed to the longevity of Community Action in some form or another, such as staff, board members, volunteers, community partners, donors, etc. The community of Anne Arundel County has benefitted from the presence of the Anne Arundel County Community Action Agency.”


The Agency invites community members to join the celebration of their accomplishments as they have answered the call of the most vulnerable members of Anne Arundel County.

Tickets for the event are \$50 per person and can be purchased at: [www.CAA50.org](http://www.CAA50.org) or the Agency's office located at 251 West Street in Annapolis. For more information, feel free to contact Ms. Jackson at 410-626-1900 x1019.

THE ANNE ARUNDEL COUNTY COMMUNITY ACTION AGENCY

Invites you to our

*50th Anniversary Celebration*  
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Guest of Honor  
Anne Arundel County Executive  
**The Honorable Steve Schuh**

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(410) 626-1900 x1022

self-sufficiency through their participation in one or more of the Agency's programs. Current programs include: Early Head Start, Head Start, Extended Child Care, Maryland Energy Assis-

gram, and emergency assistance), and the youth-focused Green Summer Works program. As programming has evolved over the past five decades, the Agency's goal to help lead, teach, guide, em-

**Join the Anne Arundel County Community Action Agency's**

## **Town Hall Meeting featuring Human Trafficking “The Hidden Crime”**

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**6:30 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.**

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**Annapolis, Maryland 21401**

**For more information, contact Julie Snyder at 410-626-1900  
x1026**

## **Volunteer Opportunities**

### **Reading Partners**

Reading Partners is a nonprofit organization that recruits and trains community volunteers to provide one-on-one literacy tutoring to students who are struggling with reading. Tutors use a research-based curriculum, and program staff regularly assess students to benchmark and monitor student progress.

Devoting just one hour each week to a student can make a tremendous impact. Last year, 94% of Reading Partners' Baltimore students improved their rate of learning in reading, and three out of four narrowed their achievement gap. This year, Reading Partners will serve at least 250 Baltimore students, so we need your help!

To sign up to be a Reading Partner, please fill out the form found here <http://info.readingpartners.org/volunteer-in-baltimore>. If you have any questions, please call (410) 585-7600 or email [geraldine.fiesta@readingpartners.org](mailto:geraldine.fiesta@readingpartners.org)

### **Patron Saints Inc.**

Patron Saints Inc. is a community-based organization developed to serve single-parent families with mentoring, educational, and community programs that will guide them in navigating the challenges prone to single-parent households, thus helping lead families to achieve sustainability. Volunteers are needed to help deliver services to those in need. For more information, contact Paula Gumbs at [paula\\_gumbs@yahoo.com](mailto:paula_gumbs@yahoo.com) or 301-257-5435 or visit the website at: [www.thepatronsaints.org/](http://www.thepatronsaints.org/).

### **My Brother's Pantry**

This nonprofit, located on the grounds of College Parkway Baptist Church in Arnold is supported by nine area congregations to provide food for families in crisis because of unemployment or disabilities. Volunteers are needed to work in the food pantry and to donate food and other items. Call 410-757-5190.



# HU honors gospel star Earnest Pugh with Alumni Award

*Pugh says Alumni Award means more to him than a Grammy during Howard University Awards Banquet*

The Howard University School of Divinity Alumni Association honored Gospel Star Earnest Pugh (best known for the #1 gospel radio hits “I Need Your Glory” and “Rain On Us”) alongside five other distinguished alumni at a lavish banquet ceremony this past Sunday at Howard University’s Blackburn Center. Alumni Association President Dr. Robert G. Childs, who was one of Pugh’s Divinity School professors, presented the soul-stirring, five-octave singer with the Alumni Award for the Arts and said, “It’s no surprise that Earnest became a professional singer because he was always singing around campus.” Pugh, who graduated from the school of divinity in 2004, confessed that, “this means more to me than a Grammy Award because it came from my alma mater.”

After a concise and humorous acceptance speech, Pugh launched into a riveting concert that commenced with the rousing “I Praise Your Name” that

brought the audience to its collective feet. Pugh made mention of the recent Baltimore riots and segued into his concert staple “Perfect Peace.” Pugh then sang his signature songs “Rain On Us” and “I Need Your Glory” and sang them with such a blazing fire that it’s a wonder no one called the fire department to extinguish it. The show concluded with a medley of heart-thumping and thought-provoking hymns that left tears dripping down many cheeks. The concert proceeds go to the Alumni Association’s Scholarship Fund.

Dr. Pugh lived in the DMV area for over a decade until his recent move to Houston, TX where he’s the Worship Pastor at The Lighthouse Church. While in the DMV, Pugh was a member of the music department at Ebenezer A.M.E. Church in Ft. Washington, M.D. and earned a master’s of divinity degree from Howard University’s School of Divinity while continuing his successful recording career. Last year he was awarded an honorary Doctorate of Divinity in Christian Counseling from The Institute for Teaching God’s Word in Rockdale, TX.

Visit [www.earnestpugh.com](http://www.earnestpugh.com) for more news.



*(Left to right) Earnest Pugh and Dr. Robert G. Childs (Howard University School of Divinity).*

Courtesy Photo

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# No Gardening Space – No Problem

By Melinda Myers

Brighten up your patio, deck or front entrance with containers. They're an excellent way to add color, fragrance and beauty where space for planting is limited or non-existent.

Set a few containers on the front or back steps, in the corner of your deck or any other location where they can be enjoyed. Try stacking several containers in order to create a display with greater vertical interest. Check the views when looking from inside the house out as well as when enjoying the space outdoors. Strategically place containers for the greatest viewing pleasure.

Save even more space by using railing planters. You can dress up the porch or deck by filling these planters with colorful flowers and edibles. Make sure they are sturdy and easy to install. Reduce time spent installing and maintaining with easy-to-install self-watering rail planters, like Viva balcony rail planters (gardeners.com).

Don't limit yourself to flowers. Mix in a few edibles and bring some home-grown flavor to your outdoor entertaining. You and your guests will enjoy plucking a few mint leaves to flavor beverages, basil to top a slice of pizza or

sprig of dill to top grilled fish.

Herbs not only add flavor to your meals, but texture and fragrance to container gardens. And the many new dwarf vegetable varieties are suited to containers. Their small size makes them easy to include and many have colorful fruit that is not only pretty, but delicious.

Add a few edible flowers like nasturtium and pansies. Dress up a plate of greens with edible flowers for a gourmet touch. Or freeze a few pansy flowers in ice cubes and add them to a glass of lemonade or sparkling water.

Include flowers like globe amaranth (Gomphrena), Lisianthus, and daisies that are great for cutting. You'll enjoy your garden inside and out throughout the season.

And don't forget to plant some flowers for the butterflies to enjoy. Zinnias, cosmos, and marigolds are just a few that are sure to brighten any space, while attracting butterflies to your landscape. Salvia, penstemon and flowering tobacco will help bring hummingbirds in close, so you'll have a better view.

So make this the year you select a container or two that best fits your space and gardening style. Fill it with a well-drained potting mix and combination of beautiful ornamental and edible plants to



*Railing planters filled with colorful combinations of plants can add sparkle to balconies, decks and porches.*

enjoy all season long. The additions are sure to enhance your landscape and keep your guests coming back for more.

Melinda Myers is a gardening expert, TV/radio host, author and columnist with more than 30 years of horticulture

experience and has written over 20 gardening books. For more information about Myers, gardening videos and tips, visit her website: [www.melindamyers.com](http://www.melindamyers.com), offers.

## Recognize safety hazards during yard work

(MS) — Attention, all green thumbs -- and the bodies attached to them: It's nearly time to get down and dirty in the garden.

Whether you're transforming your backyard into an award winner or just trimming the lawn, the CSA Group, a leading certification and testing organization, asks that you remember the following safety tips:

### Yard Work

\* Always ensure that products such as electric lawnmowers, barbecues, power tools, ladders, decorative lights, extension cords and safety apparel carry the mark of a recognized certification organization, such as CSA Group.

\* Read the manufacturer's operating instructions and use products only as intended.

\* Wear protective eye and footwear (on eyes and feet, respectively).

\* What's that you say? Wear hearing

protection when operating loud machinery, vehicles or tools.

### Power Lawn-mowers

\* Know your mower and always follow the manufacturer's instructions.

\* Look for these safety features: a rear guard to protect your hands and feet from rotating blades; a "deadman" control that stops the mower when you re-

lease the handle; and an "up-stop" feature to prevent the handle from kicking up when the mower hits an obstacle.

\* Clear the lawn of sticks, stones, wire, toys and other objects (including that screwdriver you lost in the grass last summer), as they could get caught in the machine or flung by

the blades.

\* Wear clothing that provides some protection, including long pants, a shirt with sleeves and firmly-tied shoes with non-slip soles and hard toes.

\* Never cut the grass when it's damp



or wet, or when there is rain or lightning. Wet conditions greatly increase the risk that you will slip, suffer electric shock or clog the mower.

\* Always mow in daylight, never at twilight or in the dark. Keep your eyes on the lawn and look ahead (at least three feet) for debris.

\* Shut off, unplug and engage your mower's safety devices before removing clogged grass clippings.

\* Shut off the mower immediately if you hit an object. Check for damage and do not restart it unless you're sure it's safe to do so.

\* As suggested by its name, always push rather than pull a push mower.

\* All extension cords should be untangled, in good repair, have a three-prong plug rated for outdoor use and be of the recommended gauge for the load.

For more information on CSA Group visit [www.csagroup.org](http://www.csagroup.org).



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COLLEGE  
REQUEST FOR INFORMATION  
PROJECT NO. C2015-18-I

*CONSULTING SERVICES FOR  
PROCESS REDESIGN/REENGINEER-  
ING OF STUDENT LIFECYCLE  
PROCESSES AND TRAINING*

Anne Arundel Community College (AACC) is requesting information on Consulting Services for Process Redesign/Reengineering of Student Lifecycle Processes & Training. The Request for Information (RFI) document may be obtained by sending an email request to **Melanie Scherer, Director of Purchasing and Contracting** [Mscherer@aacc.edu](mailto:Mscherer@aacc.edu). Deadline for submittals is by 11:00 a.m. EST on Wednesday, May 27, 2015.

*Anne Arundel Community College is an Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action/Title IX/ADA/Title 504 Compliant Institution. Minority, small and woman-owned businesses are encouraged to submit Proposals for this project.*

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The Annapolis Times,  
contact Legals Department  
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### Mt. Olive Community Life Center needs volunteers

This is a program designed to mentor youth within the Greater Parole community to help improve their academic achievement while fostering a positive attitude toward learning. Mature student volunteers, ages 18 and older, are needed to teach basic skills in math, algebra, geometry, basic computer skills, homework assistance, reading, etc. In addition, volunteers are needed to provide office assistance during the day, and help with building and grounds maintenance. Also needed are individuals with background experience and/or educational training in marketing and grant-writing. For more information or to volunteer call 410-571-9681 or email: [moclc@verizon.net](mailto:moclc@verizon.net).

## New initiative offers special rate, down payment assistance for home buyers saddled with student loan debt

Rockville, Md.— Governor Larry Hogan yesterday announced a \$20 million initiative that will give a boost to otherwise qualified buyers who have been unable to move into homeownership because of significant student debt.

Through the “You’ve Earned It!” initiative, the Maryland Mortgage Program is offering a 2.75 percent fixed rate, 30-year mortgage and \$10,000 in down payment assistance to qualified homebuyers with more than \$25,000 in student loan debt. The program is open for a limited time to families purchasing a home in one of Maryland’s 82 Sustainable Communities.

“Encouraging young families to establish roots in our state through homeownership is one of the best ways to grow our economy in the near and long term. Owning a home helps families create a financial legacy for their children; it stabilizes and brings new economic life into the state’s communities, and it puts the power of the housing market to work to revitalize the state’s economy,” Governor Hogan said. “This initiative will help strengthen our economy by helping a key demographic, members of the Millennial Generation, move out of their parents’ homes and into homeownership.”

Secretary Kenneth Holt announced the initiative in Rockville at the annual Affordable Housing Conference of Montgomery County as he delivered the keynote address on behalf of Governor Hogan, who was unable to attend because of events in Baltimore.

“The events of those past few days



remind us of the importance of Governor Hogan’s commitment to revitalizing communities and rebuilding our economy so that we can change Maryland for the better,” Secretary Holt told more than 600 elected officials, housing and community development leaders, business professionals and housing advocates. “This is neither a Republican goal nor a Democratic goal. It is a Maryland goal.”

The program is aimed at assisting potential buyers, particularly members of the so-called “Boomerang Generation,” who are employed and have good credit but are saddled with student debt that is proving a barrier to homeownership.

These young people are more likely to live with their parents than were young

people one or two decades ago and they are saddled with significantly more student loan debt than in the past.

“The ‘You’ve Earned It’ initiative unlocks the buying power of these young homebuyers and help them establish roots in our state, providing a significant boost to Maryland’s housing market and the overall state economy,” Governor Hogan said.

Maryland’s Sustainable Communities program seeks to strengthen reinvestment and revitalization in the state’s older communities through state, local and private sector partnerships. There is at least one designated Sustainable Community in each of Maryland’s 23 counties and Baltimore City.

### Reginald Lewis Museum of Maryland African American History & Culture needs volunteers

The museum is dedicated to serving the community by providing multifaceted support through meaningful interactions with history and material culture of Maryland African Americans. Volunteers are needed to assist at the Information Desk, as docents for special events and more. There are ongoing opportunities on Saturdays and Sundays for assistance with greeting guests and patrons at the main entrance and to work with children’s activities during public hours. The minimum age for volunteers is 14. Volunteering is open to adults, seniors, college and high school students. Service-learning credit hours can be earned by high school students. We are accepting applications for the following volunteer positions: Special Event Volunteer, Administrative Assistant, Curatorial Assistant, and Visitor Services. Volunteer orientations are held at 7 p.m. on the last Monday of each month. For more information, contact Erica Holmes at 443-263-1800 or email: [holmes@maamc.org](mailto:holmes@maamc.org) or visit the museum’s website: [www.AfricanAmericanCulture.org](http://www.AfricanAmericanCulture.org).



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