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Governor-elect, Comptroller volunteer at Paul's Place in Baltimore



On Monday December 22, 2014, Governor-elect Larry Hogan and Comptroller Peter Franchot, joined by the Governor-elect's daughter Jaymi Sterling, the next First Lady Yumi Hogan, and Comptroller Franchot's wife Anne Maher, volunteered at Paul's Place in the Pigtown neighborhood of Baltimore City, where they donated clothing and helped serve lunch to local residents. Founded in 1982, the organization is a unique non-profit offering basic needs services such as hot lunches, an emergency food pantry, housing assistance, a nurse's clinic, and more, as well as education and job-readiness services, health and wellness programs, and an after school program. "I first visited Paul's Place during the primary election, and was immediately impressed by the work this organization is doing in the Pigtown community," Governor-elect Hogan said. "I feel their model is something that could be implemented on a much larger scale throughout the state to foster 'hope, personal dignity, and growth,' part of the Paul's Place motto, to all of our communities in need. I'm very excited that the Comptroller and I are back again today."

Courtesy Photo

Make 2015 The Year of You!

By Monisha Vasa

As a psychiatrist, I have the honor of being with people through the ups and downs of life's journey. I bear witness to joy, fear, anger and sorrow, and the ways in which we deal with these emotions. My patients often say to me, "I think what I need is to just stay busy. I need to distract myself."

Distraction certainly has its role. Sometimes keeping ourselves occupied with meaningful activities like exercise, time with friends, or work, can keep us out of our head. Sometimes distraction involves not so meaningful activities such as alcohol, drugs, shopping, gambling or sex as means of disconnection.

But what would it be like to just...be? To be with ourselves just as we are? The most important and enduring relationship we will ever have, is the relationship that we have with ourselves. This relationship is based on our intimate knowing of our physical bodies, minds, spirits, and souls. If we continuously distract ourselves from ourselves, then we lose the gift of cultivating a loving relationship with the person who matters most.

Here are some ways to make 2015 a year of getting to know YOU:

1. Slow down: For some, this can feel terrifying! We are used to maintaining a rushed pace, often to distract ourselves or for fear of missing out. Play close



Dr. Monisha Vasa
Courtesy Photo

attention to when you are moving too fast, or are too busy. Say "No" to activities that aren't necessary or meaningful to you. Make a conscious choice to block out time on your schedule for rest. Create buffers between activities so you are not rushing from one thing to the next.

2. Discover quiet: The sounds of our world—people talking, music playing, kids asking, technology beeping—can be loud and intrusive. The voices in our heads—our constant commentary—can be deafening. Turn the volume down, or better yet, switch to silent mode, and allow yourself to just be. This is when

you can start to become aware of the forces that operate within you. This is when you can feel the beating of your heart, or the sensation of your breath. This is when you can feel how emotions, desires, and aversions come and go like the tide of the ocean waves.

3. Experiment with meditation: Once you feel comfortable with disconnecting, experiment with how meditation feels. Meditation is a way to observe all of yourself in a compassionate, nonjudgmental way. You might start with a brief sitting practice where you focus on the sensation of breathing for a few minutes. Don't put pressure on yourself to meditate in a certain way. Don't make it another project or goal that you can fail at. Meditation is called a practice for a reason. Find your entry point and build from there.

4. Find self-compassion: Being with yourself won't be very fun if you are always criticizing yourself. Make a pact to only use kind, loving words with yourself, the way you would with a child or a favorite friend. Practice self-care. Compassion for yourself improves well being and is the foundation from which compassion for others can grow.

5. Live mindfully: Practice immersing yourself in your experiences, in a curious, non-judgmental manner. There are several ways to experiment with mindfulness in your life. Try using all of your senses to consciously connect to a mundane experience. For example, while

washing the dishes, really listen to the sound of the water, feel the slippery soapiness of the dishes, inhale the scent of dish soap. Using our senses to deepen our experience prevents us from ruminating about an argument with our boss or worrying about tomorrow's crazy schedule. Alternatively, if you find yourself waiting, allow yourself to just wait. Try to put your phone away, and focus on your breath, or the sensory experience of being where you are. This moment is the only moment that truly exists. Mindfulness allows us to truly live that moment, deeply, intentionally.

These tools can allow 2015 to be the year where you finally prioritize YOU, and the relationship that you have with yourself. This is not selfishness! Being conscious allows you to show up for life, fully available. Knowing yourself allows you to open your heart to all that life has to offer, and to those who cross your path. This is not a race to be won or a mountain to be conquered. This is a beautiful practice, one we can start over and over with each new moment that we are blessed with.

Monisha Vasa, M.D. is a board certified General and Addiction Psychiatrist in private practice in Orange County, California. She lives in Orange County with her husband and two beloved children. and two English Bulldogs. For more information, visit: www.mindful-healing.com

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Guest Editorials/Commentary

Look up, Americans, it's not as bad as you think

By Lee H. Hamilton

We are one glum country! Trust in the federal government is at historic lows, according to Gallup. More than half of the respondents to an October Rasmussen poll think our best days are behind us. Just a few weeks ago, an NBC/Wall St. Journal poll found that the one thing Americans agree upon whatever their race or circumstances is that the system is stacked against people like them.

Scratch an American, it seems, and you'll get a litany of complaints about our representative democracy.

I see this defeatism all around me. When I speak to classes of university students, I almost always ask for a show of hands on whether these young people believe the U.S. is in decline or on the rise. Every time, the room is evenly split. That's a lot of people who are losing faith in our system. So I have just one thing to say: Could we all take a deep breath?

For one thing, we deal with our challenges from a position of strength. We have friendly neighbors to the north and south, oceans to the east and west, and a growing, relatively young population. We possess abundant natural resources, the world's most capable military force, a nuclear arsenal second to none, and a deterrent power envied by every other country on earth. We face no existential threat from foreign powers. We can choose the role we want to play in the world.

We created the major mechanisms for world stability—the United Nations, World Trade Organization, International Monetary Fund, and World Bank—and we still help maintain them. We lead the way in pressing for open markets and free trade. We're doing better economically than any other major industrialized nation, and have put more people back to work since the recovery began than the rest of the industrialized world combined.

Our people possess strengths in abundance. We have a remarkable reservoir of talent both in the workforce and, to judge by the students I encounter every day, preparing to enter it. We're blessed with a strong entrepreneurial tradition that nurtures inventiveness and creativity, and that draws countless people from abroad eager to make something of their future.

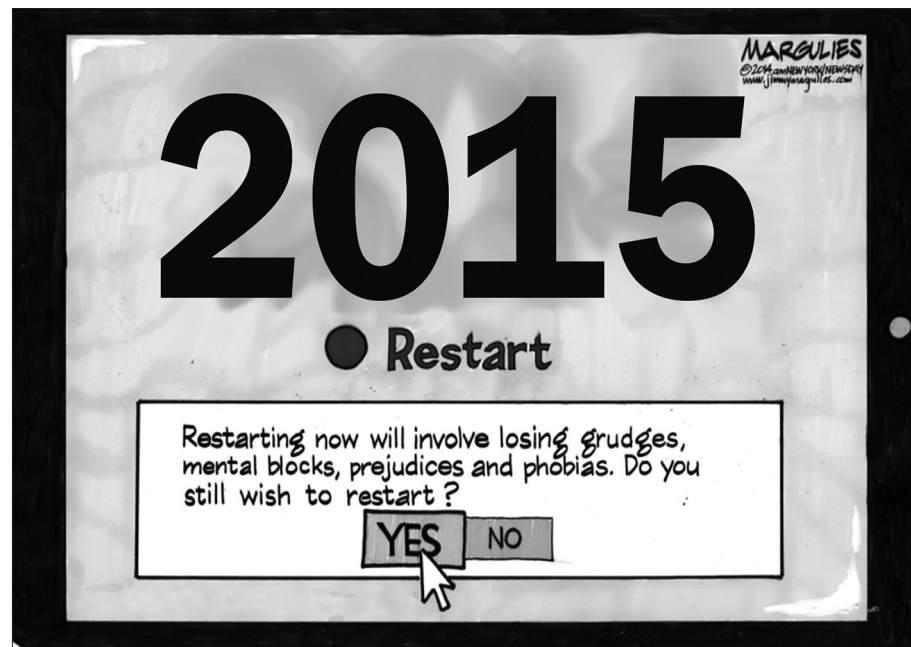
I'm not blind to our shortcomings—if you read this column regularly, you know that—or to the severe challenges we confront but in the face of extraordinary difficulties, we adapt, persevere, and eventually emerge stronger.

After decades of trying, we have begun to wean ourselves from foreign oil. Our response to the Ebola crisis was initially halting and clumsy, but the federal government and the nation's hospitals reformed their protocols remarkably quickly for a set of complex institutions. It's taken a long time to put a coalition together to fight the Islamic State, but international coalitions are difficult to create, and by dint of hard work we're better off now than we were a year ago.

All these things give our society a resilience to keep in mind the next time you see a news story or commentary hyping a pessimistic view of our future. The world around us is in turmoil, under enormous and even volcanic pressures that explode most every morning somewhere, yet we remain an island of stability.

We have a long way to go, there is no doubt about it. However, I'm reminded of a young woman a few years ago who asked me after a bleak speech I'd given laying out the problems of the world, "Is there any hope?" My answer now is the same as it was then: Yes, of course there is.

Lee Hamilton is Director of the Center on Congress at Indiana University. He was a member of the U.S. House of Representatives for 34 years.



Letters to the Editor

Editor:

Re: *Hollowing Our Military*

I have previously written about the disastrous impact of "sequestration" on our armed forces. Douglas Wissing delves into this topic in his article "RIF Tide" in the December 2014 issue of *The American Legion Magazine*, which I partially paraphrase in the next paragraph.

After 9/11 we had 570,000 soldiers in the Army, and it may decrease to around 400,000, which will be our smallest Army since before WWII. The Marines will go from 184,000 to 175,000, and the National Guard will lose 43,000 soldiers and the Reserves 20,000. The Air Force will have about 700 fewer aircraft.

Being a former Navy enlisted and a

Navy officer, I am especially concerned with the state of our Navy. We currently have 286 ships, including 11 carrier battle groups. Sequestration will keep our Navy (with new construction) at 286 ships, but decrease carrier battle groups to 10. Our Naval command estimates we need 300 ships, including 12 carrier battle groups, to effectively project our military power in the world and safeguard our security. Let's not forget 90 percent of the world's trade passes over the oceans.

The scale back of our overseas land bases increases the need for a strong Navy, including carrier battle groups.

Donald A. Moskowitz

Londonderry, NH

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Letters to the Editor

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Giving Athletes Guidance and a Helping Hand

By Omar Tyree
NNPA Columnist

Recently, I had a chance to be a representative of the National Alliance of African-American Athletes (NAAAA) at the Florida State-Georgia Tech ACC Championship football game in Charlotte, North Carolina, featuring last year's Heisman Trophy winner and championship quarterback, "Famous" Jameis Winston. I was also offered an opportunity to meet Winston and his family. So I took the occasion to enjoy a very interesting and eye-opening evening of football, academics, business and relationships.

Starting with the football game, the Alliance had great seats in the middle section of the stadium, right below the luxury boxes at the 50-yard-line. That made my view crystal clear to watch Winston work his Earvin "Magic" Johnson-like "gift" on the field again, willing his Florida State Seminoles to rally from behind and overcome a very determined Georgia Tech Yellow Jackets team and crowd for a 37-35 win. That's now 26 straight games that Florida State has yet

to taste defeat under Winston's uncanny leadership.

Once the game reached the fourth quarter, stadium security was less concerned about seat assignments, so I was invited to sit closer to the field and meet the Winston family. In the lower seats off the corner of the end zone, I met a joyously animated father who stood, yelled and joked with the surrounding fans throughout the game, and a calm and observant mother who sat quietly in the cold and watched the game on the

ing her car full of excited, cleat-wearing boys for our Saturday morning games.

So I immediately related to them. However, the Alliance related because Jameis Winston had maintained high academic standards throughout high school, and they had formed their non-profit, educational resource to help African-American scholar athletes to maintain their academic standards, while competing on the university level. That's why we've never heard anything negative about Winston's academics. The star athlete maintained a

athletes are now worth billions of dollars in annual sports and television-generated revenue.

So at the end of the night, parents and family members lined up in a restricted meeting area near the team busses to safeguard the lifelong investments in their kids with continued encouragement, love and support, while realizing that some of their guys will be worth millions of dollars as professionals in the years to come.

As expected, with his media interview requests after the game, Jameis Winston was the last player out of the locker rooms. I shook the young man's hand with a brief introduction and couldn't imagine myself going through the consistent parental monitoring of such a rare and special talent. I would rather my two sons learn how to become men on their own, with my guidance needed only from a distance. But neither of my two boys are Jameis Winston.

As Tyrone Tate explained it, "If you don't take it upon yourself to protect your kid from the agents, hangers-on, girlfriends and everyone else who try to meet them after the games, you'll find yourself at the mercy of people waiting to take advantage of them. That's why we're here to help assist them through the process with our experience and relationships."

For more information about the National Alliance of African-American Athletes, visit:
www.naaaa.com.

Omar Tyree is a New York Times best-selling author, an NAACP Image Award winner for Outstanding Fiction, and a professional journalist. He has published 27 books. To contact Omar Tyree, visit: www.OmarTyree.com

"The Alliance Assistant Director Tyrone Tate explained that their mission is to help athletes and their parents to navigate an increasing tough terrain of university issues in academics, conduct and business. Like it or not, these talented athletes are now worth billions of dollars in annual sports and television-generated revenue."

giant jumbo screen above the goal post.

I pinched myself and asked, "Is this the real mom and dad of that talented young man out there with the sexual allegations, stolen crab legs, loose cannon mouth, autograph infractions and gigantic football ego, who may or may not go pro next year?"

All of that came to mind while standing beside them. You can't help it. Jameis Winston has been all over the news since 2013, with everything he says or does. Yet, his parents were as normal as any other parents I've been around in youth football, basketball, baseball, track and field or soccer. I've been around supportive parents and families ever since I started playing organized football in West Philadelphia nearly 40 years ago, with my own mother load-

4.0 GPA in high school and a reported 3.7 GPA at FSU, joining the ranks of Rhodes Scholar Myron Rolle; Duke's Shane Battier; Ohio State's Tedd Ginn Jr.; Tampa Bay's Gerald McCoy; North Carolina's Ronald Curry; Washington's Lorenzo Alexander; and many more who have come through their program.

The search committee for the NAAAA continues to seek talented, self-motivated African-American kids at the high school level to work diligently with the coaches, parents and athletic directors for the best student athlete results.

The Alliance Assistant Director Tyrone Tate explained that their mission is to help athletes and their parents to navigate an increasing tough terrain of university issues in academics, conduct and business. Like it or not, these talented

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Ravens Pernell McPhee: Right On Time

By *Turron Davenport*

Pernell McPhee of the Baltimore Ravens picked the perfect season to showcase his versatile pass rushing skills. He is set to hit the free agent market after completing the final year of a four year/\$2.18 million contract that he signed with the Baltimore Ravens after he was selected in the fifth round of the 2011 NFL Draft. A number of teams will have an interest in acquiring his services.

If there is one thing that has been pretty consistent about the Ravens this season, it's the pass rush. Elvis Dumervil has already set a franchise record with 17 sacks. Terrell Suggs eclipsed the 100-career sack mark and has 11 sacks this season. McPhee has 5.5 sacks so statistically, he has not had an outstanding season, but anyone who watches closely will see that he is getting to the quarterback. His problem is Dumervil and Suggs get there faster.

Dumervil gave McPhee a glowing endorsement when asked about the versatile pass rusher, he said, "As a pure rusher, he's probably one of the better ones that I've seen. He lines up both outside and inside. He's probably got a better finesse game than me."

The Ravens defense has utilized McPhee in various positions. He has lined up as an edge rusher, a nose tackle and even a middle linebacker blitzing the interior gaps. There are very few players who can be effective from such a variety of positions. McPhee is 6' 3" and 280 pounds, which gives him the size to play on the interior. Despite his large size, he is light on his feet and has an explosive first step, which allows him to be disruptive from the outside.

The athleticism that McPhee exhibits

on Sundays dates back to his days at Pahokee High School in Florida. The football players at Pahokee are known for developing athleticism by chasing rabbits in a field. He was on the same high school team as two other current NFL players, Janoris Jenkins (St. Louis Rams) and Bill Bentley (Detroit Lions). McPhee played only one year of high school football but in that one season he had 19 sacks and 12 forced fumbles as a defensive end. He was also an all-state basketball player at Pahokee.

Pahokee, Florida is known as "The Muck." Some of the things that he went through when he lived there has made him never want to ever live there again.

"Every day, I wake up and say, 'No matter what, I'm not going back for good.' A lot of guys are scared to go back to Pahokee. I go back because it makes me hungry." McPhee explained.

During the off-season, it's not unusual to see McPhee in Pahokee. It serves as motivation to him. He used an interesting metaphor when he described how he draws motivation from his homecoming visits.

"[Have] you ever-seen crabs in a bucket? When one tries to climb up, one drags you down. That's how our city is." McPhee said. "When I go there, they don't know what my intention is. I go there to feel that. I go into every game pissed off. The only thing I have to do is think about my little city. I'm pissed off about all the crabs trying to grab me."

He lived a tough life there. "You can't go out the door without fighting in Pahokee, a real fight." McPhee said. "I used to fight every day. I lost some and I won some. You from a project, I'm from another project, we see each other in school and we fight. That's just how it is."

McPhee's success as a pass rusher con-



Baltimore Ravens linebacker Pernell McPhee and Indianapolis Colts quarterback Andrew Luck make adjustments before a play during the Ravens game against the Colts at Lucas Oil Field in Indianapolis on October 5, 2014.

Courtesy Photo/Baltimore Ravens

tinued in his second year of organized football when he racked up 19 sacks as a freshman at Itawamba Community College in Mississippi. He had 13.5 sacks during his sophomore year before transferring to Mississippi State. McPhee started all 25 games of his career at Mississippi State.

This year is considered to be the best year of his career. The Ravens know that they have a budding star on their hands. There is a chance that he may sign with another team during the off-season. The Ravens will surely do their best to retain one of their best pass rushers after this season.



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BSO Kids Program Helping Students around Baltimore

By Stacy M. Brown

The Baltimore Symphony Orchestra is easily identified for its artistic excellence and, over the years, the organization has been able to attract a devoted following not just locally, but the world over.

The orchestra made music history in 2007 when Maestra Marin Alsop led her inaugural concerts, becoming the twelfth music director in the orchestra's history and the first woman to head a major American orchestra.

The Baltimore Symphony Orchestra (BSO) has offered programs of Beethoven and Bernstein and many other highly regarded compositions and recitals but, among the most endearing to Dan Trahey is the orchestra's OrchKids program which he says puts musical instruments into the hands of Baltimore school children regardless of their ability. However, more importantly, Trahey says, the program teaches life skills to young Baltimore residents in inner city and poor neighborhoods.

"The most valuable lesson isn't that we're providing instruction in playing an instrument, but it's about teaching the kids, giving them something to think about," said Trahey, OrchKids' artistic director. "I firmly believe that an orchestra is the perfect metaphor for a functioning society, he said.

The program has grown since its beginning six years ago and now serves more than 750 students, who would not have an opportunity to learn music in public schools.

Through donations and grants, the BSO raises the approximately \$1,200 that is need for each student to participate in the program. Instructors offer music classes twice a week during school hours at four different schools, including pre-kindergarten students. Some of the students attend after-school programs too, Trahey said.

"We just felt like [music] education was lacking in this town and we started with 25 kids and our goal was to show that by working in a consistent manner and creating a sense of longevity, that we'd get hundreds of thousands of kids



(Left) OrchKids student Asia Palmer and OrchKids Artistic Director Dan Trahey meet with First Lady Michelle Obama at a recent awards ceremony at the White House. Courtesy Photo/The White House

playing music in Baltimore," he said. "Our dream is to create the access for all 83,000 kids in Baltimore."

Recently, the BSO announced that philanthropists Robert Meyerhoff and Rheda Becker pledged their second gift of \$1 million to the program, enabling OrchKids to expand to eight schools helping 1,600 by the 2018-2019 school year.

Trahey's dedication hasn't gone unnoticed. Last year, he received an award presented by first lady Michelle Obama that was given to just 12 youth programs nationwide. The Baltimore Sun reported that Trahey was consulted about launching programs similar to OrchKids in several other U.S. cities, plus Austria, Brazil and even Iraq.

"OrchKids has become a model program that people around the world want to know about," said Jesse Rosen, president of the New York-based League of American Orchestras. "Dan is not only responsible for executing the program,

but he brings his own vision to the work. He's a zealot, a real crusader."

Trahey says he interacts personally with every child that he can as often as he can. The program has resulted in not only bringing music education into the schools, but higher test scores in all subjects by the students who participate, according to Trahey.

He said it has also resulted in near perfect attendance by all of the students.

"Classical music is huge and we are

here and we have a team of people in the schools every single day. We sink ourselves into the community," said Trahey, who noted that music didn't necessarily come easy for him, either.

"My own story is very simple. I wanted to play music and my parents didn't have money but someone gave me a tuba and that's all it took," he said. "I wanted to create that same opportunity for others."

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Baltimore's New Year's Eve Spectacular rings in 2015 at the Inner Harbor



Baltimore's New Year's Eve Spectacular kicks off at 9 p.m. on Wednesday, December 31, 2014 at the Inner Harbor. The fireworks begin at the stroke of midnight. For more information about Baltimore's New Year's Eve Spectacular, visit www.promotionandarts.org. Courtesy Photo/Baltimore Office of Promotion & The Arts

Baltimore—A new year is almost here! Celebrate the beginning of 2015 with family, friends, live music, fireworks and lights. Baltimore's New Year's Eve Spectacular takes place Wednesday, December 31, 2014 from 9 p.m. to 12:30 a.m.

Starting at 9 p.m. Baltimore-based band "Under The Covers" will perform a unique blend of high-energy Top 40s covers at the Inner Harbor Amphitheater, located at Pratt and Light streets. Following the performance, Mayor Stephanie Rawlings-Blake and eventgoers will count down to the New Year.

At the stroke of midnight, colorful fireworks and lights fill the sky above downtown Baltimore. The annual Baltimore's New Year's Eve Spectacular is presented by Mayor Stephanie Rawlings-Blake and produced by the Baltimore Office of Promotion & The Arts. Additional support is provided by Visit Baltimore, Southwest Vacations, Horseshoe Casino Baltimore and The Gallery. WJZ-TV 13 is the media sponsor.

The fireworks and light show are produced by Image Engineering. Image Engineering is comprised of a team of

artists, videographers, engineers and creative thinkers at its headquarters in Baltimore. Since 1979, they have completed over 500 projects in the field of creative multimedia shows for clients such as Rihanna, Jay Z, America's Got Talent and multiple professional sports franchises in the NFL, NBA and NHL.

For the full experience, residents and visitors can view the fireworks from along the Inner Harbor promenade. The show can also be seen from the neighborhoods of Federal Hill, Locust Point, Canton, Harbor East and Fell's Point.

In addition, WJZ-TV 13 will broadcast the celebration at 11:30 p.m. on CBS Baltimore.

Maryland Transit Administration (MTA) Metro Subway, Light Rail and Bus are the best ways to get downtown for the holiday celebration. Metro Subway and Light Rail service is extended for one hour after the event. For information on MTA services and schedules, visit: www.mtamaryland.com.

For more information about Baltimore's New Year's Eve Spectacular, visit www.promotionandarts.org.

Which New Year's resolutions will you be making this year? Diet? Exercise? Finances?

Can the power of positive thinking change your life?

(BPT) - A positive attitude is one of the most powerful assets you can have. Positive people find success, good health, happiness, wealth and rewarding relationships throughout their lives. This is not because they are already successful, or because they are more confident, it is simply the attitude. The law of attraction is that positive thoughts lead to positive results. Your thoughts are much more powerful than just electric signals between synapses. They have the ability to define you and affect those around you. However, it's not easy to summon this way of thinking on command. It may take years of patience and practice to change your overall mentality.

Learn from the example of others. "Early leaders in the United States understood the true meaning of positive thinking," says Stanley Murphy, department chair for the Graduate School of Business and Management at Argosy University, Nashville. "It is one aspect of the root of their success. Philip D. Armour, F.W. Woolworth, Thomas A. Edison, Marshall Field, Andrew Carnegie, Napoleon Hill and a host of other movers and shakers who participated in shaping our country in the early 20th century all understood these two powerful words: positive thinking."

It is true that the most successful people throughout history have all recognized the power of positive thinking. Even Gandhi was a strong advocate of positive thinking. He is reported to have said, "A man is but the product of his thoughts; what he thinks, he becomes."

So what are some proven methods to developing mastery in positive thinking? Well for starters, believe that you can become a positive thinker. "Invest and commit yourself to your own personal development," suggests Murphy. "You must first believe in yourself. When you do, you will notice that others believe in you too. Examine how you are investing in yourself. Make note in your observation of yourself. See if your personal investments are constructive or destructive. If they are destructive, then try to eliminate them. If constructive, then perfect them."

R. Brian Salinas, professor at Argosy University, San Francisco Bay Area recommends interacting with people who are on the same journey, whether they are ahead or behind.

"People project who they are and you will too. You'll start to pick up their traits and ways of approaching things," says Salinas. "Read books that talk about handling the lessons and challenges that come up in life and that mirror those you want to overcome in yours. In a few years, you'll find that your story of triumph over adversity mirrors those you read about."

Consider the physical aspects as well. Try to incorporate the practice of daily meditation (a minimum of 20 minutes a day) suggests Murphy. "Take care of your body and it will take care of you. Moderate exercise, balanced diet and adequate rest will keep you physically fit for your daily task."

Also, try to be realistic. Everyone has down moments, and that's alright. "Positive attitude is more than the sum of your feelings at any particular moment. If a loved one passes away or you are facing a challenge that feels overwhelming at the moment, it doesn't mean that you're not a positive person," adds Salinas. "Positive people have every right to feel sad. It's even healthy to express those feelings from time-to-time. Just remember that those moments don't define us."



Can't keep a resolution? Outside support can help

(BPT) Each year, millions of Americans resolve to get in better shape and become healthier, better versions of themselves. But, unfortunately the vast majority don't meet their goals. Less than a quarter of 1,000 people surveyed by YMCA of the USA kept their resolution in 2014. An overwhelming 71 percent said they tried but fell short, and 40 percent confessed that they made it through only a couple weeks or months.

However, there's hope for the coming year. One-third of survey respondents who plan to make a resolution in 2015 believe they'll stick to it and reach their goals, with more than half believing that encouragement from others will keep them committed. Finding a supportive community can be beneficial in keeping resolutions on track.

Here are some tips to make a healthy New Year's resolution stick:

Start small. Set attainable resolutions. For example, if your goal is to exercise more frequently in the new year, don't schedule seven days a week at the gym. Start with a reasonable three days a week. If you'd like to eat healthier, try replacing desserts with other foods you enjoy, such as fruit or yogurt.

Take it one step at a time. Making a New Year's resolution doesn't require you to reassess every little detail of your life. Replacing unhealthy behaviors with healthy ones takes time, so don't become overwhelmed. Work to change one behavior at a time, and then go from there.

Choose a facility that focuses on a holistic approach to health. When it comes to adding healthy behaviors - like working out - to your lifestyle, finding a facility that keeps you motivated is critical to maintaining your exercise routine. Before committing to a membership, take a tour of local gyms to find the best fit for you. Your facility should not be just a gym, but a community organization that offers more health, more hope and more opportunity.

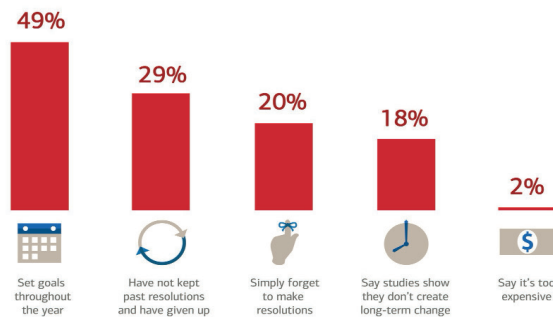
Establish a little friendly competition. More than half of the Y survey respondents felt a little "healthy competition" when friends encouraged them to be even more committed to keeping their New Year's resolutions. Share your experiences with support groups - friends, family, fellow workout class members or close colleagues. Talking about your struggles and successes will make your goals more obtainable and less intimidating.

Set New Year's goals with someone you love. It's easier to stick to your resolutions if you have a partner working toward similar goals. More than three-fourths of survey respondents indicated that they would set the same resolution for a member of their immediate family. Team up with a family member to set your 2015 goals, and establish a game plan that is dedicated to achieving them. For more information on goal-setting for the new year, visit www.ymca.net/healthy-living.



55% of respondents typically **DO NOT** make New Year's resolutions

Main reasons why people don't make resolutions:



In 2014, **42%** of respondents say they **WILL NOT** make a resolution



49% of women typically make resolutions compared to **41%** of men



Of those that typically make resolutions, **58%** will make **more than one** resolution

The three most popular categories for resolutions are:



More people are planning to make a **personal finance resolution** in 2014 (**51%**) than have typically made in the past (**45%**)



Despite their best efforts, the majority of respondents (**55%**) **abandon their resolutions** before May. However, **26%** of respondents say they **see through their resolutions**

STICKING WITH YOUR FINANCIAL RESOLUTIONS



(Family Features) With the new year underway, there is a heavy focus around resolutions. Whether you are making a resolution to celebrate a fresh start or looking to make a change no matter the time of year, maintaining resolutions can be difficult. In fact, a recent survey from Bank of America found that 49 percent of respondents don't make New Year's resolutions because they prefer to set goals throughout the year.

Goals tied to the new year, and those set at various points in the year, are all aimed at making significant life changes. According to the survey, 81 percent of resolutions involve health and fitness, 45 percent involve personal finances and 30 percent are targeted toward making changes in social life and relationships. With the large number of people planning to make changes in their finances, it is helpful to determine how to best ensure you achieve your goal.

Research shows that consumers who understand their behaviors and motivations are more likely to build and keep positive habits for the long term. That's why it's so important to have strategies to keep those financial resolutions throughout the year. A few pointers to stick with your financial resolutions include:

Prepare before your resolution begins

Putting thought into your resolutions before you spring into action can put you on the path to change. Starting early with a few small changes can also improve your odds of staying the course to achieve your goals.

Develop an action plan

It's fine to make a resolution, but the odds of sticking with it improve dramatically if you create an action plan of smaller steps to support your goals. Creating a

budget? Start by tracking your spending to see where the money is going. Then create a budget that's tight but workable, to give you more flexibility to pay down debt, increase savings or invest for retirement. If have to carry a balance, but want to responsibly manage your credit card, consider a card that helps build

positive habits. For example, Bank of America's Better Balance Rewards card pays you to manage your credit card use. Every quarter that you pay more than your minimum balance on time, you earn \$25 cash back. If you have at least one other qualifying account with Bank of America, you can receive another \$5 bonus, totaling up to \$30 a quarter. You'll be eligible for up to \$120 a year toward your balance, and you'll feel better knowing how much you can spend each month.

Write it down

Forty percent of survey respondents say they use written reminders to help stay on track with their resolutions. Try writing your resolutions on Post-it notes, in Evernote, in calendar reminders or on notes stuck to the refrigerator — whatever you'll look at regularly — to keep yourself committed and on track.

Get a little help from your friends

Sometimes a gentle reminder from a family member or friend can work wonders. Share your resolutions with a trusted person and ask for occasional reminders.

Partner up

Find a friend or loved one with the same resolution and agree to motivate and support one another to stick to your goals. It's easier to manage a diet, exercise plan or budget if you have support. Twenty percent of respondents plan to partner up to keep to their resolutions.

Start your New Year's resolutions thinking today, and keep the big goals in mind every day, whether they aim for better health, sounder finances or better relationships. With the right attitude and commitment, 2014 could be a very good year.

McCormick® Flavor Forecast® Reveals Eight Flavor Trends for 2015

Hunt Valley, Md.— McCormick & Company, a global leader in flavor, released its McCormick® Flavor Forecast® 2015, highlighting eight enticing trends that will shape the future of flavor. Now in its 15th year, the much-anticipated report drives flavor innovation and exploration throughout the food industry and in kitchens everywhere.

Reflecting the rapidly increasing demand for bolder, more intense flavor experiences, the McCormick Flavor Forecast 2015 pinpoints adventurous global tastes on the rise, like Japanese 7 Spice (Shichimi Togarashi), as well as an appreciation for the robust flavors developed in slow-simmered dishes from around the world. The report also showcases new ways to elevate pantry essentials to starring roles, like smoking spices and herbs or pairing sour with coarse salt.

Over the past 15 years, the Flavor Forecast has predicted trends that have changed the way people eat at restaurants and cook in their home kitchens. Even the products found on retail shelves today were impacted by trends forecasted in this industry-leading report.

“Many early trending flavors in past reports have become favorites of today. Take chipotle chile, for instance,” said McCormick Executive Chef, Kevan Vetter. “When we first identified this chile pepper as a flavor to watch in 2003, many people couldn’t pronounce it. Today, it’s a household name. Pumpkin pie spice, sea salt, coconut water and cocktail-inspired flavors have seen similar success, taking over restaurant menus and grocery store shelves. The flavor trends highlighted within our 15th annual Forecast promise to do the same.”

Identified by a global team of McCormick chefs and flavor experts, these are the eight flavor trends to watch that offer a taste of 2015 and beyond:

Global Blends On the Move – Japanese 7 Spice (Shichimi Togarashi) offers a new kind of spicy heat, while Shawarma Spice Blend lends warm, spiced flavor to grilled meats and more.

Middle Eastern Mezze – These distinctive dips and spreads, packed with zesty herbs and seasonings, offer an approachable and delicious introduction to a vibrant global cuisine.

Sour + Salt – Combining coarse salt with surprising sour sours like pickled ginger, sour cherry, dried mango and lemon zest results in a lively finishing flavor that lends brightness and texture to dishes.

Smoked Spices – Smoking spices and herbs deepens their flavor and aroma, adding richness to meals and drinks.

Umami Veggies – For a fresh way to savor the tempting “fifth taste,” look no further than naturally umami-rich veggies like mushrooms, tomatoes, sweet potatoes and nori.

Liquid Revolution – Fresh purees and juices blend with bold spices and herbs to intensify sauces, pasta, dressings and more - providing a fun, delicious way to enjoy an extra serving of fruits and veggies.

Flavor Worth the Wait – Lift the lid to discover the rich flavors from recipes around the world that meld aromatic spices and comforting ingredients into mouthwatering slow-cooked meals.

Cookies Reimagined – Classic spiced cookie flavors take new form in decadent, imaginative desserts that redefine “milk and cookies.”

Visit FlavorForecast.com and pinterest.com/mccormickspice for innovative recipes, images and more ways to explore this year’s top tastes.

About Flavor Forecast

Since 2000, the annual McCormick® Flavor Forecast® has identified top trends, insights and ingredients driving the future of flavor. Created by a global team of McCormick experts — including chefs, culinary professionals, trend trackers and food technologists — the Flavor Forecast inspires culinary exploration and innovation around the world. Visit FlavorForecast.com to learn more.

McCormick

Flavor Forecast 2015

8 Flavor Trends to Watch

Liquid Revolution
Fresh purees and juices blend with bold spices and herbs to intensify sauces, pasta, dressings and more—providing a fun, delicious way to enjoy an extra serving of fruits and veggies.

Global Blends On the Move
Japanese 7 Spice (Shichimi Togarashi)— A pungent combination of chilies, sesame, orange zest, nori and more.
Shawarma Spice Blend— A Middle Eastern street food favorite made with cumin, cinnamon, black pepper and more.

Middle Eastern Mezze
These distinctive dips and spreads, packed with zesty herbs and seasonings, offer an approachable and delicious introduction to a vibrant global cuisine.

Smoked Spices
Smoking spices and herbs deepens their flavor and aroma, adding richness to meals and drinks.

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Combining coarse salt with surprising sour sours like pickled ginger, sour cherry, dried mango and lemon zest results in a lively finishing flavor that lends brightness and texture to dishes.

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For a fresh way to savor the tempting “fifth taste,” look no further than naturally umami-rich veggies like mushrooms, tomatoes, sweet potatoes and nori.

Sickle Cell Disease petition gets President Obama's attention

By Stacy M. Brown

The Baltimore-based Sickle Cell Disease Association of America and those who have been affected by the illness, their family members and friends and others have collected more than 120,000 signatures on a White House petition to bring the disease some much needed attention.

It may also lead to legislation that will provide sorely needed funds and resources that could help combat the dreaded condition.

"The petition is currently under review at the White House and we are hopeful that positive change will be made," said Kelsey McDowell, the communications specialist at the nonprofit Sickle Cell Disease Association of America (SCDAA). "Nevertheless, such success is contingent upon raising public awareness and support."

Sickle cell disease is an inherited blood disorder that affects red blood cells. Individuals with sickle cell disease have red blood cells that contain mostly

hemoglobin S, an abnormal type of hemoglobin, according to information from the SCDAA. Sometimes these red blood cells become sickle-shaped (crescent shaped) and have difficulty passing through small blood vessels.

When sickle-shaped cells block small blood vessels, less blood can reach that part of the body. Tissue that does not receive a normal blood flow eventually becomes damaged. This is what causes the complications of sickle cell disease. There is currently no universal cure for sickle cell disease and more than 300,000 children are born with it each year, according to officials.

The petition, which was launched on September 22, 2014, was created by SCDAA President and Chief Operating Officer, Sonja Banks. It requests that President Barack Obama and his administration declare sickle disease a national health priority and that the White House support legislation to establish and expand sickle cell disease programs.

"This goal would not have been met if



Sickle cell disease affects an estimated 100,000 Americans who live with the disease while about three million people— including one in 12 blacks— are carriers of sickle cell traits.
Courtesy Photo/Atlanta Black Star

it weren't for the dedication of our members as well as strong celebrity endorsement that include: Steve Harvey, Kier "Junior" Spates, Kevin Hart, Nick Cannon, Dondre Whitfield, Nelly, Jackie Long, Khloe Kardashian and Jourdan Dunn," McDowell said.

The priority of the legislation, known as the Sickle Cell Treatment Reauthorization Act, is to improve quality of life, treatment and prevention for those affected by sickle cell disease, she said.

Among numerous modified benefits, the bill aims to establish full funding for 25 Sickle Cell treatment centers throughout the country and to provide continued support of a National Evaluation Center to collect, coordinate, monitor and distribute data, as well as to define best practice standards.

Common among African-Americans, Latinos and those whose ancestors are from sub-Saharan Africa, regions in the Western Hemisphere, Saudi Arabia, India and Mediterranean countries,

sickle cell disease affects an estimated 100,000 Americans who live with the disease while about 3 million people— including one in 12 blacks— are carriers of sickle cell traits.

In Maryland, 40 percent of the population— or about two million individuals— fall within those demographics, according to McDowell.

Even though sickle cell disease-related healthcare costs average an estimated \$2 billion annually, it receives a significantly disproportionate amount of funding for research and treatment compared to other blood disorders or comparable diseases.

"We are hopeful that this bill will not only improve the quality of care, but also the quality of life for sickle cell patients," McDowell said. "As the only national resource for sickle cell disease, the SCDAA is proud of accomplishing the goal of 100,000 signatures, however, the hard work will not cease until change is made for the sickle cell community."

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Chip Mentoring Program

The CHIP Mentoring Program is a Baltimore-based program for children of incarcerated parents, run through Alternative Directions, Inc. The program offers one-on-one mentoring, monthly events and arts nights. For more information or to find out how you can get involved, call 410-889-5072 or email: hipmentoring-info@gmail.com.

Caring and Sharing Committee at John Wesley United Church promotes education



Doris McQuaige Duncan and staff of The Sharing and Caring Committee at John Wesley United Church

“We have a powerful potential in our youth, and we must have the courage to change old ideas and practices so that we may direct their power toward good ends.”

— Mary McLeod Bethune

The Sharing and Caring Committee at John Wesley United Methodist Church located at 3202 West North Avenue in

Baltimore promotes higher education by awarding students with perfect attendance, averages of B+ or higher in reading, language or mathematics and improved social/emotional behavior.

On Saturday, December 20, 2014, students who qualified for awards received a new bike and other prizes as a reward for their academic success. The church also gave coats, hats and gloves to children in need.

Doris McQuaige Duncan has been spearheading the campaign for well over 30 years following in the footsteps of the legendary Mary McLeod Bethune.

“I am very big on education. This is something we do yearly to help promote the importance of learning. To be a part of this, [the students] have to meet the goal of a B+ or better. We work with the schools in our area, as well as the parents, so we get a report on what children are

doing. [They] don’t have to be from our church to participate. This is for the community. We don’t turn any child down.”

The event also featured a magic show, Santa and performances. John Wesley United Methodist Church encourages the community to visit their website: www.jwumc.org to see the many services offered including Community Outreach Feeding, GED classes, and many more activities and events.

Indie Soul Music Review: Dreamzz by Phillip Lassiter

By Phinisse Demps

For all my music lovers, Indie Soul discovered a gem of a CD for you. The CD is entitled “DREAMZZ” by Phillip Lassiter and features 11 TRUE music sounds, which combine, hip-hop, soul, jazz, and blues.

Lassiter has an impressive background which includes arranging songs for multi-platinum artists like Prince; Fantasia; Kelly Rowland; Jill Scott; Roberta Flack; Kirk Franklin and many more. The highlights of his career include production and arranging work for seven GRAMMY winning projects with Fred Hammond and Kirk Franklin in addition to working as section-leader, arranger and lead trumpeter for Prince.

When you listen to Lassiter, you can hear his passion for music and the many styles that inspired him. His songs take the listener on a musical journey as he travels into the land of funk with “Strut” featuring Bernard Wright of

Cameo. He gives you a touch of that new school with “Shawty” featuring Jason Waters and Josephine Rojer. And if you are a blues lover, there is the song “Room for the Blues” featuring Jay White. “Dreamzz” contains two outstanding songs “Pick Myself Up” with Tommy Sims, and the sensuous favorite “Liquid In Love” which features Mark Kimble, Joey Kimble and Kim Mont.

Phillip Lassiter certainly set the table with a different sampling of what he has to offer musically. True music lovers will appreciate the many sounds of “Dreamzz.” It’s available on iTunes: <https://itunes.apple.com/us/artist/philip-lassiter/id822251204>

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



Hogan and Rutherford make Thank-You Tour stop at BIGGY's Community Center



Governor-elect Larry Hogan and Lt. Governor-elect Boyd Rutherford visited BIGGY's Community Center in Baltimore on Saturday, December 20, 2014. It was a stop on their Thank-You Tour. They handed out presents and goodie bags to local children and their families for the holidays. Courtesy Photo

Annapolis— Governor-elect Larry Hogan, Lt. Governor-elect Boyd Rutherford, and their wives, Yumi Hogan and Monica Rutherford, traveled to Baltimore on Saturday, December 20, 2014, for a Thank-You Tour stop at BIGGY's Community Center. There, the Hogans, Rutherfords, and staff passed out presents and goodie bags to local children and their families for the holidays.

"I was very happy to get back to the BIGGY's community," Governor-elect Hogan said. "This is a wonderful organization that is doing great things for the community, and I was thrilled to help them and to see all the kids and their families."

Governor-elect Hogan and Lt. Governor-elect Rutherford are no strangers to the BIGGY's organization. During the campaign, the pair and staff held a Labor Day Cookout for BIGGY's and later toured the area and spoke to residents, many of whom were receptive to its message of change.

"This was a great opportunity to do something for an organization that does so much for our youth and inner city communities," Rutherford said. "It feels great to be out here with the Governor-elect."



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2015 Michael S. Powell

High School Journalist of the Year

Library of Congress offers Junior Fellows Summer Internships

The Library's Junior Fellows Summer Internship Program once again is offering 10-week paid fellowships to college students

Washington, D.C.—For a stipend of \$3,000, the 2015 class of Junior Fellows will work full-time with Library specialists and curators from June 1 through August 7, 2015, to inventory, describe and explore collection holdings and to assist with digital-preservation outreach activities throughout the Library.

The program aims to increase access to collections and awareness of the Library's digital-preservation programs by making them better known and available to Members of Congress, scholars, researchers, students, teachers and the general public.

The fellows will be exposed to a broad spectrum of library work: copyright deposits, digital preservation, reference, access standards and information management. Rare and unique treasures were processed by the 2014 Junior Fellows, from a collection of Mayan "poison flasks" dating from 300-700 AD (350-800 CE) that contained tobacco and other stimulants in the ancient culture, a rare 17th-century hand-illuminated Persian manuscript, a check from Marilyn Monroe to acting teacher Lee Strasberg for \$90 (Strasberg was Monroe's private acting coach) and an audition sheet showing Al Pacino's

first audition for the Actors Studio in 1961.

The program is made possible through the generosity of the late Mrs. Jefferson Patterson and the Knowledge Navigators Trust Fund. A gift from H.F. (Gerry) Lenfest, chairman emeritus of the Library's James Madison Council private-sector advisory group, established the Knowledge Navigators Trust Fund, which will bring outstanding talent to the Library to benefit from first-hand interactions with its unparalleled collections, experts and programs and train future leaders for the information age. The goal of Knowledge Navigators is to energize innovation and creativity across all sectors by providing access to an expanding universe of information that is reliable and authentic.

Applications will be accepted online only at usajobs.gov, keyword: Junior Fellows from Monday, December 15, 2014, through midnight, Friday, January 23, 2015.

For more details about the program and information on how to apply, visit www.loc.gov/hr/jrfellows/. Questions about the program may be sent to interns2015@loc.gov.

The Library of Congress is an equal-opportunity employer. Women, minorities and persons with disabilities who meet eligibility requirements are strongly encouraged to apply.

MYSOUL RADIO

MYSOULRADIO.COM

Petition launched to open federal files on Malcolm X

By Stacy M. Brown

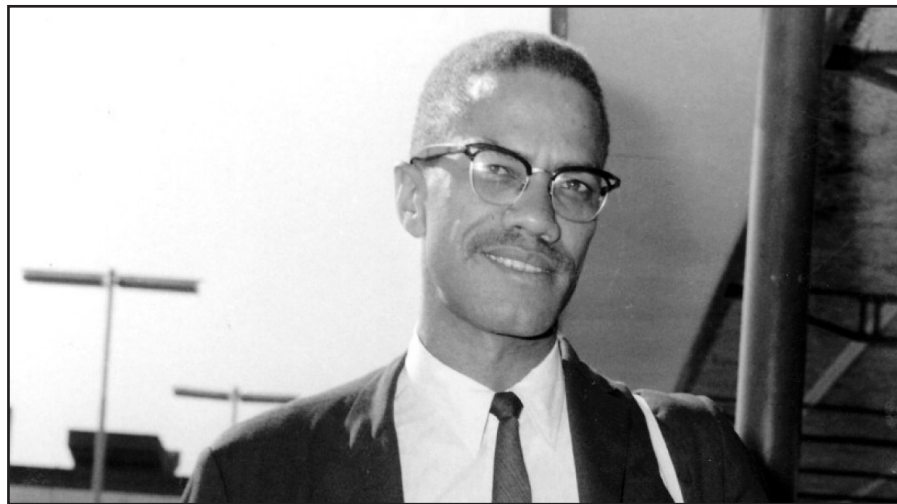
It seems like it just might be a long shot, but one man continues to try and find a way to compel President Barack Obama, Attorney General Eric Holder and the United States government to publish the un-redacted FBI, CIA and New York Police Department files relating to the 1965 assassination of Malcolm X.

"We have a January 11, [2015], deadline to reach our goal of 100,000 signatures," said John Altmann, who has started an online petition on the White House webpage, "We the People."

"So far, just 44 people have signed the petition, including several individuals from Baltimore," Altmann said.

Malcolm X, a black nationalist and religious leader, was assassinated at the age of 39 by who appeared to be rivals in the Nation of Islam as he addressed the Organization of Afro-American Unity at the Audubon Ballroom in New York's Washington Heights section.

The assassination came just one week



Malcolm X
Courtesy Photo/BET

after his home had been firebombed.

Reportedly, files held by law enforcement and federal officials may contain the answers to many questions, including who may have ordered the assassination.

"We have had people sign that live

everywhere from the state of Georgia all the way to California. I think such a response illustrates that Malcolm, his legacy, and his message transcended all boundaries and touched every corner of America," Altmann said.

The government has recently published the United States Senate's report on the CIA's systematic use of torture against detainees despite the fact that such disclosures could undermine ongoing efforts against international terrorism and it could also invite retribution, Altmann said in arguing for the release of the Malcolm X files.

"What possible justification could the Obama administration offer for its continued failure to publish the files on the assassination of Malcolm X, a crime that was committed half a century ago? We appeal to the president and Attorney General Holder to publish all federal records, un-redacted and unaltered, relating to this vicious crime and to seek the prosecution of any of its surviving perpetrators," Altmann said.

For more information or to sign Altmann's petition, visit: www.petitions.whitehouse.gov/petition, and type in "publish-fully-unredacted-and-unaltered-fbi-cia-and-nypd-files-21st-february-1965-assassination/3Jg1C16j."

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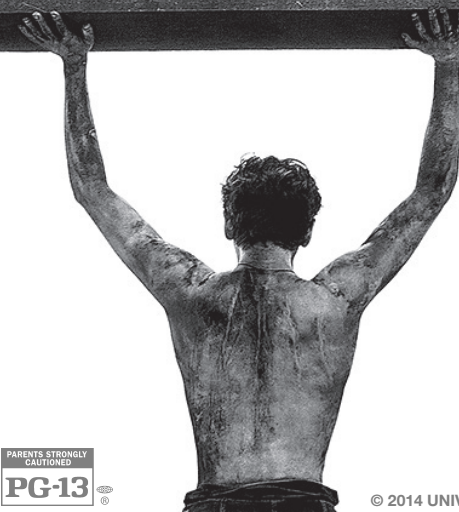
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Sanitary Contract 918 – Improvements to the Headworks and Wet Weather Flow Equalization at the Back River WWTP – City of Baltimore

Johnson, Mirmiran & Thompson (JMT) is inviting prospective general contractors to review the 95% Design Plans and Specifications for Sanitary Contract 918. When advertised, the anticipated Prequalification Category required for bidding on this project is E13003 Water and/or Sewer Treatment Plants and Pumping Stations. This project is tentatively scheduled for advertisement in the First Quarter of 2015.

Reviewers will need to sign a release of liability form prior to viewing the documents to acknowledge your understanding that the documents are provided for reference only. Please contact Paul Deardorff (JMT) at 717-741-6228 to schedule a review.

Principal Items of Work for this project are construction of a new Headworks and Wet Weather Storage Facility at the Back River WWTP including, but not limited to Influent Pumping Station, Fine Screen Facility, Grit Removal Facility, Equalization Pumping Station, Equalization Storage Tanks, Emergency Power Generation Facility, miscellaneous Flow Distribution Structures, Odor Control Facilities, associated electrical and control systems and associated site improvements.

Best Buddies of Maryland Needs Volunteers

Best Buddies enhances the lives of people with intellectual disabilities by providing opportunities for one-on-one friendship and integrated employment. Volunteers, 18 and older, will be matched with an adult who has an intellectual disability. Matches are based on age, gender, proximity and similar interests. Once matched, the pair is asked to maintain weekly contact, via phone or email, and visit twice a month. Some monthly outings include going to concerts, dining out, watching movies and more. Volunteers are needed in Baltimore City and surrounding counties. For an application and more information, contact: Tom Waite at 410-327-9812 ext. 38 or tomwaite@bestbuddies.org or visit the website: www.bestbuddiesmaryland.org.

BGE Provides 360 Energy Saving Trees to Baltimore City through the Arbor Day Foundation

Baltimore— Many times the importance of trees during the winter-time is overlooked, however, trees provide energy savings for customers year-round and are essential for the health of the local ecosystem and the Chesapeake Bay watershed. Through the Baltimore Gas and Electric Company's (BGE) annual BGE Energy Saving Trees Program the company is helping the City of Baltimore and its customers throughout central Maryland reduce their energy consumption and carbon footprints, while also making a positive impact on the environment. Through a commitment of \$100,000, the company has teamed up with the Arbor Day Foundation and Davey Institute to provide 360 trees that have been planted throughout Baltimore City in neighborhoods where the City has plans to increase the tree canopy.

Heating and cooling typically account for nearly half of a home's annual energy use and studies have shown that planting the right tree, in the right place, can help customers save up to 30 percent on their energy use throughout the year.

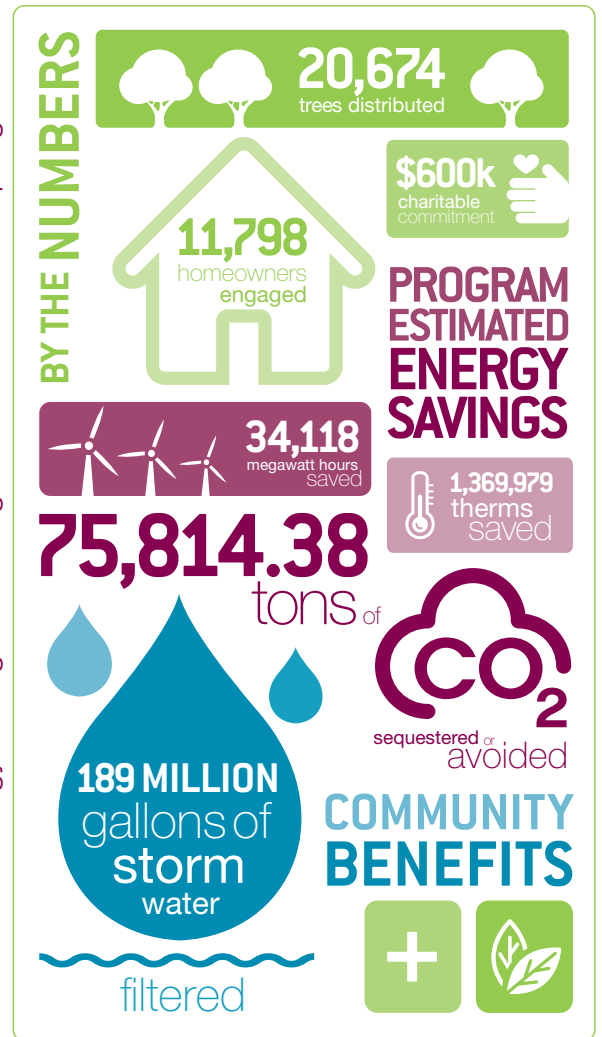
"BGE is pleased to team up with Baltimore City to enhance and improve the communities we serve," said Valencia McClure, director of communications and corporate relations for BGE. "In addition to supporting efforts to improve energy efficiency, this tree planting project will have a positive impact on the environmental and aesthetic qualities in communities that suffer from excessive vacancy and bare lots."

The Baltimore City neighborhoods of Harlem Park and Sandtown received 150 trees each, which were planted during community tree planting events on November 15 and December 6, respectively. In addition, 60 additional trees were planted along streets within McElderry Park, along E. Monument Street and throughout the downtown and South Baltimore City. The greening of these areas will help to reduce a heat island effect in the summer, improve air quality, and mitigate storm water runoff year-round, helping to improve the health of the Chesapeake Bay watershed. The trees that were planted are all native species that have been shown to thrive as street trees in Baltimore. The species planted include Sugar Maple, Red Maple, Scarlet Oak, Honey Locust, Eastern Redbud, Hornbeam, Sweetgum, Zelkova, London Plane and the flowering Dogwood. The neighborhoods targeted were selected with Baltimore City Division of Forestry due to their low tree canopies. The tree planting projects were completed with volunteer support from BGE, Baltimore City, the Baltimore Tree Trust and the Downtown Partnership.

"Baltimore City is committed to increasing the tree canopy throughout the City, but especially in the neighborhoods that currently have fewer trees, to improve the air quality, shield homes from harsh winter winds and provide shade in the hot summer months," said Erik Dihle, Baltimore City Arborist. "We thank BGE for supporting the City in our efforts by providing 360 trees, which have been planted in several neighborhoods, all of which will benefit from the improved aesthetics and environmental enhancements. We look forward to continuing to work with BGE in the future as they provide meaningful investments in communities across Baltimore City."

BGE's donation of 360 trees to Baltimore City is part of its larger annual BGE Energy Saving Trees Program. Over the past two years, through a commitment of \$600,000, BGE has provided more than 20,600 free trees to nearly 12,000 customers throughout central Maryland.

Since BGE's Energy Saving Trees Program launched in the spring of 2013



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