

# The Annapolis Times

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## MCB Real Estate Joins Baltimore Mayor Brandon Scott to Break Ground on New Headquarters for Employment Development



MAYOR'S OFFICE OF  
EMPLOYMENT DEVELOPMENT



RESERVOIR  
SQUARE  
BAL  
MD.

MAYOR'S OFFICE  
EMPLOYMENT DEVE



Groundbreaking for the new location of the Mayor's Office of Employment Development at Reservoir Square took place on June 27, 2025. The \$170 million mixed-use development will be located along the 600-850 block of W. North Avenue in Baltimore, Maryland. The project is the result of a strategic partnership between Baltimore City and private sector partners, including MCB Real Estate. (Left-right): Pat Coggins, President, Atapco Properties; Deputy Secretary Jason Perkins-Cohen; Maryland Department of Labor; MacKenzie Garvin, Esq., Director, Mayor's Office of Employment Development; Mark Renbaum, Principal MLR Partners; Councilman James Torrence; MCB Co-founder & Managing Partner Peter Pinkard; MCB Co-founder & Managing Partner P. David Bramble; Bill Henry, Comptroller, City of Baltimore; J. Tom Sadowski, Executive Director, MEDCO; Assistant Secretary Carol Gilbert, Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development; Reni Lawal, MCB development associate; and Theresa Stegman, MCB VP of Development & Structured Finance. (See article on page 7.)

Photo credit: MCB Real Estate



## Inaugural Football VS. Fútbol Sports and Wellness Festival Launches in Baltimore

By Andrea Blackstone

Sometimes good ideas evolve accidentally. Dr. Kenneth (Kenny) L. Gray, founder and co-owner of The Legacy Sports Group (also owned by Scott Denison Cabral and Scott Westcoat); owner of Graystone Fitness Personal Training; Dominant Force Celebrity Events; and Beat the Pro recalls a personal experience that inspired an inaugural event that he hopes is the start of something big.

Eight years ago, Dr. Gray hosted an alumni celebrity softball game. During that time, he engaged in a conversation about sports with his current business partner, Denison Cabral, a former Baltimore Blast soccer team player and Hall of Famer. Cabral, who originally hails from Brazil, informed Dr. Gray that he did not know how to play softball.

"I couldn't believe it. He said he only used his feet all his life as a soccer player, but never his hands in his country as a professional athlete," said Dr. Gray.

Cabral had only played fútbol (soccer). Dr. Gray, a Glen Burnie, Maryland-based resident, began to ponder the popularity of American football and the global appeal of soccer. NFL professionals and a soccer professional were present at his event. Dr. Gray began to compare how the two popular sports were played. He later had an idea to tap into the appeal of both beloved pastimes and create a free community event to uplift communities through health, wellness and sports.

"One [sport] uses their hands, and the other uses their feet. So, Football VS. Fútbol was created. I began putting together the concept before the pandemic," Dr. Gray continued.

The Football VS. Fútbol Sports



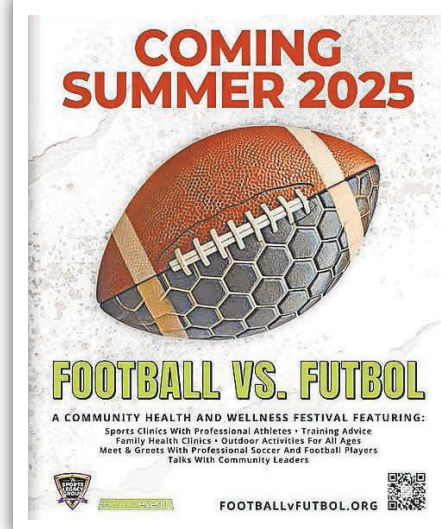
*(L-r, front): Denison Cabral, Jonatas Melo, Juan Pereira  
(Back row): Chuck Banks, and Kirk Mitchell.*

*Photos courtesy of Coach Kenny Gray*

and Wellness Festival will be held on July 19, 2025, from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. at Baltimore Peninsula E15, located at Distillery Street, Baltimore, Maryland 21230. Dr. Gray, who also coaches high school football and basketball and serves as a pro ABA basketball coach, is the event's visionary and founder.

The longtime community volunteer now feels that God had a bigger assignment for him, which will grow into a nationwide endeavor, bringing together two sports—football and soccer. July 19, 2025 launches the first part of Dr. Gray's vision. He is embarking on a new journey with the help of partners, the professional athlete community, community organizations, and fellow business owners.

"We will have former and current professional athletes from the NFL; NBA; WNBA; MLB; soccer; volleyball; and Women's Flag & Tackle Football leading skills and drills activities with volunteers that the public can join in with the Pros. Activities will focus on football and soccer. Health screenings; lectures; a deejay; entertainment; guest speakers;



games; local leaders; food; giveaways and more will also be available during the event," said Dr. Gray.

He continued, "The goal is to unite the community through sports and wellness all over the country! The interest has already begun in Charlotte, North Carolina; Boston; Atlanta; Los Angeles; Los Vegas and it's growing."

United Health Care, a signature partner of the event, will combine a pathway to improve health education and access to health screenings while promoting wellness in various ways such as demonstrations.

John Coulson, a Baltimore based business owner, is lending his support to the Football VS. Fútbol Sports and Wellness Festival. He stated that his companies, PressBox, County Sports Zone, and Jmore partnered with the event's promoters to generate revenue via sponsorship. According to Coulson, the partnership of the inaugural event is made up of several community companies as well as a nationally known event promoter.

Coulson noted that he chose



*Dr. Kenneth L. Gray, visionary of the Football VS. Fútbol Sports and Wellness Festival. The inaugural event will be held on July 19, 2025.*

to get involved to help establish a community event for both underserved and other youth athletes and their families.

"Our hope is to grow Football VS. Fútbol into a significant sports, health and wellness festival over the course of a few years," the entrepreneur added. "The purpose is to provide a fun sports-based event, introducing kids and families to professional athletes they admire, while providing an opportunity to expose the attendees to important health and wellness information as they have fun."

Visit <http://www.footballvfutbol.org> and <https://footballvfutbol.org/home/f/> what-is-and-why to learn more about his free event. All ages are welcome to attend the Football VS. Fútbol Sports and Wellness Festival.

# THE BALTIMORE TIMES

## CREATIVELY **BLACK** BALTIMORE

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# Elektra-Fying the Cybersecurity World with Women-Run Nonprofits Who Hack Back

By Karen Clay

Clay Technology and Multimedia, L.L.C.

In the general field of technology, women still represent only about 25% of the IT workforce, up from 10% about 12 years ago. The current increases are said to reflect companies realizing the value women bring to the table, especially in the area of leadership skills. In the specific field of cybersecurity, however, women still remain even less represented.

A report titled “POV Reimagined: Women in Cybersecurity,” published by Deloitte and The Female Quotient, indicates that the unique skills of women in the areas of collaboration, problem-solving, and critical thinking are vital to tackling today’s complex digital challenges. It emphasizes the need to attract and retain more women in cybersecurity to foster innovation, diversity, and resilience, thereby better addressing the complex challenges of this digital age.

Attracting more women to the field of cybersecurity will make the field more diverse and the community stronger. The challenge, however, is that women often feel excluded, with reportedly 51% indicating they don’t think there’s room for them in cybersecurity. Additionally, the industry typically lacks visible female role models, especially in leadership positions, which discourages younger women from considering it as a career. Countering this, according to the report, involves at least five actions to lower the perceived barriers:

- **Exposure:** Sparking early interest in girls by exposing them to cybersecurity concepts and opportunities starting in elementary school and through STEM programs.

- **Inclusive Hiring:** Encouraging companies to focus on diversity, offering family-friendly benefits, and avoiding the overemphasis on technical skills in job

descriptions.

- **Role Model Visibility:** Highlighting successful women in cybersecurity through media, conferences, and opportunities to speak with aspiring girls and young women.

- **Community Building:** Creating internships, mentorship programs and networking opportunities to support women in the field and those learning the field. Additionally offering grants and scholarships or developing intentional recruitment efforts for those interested in entering the cybersecurity field.

- **Demystify Cybersecurity:** Emphasizing the human and creative aspects of the field to make it more accessible.

The good news is that there are non-profit organizations whose sole purpose is to advance the prevalence of women in IT in general and cybersecurity in particular. Some of these nonprofits include the following:

**Women in CyberSecurity (WiCyS):** (<https://www.wicys.org/>) A nonprofit organization headquartered in Cookeville, Tennessee, dedicated to recruiting, retaining, and advancing women in cybersecurity. WiCyS operates as a global community with a strong U.S. presence, including over 300 student chapters and numerous professional affiliates across the country, such as those in San Diego and the Mid-Atlantic region. The organization hosts an annual flagship conference that attracts thousands of cybersecurity professionals and students. Through mentoring, training scholarships, career fairs, and local chapter support, WiCyS empowers women at all stages of their cybersecurity journey.

**Girls Who Hack:** (<https://girlswhohack.com/>) An initiative based in New Jersey and founded by teen cybersecurity advocate Bianca Lewis (aka BiaSciLab),

when she was

12 years old.

Rather than

maintaining

formal

headquarters

or brick-

and-mortar

locations,

Girls Who

Hack operates

virtually

and through

in-person

workshops

held at major

cybersecurity

conferences like

DEF CON and

Hackers On Planet Earth (HOPE). The

organization focuses on teaching girls

ethical hacking and cybersecurity skills

to inspire the next generation of cyber

defenders. By leveraging online courses

and event-based learning, Girls Who

Hack reaches a wide audience of girls

across the U.S. without the constraints of

regional chapters.

**Black Girls Hack (BGH):** (<https://www.blackgirlshack.org/>) A nonprofit headquartered in Fredericksburg, Virginia, with a mission to increase diversity in cybersecurity by providing Black women and girls with training, mentorship, and access to industry certifications. Although based in Virginia, BGH has built a national and international presence through virtual programming, online bootcamps, and large-scale events like SquadCon, held in Las Vegas. The organization’s reach extends across the U.S., Africa, and Europe, connecting members to practical hands-on experiences and career development resources regardless of location.



*Women bring a powerful blend of resilience, innovation, and strategic thinking to the future of cybersecurity.*

*Graphic Design by Karen Clay*

**Women’s Society of Cyberjutsu**

**(WSC):** (<https://womenscyberjutsu.org/>) A nonprofit started by Lisa

Foreman-Jiggetts, a service-disabled

veteran, dedicated to women in

cybersecurity. They provide women

with the resources and support required

to enter and advance as cybersecurity

professionals. They operate a national

network of regional chapters, including

those in Southern California, Raleigh,

and Baltimore, partnering with prominent

institutions like SANS, Cisco, and Black

Hat to deliver workshops, webinars,

scholarships, and career-focused events.

These nonprofits are four dynamic organizations leading the charge to increase female representation in the cybersecurity field. From global networks and professional development to hands-on hacking workshops and virtual training for underrepresented communities, these groups are creating powerful pathways for women and girls to enter and thrive in cybersecurity. As awareness grows and opportunities expand, the future of cybersecurity looks brighter—and more secure—with more women at the forefront.



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## Arts & Culture

# BNHA Launches Phase II of Citywide Wayfinding Sign Initiative, Unveils New National Great Blacks In Wax Museum Monument Sign

Features 31 Citywide Wayfinding Signs, Enhances Cultural Tourism and Heritage Education



*L-R: Delegate Stephanie Smith (District 45), Senator Cory (McCrays District 45), Dr. Joanne Martin, Shauntee Daniels, and Councilman Jermaine Jones (BC District 12) Photo courtesy of BNHA*

Baltimore, MD (June 28, 2025) — The Baltimore National Heritage Area (BNHA) unveiled a new monument sign at The National Great Blacks in Wax Museum, recognizing the museum's historical and cultural significance and its essential contribution to the preservation and celebration of Black heritage in Baltimore.

During the event, BNHA also announced the launch of Phase II of their Heritage Wayfinding Signage Initiative, an effort to enhance cultural tourism and heritage education across Baltimore. This new phase includes the installation of 31 wayfinding signs to be placed throughout the city. Each sign is

designed to guide residents and visitors to significant African American heritage sites, museums, and cultural institutions that tell the story of Baltimore's Black legacy.

Maryland State Senator Cory McCray (District 45) was also commended for his dedication to safeguarding Black history in Baltimore. His support played a crucial role in realizing this monument initiative.

"The Great Blacks In Wax Museum is more than just a landmark—it's a legacy," said Senator McCray. "This monument honors the generations of truth-tellers who have ensured that African American stories are seen,

heard, and remembered. I am proud to support the Baltimore National Heritage Area in its mission to preserve and promote Black history in our city.

"This sign represents our ongoing commitment to elevating the voices, stories, and contributions to elevating the voices, stories, and contributions to preserve Black history, which is American history," said Shauntee Daniels, BNHA Executive Director. "It stands as a symbol of resilience, recognition, and remembrance, and we are proud to honor Senator McCray's unwavering support in making this vision a reality."

## A Summer Hair Affair: Tips to Take Good Care of Your Textured Tresses

By Andrea Blackstone

High temperatures and summertime fun can be hard on Black hair.

“Our textured hair often faces dryness and moisture loss during the summer due to sun exposure, chlorine, and saltwater. The hair can be more brittle, dull, and prone to breakage,” said Alisha LaVon.

The owner of LVX Hair Salon located in Glen Burnie, Maryland is a licensed cosmetologist who provided summer haircare tips.

### Haircare for Swimmers

Before heading to the pool, LaVon recommends thoroughly wetting the hair, as it acts like a sponge.

“If it’s already full of clean water, it absorbs less chlorine or saltwater. You can do this in the shower or with a spray bottle. I always tell my clients to put their hair in a few braids, twists, or a bun to reduce tangling and matting,” she added.

Although a tight-fitting silicone cap helps to keep water out and keep braids or protective styles dry, LaVon stated that you should still shampoo your hair after taking a swim.

“Even with a swim cap, water can get in and chlorine and saltwater can dry out the hair and scalp. It’s important to rinse immediately and shampoo regularly—even with light shampoo or co-wash if you swim often,” she added. “Rinse with fresh water right after swimming to remove most of the chlorine or salt before it dries on your hair. Next, you’ll need to cleanse/ shampoo.”

LaVon advises swimmers with natural hair that is curly, coily or kinky choose a sulfate-free, clarifying shampoo to gently remove buildup without stripping the hair’s natural

oils. Second, she recommends using an apple cider vinegar rinse to help restore pH and remove chlorine residue. LaVon advised that people who have chemically processed hair that is relaxed or color-treated should use a gentle sulfate-free shampoo to avoid stripping color.

“After cleansing, you’ll want to follow with a protein-moisture balanced deep conditioner to restore softness and strength. Lastly, apply a leave-in conditioner and seal with light oil or butter (for example, jojoba, avocado oil). This helps lock in moisture and reinforce the cuticle,” LaVon explained.

### Popular Protective Styles

“Boho Knotless Braids are my most popular summer style this year,” said LaVon.

The cosmetologist explained that they are lightweight, natural-looking, and cause less tension on the scalp and can last four to eight weeks. She cautioned that the loose hair tangles easily if it is synthetic, and the curls can dry out fast if they are not maintained.

Quick weave styles are affordable and fast to install. LaVon cautioned that this style can cause damage if too much glue touches natural hair, or if it is worn too long without proper removal.

“A lot of my clients are really loving crochet braids this year. They come in so many different styles such as faux locs; passion twists; boho braids; and loose curls. These styles are low maintenance, budget-friendly, and super quick to install,” LaVon also stated.

“A curly half wig is another great heat-free style,” she added.



*Alisha LaVon provides haircare to women and men of all ages in the DMV area. She specializes in caring for natural hair, creating braided styles and installing extensions.*

*Photo: Distinctive Headshots*

### Maintenance and installation of popular styles are key.

Styles that are too tight, or styles that create too much tension, can cause traction alopecia, especially around edges.

“This can happen with tight braids, heavy styles, or improperly installed weaves,” said LaVon.

The experienced hair professional warned that leaving protective styles installed too long can cause hair damage that the wearer does not see until it is removed. Although the style may look fine on the outside, underneath, hair could be breaking at the roots, losing moisture, have clogged follicles, and weakened hair strands.

People who choose to wear their



*Alisha LaVon, owner of LVX Hair Salon* Courtesy photo

hair in certain styles can use LaVon’s recommendations that the maximum time for noted styles with proper care are as follows:

**Knotless/Box Braids:** six to eight weeks

**Sew-Ins, Stitch Braids, Crochet Braids:** four to six weeks

**Quick Weaves:** one to three weeks

### Healthy Hair

Remember to use moisture-rich formulas this time of the year.

“Look for humectants like glycerin, aloe vera, or honey,” said LaVon.

Be careful of using heat from flat irons or blow dryers more than once or twice a week. Do not skip using heat protectant.

Visit [www.lvxhrsalon.as.me](http://www.lvxhrsalon.as.me) and @lvxhrsalon LVX Hair Salon on social media platforms to learn more about LaVon’s business.



# MCB Real Estate Joins Baltimore Mayor Brandon Scott to Break Ground on New Headquarters for Employment Development

## New 63,000 SF Location at MCB's Reservoir Square Will Support Employment Access

**BALTIMORE, MD – MCB Real Estate**, a commercial real estate investment management and development firm with nationwide holdings, is excited to announce the official groundbreaking for the new location of the Mayor's Office of Employment Development (MOED) at Reservoir Square, a new \$170 million mixed-use development located along the 600-850 block of W. North Avenue in Baltimore, Maryland developed in partnership with MCB Real Estate, Atapco Properties and MLR Partners.

"This is an investment that will change lives and help to change the footprint and legacy of this neighborhood," said Mayor Brandon M. Scott. "We're talking about a place once called 'Murder Mall,' that will soon be home to a state-of-the-art employment hub, where Baltimoreans can get connected to good jobs. My administration is committed, not only to making these resources available, but making them accessible, including by creating spaces like this one in neighborhoods where they can have the greatest impact."

The City's new state-of-the-art employment hub will encompass a four-story 63,000-square-foot facility. MOED's strategic placement on the CityLink Gold route and proximity to Penn North Station ensures optimal accessibility for MOED's clients who are connecting to employment opportunities. The facility will integrate a modern American Job Center, featuring advanced career skills-building classrooms, collaborative workspaces, and upgraded technology learning labs. This consolidated One-Stop Career Center will centralize various programs and services, making

them more accessible and efficient, ultimately benefiting residents and the greater West Baltimore community and the City as a whole.

"The new MOED at Reservoir Square is much more than just a building, it represents a profound commitment to the very community it serves," says MCB Real Estate Co-founder and Managing Partner P. David Bramble. "Much like the broader vision we have for Reservoir Square, this center is uniquely positioned to unlock immense potential right here in the neighborhood. As someone incredibly proud to call this area home, seeing this direct investment and the opportunities it creates for its residents is truly gratifying."

In FY 2024 alone, MOED's efforts translated into more than 3,000 city residents securing jobs through the office's efforts. MOED also actively supported the business community, servicing more than 1,000 businesses with essential recruitment services, strategic advisement, and grants. Additionally, MOED's 2024 YouthWorks initiative offered summer job opportunities to over 10,000 young individuals, collaborating with more than 750 employer partners across the city.

The creation of the new MOED facility is the result of a strategic partnership between the City and private sector partners like MCB. This collaborative model ensures the project proceeds without affecting other municipal capital initiatives, and for the first time in decades, Baltimore City will gain a new government office building, demonstrating an innovative method for delivering critical public services by harnessing private sector expertise.



*Rendering of the new Mayor's Office of Employment Development headquarters.*

*Photos: MCB Real Estate*

"The groundbreaking of our new American Job Center marks a major milestone in our mission to connect Baltimoreans with opportunity," said MacKenzie Garvin, Esq., Director of the Mayor's Office of Employment Development. "This state-of-the-art, transit-accessible facility will serve as a centralized hub for workforce innovation, employer engagement, and community collaboration. By unifying our core programs in one modern space, we're enhancing access, streamlining services, and equipping residents to build sustainable careers. This historic investment reflects the power of strategic partnership and underscores our long-term commitment to advancing economic justice across Baltimore."

The Reservoir Square project is also a textbook example of a collaborative public-private partnership. The City of Baltimore collaborated with MCB Real Estate, Atapco Properties, and MLR Partners, along with the Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD), the Maryland Economic Development Corporation (MEDCO), national non-profit P3 –Foundation Inc. (P3) and



*(L-r): Councilman James Torrence; MCB Co-founder & Managing Partner P. David Bramble; Bill Henry, Comptroller, City of Baltimore; and J. Tom Sadowski, Executive Director, MEDCO.*

the Neighborhood Impact Investment Fund (NIIF). The sale-leaseback structure between the City and P3, with bonds issued by MEDCO, provides a path to ownership for the City, with a built-in reserve fund to ensure the long-term viability of the facility. The development is considered a model for equitable urban redevelopment, transforming a once-blighted mall and public housing site in West Baltimore into a vibrant, mixed-use community.

"Reservoir Square and the new MOED location are a powerful testament to what is possible when committed partners come together with a shared vision," adds Bramble. "This project brings long-overdue investment to a truly deserving community. And though these deals are complex, when you have the right partners, determination, and vision, even the toughest projects can rise. It is our hope that this project inspires other organizations, public and private alike, to come together and make a difference."

# Keep Youth Engaged During Summer Vacation

## Free, Budget-friendly Activities for Local Youth to Do This Summer

Compiled by Andrea Blackstone

Summer is in full swing, and although there are lots of activities for children, some families may not have the funds to send a child to a weekly camp or activities before school resumes. Budget-friendly options can require digging for opportunities online and making calls. If you are seeking strategies to improve how to find events and resources faster and earlier, follow social media pages when you notice an event that could interest your child or children, search Eventbrite listings, and subscribe to newsletters or email lists to stay informed about future opportunities. Do not forget to network with other parents and build a tribe of people who are willing to exchange information via text, group chat, or some agreed-upon method of sharing helpful resources and in-person event details. Below is a list of things to do and offers to get you started.

**Annapolis Recreation & Parks Department** is throwing a party on Saturday, July 19, 2025 from 10 a.m.-2 p.m. at “Pip” Moyer Recreation Center (273 Hilltop Lane). Enjoy games, food, and music. See <https://www.annapolis.gov/189/Recreation-Parks>.

Introduce computer programming to your students at home. Find an online coding class for them to take. Learn more about **Create & Learn** by visiting <https://www.create-learn.us/coding-for-kids/free-classes>

Sign up for **Khan Academy** (<https://www.khanacademy.org/signup>) to keep your young learner thinking over the summer and beyond.

Stay in touch with your local library to find out about upcoming events.

See **Baltimore County Library** <https://events.bcpl.info/events?n=2&r=months> and **Pratt’s calendar** (<https://calendar.prattlibrary.org/#tab=47117420486632-47117432136773>)

if you want to stay informed in Baltimore. Check events for teens and kids.

**Home Depot** offers in-store kids’ workshops the first Saturday of every month for participants to build a project. Check workshop schedules and locations here: <https://www.homedepot.com/c/kids-workshop>.

Do not overlook free or low-cost attractions in nearby towns that are close to home. Museums such as **the Banneker-Douglass-Tubman Museum** promote appreciation of African American history and culture. Plan a day trip <https://bdmuseum.maryland.gov/plan-your-visit> to visit 84 Franklin Street, Annapolis, Maryland. Admission is free.

Plan an educational excursion to explore **the Naval Academy** <https://tickets.navalacademytourism.com/webstore/shop/viewItems.aspx?cg=TKTS&c=WT>, or if it is too hot, upgrade from a walking tour to ride in a five-passenger electric vehicle <https://tickets.navalacademytourism.com/webstore/shop/viewItems.aspx?cg=TKTS&c=GRTm>.

Save food **coupons** that are mailed to your home in case you are out and about with children. Keep some of them in the car for road trips. Check **app offers** and look for **discount codes** to save money on meals. For example, **Wendys** offers a Free Kids Meal with a Premium Combo Purchase. See [https://www.wendys.com/offers-coupons?utm\\_source=paid-search&utm\\_medium=search&utm\\_campaign=always\\_on\\_offers](https://www.wendys.com/offers-coupons?utm_source=paid-search&utm_medium=search&utm_campaign=always_on_offers).



campaign=always\_on\_offers.

Find out how to claim the offer by visiting [https://order.wendys.com/rewards-store?lang=en\\_US](https://order.wendys.com/rewards-store?lang=en_US).

**Pizza Hut’s BOOK IT!® program** (<https://www.bookitprogram.com>) rolled out a new digital app to empower families to track progress of their child’s reading and set goals. Pre-K through six graders can earn pizza rewards and prevent the “Summer Slide.” Learn more via <https://blog.pizzahut.com/pizza-hut-debuts-first-ever-book-it-app>.

**Planet Fitness** offers a High School Summer Pass for teens ages 14-19. They can sign up to work out for free. Youth under 18 must bring a parent or guardian. Learn more about the program and find a Planet Fitness location via <https://www.planetfitness.com/summerpass>.

**Visit a nature center.**

The admission for Irvine Nature Center <https://www.explorenature.org> includes trails, animal exhibits and wetlands, located at 11201 Garrison Forest Road, Owings Mills, Maryland. Entry is just \$5 a person ages six and up



Photo: Metro

for nonmembers. Some Friday dates are free. See <https://www.explorenature.org/series/free-fridays> for hours and details.

Find free **breakfasts and lunches** at a meal serving site for the Summer Food Program in Baltimore City by visiting <https://cityservices.baltimorecity.gov/summerfood/>.

Wednesday, July 30, 2025, **YouthVoice Wellness Live Podcast & Youth Networking Event** for ages 14 and up will offer game time and all things health, wellness, real talk, and a networking hour with youth in a welcoming space. The event will be held at Gallery About Nothing located at 805 East Baltimore Street Baltimore, Md. from 5:30- 8 p.m. Entry starts at 4:45 p.m. The private event requires registration. See <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/youthvoice-wellness-wednesday-youth-podcast-game-night-tickets-1247843255769?aff=ebdssbdestsearch> for more information.

**Save the date**

**Hug Don’t Shoot & Focus Movers 8th Anniversary Back-to-School Giveaway & Teen Summit**

Saturday, August 9, 2025 from 2-6 p.m., located at Langston Hughes Resource Center, 5011 Arbutus Avenue.

**The American Indian Festival 2025** on Saturday, October 18, 2025, from 11:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. The event held at Patuxent River Park located in Prince George’s County is free. See [https://arts.pgpark.com/event\\_list/aif](https://arts.pgpark.com/event_list/aif).



## Rambling Rose



By Rosa Pryor

Hello everyone, I hope everything is well with you. I am telling you the hot weather is kicking butts—not that I am complaining. This is my time of the year. I just truly enjoy all of the outdoor events, especially the free music concerts.

My favorite every summer is the **Baltimore/Washington 44th Annual Caribbean Carnival**. I can't believe it has been 44 years. I participated in the first one when Commissioner Dr. Elaine Simon joined the late Terrance Charles, Carlton Best, Stephen Barclay, the Mayor Kirk Schموke Administration, the late Delegate Melvin Stukes, and Rick Nugent along with the Park Heights Avenue residents. first brought it to Baltimore—and that is when history was born. I haven't missed one yet, covering it as the entertainment columnist for The Baltimore Times as well as for the Afro-American Newspaper. It is one of the most colorful, entertaining events I have ever been a part of and I believe that the Caribbean Carnival is one of Baltimore's highlight events of the year. Yes, I said so, and you can take that to the bank!

Honey Child! Let me tell you! My favorite, and many of the residents from Baltimore City and County feel the same way. Thousands of residents from all over the city and counties and all walks of life gathered along the curbside from the corner of Park Heights Avenue and Belvedere Street to Park Heights Avenue and Park Circle ending in Druid Hill Park back in the day. Now, it starts from

## "BALTIMORE/WASHINGTON 44TH ANNUAL ONE CARIBBEAN CARNIVAL & PARADE"



*Cross Winds Singing Group*



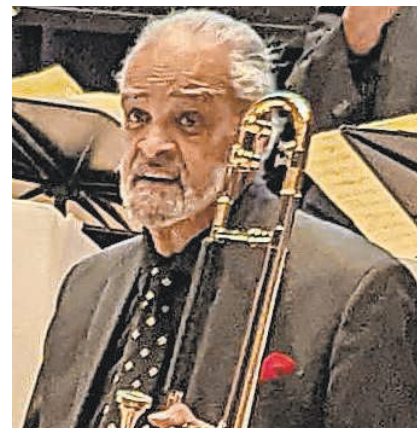
*Elaine Simon,  
The lady who started it all*



*Beautiful gold costume sparkled in the sun in the parade.*



*Shay & Company*



*Charles Funn*



*Avenue Bakery 10th Anniversary  
with Rosa Pryor as  
Mistress of Ceremony*

the corner of Park Circle and Park Heights to the "Park." For hours you can watch the Masqueraders' Parade, "Caribbean Style"! Girlfriend, there's nothing like it. They command attention along the parade route, a five-hour display of glitz, glamour, music, costume, dancing and marching down the middle of the street to their destination—the historic Druid Hill Park. The parade will be held on Saturday, July 12 at noon at the intersection of Park Circle and Reisterstown Road. Bring your folding chairs and watch the festivities continue at Druid Hill Park with food, crafts, and live entertainment until 10 p.m. On Sunday, July 13, the celebration continues in Druid Hill Park from

noon to 9 p.m. I'm getting excited just writing this. What about you?

Now moving on, I don't want you to forget **The Royal Theater & Community Heritage Corporation "Matinee @ The Royal**, with yours truly, "Rambling Rose" as the Mistress of Ceremony as well as the producer for the live entertainment at the **Avenue Bakery**, located at 2229 Pennsylvania Avenue, at the corner of Baker Street in the Avenue Bakery outdoor courtyard, owned by **James Hamlin**. Come one, come all and enjoy the **FREE** live entertainment of **Greg Hatza ORGANization** on Saturday, July 5 from 4-7 p.m. Bring your folding chairs

and enjoy. For more information, you can call me at 410-833-9474.

Ladies and gentlemen, there is so much going on this week and next week. It is that time of the year, especially in the next few months. Oh! By the way, my new book is finished, entitled "Baltimore & Maryland Black History Stories; Who, What, When & Where-1950's-1980's." I will start my book signing in a couple of weeks. So, keep in touch. Enjoy your week, and remember, if you need me, call me at 410-833-9474, or email me at [rosapryor@aol.com](mailto:rosapryor@aol.com). **UNTIL THE NEXT TIME, I'M MUSICALLY YOURS.**



# Tamara Payne, Artist, Scholar, and Community Arts Advocate

## We Echo the Voices of Our Ancestors

### Celebrating Black Women's Resilience Through Art and Community Healing

Tamara Payne, a Baltimore-based artist and scholar, explores the lived experiences of Black and brown women through a multimedia project rooted in biblical symbolism and ancestral echoes. Her work weaves film, portraiture, and vibrant Ankara fabrics into a tapestry of stories that carry the weight of history and the promise of healing. Through community workshops, organic conversations, and collaborative art-making, Payne challenges stereotypes and builds safe spaces for women and girls to reflect, celebrate, and dream together. Her thesis investigates how Black and brown women support and inspire one another through shared experiences, emphasizing the importance of documenting stories and fostering authentic audience engagement. The project prioritizes collaboration, relationship building, and communal practices to encourage personal reflection and understanding of history's impact.

Using multimedia, film, portraiture, and performance, Payne layers materials to reveal the complexities and depths of issues Black women endure. The vessels in her work symbolize the female figure, nurturing others daily. Workshops and events elevate the experiences of women and girls, making each iteration of the project unique. Influenced by her mother's legacy and ancestral longings, Payne's work is a collective effort of many women and girls, with the curated space gaining significance through interaction. Themes include home, memory, grief, healing, safe spaces, communal practices, relationship building, loss, celebration, and grounding.

Payne's artistic journey began at the Baltimore School for the Arts and continued through studies at Parsons

School of Design and the Maryland Institute College of Art, where she earned a BFA and a Master's in Community Arts. Her passion for humanity has led her to paint and curate murals in impoverished communities worldwide. Known for mosaic murals and collaborations with Black women, her multidisciplinary work spans multimedia, fashion, public installations, film, assemblage, portraiture, and performance art. Her work, influenced by experiences of girlhood and womanhood, focuses on self-exploration, healing, and empowerment of Black and brown women and girls.

Payne has received numerous awards and been featured in publications such as Voyage Baltimore, Bmore Art Magazine, The Baltimore Times, Forbes Magazine, Le Figaro, and Travel Noire. Currently, she is an Associate Professor and pursuing an MFA at MICA, expected to graduate in summer 2025. She invites all to witness her inspiring artistic journey.

"My thesis investigates how Black and brown women support and inspire one another through shared experiences, emphasizing the importance of documenting our stories and reflecting on ancestral echoes. Drawing on biblical symbolism—such as vessels and oil—my work uses multimedia, film, portraiture, and colorful Ankara fabrics to create spaces for authentic engagement and community dialogue. By deconstructing stereotypes and promoting holistic

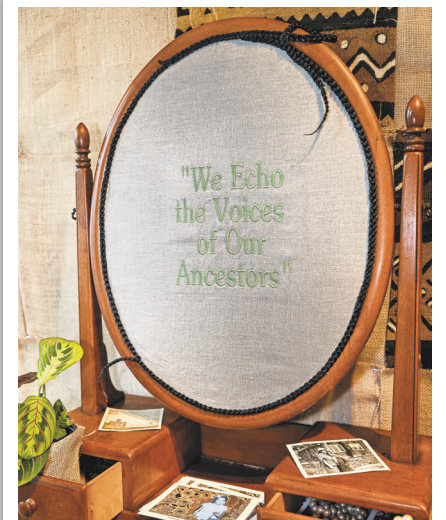


*Tamara Payne*

healing, I aim to deepen understanding of Black women's experiences and foster relationship-building. The process centers on collaboration, organic conversations, and workshops that elevate the voices of women and girls. Each curated project is unique, highlighting the complexity and resilience of our communities while encouraging personal reflection and collective celebration. Influenced by my mother's legacy and the women around me, this work honors our histories, explores themes of home, memory, healing, and joy, and seeks to empower future generations through representation and shared storytelling."

#### About Tamara Payne

Tamara Payne, born in Baltimore, began her artistic journey at the Baltimore School for the Arts and studied Fashion at Parsons School of Design in New York before earning her BFA in painting and ceramics and a Master's of Community Arts from the Maryland Institute College of Art. She has painted and curated murals in communities from Baltimore to South Africa, the Dominican Republic, and



*We Echo the Voices of Our Ancestors. Mixed Media, Mud Cloth, Burlap, Ankara Fabric, Found Objects Photos: Denzel Photographer*

Puerto Rico, driven by a passion for art's role in social change.

A multidisciplinary artist recognized for her mosaic murals and collaborations with Black women, Tamara's work spans multimedia, public installations, film, assemblage, and performance. Her art is deeply influenced by her experiences of girlhood, womanhood, and memory, focusing on self-exploration, healing, and empowering Black and brown women and girls.

Tamara's community-based projects have earned her numerous awards and features in publications such as Voyage Baltimore, Bmore Art Magazine, The Baltimore Times,

Forbes, Le Figaro, and Travel Noire. She is currently an Associate Professor and a candidate for an MFA at MICA, graduating in summer 2025. Tamara invites all to witness and be inspired by her ongoing creative journey.



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