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Heirlooms, History, and Hard Truths: Everyman's The Piano Lesson Brings August Wilson Home



'The Piano Lesson' directed by Paige Hernandez, runs until September 23, 2025, at Everyman Theatre in Baltimore, Maryland. The Pulitzer Prize-winning masterpiece is a landmark for Everyman Theatre's 35th Anniversary Season. It is also a part of the Baltimore August Wilson Celebration, a citywide initiative uniting ten theater companies to stage Wilson's entire American Century Cycle in chronological order. Cast members: (Left to right): RJ Brown as Boy Willie and Mecca Verdell as Grace. (See article on page 7) Photo: Teresa Castrane Photography



Reinforce Hope for Addiction Recovery: Increase Education About Addiction, Lives It Touches

Part I of a Two-Part Series

By **Andrea Blackstone**

September offers a dedicated time to highlight issues and people within the recovery community and reminds others that recovering from addiction is possible. However, it is critical to dive into substance use from a comprehensive perspective. Recovery is an issue that touches every corner of the map and nearly every group. In fact, children and American teenagers are among the people who have been gripped by the chronic disease of addiction.

According to “Key Substance Use and Mental Health Indicators in the United States: Results from the 2024 National Survey on Drug Use and Health,” a publication prepared for the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), “among people aged 12 or older in 2024, 58.3 percent (or 168.0 million people) used tobacco, vaped nicotine, used alcohol, or used an illicit drug in the past month; 46.6 percent (or 134.3 million people) drank alcohol in the past month; 16.7 percent (or 48.0 million people) used a tobacco product in the past month; 9.6 percent (or 27.7 million people) vaped nicotine in the past month; and 16.7 percent (or 48.2 million people) used an illicit drug in the past month (<https://www.samhsa.gov/data/sites/default/files/reports/rpt56287/2024-nsduh-annual-national-report.pdf>).

Najamah Davis, owner of Najamah Davis Counseling Services, and Casondra Burkley, owner of

Conquering the Obstacles of Painful Experiences, provide expert insight into addiction and recovery in a two-part series during National Recovery Month.

Addiction is not just about substances.

How people respond to distressing experiences and trauma is linked to addiction and substance use.

“It’s often rooted in coping with pain, trauma, or unmet emotional needs. Many people are surprised to learn that addiction is as much about why someone uses as it is about what they use,” said Davis, an expert in the mental health field.

Addiction can affect anyone.

Davis, a psychiatric social worker, licensed clinical social worker and field instructor who specializes in providing mental health services to children, women, and families, further noted that addiction can affect anyone—from adolescents experimenting for the first time to older adults misusing pain medications. Faces of addiction do not all look the same. They can be found in posh neighborhoods, suburban environments, or in urban settings. A person who battles addiction does not fit a specific profile.

“It doesn’t discriminate by age, gender, or background,” Davis added.

Burkley, LCSW-S, M.Div, LSSGB, ADS-CEO, specializes in trauma. The licensed clinical social worker, mental health expert, and founder of Conquering the Obstacles of Painful Experiences pointed out that addiction



Casondra Burkley, mental health expert and owner of Conquering the Obstacles of Painful Experiences.

Photo: Monica Blackshire



Najamah Davis, mental health expert and owner of Najamah Davis Counseling Services. *Courtesy photo*

can start shockingly early. For instance, pregnant mothers who use substances even before giving birth can expose their unborn fetuses to substances during pregnancy.

According to the NIH National Institute on Drug Abuse, “estimates suggest that about 5 percent of pregnant women use one or more addictive substances.” (<https://nida.nih.gov/publications/research-reports/substance-use-in-women/substance-use-while-pregnant-breastfeeding>)

In other cases, children and teenagers

can dabble in substance use long before they fully understand the consequences. Burkley also said that some children and teenagers are introduced to addictive substances through family environments where alcohol or drug use is normalized. Habits within generations can be passed down because of unhealed trauma. Other young people may encounter substances in social settings where peer pressure, the desire to belong, or curiosity leads them to experiment.

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Kidney Transplant Recipient Approaches 50th Transplant Anniversary from Deceased Donor

Oldest living African American with the same kidney transplant in the nation

By Andrea Blackstone

George Edward Franklin, III, is a walking miracle. The seventy-one-year-old who underwent his successful kidney transplant on November 4, 1975, is the oldest living African American with the same kidney transplant in the nation. Franklin was informed that organ transplants were still considered rare and experimental when he initially received his life-saving gift. According to the kidney transplant recipient, his medical victory also predates most organ procurement organizations.

"There was only one drug at the time to prevent rejection of the transplanted organ. Now we have a half dozen medications that can be given if an organ goes into rejection," Franklin explained.

Franklin reflected on his teenage years when he was a hemodialysis patient at the George Washington Hospital Center in Washington, D.C.

"I didn't know I had kidney disease until I was in the hospital," Franklin explained. "I was almost in complete renal failure."

At just 18 years old, Franklin's plans to enlist in the military forcibly shifted in another direction. He needed to start hemodialysis, a life-saving medical treatment that filters waste and excess fluids from the blood when the kidneys fail, approximately four months after high school graduation. Franklin discovered that he was born with only one kidney that could no longer do its job. His tiny kidney filters became inflamed because of a kidney disease called glomerulonephritis.

His first transplant kidney was removed after a week or two due to massive rejection in April of 1975.

"It never worked. They took it out the day after Mother's Day, which sent me into a depression," Franklin explained.

The second time, Franklin's body



George Franklin III, 71, with his beloved chihuahua, Joey. Franklin is the oldest living African American with the same kidney transplant in the nation. He will soon celebrate his 50th year of success on 11/4/1975.

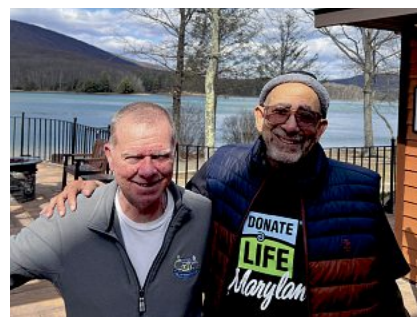
Photos: George Franklin III

responded positively to the new kidney that was surgically implanted by Dr. Glenn W. Geelhoed when Franklin was 21 years old. Today, the gift of life still offers Franklin a chance to live an active, joyful existence. His life in Cumberland, Maryland is quiet and scenic. He likes to bowl and capture beautiful moments that surround him, such as trees that turn colors.

"I guess somebody with 15,000 pictures on their phone should mention photography as a hobby," Franklin joked.

Joey—Franklin's faithful little buddy—is a Chihuahua who once belonged to a young girl who is a deceased organ donor. Her mother gave Joey to Franklin as a gift in May of 2023. Joey's addition to Franklin's life has offered good therapy for an inspiring warrior who has endured layered challenges and won. Franklin survived an incident when the electrical impulses in his heart stopped in 2022.

"I collapsed on a pool deck. After two AEDs were used at the pool, and one in the ambulance, the next day a pacemaker and defibrillator were implanted in my chest.



Mike Butler and George Franklin III participate in a Donate Life event at Rocky Gap State Park and Casino in Maryland in 2025. Donate Life Maryland handles registration for the state's organ, eye and tissue donors.

A defibrillator will restart it, hopefully, if it stops again," Franklin noted. AEDs (Automated external defibrillators) are portable, life-saving devices designed to treat people experiencing sudden cardiac arrest, a medical condition in which the heart stops beating suddenly and unexpectedly.

He added, "Since August 1 of 2022, I've been okay, with the exception that my kidney function is decreasing, but it's still life-sustaining. I hope to reach November 4, which will be my 50th transplant anniversary from a deceased donor. I'm said to be the longest living African American transplant recipient in the nation with a deceased donor transplant."

Franklin's kidney donor, who saved his life, allowed him to live to see his grandmother (Alease Holbrooks) reach an old age. Franklin's mother, Alease Terry, passed away in 2022.

"I lived to see my mother reach 90. I was 21 when I had my transplant, so she lived to see me thrive," Franklin explained.

While Franklin is a record holder who



(L-r): George Franklin III, a kidney transplant recipient; Sierra Alban, mother of a deceased organ donor; and Raymond "Boo" Twyman, a four-year liver recipient.

offers hope to anyone who wants to know if long life is possible despite enduring an organ transplant journey, he shared that he knows fellow living organ transplant recipients who still have kidneys from their mothers and fathers who donated organs more than fifty years ago. They are members of a national club called The Quarter Century Club for transplant recipients whose transplants have lasted at least 25 years.

Franklin encourages people who are not yet organ donors to consider signing up to help others. The Western Marylander further stated that people are dying needlessly because of a lack of organs that can be transplanted to save lives in this country.

"You can donate one and save someone's life, literally. I am an example of longevity from a deceased donor," Franklin said. "Leave a legacy. Become an organ donor and save someone's life."

Learn more about organ, eye and tissue donation by visiting Donate Life Maryland via <https://www.donatelifemaryland.org>.

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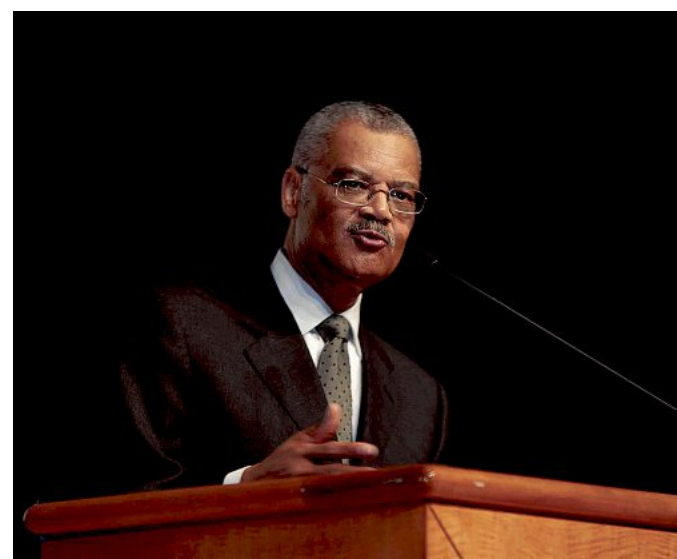
Life and Legacy of President Emeritus Earl S. Richardson Honored With Morgan State University Board of Regents Resolution

By Morgan State University

BALTIMORE — While gathered for its annual retreat, the Morgan State University Board of Regents formally issued a resolution honoring the late President Emeritus Earl S. Richardson, lauding his extraordinary 26-year tenure as Morgan’s ninth inaugurated president and his transformative impact on the University. Dr. Richardson, who passed away on Sept. 12 at age 81, presided over what has been widely regarded as the Morgan Renaissance, a period of unprecedented growth that elevated Morgan to national prominence. Richardson served as university president from 1984 to 2010, the second-longest presidential tenure in Morgan history.

Under Dr. Richardson’s leadership, Morgan achieved doctoral research classification, expanded academic offerings, dramatically grew enrollment and invested more than \$500 million in new and renovated campus facilities. In addition, his advocacy for Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) played a central role in the landmark \$577-million settlement to provide equity in Maryland higher education. In 2006, Richardson helped spur the creation of the Coalition for Equity and Excellence in Maryland Higher Education, whose 15-year lawsuit battle on behalf of Maryland’s HBCU students was finally settled in 2021.

“Morgan would not be the institution it is today without Dr. Earl Richardson’s vision and tenacity. He elevated the importance of the presidency and its role in institutional transformation,” said Morgan President David K. Wilson. “His leadership reshaped our University, and his unwavering fight for equity has left



Dr. Earl S. Richardson
Courtesy photo

an indelible mark on higher education.” Upon learning of Richardson’s passing, President Wilson issued a statement to the Morgan Community.

After his presidency concluded, Richardson continued to leave his mark at Morgan, serving as a distinguished professor of Higher Education Administration and a senior research associate in the University’s Center for Civil Rights in Education, after stepping away from the role of president in 2010. He also served on several boards and commissions, both locally and nationally.

Morgan’s Board of Regents chairman, the Honorable Kweisi Mfume, added, “Dr. Richardson was a transformative leader and stalwart in the fight to ensure a college opportunity for all students. He helped to lead and direct the legal fight to ensure equal funding for Maryland’s public Colleges and Universities. He elevated what was known as the ‘Morgan

Renaissance,’ a sustained period of growth, renewal and national recognition. His voice and his presence will be greatly missed.”

The resolution, entered into the University’s official record, commends Dr. Richardson’s service and expresses the Morgan community’s enduring gratitude for his

leadership, scholarship and devotion.

Established under Title 14 of the Education Article, Annotated Code of Maryland, the 15-member Morgan State University Board of Regents governs the actions of the University. The governor of Maryland appoints Board members for six-year terms, except for the student regent, who is appointed for a one-year term. The Board appoints the University president, who serves at the pleasure of the Board. The Board also sets admission standards; reviews and approves University policies and budgets; and establishes the regulatory framework within which the individual units operate. Action items for approval are advanced from the committees managed by the Board. These include the Academic and Student Affairs Committee, Finance and Facilities Committee and the Audit and Institutional Assessment Committee.

Per Scholas Baltimore Graduates Celebrate Success and Look Ahead to the Future of Work

By Harold Booker Jr.

Baltimore, MD — On September 9, 2025, Per Scholas Baltimore proudly celebrated the graduation of its IT Help Desk class, marking another milestone in advancing equitable access to technology careers. The program, which ran from June 2 to September 9, 2025, was a 13-week journey that met daily from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Seventeen learners successfully graduated from the rigorous course. Along the way, many overcame imposter syndrome, confidence challenges, financial hardships, and even periods of homelessness to reach the finish line. Their resilience underscored not only the intensity of the training but also the perseverance required to seize life-changing opportunities.

The graduating class achieved exceptional results, with 100 percent of the cohort earning a GPA of 90 percent or higher and every learner completing the Job Readiness Assessment, officially confirming that they are prepared to enter the workforce. The ceremony also highlighted outstanding learners with special awards, as Daniel Ball was honored as Valedictorian, Jelani Crosby was recognized as Most Valuable Technologist, and Dana Martin received the Core Values Award. Certifications further demonstrated the rigor of the program, with more than half of the class passing CompTIA A+ Core 1. Among those who attempted Core 2, 75 percent are now fully A+ certified, with additional graduates scheduled to test in the coming weeks. Guest speaker Elijah L. Harris energized the room with his charge to the graduates to “stay hungry,” a message of perseverance and ambition that left a lasting impression on the class, their families, and community partners.

“As the Managing Director at Per Scholas Baltimore, I couldn’t be prouder

as we celebrate our newest IT Support cohort,” said Camisha Beverly. “These learners have not only gained the technical skills they need but also the essential soft skills that will empower them to thrive in the workforce. Their dedication and perseverance inspire us all, and I am excited to see them embark on their professional journeys.”

Per Scholas Baltimore provides tuition-free, career-focused IT training to residents of Baltimore City, Baltimore County, Anne Arundel County, and Howard County. Over the course of the program, learners gain practical, hands-on skills in IT support, computer hardware and operating systems, and security practices, while preparing for industry-recognized certifications such as CompTIA A+. The program equips learners with both technical and professional readiness skills that open doors to in-demand IT support roles across the region.

The Baltimore campus is part of a national nonprofit network spanning more than 20 cities, offering tuition-free technology training to diverse talent pools often underrepresented in the tech industry. Since its founding in 1995, Per Scholas has trained more than 25,000 learners nationwide, helping graduates collectively earn hundreds of millions of dollars in wages. Partnerships with leading employers, including TEKsystems and other Fortune 500 companies, ensure graduates are well-connected to real hiring pipelines.

In Baltimore and across Maryland, the timing could not be better for these graduates to enter the workforce. The



Graduates of Per Scholas IT Certification class. The graduation was held on September 9, 2025 at the Junior Achievement Center of Maryland. Photo: Per Scholas Baltimore

state ranks third nationwide for tech job demand, with particularly strong opportunities in IT support, network administration, and cybersecurity. Employers are urgently seeking talent, and Per Scholas Baltimore is helping to fill that gap by preparing residents with the skills and certifications they need to succeed.

The organization will continue its work by hosting a timely community event, “The State of Hiring in Baltimore with Per Scholas,” on Wednesday, September 17 from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. at the Hyatt Place Baltimore/Inner Harbor, located at 511 S. Central Avenue. The interactive gathering will bring together employers, workforce leaders, and community partners to explore pressing challenges and opportunities in Baltimore’s hiring landscape. The lineup will include Jay Roy, CEO of Omni Technology; Lay Davenport, Job and Career Center Manager at the Enoch Pratt Free Library; James Jean-Baptist, Principal and Founder of Cyberlinx Solutions; James Mitchell,

Executive Director of Reasonable Tech Solutions; and Gretchen LeGrand, Senior Program Manager at the Deutsche Foundation, alongside other local leaders. Together, they will share real-world insights on how the city can better connect talent to opportunity.

With a record of student achievement and an eye on the city’s broader workforce needs, Per Scholas Baltimore continues to prove that the combination of free, rigorous training and strong employer partnerships can transform lives, strengthen communities, and build the future of Baltimore’s workforce.

Harold Booker Jr. is the founder and principal of DrewJenk Consulting, a boutique firm specializing in project management, workforce development, and AI-driven consulting. He is also a frequent contributor to The Baltimore Times, where he writes about technology, workforce innovation, arts, and community impact.

Heirlooms, History, and Hard Truths: Everyman's The Piano Lesson Brings August Wilson Home

By **Harold Booker Jr.**

August Wilson's "The Piano Lesson" is more than a play. It is a reckoning with family, inheritance, and memory. In Everyman Theatre's 35th Anniversary Season opener, directed by Paige Hernandez, the Pulitzer Prize-winning masterpiece feels both timeless and urgently relevant.

Wilson's brilliance is in making the universal deeply personal. Watching "Berniece" and "Boy Willie" spar over the fate of their family's piano, I could not help but think of my own grandmother. She grew up on a sharecropping plantation in Louisiana and did not buy her first home until her late fifties. That home was her triumph, but after her passing, the next generation could not agree whether to sell, rent, or keep it. That conflict mirrors Wilson's characters. One sibling is determined to use inheritance as capital for the future, and another is committed to preserving history at all costs. RJ Brown's "Boy Willie" embodies restless determination, clashing powerfully with Chinai Routté's "Berniece," who anchors the play with conviction and range, her grief often spilling into fiery monologues. Their struggle reminded me of the all too familiar fights over what we value and who decides.

Jefferson A. Russell's "Doaker," a Resident Company actor, grounds the play in storytelling. His retelling of the piano's carved history captivated the audience, weaving the family's legacy into flesh. KenYatta Rogers as "Wining Boy" lit up the room with humor while carrying scars of the past, showing Wilson's genius for characters who make us laugh while forcing us to see pain. Mack Leamon as "Avery," the preacher, had the house answering with real "Amen's" as his sermons filled the

stage with fire. Louis E. Davis's "Lymon" offered a quieter complement to "Boy Willie's" force. At the same time, Mecca Verdell's "Grace" stole her scenes with a flirtatious charm so realistic that audience members gasped in delight.

The craft of the production adds to its power. Daniel Ettinger's scenic design places us in a living room that feels preserved, not lived in, with handkerchiefs on chairs and the grand piano at the center. For me, it was a reminder of my grandmother's own "company room," where furniture was never touched unless special guests arrived. David Burdick's costumes, Alberto Segarra's lighting, and David Remedios's sound reinforced the period feel. The musical interludes stood out. The men's work song and "Berniece's" hymn at the piano punctured the heaviness with raw resonance. And when the supernatural climax unfolded, aided by stunning special effects, the drama lifted to another level.

This production is not only a landmark for Everyman Theatre's 35th Anniversary Season, but also part of the Baltimore August Wilson Celebration, a citywide initiative uniting ten theater companies to stage Wilson's entire "American Century Cycle" in chronological order. This effort honors Wilson's legacy while rooting his questions about family, race, and history firmly in Baltimore's present.

"The Piano Lesson" runs through September 28, 2025. Special performances include a Lunchtime Matinee on September 23 at 12 p.m.



(Left to right): Resident Company Member Chinai Routté and Louis E Davis as Lymon.

Photo: Teresa Castrane Photography



Cast members

Tickets start at \$55, with student tickets available for \$27, and nearly 500 accessible Pay-What-You-Choose seats are offered throughout the run. Tickets can be purchased online at everymantheatre.org, by emailing

boxoffice@everymantheatre.org, or by calling 410-752-2208.

Everyman's "The Piano Lesson" is not just a theatrical production. It is a mirror. It forces us to confront the choices we make about our legacies, what to sell, what to save, and what stories to tell. For me, it was like revisiting my grandmother's home, where legacy was never just about property but about pride, pain, and history. Wilson's work ensures those questions still echo, and Everyman Theatre delivers them with unflinching power.

Harold Booker Jr. is the founder and principal of DrewJenk Consulting, a boutique firm that specializes in project management, workforce development, and community engagement. He is also a frequent contributor to the Baltimore Times, writing about arts, culture, and social issues that connect personal history with community impact.



By Rosa Pryor

Hello everyone, my “lands of mercy!” Last week was fun and interesting, and I promise the upcoming weeks will be fun as well. If you follow my lead, I’ll keep your butt busy and having a lot of fun. Honey child, I got some stuff lined up for you. I am very excited about my new book and how many people have purchased it, telling me how much they have been enjoying the pictures and stories. I really thank you for your support and I am so happy you are enjoying my books.

Now, my friends, let’s talk about the star journalist in our town— none other than Marsha Reeves-Jews, Publisher/ CEO and host of WKIM Media Network. Marsha has more than ten years of experience as a talk show host with two National Public Radio Affiliates: “Keep it Moving” with Marsha Jews on WEAA 88.9 FM at Morgan State University in Baltimore, Maryland, and “The Marsha Jews Show” on WHCR 90.3FM at City College in Harlem, New York. Honey Child! I have so much love and respect for this lady. I don’t have enough space in my column to write everything about Marsha’s accomplishments. She is such a humble person, considering all she has accomplished and continues to do.

Hey folks! Check this out! Marsha Reeves-Jews was the former Project Manager of the renowned Harlem Renaissance, a community Technology Center focused on STEM at the Institute for Urban & Minority Education projects at Teachers’ College. She was also the former President COO Associate Publisher for Career Communication Group. She served as Executive Director of the Alvin Alley American Dance Theater Foundation of Maryland in Baltimore; Regional Director of Advertising at the Afro-American

Marsha Reeves-Jews, A Baltimore Media Star



Watch Marsha Reeves-Jews, host and producer of “We Keep It Moving w/Marsha Jews” on WKIM Media Network. The program live streams on YouTube on Tuesdays from 7-9 p.m. She is the Publisher/CEO and Host of WKIM Media Network. Marsha has more than ten years of experience as a talk show host with two National Public Radio Affiliates; “Keep it Moving” with Marsha Jews on WEAA 88.9 FM at Morgan State University in Baltimore, and “The Marsha Jews Show” on WHCR 90.3FM at City College in Harlem, New York.

Newspaper; former Vice President of Operations for the Modern-Day Marine Force in Readiness Military Exposition; and Director of Advertising of Proud Tradition Magazine & The Amphibious Warfare Review Magazine.

Marsha Reeves-Jews is the former Editor-At-Large for World Bride Magazine and the founder of Marsha Jews & Company, a full-service marketing, business development, Wedding/Events, Conference planning & management. Marsha is active in the community and a former board member of the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra. Marsha is on a host of boards and is a member of the inaugural edition of “Who’s Who in Baltimore.” Check her out: WKIM Media Network, Marsha Jews Host and Producer on YouTube. Watch live streaming episodes on Tuesdays from 7-9 p.m. “We Keep it



A service will be held in memory of Gwendolyn Estelle Patillo (Bland), Anderson Ward’s Sister who passed away early this month. Her services will be on Saturday, October 4. Family time is 10:30 a.m. to 11 and service is 11 a.m. at The City Temple of Baltimore, 317 Dolphin Street in Baltimore. The family requests that everyone wear shades of purple in her memory.

Moving” w/Marsha Jews. To subscribe to her newsletter, email: wkimmedianetwork.marshajews@gmail.com.

Honey Child, I could go on forever talking about Marsha Reeves Jews, but you got the picture. She’s one of Baltimore’s best. You remember “Rambling Rose” told you and I tell no lie.

The Caribbean Wine, Food & Music Festival at Carroll Park is coming up on Saturday, 27 from 1-9 p.m., 1500 Washington Blvd. There will be live entertainment, free wine tasting, and a lot of prizes and surprises.

Mannnnnnnnnn! I am almost out of space, but I have to tell you this before I go. For those of you who haven’t gotten the word or don’t have a Facebook page, I want to let you know my book is out. I would appreciate you going to Amazon and ordering a copy or two. I promise you, the photos will blow your mind. “Baltimore and Maryland Black History Stories; Who, What, When, and Where, 1950s-1980s” has over a thousand photos with stories. Guess what? You are in it. “SURPRISE!”

Well, my friends, I have to go now, as



Carlos Hutchins Productions presents an “Evening of Elegance” Black & Gold Attire on Sunday, September 21 from 4-9 p.m. at the Diamondz Events and Catering, located 9980 Liberty Road in Randallstown, Maryland featuring DJ Mike Jones, an open bar, a chef’s buffet and live entertainment. For ticket information, call 443-963-5711 or 443-955-8600.



Patsy Hutchins, the wife of Carlos Hutchins, is doing well, getting better every day and is back enjoying life as well as enjoying this lobster and hanging out with family and friends. She wants to thank everyone for their love and prayers.

I’m out of space. However, if you’d like to talk, schedule a book signing, or if you have an upcoming event, please don’t hesitate to call me at 410-833-9474 or email me at rosapryor@aol.com. **UNTIL THE NEXT TIME, I’M MUSICALLY YOURS.**

National Recovery Month

Recovery

Continued from page 2

Social media and culture play a powerful role.

Music, videos, and online influencers can glamorize drug and alcohol use, presenting it as a method of coping with stress or “fitting in.” When young people are already carrying heavy emotional loads, such as bullying, community violence, or family instability, the temptation to numb the pain can feel overwhelming, according to Burkley.

Burkley often informs families that young people do not just wake up one day and decide to use drugs. They are seeking relief.

“When trauma has left them feeling unsafe in their bodies and in their world, substances can appear to offer a false sense of comfort or control. This is why prevention efforts must go beyond ‘just say no’ messages,” she stated.

Burkley added, “We must create safe spaces, teach coping skills, and provide healthy outlets for stress, whether through therapy, mentorship, faith communities, or even holistic practices that help regulate the body’s stress response.”

Addiction is not limited to drugs and alcohol.

While increasing education about addiction and recovery, Burkley explained that both youth and adults can become addicted to more than substances such as alcohol, prescription medications, or illicit drugs. Behaviors such as gambling, video gaming, viewing pornography, compulsive social media use, and engaging in relationships where trauma bonds create unhealthy patterns that are difficult to

break can also be linked to addiction.

“Each addiction changes the brain’s reward system and impacts emotional health. Effective recovery addresses not just the behavior but the underlying trauma driving it. One innovative approach I use is Acudetox. Auricular acupuncture that calms the nervous system, reduces cravings, and restores balance. For many clients, it creates a sense of safety in their own bodies for the first time in years,” said Burkley.

Make a distinction between substance use and substance abuse.

Davis noted that substance use simply means the act of taking a substance. However, substance abuse refers to patterns of use that cause harm to health, relationships, or daily functioning. The distinction matters because not all use of substances is an instance of substance abuse.

Use proper terminology to help reduce stigma.

When speaking about a person who struggles with addiction, Davis informed that using terms like ‘person with a substance use disorder’ instead of labels like ‘addict’ helps reduce stigma.

“Language shapes how people see themselves and how others treat them. When we use respectful, accurate terms, we open the door to compassion and recovery rather than shame,” Davis stated.

Learn more about Najamah Davis Counseling Services via www.nd-counselingservices.com, and Conquering the Obstacles of Painful Experiences by visiting www.morethancope.com.



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The Global Parkinson’s Genetics Program (GP2) is an international research program.

GP2 aims to learn more about gene changes that may cause Parkinson’s in people from all backgrounds.

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THE MICHAEL J. FOX FOUNDATION
FOR PARKINSON'S RESEARCH

20250718-US-ENG-PA-PAD-V2.0_Baltimore

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CITY OF BALTIMORE DEPARTMENT OF GENERAL SERVICES NOTICE OF LETTING

Sealed Bids or Proposals, in duplicate, addressed to the Board of Estimates of the Mayor and City Council of Baltimore and marked for **PRJ001888 – Forest Park Library Addition and Renovation**, will be received at the Office of the Comptroller, Room 204, City Hall, Baltimore, Maryland until 11:00 A.M. on **WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 15, 2025**. Board of Estimates employees will be stationed at the Security Unit Counter just inside the Holliday Street entrance to City Hall from 10:45 A.M. to 11:00 A.M. every Wednesday to receive Bids.

Positively no bids will be received after 11:00 A.M. The bids will be publicly opened by the Board of Estimates in Room 215, City Hall at Noon. Bid opening proceedings can be also viewed live at <https://www.charmtvbaltimore.com/live-stream> at 12:00 noon. Bid tabulation sheets detailing the bids received will be publicly posted to the Comptroller's website by COB on the date of bid opening.

The Contract Documents may be purchased for a non-refundable cost of **\$100.00** by contacting Lauren Hoover at lauren.hoover@baltimorecity.gov as of **FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 19, 2025**.

Conditions and requirements of the Bid are found in the bid package.

All contractors bidding on this Contract must first be pre-qualified by the City of Baltimore Boards and Commissions. Interested contractors should call 410 396-6883 or contact the Office of Boards and Commissions at 4 South Frederick Street, 4th Floor, Baltimore, MD 21202. **If a bid is submitted by a Joint Venture ("JV"), then in that event, the documents that establish the JV shall be submitted with the bid for verification purposes.** The Prequalification Category required for bidding on this project is **E13004 – REHABILITATION OF STRUCTURES**

The Cost Qualification Range for this work shall be **\$4,000,000.01 to \$5,000,000.00**

A "Pre-Bidding information" session will

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be conducted at the site: **3023 Garrison Blvd, Baltimore, MD 21216 on TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 30, 2025 at 10:00 a.m.**

Principal Items of work for this project are:

**Masonry
Interior Finishes
HVAC
Electrical
Exterior Improvements**

The MBE goal is **27%**
The WBE goal is **10%**

CONTRACT NO. PRJ001888

APPROVED:

M. Celeste Amato

Clerk, Board of Estimates

APPROVED

Berke Attila

Director, Department of
General Services

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CITY OF BALTIMORE DEPARTMENT OF RECREATION AND PARKS NOTICE OF LETTING

Sealed Bids or Proposals, in duplicate addressed to the Board of Estimates of the Mayor and City Council of Baltimore and marked for **BALTIMORE CITY NO. RP24821 Patterson Park Pool House Renovation** will be received at the Office of the Comptroller, Room 204 City Hall, Baltimore, Maryland, until 11:00 A.M. **November 19, 2025**. Positively no bids will be received after 11:00 A.M. Bids will be publicly opened by the Board of Estimates in Room 215, City Hall at Noon. The proposed Contract Documents may be examined, without charge, at the Dept. of Rec & Parks at 2600 Madison Ave, Baltimore, Md. 21217 by appointment only on Mondays - Fridays, 8:30am – 4:00pm by emailing benitaj.randolph@baltimorecity.gov as of **September 19, 2025** and copies may be purchased for a non-refundable cost of **\$100.00**. A SharePoint link to a PDF of the Construction Drawings will be provided to all prospective bidders. **Conditions and requirements of the Bid are found in the bid package.** All contractors bidding on this Contract must first be prequalified by

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the City of Baltimore Contractors Qualification Committee. Interested parties should call (410) 396-6883 or contact the Committee at 4 South Frederick Street, 4th Floor, Baltimore, Maryland 21202. **If a bid is submitted by a joint venture ("JV"), then in that event, the document that established the JV shall be submitted with the bid for verification purposes.** The Prequalification Category required for bidding on this project is **E13001 Three-Story and Under**. Cost Qualification Range for this work shall be **\$1,100,000.00 to \$1,500,000.00**. A "Pre-Bidding Information" session will be conducted via **Microsoft Teams at 10:30am EST on September 30, 2025**. Email your contact information to demos.anastasiades@baltimorecity.gov to receive an invite to the Microsoft Teams (video conference meeting) no later than **4:00pm EST, September 29, 2025**. Principle Items of work for this project are Selective demolition, renovation of the existing building, locker room addition, entry construction, site improvements, and associated mechanical, electrical, and plumbing work. The MBE goal is **27%** and WBE goal is **10%**.
APPROVED: M. Celeste Amato,
Clerk, Board of Estimates

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CITY OF BALTIMORE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION PUBLIC NOTICE

In an effort to educate the community and receive public comment the upcoming project, a community meeting will be held.

PUBLIC MEETING FOR Harford Road Transit Improvements and Multimodal Pathway Extension Between St. Lo Dr. and Erdman Ave

*formally known as: Harford Road Transit Improvements and Cycleway Extension
Thursday, October 16, 2025
6:00 PM

Montebello Elementary Middle School,
Cafeteria, 2040 E. 32nd Street
Please use Curran Drive to enter, attendee parking is in the rear parking lot.

Virtually: www.buff.ly/BWkhxxzo

By Phone: 408-418-9388

Pass code: 2336 519 6281

If you have any questions, comments, or need special accommodations please contact via mail
Mathew Bleakney, Project Manager

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Department of Transportation,
417 E. Fayette St., 5th Floor, Baltimore,
MD 21202

Email:

DOTEngagement@baltimorecity.gov,
Subject: Accommodations Harford Road
Transit .Or by leaving a voicemail at:
443-396-6802

Accommodation requests should be received by Thursday, October 2, 2025.

Veronica P. McBeth, MSL, DIRECTOR
Baltimore City Department
of Transportation

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CITY OF BALTIMORE DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS OFFICE OF ENGINEERING AND CONSTRUCTION NOTICE OF LETTING

Sealed Bids or Proposals, in duplicate addressed to the Board of Estimates of the Mayor and City Council of Baltimore and marked for **SANITARY CONTRACT NO. 982RR-Eastern Avenue Pumping Station Rehabilitation** will be received at the Office of the Comptroller, Room 204 City Hall, Baltimore, Maryland until 11:00 A.M on **December 3, 2025**. Positively no bids will be received after 11:00 A.M. Bids will be publicly opened by the Board of Estimates and can be watched live on CharmTV's cable channel 25/1085HD; charmtvbaltimore.com/watch-live or listen in at (443) 984-1696 (ACCESS CODE: 0842939) from City Hall at Noon. The Contract Documents may be examined, without charge, at Contract Administration 4 South Frederick Street Baltimore, Maryland 21202 on the 3rd floor (410) 396-4041 as of **September 19, 2025** and copies may be purchased for a non-refundable cost of **\$50.00**. **Conditions and requirements of the Bid are found in the bid package.** All contractors bidding on this Contract must first be prequalified by the City of Baltimore Contractors Qualification Committee. Interested parties should call (410) 396-6883 or contact OBC at 4 S Frederick St., 4th Floor, Baltimore, MD 21202. **If a bid is submitted by a joint venture ("JV"), then in that event, the document that established the JV shall be submitted with the bid for verification purposes.** The Prequalification Category required for bidding on this project is **E13003 Water and/or Sewer Treatment**

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Plants and Pumping Stations. Cost Qualification Range for this work shall be **\$50,000,000.01 to \$60,000,000.00.**

A “Pre-Bidding Information” session will be conducted via Microsoft Teams. Vendors can call: 1 667-228-6519 Phone Conference ID: 646 420 121# or Virtual Platform, Microsoft Teams ID: 291 098 891 083 PASSCODE: DR7Qw3eU on Thursday, September 25, 2025 at 10:00 AM.

A site visit to Eastern Avenue Pumping Station will be conducted on **Tuesday, September 30, 2025** at 1:00 PM. For any Pre-bid questions please contact Mr. Kevin Cookley at Kevin.Cookley@baltimorecity.gov. Contractor Questions shall be submitted (In Writing Only) by **Thursday, November 6, 2025 at 5:00 PM.**

For further inquiries about purchasing bid documents, please contact the assigned Contract Administrator: Latonia Walston lwalston@baltimorecity.gov and dpwbidopportunities@baltimorecity.gov

To purchase a bid book, please make an electronic request at: <https://publicworks.baltimorecity.gov/dpw-construction-projects-notice-letting> and _dpwbidopportunities@baltimorecity.gov. For further inquiries about purchasing bid documents, please contact the assigned Contract Administrator lwalston@baltimorecity.gov. **Principal items of work for this contract include, but are not limited to:** Demolition of pumping systems (1 through 6) and associated existing piping and appurtenances; demolition of existing seal water pump and vacuum prime pumping systems; demolition of existing cone valves; demolition of existing wastewater screening systems; demolition of existing pump power supply and control systems; demolition of miscellaneous power supply and control systems; demolition of miscellaneous HVAC and plumbing systems.

Provision and installation of new pumping systems and associated piping and appurtenances; provision and installation of new seal water pump and vacuum prime pumping systems; provision and installation of new pump discharge check valves; provision and installation of new magnetic flow meters; provision and installation of new wastewater screening systems; provision and installation of new pump power supply

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and control systems; provision and installation of miscellaneous power supply and control systems; provision and installation of miscellaneous new HVAC and plumbing systems.

Miscellaneous architectural and structural improvements.

Flood protection measures at select doors and outdoor structures.

The MBE goal is **29%**
The WBE goal is **14%**

APPROVED:
Clerk, Board of Estimates

APPROVED:
Matthew W. Garbark
Acting Director
Department of Public Works

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email:
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Veteran Car Donations accepts most cars, trucks, boats, RVs, and motorcycles. We can pick up your vehicle, running or not.

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Your vehicle donation directly helps us to provide our nation's heroes with much needed programs and services, such as:

- Essential Medical Care and Mental Health Services
- Mentoring, Job Skills Training, and Employment Assistance
- Food, Emergency Shelter, and Housing for Homeless Veterans
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While we appreciate every donation, in some cases, we find that we are unable to accept certain vehicles, watercraft, and/or recreational vehicles due to the prohibitive costs of acquisition. If you have any questions, please give us a call at (833) 630-4817.



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