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MERRY
CHRISTMAS

& HAPPY HOLIDAYS!
From The Baltimore Times



Thanks to Those Who Serve

Champions of Justice: Celebrating the Volunteers Who Change Lives Across Maryland

By Etta Moen

With the holiday season upon us, it's the perfect time to reflect on what we're thankful for. At Maryland Volunteer Lawyers Service (MVLS), our gratitude begins with the advocates and attorneys who generously give their time, talent and compassion to Marylanders in need.

MVLS provides free civil legal help to individuals across the state, handling matters such as estates, expungements, family, tax, tax issues, housing, consumer challenges and special education advocacy. This year, we proudly celebrated our annual volunteer appreciation event, where we honored 317 volunteers who accepted cases with MVLS over the past year. Together, these attorneys, tax professionals and special education advocates took on more than 1,300 cases – each one aimed at removing barriers to underserved individuals and communities.

Our volunteers are the lifeblood of

our work and the heart of our mission to pursue justice for all. They make it possible for us to reach communities that would otherwise go without representation. Their dedication creates meaningful, lasting change for the people they serve.

Consider the impact:

- **Expungement volunteers** help clients get a fresh start and reenter the workforce with confidence.

- **Family law volunteers** keep households stable and united.

- **Estate volunteers** help families protect their most valuable assets, preserve homes and maintain intergenerational wealth.

Every case that our volunteers accept ensures that someone facing a complex legal challenge does not have to face it alone.

Some of the most powerful examples of this impact come from our client stories. On Friday, November 7, a

non-attorney volunteer referred a school discipline case involving a student facing potential expulsion. The student had a special education meeting scheduled for Monday and an expulsion hearing set for Wednesday – an incredibly tight turnaround for such a serious matter.

Within hours, MVLS coordinated support. A non-attorney volunteer stepped in to attend Monday's meeting, while an attorney volunteer prepared for Wednesday's hearing. The two worked collaboratively on strategy. And because Monday's meeting was so successful, the expulsion hearing was cancelled entirely. The student returned to school the very next day, now equipped with additional behavioral support.

This is the power of volunteer

advocacy – swift, skilled action that truly changes a young person's life.

Every day, I am reminded of the passion and commitment our volunteers bring to their clients and their communities. Because of these volunteers, families remain in their homes, individuals rejoin the workforce and people finally find relief from burdens they have carried for years.

Our volunteers are true changemakers across Maryland – and we are forever grateful for those who have served our mission in the past and for those who continue to carry it forward for many years to come.

Etta Moen is a volunteer coordinator at Maryland Volunteer Lawyers Service.



MVLS Attorney Steven Kappen (kneeling) at the September Estate(kneeling) at the September Estate Planning Clinic. Maryland Volunteer Lawyers Service



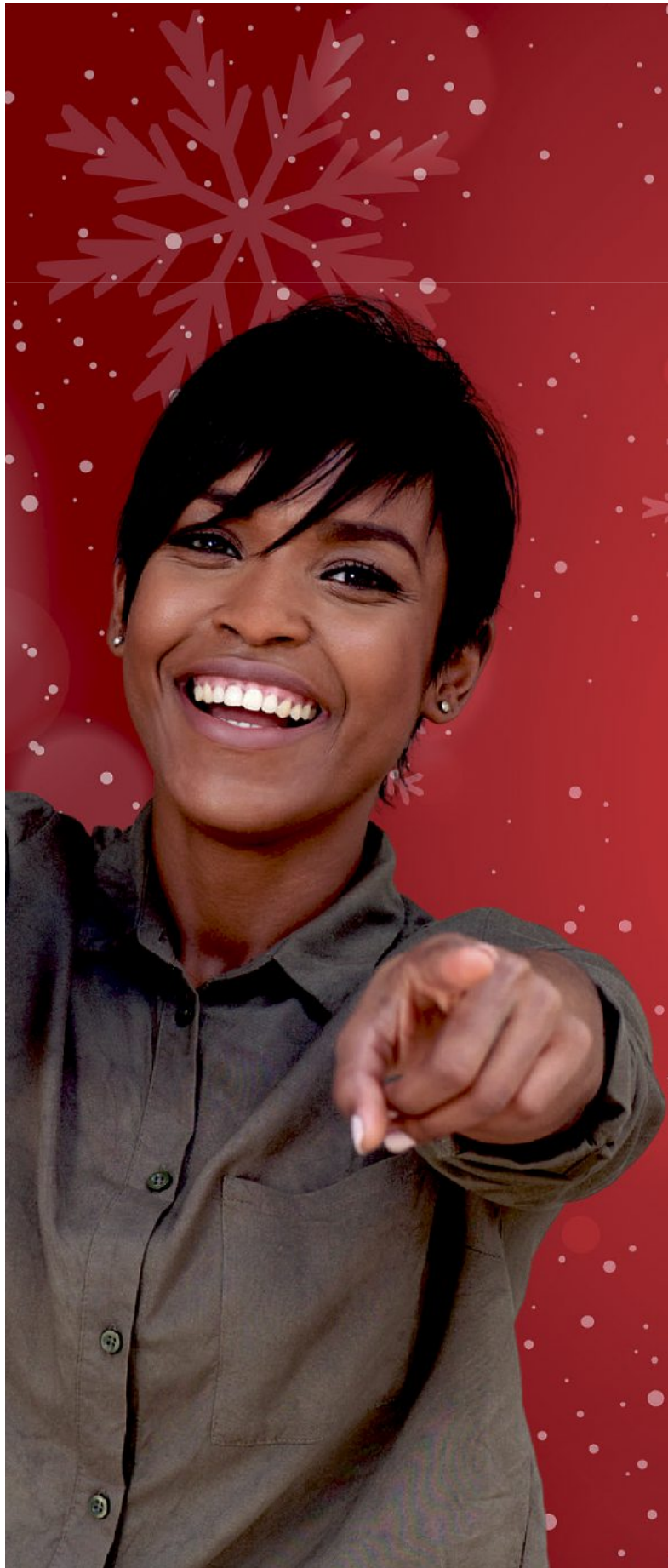
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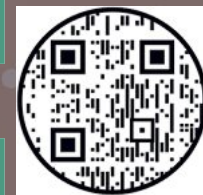
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Joseline Peña-Melnyk Makes History as Maryland's Next Speaker of the House

Submitted to The Baltimore Times

ANNAPOLIS — The Maryland House of Delegates has elected Delegate Joseline Peña-Melnyk as the next Speaker of the House, marking a historic moment in the state's political life. Peña-Melnyk becomes the first Afro-Latina Speaker in Maryland history, ascending to the chamber's highest leadership role after nearly two decades of legislative service.

Governor Wes Moore hailed the House's decision as a reflection of Peña-Melnyk's long-standing commitment to public service and principled leadership.

"The members of the Maryland House of Delegates have elevated a leader who defines public service in every beautiful sense of that phrase," Moore said. "Joseline Peña-Melnyk is a fighter—someone who doesn't just believe in the dignity of all Marylanders, but who actively channels that belief into action."

Nearly Two Decades of Legislative Leadership

Peña-Melnyk has served as a member of the Maryland House of Delegates since January 10, 2007, representing Prince George's County. Over the course of her tenure, she has become one of the General Assembly's most influential voices on health care, public health, and government accountability.

From 2022 to 2025, she chaired the powerful Health and Government Operations Committee, where she guided legislation affecting Medicaid, insurance coverage, public health infrastructure, and access to care for Maryland's most vulnerable residents. Her work on health policy has spanned multiple administrations and legislative eras, including leadership roles on task forces addressing behavioral health, opioid use

disorders, COVID-19 response, cannabis legalization, and mental health access.

Governor Moore highlighted their shared history of collaboration on issues affecting families across the state.

"I've had the privilege of calling Chair Peña-Melnyk an ally and a friend for years," Moore said. "We've stood shoulder-to-shoulder on issues that touch all Marylanders, from protecting reproductive freedom to fighting back against a White House that wants to make health care more expensive."

In addition to her committee leadership, Peña-Melnyk currently serves as Co-Chair of the Legislative Policy Committee, a member of the Rules and Executive Nominations Committee, and a member of the Joint Federal Action Oversight Committee. Her legislative resume includes participation in dozens of work groups and commissions focused on health care access, procurement reform, public safety, pretrial justice, and civil rights.

A Career Rooted in Law, Service, and Community

Born in the Dominican Republic on June 27, 1966, Peña-Melnyk's journey to the Speaker's gavel reflects a life shaped by public service and advocacy. She attended John F. Kennedy High School in the Bronx, earned a bachelor's degree in criminal justice from Buffalo State College, and received her law degree from the University at Buffalo School of Law.

Her legal career began as an attorney with the Defender Association of Philadelphia, followed by service as an Assistant U.S. Attorney in the Office of the U.S. Attorney for the District of Columbia. She was admitted to the District of Columbia and Pennsylvania bars in 1994.

Before entering state government, Peña-Melnyk served on the College Park City Council from 2003 to 2006, grounding her legislative work in local governance and constituent engagement.

National Recognition and Historic Representation

Over the years, Peña-Melnyk has earned recognition as a leading voice on health policy and equity, receiving numerous honors from health care organizations, advocacy groups, and civic institutions. She has also played a national role through her leadership in the National Hispanic Caucus of State Legislators, where she served as chair of the East Region, and through participation in national health policy organizations.

Her election as Speaker represents a historic expansion of representation in Maryland's leadership, reflecting the state's diversity and the communities she has long served.

As Peña-Melnyk steps into the Speaker's role on December 16, 2025, she succeeds former Speaker Adrienne Jones, whose tenure was marked by steady leadership amid significant change.



House Speaker Joseline A. Peña-Melnyk, Esq. the State's first Latina. Credit: Courtesy photo

"Former Speaker Adrienne Jones leaves big shoes to fill," Moore said. "But I have complete confidence that Joseline Peña-Melnyk will carry forward—and build on—Speaker Jones' profound legacy of leadership, while also building a legacy of her own."

With deep institutional knowledge, a career defined by public service, and a historic mandate from her colleagues, Speaker Joseline Peña-Melnyk now assumes responsibility for guiding the Maryland House of Delegates into its next chapter.

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Mailing Address

The Baltimore Times
2530 N. Charles Street, Suite 201
Baltimore, MD 21218
Phone: 410-366-3900
<https://baltimoretimes-online.com/>



New Chapter of Leadership

Greater Baltimore Urban League Names Kevin Seawright as New Board Chair

Submitted to The Baltimore Times

The Greater Baltimore Urban League (GBUL) has announced the appointment of Kevin Seawright as Chair of its Board of Directors, marking a new chapter of leadership for the organization as it strengthens governance and expands service across Greater Baltimore and the State of Maryland.

Seawright's appointment comes at a pivotal moment for GBUL following a period of organizational transition and renewal. A respected executive with more than two decades of experience in affordable housing, urban economic development, public finance, and community-centered leadership, Seawright brings deep financial expertise and nonprofit leadership to the role.

"It is a profound honor to serve as Board Chair at such a pivotal moment for the Greater Baltimore Urban League," Seawright said. "GBUL has an important legacy—and an even more urgent responsibility—to advance equity, opportunity, and justice across our communities."

Strengthened Leadership and Organizational Renewal

GBUL Interim CEO Tershea Rice said the leadership transition reflects a renewed chapter for the organization and its mission.

"The Greater Baltimore Urban League is entering a renewed chapter of service," Rice said. "With dedicated board leadership in place, we are ready to build on our momentum and continue advancing economic mobility for the communities we serve."

As part of this renewed focus, GBUL has also been restored to full compliance and good standing with the National Urban League, signaling strengthened governance and alignment with the standards of the national organization.

National Urban League Support

National Urban League President and CEO Marc H. Morial welcomed Seawright's appointment and expressed confidence in the organization's direction.

"The National Urban League is proud to welcome Kevin Seawright as the new Board Chair of the Greater Baltimore Urban League," Morial said. "With more than two decades of experience in affordable housing, urban economic development, and community-centered financial leadership, Kevin brings the strategic insight and steadfast commitment needed to guide the GBUL into its next chapter."

Morial added that Seawright's work reflects the core values of the Urban League movement.

"As the GBUL moves forward under this renewed leadership, we are confident that the organization will continue to expand its impact and deepen its service to the Baltimore community," he said.

Recognizing Outgoing Leadership

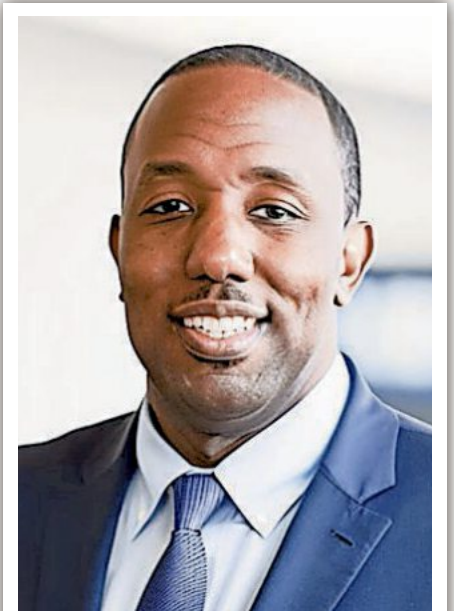
GBUL also recognized the service of outgoing Board Chair Ricky Smith, whose leadership helped guide the organization through a challenging period.

"Serving as Chair of the Greater Baltimore Urban League Board was one of the hallmarks of my public service career," Smith said. "The Board and the office team worked through many challenges to provide exemplary service to the Baltimore community."

"I'm extremely confident in and excited for the future of GBUL," Smith added, applauding the Board's selection of a new chair.

Looking Ahead

With renewed leadership and strengthened governance, GBUL is positioned to expand its workforce



Kevin Seawright
Courtesy photo

development, entrepreneurship, and advocacy efforts while continuing to build partnerships across the public, private, and philanthropic sectors.

"This moment reflects the culmination of months of hard, necessary work to realign GBUL with the highest standards of the Urban League movement," Seawright said. "We are moving forward with clarity, unity, and purpose."

About the Greater Baltimore Urban League

The Greater Baltimore Urban League works to empower historically under-resourced communities to achieve economic self-reliance, parity, power, and civil rights. Through programs in entrepreneurship, education, workforce development, youth leadership, and advocacy, GBUL advances equity and opportunity across Greater Baltimore and the State of Maryland.

Things to Do During Christmas, New Year 2026

Compiled by Andrea Blackstone

Christmas time offers an ideal opportunity to build priceless memories with loved ones at home and on the go. Spending the holiday at home can include baking treats, cooking, playing games, listening to festive music, decorating Christmas trees, catching up with family and friends, attending church services, taking road trips, or having a little fun. You may find a festive event or two on this list to add to your holiday calendar. Check websites for details and updates.

B&O Railroad Museum
December 27 & 29, 2025
from 4:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.
901 West Pratt St., Baltimore,
Maryland 21223

Climb aboard for some holiday magic and ride the rails where history began. The Reindeer Railway will trot down the B & O's tracks at 7 p.m. on December 27 and 29, 2025, and December 31 at 11 a.m. and 1 p.m. Children in attendance will even receive light-up antlers. All will receive a sweet treat. During Night In The North Pole at the B&O Railroad Museum, come see the Roundhouse in all its winter wonder and enjoy crafts for children. The Candy Cane Café will serve food and holiday drinks, and the S'mores Corner will be in full effect with the fire pits ablaze. Visit <https://www.borail.org/events/night-in-the-north-pole> to read more information.

Christmas at Gaylord National
November 14, 2025 -
January 4, 2026
201 Waterfront Street National
Harbor, Maryland 20745

Experience "So Much Christmas" with dazzling displays, tempting treats, holiday shows, colossal ice sculptures and festive activities throughout



Photo credit: Metro Creative

the resort. ICE! featuring The Polar Express™ is the Gaylord Nationals' signature attraction. Visitors can ice tube. Come watch Cirque: Spirit of Christmas, a spectacular holiday show featuring world-class acrobatics, awe-inspiring stunts, and dazzling production, set against the backdrop of 19 stories of atrium glass. Visit <https://www.christmasatgaylordnational.com/> to obtain more information.

Festival of Lights
Friday, November 28, 2025 -
Thursday, January 1, 2026
from 5:00 p.m. - 9:30 p.m.
Watkins Regional Park 301
Watkins Park Drive, Upper
Marlboro, Maryland

Bring the family to experience dazzling scenes that celebrate the magic of the holiday season at the annual Festival of Lights from your car. Tickets can be ordered online. Contact 301-218-6700/wsinfo@pgparks.com to obtain more information. Visit https://www.pgparks.com/event_list/festival-of-lights-2 to learn more about the Festival of Lights.



Photo credit: Metro Creative



Photo courtesy of Visit Baltimore



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Doors open at 5:45 pm

Program begins at 6:00 pm

This year's celebration features the premiere of the Voices of History Youth Ensemble, directed by Marcia Sellers of PowerFTP, along with performances by the Community of Academic Scholars and Keur Khaleyi Kids.

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TEACH

Layoff Leads to Full-Time Entrepreneurship, Creation of Timeless Cookware for Cultured Hosts

By Andrea Blackstone

When families share holiday meals, the special time offers a chance to celebrate heritage, to pass down stories, and to keep the spirit of special bonds alive, one dish at a time. Dr. Chanel Fields, founder and Chief Culinary Officer of Fields and Jackson, believes that cooking does not end at the stove. It extends to how food is presented, shared, and experienced. Additionally, Dr. Fields believes that the table is just as important as the recipe, and cookware is the foundation of the cooking experience.

“You can have the highest quality ingredients, but if the cooking vessel is sub-par, the ingredients will be impacted. Quality tools allow you to cook with confidence, consistency, and care. When cookware performs well, it frees you to focus on creativity and connection,” she said.

Fields and Jackson’s Creole Roots Fields’ collection of elegant bakeware and cookware and glasses was created to honor the way food, culture, and hospitality shaped her upbringing. Some of Dr. Fields’ earliest and most meaningful memories were formed in the kitchen, watching meals come together, sharing stories, and passing down traditions.

“I wanted to create a brand that celebrated those moments while elevating them. I’m inspired by women like my mother; bonus mom; aunts; grandmothers; Martha Stewart; Ina Garten; and the generations of women (especially Black women) who turned kitchens into places of beauty, nourishment, and connection, often without recognition,” Dr. Fields added.

Although Fields and Jackson was founded in 2024, for Dr. Fields, food has never just been food. It intertwines history, love, and tradition on a plate. Her

mother — a Jackson from Shreveport, Louisiana—was her greatest inspiration. She passed away from breast cancer.

“This brand absolutely honors her. She taught me that the kitchen was a sacred space, and that the tools and ingredients you cook with matter. My father’s side of the family is Fields from St. Landry Parish (hence the “Fields”). I intentionally named the collections after parishes my family is from in Louisiana for that added personal touch,” Dr. Fields stated.

Part of the reason Dr. Fields founded Fields and Jackson is that she grew up using cookware that had history, memories, and stories.

“After my mom passed, I found myself with three generations of beautiful, high-quality pieces that I couldn’t let go of. That experience shaped my belief that cookware should last, not just physically, but sentimentally, as my mother and grandmother had pieces that literally outlived them physically.”

Fields Self-Funded Her Business

Fields started part-time while maintaining her career in education as an executive leadership coach/consultant. However, she was laid off earlier this year in 2025.

“This pushed me into full-time entrepreneurship when I’d just launched Fields and Jackson only nine months before,” Fields explained.

She remarked that her self-funded business is a blessing, but it can be stressful at times. Dr. Fields reinvests strategically and is very intentional about growth to build a scalable business model, rather than rushing. One of her biggest challenges has been creating brand awareness in a space dominated by long-established retailers.

“As a newer, e-commerce-based brand, I’ve had to work intentionally to earn trust, visibility, and credibility, but

I look at challenges as opportunities for growth. It’s pushed me to lead with storytelling, quality, and community, and to be very clear about what makes Fields and Jackson distinct rather than trying to compete on scale alone,” Fields added.

Why do Fields and Jackson stand out?

Fields emphatically noted that the company’s cookware is made to last.

“Our Dutch ovens are crafted from enameled cast iron, designed for durability, heat retention, and versatility. We only carry products with non-toxic ingredients, so the other pieces are ceramic, porcelain, stainless steel and lead-free crystal.”

Fields’ and Jackson’s Dutch ovens are the most popular items, followed closely by the company’s bundt pans. Fields and Jackson’s cookware sits at the intersection of performance, design, and cultural storytelling. Diversity in the cookware industry is represented while Jackson pays tribute to her Creole heritage.

“We don’t want to be carried in a store. We are the store; a store for cultured cooks. We pride ourselves on sourcing



Dr. Chanel Fields, founder and Chief Culinary Officer of Fields and Jackson, grew up using cookware that had history. After losing her mother to breast cancer, Dr. Fields found a way to honor her loved one through her culturally rich lifestyle brand for all things kitchenware. Photo Credit: Natalie Donofrio & Candice Gurr of Amari & Co.

products from businesses created by people who look like you, whoever you are. We curate collections with intention, centering quality while celebrating culture—something that’s been missing in the industry,” Fields stated.

Fields and Jackson is available online at <https://www.fieldsandjackson.com>.

Years in the Making: Baltimore's Franchón Crews-Dezurn Readies for Claressa Shields Rematch

Submitted to The Baltimore Times

Baltimore, MD—When Baltimore's own Franchón "The Heavy Hitting Diva" Crews-Dezurn steps into the ring for her long-awaited rematch against Claressa Shields, she will be fighting for far more than another championship belt. She will be fighting for legacy, redemption, and the pride of a city that has watched her rise from a gifted local performer to one of the most accomplished women in American boxing history.

The highly anticipated showdown—set in motion after ESPN confirmed Shields' decision to move up in weight to challenge for the undisputed heavyweight crown—quickly became one of the most significant matchups on the women's boxing calendar. But for Baltimore, the moment carries deeper meaning. It represents a homecoming of sorts for a champion whose roots run through the neighborhoods, gyms, and community spaces that shaped her resilience, creativity, and competitive fire.

A Baltimore Native with Global Impact

Crews-Dezurn's journey began in Baltimore, where her earliest aspirations centered on music rather than boxing. Long before fans knew her for a punishing right hand and relentless pressure, she appeared on "American Idol," displaying a stage presence and confidence that foreshadowed the commanding persona she would later bring into the ring.

Boxing, however, ultimately claimed her heart. What started as cross-training evolved into a life-defining pursuit. Through discipline and raw talent, Crews-Dezurn built one of the most decorated amateur careers in U.S.

women's boxing. Over more than a decade representing Team USA, she earned national titles, multiple Pan American gold medals, and international tournament berths, becoming one of the first American women to compete in the Pan American Games. Those years forged a competitor who understood that greatness is built over time—and embraced the grind required to reach it.

Her transition to the professional ranks followed the same determined path. In 2018, she captured her first world title, added another in 2019, and by 2021 made history as the first undisputed women's super middleweight world champion. By unifying all four major belts and claiming the inaugural *Ring Magazine* championship, Crews-Dezurn cemented her place among boxing's elite.

The Evolution of a Heavy Hitting Diva

What sets Crews-Dezurn apart is her refusal to be defined by a single lane. She is an athlete, singer, designer, entrepreneur, and public speaker—bringing a multidimensional presence rarely seen in professional sports. Her fashion and apparel brand, FranDez by Franchón, has been featured on major sports networks and worn by fellow world champions. Her designs have appeared at fashion showcases nationwide, including the Baltimore Met Gala.

Her creativity extends into music, with singles that have charted internationally, and into gaming, where she made history as a playable character in the boxing video game *UNDISPUTED*. Across platforms, her message remains consistent: women can be powerful, expressive, and unapologetically ambitious—inside and outside the ring.

A Rivalry Reignited

Crews-Dezurn's rivalry with Claressa Shields dates back nearly a decade. Their first meeting in 2016 marked the professional debut for both fighters—a rare occurrence in boxing. Shields won a competitive decision, but the loss fueled Crews-Dezurn's drive rather than defining her.

Since then, both women have built extraordinary careers along different paths and in different divisions. A rematch always felt inevitable. Now, with Shields moving up two weight classes, the stakes—and dynamics—have shifted. Shields brings speed, precision, and a résumé unmatched in modern women's boxing. Crews-Dezurn enters as the naturally bigger, stronger, and more experienced champion at higher weights.

It is a clash of two fully realized athletes, each chasing history: Shields pursuing unprecedented glory, and Crews-Dezurn defending her domain with the pride and force that have defined her career.

Carrying Baltimore Into the Ring

Throughout her rise, Crews-Dezurn has remained deeply connected to Baltimore. She often credits the city's toughness and creativity for shaping her mindset and purpose. Her commitment shows through mentorship, community advocacy, and work highlighting women's empowerment, health equity, and entrepreneurship.

To many young Baltimore athletes—especially young girls—she represents possibility. Her story reflects the city itself: resilient, evolving, and unafraid to challenge expectations on a global stage.



Baltimore boxing champion Franchón "The Heavy Hitting Diva" Crews-Dezurn prepares for her long-awaited rematch against Claressa Shields, a bout that carries championship stakes and hometown pride. The February 22 showdown marks a pivotal moment in women's boxing and a legacy fight for a Baltimore native whose rise from local gyms to undisputed world champion continues to inspire the city she represents.

Courtesy Photo

A Moment Bigger Than Boxing

As the rematch approaches on February 22, 2026, at Little Caesars Arena in Detroit, anticipation continues to build well beyond boxing circles. Crews-Dezurn represents Baltimore not just as a champion, but as a symbol of perseverance, reinvention, and creative excellence.

When she steps into the ring, she carries more than gloves and titles. She carries Baltimore's pride, its voice, and its belief. And regardless of the outcome, her legacy—as a fighter, innovator, and hometown visionary—continues to grow.

Baltimore Gears Up for CIAA 2026 with Local Host Committee Announcement

By Adrian Harpool

(Baltimore, MD) December 15, 2025- Baltimore's deep-rooted connection to Black excellence, culture, and economic opportunity took center stage on December 11, 2025, as civic, business, and sports leaders gathered at Under Armour's global headquarters greeted by its founder CEO Kevin Plank to officially announce the Local Host Committee for the 2026 CIAA Men's and Women's Basketball Tournament, set to return to the city in February 2026.

The high-profile event featured a fireside chat with Maryland Governor Wes Moore and Baltimore Mayor Brandon M. Scott, moderated by Mark Anthony Thomas, President and CEO of the Greater Baltimore Committee. The discussion highlighted the CIAA Tournament's enduring significance as both a premier sporting event and a cultural institution that generates meaningful economic and community impact across Baltimore and the State of Maryland.

Governor Moore emphasized that the CIAA Tournament represents far more than competition on the court. He pointed to its role in celebrating education, opportunity, and Black excellence, while driving measurable economic growth. Since returning to Baltimore in 2021, the CIAA Tournament has generated more than \$109 million in total economic impact for the city, reinforcing its importance as a cornerstone event for Maryland's economy.

Mayor Scott echoed that sentiment, underscoring Baltimore's pride in serving as the tournament's home. He noted that the CIAA is a celebration of Black culture, Black history, and Black excellence, and that hosting the tournament during Black History Month brings thousands of fans, alumni, and students to Baltimore. The influx

supports local hotels, restaurants, attractions, and small businesses throughout the city.

Visit Baltimore Interim President and CEO Kareem Swinton shared insights into the tournament's significant and sustained economic benefits. The 2025 CIAA Tournament alone generated \$27.4 million in total economic impact during its five-day run, supported nearly 1,500 full-time and part-time jobs, and produced \$2.4 million in state and local tax revenue. Beyond tourism spending, the City of Baltimore, the State of Maryland, Visit Baltimore, and the Local Host Committee collectively contributed \$1.6 million to the CIAA General Scholarship Fund, directly supporting students attending the conference's 13 Historically Black Colleges and Universities.

A key moment of the program came from Local Host Committee Fundraising Chair Ja'Ron Bridge, Interim CEO of CareFirst BlueCross BlueShield. Bridge

reaffirmed CareFirst's longstanding commitment to supporting the CIAA and challenged fellow corporate and philanthropic leaders in attendance to step forward as sponsors for the 2026 tournament. He emphasized that investing in the CIAA is an investment in students, workforce development, and equitable economic opportunity across the region.

The announcement also spotlighted Under Armour's renewed partnership with the CIAA. As a Baltimore-based global brand, Under Armour will continue providing apparel and footwear for student-athletes, reinforcing a shared commitment to community impact and excellence.

The CIAA Board of Directors recently voted to extend Baltimore's hosting rights for the tournament through 2029, marking the conference's first long-term host partnership since relocating from Charlotte. The 2026 CIAA Men's and Women's Basketball Tournament will



Front Row (L-R): Baltimore Mayor Brandon Scott; Under Armour Founder and CEO Kevin Plank; Governor Wes Moore; Greater Baltimore Committee CEO Mark Anthony Thomas; Sonje' Productions CEO Sonje' DeCaires; Visit Baltimore CEO Kireem Swinton; Second Row (L-R): Eric Ogbogu; CareFirst BlueCross BlueShield Interim CEO Ja'Ron Bridge, Zachary McDaniels. Photo Credit: Under Armour



(L-R): Visit Baltimore Interim President and CEO Kireem Swinton, Interim CEO of CareFirst BlueCross BlueShield Ja'Ron Bridge, Entrepreneur and Strategist Zachary McDaniels. Photo Credit: Under Armour

take place February 24 through March 1, 2026, at CFG Bank Arena, once again positioning Baltimore as the national stage where sports, culture, and community converge.

A Tool for Strategy and Investment

BDC Releases New Commercial District Profiles to Guide Investment and Growth Across Baltimore

Submitted to the Baltimore Times

The Baltimore Development Corporation (BDC) has released a new set of Commercial District Assessment (CDA) profile reports that provide detailed, neighborhood-level data on Baltimore's business corridors. Drawing on more than 2,600 data points, the profiles are designed to help city leaders, community organizations, and business owners better understand local commercial conditions and make informed decisions that support small businesses and long-term economic growth.

"These new profiles give us current, block-level information that has never existed in one place before," said Otis Rolley, president and CEO of BDC. "They reflect close collaboration between BDC and our community partners. Together, we can see how each corridor is performing today, identify the gaps, and target investments that support small businesses, residents, and long-term growth."

Community-Driven, Data-Informed Insights

For the first round of assessments, BDC partnered with 11 community organizations to collect more than 2,300 new data points using a custom, app-based survey. Staff, volunteers, interns, students, and business owners documented storefront conditions, commercial property use, pedestrian activity, transit access, and other real-time indicators that shape the health of neighborhood business districts.

The CDA profiles also incorporate more than 300 third-party data points, including income, housing, and demographic information within a 15-minute walking radius of each corridor. Together, the data offer

a comprehensive view of both the commercial environment and the surrounding community context.

Ten Commercial Corridors Profiled

The first cohort of CDA profiles includes:

Downtown Charles Street; North Harford Road; Federal Hill Light Street; Brooklyn West Patapsco Avenue; Lauraville Lower Harford Road; Highlandtown Eastern Avenue; Downtown Howard Street; Hollins Market West Baltimore Street; Walbrook West North Avenue; and Govans York Road.

Each profile highlights key indicators, including the business landscape, commercial performance, recent investment activity, and physical conditions along the corridor.

A Tool for Strategy and Investment

Community partners say the CDA reports provide actionable insights to

guide future planning and investment.

Patrick Terranova of the Downtown Partnership of Baltimore called the initiative a "focusing moment" that captures critical on-the-ground data to inform thoughtful strategies and measure progress over time. Federal Hill Main Street Executive Director Taylor Schwartz noted that the data enables more informed decision-making and supports initiatives that create sustainable, meaningful impact.

What's Next?

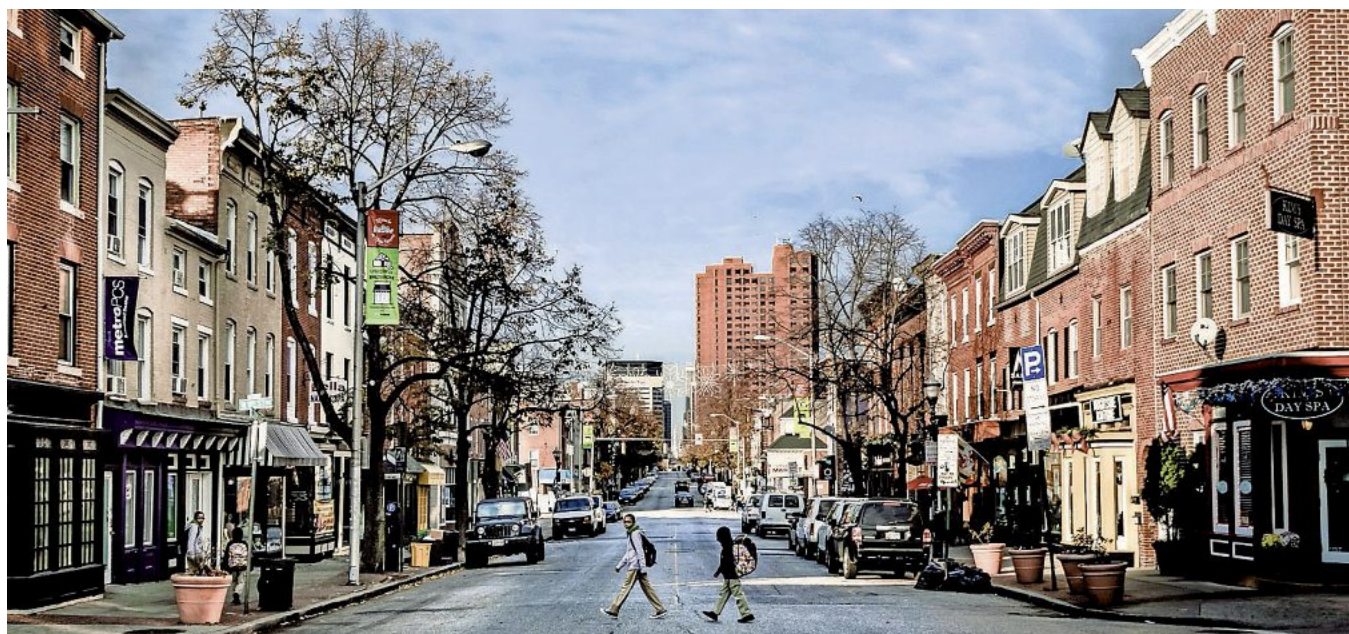
BDC plans to move into a deeper analysis phase, identifying trends within and across corridors to understand strengths, challenges, and opportunities better. The findings will help direct city resources, attract new businesses and investment, identify priority properties for redevelopment, and guide capital funding to areas where it can have the most significant impact.

Residents, business owners, and community stakeholders can explore the interactive Commercial District Assessment profiles online at: <https://experience.arcgis.com/experience/ca0b2b719a2f4988a72464ab8642ddf5/page/Commercial-Districts>

Details on applying to participate in a future CDA cohort are expected to be released in early 2026.

Building Stronger Neighborhood Economies

By combining data with community insight, the Commercial District Assessment initiative represents a significant step toward more inclusive, transparent, and strategic economic development across Baltimore. As the city continues to invest in its neighborhoods, these profiles offer a powerful tool to ensure that growth is rooted in local realities and shared opportunity.



Federal Hill Main Street Baltimore Photo courtesy of BDC

10 Holiday YESes for Mindful Eating and Joyful Living

By Michelle Petties

The holidays arrive wrapped in joy, tradition, and togetherness — but also pressure. Pressure to restrict. Pressure to indulge. Pressure to “be good” and then quietly pay for it later. For many of us, especially Black women, this season becomes a tug-of-war between celebration and self-control.

The messages are loud and familiar: No sugar. No carbs. No seconds. No fun.

But what if this year, instead of bracing ourselves for another season of “don’t,” we tried something different?

What if we practiced saying **YES** — to what nourishes, steadies, and restores us?

That question inspired *The Season of Yes: A Holiday Reset for Mindful Eating and Joyful Living*, a more in-depth reflection on how we can navigate the holidays without guilt, shame, or punishment. What follows is a curated selection of the first “10 YESes”—gentle, practical invitations to help you reset your relationship with food, your body, and this season.

Each YES is not a rule, but a reminder: lasting change doesn’t come from deprivation. It comes from attention, compassion, and choice.

10 Holiday YESes

Say YES to starting your morning with gratitude before checking your phone. Before the world rushes in, take a moment to center yourself. Gratitude sets the tone for your day — and reminds you that you already have enough.

Say YES to drinking water before your meals, not during. Hydration aids digestion, curbs mindless eating, and signals to your body that you’re paying attention.

Say YES to eating something green every day — even if it’s just a handful of spinach. Greens bring life to your plate and energy to your body. It’s a small, easy “yes” that adds up over time.

Say YES to noticing fullness before you’re stuffed. Pause halfway through your meal. Ask, “How do I feel?” Your body whispers long before it shouts.

Say YES to listening to your body — not the buffet table. The food will always be there. The question is: what does your body truly want right now?

As you read these YESes, you may notice a pattern emerging. None of them asks you to give something up entirely. Instead, they invite you to slow down, tune in, and choose with intention.

These small shifts — hydration, rest, awareness, joy — form the foundation of sustainable wellbeing. And they’re only the beginning.

Say YES to taking a few deep breaths before you eat. A mindful pause transforms eating into nourishment rather than a habit.

Say YES to leaving one bite behind. This tiny act of intention reminds you that you’re in charge — not your cravings.

Say YES to choosing rest over rushing when you’re tired. Fatigue fuels overeating. Rest restores balance.

Say YES to moving your body in joyful, seasonal ways — walk, dance, stretch, sway. Exercise shouldn’t feel like punishment. Let it be a celebration of what your body can do.

Say YES to laughter — it’s calorie-free and soul-rich. Joy releases tension and reminds us that wellness isn’t just physical.

The first 10 YESes focus on presence: how we start our days, how we eat, how we move, and how we speak to ourselves in moments of temptation or fatigue.

The remaining YESes — available in the full online article — further expand this practice, exploring joy, community,

rest, pleasure, and permission as essential ingredients of health.

The holidays don’t need another diet, detox, or rigid plan. What they need is consciousness — an awareness that food is part of the celebration, not the battleground.

When we stop fighting food and start listening to ourselves, something powerful happens. We move from restriction to respect. From guilt to gratitude. From survival mode to choice.

These 10 YESes are an invitation to begin.

To continue the journey, visit the online edition of *The Baltimore Times*, where the full article, *The Season of Yes: A Holiday*

Reset for Mindful Eating and Joyful Living, offers additional reflections, practices, and permission to redefine what health looks like this season.

The most meaningful gift you can give yourself this holiday isn’t another rule.

It’s the freedom to say YES — to joy, rest, presence, and enough.

Michelle Petties is a TEDx speaker, Food Story coach, and award-winning memoirist. After gaining and losing 700 pounds, Michelle discovered the secret to overcoming stress and emotional overeating. Her free workbook, *Mind Over Meals*, reveals her core principles for losing weight and keeping it off.

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Rambling Rose



By Rosa Pryor

Hello everyone, what can I say, this has been quite a year! Some good and some bad in the entertainment world. We hope 2026 will be bigger and better. I continue to pray for the families who have lost loved ones this year and pray that next year will bring you beautiful flowers, fun, life and a lot of entertainment. As you see from my photos, we lost at least three close and dear friends. May God bless peace on their souls. Each one was very special to me and so many others.

The Open Church and Israel Baptist Church present their Annual Christmas Concert with the Community Concert Choir of Baltimore, with Dr. Marco K. Merrick, founding Director on Sunday, December 21 at 4 p.m. at Israel Baptist Church, 1200 N. Washington Street. Dr. W. Patrick Alston on organ, Bobby Harris on percussion, Nicole Ross on drums, Marcus Smith on piano, and the Community Concert Choir of Baltimore. Jubilee holiday reception following the concert and it is free and open to the public.

Sankofa Children's Museum of African Cultures celebrates KWANZAA 2025 on Saturday, December 27, 4-7 p.m. at 4330 Pimlico Road. There will be Cultural performances, children's activities, vendors, African food to go, Sankofa gift shop and much more. Charlie Dugger is the head man in charge.

One of my favorite clubs, Caton Castle, is celebrating 35 years of jazz on Saturday, December 20 with Curtis Lundy Quintet featuring Curtis on bass, Abraham Burton on sax, Marc Cary on piano, Wallace Roney Jr. on

Merry Xmas and Happy New Year to All of You, Welcome 2026!



Warren Wolf, Baltimore's own and world-wide known along with Tim Green on alto sax, Marc Cary on piano, Craig Alston on tenor sax, Kris Funn on bass and Eric Kennedy on drums, all of my gifted, talented music sons will be getting together and doing a New Year's Day All-Stars show on Thursday, January 1, 2026, at 1 p.m. at Caton Castle, 20 South Caton Avenue. This is a show you do not want to miss.

trumpet and Eric Kennedy on drums. Caton Castle is located at 20 S. Caton Avenue, Baltimore, Md. 21229. Or visit their website at www.catoncastle.com for more information.

Cityview, located at 6700 Security Blvd in Gwynn Oak, Maryland, is still jumping up and down and doing the "James Brown" almost every day of the week. On Saturday, December 20, the group Palovation will perform, and on Saturday, December 27, J'KAR will perform. The time is 1-5 p.m. The DJ for their Motown Saturdays is "DJ Cool Brotha Jazz." Always free admission.

On Thursday, January 1, from 1-5 p.m., my little brother, DJ Mike Jones, and the DJ Mike Jones Experience will be throwing a New Year's Day Party at Diamondz Events & Catering,



Services for Deaconess Patsy Hutchins, the wife of the renowned, Baltimore promoter Carlos Hutchins, a friend and my brother in the entertainment world is as follows; the viewing will be held on Saturday, December 20 from 9-10 a.m.; Family Hour will be from 10-10:30 a.m. and the funeral service will follow at Rising Sun First Baptist Church, 2211 St. Lukes Lane. May my dear friend rest in peace. Please keep Carlos and his family in your prayers.

9980 Liberty Road in Randallstown, Maryland. It is a cabaret-style BYOB, BYOF, with free set-ups and more surprises. For more information, call Mike on 443-525-5016. Tell him "Rambling Rose" told you.

Well, my dear friends, it has been a blessed and a sad year. But with God's blessings, we will see each other in 2026. I will be having surgery in a few weeks. I have to have my left shoulder replaced. But I will be home. So please feel free to call or stop by. You can buy my new book with my autograph when you visit me. Call me at 410-833-9474 or stop by to say hello at 214 Conewood Avenue, Reisterstown, Maryland 21136. Okay, I've got to go now. UNTIL THE NEXT TIME, I'M MUSICALLY YOURS!



The funeral service for another good friend, Clayton Tucker, who passed away this month, was held on December 12 at United House of Prayer For All People, 3401 Edgewood Road. Please keep his wife, Wanda, in your prayers.



A few hours before Clayton Tucker passed away, another one of my dearest friends also passed away. Viewing for Cleve Brister, (husband of Nancy Brister) was on December 9 at Howell Funeral Home on Liberty Heights Avenue. His funeral was at Bethel AME Church, 1300 Druid Hill Avenue. Please keep Nancy and Cleve's family in your prayers.

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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. RP24822R - Patterson Park Wading Pool** will be received at the Office of the Comptroller, Room 204 City Hall, Baltimore, Maryland until 11:00 A.M. **January 21, 2026**. 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 Monday through Friday, 8:30am – 4:00pm by emailing ganiyat.adigun@baltimorecity.gov as of **December 19, 2025** and copies may be purchased for a non-refundable cost of **\$100.00**. **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 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 **G90073 Swimming pool construction and repair**. Cost Qualification Range for this work shall be **\$1,200,000.00 to \$1,900,000.00**. A “Pre-Bidding Information” session will be conducted via Microsoft Teams at **10:30 A.M.** on **January 6, 2026**. Email your contact information to demos.anastasiades@baltimorecity.gov to receive an invite to the Microsoft Team (video conference meeting) no later than **January 5, 2026 at 4:00pm**. Principal Items of work for this project are Removal of site improvements, Earthwork, Underground utilities, Storm water facilities, New Swimming Pools, New Site Amenities Landscaping and Hardscaping. The MBE goal is **20%** and WBE goal is **9%**.

**APPROVED: M. Celeste Amato,
Clerk, Board of Estimates**

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CITY OF BALTIMORE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

NOTICE OF LETTING

Sealed Bids or Proposals for the **TR19018 REPLACEMENT OF RETAINING WALL ON DARTMOUTH ROAD** will be received at the Office of the Comptroller, Room 204, City Hall, Baltimore, Maryland until **February 4, 2026** at 11:00 A.M. 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. As of **December 19th, 2025**, the Contract Documents may be examined, without charge by contacting Brenda Simmons at brenda.simmons@baltimorecity.gov or (443) 865-4423 to arrange for a copy of the bid book labelled “**NOT FOR BIDDING PURPOSES**” which can be electronically emailed to you. Anyone who desires to purchase a bid book in person, may do so by appointment only for the non-refundable cost of SEVENTY-FIVE DOLLARS AND NO CENTS (\$75.00) at the Department of Transportation located at 417 E. Fayette Street, Baltimore, Maryland 21202 made payable to the Director of Finance. **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 Office of Boards and Commissions, 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 Categories required for bidding on this project is, **C02300 Pile Driving and G90046 Concrete and Brick Retaining Walls**. The Cost Classification Range for this project will be from **\$1,000,000.00 to \$2,000,000.00**. A “Pre-Bidding Informational Meeting” will be conducted via Microsoft Teams on **January 14th, 2026**, at 10:00 a.m. hosted by the Department of Transportation. By **January 13th, 2026** at 4 pm prior to the pre-bid meeting, email your contact information to include

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your name, company name, phone number and email address to christopher.brown@baltimorecity.gov to receive an invite to the Microsoft Team (video conference meeting). Principle Items of work for this project are: **PERMANENT TOP-DOWN RETAINING WALL-LUMP SUM; CONCRETE STAIRS-LUMP SUM**. The MBE goal is **5%**; The WBE goal is **2%**- **APPROVED: Celeste Amato, Clerk, Board of Estimates.**

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CITY OF BALTIMORE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

NOTICE OF LETTING

Sealed Bids or Proposals for the **TR-26001 RECONSTRUCTION OF FOOTWAYS CITY WIDE** will be received at the Office of the Comptroller, Room 204, City Hall, Baltimore, Maryland until **January 21, 2026** at 11:00 A.M. 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. As of **December 19th, 2025**, the Contract Documents may be examined, without charge by contacting Brenda Simmons at brenda.simmons@baltimorecity.gov or (443) 865-4423 to arrange for a copy of the bid book labelled “**NOT FOR BIDDING PURPOSES**” which can be electronically emailed to you. Anyone who desires to purchase a bid book in person may do so by appointment only for the non-refundable cost of SEVENTY-FIVE DOLLARS AND NO CENTS (\$75.00) at the Department of Transportation located at 417 E. Fayette Street, Baltimore, Maryland 21202 made payable to the Director of Finance. **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 Office of Boards and Commissions, 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**

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verification purposes. The Prequalification Categories required for bidding on this project is, **A02601 PORTLAND CEMENT CONCRETE PAVING & D02620 CURB, GUTTER SIDEWALKS**. The Cost Classification Range for this project will be from **\$1,800,000.00 to \$2,200,000.00**; A “Pre-Bidding Information” session will be conducted via Microsoft Teams on **JANUARY 7, 2026 @ 9:00AM** hosted by the Department of Transportation. Roll call will be taken at the beginning of the pre-bid meeting. By no later than **3pm on JANUARY 6, 2026** email your contact information to include your name, company name, phone number and email address to michael.donovan@baltimorecity.gov to receive an invite to the Microsoft Team (video conference meeting). Principle Items of work for this project are: **5” Concrete Sidewalk 162,000 square feet; 5” Exposed Aggregate Sidewalk 6,000 square feet; 7” Concrete Pavement 6,000 square feet**. The MBE goal is **30%**; The WBE goal is **10%**- **APPROVED: Celeste Amato, Clerk, Board of Estimates.**

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CITY OF BALTIMORE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

NOTICE OF LETTING

Sealed Bids or Proposals for the **e TR-26004 RECONSTRUCTION OF ALLEYS CITY WIDE** will be received at the Office of the Comptroller, Room 204, City Hall, Baltimore, Maryland until **January 21, 2026** at 11:00 A.M. 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. As of **December 19th, 2025**, the Contract Documents may be examined, without charge by contacting Brenda Simmons at brenda.simmons@baltimorecity.gov or (443) 865-4423 to arrange for a copy of the bid book labelled “**NOT FOR BIDDING PURPOSES**” which can be electronically emailed to you. Anyone who desires to purchase a bid book in person may do so by appointment only for the non-refundable cost of SEVENTY-FIVE DOLLARS AND NO CENTS (\$75.00) at the Department of Transportation

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located at 417 E. Fayette Street, Baltimore, Maryland 21202 made payable to the Director of Finance. **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 Office of Boards and Commissions, 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 Categories required for bidding on this project is, **A02601 PORTLAND CEMENT CONCRETE PAVING & D02620 CURB, GUTTER SIDEWALKS.** The Cost Classification Range for this project will be from **\$1,600,000.00 to \$2,000,000.00.** A "Pre-Bidding Informational Meeting" will be conducted via Microsoft Teams on **January 7th, 2026**, at 10:00 a.m. hosted by the Department of Transportation. By no later than **January 6th, 2026** at 3 pm prior to the pre-bid meeting, email your contact information to include your name, company name, phone number and email address to michael.donovan@baltimorecity.gov to receive an invite to the Microsoft Team (video conference meeting). Principle Items of work for this project are **CLASS 1 EXCAVATION 5800 Cubic Yards; 6 IN. SUB-BASE USING CRUSHER RUN 16,820 Square Yards; 7 IN. CEMENT CONCRETE PAVEMENT MIX, NO. 7 16,320 Square Yards. The MBE goal is 20%; The WBE goal is 7%-APPROVED: Celeste Amato, Clerk, Board of Estimates.**

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CITY OF BALTIMORE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

NOTICE OF LETTING

Sealed Bids or Proposals for the **TR-26005 CURB REPAIR CITYWIDE** will be received at the Office of the Comptroller, Room 204, City Hall, Baltimore, Maryland until **January 21, 2026 at 11:00 A.M.** 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

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Room 215, City Hall at Noon. As of **December 19th, 2025**, the Contract Documents may be examined, without charge by contacting Brenda Simmons at brenda.simmons@baltimorecity.gov or (443) 865-4423 to arrange for a copy of the bid book labelled "**NOT FOR BIDDING PURPOSES**" which can be electronically emailed to you. Anyone who desires to purchase a bid book in person may do so by appointment only for the non-refundable cost of SEVENTY-FIVE DOLLARS AND NO CENTS (\$75.00) at the Department of Transportation located at 417 E. Fayette Street, Baltimore, Maryland 21202 made payable to the Director of Finance. **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 Office of Boards and Commissions, 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 Categories required for bidding on this project is, **D02620 (curb, gutter & sidewalk).** The Cost Classification Range for this project will be from **\$500,000.00 to \$750,000.00.** A "Pre-Bidding Informational Meeting" will be conducted via Microsoft Teams on **January 7th, 2026**, at 11:00 a.m. hosted by the Department of Transportation. By no later than **January 6th, 2026** at 3 pm prior to the pre-bid meeting, email your contact information to include your name, company name, phone number and email address to Gaylord.Dutton@baltimorecity.gov to receive an invite to the Microsoft Team (video conference meeting). Principle Items of work for this project are **MISCELLANEOUS CURB REPAIRS 6,500 Linear Feet; 5 INCH CONCRETE SIDEWALK 18,000 Square Feet. The MBE goal is 30%; The WBE goal is 10%-APPROVED: Celeste Amato, Clerk, Board of Estimates.**

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CITY OF BALTIMORE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

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Sealed Bids or Proposals for the **TR-26008 RECONSTRUCTION OF ALLEYS CITY WIDE** will be received at the Office of the Comptroller, Room 204, City Hall, Balti-

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more, Maryland until **January 21, 2026** at 11:00 A.M. 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. As of **December 19th, 2025**, the Contract Documents may be examined, without charge by contacting Brenda Simmons at brenda.simmons@baltimorecity.gov or (443) 865-4423 to arrange for a copy of the bid book labelled "**NOT FOR BIDDING PURPOSES**" which can be electronically emailed to you. Anyone who desires to purchase a bid book in person may do so by appointment only for the non-refundable cost of SEVENTY-FIVE DOLLARS AND NO CENTS (\$75.00) at the Department of Transportation located at 417 E. Fayette Street, Baltimore, Maryland 21202 made payable to the Director of Finance. **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 Office of Boards and Commissions, 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 Categories required for bidding on this project is, **A02601 PORTLAND CEMENT CONCRETE PAVING & D02620 CURB, GUTTER SIDEWALKS.** The Cost Classification Range for this project will be from **\$1,600,000.00 to \$2,000,000.00.** A "Pre-Bidding Informational Meeting" will be conducted via Microsoft Teams on **January 7th, 2026**, at 10:00 a.m. hosted by the Department of Transportation. By no later than **January 6th, 2026** at 3 pm prior to the pre-bid meeting, email your contact information to include your name, company name, phone number and email address to michael.donovan@baltimorecity.gov to receive an invite to the Microsoft Team (video conference meeting). Principle Items of work for this project are **CLASS 1 EXCAVATION 5700 Cubic Yards; 6 IN. SUB-BASE USING CRUSHER RUN 16,530 Square Yards; 7 IN. CEMENT CONCRETE PAVEMENT MIX, NO. 7 16,030 Square Yards. The MBE goal is 20%; The WBE goal is 7%-APPROVED: Celeste Amato, Clerk, Board of Estimates.**

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