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# The Annapolis Times

Vol. 24 No. 43 August 19 - 25, 2016

A Baltimore Times/Times of Baltimore Publication

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## Boys & Girls Club Keeps Students Learning Over Summer



*More than 45 members of the Brooklyn O'Malley Boys & Girls Club ages six to 12 and 14 to 17 participated in My.Future five times per week to cultivate their thinking and prepare them for careers in the technology field. The program aimed to combat learning loss for members through the "Hour of Code Program," summer STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics) activities and their summer "100 Book Challenge" program. The six-week program began June 27, 2016, and concluded August 5, 2016. (See article on page 12).*

Courtesy Photo

# Raymond V. Haysbert Sr. Entrepreneurship Center named in honor of famed businessman

By Ursula V. Battle

On Tuesday, August 2, 2016, national leaders, elected officials, members of the city and state business communities, and others gathered for the ribbon cutting of the Raymond V. Haysbert, Sr. Entrepreneurship Center at the Greater Baltimore Urban League (GBUL). The Haysbert Center provides assistance, support and mentorship to entrepreneurs in their efforts to start or expand businesses by providing resources, offering workshops, seminars and individual counseling by business experts.

“This was the official opening, but the Center has been functioning for the past two months,” said J. Howard Henderson, president and CEO of the Greater Baltimore Urban League. “We have met with over 30 small businesses doing one-on-ones and workshops. We want to be the center of connectivity for small businesses. Ultimately, we want to grow Baltimore’s black businesses.”

The Haysbert Center also provides technical assistance in drafting business plans and proposals and completing loans and government applications. Services provided by the Haysbert Center are free for all clients, and is named after Raymond V. Haysbert, Sr., the late CEO of Parks Sausages Company and the former chairman of the Greater Baltimore Urban League Board of Trustees.

“I knew Mr. Haysbert very well,” said Henderson. “He never looked down on anyone, and always wanted to help. He was a great guy.”

The Greater Baltimore Urban League (GBUL) helps disadvantaged Marylanders gain access to equal opportunity in employment, education, healthcare, housing and the civic arena. As one of the local affiliates of the National Urban League, GBUL defines its mission to enable African Americans and other minorities to secure economic self-reliance, parity, power and civil rights.

William Honablew, Jr. will serve as the center’s director, which was created with funding from the U.S. Department of



(Left to right) William Honablew, Jr., director, Raymond V. Haysbert, Sr. Entrepreneurship Center at the Greater Baltimore Urban League; J. Howard Henderson, President/CEO, Greater Baltimore Urban League; and Marc Morial President/CEO, National Urban League standing in front of a photo of the late Raymond V. Haysbert, Sr.  
Courtesy Photo

Commerce, the Baltimore-based Abell Foundation, and Wells Fargo Bank. The dedication of the Haysbert Center also coincided with the opening of the National Urban League 2016 Conference, which took place August 3rd through August 6th at the Baltimore Convention Center.

Baltimore is home to the 13th Urban League Entrepreneurship Center. Additional centers are located in Atlanta, Georgia; Jacksonville, Florida; Los Angeles, California; and other areas.

“This is a great event, and has been many months in the making,” said Marc Morial, president and CEO of the National Urban League. “We decided to dedicate this center after the Freddie Gray incident. It represents the Urban League’s commitment to being a part of the solution here in Baltimore. A whole host of people came together to make sure we got to today. I knew Mr. Haysbert personally, and his reputation at Parks Sausage. He was a great man.”

During his lifetime, Haysbert owned and operated more than 15 businesses, which included the Parks Sausages Company and The Forum Caterers. He was a founder of Advance Federal Savings & Loan, Harbor Bank of Maryland, and United Founders Insurance Company. He also helped to found several business organizations, which included The President’s Roundtable, and The Greater Baltimore Chamber of Commerce.

The Cincinnati, Ohio, native served with the famed Tuskegee Airmen, and was the recipient of numerous honors and awards.

“It is fitting that they would name this center after my father,” said Nikita Haysbert. “There was nothing he didn’t feel strongly about. This is a wonderful addition to his legacy. So many people talk to me about the impact he had on their lives. Most of the stories are about how my father mentored them about starting their own businesses. I am very grateful.”

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## The Annapolis Times

(USPS 5840) is published every Friday by *The Baltimore Times/Times of Baltimore*, 2513 N. Charles Street, Baltimore, MD 21218. Subscriptions by mail \$60 per year. Standard bulk postage paid at Baltimore, MD 21233.

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# Guest Editorials/Letters

## Taking a Closer Look at Black Mental Health

By Patricia Maryland, Dr.PH, NNPA News Wire Guest Columnist

Good physical and mental health can help to drive success and enjoyment in our lives. However, when it comes to overcoming some of our society's biggest health challenges— from HIV/AIDS to cancer to diabetes to behavioral health issues— the African-American community unfortunately, shoulders a disproportionate share of the burden. As our nation increasingly deals with violence, suicide and depression, it's important to take a close look at the state of black mental health in America.

The National Institute of Mental Health estimates that one of every five adults in the U.S.— some 43 million people— will experience mental illness this year. African-Americans are far from immune. In fact, blacks are more than 20 percent more likely than Whites to report having serious psychological distress. For people of color living in poverty-stricken neighborhoods, where rates of homelessness, incarceration, substance abuse and violent crime are higher, the risk of mental illness is compounded.

One of the challenges African-Americans with mental health issues continue to face is an imbalance in health insurance coverage. While the Affordable Care Act has caused the uninsured rate among blacks to decline by close to 10 percentage points between 2013 and 2016, it remains almost twice as high as the uninsured rate for non-Hispanic whites. There is also a lack of African-American mental health professionals who can deliver culturally competent care for illnesses that are often deeply personal and can be the subject of stigmatization. According to a 2014 survey, less than two percent of American Psychological Association members are African-American.

These disparities are unacceptable. It is clear that we must make mental health equity a guiding principle and an utmost priority. As Ascension's President and CEO Anthony Ter-signi recently stated: "Insurance coverage for the treatment of these disorders has long been discriminatory compared with coverage for physical diseases. In 2008, the federal government essentially legislated that there be parity between mental health coverage and physical health coverage, but the intended changes have been problematic and slow in coming."

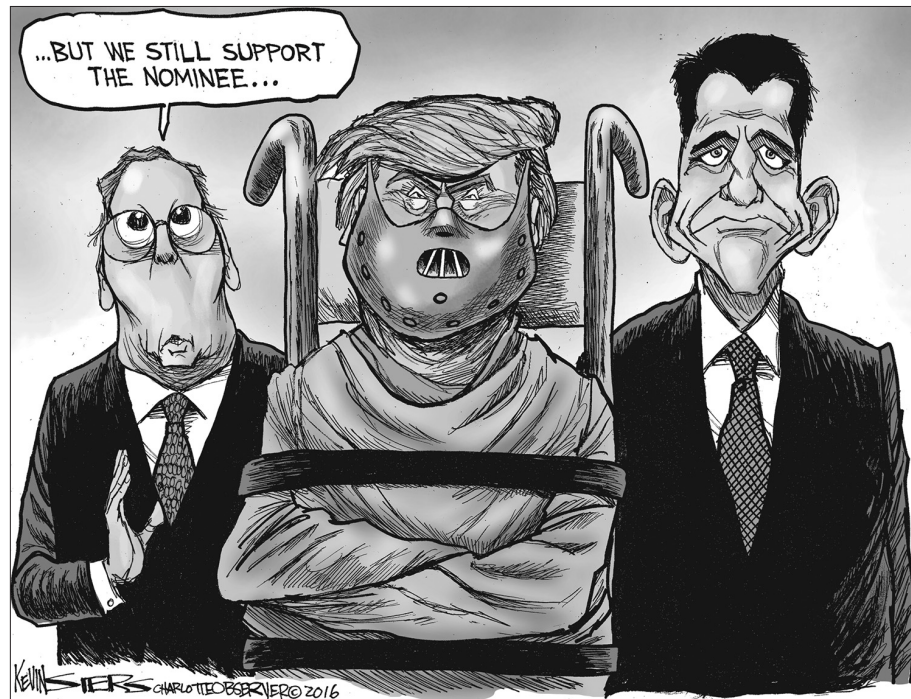
On the part of healthcare providers, addressing this challenge means promoting and expanding access to affordable mental and behavioral healthcare— care that recognizes the stressors that African-Americans experience and provides solutions that are culturally competent. For our part, we have established behavioral/mental health as a dedicated priority service line across our national healthcare system.

This work demands continued investment in community health centers, which are vital to serving high-need minority neighborhoods. And it requires that we go beyond the traditional scope of care by addressing the socioeconomic needs that contribute to mental health, including access to affordable housing, food security and more.

All of these programs and investments are important, but real gains in this fight will not come without the support and participation of the African-American community overall. We must stop viewing mental illness in America as if it were a personal failing rather than a serious health concern. And we must help our loved ones and neighbors to stop neglecting the care they need because of stigmas that surround mental health. These stigmas must be addressed and overcome.

While communities of color are having important conversations about mental health, we can do more. Breaking down these barriers will compel us not only to recognize the necessity of mental health care, but also to marshal our support for family, friends and neighbors who are seeking the help and treatment they need. Together, we can build a healthier, stronger community, where getting support for mental health problems is not a sign of weakness, but one of strength.

*Patricia A. Maryland, Dr.PH, is the President of Healthcare Operations and Chief Operating Officer for Ascension Health, the healthcare delivery subsidiary of Ascension, the nation's largest non-profit and largest Catholic health system.*



## Letters to the Editor

**Editor:**

**Re: Two Flawed Candidates**

Clinton and Trump are flawed candidates running for President.

Clinton has questionable scruples, and she has made significant mistakes. As Secretary of State she set up an unsecured private server in her home for government email communications and sent and received secret and top secret information. She had ultimate responsibility for the Benghazi debacle where our ambassador and other Americans were killed by Islamic terrorists. Her foundation accepted contributions from foreign entities.

Trump is the most unqualified person to ever run for President. He is a vile

loudmouth with possible bigoted views who only cares about himself, and he does not respect our constitution and our institutions. Trump could have dictatorial tendencies. He has no knowledge of government operations and has no understanding of our domestic and world economies. His lack of knowledge in foreign affairs and military matters will hurt us in the world.

The choices are: vote for who you dislike the least, or vote for a third party candidate, or do not vote— how sad!

**Donald Moskowitz**  
Londonderry, NH

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## *Dignity and Respect During an Election Year*

By Rivera Sun

During election years, pent-up frustrations, simmering animosities and the toxic legacy of countless hours of hate talk radio erupt from the seething volcano of the American public. Injustice left festering explodes into anger and hatred. Defensive arrogance and condescension drips down the pyramid of privilege.

What should— and perhaps someday could— be a time of remarkable civic discourse, truth-telling, education and public dialogue devolves into political shouting matches that leave millions of American citizens feeling bruised and abused, belligerent waiting for the next go-round of the elections to take vengeance on each other.

I am a member of the last generation of American children who received civics education in our public schools. Budget constraints and curriculum cuts have stripped our youth of access to knowledge not just about the three branches of government, the constitution, the electoral process, but also about the broader

context of democracy, historically and worldwide. In the void of education, we learn from observing the current political climate— a circus of extreme wealth, party politics, manipulations, fraud, deceit, personality candidates, disempowerment of citizens, corporate sponsorship, name-calling, shaming, personal attacks, and the endless stream of broken campaign promises.

While this is, unfortunately, an accu-

politics and elections.

Where did this come from? One afternoon, a civics teacher invoked this semi-mythic figure to stimulate the half-glazed expressions in the classrooms. Politics should not be vitriolic or boring, our teacher told us, we should enjoy political discussions and consider them an essential part of the culture of a democratic society. By lunch, most of my classmates went back to talking

office, our homes, on the media, with friends, family, or with total strangers— is essential for a society that prizes the ideals of liberty and freedom.

If we are not free to converse without being verbally assaulted, insulted, and screamed at, what does that say about the content of our characters? Why should any of us believe that shaming another citizen for their political choices is an effective approach to building the kind of political engagements and civic interest that greases the wheel of functional political process? Is it really so hard to engage in the practices of being curious about our differences, asking questions, listening, and responding in a sane and civil manner?

We can do better than the obnoxious and insulting manners we are currently displaying during this election cycle. These behaviors are beneath the dignity of a nation that claims to be a democracy and professes to have operated as one for 240 years.

If there is one political action every American should take between now and November, it is to lift our heads with greater dignity and treat our fellow Americans with respect. Regardless of others, our own self-respect should demand such action. We can engage in functional civic dialogue. There is no need to wait for the "leadership" of politicians, parties, pundits or press. In our own lives and interactions, we can discuss politics in a way that uplifts the dignity of all.

*Author/Activist Rivera Sun, syndicated by PeaceVoice, is the author of The Dandelion Insurrection and other books, and the Programs Coordinator for Campaign Nonviolence.*

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***“What should— and perhaps someday could— be a time of remarkable civic discourse, truth-telling, education and public dialogue devolves into political shouting matches that leave millions of American citizens feeling bruised and abused, belligerent waiting for the next go-round of the elections to take vengeance on each other.”***

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rate representation of how our dysfunctional political system currently operates, it also fails to articulate or embody the values of true democracy or of a democratic society.

As a child in a rural Maine public school, I learned about the nuanced discussions of democracy from the ancient Greeks through the founding fathers. I learned the shortcomings, foibles and follies of both the individual characters and the governing systems they produced. My memory of my civics courses evoke images of the white-clad suffragettes with sewn banners and African-Americans organizing nonviolent action that led toward civil rights and the Voting Rights Act. And, oddly, I have a persistent memory of a French woman in a cafe holding a lively discussion about

about soccer or pop songs, but the lesson stuck with me.

This election cycle, as my fellow Americans froth at the mouth, I find this memory returning as I interact online and in person. Why is it so hard for us to have a passionate— not scornful or vituperative— conversation about politics? Has respectful discourse, like civics, fallen by the wayside of American education? Are we trained only in argument, attack, humiliation, screeching, vilifying, fear mongering, and other forms of verbal abuse?

This is unfortunate and dangerous. Discourse is the foundation of democracy. Even within the context of a representative republic, the ability to have a respectful, engaged, and informed conversation about politics— in the post

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# Enhancing Black Owned Print and Digital Press in the Age of Social Media

By Dr. Benjamin F. Chavis, Jr.  
President/CEO, National Newspaper  
Publishers Association

The National Newspaper Publishers Association (NNPA) salutes the career development success of the Discover the Unexpected (DTU) NNPA Journalism Fellowship program that has just completed its first term of providing undergraduate students at the Howard University School of Communication the unique apprentice opportunity to work at NNPA member newspapers in Chicago, Atlanta, Washington, D.C. and Detroit.

Black owned newspapers are not opposed to the digitalization of our content or to the digital distribution of the “trusted,” vibrant, prophetic voice of the Black Press of America. In fact as black owned businesses, it makes good business sense for Black owned newspapers to embrace digital and social media platforms to enhance and increase the value and profitability of our publications.

One mutual benefit that emerged during the labor and service rendered by the DTU NNPA fellows was their daily increase in utilizing social media as an integral component of their career journey while working for black owned newspapers. Both the fellows and our newspapers benefited from having these gifted and talented millennials in our workplaces during the past six weeks. It was a summer of news reporting. It was a journalistic “Freedom Summer.” It was a print, digital and social media summer.

Brandi Montgomery and Brelaun Douglas were at The Atlanta Voice; Briahna Brown and Mckenzie Marshall at the Chicago Defender; Victoria Jones and Rushawn Walters at The Washington Informer; and Tatyana Hopkins and Sidnee King were at the Michigan Chronicle. In addition to writing front-page news stories pertinent to improving the quality of life of black America, all of the NNPA fellows were actively engaged on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Google, LinkedIn, Snapchat and Youtube.

Most of the 209 black owned newspa-



pers that are affiliated with the NNPA now have active websites with various degrees of interactivity and digital capabilities. But the challenge of linking social media with the world of the black print press, while formidable, will be a growing opportunity to enhance the future economic sustainability of black owned newspapers.

One goal, which the NNPA is now actively planning and researching, is how to effectively and efficiently establish the NNPA Digital Network (Digital-Network@nnpa.org). The truth is that by having the DTU fellows working at some of our member’s newspapers has helped to crystallize the need and the opportunity for the timely development of the NNPA Digital Network. Again the digital network is not to replace or to supplant the print work of NNPA’s 209 black owned newspapers. The digital network will help to increase the market

value of the trusted content of NNPA member newspapers.

We are living at a time when candidates to be President of the United States routinely communicate to their constituents and supporters via Twitter, Facebook, Google and Instagram. The national and global news cycles are now ten seconds in length. Yet, there is still market demand from millions of people across the United States and throughout the world for more in-depth and detailed news accounts of what is happening in a rapidly changing and challenging world.

Black owned newspapers in print and their online editions provide in-depth news coverage and uplifts the cultural genius of black America as part of the long unique and respected tradition of the Black Press of America. From our perspective, we are encouraged by the emergence of committed student journalists like our DTU fellows. The future

maybe challenging but the opportunities to soar with success and progress are much greater.

Social media has increased the instantaneous awareness and involvement of millions of people. It is driven by content. Black owned newspapers are content rich. As various social media platforms become additional distribution vehicles for black owned newspapers, the overall value of black owned print and digital media will increase correspondingly.

Learn more about the Discover the Unexpected (DTU) program at <http://www.nnpa.org/dtu/> and use the hashtag #DiscoverTheUnexpected on Twitter. Follow us on Twitter @BlackPressUSA, @NNPA\_BlackPress and @NNPADTU, like our Facebook pages at NNPA Black Press and Black Press Matters.

***Social media is changing the way we communicate and the way we are perceived, both positively and negatively. Every time you post a photo, or update your status, you are contributing to your own digital footprint and personal brand. —Amy Jo Martin***

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[#discovertheunexpected](#)

**DISCOVER MORE OF THEIR STORY AT [NNPA.ORG/DTU](http://NNPA.ORG/DTU)**

# Ravens tight end Benjamin Watson settling in with new team

By Turron Davenport

Benjamin Watson signed a two-year contract with the Baltimore Ravens worth \$7 million with a guarantee of \$3 million. Watson comes to the Ravens after posting a career year with the New Orleans Saints. He had 74 receptions for 825 yards and six touchdowns last season.

The Ravens added Watson to the mix of young tight ends during the off-season. He is looking forward to showcasing how he is a complete player in Baltimore.

"I think that as a tight end. One of the great things I love about the position is you have the chance to do a lot of everything," Watson said after practice.

"Sometimes, that is the difficult part of the position— you are asked to block guys that are twice your size, but then run with guys that are half your size."

Watson is looking forward to being involved in both the running and passing game with the Ravens. The fact that the game plan will evolve on a weekly basis is intriguing to the veteran tight end.

"I think that my role will be some of both [blocking and catching passes]— a lot of what I've been doing the last 12 years of my career," Watson explained.

"I'll be doing a lot of those same things. I think that roles also change week to week, depending on personnel and things like that.

"My role coming here [is] to learn what to do, learn the offense and then be available for whatever [offensive coordinator Marc] Trestman and [John] Harbaugh have for me."

Watson believes that having a veteran quarterback like Joe Flacco will help him get acclimated to the offense. Flacco has always liked to throw to his tight ends. The two are taking advantage



Ravens tight end Benjamin Watson (right) talks with second-year tight end Nick Boyle (left) before practice during training camp. Courtesy Photo/NFL.com

of training camp to get their chemistry down before the start of the season.

"Reps always help. One of the things about training camp is there are a lot of guys, and usually a lot of reps to spread around," Watson said. "But anytime you can get more reps with the quarterback, more reps in the offense, hearing the play in the huddle and getting to the line and going through the checks in my brain over and over again, it always helps for me."

The goal is to be ready for the season opener against the Buffalo Bills. Watson has become the leader of a young tight end group that includes Crockett Gilmore, Maxx Williams and newly converted wide receiver Darren Waller.

Watson is the most proven of the group outside of Dennis Pitta who is working his way back from a hip injury that had derailed his career.

The Ravens have always been a team that embraces veterans who join their team. Watson and Eric Weddle are the 2016 veteran additions. They can rely on

the veterans that are already entrenched in the locker room for guidance when they leave the Ravens facility in Owings Mills.

Watson says he is making the adjustment as he gets settled into the area.

"It is always a process, but every day has been better. I can say that this organization has opened their arms to me and my family 100 percent," Watson said with a smile. "Everything from letting us know about different restaurants, to schools, to doctors, all of those sorts of things. [It has been good] coming into a locker room that has established veterans in the locker room— guys who have been in the league— but also a good group of young players."

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# Urban Teachers, Hopkins Kick off New Educational Partnership

By Stacy M. Brown

As the new school year begins, so does the start of a major new educational partnership.

The 2016-17 school year will mark the first year of a teacher-training program at Johns Hopkins University that will prepare a new cohort of high-quality teachers at the level of rigor seen in medical schools, according to officials. Urban Teachers, a heavily lauded and rigorous alternative teacher certification program, has formed a partnership with the Johns Hopkins School of Education, the top-ranked institution of its kind in the nation, that will apply a medical school-style clinical residency model to their teaching preparation program.

The partnership creates a national pipeline of well-trained career teachers to enter urban Baltimore classrooms and low-income schools across the country.

“Applications to Urban Teachers increased almost three-fold as the result of partnering with Johns Hopkins, which has allowed Urban Teachers to increase its presence in D.C. and Baltimore, and [to] expand to the Dallas/Fort Worth region,” said Shaina Cook, a communications and media project manager for the Collaborative Communications Group which handles public relations for Urban Teachers.

“The Johns Hopkins University School of Education is ranked [as the top] School of Education in the nation. Their brand has had a significant impact on our ability to attract and enroll a high-quality, diverse group of individuals in our program,” Cook said. “Johns Hopkins also has terrific research expertise, and we are hoping to work with them to conduct ongoing research about the impact of our work. We will also be collaborating with Johns Hopkins to move toward more of a blended approach for coursework, with the goal of increasing the amount of coursework that is online.”

Founded in 2009, Urban Teachers links teacher effectiveness to certification eligibility. It serves urban youth in Baltimore City and the District of Columbia.



*Urban Teachers CEO Jennifer Green read to children in a classroom setting. Courtesy Photo*

The School of Education offers programs in areas ranging from early childhood education to adult learning through its doctoral and graduate programs; research and development activities, external partnerships with school systems and educational entrepreneurs, and collaborative connections to the broader Johns Hopkins research community.

“By preparing new teachers with the same high standards expected for doctors, the partnership will produce some of the best new educators in the country,” David Andrews, dean of the School of Education, said in a statement announcing the partnership.

The Urban Teachers and Johns Hopkins partnership will offer a Master of Science in Education with a concentra-

tion in educational studies that prepares new teachers to succeed in low-income and minority schools.

The degree will afford new teachers training in general and special education, equipping them to meet the needs of all learners.

The collaboration is expected to directly benefit schools most in need of committed teachers.

On average, approximately 50 percent of all urban public school teachers leave the profession within three years of entering it, according to statistics provided by the partnership.

“The program will offer aspiring teachers a 14-month residency in the classroom under the guidance of experienced teachers and expert faculty,” Jen-

nifer Green, CEO of Urban Teachers, said in a release. “Together, our two innovative organizations will help improve the outcomes of thousands of students in urban settings by giving them the great teachers they deserve – teachers who are able to improve their learning.”

“Applicants must have a minimum 3.0 GPA— with some exceptions made for individuals with a 2.75 or better and a successful work history,” Cook said. “Also, they must be ready to make a four-year commitment to teach in an urban school.”

For more information, visit: [www.urbanteachers.org](http://www.urbanteachers.org).

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## Local Head Start Administrator Graduates from UCLA Head Start Management Fellows Program

Los Angeles— The training completed by Head Start executive Gayle Headen will ultimately benefit children and their families at the Union Baptist-Harvey Johnson Head Start in Baltimore.

Gayle Headen is one of 41 graduates of the UCLA Head Start Management Fellows Program, an intensive 12-day leadership and management development program, conducted at the UCLA Anderson School of Management in Los Angeles. The program was developed in 1991 to strengthen the management and leadership skills of Head Start administrators and is currently funded by the Head Start National Center on Program and Management and Fiscal Operations.

Throughout the program, fellows are equipped with the tools they will need to effectively lead and deliver developmental services in changing environments, secure funding, efficiently implement programs and network with other Head Start executives across the nation. Since the program's inception, some 1,450 executives have graduated with enhanced management and leadership abilities.

“Head Start creates the foundation for a wonderful future for children and their families,” said Yasmine Daniel-Vargas, director of the National Center on Program Management and Fiscal Operations. “Graduates of the UCLA Head Start Management Fellows Program have introduced successful community



*Gayle Headen, executive director of the Union Baptist-Harvey Johnson Head Start in Baltimore is one of 41 recent graduates of the UCLA Head Start Management Fellows Program.*

Courtesy Photo

initiatives that make a lasting impact on the health, nutrition, and school readiness of the children they serve. The commitment of the UCLA Anderson School of Management to teaching excellence is a hallmark of the program's enduring success.”

Head Start programs provide comprehensive developmental services to low-income, preschool children and their families. Head Start also provides a range of medical, dental, mental health and nutrition care, and parent involvement services. In 2014-15, Head Start programs served 1,100,000 children ages birth to five and pregnant moms, making a total of more than 33 million since its inception in 1965.

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# Boys & Girls Club Keeps Students Learning Over Summer

By Ursula V. Battle

## *My.Future Technology Allow Kids to Explore Digital Education*

Students will soon be returning to school, but My.Future kept members of the Boys & Girls Club of Metropolitan Baltimore's Brooklyn O'Malley Club learning during the summer break. My.Future enabled them to select from more than 40 activities to help them understand how to safely and productively engage online, and identify and develop digital interests.

"I have been coming to this center since I was in the kindergarten," said 12-year-old Antonio, who will be entering sixth-grade in the fall. "The My.Future technology program is great. I have learned so much about computers and technology. I have also learned how to stay safe, respect the rules, not to fight, and to mind my manners. This camp has definitely kept me out of trouble."

The program aimed to combat learning loss for members through the "Hour of Code Program", summer STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics) activities and their summer "100 Book Challenge" program. More than 45 members ages six to 12 and 14 to 17 participated in My.Future activities five times per week to cultivate their thinking and prepare them for careers in the technology field. The six-week program began June 27, 2016, and concluded August 5, 2016.

The Brooklyn O'Malley Club is also one of 16 community centers across Baltimore City that is part of Comcast's Internet Essentials Learning Zone, a network of community partners working together to create a continuum of connectivity that begins online in classrooms, then extends to community centers, computer labs, and after-school programs and finally ends at home. The club is located at 3560 3rd Street in Brooklyn.

"Our main goal is to provide safe places in environments that need it most," said Matthew P. Death, vice president of Corporate and Business Partnerships for the Boy & Girls Club of Metropolitan Baltimore. "We find that you can't ignore the summer months when it comes to developing and learning."

He added, "We also try to provide support and allow the kids to thrive in places where they don't have a lot of resources. The kids are very receptive, which is fuel for us."

According to STEMconnector®, science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) jobs in the U.S. are expected to grow nearly twice as fast as other fields by 2018. There will be more than 8 million STEM jobs in the U.S. by 2018, but three million of them may go unfilled because of a lack of people with required skills.



*Members of Baltimore's Brooklyn O'Malley Club along with Club leaders in front of the center.*

"We try to make sure our teens are being developed in an employment capacity," said Death. "We are living in a world where technology is a necessity when it comes to employment. We want to do what we can to make sure they don't fall behind."

My.Future also provided an opportunity for participants to develop digital interests, earn certifications, and to develop skills they will need to pursue promising careers in high demand fields.

"Today's youth are digital natives, but there is a skills divide between young people who simply consume data as entertainment and kids who can apply data analytically and creatively," said Brad Palazzo, director of External Affairs for Comcast's Beltway Region. "Through My.Future, Baltimore kids and teens will have the chance to interact with technology in meaningful ways and prepare for great futures."

The Boys & Girls Club of Metropolitan Baltimore seeks to inspire and enable all young people, particu-



*Club members also played video games during the six-week program, which helped them to identify and develop digital interests. Courtesy Photos*

larly underserved, at-risk youth in severely distressed communities in Baltimore City, to realize their full potential as productive, responsible, and caring citizens. Boys & Girls Clubs provide a safe haven for close to 5,000 of Baltimore's children and are making a difference by providing them with life-skills training, meals, academic enhancement programs, and many more services.

# The Importance of Early Childhood Education

By Stacy M. Brown

Late in 2015, the Baltimore Community Foundation announced a \$6 million contribution towards the expansion of Judy Centers to help provide early childhood education and support services to 5,000 Baltimore City children and their families. At the time, a goal was set to have 90 percent of preschool-aged children ready for school in Baltimore by 2017.

The percentage of Baltimore children measured as school-ready grew from 28 percent in 2002 to 76 percent in 2013. According to the 2013 Maryland Measurement of School Readiness, between 85 and 93 percent of children with a Judy Center or early childhood education experience in Baltimore City, were ready for kindergarten at age five, compared with 76 percent of children citywide.

“We strongly believe that the only way our society is going to succeed over the long term is to ensure that every child, regardless of economic standing, has the same opportunity for an excellent education,” said George Sherman, a local philanthropist who, with his wife Betsy, also provided significant funds for Judy Centers in Baltimore.

The importance of early childhood education can easily be seen in numbers—Ready at Five, a statewide organization dedicated to elevating school readiness for all Maryland children in partnership with the Maryland State Department of Education/MSDE, has found that just 45 percent of students demonstrate the skills and behaviors needed to fully participate and succeed in kindergarten and that the skills and knowledge children have upon entering school are strongly predictive of future academic success and children, who enter kindergarten behind their peers, are unlikely to catch up.

Further, they found that children that enter school at higher levels of readiness, are healthier and are less likely to become involved with the criminal justice system and drop out of school.

These children experience higher levels of education and typically have higher earnings throughout their lives. Finally, Ready at Five found that chil-



*Celebree students Milania Graham, Lailah Ayyubi, Aaron Mace, and Elise Gandia during a recent Celebree Learning Center "Give Back to the Community" event.* Courtesy Photo

dren that attend Pre-K programs are better prepared for school than those in home or informal care the year prior to starting kindergarten.

The importance of an early childhood education was further underscored when, on August 13, 2016, Celebree Learning Centers, a dedicated leader in early childhood education and development, hosted its annual open house at all 22 its locations in Maryland.

“A lot of research of the brain and neurology show that the first five years are formidable,” said Lisa Henkel, CEO of Celebree Learning Centers, whose locations include Annapolis and Baltimore.

“The biggest challenge we face is public perception. People tend to believe it’s about babysitting and play time, but early childhood education and what we do at Celebree is about building an education foundation and maintaining edu-

cational milestones,” she said.

The center’s preschool curriculum, which is aligned with the Maryland State Department of Education’s focus on early childhood education, is designed to cover each kindergarten readiness milestone, according to Henkel.

Celebree’s mission is to provide a stable and secure learning environment that helps foster a solid foundation for lifelong success and center officials have a vision to be the recognized leader in providing the best care for infants, preschool and school-age children.

Teachers at the center are dedicated instructors who make a habit of going above and beyond the call of duty for the children they teach, officials said.

They also realize some of the challenges that may hold some back from an early education.

“We know quality care isn’t cheap and when parents are looking at expenses,

your child care expense is only second to your mortgage and that could be a challenge to find the funds to participate,” Henkel said. “It’s a national challenge that’s not unique to just Baltimore and Annapolis.”

Henkel says it’s important that parents realize the importance of the centers.

“We want them to know it’s important. At Celebree, play is important too and parents should know that what we provide is purposeful play,” she said.

“The exposure children are having from their earliest moment are important and formative,” Henkel said. “We are now at a point in studies that are 25 and 30 years long which show that when children are exposed to an early childhood education program they do better. They don’t have the lags and gaps of development and they have less involvement with the criminal justice system.”

# 'My Big Phat Ghetto Fabule\$\$ Wedding' returns to Johns Hopkins Auditorium

*By popular demand hit stage play production to run from September 2-4, 2016*

Baltimore— Unified Voices of Johns Hopkins (UV) and Battle Stage Plays present Ursula V. Battle's "My Big Phat Ghetto FABULE\$\$ Wedding" for a return engagement. The stage play production is being directed by Dr. Gregory Wm. Branch, and will be presented Friday, September 2, 2016 (7 p.m.) Saturday, September 3, 2016 (2 p.m. & 7 p.m.); and Sunday, September 4, 2016 (5 p.m.) in Turner Auditorium, located in the Johns Hopkins Hospital Ross Research Building, 720 Rutland Avenue in Baltimore City.

The return of the highly successful production includes a powerful cadre of some of the area's most talented performers; hilarious side splitting comedy; soul-stirring singing; gripping drama; and powerful ministry. The play's storyline centers around what happens when a reversal of fortune causes a couple's expensive wedding plans to turn into a beer bucket budget nightmare, setting the stage for the most unforgettable wedding you have ever attended. Through ministry, song, and riveting drama, the play illustrates that love truly conquers all.

The production premiered December 2016. A quick sell-out of advance tickets prompted the addition of fourth a show. The newest performances of "My Big Phat Ghetto FABULE\$\$ Wedding" features hilarious new additions, which include the debut of the production's newest character Diana Martini Rossi Aste Spumante (LeLe Russell) and the return of her nemesis sister Evelyn Champagne Jackson (Tanya Brown-Iyesi). "My Big Phat Ghetto FABULE\$\$ Wedding" follows the highly successful gospel stage play musical "DisChord in The Choir," which was presented by UV in March 2015. Written by playwright Ursula Battle, and directed by Dr. Branch, "DisChord in The Choir," also drew rave reviews and sell-out audiences.

In addition to "My Big Phat Ghetto FABULE\$\$ Wedding" and "DisChord in The Choir," Dr. Branch has also directed



*L-r: Dr. Gregory Wm. Branch, director and playwright Ursula V. Battle*

multiple stage play productions including "The Teachers' Lounge," "A Raisin in The Sun," "Dreamgirls," "Spelling Bee," "Steel Magnolias," "Ain't Misbehavin'" and "Little Shop of Horrors."

Dr. Branch serves as the director of Health and Human Services for Baltimore County. In addition to "My Big Phat Ghetto FABULE\$\$ Wedding" and "DisChord in The Choir," Battle's stage play productions include "The Teachers' Lounge," "The Crown of Glory & The Agony of Deceit," and "FOR BETTER OR FOR WORSE." Battle is a staff writer for The Baltimore Times, and CEO of Battle Stage Plays. She was recently honored as The Newsome Awards' 2016 "Playwright of the Year."

Founded in 1993, UV is a gospel choir that consists of a diverse group of individuals with different personalities, lifestyles, and backgrounds working together to bridge the gap between the medical institution and the historic East Baltimore community. Under the direction of Dr. Branch, who is executive director and co-founder of UV, the choir has remained goodwill ambassadors by singing songs of hope, health and healing through harmony at Hopkins.

Tickets are \$25 through August 27, 2016, and \$35 after that date and at the door. VIP tickets are also available. For additional information or tickets call Battle Stage Plays at 443-531-4787 or visit: [www.battlestageplays.com](http://www.battlestageplays.com). You can also call UV at 410-955-8888.



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# Baltimore Youth Launches Film Career in Charm City

By Deborah Bailey

Emerging film director/actor, Michael Anthony Hobbs is on the rise in Baltimore. The 12-year-old debuted his second short feature film, "Naga Pixie," to rave reviews this past week at the Arbutus Community Center in Baltimore County.

Hobbs, a student at Our Lady of Victory in Baltimore, originally created the drama as a classroom assignment but quickly decided to transform the project into a film.

"It started out as a project for school but after reviewing it, I thought it would make a good movie," the young director Hobbs said during an exclusive interview with the Baltimore Times Newspaper.

"Naga Pixie" is the story of a fairy (Trinity Breane Perio), who persistently reminds Jason (Hobbs) and his friends to respect nature, animals and the environment. The film, which is set in Baltimore, reminds audiences that there is beauty in every natural environment, even in the heart of the city's urban core.

The 13-minute film took Hobbs and his assistant producer Zachary Hammonds, age 11, one week to produce and edit. Hobbs will submit the film to several national film competitions and



*Michael Anthony Hobbs with the cast mate Trinity Breane Perio from the film "Naga Pixie." Hobbs debuted the film at the Arbutus Community Center in Baltimore County on Sunday, August 14, 2016. Hobbs will submit the film to several national film competitions and he hopes to experience success similar to the acclaim garnered by his first release, "One Nation," completed in 2014.*

Courtesy Photo

hopes to experience success similar to the acclaim garnered by his first release, "One Nation," completed in 2014.

"One Nation" told the story of a group of multi-racial youth who organized a special recognition for veterans from the war in Iraq, as they returned to their neighborhood after the war.

The film was screened at 10 national film festivals and won four national awards, including the Montclair Film Festival's Grand Prize for Kids Short Film; and the Gary, Indiana International Black Film Festival's Best Youth Short.

During the Naga Pixie screening event, guests had the opportunity to appear in an initial shoot of a scene that will appear in Hobbs' third release.

"There is a lot he wants to do," said Eunice Moseley, his PR director and grandmother. "He has been reading scripts since he was five years old, he has his own agency and he's starting on his third film."

I guess that means it's time for Baltimore's acclaimed director and screenwriter of the film "Hairspray" to move over—there is a new talent in town!

## Christian Liberty Church 2016 Back to School Event

The 3rd Annual "Outside the Walls Service & Back to School Supplies Give-away" will be held on Sunday, August 21, 2016 at 10 a.m. at Christian Liberty Church is located in Frederick Douglass High School at 2301 Gwynns Falls Parkway in Baltimore.



Christian Liberty Church's annual outdoor worship service will be led by the youth and followed by free give-away of backpacks, back to school supplies and children's clothing for kindergarten through high school students. There will be food, games, moon bounce, face painting and more!

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# What happens in Vegas should't always stay in Vegas!

## *Pi Omega Chapter recognized for international service*

Las Vegas— At the 80th Grand Conclave of the Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc., which was held July 21- 28, 2016 in Las Vegas, Pi Omega Chapter, Graduate Chapter of Baltimore was once again recognized for its service to the community.

On Wednesday, July 27, 2016, Pi Omega Chapter was recognized as the Fraternity's 2014-2015 International Social Action Chapter of the Year (Large Chapter, 50+ Members). The Social Action Chapter of the Year is presented to the chapter that best implements the Fraternity's mandated programs and provides significant community based programs to the local area and beyond. Pi Omega was selected from entries from the twelve districts of the Fraternity, after being selected in the same category for the Second District Social Action Chapter of the Year in April. The Second District of Omega Psi Phi Fraternity covers the states of New York, New

Jersey, Pennsylvania, Delaware, and Maryland. Pi Omega has won this award at the district level five times. This is the chapter's third consecutive International Social Action chapter award.

Under the director of C. Donald Bowser, Basileus of Pi Omega Chapter, Dwayne White and John Berkley, Social Action chairman and co-chairman respectfully, continued to engage the members in a variety of activities that fit in with the strengths of the chapter. All members of the chapter were involved in the activities during the year, truly making this a chapter award. The Pi Omega Que-ettes were also a great help to the chapter during this time. The true winners are the hundreds of people locally, nationally, and internationally, who benefited from the services and programs offered by the chapter and Omega men throughout the world. Well done is truly better than well said.

Omega Psi Phi Fraternity is a historically black fraternal organization, which provides and promotes programs of



*Grand Basileus Antonio Knox presents a plaque to Pi Omega Basileus Ronald Williams (second from left) Al White, International Social Action Chairman, Grand Basileus Antonio Knox, Pi Omega Basileus Ronald Williams, 2nd District Representative Sherman Charles (first from right). Photo Credit: Lamont Tyler*

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Pi Omega is a graduate chapter of Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc. Pi Omega Chapter has been instrumental in sponsoring programs that foster achievement,

scholarship, community action, and the search for talent. For over 90 years, Pi Omega has contributed to various organizations, programs, and schools, which serve as valuable resources to the Baltimore community. We continue to grow and serve the community in the name of Manhood, Scholarship, Perseverance, and Uplift.

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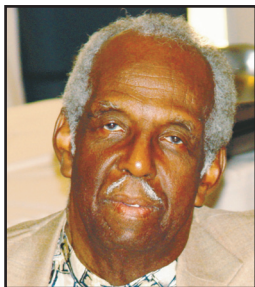
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## OBITUARY



**Robert Edward Lee**

**March 15, 1926 — August 14, 2016**

Robert Edward Lee, was born on March 15, 1926 to the late Mary Carter Lee and John Lee, in Prince Edward County, Virginia. He was the second of four children.

His parents migrated from the rich and fertile farmlands of Virginia to Baltimore, Maryland when he was only six months old. Robert's parents were good, Christian people who believed in the importance of giving to others.

Robert was educated in the Baltimore City Public Schools System. After working for a short time at the Bethlehem Steel Corporation at Sparrows Point, Maryland, Robert was drafted in the U.S. Army during the Korean War conflict. He served from the 1950 to 1952. His military service included Officers' Training Academy and he was stationed at various military locations. During this time he married the love of his life, Ruth Ella Brown on Sunday, June 10, 1951.

After his honorable discharge from the U.S. Army in 1952, Robert was able to enjoy married life with Ruth and later had two sons, first Andre, born in 1955; and Byron, born in 1964. Robert also continued his education by attending the Cortez W. Peters Business College in Baltimore, where he joined the CHI RHO International Fraternity and later received an A.A. degree in Business Administration.

Robert was a good-hearted, decent, respectful Christian man who believed that God and family are crucial to a healthy life. Robert was a longtime and devoted member of Trinity Presbyterian Church in Baltimore.

After 44 years of service, Robert retired from Bethlehem Steel as a Lead Electronics Operator. He was satisfied that Ruth retired before him after 32 years with Baltimore City Public Schools as an Educational Specialist. Robert was also pleased that his sons received their college degrees and were gainfully employed in their respective careers.

He and Ruth continued to travel and enjoy life during their long retirement years together. Robert was a sports enthusiast, loved reading the newspaper and watching the Cable News Network (CNN). He also appreciated African-American history and was a member of the Roland McConnell Branch of the Association for the Study of African American Life and History, Inc. (ASALH).

During the past decade, Robert and Ruth began to experience a decline in their health. However, Robert was more mobile than Ruth, which enabled him to continue to do what he loved— take care of her. Eventually, Robert's health declined further. While he found it necessary to reduce his physical activity, he continued his ever-present spiritual activity and developed an even deeper appreciation for the grace of God, which allowed him to reach the age of 90.

Robert leaves to mourn his loving wife of sixty-five years, Ruth E. B. Lee; his two devoted sons, Andre and Byron; nephew, Stanley Phillips, New York, N.Y.; niece, Mindell Lee Rennels, Washington, DC; sister-in-law, Doris Lee; and a host of other relatives, friends and neighbors.

### Home Going Services for Robert Edward Lee

Public Viewing:

Friday, August 19, 2016  
4:30 p.m. to 8 p.m.

Vaughn C. Greene Funeral Services  
8728 Liberty Road, Randallstown

Funeral:

Saturday, August 20, 2016 at 11 a.m.  
Family Hour: 10 a.m. to 11 a.m.

Trinity Presbyterian Church  
3200 Walbrook Avenue, Baltimore

## Phishing Scheme Targeting Tax Professionals with Phony Software Updates

*Tax preparers urged to think twice before clicking links or opening attachments*



Annapolis— The federal Internal Revenue Service (IRS) is asking tax preparers to be on the lookout for emails that purport to contain important software updates, but actually install malicious spyware on their computers. The tactic, the IRS says, is "the latest in a series of attempts by fraudsters... to trick people into giving up sensitive information such as passwords, Social Security numbers or credit card numbers or to make unnecessary payments."

"We should all be alert to these scams," said Maryland Comptroller Peter Franchot. "If a software vendor sends you an email saying, 'Click Here,' don't do it. Visit the legitimate website for that software to check for updates."

IRS officials say tax professionals are receiving emails professing to be from

tax software companies. "The email scheme requests the recipient to download and install an important software update via a link included in the email," officials said. "Once a recipient clicks on the embedded link, they are directed to a website prompting them to download a file appearing to be an update of their software package. ... Tax professionals believe they have downloaded a software update when in fact they have loaded a program designed to track the tax professional's key strokes, which is a common tactic used by cyber thieves to steal login information, passwords and other sensitive data.

For more information on this and other fraud tactics, visit the IRS' Protect Your Clients, Protect Yourself web page or the Comptroller of Maryland's Information for Tax Professionals.

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# MTA Launches Adopt-A-Stop

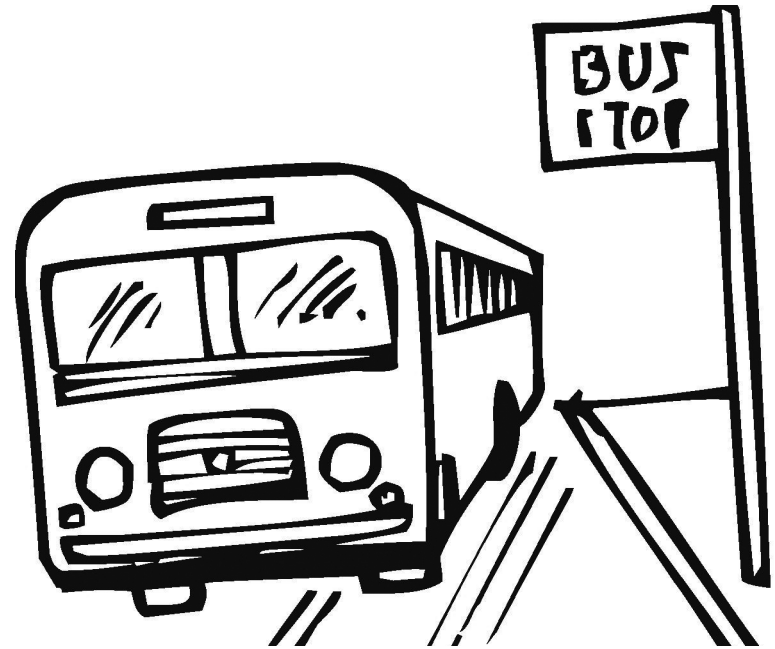
*Communities Urged to Join Efforts to Help Keep Bus Stops Clean*

Baltimore— On Wednesday, August 10, 2016, at the University of Maryland Baltimore Washington Medical Center (UM BWMC), the Maryland Department of Transportation's Maryland Transit Administration (MTA) announced the beginning of an exciting initiative to help make Maryland's bus stops litter-free. The innovative 'Adopt-A-Stop' program will rely on collaboration between MTA and area residents, businesses, property owners and neighborhood civic groups who will help keep their communities clean by 'adopting' a local bus stop. This simple commitment involves the pledge to perform a bi-weekly checkup to remove trash and unwanted items from a bus stop and to report damages or other concerns to the MTA. The UM BWMC is the first group that signed up to make a difference in its community through this program.

"My administration is committed to providing the best customer service possible for our citizens," said Governor Larry Hogan. "The Adopt-A-Stop initiative is one more way we are ensuring continuous improvements while working with our neighbors to enhance the quality of life for Marylanders."

Participants in the Adopt-A-Stop program must agree to:

- Regularly clean and maintain the adopted stop, including nearby walkways and street areas, a minimum of once every other week— and more frequently if needed in order to prevent snow, litter and other debris from accumulating and becoming a nuisance.
- Call immediately for pickup of illegally dumped large, heavy items.
- Report or clean up graffiti as soon as possible.
- Monitor and report sidewalk and



street snow clearance problems at the stop during winter.

In turn, the MTA will respond to calls about heavy item pickup, graffiti abatement and snow clearance within two days and Coordinate publicity efforts with the adopter to solicit local media coverage, as requested.

"MTA works hard to be a good neighbor and that means working together with the communities we serve," said MTA Administrator and CEO Paul Comfort. "I applaud program participants who are doing their part to help us keep our bus stops and shelters free of litter and graffiti. Together, we are enhancing the transit experience for our customers."

After two months of successful adoption, the MTA will present Adopt-A-Stop volunteers with a sign installed at their designated bus stop, recognizing their company or group for its participation along with an adoptee recognition certificate.

"We ask that volunteers commit to the program for at least one year," said

Janeen Kuser, MTA's Adopt-A-Stop Program Manager. "To sign up, volunteers just need to choose one or more MTA bus stops and fill out the online Adopt-A-Stop agreement form. This really is an easy and meaningful way to get your group involved in the community, be recognized for your hard work and keep your neighborhood clean for everyone."

The MTA urges Adopt-A-Stop volunteers to wear appropriate clothing, including gloves, safety vests and closed-toe shoes when cleaning their designated bus stops. Volunteers also should bring brooms, rakes, shovels, dustpans, trash bags, a cell phone in case of emergencies and lots of fluids, particularly on very warm days. The MTA will provide guidelines to help keep volunteers safe.

To sign up or get more information on Adopt-A-Stop, contact Janeen Kuser in the MTA's Office of Communications and Marketing at 410-767-8746 or [jkuser@mta.maryland.gov](mailto:jkuser@mta.maryland.gov) or visit <http://mta.maryland.gov/adopt-stop>.

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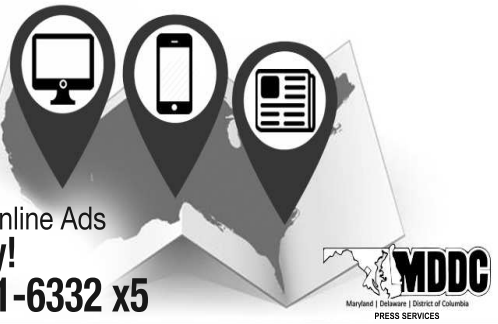
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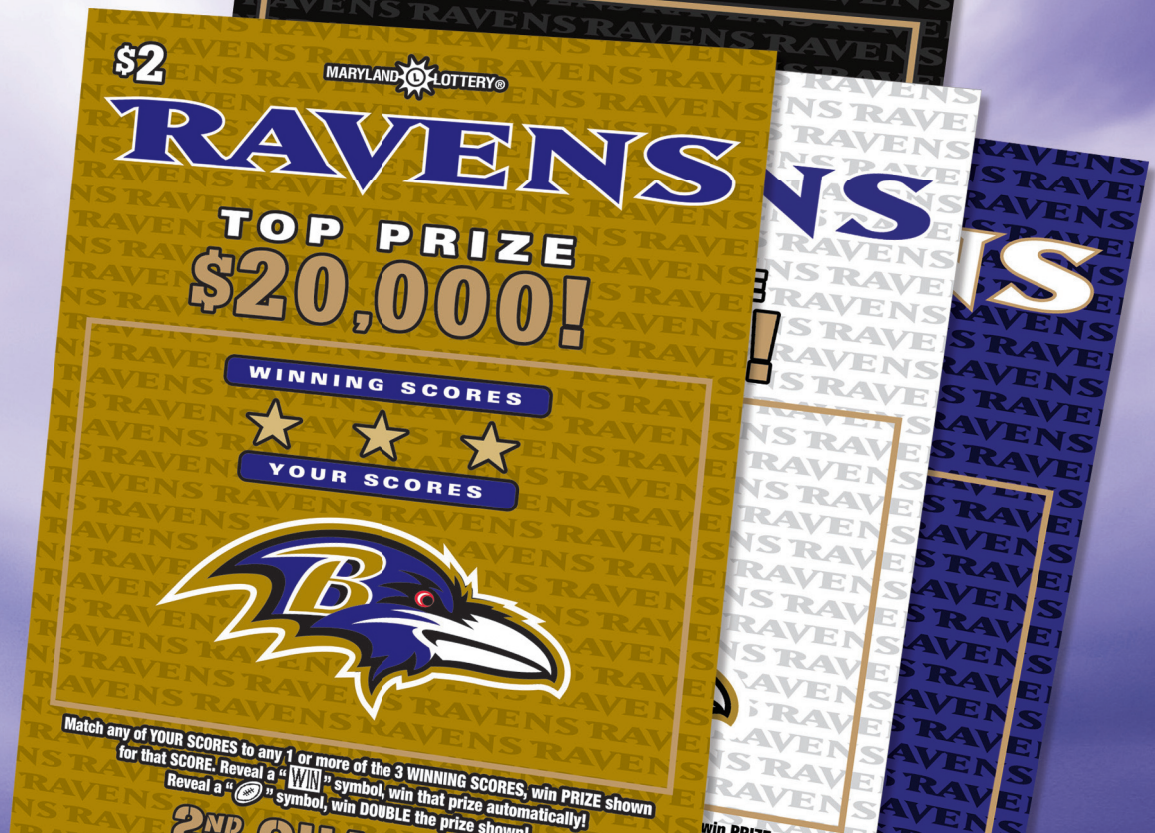
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