

VA volunteer receives award for thousands of hours of service

By Stacy M. Brown

The leadership of the Washington D.C. Veterans Affairs Medical Center honored a special volunteer with the President's Voluntary Service Lifetime Achievement Award.

The prestigious honor is granted to select individuals or organizations that have dedicated their lives in service to others, according to VA officials.

That's exactly what earned 91-year-old Mary Allen the coveted award, which was presented at an appreciation luncheon hosted by the VA on Tuesday, November 7, 2017 in Washington, D.C.

Allen has been a volunteer since 1992 and has logged a stunning 16,236 hours to veterans over the years. It never occurred to her that she would give so much of her time.

"I did not believe I'd ever reach so many hours, but there was always work that needed to be done, so I kept on volunteering and supporting the veterans," Allen said. "I did what needed to get done and that's what volunteers do."

VA officials and others call Allen an icon and a bit of a celebrity at the medical center where she has shared her time and talent in support of numerous services and outreach programs like the center's Winter haven Homeless Veterans Stand Down; Nursing; Safety and Surgical; and the Senior Companion Program.

Born in Macon, Georgia, Allen moved to Washington with her family when she was three-years-old.

While growing up, her parents maintained strict control of her time, including keeping close tabs on where she was and when she had to return home from outings.



Washington D.C. Veterans Affairs Medical Center honored Mary Allen, 91, (left) for her dedicated service as a volunteer since 1992 and logging in 16,236 hours to veterans over the years. She received the President's Voluntary Service Lifetime Achievement Award on Tuesday, November 7, 2017 in Washington, D.C. Allen is shown with Sabrina Clark, director, Veterans Administration Voluntary Service. Courtesy Photo

Continued on page 11

Maintain your childlike happiness!

By Chazz Scott, *The Nucleus Team*,
Positively Caviar, Inc.

One thing that I continually have to remind myself of each and everyday is to never lose sight of my childlike happiness. The way we live our lives has naturally turned us into an objective orientated society full of responsibilities, deadlines, goals and tasks. Because of these goal-oriented habits, many of us simply fail or have simply forgotten how to be happy.

It's very easy to get caught up in the everyday challenges of life that we tend to lose sight of the simple things that seem to bring true and fulfilling happiness. Many, if not all, of the elements that happiness comes from, most of us learn before starting and finishing grade school.

To put this in perspective a little more, one of my favorite books, "The Power of Positive Thinking" by Dr. Norman Vincent Peale explains, "children are more expert in happiness than adults." Dr. Peale goes on to explain that the "adult who can carry the spirit of a child into middle and old age is a genius."

I thought about this sentence for quite some time and I have come to understand just how much power lies in that one statement. I began to realize the real keys to fulfilling happiness are instinctively already built into us as children and it's very easy to lose sight of this,

as we grow older.

In his book, Dr. Peele asked his nine-year-old daughter one day, "Are you happy, honey?" She replied by saying "Sure I'm happy." He asked, "Are you always happy?" and she replied by saying "Sure, I'm always happy." He then asked, "What makes you happy?" and she responds by saying "Why, I don't know, I'm just happy." After her response, he then begins to urge her for a reason and she then began to reveal that her friends, classmates, family, Sunday-school teacher all make her happy. She even explains, "I love my mother and father. They take care of me when I'm sick, and they love me and are good to me."

There is no question that life can be a series of obstacles that ultimately may cause us to forget where our true happiness may come from. It can also become easy to manufacture our own unhappiness because of the circumstances life may bring. However by being aware of this, it is increasingly important to remind ourselves that it's the simple things in life that will ultimately bring us fulfilled, true happiness.

When life becomes overwhelming,



"The Nucleus" of *Positively Caviar* (Left to right) Jean Claude Louis-Charles III, Shayma Sulaiman, Nikki Abraham and Chazz Scott.
Courtesy Photo

remember to take a look at your life and you may find that it's the simple things that make you happy, just as Dr. Peele's daughter did. The same things that kept you happy and smiling as a child may very well be the same things that will continue to make you happy as you grow in age. It may very well be the meaningful relationships that you have in your life— your friends, family and even coworkers whom you love and love you that make you happy.

Although life may not be easy and may often feel like a series of endless tasks and responsibilities, if we can maintain our

childlike happiness and are grateful for the simple things that truly matter, we may find true happiness and fulfillment.

Positively Caviar, Inc. focuses on intensifying the message of positivity and optimism in our digitally centric lives in the Mid-Atlantic region. Once a month our Nucleus Team will write a column that focuses on mental and physical health tips, scientific studies, nutrition facts and stories that are positive in nature to support a purposeful and positive lifestyle. To learn more, visit: stay-basedandpositive.com

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Howard Street, Baltimore MD 21201. Please contact Barry Feinstein, Director and Certified Speech Language Pathologist. Bar577yr@comcast.net 410-404-1244

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Guest Editorials/Letters

Dear Baby Boomers, your children need you

By Lisa Fuller

Dear Baby Boomers,

Your children and your grandchildren need you right now—their lives may depend on it. I know, because I am one of them.

My only memory from the Cold War is the fall of the Berlin Wall. The only reason I remember that day, however, is because my mother told me I would remember it. At the time, I had no idea why she was so excited about the demolition of an ugly concrete wall that was covered in graffiti. I was six-years-old.

I never had to do duck and cover drills in school. I was born 20 years after President John F. Kennedy went on national television to urge Americans to build fallout shelters. I was still a baby when Carl Sagan and his colleagues discovered and publicized the prospect of nuclear winter—a development so significant that it helped initiate the de-escalation of the nuclear arms race.

My generation never felt the anxiety of the Cold War, and few of us feel anxious about the current North Korea crisis. Although the risk of nuclear war is now as high as it was during the Cuban Missile Crisis, and the majority of Americans “believe a major war is imminent,” we don’t seem to grasp the gravity of the situation, nor understand that even our own families could be at risk. Nuclear expert Alan Robock confirms that “most people, including high-ranking defense officials, are unaware that a nuclear war occurring halfway around the world from the U.S. could seriously harm the homeland.”

A few months ago, we mobilized in record numbers to prevent Congress from repealing the Affordable Care Act because we understood how losing Obamacare would negatively impact our lives. Now we are barely mobilizing at all around an issue that could have even more dire consequences for our health. Instead, we argue about nuclear war as if it was just one more issue on the political battleground that divides us. Even the activists amongst us are focused on other issues.

Author Jonathan Schell seemingly foresaw our predicament in 1998 when he wrote, “a new generation, innocent of the divisions of the Cold War... do not feel the urgency to escape the nuclear danger that some of its parents felt. The call for abolition should therefore be, among other things, a call from an older generation to younger one.”

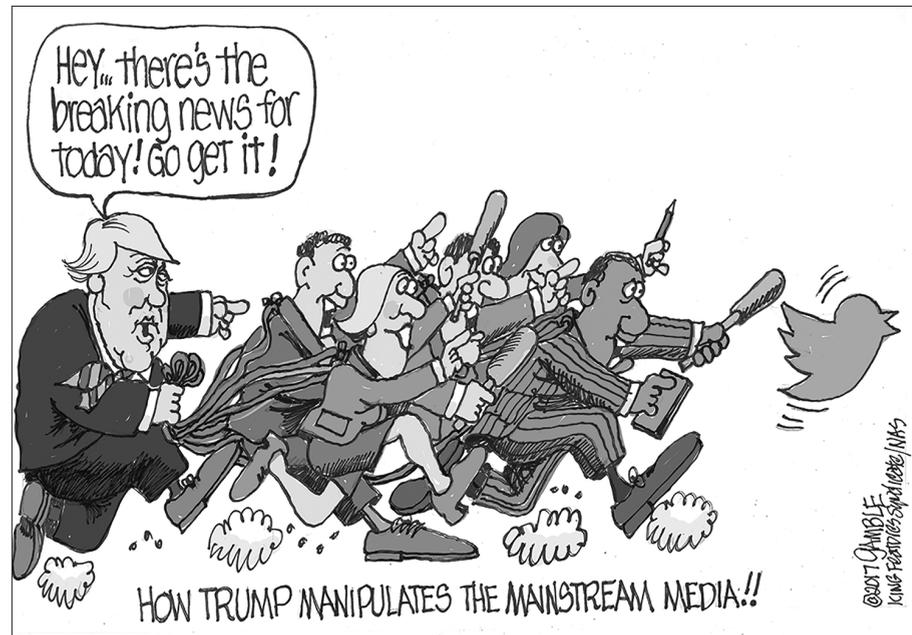
In 1982, your generation organized the (then) biggest demonstration in American history to protest nuclear escalation. Your success was largely a result of your visceral understanding of the devastating effects of nuclear war.

I know many of you are retired, and even more of you are tired. I know you already did your part in the 1960s with peace and love and all that. I know it is supposed to be our generation that takes responsibility and demands an end to the senseless escalation of threats. But we’re not doing it.

We need our parents and our grandparents to help us one last time. We need you to speak out again.

Love,
Generation X and the Millennials

Lisa Fuller spent the past eight years working in war zones such as Iraq, South Sudan and Sri Lanka as a senior staff member at Nonviolent Peaceforce. She recently discovered that she is a member of the Xennial microgeneration. Follow her on Twitter: @gigipurple



Letters to the Editor

Editor:

Re: Honor All Veterans

On this upcoming Veterans Day our family wishes to remember all of our veterans, including our family members who served in all the major wars from the Gulf War to Vietnam, Korea, WWII, WWI, the Spanish American War and the Civil War.

We are disappointed by the removal of statues of Confederate generals, thereby contributing to rewriting U.S. history. We believe these statues were placed to commemorate the service of some brilliant military minds and were not meant to be racist. About 150 Confederate generals graduated from West Point and served during the Civil War.

The Civil War was fought to preserve the Union and many Americans from the North and South fought huge battles, which raged from 1861 to 1865, and they are part of our history. Our family relates to the experiences of two members who fought in many battles during the Civil War.

Sergeant First Class (SFC) John B. Jones, my wife's grandfather; and William E. Jones, my wife's great uncle, were from the Arcade/Sandusky, N.Y. area and were in an upstate New York cavalry regiment. John enlisted on Sep-

tember 2, 1861 in Freedom, N.Y. as a private in the 5th NY Cavalry regiment.

John was force-marched to Staunton, Virginia—then Charlottesville—and ended up in a prison in Richmond. He was released on April 4, 1865 in the area of Annapolis, Maryland. He was mustered out as First Sergeant on June 30, 1865 in Elmira, NY. John died on September 24, 1918 when WWI was still raging in Europe.

Two of his sons, Alton Christmas Jones (my wife's father), William Howard Jones (my wife's uncle) were in France fighting the Germans. As United States Marines, they were in a number of major offensives during the war under the overall command of Maj. Gen. Lejeune. William Howard received the French Croix de Guerre medal and the U.S. Silver Star medal for exceptional bravery in the face of the enemy. He single handedly held off a German attack using a machine pistol at Blanc Mont, France on October 3, 1918.

We should not be obliterating U.S. history. Leave the statues standing and honor all veterans.

Donald Moskowitz
Former AG2 & LT., U.S. Navy
Londonderry, NH

Segregating public schools won't make America great again

By Rushern Baker (County Executive, Prince Georges County, Md.)

On November 4, 1952, Dr. Helen Kenyon addressed the Women's Society of Riverside Church in New York City and opined that, "Eleven o'clock Sunday morning is the most segregated hour in America." Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. often paraphrased the quote.

Today, sadly, our public schools best reflect Dr. Kenyon's and Dr. King's sentiment as the most segregated place in America.

The rampant re-segregation of American public schools poses a greater threat to the trajectory of America's progress than terrorism, nuclear proliferation and Russian meddling in our elections.

Sixty-two years after *Brown v. Board*, the GAO (Government Accountability Office) reported that from the years 2000-2014, both the percentage of K-12 public schools in high-poverty and the percentage of African American and Hispanic students enrolled in public schools more than doubled, and the percentage of all schools with so-called

racial or socioeconomic isolation grew from nine percent to 16 percent.

Research shows that racial and socioeconomic diversity in our classrooms leads to higher than average test scores, greater college enrollment rates, and the narrowing of achievement gaps. These gains don't just apply to poor and minority children either—every student benefits from learning and engaging with peers from different backgrounds.

“Research shows that racial and socioeconomic diversity in our classrooms leads to higher than average test scores, greater college enrollment rates, and the narrowing of achievement gaps. These gains don't just apply to poor and minority children either— every student benefits from learning and engaging with peers from different backgrounds.”

Despite the evidence, today our public schools are more segregated than they were 40 years ago.

As an advocate for children and families, and as a public servant, who has fought for more resources for students, I believe we must act boldly to save free, high-quality public education for all.

Some of the very leaders tasked with solving the negative effects from school re-segregation offer shortsighted policies that exacerbate racial and economic divisions. The ripple-effect, consequences of their misguided thinking remains the greatest policy foible of the modern era. Lazy logic behind bad policy feeds a perception that the achievement gap exists simply, because poor and minority students learn differently than their wealthier, White peers. Rather, it is directly tied to declining enrollment, lower

property values, and the dwindling resources available to tackle mounting challenges in the communities that surround underperforming public schools.

The greatest irony remains that those promoting harmful education policies use the same language of “giving every child a chance at a high-quality education” to pitch their tax-dollar-poaching and resource-pilfering experiments to desperate parents.

Rather than making public education a number one priority, a Hunger-Games-like competition for vouchers and charter schools leaves parents and students fending for themselves. The families that lose the education lottery end up at schools with increased needs and declining resources. In Maryland, our Governor's BOOST voucher program set aside \$5 million dollars of public money to help 2,400 families pay for their child's education. Yet, 80 percent of the families receiving these grants had children who were already enrolled in private schools.

Vouchers, whose American roots can be traced back to some Southern states' attempts to avoid integration, perpetuate segregated education and are nothing more than a thinly-veiled attempt to cut off funds to public schools. It gets even worse. Some communities

have simply seceded from the larger school district, as we've seen in Alabama and Tennessee, to keep from integrating their schools. Since 2000, the U.S. Justice Department has released 250 communities from their desegregation orders and consequently facilitated their financial and administrative secession from their school districts.

After all those factors lead to a dip in school performance, students and their communities are stigmatized as “failing.” Schools close. Quality of life drops; economic prospects dwindle; public safety decreases; and the cycle repeats, so that higher needs populations receive even fewer resources.

I know. I've lived through it. It's time to back up the big talk of “opportunity for all” with policies that don't ask parents to compete for a few spots, but instead, make public dollars work for every child.

We've embraced this mission in my home of Prince George's County, Maryland where I serve as County Executive. Though we know our best days are to come, we've seen incredible progress: increased enrollment; higher graduation rates; an increase in innovative academic programs; and more students receiving college scholarships.

The debate over how we improve public education can't begin with state-funded segregation, which harms communities and students, especially our most vulnerable. Let's secure our children's futures and the future of America by making a meaningful investment in quality public schools for all.

Rushern Baker, a graduate of Howard University, is the county executive in Prince George's County, Maryland. You can follow him on Twitter at @CountyExecBaker.

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Coppin's strategic partnership wins Greater Baltimore Committee award

Baltimore—Coppin State University was among the named winners at the Greater Baltimore Committee's 14th Annual Bridging the Gap Achievement Awards ceremony on November 1, 2017.

The Bridging the Gap Achievement Awards are held by the Greater Baltimore Committee and recognize exceptional minority, women-owned, majority businesses and executive who nurture the development of minority businesses in greater Baltimore and Maryland.

Coppin's strategic partnership is the first relationship of its kind in the nation between a public HBCU and a maker of space such as Open Works Baltimore.

The co-working space built by Open Works Baltimore is designed to nurture the next generation of small manufacturers and the business college at Coppin State University (CSU).

The partnership, which includes PNC Bank, is launching the DataWorks Project pilot, which will engage community and university stakeholders in designing an infrastructure to illuminate specific data in the immediate footprint of CSU.



Coppin's strategic partnership with PNC Bank and Open Works Baltimore Collaborative was recognized at the 14th Annual Bridging the Gap Achievement Awards Ceremony on November 1, 2017.

Courtesy Photo/ClipArt.com

Coppin says the data center is a catalyst for constructing a much richer context for understanding the challenges facing many of Baltimore's communities, such as the socio-cultural issues and economic disparities of the people and businesses within the university's footprint. Businesses, faculty, social and natural scientist, education researchers, and artists will come together using an interdisciplinary approach to observe the environment, conduct research, and solve community problems.

"We see the data center as a community intelligence agent, connecting all things West Baltimore to increase awareness through an interactive open source network for collecting, communicating, and sharing information," said Dr. Ronald C. Williams with CSU's College of Business. "The partnership is designed to provide a pathway of inclusion and establishes a collaborative framework of 'trust' between an HBCU, a financial institution, an accelerator organization, and the community."

The project will be the first center of its

kind that uses GIS technology to bring unique perspectives and data together to tell the story behind the statistical disparities and decline in some of Baltimore's most impoverished neighborhoods. The CSU DataWorks Project will connect community intelligence, Census Data, and other public sources of information into an integrated communication platform.

The DataWorks program has a unique opportunity to not only inform the community; but to advocate for public policy, connect key stakeholders and resources, and support economic growth and vitality.

"We are so pleased that this partnership's value is drawing recognition in conjunction with the annual Bridging the Gap Achievement Awards," said CSU President Dr. Maria Thompson. "The DataWorks program will greatly support the revitalization of West Baltimore and the enhancement of the immediate Coppin footprint."

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Maryland Lt. Gov. joins Larry Young to host radio show about opioid epidemic

By Ursula V. Battle

WOLB 1010 AM talk show host Larry Young was joined by Maryland Lt. Governor Boyd Rutherford, to co-host a “town hall” style discussion on the causes and effects of the opioid epidemic in Maryland. The live broadcast aired Friday, Nov. 3, 2017.

Young and the Lt. Governor Rutherford were also joined by Baltimore County Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) Director Dr. Gregory Branch.

According to the National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIH), Opioids are a class of drugs that include the illegal drug heroin, synthetic opioids such as fentanyl, and pain relievers available legally by prescription, such as oxycodone (OxyContin®), hydrocodone (Vicodin®), codeine, morphine, and many others.

The NIH further notes that these drugs are chemically related and interact with opioid receptors on nerve cells in the body and brain. Opioid pain relievers are generally safe when taken for a short time and as prescribed by a doctor, but because they produce euphoria in addition to pain relief, they can be misused (taken in a different way or in a larger quantity than prescribed, or taken without a doctor’s prescription).

Regular use— even as prescribed by a doctor— can lead to dependence and, when misused, opioid pain relievers can lead to overdose incidents and deaths.

According to the Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, the state recorded 2,089 alcohol and drug intoxication deaths last year. Fentanyl and heroin are being blamed for driving the overdoses – whether Marylanders are taking only those opioids or are mixing them with other substances.

Earlier this year, Maryland Gov. Larry Hogan escalated his administration’s response to the opioid epidemic by declaring a state of emergency and committing an additional \$50 million over the next five years to beef up enforcement, prevention and treatment services.

During the broadcast at Radio One, Lt. Governor Rutherford and Dr. Branch discussed strategies aimed at combating



Maryland Lt. Governor Boyd Rutherford; WOLB 1010 AM talk show host Larry Young; and Baltimore County Department of Health and Human Services Director Dr. Gregory Branch during a “Town Hall” style discussion on the causes and effects of the opioid epidemic in Maryland. The program was broadcast on Friday, November 3, 2017.
Photo by Ursula V. Battle

the epidemic, along with various services and programs offered throughout Baltimore County and the state. The two also fielded questions from attendees and callers.

“There is a difference between addiction and dependence,” explained Dr. Branch. “Addiction is behavior. It’s a behavior that says a person will do anything despite any type of consequences to get that drug. That person is clearly addicted. Then there are those people who are dependent. That person is not going to do anything, but they are dependent on that drug for their life.” Dr. Branch also discussed the availability of naloxone, a life-saving drug that can reverse opioid-related overdoses.

Young, who said he was “very pleased” with the broadcast, talked about its purpose.

“I am very disappointed with President Donald Trump’s decision surrounding this problem,” said the talk show host. “We know it’s a city, county and state problem here in Maryland, but it’s also a national problem. Based on the actions of the President, I wanted to find out

what the state and county were doing. As a result, the Lt. Governor and Dr. Branch were invited, and here we are today.”

Last month, President Trump directed the Department of Health and Human Services to declare the opioid crisis a public health emergency, but fell short of declaring it “a national emergency,” which many say would have prompted the rapid allocation of federal funding to address the issue.

Criticized by Democratic lawmakers and some public health advocates, who questioned the President’s commitment to the crisis, noting that Trump made no immediate request to Congress for emergency funding.

“That was very foolish,” said Young, who plans to continue the conversation.

“We are going to repeat this show and have the Lt. Governor and Dr. Branch back on,” said Young. “I would also like to include officials from Baltimore City, Anne Arundel County and Howard County. This was a great show, and a lot of helpful information went out.”

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(Aviso de Audiencias Públicas)

SCHEDULE OF PUBLIC HEARINGS

MONDAY, NOVEMBER 13, 2017 5:00 PM - 7:00 PM

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Pennsylvania Avenue Branch*
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MONDAY, NOVEMBER 13, 2017 6:00 PM - 8:00 PM

Baltimore County Public Library,
Owings Mills Branch
Metro Centre at Owings Mills
10302 Grand Central Avenue
Owings Mills, MD 21117
Transit to this location via LocalLink 87 and 89, Express
BusLink 106, and Metro SubwayLink

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 14, 2017 6:00 PM - 8:00 PM

CCBC, Essex Campus
Administration Building, Room 120
7201 Rossville Boulevard
Baltimore, MD 21237
Transit to this location via LocalLink 56 and 62

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 14, 2017 6:00 PM - 8:00 PM

Rita Church Community Center
2101 Saint Lo Drive
Baltimore, MD 21213
Transit to this location via CityLink Gold, and LocalLink
21, 22, and 54

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 15, 2017 6:00 PM - 8:00 PM

Baltimore County Public Library,
North Point Branch
1716 Merritt Blvd.
Baltimore, MD 21222
Transit to this location via LocalLink 62

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 15, 2017 6:00 PM - 8:00 PM

Sheraton Baltimore North Hotel, Grason Room
903 Dulaney Valley Road
Towson, MD 21204
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LocalLink 36, 51, 52, 53, and 93, and Express BusLink
102 and 106

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 16, 2017 6:00 PM - 8:00 PM

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The full text detailing the proposed service changes is available for public review in the lobby of the William Donald Schaefer Building at 6 St. Paul Street in Baltimore and online at <https://mta.maryland.gov/public-hearings>.

Interested persons are invited to share their comments at a public hearing or in writing. The MDOT MTA will accept written comments through Wednesday, December 20, 2017. Comments may be mailed to MDOT MTA, Office of Customer and Community Relations, 6 St. Paul Street, Baltimore, MD 21202. Alternatively, you may email your comments to HearingComments@mta.maryland.gov. Your name and address must be included with your comments to become part of the public hearing record.

Locations are accessible for people with disabilities. Please contact the department listed below to make arrangements for: special assistance or additional accommodations; printed material in an alternate format or translated; hearing impaired persons; and persons requesting an interpreter. All requests must be received one week in advance.

Los sitios tienen acceso para personas con discapacidades. Por favor comuníquese con el departamento listado a continuación para concertar arreglos para: ayuda especial o adaptaciones adicionales; material impreso en un formato alternativo o traducido; personas sordas y personas que solicitan un(a) intérprete. Todas las solicitudes deben ser recibidas con una semana de antelación.

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BCCC and UB apply "B-Power" partnership to bolster dual enrollment for city students

Baltimore— Continuing the renewed synergy of partnerships to boost student options and achievement before considering higher education, Baltimore City Community College (BCCC) and the University of Baltimore (UB) have

launched the B-Power Initiative with help from funding from the University System of Maryland. The new effort will help students determine which campus and program fits them best after graduation; provide students information on Dual Enrollment at BCCC and UB; effectively recruit students; and gain a better understanding of students' career and program interests by surveying them when they come to campus.

Fresh off the success of the Youth-Works summer jobs program in Baltimore City, sponsored by Mayor Catherine E. Pugh, the schools will gauge whether to offer the program consecutively - i.e., first at UB and then at BCCC - during the summer of 2018; guide UB Dual Enrollment students who haven't yet graduated but have taken both UB Dual Enrollment courses to BCCC for additional course opportunities; coordinate the capacity of UB and BCCC for Dual Enrollment; and share contact information for students who completed B-Power programs but who do not plan to attend UB, after they graduate.

"This is a wonderful collaboration between our colleges that meets the needs

of students to ensure they're placed on a successful pathway," said Michael D. Thomas, BCCC Vice President for Workforce Development and Continuing Education who was formerly head of Career Technology Education for the City Schools. "Besides the opportunity to experience both a community college and a university campus geographically close to one another in the city where they live, students will have time to see how college works, how to pick their classes and choose a major— really, all the things you need to be successful in college."

Currently, UB serves a total of 14 middle and high schools in the dual enrollment program, all of whom had scheduled class times at UB during the fall 2017 semester. Currently, Paul Laurence Dunbar High School, a P-TECH (Pathways in Technology Early College High) school, which partners with BCCC for early college enrollment, participates in the UB program. The other P-TECH school, Carver Vocational-Technical High School, is slated to begin next spring.

"We are helping students to "bake success right into the cake" of their overall high school and college experience," said John Brenner, UB Director of Early College Initiatives.

Last fall, BCCC President/CEO Dr. Gordon F. May and UB President Kurt L. Schmoke signed an articulation agreement enabling seamless transfer of students who complete their studies at BCCC. UB's Bee Line transfer program will assist and provide benefits to those who wish to transfer to UB. The program will allow students to transfer as many as 63 credits, receive transfer scholarships if eligible and participate in UB's Helen P. Denit Honors Program. The program also guarantees admission and waives the UB application fee.

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Retired Veteran writes about overcoming learning disability in new book

By Stacy M. Brown

Lawrence Schneider, an Air Force veteran and former research engineer at NASA, grew up in Cleveland, Ohio but has lived a large part of his life near Baltimore, in Hunt Valley.

The award-winning sculptor and author who penned the 2014 book, "Insight in 3D: Ten Years of Sculpture," has released his memoir, "Say Yes on Saturday."

The 288-page memoir touches on Schneider's upbringing during the Great Depression and his taking on a successful STEM career despite battling dyslexia and other learning disabilities.

"I thought I was going to be the only kid in the world to fail third grade. The other kids were hard on me," Schneider said. "I was an introvert and dyslexia added a layer of shyness. Dyslexia forced me to work harder and play less."

Dyslexia is a rare disorder that involves difficulty in learning to read or interpret words and letters. By the time Schneider entered high school, he had learned to overcome dyslexia with hard work, persistence and the determined support of his mother.

Today there are helpful computer tools like spelling checkers and writers can seek the help of editors, Schneider said, adding that it didn't hurt that he married a legal secretary.

"There is a well-studied advantage to having dyslexia. People with dyslexia are often more creative, persistent and risk tolerant," he said. "Successful dyslexics include Albert Einstein, Steven Spielberg, and many others."

Schneider's book chronicles "Clarence," a shy boy with dyslexia from a working class family in Cleveland whose grandfather predicts that he would be special someday if he tests himself by facing challenging adventures.

When Clarence falls in love with a beautiful outgoing girl who doesn't even recognize his existence, he resolves to change in order to win her. After a lifetime of searching and struggling, Clarence discovers the true meaning of life, loyalty, and love.

Publishers of the book note that if readers join Clarence in his quest, they'll

discover what he learns, be entertained by how he overcomes his shortcomings, and perhaps find inspiration to reconnect with their own dreams.

Readers will also learn much about Schneider's unlikely journey from having a learning disability to becoming a key cog for NASA.

"I graduated as an aeronautical engineer in 1959, shortly after the Soviet Union launched the first man made satellite, 'Sputnik.' That event triggered the creation of NASA and I became a part of the space race with my first job at NASA in Huntsville, Alabama," Schneider said.

Two years later, Schneider joined his cousin to pursue a long held dream of designing a short-takeoff-and landing airplane. The duo formed a startup company and successfully developed two unique airplanes.

After a company takeover, Schneider went on to work in the aerospace industry while earning an advanced degree in computer systems management, which along with his vast experience, prepared him for a career as a computer systems manager at the Social Security Administration.

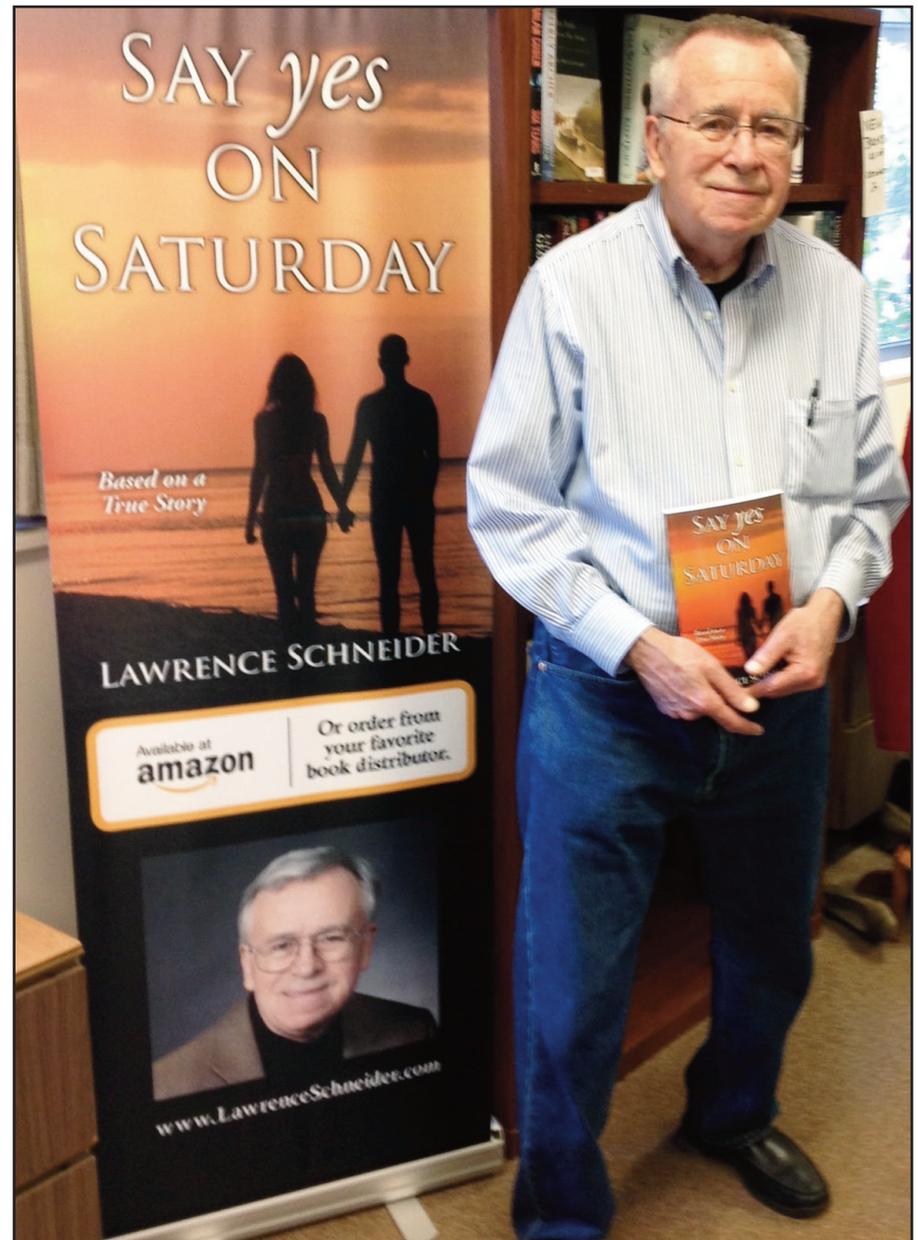
After retirement, he then became a full-time sculptor. "A woodcarving hobby triggered my interest and love for creating three dimensional figures. I discovered a new talent for telling stories with art," Schneider said.

"After 10 years of creating sculptures, I self-published a coffee table book celebrating the milestone so when I am gone I would like to pass on hard-won life experiences and insights to my yet-to-be-born descendants."

Those yet-to-be-born descendants are likely to first learn about Schneider's life experiences when they are young, so he feared that a dull memoir would stay on the shelf unread, he said.

"Because a good story is more likely to interest them, I chose fiction that is based on a true story, and reviewers of the finished story encouraged me to share it with the public as a novel," Schneider said.

"Say Yes on Saturday," is available at amazon.com or lawrenceschneider.com.



Lawrence Schneider
Courtesy Photo

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VA volunteer receives award for thousands of hours of service

Continued from page 1

“You could catch a movie on Saturday and then you went to church on Sunday,” Allen said. “Sometimes, there would be a church social on Sundays, too,” she said.

Speaking about the various changes she has witnessed from her teen years as compared to modern day, Allen says the differences are readily noticeable.

“Clothing has changed a lot,” she said. “I don’t remember girls wearing shorts when I was growing up and kids today, they think they’re all grown up.”

Allen conceded that the fault doesn’t always lie with the youth.

“Some parents influence their kids to act more grown up before their time,” Allen said.

“You see young ladies wearing heels and carrying purses and young people today don’t always dance properly.”

Once Allen retired from the State Department more than two decades ago, she began volunteering at the D.C. Veterans Affairs Medical Center. She picked the VA center for volunteer work because her husband served in the Navy during World War II. He was also a disabled veteran and her son is a Navy veteran.

“I started to volunteer in 1992 and my first volunteer assignment was working

with the diabetes clinic where a lot of filing was required for all of the information that was being collected,” she said. “I worked in many locations throughout the hospital and was always able to contribute.”

Her vast contributions have made her famous— at least at the center.

“I feel good about that. When I started to volunteer, I was given a number of assignments and I was able to help a lot of veterans,” Allen said. “They respected my opinions and I was always able to contribute in positive ways,” she said, adding that most individuals usually value her opinion.

For anyone seeking to volunteer, Allen’s advice is simple.

“When you volunteer, do your best and if you don’t understand what needs to be done, ask someone to explain, so that the job is done correctly,” she said. “Don’t just sit around, there are always things that can be done.”

According to those who know her, Allen continues to be a steady influence on all those whom she meets. She says that after more than 16,000 hours, she doesn’t know when she’ll stop offering her time and service.

“I just like helping people and I



*Mary Allen
Courtesy Photo*

learned about how to care for people, which is important work,” she said. “I believe God has healed my body to keep

me going. I don’t have any pain and that has kept me going.”

Hair Cuttery to donate haircuts to former military in recognition of Veterans Day

Vienna, Va. – This Veterans Day, join Hair Cuttery, the largest family-owned and operated chain of hair salons in the country, in saying “thank you” to our veterans through its Share-A-Haircut program. For every haircut purchased by Hair Cuttery patrons on Veterans Day, Saturday, Nov. 11, a free haircut certificate will be donated back to a veteran in the same community.

To distribute the free haircut certificates, Hair Cuttery partners with veteran’s organizations across the U.S., including, the American Red Cross, Operation Sacred Housing and regional Veterans Affairs offices.

“With November’s Share-A-Haircut program, we are saluting former military in neighborhoods throughout our great country,” said Dennis Ratner, Hair Cuttery founder and CEO. “This is our way



of expressing our gratitude for their selflessness and courage, and serves as a token of our appreciation for their heroism.”

Since 1999, the Share-A-Haircut program has donated 2.2 million free haircut certificates valued at more than \$35.92 million to various causes including the homeless, survivors of domestic violence and disadvantaged children. This November, Hair Cuttery hopes to reach thousands more with its veterans-focused campaign.

Hair Cuttery has an established history of charitable giving, supporting a range of local and national causes including, St. Baldrick’s Foundation, American Red Cross, American Cancer Society, Girls on the Run and The National Network to End Domestic Violence.



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High School Journalist of the Year

Beyond Bars celebrates 25 years of uniting incarcerated mothers with their daughters

By Andrea Blackstone

While flipping through the Girl Scouts of Central Maryland (GSCM) Beyond Bars 25th Anniversary program booklet at the luncheon at La Fontaine Bleue on November 4, 2017, the alarming statistics sprawled across two pages commanded attention. Two of which read: “Women, compared to men, are the fastest growing group of prisoners in the United States,” and “68 percent of incarcerated women have at least one child under the age of 18 left behind when they enter prison.”

For 25 years, the Girl Scouts Beyond Bars program has worked to lessen the impact of separation that occurs between mothers and daughters who must endure heart-wrenching situations like these.

The Beyond the Bars program has provided opportunities for over 400 girls to bond with their mothers through bi-monthly troop meetings at the Maryland Correctional Institution for Women (MCIW) in Jessup, Maryland, as well as in other states.

“At this point, I think that it is important to note that the Girl Scouts Beyond Bars Program began in response to a Baltimore City Circuit Court Judge’s concern for the mothers she was sentencing, and for their children. In 1992, Judge Carol E. Smith contacted the U.S. Department of Justice about [the concerns] she had. The Justice Department and Judge Smith went to the GSCM with a plan, with a suggestion of holding Girl Scout meetings at the prison. Fortunately, the Justice Department [and] the GSCM agreed. The Justice Department provided funding and a program was born,” said senior Baltimore City Circuit Court System Judge Marcella Holland, who has served as co-chair of the Beyond Bars Advisory Committee for 19 years. “With federal funding the program grew nationally, and was at one time offered by 30 states in this country. When federal funding ended, many counties had to drop the program, and today currently the program is only in 15 states, but here in Maryland we are very fortunate. Where it all began, the Beyond Bars Program has operated continuously for the past 25 years, with the help of private foundations and donations, and the



Justice Mears, 19, is the first student from the GSCM Beyond Bars program to attend college. Mears reminded the audience that having an incarcerated mother doesn’t have to limit what a girl can accomplish in life. Photo by Andrea Blackstone

ongoing support from the very beginning of a number of women judges.”

Kemba Smith Praidia, the keynote speaker at the GSCM celebration and author of “Poster Child: The Kemba Smith Story” was a former federal prison inmate. Smith Praidia spoke about her experience giving birth while she was incarcerated.

Smith Praidia explained that she was student at Hampton University who got mixed up with her then boyfriend’s drug dealing activities.

She was sentenced to 24.5 years in federal prison for a limited role in the drug ring. She was pardoned by Former President Bill Clinton in 2000.

Now an activist, author, wife and motivational speaker, Smith shares her cautionary tale, while imparting hope whenever she can.

“Your parents, your mother— they are human. We make mistakes, but it’s very important that I hope that in this program, that you have learned about the act of forgiveness,” Smith Praidia said to the Girl Scouts. “I want you to know that your moms are capable of coming out of prison and doing well, and being successful. But right now, your moms are being very strong, and I am sure that they love and pray for you every night.”

Justice Mears, 19, symbolizes the hope that youth graduates of the GSCM’s Beyond Bars program will go on to accomplish great things in life.

Mears is the first student from the GSCM Beyond Bars program to attend college. She is currently a biology major at the University of Maryland Eastern Shore.

Mears serves as an example for fellow Girl Scouts like Kaniya Collins, 14, that having a bright future is possible. She reminded the Girl Scouts that having an incarcerated mother doesn’t have to limit what a girl can accomplish in life.

“I love being in the Girls Scouts, because before I started Girl Scouts, I didn’t see my mother as much. And when she was home with me, my mother was like my best friend. Girl Scouts made us become closer—we catch up with each other. It just made everything better because I get more time to be with her. I get to hug her and kiss her, even though I [am] sad sometimes, when I go and see her, it makes me happy,” Mears explained. “I felt like I didn’t have nobody, and then when you come around people, your support system is everything. I feel so much better about myself.”

Mears was awarded two surprise scholarships on the festive afternoon. She received \$250 from ScholarCHIPS, and \$1,000 was provided the GSCM to their Beyond Bars program graduate.

For more information about the Girl Scouts of Central Maryland Beyond Bars program, visit <http://www.gscm.org/en/support-us/BeyondBars.html>.

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CCBC partners with Horseshoe Baltimore to offer Casino Dealer Academy

Baltimore County, Md.— The Community College of Baltimore County and Horseshoe Casino Baltimore are partnering to operate a “CCBC Casino Dealer Academy.” Housed onsite at Horseshoe Casino Baltimore, this new academy will give individuals the necessary skills to compete for jobs locally and within Maryland’s growing casino industry as a table games dealer.

Students of the CCBC Casino Dealer Academy receive instruction covering introduction to gaming, carnival games and blackjack. Additional instruction in other major games such as roulette, baccarat and craps are available for experienced, working dealers looking to expand their repertoire of major games.

Classes are flexible and can be completed in as little as four weeks. Training at the Academy is offered at no cost to students.

“We are extremely excited to enter into this partnership with Horseshoe Casino Baltimore,” said CCBC President Sandra Kurtinitis. “The gaming industry has grown exponentially in Maryland, and with that comes the need for trained individuals with the expertise to fill job vacancies. The CCBC Casino Dealer Academy will allow us to do that for the gaming industry. It’s the perfect marriage between local business and CCBC to address a current workforce training need.”

Casino dealers are currently in high demand in Maryland. Dealers can earn more than \$40,000 annually plus benefits. And, hours are extremely flexible working within this 24/7 entertainment industry.

To learn more about the Casino Dealer Academy, visit: www.ccbcmd.edu/casinodealer. Anyone interested in the program is invited to attend an Information Session on Wednesday, December 6, 2017 at CCBC Owings Mills located at 10300 Grand Central Avenue, or call 443-840-4625.

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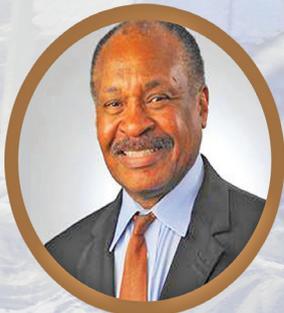
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Natural gas safety tips from BGE

Baltimore— With cold weather and the heating season quickly approaching, Baltimore Gas and Electric (BGE) would like to remind customers to familiarize themselves with the natural gas safety tips provided in BGE's natural gas safety brochure which is being distributed to homes and businesses in and around BGE's natural gas service area. Customers should be mindful that households and businesses not served directly by natural gas are still in proximity to BGE's and other operators' gas equipment.

"BGE is committed to maintaining a safe and reliable natural gas system and it is vital that our customers know how to recognize, report, and respond to natural gas leaks and emergencies," said Christie McMullen, vice president of Gas Distribution for BGE. "Just as BGE prepares for the heating season, we urge our customers to have their heating systems checked and inspected by a qualified technician to ensure safe and efficient operation."

BGE's natural gas safety brochure is being mailed to all customers. The brochure provides information in English and Spanish, detailing how to recognize and report natural gas leaks. A scratch-and-sniff odor indicator is included that reminds customers about "mercaptan," a safety additive that BGE and other utilities put in natural gas to give it a distinctive rotten egg odor that makes gas



easier to detect. The brochure also reminds customers to call Miss Utility at 811 prior to digging anywhere—from large construction jobs to home landscaping and gardening projects.

If you detect a gas leak:

- Leave the building or area immediately and go to a safe place where you can call BGE, toll free, 24 hours a day at 1-800-685-0123.
- Extinguish all open flames. Do not use matches or lighters and do not attempt to light an appliance.
- Do not use any phones, electric switches, thermostats or appliance controls. All of these devices, including battery operated equipment, can cause sparks, and ignite natural gas.
- Do not start or turn off vehicles or motorized equipment. Abandon any motorized equipment you may be operating.
- Do not attempt to find the source of the leak or to repair a leak.
- When you call, BGE will respond promptly to survey the area, perform safety measures, and repair BGE's equipment. There is no charge to investigate a gas leak.
- For more information on natural gas safety and to view an electronic version of BGE's natural gas safety brochure, visit: bge.com/naturalgassafety.

Please send PSAs and Community Calendar events to: kreevie@btimes.com

Stanton Community Center Needs Volunteers

The Stanton Community Center serves as a community resource that provides children and adults with recreational and cultural enrichment opportunities and health, medical, therapeutic, and counseling services. The center displays historical portraits of Annapolis' diverse community and features many offices, a multi-purpose gymnasium, commercial kitchen, fitness area, historic classroom, media center with computers, and two conference/meeting rooms. Volunteers, age 18 and up, are needed as academic tutors for elementary, middle and high school students in the After School Homework Program on Monday through Thursday, 3 p.m. to 6 p.m. from September–June to help with homework, core subjects, school projects and academic skills. The program ends with a Homework Club Banquet to recognize students for their in-school academic accomplishments and for their after school Homework Club academic accomplishments. Also needed are volunteers to help with the computer lab, which is available free to city residents. For more information contact Archie Trader at 410-263-7966 or email: atrader@annapolis.gov or visit the website: www.annapolis.gov at Department-Recreation & Parks.

Rally to save Bethesda African Cemetery!

Sunday, November 12, 2017

1:30 p.m. to 3:30 p.m.

March with us to the cemetery from

Macedonia Baptist Church

5119 River Road

Bethesda, Maryland

Right this historic wrong!

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GENERAL ANNOUNCEMENTS

LADIES' NIGHT BINGO
Thursday, Nov. 16th, Doors open at 6pm; Games begin at 7pm
Charlestown Retirement Community
719 Maiden Choice Lane
Tickets \$20.00 in advance, \$25.00 at the door
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Contact Philanthropy office for ticket info 410-737-8892.
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