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MLK Day Parade in Annapolis celebrates peace, recognizes community service



A sudden snow shower did not stop these energetic youth performers from jumping joyfully to celebrate the life and legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. along with a host of community groups, sororities, fraternities, politicians, other youth groups, Annapolis City employees, and exotic car drivers and passengers. The Annapolis fourth annual Martin Luther King, Jr. Parade was held on January 15, 2018. The parade's theme was "Pushing Peace in our Homes, Communities, Nation, & World!" (See article on page 11) Photo: Andrea Blackstone

Former Heroin Addict Peddling Hope

By Ursula V. Battle

Tim Ryan once found himself playing the “cool dad” role with his son Nick. Ryan engaged in drinking, marijuana and heroin use with Nick. The father and son soon saw their lives spiraling out of control. Ryan was in and out of rehab and wound up behind bars. The once successful businessman found himself facing a seven-year prison sentence for drug-related convictions.

However, while serving his sentence, Ryan got clean and put his life of drug use behind him. Despite treatment programs and other help, Nick continued to use, and eventually died of a heroin overdose at the age of 20.

“I was not a father to Nick,” said Ryan. “I was a friend. I set the stage, and he followed in my footsteps. Nick passed away on the 21st month of my sobriety. He chose to use again and succumbed to opioids.”

Reaching beyond the devastation and heartbreak, Tim used Nick's death as the inspiration to provide help, hope and healing to those struggling with addiction.

“I want to do everything I can to help people turn their lives around,” said Ryan. “I am a ‘hope dealer.’”

Ryan was the subject of the hit A&E documentary *Dope Man*, which aired July 31, 2017. The show provided a chilling, yet hopeful look at the unexpected face of addiction through the eyes of Ryan.

“The show was very fulfilling and intense,” said Ryan. The experience was phenomenal. That show touched millions of people worldwide. We received calls from all over asking for help. It's a matter of letting people know [there's] help out there. There are so many people out there struggling. If I helped one person, that's what it's all about.”

Ryan is an advisor to Rehab.com, a leading online resource for individuals seeking treatment. Rehab.com provides unbiased resource information on over 16,000 treatment facilities across the U.S. He is also the founder of A Man in Recovery Foundation, a nonprofit that helps addicts and their families.

Ryan is also the author of *From Dope*



Tim Ryan is on a crusade to help those struggling with addiction and their families. He is a highly sought after speaker, who speaks all over the country.

Courtesy Photos

to *Hope*, and says he has received interest in turning the book into a movie. He is a highly sought after speaker, and speaks all over the country.

“I just want to help people,” said Ryan. “God opens doors, and I walk through them. My goal is to find avenues to get people into treatment. Many people who are addicted do not know what to do because of the stigma of addiction, and parents think they might have done something wrong. My role in all of this, is to guide and direct people into treatment and live a life of recovery. I am the concierge of the treatment industry.”

Ryan warns that addiction programs are not a “one size fits all.”

“The way technology is today, everyone has Internet access,” said Ryan. “They Google ‘drug treatment’ and call a phone number, but sometimes it's misleading information. People have to do their homework, which means they have to do some research to find out which program best suits a person. If I knew then what I know now when Nick was struggling with addiction, I would have sent him to Florida for a long-term treatment program aimed at helping younger people.”

Ryan added, “Rehab.com is the best

resource. It is not owned by a treatment center. Rehab.com helps people to do their homework and people aren't misled.”

Ryan has been featured in USA Today, Newsweek, Chicago Tribune, and on The Steve Harvey Show with Dr. Drew.

“Nobody chooses to struggle with addiction,” said Ryan. “They made a bad

choice, but that does not make them a bad person. Some people have more compassion for a homeless dog or cat. We need to change that way of thinking.”

According to the CDC (Centers for Disease Control), since 1999, the number of overdose deaths involving opioids (including prescription opioids and heroin) quadrupled. From 2000 to 2015 more than half a million people died from drug overdoses. The CDC further notes that 91 Americans die every day from an opioid overdose.

“Being in this line of work is very stressful,” said Ryan. “Two weeks ago, two kids who I had worked with passed away. Despite the sad news, I also receive good news letting me know that people are living sober. Someone recently sent me a message thanking me. They said they were two years sober and now have a career.”

He added, “Another person read ‘From Dope to Hope’ while they were in jail, and went into treatment. They said I had given them hope. Those things give me motivation to move forward. I believe that as long as a person has a heartbeat, they have hope.”

For more information about Rehab.com, visit: www.rehab.com and for more information about A Man in Recovery Foundation, visit: www.tim-ryanspeaks.com.

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Guest Editorials/Commentary

Time to focus on school choice in Baltimore and Across America

By Andrew R. Campanella

Next week, schools, homeschool groups, organizations and individuals in Maryland and across America will work together to raise awareness about the importance of opportunity in K-12 education.

National School Choice Week begins on January 21 and celebrates all types of schools and education environments for children.

Nationwide, 32,240 different events and activities— such as open houses, school fairs, and information sessions— are being planned, with an estimated attendance of 6.7 million people. In fact, 479 of those events and activities will be held in Maryland, and 80 are in Baltimore.

National School Choice Week has been celebrated every year since 2011. And even with increased awareness, many families still have questions about school choice and how it can benefit them and their communities.

The first thing to know is that school choice isn't partisan or political. It isn't about a specific set of policy goals either. Rather, it's about parents making personal decisions for their children.

School choice means empowering individual parents with the opportunity to search for, and find, the best education environments for their individual children— regardless of where they live or how much money they make.

Finding the right school is important, because every child has unique talents, challenges, and needs. School choice isn't about finding fault with any of the schooling options available. Instead, it recognizes that while one student might thrive at a neighborhood school, another student might do better somewhere else.

Research shows that when parents actively choose schools and education environments for their children, students are more likely to succeed in school. They are also more likely to graduate from high school, get good jobs, and participate in their communities. School choice isn't just theoretical. Right now, more parents in Maryland and across America are actively choosing the education environments for their children than at any other time in history.

National School Choice Week provides parents with an opportunity to evaluate the education options available for their children. If parents are interested in switching their child to a different school, or considering homeschooling, it helps to start looking into these options in the winter.

Families in Maryland can choose from traditional public schools, public charter schools, public magnet schools, private schools, online academies, and homeschooling. Because the state offers a private school choice program, parents who choose private schools for their children may also be eligible for state-supported scholarships or tuition assistance for their children.

Searching for a new school, or considering an alternative education environment, doesn't have to be daunting. Parents can start by talking to their children and other parents, researching schools online, and visiting schools in person. A good place to start is the National School Choice Week website: www.schoolchoiceweek.com, where we provide more information about specific school choice options in the Old Line State as well as listings of the tens of thousands of local and regional events happening this year.

National School Choice Week is a time when the country comes together around the idea that every child can succeed when they find the right school fit. This month, parents have more options and opportunities than ever before to find that right fit. For individual communities and for our country, that is a good thing.

A nationally recognized advocate for children and families, Andrew R. Campanella serves as president of National School Choice Week, the world's largest-annual celebration of opportunity in education. He lives in Northwest Florida.



Community Affairs

BGE files to pass on federal tax reduction benefits to customers

Baltimore— BGE has filed with the Maryland Public Service Commission (PSC) to pass approximately \$82 million in annual tax savings to customers, resulting from federal tax cost reductions.

The Tax Cuts and Jobs Act, which decreased the corporate tax rate from 35 percent to 21 percent, was signed into law on December 22, 2017 and became effective on January 1, 2018.

If approved by the PSC, the average BGE residential electric customer can expect to see an estimated \$2.31 decrease on their monthly bill, and the average residential combined natural gas and electric customer can expect an estimated \$4.27 monthly reduction, effective in February 2018.

“Reduced tax costs create an opportunity for BGE customers to benefit from further decreases in their total energy bills,” said Calvin G. Butler Jr, chief executive officer of BGE. “Even prior



to the tax reductions, the long-term trends of customers using significantly less energy and the declining costs of natural gas and electricity commodities have resulted in the average BGE residential customer's total monthly bill remaining lower than 2008 levels.”

While customer bills have decreased, BGE has continued to invest in the systems serving customers, delivering the record lows in the frequency and duration of power outages, accelerated modernization of the natural gas system, and more useful information through the smart grid that allows customers to use energy more efficiently.

To truly remember Dr. King, political action and infinite hope must outweigh anti-democratic forces

By Rep. Gregory W. Meeks (D-N.Y.)

Often lost in our celebration of Martin Luther King, Jr. is his unwavering testimony of hope and his political action in the face of despair and nihilism, forces that have the potential to thwart otherwise transformative movements.

We often remember Dr. King's hope as a more passive "dream" instead of the definitive declaration of "Normalcy, Never Again" which was the intended title of his revered 1963 speech.

Nonetheless, no time is riper than 2018 to commemorate Dr. King's true legacy by exercising political action and demonstrating unwavering hope in the face of circumstances that naturally call for the blues.

No doubt, anti-democratic forces have penetrated American politics and those forces have the potential to breed widespread hopelessness and political apathy. For example, gerrymandering—the partisan act of creating voting districts in favor of one's own political party—has led to situations like that in Virginia, where 55 percent of voters pulled the levers for Democrats to only lose the

House of Delegates by the drawing of straws. These Virginians, and other marginalized voters, could lose hope and sit out future elections conceding that their votes and voices matter little.

Anti-democratic proposals—including a bid by Jeff Sessions to require Census respondents to answer self-incriminating questions about their immigration status—have the potential to discourage

identification laws, voter roll purges, limitations on early voting procedures, and other impediments to voter registration and ballot casting continue to suppress Americans to this day.

Despite the times, if the legacy of Dr. King means anything, today's challenges are a call for increased involvement in our democratic process. A number of democratic victories reaffirm Dr. King's

Washington, as a result.

Democratic Senator Doug Jones' statewide victory in Alabama is also an example of why our infinite hope should always trump finite disappointment, especially in the electoral process. If only a few voters lost hope and decided to sit out the Alabama senatorial race, the result could have been status quo in the Senate during a time where resistance to anti-democratic forces in Washington is needed more than ever.

We must heed the words of the great man we honor today, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., who warned us that "history will have to record that the greatest tragedy of this period of social transition was not the strident clamor of the bad people, but the appalling silence of the good people."

As Chair of the Congressional Black Caucus' Political Action Committee, I am inspired by Dr. King's infinite hope now more than ever before.

This year, concerned citizens can make Dr. King's philosophy real in the voting booth. Lawyers can do the same in the courts, as well as advocates throughout the halls of Congress and state legislatures. If we all maintain hope and action, the outcome will be a more democratic America where our institutions reflect our true values, not the perverted aspirations of the powerful few.

Congressman Gregory W. Meeks represents the 5th Congressional District of New York and is the Chair of the Congressional Black Caucus' Political Action Committee.

"No doubt, anti-democratic forces have penetrated American politics and those forces have the potential to breed widespread hopelessness and political apathy. For example, gerrymandering—the partisan act of creating voting districts in favor of one's own political party—has led to situations like that in Virginia, where 55 percent of voters pulled the levers for Democrats to only lose the House of Delegates by the drawing of straws."

participation in a process that determines the size of each state's congressional delegation and each state's receipt of federal funds for essential programs like quality public education. Such forces do more to depress civic participation, and they create a disconnected class of Americans, rather than encourage lawfulness.

Many pre-civil rights era measures that suppressed minority voters, like poll taxes and literacy tests, have despicable descendants that plague the modern-day electoral system. Discriminatory voter

call to "accept finite disappointment, but never lose infinite hope."

A recent federal court decision that found North Carolina's partisan gerrymandered districts, which unjustifiably favored Republicans 10 to 3, unconstitutional provides persuasive arguments as to why the Supreme Court should conclude the same in two pending cases. If the Supreme Court adopts North Carolina's reasoning, the result may be a more leveled political playing field during 2018 midterm congressional elections, and a more accountable

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CASH Campaigns merge to assist more with taxes and other services

By Stacy M. Brown

The 2018 tax season doesn't have to be stressful for local residents. That's because the Baltimore and Maryland CASH Campaigns have merged to form the new nonprofit, The CASH—Creating Assets, Savings and Hope Campaign in Maryland.

For low-to-moderate income families and individuals in Baltimore and throughout the state, the new CASH Campaign of Maryland will provide free tax preparation services for those who earned less than \$54,000 in 2017.

The organization will kick off its new and free tax preparation season on Friday, January 27, 2018 at the Northwest Community Action Center on Reisterstown Road and, because January 27 is designated as National Earned Income Tax Credit Awareness Day, several city officials including state Comptroller Peter Franchot and Baltimore City Council President Bernard "Jack" Young are scheduled to attend.

It's also likely that Veronica Purcell, who has worked for CASH for seven-years will also attend the kick-off event to assist residents with tax questions.

"I get a deep sense of satisfaction from helping others," said Purcell, a 15-year resident of Baltimore who graduated from Towson University as she described how she came to work for CASH. "The CASH Campaign of Maryland had a position open on one of the nonprofit websites where the main duties were to screen clients for benefits and to manage a tax site and I went to the Tax Site Managers' Training and became certified," Purcell said.

Currently, she serves as a senior program associate in Tax and Financial Capability. During tax season, Purcell manages the tax site at the Enoch Pratt



Veronica Purcell has worked for the CASH Campaign for seven-years. She serves as a senior program associate in Tax and Financial Capability. During tax season, Purcell manages the tax site at the Enoch Pratt Central Library where more than 1,000 returns are prepared each year. Courtesy Photo/CASH Campaign

Central Library where more than 1,000 returns are prepared each year, making it one of the busiest free tax prep sites in the city.

With a background in social services and housing, Purcell says she enjoys helping others strive to get to the next level in life. It brings her joy to see people have that "ah ha moment" when they learn something new or the sign of relief when they become eligible for a program they didn't know existed.

"The 'Ah ha' moment is when someone has no understanding about tax returns and once everything is explained to them, you see the light bulb come on. Then they begin to ask questions in preparation for next tax season and they see the correlation between the W-4 Form and the role it plays at tax time," she said.

Purcell also manages the free tax prep

volunteers and the campaign's tax interns. Part of her job is to make sure the

clients who receive free tax preparations receive top notch customer service and their tax returns are prepared accurately, as well as to educate them about their tax returns and ways to save.

When tax season is over, Purcell, a newlywed with two children, remains busy conducting benefits screenings at Mondawmin Mall and the Jane Adams Resource Corporation in Park Heights.

She screens their customers and trainees to see if they qualify for social service benefits and some tax credit programs then assists them with the application process.

"I do a lot work in my community, Lakeland, which is located in South Baltimore," Purcell said. "One of my goals would be to have a financial education group that appeal to the minorities living in the area where they could take advantage of the information and tools out there to eliminate debt and create generational wealth."

For more information about The Cash Campaign of Maryland, visit: www.cashmd.org or www.mdcash.org.



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Sorority chapter makes a difference with girls conference

By Stacy M. Brown

The Baltimore Alumnae Chapter of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. is host to the M.A.D (Make a Difference) Girl Conference, a signature event within the award-winning Delta Academy youth program on Saturday, January 20, 2018 at the Delta Community Center on Springhill Avenue from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Now in its 5th year, the conference is an invite-only activity for African-American girls in the Baltimore area. Organizers say the goal of the conference is to help young ladies between the age of 11 and 18 to make better choices that will not only shape their future but make a difference in the world.

“The conference is designed to empower young women to be the best they can be and to make a difference in their communities, this country, and the world,” said Krystle I. Myers, a lawyer who along with her friend, Adriene N. Boone, are co-chairs of the event.

“In the past, we have had presenters and workshops on self-esteem, cyberbullying, relationships, science, technology, engineering, art and math.”

Over 200 people are expected to attend this year’s conference, which will feature as many as 40 advisors.

“The conference has continued to grow in attendance— our first conference had approximately 75 participants, and this year we expect approximately 200 participants,” Myers said. “We continue to receive strong positive feedback from participants [who] were inspired by the conference overall and the speakers and workshop presenters. The girls love that they are able to see real life examples of positive African-American women who are making significant impacts in their careers and communities.”

Since the inception of the conference,



Over 200 participants are expected to attend this year’s M.A.D (Make a Difference) hosted the Baltimore Alumnae Chapter of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. (Above, left to right) Adriene N. Boone and Krystle I. Myers this year’s conference co-chairs. Courtesy Photo

organizers say they have been amazed at the enthusiasm displayed by the young participants.

For this year’s conference, organizers are using what Myers says is a more interactive model. They plan to begin the event with seven TED Talk-like presentations from seven different speakers. In the afternoon, participants will then be separated into groups based on their pre-selected area of interest. They will work together to creatively solve a problem facing the city, according to Myers.

Myers grew up in North East Baltimore and she attended Western High School. She went on to Winston Salem State University in North Carolina where she graduated Magna Cum Laude with a degree in political science. She earned a Juris Doctorate from The Ohio State University.

Boone, who was raised in West Baltimore, attended St. Paul School for Girls

before going to Temple University in Philadelphia where she graduated with a Bachelors of Business Administration with a concentration in Marketing. She

obtained a Master’s degree in Marketing Management from the University of Maryland.

“My grandmother was my inspiration,” Boone said. “She was a teacher in the Baltimore City School system for 32 years and when she retired she still gave back to youth by volunteering in schools and being a Girl Scout Leader. Even though, she has been deceased for almost seven years now, people still come up to me and say things like ‘I became a teacher because of Mrs. Hyman.’ I learned how to give back from her and I just always want to make her proud.”

Myers says she has always been motivated to do her best to make her parents proud.

“They have sacrificed so much to support me in achieving my dreams and it has always been important to me to make sure they know their efforts are not in vain,” she said, adding that she’s also motivated to set a positive example for “my nieces and nephews and to be a positive role model for other brown girls who dare to dream big.”

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Morgan State president to serve on Lumina Foundation Board

Wilson joins diverse voices of national leaders in support of the foundation's goal to prepare Americans for future success

Indianapolis— Lumina Foundation has announced the election of Morgan State University President David Wilson, Ed.D. to serve on its Board of Directors.

Wilson has served as president of Maryland's public urban university since July of 2010 and has a record of accomplishment during his more than 30 years of experience in higher education administration.

“David is a nationally regarded leader in higher education, and his broad background will add a welcome voice to our work toward the attainment agenda,” said Jamie Merisotis, president and CEO of Lumina Foundation.

Wilson holds four academic degrees: a bachelor of science in political science; a master of science in education from Tuskegee University; a master's in educational planning and administration from Harvard University; and a doctorate in administration, planning and social policy, also from Harvard.

He came to Morgan from the University of Wisconsin, where he was chancellor of the University of Wisconsin Colleges and the University of Wisconsin–Extension.

Since Wilson's arrival at Morgan State in 2010, the university's progress has continued unabated. Among the many highlights of Wilson's tenure to date are: increasing a second-year retention rate above 70 percent for the seventh consecutive year; growing enrollment to nearly 8,000 students; procuring the university's largest-ever research contract; overseeing a 183 percent increase in



Dr. David Wilson
President, Morgan State University
Courtesy Photo/MSU

alumni participation in giving since 2010; creating a new West Campus; guiding \$271 million of campus construction; founding a School of Global Journalism and Communication; establishing Morgan State's first online degree program; winning designation of the university as a National Treasure by the National Trust for Historic Preservation; and receiving an General Assembly's designation of Morgan State as Maryland's preeminent public urban research university.

“I'm truly honored and humbled to have been elected to serve in this capacity and I look forward to joining the voices of the other members of the Board in offering creative insights to Lumina Foundation on how best to achieve its goal of ensuring that sixty percent of Americans receive a high-quality college degree, certificate or credential by 2025,” Dr. Wilson said.

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UMB Offers Employees New Homebuyer Incentive

BALTIMORE—University of Maryland, Baltimore (UMB) will offer employees a huge incentive to purchase a home in one of seven nearby West Baltimore neighborhoods under a new Live Near Your Work program introduced Jan. 9 by President Jay A. Perman, MD. The incentive — along with a matching grant from the city of Baltimore — is expected help revitalize the communities that are neighbors to the university.

UMB employees are being offered \$18,500 — \$16,000 from the university plus \$2,500 from the city — to buy a home in Barre Circle, Franklin Square, Hollins Market, Mount Clare, Poppleton, Union Square, or Washington Village/Pigtown (see map of LNYW neighborhoods).

“We think this is a game-changer,” Perman told a group of more than 75 state and city officials, university leaders, community members, and media at the event launch held at the University of Maryland BioPark. “The program was grounded in the fact that it’s infinitely easier to build a community of strength, a community of mutual respect, a community shaped by a shared destiny when we work together and socialize together and yes, live together.”

Mayor Catherine Pugh attended the event and praised Perman, UMB and all of the partners that have made the program possible.

“It is efforts like this, Dr. Perman, that I believe will make the difference in the growth and expansion of our city,” Pugh said. “You have taken up the mantle to bring about the difference that this city needs, and what is so great about the University of Maryland coming across Martin Luther King Boulevard is their investment in this community.”

UMB has had a Live Near Your Work incentive in the past, but at just \$2,500, it had very few takers, Perman said. The new benefit is available to both full- and part-time employees and now requires they live in the house for at least five years.

“Community revitalization is key to our mission,” said Dawn M. Rhodes, MBA, Chief Business and Finance Officer, and Vice President. “While showing our commitment to the community, we are providing our employees with an out-



Ebony Nicholson, MSW, academic coordinator for Diversity & Inclusion Initiatives at UMB's Campus Life Services, currently rents a home in Hollins Market and hopes to take advantage of the LNYW program to buy a house in the neighborhood. Courtesy Photo

standing opportunity that benefits both our neighbors and our employees.”

The university has worked with several partners on this venture including the city, the Housing Authority of Baltimore City, Southwest Partnership, Live Baltimore, and Go Northwest.

“We would truly not be here today without the collaboration of our community partners,” Rhodes said. “There was a great deal to learn and execute. We needed the expertise of other organizations to ensure that our employees have a great home buying experience.”

According to Rhodes, the Housing Authority of Baltimore City has already, confidentially, identified nearly 40 UMB employees in Section 8 housing and reached out to them about the LNYW program. Go Northwest will be offering homeownership workshops and counseling services on campus, and the Southwest Partnership has planned a housing fair at the UM BioPark in March with real estate agents and developers showcasing as many as 50 homes in the area to UMB employees.

“We are at a moment in time for these seven neighborhoods where there is fi-

nally a strong belief system that the diversity, the excitement, the creativity that already exists is going to be acknowledged by all of the larger partners that we have,” said Michael Seipp, executive director of the Southwest Partnership. “There is more to this than just buying a house. You are buying into a community of spirit and energy that doesn’t exist in many of our suburban neighborhoods.”

Also present at the launch was Carol Anne Gilbert, assistant secretary of the Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development who pointed out the potential of stacking other grants along with the university and city incentives. The state offers the Maryland Mortgage Program, tax credits and other grants while opportunities also exist through Vacants to Value, House Keys 4 Employees, and Live Baltimore.

“The grand prize winner can get well over \$30,000 with all those stackable incentives. ... That should help a little bit,” Gilbert said. “We wrap all these incentives into a home buying experience which is really a community buying experience. You are buying a house but really buying into a great community.”

There has already been interest in the program, which will be introduced to employees Jan. 11. Ebony Nicholson, MSW, academic coordinator for Diversity & Inclusion Initiatives at UMB’s Campus Life Services, currently rents a home in Hollins Market and hopes to take advantage of the LNYW program. “I am looking to buy a home in [Hollins Market,]” she said. “I’m really invested in my neighborhood association. ... It’s an opportunity to have fun and really be close to work and lower my carbon footprint.”

Ashley Valis, MSW, executive director of the Office of Community Engagement, bought a home in Hollins Market last year using the previous Live Near Your Work incentive. She and her husband found the size of home they were looking for in Southwest Baltimore at a much better value than in one of the pricier downtown neighborhoods, she said.

“We have a beautiful, historic home that we can afford, and we didn’t have to give up walking to the Inner Harbor or to work,” explained the mother of two young children. “Eliminating a work commute was definitely part of why we decided to buy in the Hollins Market area. If I have to work full time, I want to be away from the house as little as possible.”

Valis said that the neighborhood is improving and that is good for the community as well as the university.

“The fact that our Live Near Your Work Program is targeting all income levels for the university is really important to note, because we want all of our employees to have homeownership on their resume and now, through this program, homeownership will be in the reach of all UMB employees,” she said. “No matter how much you earn, the more homeowners you can have on your block ... that is really an added value to the community at large, not just to us as UMB Employees.”

The LNYW application process will open Jan. 29. Eligible employees will be required to complete a homeownership counseling program and the benefit will be taxed. For details on the program visit <http://www.umaryland.edu/live-near-your-work/>.

MLK Day Parade in Annapolis celebrates peace, recognizes community service

By Andrea Blackstone

A sudden snow shower lightly coated Annapolis during the city's fourth annual Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Parade that was held on Monday, January 15, 2018. This year, Annapolis Drum and Bugle Corps, Men Aiming Higher, and We Care & Friends co-hosted the event, which included a concert and grand marshals who were honored for community service work.

Recent frigid temperatures did not deter bands, community groups, sororities, fraternities, politicians, youth groups, Annapolis City employees, and exotic car owners and passengers from making their way to Main Street before stopping at the City Dock.

The celebration of King's life and legacy was a joyous time for participants and onlookers who bundled up to pay tribute to the late activist and civil rights movement leader. Locals and individuals from across the state greeted each other with waves, hugs, and cheers as the parade's theme, "Pushing Peace in our Homes, Communities, Nation, & World!" unfolded.

Annapolis Mayor Gavin Buckley thanked everyone who braved the cold temperatures to keep Dr. King's dream alive by attending the parade. He remarked that it was an important time in history for people to come together.

"I think that... we shouldn't be governed by fear and greed," Buckley said. "We should be governed by the things that Martin Luther King espoused. We should be governed by inclusivity. We should be governed by hope..."

Symbols of hope were written on message-filled signs. Posters about dismantling racism to living in a world without hate were held up by diverse parade participants. The strong presence of youth who participated in the City of Annapolis's fourth annual Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Parade indicated that they also wanted to acknowledge philosophies rooted in justice and equality.

Two sisters—Cassandra Wilkins and Ericka Wilkins—are among Annapolitians who are building alliances to benefit youth in Annapolis. Like-minded community leaders such as Odessa Ellis and Sandra Johnson ("Ms. Tippy") joined them to help a group of young

people participate in this year's annual Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Parade.

Odessa Ellis, chairperson of the Black History Club for Annapolis High School (AHS), leads it during the school day. Ellis said that students who represented AHS during the 2018 parade have been participating since the parade began four years ago.

"We try to instill into the students at AHS, the importance of Black History, and it's not all just about slavery, but it's about the achievements of Black people (African-Americans) throughout the world. The club takes trips. We go to museums. We have functions like the parade today, and we have a Black History program in the month of February," Ellis said, mentioning that an average of 20-25 students drop in for the club. "What makes me feel good about them (AHS students) coming to the club is knowing about their history. It's open to all races."

Super Leaders—founded by former Washington Redskin, Brig Owens—is a youth organization, which joined forces with AHS's Black History Club. Ericka serves as the advisor. In addition to learning Black History, students undergo leadership training and work on academics.

On the day of the parade, Johnson rode in a church van with the Wilkins sisters while passing out gloves, hats, and scarves to younger children who comprised the eclectic group. From day-to-day, Johnson leads an after school program through the Housing Authority for the City of Annapolis at Eastport's Harbor House Recreation Center. Mentoring, homework help, activities are offered to young students who currently range from ages six to 12.

Johnson, who said she marched in the City of Annapolis's fourth annual Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Parade three times, added that she enjoyed every experience. After the parade, Johnson remarked that youth she escorted learned team building and leadership skills, in addition to knowledge about King.

"They seem to enjoy it. Every year I call on them. Every year they are with me, so I love that," Johnson said. "I tell them (youth in the program) that every day is history day for us."



Photos: Andrea Blackstone

Historian to Discuss Baltimore County African-Americans role in Civil War

By Stacy M. Brown

Very few documented histories of African American life and communities are available in Baltimore County. However, historian and author Louis S. Diggs, the president of the Friends of Historical Cherry Hill AUMP, Inc. and the president of the board of the Diggs-Johnson Museum in Granite continues his mission to tell these stories.

On Saturday, January 27, 2018, the museum, located at 2426 Offutt Road, will host Diggs' presentation of his 10th book, "African-Americans from Baltimore County Who Served in The Civil War: Maryland's Six USCT Regiments of Slaves."

The presentation of the 492-page book will take place from 1 p.m. to 3 p.m. The program is free but donations are encouraged.

Diggs, who has authored 14 books, says those he wrote previously to his 10th book only served to scratch the surface of the history of those who participated in the Civil War.

"This book on the history of African Americans from Baltimore County who served in the Civil War takes the documented history of African American life in this county to a higher level," Diggs said.

The book has about 475 pages that specifically detail the sacrifices and history of African-Americans from Baltimore County as free men and slaves, who from 1863 through the end of the war, either volunteered to serve by enlisting as substitutes for both white men and other free blacks, or who were drafted.

Others simply ran away from slavery hoping to gain their freedom by joining the six United States Colored Troop Regiments (USCT) formed in Maryland beginning in 1863.

"The majority of information was gleaned from the official military records of each soldier named in the book utilizing the websites, Fold3.com and Ancestry.com, and also the 'History and Roster of Maryland Volunteers [and other research material]," Diggs said.

As the Civil War enhanced, there was a great need for the Union to recruit men to enlist, therefore in 1863, the Union established a "Bureau of Colored Troops" to facilitate the recruitment of African-Americans, Diggs said.

"It ended up with approximately 175 regiments of U.S. Colored Troops composed of more than 178,000 free and enslaved African-Americans," he said. "Unfortunately, they started off earning less than their white counterparts [as] white soldiers were paid \$13 a month and Black soldiers were paid \$10 a month minus \$3 for clothing."

During the January 27 program, Diggs will include a power point presentation to help the audience further grasp the history of African Americans from Baltimore County who played a significant role in the Civil War.



Battle of the Crater— Several of African American men from the three USCT Regiments who participated in the Union army battle for Petersburg, VA called "The Crater." Several African Americans from Baltimore County served in this battle. History of the battle will be told at the program.



Brevet Lieutenant Colonel Alexander T. August— An African American Surgeon assigned to the 7th USCT Regiment. While on a train that stopped in Baltimore, MD, he was singled out while wearing his uniform and was attacked by white men.



Headstone of George Harris, a former slave from the Winters Lane, an African American community in Catonsville, MD, who served in the Civil War.

Courtesy Photos

Because parking is greatly limited at the museum, parking passes will be required. To request a ticket and a parking pass, send an email to louisdiggs2@verizon.net.

For more information about the Diggs-Johnson museum, visit <http://diggsjohnsonmuseum.com>.



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Overview of Baltimore Ravens offseason game plan

By Turron Davenport

The Baltimore Ravens were on the brink of making a return to the playoffs after not seeing the postseason since 2014. Unfortunately, an old friend in former defensive coordinator and current Bengals head coach returned to M&T Bank Stadium and ended any possibility of a playoff appearance—saving his job in the process.

Head coach John Harbaugh signed a one-year contract extension, keeping him under contract through the 2019 season. However, make no mistake he is under pressure to get the team back to the playoffs.

There will be a major change in the coaching staff. Defensive coordinator Dean Pees retired and will be replaced by linebackers coach Don Martindale, which will allow the defense to keep a similar scheme in place.

Heading into the offseason, there are some pieces that need to be added to fill holes in the Ravens roster. The wide receiver unit has continued to be a problem despite having Bobby Engram, an outstanding position coach.

General Manager bOzzie Newsome needs to add to the group that includes veteran Jeremy Maclin and underachieving former first-round draft pick Breshad Perriman.

Mike Wallace is set to hit the free agent market but should be included in the team's future plans. Turning to the



Baltimore Ravens head coach John Harbaugh has signed a one-year contract extension, keeping him under contract with the team through the 2019 season.

Courtesy Photo/NFL.com

draft could be an option for the Ravens, especially if Alabama wideout Calvin Ridley is on the board when they are set to pick in the first round.

It is also time to strongly consider selecting a quarterback to groom as Joe Flacco's future replacement. With a salary cap number of at least \$24 million in each of the next three years, at some point, they have to move on because Flacco is not worth funneling such a large part of the salary cap to.

Defensively, the Ravens are fortunate that defensive end Terrell Suggs found

the fountain of youth as he revisited his days as a double-digit sack pass rusher. Suggs finished with 11 sacks and four

forced-fumbles and wants to build on that heading into the 2018 season.

With Suggs in place for next year and a steadily improving outside backer in Za'Darius Smith, Baltimore should be in good shape.

The biggest weakness remains at weakside linebacker. Patrick Onwuasor finished the year as the starter after Kamalei Correa was placed on injured reserve in late December. With GM Ozzie Newsome's fondness for prospects from his alma mater, Alabama, don't be surprised if linebacker Rashard Evans has his name called at some point when the Ravens are on the board.

Baltimore's roster is still well intact. Sprinkle in a playmaker at wide receiver as well as a breakaway running back and the offense will find some big plays again.

This year will be a big-time test for Harbaugh and company. Team owner Steve Bisciotti is desperate to return to the winning seasons that used to be a regular occurrence for his team.

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

NOTICE OF LETTING

Sealed Bids or Proposals, in duplicate addressed to the Board of Estimates of the Mayor and City Council of Baltimore and marked for **Sanitary Contract No. 962R-Improvements to the Sanitary Sewers in the South East Area of Baltimore City** will be received at the Office of the Comptroller, Room 204, City Hall, Baltimore, Maryland until 11:00 A.M. on **Wednesday, February 7, 2018**. Positively no bids will be received after 11:00 A.M. Bids will be publicly opened by the Board of Estimates in Room 215, City Hall at Noon. The Contract Documents may be examined, without charge, in Room 6 located on the first floor of the Abel Wolman Municipal Building, 200 N. Holliday Street, Baltimore, Maryland 21202 as of **Friday, January 19, 2018** and copies may be purchased for a non-refundable cost of **\$100.00**.

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

All contractors bidding on this Contract must first be prequalified by the City of Baltimore Contractors Qualification Committee. Interested parties should call 410-396-6883 or contact the Committee at 4 South Frederick Street, 4th Floor, Baltimore, Maryland 21202. **If a bid is submitted by a joint venture ("JV"), then in that event, the document that established the JV shall be submitted with the bid for verification purposes.** The Prequalification Category required for bidding on this project is **B02552-Sewer Construction or G90099-Cured-in-Place Pipe Lining**

Legal Notices

Cost Qualification Range for this work shall be **\$10,000,000.01 to \$15,000,000.00**

A "Pre-Bidding Information" session will be conducted at **300 Abel Wolman Municipal Building, 3rd Floor Large Conference Room on January 23, 2018 at 10:00 A.M.** The CCTV videos of the sewers included in this project will be made available for viewing/coping to interested parties at the office of Rummel, Klepper & Kahl, LLP, 700 East Pratt Street, Suite 500, Baltimore, MD 21202-4919. Refer to IB-8 for additional details.

THIS IS A STATE FUNDED PROJECT

Principal Item of work for this project are:

- Sewer cleaning and closed circuit television (CCTV) inspection;
- Cured-in-Place Pipe (CIPP) lining of sanitary sewers;
- Excavate and replace segments of sanitary sewers via point repairs;
- Manhole repair and rehabilitation work;
- Sewer house connection (SHC) repair and rehabilitation work;
- New manhole and cleanout installation work

The MBE goal is **18%**
The WBE goal is **16%**

SANITARY CONTRACT NO. 962R

APPROVED:
Bernice H. Taylor
Clerk, Board of Estimates

APPROVED:
Rudolph S. Chow, P.E.
Director of Public Works

Legal Notices

CITY OF BALTIMORE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION NOTICE OF LETTING

Sealed Bids or Proposals, in duplicate addressed to the Board of Estimates of the Mayor and City Council of Baltimore and marked for **FAP NO. NHPP-3064(1)E; SHA NO. BC420008 BALTIMORE CITY NO. TR16303 RESURFACING FRANKLIN STREET FROM MLK JR. BOULEVARD TO EDMONDSON AVENUE** will be received at the Office of the Comptroller, Room 204 City Hall, Baltimore, Maryland until 11:00 A.M. **February 28, 2018**. Positively no bids will be received after 11:00 A.M. Bids will be publicly opened by the Board of Estimates in Room 215, City Hall at Noon. The Contract Documents may be examined, without charge at the Department of Public Works Service Center located on the first floor of the Abel Wolman Municipal Building, 200 N. Holliday Street, Baltimore, Maryland 21202 as of **January 19, 2018** and copies may be purchased for a non-refundable cost of **\$75.00**. **Conditions and requirements of the Bid are found in the bid package.**

All contractors bidding on this Contract must first be prequalified by the City of Baltimore Contractor's Qualification Committee. Interested parties should call (410) 396-6883 or contact the Committee at 4 S. Frederick Street, 4th Floor, Baltimore, Maryland 21202. **If a bid is submitted by a joint venture ("JV"), then in that event, the document that established the JV shall be submitted with the bid for verification purposes.** The Prequalification Categories required for bidding on this project are A02602 Bituminous Concrete Paving and D02620 Curbs, Gutters, & Sidewalks. Cost Qualification Range for this work shall be **\$2,000,000.00 to \$4,000,000.00**. A "Pre-Bidding Information" session will be conducted at **10:00 A.M. on February 2, 2018** at 417 E. Fayette Street, Charles L. Benton Building, Richard Chen Conference Room, 7th Floor. Principal Items of work for this project are Superpave Asphalt 12.5MM PG64S-22 for Surface, Level 2 - 9,310 TON, Superpave Asphalt 19.0MM PG64S-22 for Base, Level 2 - 700 TON, Superpave Asphalt 9.5MM for Wedge & Level, Level 1 - 500 TON, and Pavement Removal of Bituminous Material 0 to 3" Depth - 69,140 SY. The DBE goal is **25%**.
APPROVED: Bernice H. Taylor, Clerk Board of Estimates

Legal Notices

CITY OF BALTIMORE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION NOTICE OF LETTING

Sealed Bids or Proposals, in duplicate addressed to the Board of Estimates of the Mayor and City Council of Baltimore and marked for **FAP NO. STBG-000B(228)E; SHA NO. BC410021 BALTIMORE CITY NO. TR13310 GEOMETRIC SAFETY IMPROVEMENTS PHASE II** will be received at the Office of the Comptroller, Room 204 City Hall, Baltimore, Maryland until 11:00 A.M. **February 28, 2018**. Positively no bids will be received after 11:00 A.M. Bids will be publicly opened by the Board of Estimates in Room 215, City Hall at Noon. The Contract Documents may be examined, without charge at the Department of Public Works Service Center located on the first floor of the Abel Wolman Municipal Building, 200 N. Holliday Street, Baltimore, Maryland 21202 as of January 19, 2018 and copies may be purchased for a non-refundable cost of **\$100.00**. **Conditions and requirements of the Bid are found in the bid package.** All contractors bidding on this Contract must first be prequalified by the City of Baltimore Contractor's Qualification Committee. Interested parties should call (410) 396-6883 or contact the Committee at 4 S. Frederick Street, 4th Floor, Baltimore, Maryland 21202. **If a bid is submitted by a joint venture ("JV"), then in that event, the document that established the JV shall be submitted with the bid for verification purposes.** The Prequalification Categories required for bidding on this project are A02602 Bituminous Concrete Paving, and D02620 Curbs, Gutters & Sidewalks. Cost Qualification Range for this work shall be **\$500,000.01 to \$1,000,000.00**. A "Pre-Bidding Information" session will be conducted at **10:00 A.M. on February 2, 2018** at 417 E. Fayette Street, Charles L. Benton Building, Room 724. Principal Items of work for this project are Superpave Asphalt 12.5MM for Surface, PG64S-22, Level 2 - 450 Tons and 5" Concrete Sidewalk - 4,750 SF. The DBE goal is **16%**.
APPROVED: Bernice H. Taylor, Clerk Board of Estimates

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CITY OF BALTIMORE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION NOTICE OF LETTING

Sealed Bids or Proposal, in duplicate addressed to the Board of Estimates of the Mayor and City Council of Baltimore and marked for **TR18013 RECONSTRUCTION OF FOOTWAYS CITYWIDE**, will be received at the Office of the Comptroller, Room 204, City Hall, Baltimore, Maryland until **FEBRUARY 7, 2018** at 11:00 A.M.

Board of Estimates employees will be stationed at the Security Unit Counter just inside the Holliday Street entrance to City Hall from 10:45 A.M. to 11:00 A.M. every Wednesday to receive Bids. Positively no bids will be received after 11:00 A.M. Bids will be publicly opened by the Board of Estimates in Room 215, City Hall at Noon. The Contract Documents may be examined, without charge at the Department of Public Works Service Center located on the first floor of the Abel Wolman Municipal Building, 200 N. Holliday Street, Baltimore, Maryland 21202 as of **JANUARY 19, 2018** and copies may be purchased for a non-refundable cost of **\$75.00**. **Conditions and requirements of the Bid are found in the bid package.** All contractors bidding on this Contract must first be prequalified by the City of Baltimore Contractors' Qualification Committee. Interested parties should call (410) 396-6883 or contact the Committee at 4 S. Frederick Street, 4th Floor, Baltimore, Maryland 21202. **If a bid is submitted by a joint venture ("JV"), then in that event, the document that established the JV shall be submitted with the bid for verification purposes.** The Prequalification Categories required for bidding on **this project are A02601 PORTLAND CEMENT CONCRETE PAVING**. Cost Qualification Range for this work shall be **\$500,000.00 to \$900,000.00**. A "Pre-Bidding Information" session will be conducted at **10:00 A.M. on FEBRUARY 2, 2018** at Charles L. Benton Jr. Building, 417 E. Fayette Street, Room 702.

Principle Items of work for this project are:
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ESTIMATES PRE-APPROVAL.**

Four Tips to Stop Smoking from the FDA

Silver Spring, Md.— What are your New Year's resolutions? If you smoke, maybe this will be the year that you decide you want to quit. And you may not be alone: Nearly 70 percent of current adult smokers say they want to stop.

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has approved many products that can help. In fact, data has shown that using an FDA-approved cessation medicine can double your chance of quitting successfully. Plus, every time you put out a cigarette is a new chance to try quitting again, according to a new FDA campaign called "Every Try Counts."

So here is some advice to consider if you want to stop smoking:

1. Know your reasons for quitting— For some people it's their health. Others want to quit for lifestyle or financial reasons, like being able to smell and taste food better, or having more money to spend on stuff besides cigarettes. Whatever motivates you, get clear on it when you decide to quit. And consider making a list so that you can read it when you get the urge to smoke, advises the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. If you're health conscious, you may want to remember that cigarette smoking is still the leading cause of preventable disease and death in the United States, causing 480,000 deaths every year. If you quit, not only will you lower your risk of getting various cancers, including lung cancer, you'll also reduce your chances of having heart disease, a stroke, emphysema, and other serious diseases. Quitting also will lower the risk of heart disease and lung cancer in nonsmokers who otherwise would not be exposed to your secondhand smoke. Also know that no matter how much you smoke—or for how long—quitting will benefit you.

2. Be kind to yourself— Quitting smoking can be hard, especially because of a highly addictive chemical in tobacco products called nicotine. Tobacco users who are addicted to nicotine are used to having nicotine in their bodies. And because you're used to it, you can go through symptoms of withdrawal (like cravings, trouble sleeping,



and anxiety) when you try to stop. These withdrawal symptoms can make it harder to quit, but they also disappear over time as your body readjusts to being nicotine-free.

When you try to quit, you may have to try a few times before you're successful. Just know that you can do it, and don't be too hard on yourself. Studies demonstrate that previous quit attempts can lead to more attempts in the future, and that it often takes multiple attempts to quit smoking long-term.

3. Know that FDA-approved products can help you quit— You don't have to quit all on your own. FDA-approved smoking cessation products can help. For instance, nicotine replacement therapy (NRT), which supplies controlled amounts of nicotine, can help you quit by reducing withdrawal symptoms and cravings. The FDA has approved two types of prescription NRT products (a nicotine nasal spray and nicotine inhaler), and three types of over-the-counter nicotine products (a gum, transdermal patch, and lozenges). Most of these products have been approved for at least 20 years. And while their effectiveness can vary by type, these products can double your chances of a successful quit attempt.

Other FDA-approved, prescription

drug products that do not contain nicotine also are available.

If you are under age 18 and want to quit smoking, talk to a health care professional about whether you should use smoking cessation products.

And, if you do use or are prescribed these products, please always read and follow the labeled directions. Talk to your health care provider if you have questions.

You can learn more about this topic in the FDA's article, "Want to Quit Smoking? FDA-Approved Products Can Help."

4. Take advantage of other FDA resources— If you're thinking about quitting or have tried to quit in the past without success, check out the FDA's new campaign at EveryTryCounts.gov to find more support.

Campaign ads underscoring the health benefits of quitting appear in cities around the country beginning in January 2018. Look for signs and materials in retail locations like convenience stores that remind you that you can quit—and encourage you to try to quit again. You may also sign up for free resources to help with your next quit attempt through the EveryTryCounts.gov website.

Maybe this year will be the year you try quitting for good. And, when you try to quit, remember that every try counts!

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