

THE **Business** MONTHLY

January 2019 Volume 27 Number 1

YOUR FREE ISSUE

COLUMBIA MALL: Great sales and new owner

HACKER CONVENTION: Techmasters gather

BIZKIDZ: Youth compete with new businesses

The Business of Howard + Anne Arundel Counties and the BWI Business District

What will it cost your business this year?

SEXUAL HARASSMENT

By Susan Kim
Staff Writer

Sexual harassment prevention in the workplace has been getting a lot of attention – both in the news and in business.

After offering training on sexual harassment prevention for many years, the Maryland Commission on Civil Rights has noticed a large uptick in interest this year, not only from state employees who are required by law to complete such training, but from the private sector, too.

Look at it more like an investment in your organization's immune system. Take that preventive approach right up front."

"While we have seen a large number of sexual harassment complaints come in, we've also seen more employers reaching out to get ahead of it," said Spencer Dove, an executive associate

with the commission.

What if employers ignore it? Your business potentially faces not only the cost of a lawsuit, but deeper-gouging costs related to retention and recruitment of staff and a tarnished reputation that repels customers.

As much as sexual harassment has captured the headlines this year, it's hard to pin a price tag on it, though everyone from human resources experts to the U.S. Senate to human rights advocates are calling for more research on what those costs might be. Clearly, the costs are mounting.

continued on page 18



Photo courtesy of Live! Casino & Hotel

Is Maryland ready for the sports betting game?

By Mark R. Smith
Senior Writer

West Virginia, Pennsylvania and Delaware have voted sports gaming into law.

Maryland, the District of Columbia and Virginia have not.

Those last three facts will be under discussion when the next legislative session starts at noon on Jan 9, in Annapolis.

Session 2019 will come after the House passed a bill to allow sports gaming in Maryland, but the Senate did not; and on the heels of a recent Washington Post-University of Maryland poll that revealed that, while voters likely will have to wait at two years to decide whether to legalize sports

gambling, 53 percent of registered voters favor doing so (with 37 percent opposed and 10 percent having no opinion).

D.C. and Virginia are also making noise about legalizing gambling, period; but even if sports gaming is approved in both states and the District, it won't result in a huge windfall, as was the case with the approval of slots.

"Where we are today," said Frank Turner, recently retired delegate from District 13, who sponsored the sports gaming bill last session, "is in limbo. I haven't seen a bill put in for the upcoming session, but it's likely one will be. Then the question becomes, 'Will there be an agreement between the House and the Senate as to what the bill will look like?'"

Last year, the House wanted sports gaming at the

continued on page 10

GOLDEN CELEBRATION

Howard County Chamber marks 50 years as the 'voice of business'

page 3

AND THEY'RE OFF

Laurel Park looks to the future as Pimlico seeks \$425 million

page 5

KITTLEMAN REFLECTIONS

Former county executive reviews the ups and downs of public service

page 12

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Tourism spending grows past \$17B

Visitors to Maryland spent more than \$17 billion in calendar year 2017, up 2.1 percent from the previous year, officials announced today at the Maryland Tourism and Travel Summit.

The study, conducted by Tourism Economics, also showed that \$2.4 billion in state and local taxes were generated by visitors, which saved every Maryland household \$1,100.

“Maryland has so much to offer, it’s no surprise that tourism is one of our most important economic generators and job creators,” said Governor Larry Hogan. “Our goal is to give each and every visitor, whether they are here for vacation or business, the best possible experience

so travelers return again and again. Maryland tourism is open for business!”

Tourism is Maryland’s 10th largest private sector employer. The study showed that there was a 2 percent increase in employment to 149,000 in 2017, and a 4 percent increase in wages to \$6.3 billion.

Starting in 2015, the Maryland Office of Tourism Development began promoting Maryland as a travel destination to a number of states and cities in the region, and last year reported visitors from New York have increased 10 percent, with visitors from Pittsburgh up 4 percent, and visitors from Washington, D.C. up 3 percent.

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Howard Chamber marks 50 years

By **George Berkheimer**
Senior Writer

The Howard County Chamber of Commerce (HCCC) marks its 50th anniversary in 2019.

Established when Columbia itself was just two years old, the Chamber has followed a similar trajectory of growth and evolution alongside its home of record.

“When I look at the founding documents, they were done on stencil paper and typewriter in multiple copies,” observed current HCCC President

and CEO Leonardo McClarty. “Now everything we do is electronic, it’s on a computer, submitted online and filed electronically.”

It was a time, he said, when the speed of business was measured in days, and by most accounts, Columbia was a sleepy town and Howard was a sleepy county that business professionals passed through on their way to where the real action was, in Baltimore or Washington, DC.

How times – and the Chamber – have changed.

Early Days

Ed Kasemeyer, former District 12 State Senator, served as a past Chamber president in 1980 and remembers the organization’s early days.

“We didn’t have a home or a permanent executive director,” he recalled. “We rented an office next to the Clark building for our monthly meetings.”

It was during his term that the Chamber hired its first full-time executive director, at that time a significant step in terms of expense and services when members still looked to each

other for news, advice, business leads and leadership.

“Now it’s vibrant, highly sophisticated and focused in terms of the number of employees and their functions, and the depth they go to in terms of subject matter and skill,” Kasemeyer said.

Along the way, the Chamber evolved to take on new roles and become a significant player in the greater Baltimore economy, but still maintained its basic identity as a local business advocate.

continued on page 18

Visit Howard County names executive director

By **Dan Medinger**
Editor

Amanda Hof has been named the new executive director of Visit Howard County.

Hof oversees all operations that promote the hospitality industry locally and nationally for the rapidly growing county.

Her staff of five full-time and several part-time employees promote hotels, restaurants, attractions and events. They also staff the Welcome Center, located on Main Street in Ellicott City, seven days a week.

Chuck Chandler, Visit Howard County Board Chair said in a prepared statement, “Amanda is the right person at the right time to continue to grow and develop tourism and tourism-related events for Howard County now and into the future.”

Tourism is a big economic driver bringing nearly three million visitors to the county in 2018 resulting in more than 1.25 million overnight stays.

The \$1.1 million Visit Howard County budget is raised mostly from hotel taxes.

According to the Visit Howard County annual report, tourism supports nearly 11,000 jobs and generated \$628.8 million in sales last year.

Leading all of this promotional activity is Hof, who said that she first promoted Howard County when she asked her parents to move from Catonsville to the county when she was four years old.

“Howard County was a magical place for me,” Hof remembered. “It had the Columbia Mall and the Enchanted Forest. I loved the Howard County Fair.”



Amanda Hof greets visitors at the Visit Howard County office in Ellicott City.

It wasn’t long before her family moved to Ellicott City and she has lived in the county ever since. Hof now resides in Columbia with a family of her own.

A graduate of Centennial High School, she earned a degree in recreation and

parks management from Frostburg University. “I was sure that I wanted to do something in Howard County,” she said.

She started with the Tourism Council as a ghost tour guide and staffed the

Welcome Center.

“I was grateful for the opportunity to learn about the county and how the tourism office worked from the ground up. I learned a lot about Howard County,” she said.

Now in the top job, she plans to take advantage of the county’s location between Baltimore and Washington, D.C. “We have lots of meeting space with traditional and unique venues. We have first class amenities and the quality of life is great here.”

She said that she plans to market the county in a “close radius” but she also sees national opportunities. She is pleased with the Maryland Office of Tourism’s efforts which show “an increase in visitors and an uptick in spending.”

Hof said Visit Howard County will be expanding local initiatives and increasing digital and mobile promotion efforts. Last fall, Visit Howard County released its first ever destination video.

“We want to do more data driven marketing,” she said. “We are developing marketing campaigns to induce more overnight visitation. The longer visitors stay, the more they spend.”

Notably, traffic to the Visit Howard County website has spiked 200 percent.

The county tourism team has been recognized by the Maryland Office of Tourism Development (OTD) – a division of the Maryland Department of Commerce – and the Maryland Tourism Development Board (MTDB) for the first-ever Market Expansion Award to recognize Visit Howard County, in partnership with the Korean Society of Maryland, for their work on Maryland’s Korean Way culinary trail.

continued on page 10



Maryland Capital Enterprises, Inc. (MCE) has been awarded \$50,000 from the Business Finance Group to provide microloans to small businesses on Maryland's Eastern Shore and in the Baltimore-Annapolis area. Pictured from left to right Maurice Ames, executive director of MCE, Senator Ben Cardin and Richard Frank, president & CEO of Business Finance Group

SC&H plans Howard expansion

SC&H Group has signed an agreement that will double its Ellicott City office space early next year. The expansion will primarily accommodate the growth of the firm's Business Performance Management (BPM) practice group and investment banking arm, SC&H Capital.

SC&H Capital's business specializes in advising manufacturers, clinical healthcare providers, government contractors, and other businesses on mergers, acquisitions, and strategies to sell their companies.

The firm's BPM group, which specializes in Oracle-Hyperion Enterprise Performance Management (EPM) and Business Intelligence (BI) solutions, is one of Oracle's premier consulting partners and advises clients ranging from global Fortune 500 companies to mid-market organizations leveraging

the power of Oracle's finance and accounting solutions.

The new office footprint will allow the office to house more than 100 employees. The office redesign will focus on the important and evolving needs of the Capital and BPM business practices – including modern, multi-functional space that can be used for training, meetings, and video conferences, as well as the latest technology for communicating with global clients.

"Growing our footprint in Howard County makes sense. We have a strong workforce presence here and are conveniently located between SC&H's other locations in Tysons Corner, VA and Sparks, MD," said Christopher Helmrath, SC&H Capital's founder. Partnering with Merritt Properties, SC&H Group's Ellicott City expansion is now underway.

Holiday sales grow

Columbia Mall sold to new owner

By Mark R. Smith
Senior Writer

It's been a busy month-plus for area malls during what they, no doubt, consider the most wonderful time of the year – with sales expected to grow between 5 percent and 5.6 percent from a year ago, according to Deloitte's annual holiday retail sales forecast.

But now, it's time to start focusing on 2019, especially after General Growth Properties, the long-time owner of The Mall in Columbia was sold to Brookfield Property Partners in a \$9.25 billion transaction.

Representatives from Brookfield declined to be interviewed for this article. However, said Stephanie Cegielski, vice president of public relations for the New York-based International Council of Shopping Centers, said the net number of malls in operation had increased "during the past five years and mall occupancy rates remain high, at about 93 percent."

To stay relevant, malls are diversifying their tenant base to appeal to their communities. "In areas with Millennials and Gen Z, who want more experiences, there are more food and beverage choices, dine-in movie theaters and escape rooms," said

Cegielski, also mentioning grocery stores and gyms. "Any turnover is quickly being replaced with these types of offerings, as well we formerly online-only retailers who moving into the physical space."

Cailey Locklair Tolle, executive director of the Maryland Retailers Association, said mall owners are focusing on creating experiences. "The addition of Dave & Buster's at [Westfield] Annapolis is one example. It has a new food court, too, because they want to offer a comfortable environment."

Events like a Christmas tree lighting, musical performance and getting pet

The Mall in Columbia was sold in a \$9.25 billion transaction.

pics taken with Santa are also increasingly important. "They make shoppers want to stay longer, like having a train for kids that runs through the malls or even a tram for adults, or offering phone charging stations."

Still, Locklair Tolle added that she's "not sure we've seen some struggling malls come out of the deep end yet. However, we are seeing is mall owners taking new approaches."

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Laurel Park track ready to host Preakness

By George Berkheimer
Staff writer

The Maryland Stadium Authority (MSA) released its Phase Two Pimlico Race Course Study on Dec. 13, providing three potential planning scenarios ranging from partial redevelopment to complete demolition and redesign.

With the start of the Maryland General Assembly's 2019 session only days away, it leaves The Stronach Group (TSG), which owns both Pimlico and Laurel Park, precious little time for legislative strategy.

It also adds to the list of stresses that have been piling up lately for the Maryland Jockey Club (MJC), which operates the tracks and is currently focused on rehabbing several older barns at Laurel Park, constructing six new cinderblock barns, and finding a location for a stick barn that will deliver 150 new backstretch dormitory rooms.

"With everything going on with Pimlico, changing the backstretch at Laurel and possibly the resurrection of the Bowie Training Center, there's some confusion within the organization as to what we'll do next," said MJC President and General Manager Sal Sinatra at the Maryland Racing Commission (MRC)'s December meeting.

Another thing on everybody's minds is the Canadian lawsuit filed in October against TSG President and Chairman Belinda Stronach by her father, TSG Founder and Honorary Chairman Frank Stronach, and mother, Elfriede.

The elder Stronachs are seeking \$520 million in damages from Belinda and TSG CEO Alon Ossip, alleging mismanagement of assets and trust funds.

"We view the ongoing litigation as strictly a family matter," said MRC Executive Director Michael Hopkins.

While the rest of the racing industry has taken the same position, nobody can say for sure whether the outcome might have repercussions for the family's racing business.

Preakness 2.0

The MSA's initial Pimlico Study concluded that the facility's physical conditions threaten its continued existence and the success of the Preakness Stakes. It proposed extensive renovations ranging from \$248 million to \$321 million to address code, safety and security, operational efficiency, revenue enhancement, visitor experience and



Drawing Courtesy of Crossroads Consulting/Populous

Conceptual rendering of full redevelopment at Pimlico Race Course.

accessibility concerns.

The Phase Two study goes a step further, developing a detailed program of seating and hospitality products considered ideal for hosting the Preakness Stakes, and optimizing the availability of land that could be used for non-racing development opportunities.

The most drastic redevelopment option calls for complete demolition, including the tracks; realignment and construction of new tracks and a new infield; construction of a new multi-use clubhouse with premium seating products; a new paddock plaza termed the Palio; and improvements to roadways as well as both on-site and off-site utilities.

At an estimated minimum cost of \$424 million, it also requires moving the Preakness to Laurel Park for two years while the three-year project is completed, beginning immediately after the 2021 Preakness event and returning the race to Pimlico in 2024.

The study's non-racing land use concept reserves four districts around the track for residential, retail and commercial uses, and suggests that a shared-use infield could provide off-season public amenities including athletic fields, entertainment and leisure space.

Laurel's Rising Stock

In 2015, the MJC's \$7 million investment in clubhouse and grandstand improvements brought new dining areas, new concessions, a new simulcast center and a new look to Laurel Park.

"We're continuing to improve, but Laurel is in its infancy of what we really think we can do there," said TSG COO Tim Ritvo.

He credited Belinda Stronach for setting a new course for the track after taking a hard look at the industry.

"People are betting more on our races and we've outgained the industry on market share through the last couple of years," Ritvo said. "We've done a good job with the racing product, but [Belinda Stronach] thinks we've lagged behind in the hospitality end of the business, the entertainment, the refurbishment of the buildings and innovation. She believes it's one of the last [sports] industries that hasn't gotten into the times and evolved."

Enhancements planned for 2019 target digital innovations, including way finding around properties, wagering applications and new kinds of bets, he said.

Aside from new fans, the strategy – and the venue's location between two metropolitan cities – might have also

caught the attention of the Breeders' Cup board of directors, who are considering holding a future running of the cup in Laurel.

"The only commitment they're looking for from us is what our full-scale build out would look like and how long it would take," Ritvo said. "I think we could see a Breeders' Cup in 2022 or 2023."

What If...

The MSA study has convinced TSG's planners to consider relocating Pimlico's stables and shipping horses in for race days, a standard model at other tracks, but there's a logistics problem.

"Laurel couldn't accommodate as many horses as we need, especially if we want to grow the business, so the Bowie Training Center has become a very valuable instrument," Ritvo said. "We've thought about a complete rebuild and revitalization along the line of Palm Meadows. It would be a great training center."

Moreover, he noted, Bowie is more centrally located to Laurel, where most of the year-round racing occurs.

That quite naturally prompts an intriguing question: could the Preakness perhaps find a permanent home at Laurel instead?

"Everything is on the table," acknowledged Ritvo. "Maryland owns the Preakness, it's a huge state event and we understand that, but the bottom line is that the economic impact that delivers a good healthy economy to Maryland ... doesn't revolve around the Preakness, it revolves around the rest-of-the-year racing."

It makes little sense from a business perspective to invest so heavily in two tracks, he added.

"We believe that a \$120 million investment in Laurel could give us a super track that people would just be amazed at, and then the Preakness could be run there, the DC International, and the Breeders' Cup," Ritvo said.

No matter what direction the collective stakeholders choose regarding Pimlico, "the decisions have to happen fast," he said. "In all fairness, someday that building's just going to fail. We have to think about what the Preakness looks like 100 years from now, not just the next two or three years. We have two facilities and alternate solutions for the stadium, but everyone has to work together to see if those satisfy everybody's needs."

The venue's location caught the attention of the Breeders' Cup board which is considering holding a future running of the cup in Laurel.

DOG THRIVE EXPANDS

24-7 care supports pet owners

By Mark R. Smith
Senior Writer

A couple of years ago, four friends that happened to be two sets of brothers – Matthew and Mark Stewart, and Scott and Tyler Parker – jointly embarked on new career chapters.

Some said they were going to the dogs but they are proud to have founded Dog Thrive, aiming to get a slice of the \$72 billion pet industry.

Because there was a need for indoor/outdoor pet day/night care service in the Crofton/Gambrills area, they opened a location on Route 3 at Johns Hopkins Road. In 2017, they opened a second location near Westfield Annapolis (the mall) and are contemplating another location on Bethany

Lane, in Ellicott City.

While boarding facilities are nothing new, “Our breadth of services, with grooming and training, isn’t the norm,” said Tyler Parker.

The staff is on hand 24/7 from June through September at the Gambrills location, which hosts “about 70 dogs per day. Annapolis hosts about 50,” Parker said, with costs running from \$25 for a half-day, \$29 for a full day and various packages; suites cost \$75 for 24 hours.

Carmen Rustenbeck, CEO of the Colorado Springs, Colo.-based International Boarding & Pet Sitting Association, called the setup of such facilities “a market issue. The local population dictates what’s expected,” she said. “What you see in New York City is quite different than what’s offered in a small town.”

Rustenbeck said, “New Yorkers may want their white Westie to be even whiter, so they can order a blueberry masque, or request other options like special treats, having a story



read or aromatherapy. One facility in Wisconsin employs a chef.”

Anything that can be done for a human “can also be done for a pet. That means opportunities for service providers,” she said. “The big issue here is finding certified professionals and explaining to pet owners why that approach is solid.”

Elisa Kamens, owner of Club Pooche, in Columbia, concurs. She’s been in the business for 25 years and was “the first person in the area who got proper zoning in Howard County to allow dogs in buildings,” she said.

After caring for two dozen dogs in her home for many years, she received

her zoning permit in 2008 and founded Club Pooche, “That’s when the industry expanded,” she said, calling the Columbia market “saturated. I have 20 competitors, including [the Snowden Square] PetsMart.”

She accommodates “up to 65 dogs at \$65 per day,” all costs included. Kamens said clients need to be sure to ask boarding facilities various questions about costs, kennel cough, sanitization, how emergencies are handled, etc.

There’s always plenty to know. “What this industry is about,” said Rustenbeck, “is understanding what’s best for your pet.”

Consumers deplete electric cars credits

The Maryland Department of Transportation’s Motor Vehicle Administration (MDOT MVA) announced that the Vehicle Excise Tax Credit, which has been available to the purchasers of qualified electric and hybrid plug-in vehicles, has been depleted.

Since funding of the fiscal 2019 program began in July, \$3 million in rebates have been requested, which is the full funding allocated by the Maryland State Legislature for this fiscal year. Since July 2016, the Vehicle Excise Credit has provided more than \$7.2 million in rebates and helped place more than 2,500 electric vehicles on Maryland roadways.

The monies for the Vehicle Excise Tax Credit were included in the Maryland Clean Cars Act of 2017. The legislation allows a tax credit of up to \$3,000 for electric and plug-in hybrid vehicles with a sale price up to \$60,000. During the 2017 legislative session, funding for the Plug-In Electric Vehicle Tax Credit program was increased by more than 30%.

Currently, there are 15,074 registered electric and plug-in hybrid vehicles in operation in the state; during the past two years, the number of registered EVs in Maryland have doubled. Since 2015, the number of EV charging stations in Maryland have increased 35%.

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Taking a look inside Google maps

Gambrills photo firm brings the world to you

By Mark R. Smith
Senior Writer

Seeing is believing. That phrase might be trite and tired, but to Frank Clark, that's been the mantra since he began serving as vice president, corporate outreach of Gambrills-based Business Photos America (BPA), an international contractor for Google Maps. It's led to assignments taking still photos and creating 360-degree images for a variety of businesses, from defense contractors to fitness centers and from funeral homes to car dealerships.

"Typically, we look around and get the scene ready to shoot with the Canon DSLR EOS 80D, with a special lens," said Clark of the setup, which also includes tripods, rotators, GPS devices and remote triggers.

A 360-degree virtual experience for a small company costs about \$1,300, while big jobs can reach \$100,000. In the Baltimore-Washington Corridor, a good example of the latter would be a contractor, "because the government wants to see what kind of spaces these businesses work from," he said.

Going Big

BPA is in the midst of a huge project with Kaiser Permanente (KP) that started in 2015. "The corporation called us in to scan each of its medical offices. We've already shot more than two dozen facilities in Washington, D.C., Virginia and Maryland," said Clark. "They seem to discover new jobs for us every day, for corporate and government reports, architectural updates, American Disability Act (ADA) requirements," and more.

And it's not all local. "We've already worked in Georgia, and we'll also be heading to Colorado, Washington state, California and Hawaii.

Half of the projects include overlays, too. "We shot at a small college where the dean comes on the image to address the viewer. That deal also included audio, hyperlinks and a menu system."

Another recent client was Savage Mill. "We were going to use it during an event, but the video went viral. We were expecting 2,600 views the first month, but we got 28,000," Clark said. "So, we nixed the event."

Adam Winer, director of business development for Odenton-based A.J. Properties, which owns Savage Mill, said few companies offer this service "and he's qualified via Google, which is a huge marketing asset. Every business owner is trying to get a leg up on their marketing efforts and BPA offers something truly unique."

Winer said working with Clark "greatly increased the visibility of Savage Mill and its stores. We featured ArtCraft (of which Winer is part owner) in our project, which boosted e-commerce and opened a new universe for the store."

A 360-degree virtual experience for a small company costs about \$1,300, while big jobs can reach \$100,000.

Google Juice

As for KP, Clare Callaghan, senior digital consultant for the mid-Atlantic states, said BPA will eventually shoot all 30 of the corporation's current regional medical centers, and is adding three more next year. She said the virtual experience tours "have contributed significantly to our search presence.

"Our Google My Business dashboard reports if similar businesses have similar amounts of photography, and we have significantly more imagery than many others. We have about 100 photos just for our Columbia Gateway location, most of which were taken by BPA," she said, noting images can be added by clients and others.

Moving forward, Clark noted that a 2018 ADA requirement has him looking forward to a strong 2019. "It calls for businesses with more than 15 employees to have an ADA-compliant web site," he said. "That's meant even more work, since we have to update the visual presence on many sites to indicate those adjustments."



Adam Winer, of A.J. Properties (left), and Frank Clark, of Business Photos America, created a 360-degree video to market Savage Mill that garnered more than 28,000 views in a month.



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Hacker convention is a family enterprise

Shmoocon gathers techies for 20 years

By George Berkheimer
Senior Writer

Running annually since 2005, the ShmooCon hacker convention in Washington, DC, is so popular that tickets for this year's January event sold out in less than 12 seconds.

The event is the last vestige of the Shmoo Group, a band of security and privacy professionals who joined forces some 20 years ago to collaborate on projects, presentations and books.

Since ShmooCon I, which attracted some 400 participants, the convention has grown to the point that its organizers impose a limit of 2,200 guests.

The upcoming ShmooCon XV event, running from Jan. 18-20, will feature 40 different talks and presentations on subjects related to cybersecurity, cyber culture, encryption, electronic voting, and a host of late-breaking computer security topics.

To the casual observer, ShmooCon would appear to be just an ordinary industry convention with an arcane focus, but true to its nature, few attendees are aware of the real truth behind this facade: the whole event is fundamentally a family enterprise orchestrated from the organizers' home in Ellicott City.

Unplanned Roots

Shmoo Group Founder Bruce Potter and his wife, Heidi Potter, have spent their careers involved in computers and cybersecurity.

Currently the Chief Information Security Officer for Herndon, Va.-based Expel, Bruce Potter ran his own cybersecurity company with a partner in Ellicott City for nearly seven years before selling the business to Hanover-based KeyW Corp.

Heidi Potter owns the company that runs ShmooCon and is the event's lead organizer.

What's ironic, said Bruce Potter, is that a convention was never something

on the Shmoo Group's project list, but rather a response to an on-stage incident at a Las Vegas security conference in which the speaker was not held accountable.

"One of our group members said, 'We'd never let that stand if we ran the conference, we should do a conference,'" he recalled.

The Potters thought their colleague was joking – until he mortgaged his house to secure the seed money.

"At the time there wasn't a hackercon on the East Coast," said Heidi Potter. "There are many of them now, but ShmooCon continues to be a product of an amazing group of volunteers who show up, work, and support us every year, giving us many hours of their time."

Broad Appeal

The convention's stated purpose is to provide an interesting atmosphere for demonstrating technology exploitation, inventive software and hardware solutions, and open discussions of critical information security issues.

"We have a large contingent of attendees coming from service academies and universities around the country, a lot of federal employees, commercial sector folks, engineers and software engineers," Heidi Potter said.

It's a venue where three-star generals, researchers and directors of agencies can mingle with the commercial sector, high school students, and shadowy characters who introduce themselves by their cryptic online handles.

Speaker tracks this year are categorized by offensive and defensive topics, and a third track for topics that fit neither description.

There are also some fun diversions that include the Lockpick Village, a hands-on learning experience focused on physical security operated by The Open Organisation of Lockpickers, as well as Hack Fortress, a combined video game tournament and hacking competition that requires cooperation from teams of players engaged in each of the skills simultaneously to compete.

Serious Fun

ShmooCon is a serious convention covering serious topics, "But to be clear, this is something we do for fun," Bruce



Photo by Carson Zimmerman

ShmooCon organizers Bruce Potter (front left) and Heidi Potter (front right) rely on a large team of volunteers to produce the annual hacker convention in Washington, DC.

Potter said. "We don't make money off of this, we're not a nonprofit, and we release our financials at the Con every year."

In keeping with the spirit of hacker society, the organizers go to great lengths with ticket sales and a rapid,

school students.

"This year we had 36 Shmoozers and 82 students, so nearly half of those students were directly supported," Heidi Potter said.

Cultural Exchange

Philosophically, Bruce Potter said, ShmooCon aims to provide people wide viewpoints so they realize there's more going on than what they see in their own spheres, allowing public sector and private sector attendees to meet one another and discuss trends and policy.

"The industry has grown up and formalized quite a bit, and I think it's led to some preconceptions about cybersecurity," he said. "You've got to talk to the practitioners in a more casual setting, often times you can't really find out what's happening any other way."

Generally speaking, the hackercon scene promotes those interactions and continues to push those conversations forward.

"These events are important to have in the face of maturity and commercialization of the cybersecurity industry, we try to poke a little fun at that and be a little irreverent to help people remember what's really going on," Potter said. "My day job is defending networks. It's important to remember that there are bad actors trying to do bad things to our enterprises and our public networks. Remembering that they don't always play by the rules and are a little irreverent as well helps people stay on their toes and make good decisions around cybersecurity that are in the best interests of the people and organizations they're trying to protect."

In keeping with the spirit of hacker society, barcoded badging check-in helps attendees maintain anonymity.

barcoded badging check-in procedure to help attendees maintain anonymity.

"We don't really know who's at the conference until we're there," Heidi Potter said.

Because of the emphasis on secrecy, everything is run out of the Potters' home.

"It's kind of a family business," Bruce Potter explained. "The kids all pitch in, they do graphic design, help update patches, whatever needs to be done."

For the past 10 years, ShmooCon has incorporated a charitable side, giving away free t-shirts to attendees who donate a fixed amount of money to one of three charities: the Electronic Frontier Foundation, Hackers for Charity, or a third option chosen to reflect the year's themed event. To date, cumulative donations total more than \$60,000.

Additionally, attendees can Shmooze a Student by donating a \$100 stipend that is matched by ShmooCon to cover the cost of admission for high

Q&A with Sam Minnitte

BWI Business Partnership readies for a new era

By Mark R. Smith
Senior Writer

It's the dawn of a new era for the BWI Business Partnership. Founded in 1993 as the BWI Commuter Assistance Center at a time when only a few hotels operated within what was becoming the BWI Business District, it is now home to more than two dozen lodging options. The organization is also a leader in promoting economic development in the area.

With the hiring the entrepreneurial Gina Stewart as executive director, Board Chair Sam Minnitte, vice president and area manager with the Baltimore office of engineering professional services firm WSP, is excited about the partnership's new direction.

What will the \$1 million Anne Arundel County Local Development Council (LDC) grant be used for?

It will be used for the circulator bus program for the county, which will allow for a full-time transit service to run through most of the high employment areas within the BWI Business District, including BWI Thurgood Marshall Airport, the car rental facility, Arundel Mills, Airport Square, the Cromwell Light Rail station (in Glen Burnie) and other locations, to run more frequently. It currently serves about 200 passengers a day.

What other grants has the partnership received?

We've received a beautification grant, also from the LDC. People sometimes ask, "Why is the partnership involved in beautification in the district?" But understand that how it looks and functions has much to do with perceptions of the market and people who want to establish a business here.

We may also work on creating more signage for the area, too. As a nonprofit,

we're always looking for grants that help make us more viable.

What's your opinion of the Mass Transit Administration's (MTA) Light Rail service?

Light rail has one really important characteristic: it has a dedicated right-of-way and thus does not have the challenge of traffic with congestion uncertainties. That's important, because when you look at transit, you analyze a series of options, such as pedestrian traffic, buses and bikes, and more recently, shared rides and scooters.

The purpose is offering options for improved mobility. Remember, five years ago Lyft and Uber didn't exist, and by 2025, they will be employing autonomous cars. All of these will improve mobility for patrons in the Greater BWI Marshall area. Coordinating these alternatives is the need and challenge to improve mobility for all.

How is the partnership getting involved in microtransit opportunities?

By investing grant money in the circulator and working with the MTA to

expand services. This is all a part of the "first and last mile" transit challenge.

Do you think the Linthicum Light Rail station should close?

I've always wondered why it was there and assumed it was for walk-ups, given that it does not offer parking. I've never seen many folks stop there, but I don't know what the MTA would gain by closing it, either.

What are your thoughts about expanding Baltimore Washington Parkway?

It's critical that it happens. It's a tough subject to tackle, due to the ownership of the parkway by the federal government west of Route 175 and the state east of that artery; however, I know that MDOT [the Maryland Department of Transportation] and [Secretary Pete] Rahn are working hard on that issue.

It is so over capacity that more accidents have been occurring there.

What will the upgrades to the BWI MARC station accomplish?

When I used the garage regularly, I was always shocked at how full it was at 5:15 a.m.

We recognize the value of the station to the MARC Penn Line and the access it provides to the northeast corridor. Construction will modernize the station from an infrastructure standpoint. Construction is moving quickly and it appears that it will be complete during the first half of 2019. At that point, I think the station will really take off.

What are your thoughts on the expansion at BWI Marshall?

The airport served 27 million passengers a year ago. When I heard that news, I recalled a conversation I had with [long-time area businessman] Lou Zagarino, when he mentioned that BWI Marshall's goal 20 years ago was to reach 2 million patrons; no one imagined the growth to 27 million.

So, the expansion will only make a great airport even greater. Actually, the main challenge today is that BWI Marshall doesn't have the real estate to expand, like Dulles [International



Airport, in Northern Virginia] does. However, Maryland Aviation Administrator Ricky Smith and his team are always addressing efficiencies, which allows BWI Marshall to successfully attract patrons from all over the Baltimore-Washington region.

What would you tell residents who are affected by noise around the airport?

The Federal Aviation Administration manages the planes in terms of how flights are directed and that's where they need to focus. We cannot affect operations at BWI Marshall due to federal program actions that it's not Maryland's policy to address. However, BWI Marshall, is doing all it can do locally to work with the airlines and residents.

What's your take on the MagLev?

It is a necessary option for intercity mobility, but we will need to address area residents' concerns. We look forward to hearing more from the MagLev team in 2019.

What would you like to see happen in the BWI Business District?

Greater involvement that would help elevate the Greater BWI Marshall area as the economic engine between Washington and Baltimore that it truly is.

We need to elevate the partnership's game to support this goal for the area's thoughtful development and transportation infrastructure, as well as local mobility. With the hiring of Gina and a renewed focus by the partnership board, we're poised to achieve that goal.

Is joining the partnership economical for small businesses?

It's one of the best bucks a business can spend. We have about 200 members from public and private sectors, from the southern side of Baltimore to Annapolis to Columbia.



Photo by Eric Stocklin Photography
BWI Business Partnership Board Chair Sam Minnitte welcomes the crowd at a recent breakfast event.

Maryland to consider expanding gambling options

continued from page 1

race tracks and the casinos; the Senate only wanted it at casinos. “That’s the hang up,” Turner said, “and I don’t think either side is rushing to take a position, since it can’t come into play until 2020, when it has to go to referendum”

As for what legalization would mean for Maryland, Turner said in Las Vegas sports gaming only accounts for “5 percent to 6 percent” of gambling revenues, “so I don’t think it would be the kind of windfall people might assume it would be.”

The state gets about \$1.4 billion from casinos and \$1 billion from the lottery, he said. “Sports betting won’t stop that.”

The deal today, he said, is that “people who really want this are very vocal, and they don’t want to drive [out of state] or go to Vegas to get it.”

While Maryland has come to the gaming party later than other states, Turner isn’t sure that’s a bad thing.

“People complained about how late we got into gaming here, but Maryland is far ahead of other states in [gambling] revenues,” he said. “Much of that is to do with D.C. and Virginia not having it. We even get people from North Carolina who come here and sightsee, too.”

Three Points

Jeffrey Hooke is managing director of Hooke Associates, of McLean, Va., and a senior lecturer with The Johns Hopkins University, and he thinks



With many gambling options already available in Maryland, state lawmakers will be considering adding sports betting.

enabling legislation will occur by mid-2019. “Maryland almost got there last time,” he said, offering three issues to contemplate until then.

First the legislature “must address whether they will give away licenses for free, as most states do and as happens with casino licenses, or sell them to large corporations. They have a market and are worth millions. The state must address that point from a taxpayer point of view.”

Next, the state “will need a regulatory system” to police illegal conduct, such as inside information, bribes, and so on. “How are bettors being screened?,” he said. “Other states haven’t put much effort into monitoring the integrity function.”

Lastly, the 75-year-old Wire Act, a federal law that prohibits information sharing on national level for horse racing, “needs to be updated, since it restricts the sharing of betting patterns across states. The immediate goal here,” said Hooke, “is to legalize sports gaming in every state, give away the licenses for free and try to have a low betting tax rate – then establish the integrity system on the state level.”

Nationally, 10 states have authorized sports betting and approximately 20 others are pursuing authorizing legislation, which is not lost on Joe Weinberg, CEO of Cordish Global Gaming, which runs Live! Casino, in Hanover.

“Maryland, with one of the smallest populations in the U.S., has the fourth highest gaming tax collections in the country, with more than \$3.5 billion to date,” he said. “It is important that Maryland casinos continue to have the ability to offer a full suite of products to remain competitive with surrounding states which already offer, or will shortly, allow sports betting.”

‘Volatile Market’

That “could well happen in 2020,” said Jennifer Roberts, associate director at the International Gaming Institute at the University of Nevada Las Vegas.

“What’s going on in the mid-Atlantic is like the Mississippi-Louisiana relationship, where residents of Louisiana gamble on sports in Mississippi,” she said. “The politicians of Louisiana would rather have their people gamble on sports in state.”

Roberts also said the revenues would not amount to as much as people think, however. “For instance, before the last

Super Bowl (LII), customers at the 198 sports books in Nevada wagered \$158 million – combined, they made \$1.17 million. That was it,” she said, though noting that other Super Bowls “made much more money. It’s a volatile market.”

So, don’t expect the earnings in Maryland or anywhere else to pay for new schools, roads or bridges. “But it will add to employment and keep some money in the state,” she said. Revenue Plus

While Turner would “like to see agreement between the Senate and House,” there won’t be any pressure this year to get it done.

In addition, he said, the state has a \$1 billion surplus in revenue, “so there’s no pressure to raise more money. There will be in a couple of years, because educational bills need financing and prescription drugs for retired state employees need funding,” he said, “plus the economy could [weaken].”

With Turner retired, the point man for a bill will be Del. Eric Ebersole (District 12, Howard and Baltimore counties), subcommittee chair for finance resources in the Ways and Means Committee, the umbrella group for all gaming interests. He agrees that it’s hard to ignore any extra money that sports gaming would generate, as well as a new synergy it would provide for the overall gaming market.

“Many people will be looking forward to the additional financial resources,” said Ebersole, noting it could be directed to making community colleges debt free, 3-4 year old pre-kindergarten, school construction, etc.

“There would be,” he said, “plenty of places to spend it.”

Visit Hoco gets new director

continued from page 3

From her office in the old Post Office building in Ellicott City, Hof said Visit Howard County is committed to doing everything it can to help Old Ellicott City recover. But she said efforts are also underway to promote other communities including Elkridge, Laurel and Savage.

Visit Howard County cultivates signature events like the Festival of the Arts, the Sheep and Wool Festival, hot air balloons during the Preakness and Wine in the Woods.

Other notable successes include bringing The Made Marketplace event to Elkridge and working with a local tour operator on the launch of Maryland Brewery Tours.

“We have a robust agri-tourism

program with our farms, breweries and farm to table events. Restaurant Weeks are one of our most successful campaigns.” Hof has coordinated the Howard County Restaurant Week events since its inception 10 years ago.

Last fall, the county hosted the US Quidditch Mid-Atlantic Regional Championship at Troy Park in Elkridge which brought 30 teams to the county that booked 238 hotel rooms. “They would like to come back. They had a great experience,” she said.

Hof looks forward to growing Howard County’s tourism industry with the board, staff and industry stakeholders.

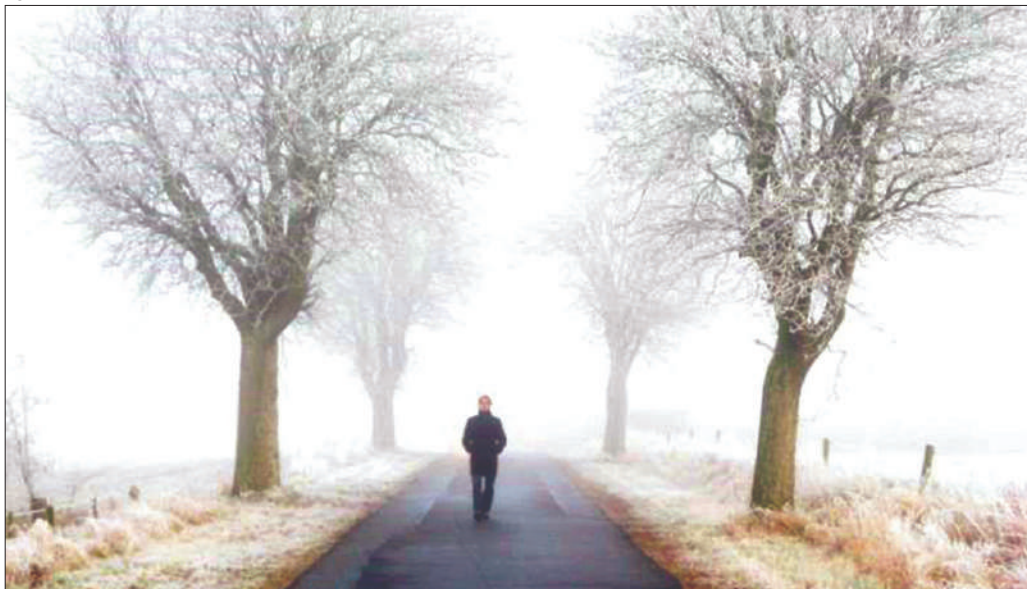
“We want to work for all of Howard County,” she said. “This is my dream job. I love promoting Howard County.”

BY THE NUMBERS

By Susan Kim, Staff Writer

SNO WAY! *Slick, thick, heavy and wet and it's gotta' go*

Frosty may think it's fun but most Marylanders dread the S-word. While many prepare for cancellations and closings, a small army of snow removal teams are prepared to push and plow so we can go about our business. Below, a numerical look at what goes into snow removal.



1,036

Miles of roadway from which Howard County removes snow every winter

32,500

Tons of salt stockpiled by Howard County each winter in preparation for winter. Plus, 32,300 gallons of liquid magnesium and 30,000 gallons of brine are at the ready, too.

27

Degrees Fahrenheit or higher = the temperature at which salt is most effective after snow has accumulated about an inch.

12-18 hours

The time goal for Howard County, after a 6-12" snowfall, to have all county roadways cleared.

2,336

Cul-de-sacs in Howard County that, of course, also require snow removal

300

People hired by SnowMovers to shovel or snow blow sidewalks during the blizzard of 2010, commonly referred to as "Snowmageddon."

23

Inches of average annual snowfall in Howard County, with the majority falling in January and February

13,000

Tons of salt stored by Anne Arundel County at six different locations. A growing portion of Anne Arundel County's fleet is also equipped with liquid calcium chloride pre-wetting equipment. Pre-wetting dry salt during its application helps the salt adhere to the roadway. In contrast, dry salt can bounce, blow off the roadway, and be less effective.

20

Degrees Fahrenheit or lower = the temperature at which salt will not melt the snow and ice. In this case, other methods are used, including the use of calcium chloride to melt the ice and snow.

23

Average number of out-of-state crews hired by SnowMovers during a blizzard.

15

Inches of average annual snowfall in Anne Arundel County

135

Pieces of snow removal equipment, all with automated vehicle-locating devices to allow the Bureau of Highways and the public to see which Howard County roads have been serviced.

40

Number of years Rooney Anderson owner of SnoMovers has been in the snow removal business. "I was making money shoveling snow long before I had my driver's license," he said.



The tolerance Washington Adventist Hospital has for snow and ice, leading them to hire the Severna Park-based company SnowMovers, Inc. The hospital, between offering emergency and patient care, being located on a hill, and maintaining a helicopter pad, presents one of the most challenging snow removal situations around for SnowMovers owner Rodney Anderson.

At Washington Adventist Hospital, Anderson said, "We never let the snow get very deep," he said, "so we constantly remove it. We shovel in between parked cars, we shovel all the curb lines. In a one-foot snow storm we might be there for two or three days nonstop. Crews go in 12-hour shifts."

Kittleman reflects on decades of service

A legacy of accomplishment follows former county executive

By **George Berkheimer**
Senior Writer

Nine days out of office, former Howard County Executive Allan Kittleman sits in an otherwise vacant dining area of the Bagel Bin in the Enchanted Forest shopping center, taking shallow sips from a bottle of fruit punch.

He's giving one last interview exclusively to *The Business Monthly*, reacquainting himself with the luxury of late afternoon down time, taking the opportunity to reflect on four years in county government's highest office.

The Ups

Looking back, Kittleman found more purpose in identifying meaning in his administration's accomplishments than in trying to rank them in any particular order.

"[With] the NonProfit Collaborative and the Community Resources Campus, we have our human services almost all in one location now," he said, making it easier for the people who need those services to get them.

Preservation of the Harriett Tubman School and its repurposing as a cultural center constitutes a personal triumph, he said. "I'm proud of [what] we did with the ... Harriett Tubman Foundation and the school system, it was a joint accomplishment."

His administration's education priorities included school construction and acceleration of the county's 13th high school to help relieve some Adequate Public Facilities Ordinance (APFO) pressures and increase high school capacity; the cost-free ReadyRosie initiative to help families better prepare pre-school-aged children for entry into the school system; and Achieve 24/7, focused on improving outcomes in early childhood education, mental health, summer food access and support for children at risk.

From doubling the number of police officers working human trafficking issues to multiple prevention initiatives, "We did an awful lot to make this issue more visible," Kittleman said.

His administration also advanced several significant projects initiated by his predecessor, Ken Ulman, across the goal line, notably a redevelopment plan for Long Reach Village Center and construction of the Leola Dorsey Community Resources Center that provides housing units for chronically homeless individuals and modern facilities for the Grassroots Crisis Intervention Center's homeless services.

The Downs

Some of Kittleman's darkest days were spent in Ellicott City. He shakes his head, gazing into the distance to recall the succession of challenges that hijacked his attention in 2016.

"We had the biggest blizzard in the history of Howard County in January, I slept in my office six nights that week," he said. "In June we had a tornado that went through 13 miles of Howard County, then on July 30 we had the first flood. Yeah, 2016 itself was a hard year for me."

July 18, 2018, the day Howard County Firefighter Nathan Flynn died in the line of duty, marked the lowest point of all for Kittleman.

"I [accompanied] the deputy fire chief and the president of the Firefighters Union to notify his wife, it was probably the hardest thing I saw or did in my four years," he said. "Around 5 a.m. we were at her door in Havre de Grace and I was thinking, 'Celeste is in there sleeping with her children, and her life is going to change in five minutes.' A low point for sure."

Seeing the fire service's response and the commitment of Flynn's colleagues to each other and the community was heartening, Kittleman noted.

Likewise, he said, the resilience of victims who survived two Ellicott City floods, the community's compassion, response and support, and the lack of partisanship in dealing with the aftermath of the disasters provided a measure of encouragement in the face of daunting crises.

The Clashes

"I made a concerted effort to have a



While the two floods in Ellicott City had a major impact on the four years that Allan Kittleman served as Howard County Executive, he was also ubiquitous throughout the county.



bipartisan administration," Kittleman said, knowing he would be working with a majority opposition council. "My Chief Administrative Officer was a Democrat; my Chief of Staff was a Republican; my two Deputy Chiefs of Staff were both Democrats."

Several of the former executive's decisions continue to stir debate, chief among them the decision to replace the county courthouse.

"People were talking about getting a new courthouse when I was on the county council 20 years ago, but we kept moving things around the county,"

Kittleman said. "You don't want the State's Attorney not in the courthouse, you don't want the Sheriff's Department not in the courthouse when the Sheriff's primary job is to protect the courthouse."

As to his decision to raze historic buildings in Ellicott City, "I still think it's the best way to go forward," he said.

Kittleman's shifts on mulch bill legislation and the Downtown Columbia Tax Increment Financing (TIF) plan garnered plenty of criticism.

State regulations require farmers to get rid of mulch after a year, he



said, meaning it might make sense for them to sell leftover mulch to the county’s composting program at Alpha Ridge. “That’s one way I was going to be moving had I been reelected.”

In regard to the TIF, the business community criticized the county’s ownership of a garage that would be used by a commercial property, while some council members felt the TIF should have been reevaluated rather than simply changing the infrastructure it covered.

“It was frustrating that we were trying to compromise and make it work for everybody,” Kittleman said.

Aside from the major development the TIF enabled, “Merriweather would never have been given to the Downtown Columbia Arts and Culture Commission as early as it was without the TIF ... and we wouldn’t have had 900 affordable housing units downtown,” he said.

Thankful Departure

After four years in office, what has Allan Kittleman learned?

“What was surprising was the commitment of the people who work for Howard County, and that goes to the top,” Kittleman said. “I learned how great ... professional associations are, particularly those that I maybe didn’t have as strong a respect for when I ran for office, and the resiliency of our community. When something happens in Howard County that may be considered negative, man, does the community come out.”

He added, “Things even happen outside of our community and we have to have a town hall because we’re upset, and that’s okay. I’d much rather do this than have a community that’s apathetic.”

Something people may not know, Kittleman said, is the support he received from a group of men who met with him monthly to pray and hold him accountable for making time for his family.

“That would be my advice for Howard

County Executive Calvin Ball as well, make sure your family still comes first,” he said. “Dr. Ball is up to the challenge. It’s not an easy job. He has a whole county wishing him well, including me.”

He recalled, “When I visited our schools, I asked the kids, ‘Who do I

work for?’, and they eventually figured out that I work for them. That was my mantle for four years. Being County Executive was an honor and a privilege, something I’ll always be thankful to the citizens of Howard County for allowing me to do.”

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Entrepreneur Expo seeks connections

Maryland tech sector preparing for innovative collaboration

By **George Berkheimer**
Senior Writer

Now in its eighth year, the Maryland Technology Development Corp. (TEDCO)'s Entrepreneur Expo moved further afield in 2018 to highlight the importance of community and place making.

More than 900 entrepreneurs, investors and business leaders attended the event at The Hotel in College Park, the anchor of Discovery District West, the first phase of the University of Maryland Discovery District.

Taking shape under the guiding hand of Ken Ulman, chief strategy officer for economic development at the University of Maryland College Park Foundation, the project will soon be home to a collection of startups, established technology businesses, and the venture capital, legal and accounting firms that support them.

"We have always been a great university, but we haven't always been a great innovation ecosystem," Ulman said. "That's what we're working really hard on."

Tenants of the newly opened Diamondback Garage, a startup hub located on the first floor of The Hotel's parking structure, include Capital One's technology innovation lab and enterprise data management provider Immuta.

Software giant Adobe has also located a research laboratory adjacent to the garage. Other neighbors expected by spring include the Brendan Iribe Center for Computer Science and Innovation across the street, and the first WeWork co-working office space in a campus environment.

Activity is also underway at the second phase Discover District East, located near the College Park Metro station.

"We are signing leases with private sector companies there as well, and the Purple Line will run through all of this and provide connective tissue to our Discovery District and main campus," Ulman said.

Opportunity Zones

Since revamping itself as TEDCO 2.0 last year, the early stage venture capital investor created a new Gateway Services concept designed to better support the needs of startups at

different stages of development.

"We're getting really good feedback from that," said TEDCO CEO George Davis. "We're trying to get more money for our venture side as well. I think we're totally undercapitalized."

Currently, TEDCO is working with the governor's office on new ideas to improve the startup environment.

"We have all this great service delivery, all these research assets, but we're not connected; it's kind of a fragmented ecosystem," Davis said. "We're working very hard to bring that together through partnerships with other state agencies and bringing the private sector more into play."

One of the most promising changes on TEDCO's horizon is a new community development program created under the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act of 2017 that will enable private investment in economically stressed Opportunity Zones. So far, the U.S. Treasury has designated 149 such zones in Maryland.

"It has the power to unleash hundreds of billions of dollars sitting in untapped capital gains," Davis said. "Here's the opportunity to take that money and move it to a shelter ... that will focus on investing in areas of need. It's going to be huge."

Deep Trends

Among trending topics explored at this year's Expo were the complex domains of blockchain technology and artificial intelligence (AI).

Immuta is one of the fast rising companies working to evolve the role of data science and AI across industries.

"We built a way where data scientists, data owners and lawyers can work together on a single platform," CEO Matthew Carroll told participants attending a morning panel on the topic. "We had to automate the legal engineering part into the data science process."

That may not sound very exciting, but the result is akin to building ethics into complex decision-making code. In the intelligence community, for example, it could enable data scientists to build algorithms for analyzing raw data so that machines learn to exclude data pertaining to U.S. persons, ensuring that the computer-aided process does not break any laws.

Immuta's initial clients include Mercedes-Benz, Barclays Investment



TEDCO CEO George Davis (left) interviews AOL Co-founder Steve Case during the 2018 Entrepreneur Expo in College Park.

Bank, two U.S. intelligence agencies and another in the United Kingdom.

In the blockchain arena, the technology is poised to move beyond its initial cryptocurrency and supply chain applications.

"I think it's got a lot of potential in many areas across healthcare, health research and very specific niches of research including stem cells," said Sean Manion, CEO of Windsor Mill-based Science Distributed, a science and health research business.

"There are pitfalls we need to watch out for before mass adoption can occur," added Tim Gilday, technology acceleration principal for General Dynamics IT. "Once we crest that hill, blockchain will be unleashed on a more commercial scale."

The challenge that lies ahead, he said, is to create a more robust technology that allows changes without breaking the integrity of the blockchain ledger, one example being the expungement of Department of Justice files or subpoenas after a specified period of time.

"We're investigating ways to have malware injected into blockchain so you set a certain time and then malware destroys information from the inside," he said.

Third Wave

Steve Case, chairman and CEO of Revolution LLC and co-founder of America Online, delivered the day's keynote.

During his Rise of the Rest bus tours of the United States to promote

startups and job creation, Case said he has observed a lack of the connection and collaboration that are hallmarks of Silicon Valley.

"People who should be working together often don't even know each other," he said. "Figuring out ways to drive that collaboration are critical. There are a lot of things that are basic that can be worked on."

The first wave of the Internet involved getting everybody connected, and the second wave saw the establishment of software services and applications on top of the Internet.

The third wave – integrating technologies to meaningfully improve healthcare outcomes, food and agriculture, education, government services and other important aspects of life – will not only drive entrepreneurship for the next 10 to 20 years, Case said, but will once again redistribute opportunity geographically and demographically.

Last year, Case said, California, New York and Massachusetts claimed 75 percent of venture capital investing, with one percent going to Maryland. More than 90 percent of those funds went to men, but less than one percent went to African Americans.

"I think you're going to see innovation dispersed, I think you're going to see a lot more companies in places like Maryland break out and be the next big successes," he said. "I think that's actually critically important for our country. I think we need to have a more evenly dispersed innovation economy."

KID-PRENEURS

BizKidz dive into the shark tank

By Susan Kim
Staff Writer

“Who wouldn’t want their hands to smell like cotton candy?”

For 9-year-old Serena Soldavin, this question is an important part of her business pitch for “Serena’s Soaps and Scrubs.”

As she hands her customers a pastel pink-and-blue bar of soap, Serena explains why her soaps are made of the “finest ingredients.”

The young entrepreneur began making soap when she received a soap-making kit as a gift. Now, she said, “I have whole vats of ingredients and I don’t use a kit anymore.”

Her pitch – and perhaps the effect of the cotton candy scent – went over well with a panel of judges at a November “Biz Kidz” Market Day and Shark Tank Competition at Long Reach High School in Columbia.

Serena was the elementary school-age winner among two dozen competitors.

Danielle McNerney, founder of “Save the Moms” Recipe Cards, won the high school category for her business that teaches kids to cook. “Every time I’m not thinking about schoolwork, I’m thinking about this business,” said Danielle, who won a \$500 scholarship.

Biz Kidz Academy is a faith-based non-profit developed to inspire young entrepreneurs ages 5-18.

The shark tank event was also supported by the Maryland Lt. Governor’s Office, Girl Scouts of Central Maryland, Howard County Chamber of Commerce, and Howard County Public School System (HCPSS).

Judges included Howard County State’s Attorney Kim Oldham; Mary Schiller, manager of HCPSS partnerships; and Anne Arundel County Councilman Pete Smith.

As the judges circled the exhibit floor, the young entrepreneurs explained their wares and their reasons for starting a business in the first place.

Khalik Newbold, the 11-year-old CEO of New Bold Works, talked easily about his goals: “I love to make money!” he said. When his family drove to Colorado last summer, he and his father collected rocks. “My dad shaped one of the rocks into a heart for my sister. I thought, ‘We can make money off of this.’”

Khalik’s short-term goals are to buy a cash register and a receipt machine.

He brims with confidence. He said, “I will be a successful businessman and I will help other people reach their goals.”

BizKidz founders Dr. Marlene Jackson and her daughter, Ashley Jackson, created the organization to empower young entrepreneurs with the guidance, resources and tools they need to be confident, cultivated, and self-assured decision makers.

Growing up in Chicago in a



Nine-year-old Serena Soldavin, founder of “Serena’s Soaps and Scrubs.”

single-parent household, Jackson said she and her seven siblings did not have many opportunities or much money to participate in things that would inspire them to reach their goals.

Now a Columbia resident, Jackson

and her daughter, a counselor for Baltimore County Public Schools, first founded Le’ Chic Academy, which started out as a girls’ empowerment program before evolving into Biz Kidz.

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Athelas Institute: Putting

By Len Lazarick

Named for a healing herb in the Lord of the Rings books, the Athelas Institute began small in 1976, serving about 20 people with intellectual and developmental disabilities with a staff of three or four people based at Catonsville Community College.

Today, with a headquarters on Red Branch Road in Columbia, Athelas (ATH-uh-las) serves over 350 clients with a wide range of disabilities and a staff of 250 in Howard, Baltimore and Carroll counties, including 19 residential homes.

The state and federal government provide most of its \$13 million budget.

Not as well known as some of the local ARCs and Humanim, which provide similar services, Athelas was somewhat publicity shy until recently, when it began greater outreach to businesses and the community at large as it faced new challenges.

The state is making a major change in how reimburses care providers like Athelas and there are even stronger government requirements that its clients work or volunteer in the community.

Major change

It all represents a massive change from the 1960s, when large institutions once housed the developmentally disabled out of sight and out of mind.

Even the idea of “sheltered workshops” where the disabled were paid subminimum wage “is no more,” said Athelas executive director Diane LaSov. “The philosophy now is that everyone should be having community experiences and integrated in the community. So even our least capable folks are out and about in the community. They volunteer at soup kitchens or the library or wherever. They can do Meals on Wheels and they also get involved in activities of their choice for their enjoyment”

LaSov has witnessed all the changes over her 39 years with Athelas. She took over as executive director last year after the death of founder Ray Jordan.

“What kept me here all that time was the ability to learn new things all the time I’ve done program management. I’ve done H.R. I’ve done admissions. I’ve done a little bit of everything over all these years.”

The state is now insisting on “Employment First” for adults with developmental disabilities, but that has always been part of the Athelas model.

In its first years, Athelas had its clients working in the recycling business, collecting paper long before counties made it a standard part of their trash removal.

Now, through its Supported Employment program, the institute places clients in businesses with job coaches that assist them with a transition into a regular workplace, doing work suited to their abilities.

‘I love this job’

James Powell is one of those. Now 27, Powell was adopted from Romania at age 5 and went to Maryland schools. He began at Athelas part-time



seven years ago and now works there full time in the maintenance department.

“Maintenance is a great thing,” Powell said enthusiastically in an interview. His supervisor and job coach picks him up at home “and then he tells me the plan for the day, what I’m going to do, and what he’s going to do. So we split up. When he does electricity, I do raking; after raking, I go do painting. If he does painting, I do plumbing ... I love this job.”

Some day he’d like to work at an electronics or appliance store. Other clients have moved on from volunteer tasks to full-time work, such as a woman who loved animals and began as a volunteer doing clean-up at an animal shelter. After watching the spaying and neutering, she has moved on to be a veterinary technician and is now working in doggy day-care.

“Everybody can do something even for an hour at a time,” LaSov said. “It’s all very individualized based on the person’s choices and needs and what they want to do. But we try to get everybody out,” even if it’s just miniature golf or listening to a music performance.

Integrating into the community can be a fearful experience for the clients who might prefer the comfort of home, and is hard work for staff whose job is to help them fit in with new tasks and new surroundings. That hard work along with reimbursement from the state that has barely kept up with

minimum wage leads to high turnover.

“You’re working with people and you have a lot of responsibility because you’re caring for that person,” said Andrea Callahan, director of day services.” So, it’s a lower paid field but if you are the right person, the worth of what you’re doing for humans is what drives you.”

Hard to retain staff

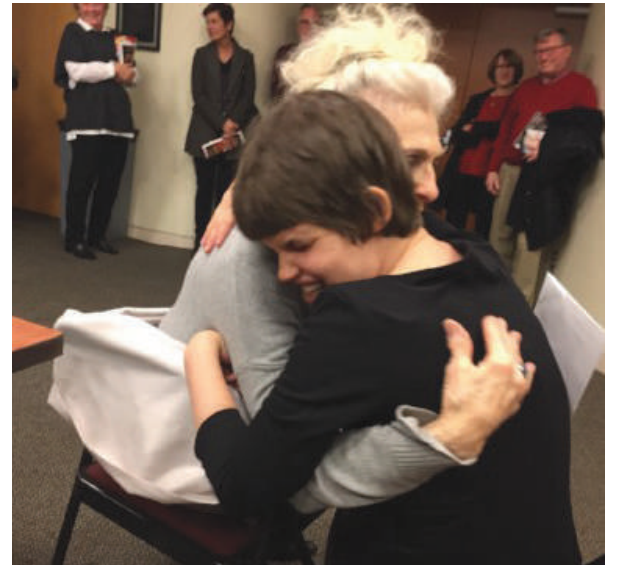
“Staff retention in this field is hard for any agency but we have good people that have been retained a very long time,” Callahan said, who returned to Athelas after supervising a larger program in New York City. “Years ago veteran staff that we have now, they would come in and they’d love the guys and it just became their career. We have many people here 20, 30 years.”

“It’s more difficult getting the newer ones in now and holding them,” with the attraction of higher wages at McDonalds or Walmart, Callahan said.

“Part of our job is teaching the community how to accept people that are different. As diverse as Howard County is and as wonderful as they are with disability we have some citizens that are not so kind to people that are different and we’ve had some issues. There’s been times I’ve had to call the police just to help my individuals in a library or in a park.”

The institute and its fellow providers want more businesses to understand that there is a work force

g the disabled to work



Athelas Institute by the numbers

- HQ: 9104 Red Branch Road, Columbia 21045
- Staff: 250
- Clients: 350-400 intellectually and developmentally disabled
- Budget: \$13 million
- Residential homes: 19 homes serving 64 people in 3 counties
- Dances: Once a month for 18 years

available that can be supported by job coaches.

“Staff will go with them until such time that they’re comfortable in their job and they understand all the requirements of that job,” said Callahan.

Besides the difficulty of the work itself and the low reimbursement rate for many of its staff, Athelas and the other providers are also facing a big change in how the state reimburses them. In the past, the state has paid for the services they provide up front every quarter, then the payments were adjusted based on the number of actual clients and the kinds of services rendered. Now the state wants them to bill for services as often as weekly.

“That’s a bit nerve racking,” says LaSov. “We’re not quite sure how long they’re going to take to pay. They’re saying it’s a quick turnaround. That’s what they’re saying. And you hope that’s true.”

And the providers hoping for a bridge loan to take them through the transition.

All pictures are courtesy of Athelas Website

Safe workplaces prevent harassment

continued from page 1

A 1988 survey, answered by personnel and human resources directors and equal opportunity offices representing 3.3 million employees at 160 corporations, found that a typical Fortune 500 company lost \$6.7 million a year because of absenteeism, low productivity and staff turnover as a result of sexual harassment.

In 1994, the Merit Systems Protection Board estimated that, over the course of two years, sexual harassment in the federal workforce cost the government a total of \$327.1 million as a result of job turnover, sick leave, and decreased productivity.

In 2017, the human resources consulting firm ERC estimated that, assuming that a sexual harassment claim is settled out of court, the average cost to an organization runs anywhere from \$75,000 to \$125,000.

How can businesses avoid these costs?

Eileen Levitt, president of the Columbia-based The HR Team, Inc., recommends three steps: have a policy, follow that policy, and train your managers and employees.

If this sounds over-simplified, ask yourself what your company's policy on sexual harassment is and what it means. Is it something you blindly signed



Big problem: Bigger Costs

- ✓ More than 70 percent of women and 27 percent of men say they have been sexually harassed at work.
- ✓ Out of court settlements cost \$125,000 and more
- ✓ Low productivity, staff turnover and absenteeism follow hostile work environments

online, perhaps after sitting through a slide presentation and checking a box?

That type of training doesn't work, agreed Levitt and many others in the field. "The reality is that we have to change behaviors," said Levitt. "As an organization, we have to hire people that have behaviors we want to emulate."

Nurturing a healthy workplace

Instead of thinking of sexual harassment as a hopelessly inevitable fact of office life, start thinking about a mindful approach to developing your team's capacity to prevent harassment in the first place, suggested Sarah Rowell, CEO of Kantola Training Solutions, a company that has trained more than 13,000 organizations in sexual harassment prevention in the last five years.

Look at it more like an investment in your organization's immune system," Rowell said. "Take that preventive approach right up front."

Kantola uses story-based training

that, through sophisticated instructional design, truly puts people in each other's shoes. One of the many important concepts Kantola focuses on is "bystander intervention," or ways to support your coworkers when you witness harassing behavior.

The key to good training is real-life scenarios, agreed Tara Taylor, director of Education & Outreach for the Maryland Commission On Civil Rights. Taylor also recommends having clear timeframes in policies that outline when a response to a complaint should be expected. "Most state agencies have to investigate and respond within 30 days," she said. "But private businesses and nonprofits don't always have a clear timeframe."

A common mistake by employers is retaliation against the alleged victim for complaining, Taylor added. "Sometimes employers are unconsciously retaliating," she explained. An example? Moving alleged victims away

to another job or another location to "protect" them.

Finally, Taylor said, if you have never received a complaint of any kind related to sexual harassment, ask yourself: do people feel comfortable complaining?

A new era

Sexual harassment has been around a long time, pointed out Amy Polefrone, president and CEO of the HR Strategy Group in Ellicott City. "It's illegal under the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title VII," she said. Yet, until comparatively recently, sexual harassment prevention training was a "check-the-box" routine.

At its heart, good training should be about gathering people together to answer a positive question: what kind of workplace do we want to have?

As the millennial generation and younger generations enter the workforce, they are increasingly choosing workplaces in which harassment of any kind is unacceptable. And, perhaps in part due to anti-bullying training they've had in their school years, this generation is proficient at identifying and combating harassment on the spot.

"Readiness training" in sexual harassment prevention seems key to creating a team that protects each other. It's time, said Polefrone: "Dust off your policy, and ask yourself: how do we respond?"

Howard Chamber begins 50th anniversary celebration

continued from page 3

"One role that hasn't change is providing a way to get [members] substantive information to help them make decisions in a more timely fashion, which continues to add value," McClarty said.

Meaningful Spinoffs

Along the way, HCCC has had a hand in creating some of the most meaningful quality of business life aspects the county has to offer.

"The Chamber was the original founder of Leadership Howard County," McClarty noted. "It was an affiliate of the Chamber for a number of years and we were housed in the same space until it found its own office."

In 1992, under the presidency of Orchard Development's Chair and CEO Earl Armiger, the Chamber spun off another successful mission

with the creation of the Jim Rouse Entrepreneurial Fund.

"The economy was coming out of a recession, and we recognized that more jobs were being created by small business than by big businesses," Armiger said. "Our idea was to get the commitment of eight banks to put up a combined \$250,000 to start a low-interest loan fund for startups."

When the Chamber asked for permission to use Rouse's name, the Columbia developer challenged the organization to think bigger and target \$1 million.

Two years later, Armiger said, the fund had amassed to \$3 million.

By the year 2000, the fund had provided more than \$1,000,000 in funding, leading to the creation of more than 250 new local jobs.

The Chamber also played a small but important role in the start of the



Howard County Economic Development Authority (HCEDA) in 1992.

Dyan Brasington, now executive vice president for Economic Development for the Miami-Dade Beacon Council, led the HCEDA from its existence as a small county organization to its inception as a stand-alone authority.

"We consulted with many other economic development organizations,

and the Chamber was very much a part of the conversations we were having," she said. "Its leaders helped inform our decision making."

Milestone Events

These days, the Chamber's role also extends to helping partners in education, and it serves the government contracting community by continuing to refine its GovConnects program.

To mark the milestone, the Chamber plans to introduce the anniversary theme into events that it already has in place, rather than create stand-alone events that compete for attention.

"Our annual signature event, typically held the first Friday in October, will be a Saturday event and a black tie gala," McClarty said. "We'll plan to do something special with our annual meeting in May."

Howard County: At the Center of Cyber

By Larry Twele

Howard County is Cyber Central. It became that before we realized it. Before the media started paying attention. Before it was cool to be in cyber. Before people even thought about what their digital footprint was. Before it even got a name.

This area became the epicenter and it happened naturally; growing, expanding and evolving. Each success and failure spurred more attention, more innovation, and more investment in the community. Ideas became bolder and companies grew bigger. This community quietly became one of the nation's leading cyber centers, just out of the public eye.

Initially fueled by talent out of the Department of Defense and Ft. Meade, the industry meticulously grew, along with the need for information security. The innovation of employees, success of neighboring firms and pressure of competing companies expanded the momentum sustained by the ever-increasing amounts of investment and entrepreneurship.

Thus, success begets success. We

“New companies land here, companies start here, companies relocate to and from here, but they don't leave here.”

have seen it day after day, year over year. Companies start, make breakthroughs, spin off new companies, get acquired, employees turn ideas into companies, founders invest in the next big thing, and firms leave the nest. All this activity raises the profile of the entire region higher.

The cyber industry continues to sow and reap its innovation right here in our county. This region has nearly twice as many cyber professionals as anywhere else in the country. The best of the best, from leading markets all over the world, are packing up and relocating here to play in the major leagues. While some companies surreptitiously grow



Larry Twele, CEO of the Howard County Economic Development Authority

nestled in secure facilities, encased in unassuming office buildings, there are also internationally recognized companies choosing to make their future here in Howard County. From defense to agriculture, their services have become vital for every industry, and are now as important as facility and financial security. Often, the firms doing the most incredible things don't have names on their buildings, sales pitches on their website, or come up in conversation.

We are proud to serve this unique and expanding market. Several years ago, we made a special effort to support the growth and expansion of this industry in Howard County as part of our business development strategy. As a team, we have traveled to many of the world's largest cyber security conferences, together with many of the business who already call Howard County home. Collectively, we are ambassadors for this region, promoting the unique combination of resources and community present here,

and our efforts have worked.

We are building upon these efforts in early 2019 as we look to open an Innovation Center in Howard County. This resource will be a centerpiece to support the growth and development of this sector, providing the programs and strategic partnerships needed to foster small business innovation.

New companies land here, companies start here, companies relocate to and from here, but they don't leave here. They may move to and from one of our neighboring jurisdictions, but they don't leave the thriving community in this region.

As economic development professionals, it is our job to support these companies and connect them to the community to aid them in their growth. With each company we support, the entire region benefits. Together, we have created a market that now can compete against any national market who wishes to rival us.

This industry is here to stay. The innovative professionals who support it have found something special here, and Howard County is at the heart of that effort. Our combination of geography, welcoming business community, high quality of life, and access to the industry's leading talent has made us a "must be" location. Seemingly, as soon as a company outgrows their space, another moves in. Despite new construction underway and steel going up in the air; vacancy rates remain low.

This is a unique time for Howard County and the surrounding region. We are proud to continue to do our part to support the incredible cyber security industry and are humbled they have chosen to make Howard County their home.

Thayer elected Better Business Bureau chair

Arlene R. Thayer, executive vice president and chief operating officer at KatzAbosch, was elected chair of the Better Business Bureau of Greater Maryland's Board of Directors.

As a private, non-profit organization, Better Business Bureau is dedicated to fostering honest and responsive relationships between businesses and consumers by establishing consumer confidence and advancing a trustworthy marketplace for all. They do so by setting and upholding high standards for fair and honest business behavior.

Thayer, along with a new group of accomplished business leaders, were appointed at the September meeting of the Better Business Bureau's Board of Directors. The board sets policy, approves new applicants for Accreditation, and advances BBB's mission.

Thayer joined KatzAbosch in 2003 and has over 20 years of industry



experience. She has been involved with a number of boards and committees. In addition, she has won numerous awards recognizing her mentoring and leadership qualities.

Founded in 1969, KatzAbosch is one of the largest CPA and business consulting services in the region.

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Tax collector more popular than governor

Peter Franchot is carrying on a long tradition on Maryland: A tax collector more popular than the governor.

It was a tradition begun by the late great Louie Goldstein, comptroller for almost 40 years until his death in 1998. Franchot has a corner office in the treasury building named after Goldstein, whose statue stands outside Franchot's window.

Like Goldstein, Franchot hands out medallions, heavier and more elegant than Goldstein's, but without his trademark send-off, "God bless you all real good." Like Goldstein, Franchot crisscrosses Maryland, talking to business or civic groups, as he did to a sold-out BWI Business Partnership breakfast last month.

"You may roll your eyes at this, but as the state tax collector I received more votes for state office than any Marylander in history," Comptroller Peter Franchot gleefully told them. "And if you bump into Governor Hogan, could you tell him I happened to get 300,000 more votes than he did?"

(Gov. Larry Hogan likes to remind people that he just got more votes than any Republican in Maryland history.)

Democratic Sen. Chris Van Hollen "got 20,000 more votes than I did" in 2016 when Franchot wasn't on the ballot, he concedes in a brief interview.

"Other than that, I am numero uno," Franchot said.

A potential run for governor

As the most popular Democrat on the ballot for the last three gubernatorial elections, "People are saying you might run for governor," I said to him.

"Well that's a long, long time away. I'm very happy with the position I have and I'm not term limited."

"And you will be 75," I pointed out.

"Exactly."

"But 75 is the new 65," smiled Franchot.

"Seriously, I am flattered that people would say that. And you know, it's kind of a different landscape after the election. A lot of Republican executives lost. There doesn't seem to be an heir apparent in either party. So, we'll see."

That's not exactly closing any door or any window of opportunity.

Maryland just finished an election that dragged on for months, but political junkies who thrive on campaign tussles always have their eyes on the next election.



ANNE ARUNDEL POLITICAL

by Len Lazarick



Maryland Comptroller Peter Franchot spoke to the BWI Business Partnership Dec. 13.

No wonder that Franchot is happy with the job that he has now. It is a lot easier than being governor, but has some of the same perks. He gets an executive staff, a state SUV with a state trooper to protect and drive him, and he gets to serve as an equal vote with the governor on the Board of Public Works, approving over \$10 billion a year in state contracts.

This board also gives him a bully pulpit on all manner of state issues, and he's particularly used it to campaign for better maintenance of state schools and air-conditioning for schools in Baltimore City and County. Beating up on bureaucrats appearing before the board also follows in the long tradition of Goldstein and William Donald Schaefer.

Converting to fiscal conservative

Contrary to his record as a fairly conventional Takoma Park liberal during 20 years in the House of Delegates, Franchot's conversion to fiscal conservatism appears to be both sincere and permanent. Yet again, at the BWI breakfast, he called for fiscal restraint. The federal tax changes have produced a

major windfall, as has a Supreme Court ruling permitting taxing of all Internet sales.

These leave the state with perhaps \$1.6 billion more to spend in the coming year. Franchot wants the governor and legislators to put it all away in the rainy day fund, recalling the drastic midyear budget cuts he helped make after the 2008 recession.

"I know the General Assembly will be considering a number of very worthy and critically important programs and proposals in the upcoming year," Franchot said when announcing the latest revenue estimates.

But Franchot freely admitted to the business breakfast, "I'm sure it will be completely spent by the end of the session."

As the man who collects all the taxes, and signs all the checks, Franchot can take positions on spending but, unlike a sitting governor, he doesn't actually have to do anything about it.

A perilous run for governor

This is what makes a run for governor more perilous than his record-setting vote totals would suggest. The Democratic Party State Central Committee – activists elected by Democrats across Maryland – recently chose a new state party chair, Maya Rockey Moore Cummings, wife of

Rep. Elijah Cummings, to lead a more progressive party out of its two-term shutout for governor.

These activists have been complaining for years that Franchot is no longer a real Democrat, especially given his coziness with Hogan.

If he ran for governor, Franchot would actually have to take detailed positions on beefing up funding for the school reforms proposed by the Kirwan Commission, on expanding health insurance, on easing Maryland's increasing traffic crunch, on understaffing at prisons and on a host of other issues where his current views seem out of step with the most progressive elements of his party.

He may continue his crusade for loosening Maryland's antiquated alcohol regulations that hamper the expansion of craft beer or improving air-conditioning and maintenance in public schools but these are peripheral issues without broad impact.

For the moment he is content to play the outsider, prodding and poking the Annapolis Democratic establishment with little consequence and limited effect. That is certainly popular but will take a lot more to jump from tax collector to governor.

Schuh to run state's opioid crisis program

My gallbladder surgery Nov. 19 did not go as well as planned – with the enlarged bladder bursting as it was being removed – so instead of heading home, I spent two nights in the hospital.

Minutes after arriving in my room, a nurse arrived with two little vials. “Would you like some morphine?” I was surprised. I had been reading and writing about opioids and addiction to pain medication for years now, but I had never recently been confronted with a personal choice.

I think I said no, but I got needles with so many different things, I might have said yes.

And as I was leaving the hospital two days later, I was given a prescription for oxycodone – 15 tiny 5 mg pills. I don't much like how oxycodone makes me feel, so I only took one at bed time for a few days.

But the experience reminded how prevalent oxycodone and other pain killers are across medicine. They are important and effective in the treatment of pain, but they have also become the new gateway drugs with lethal consequences.

Many doctors and prescribers have become more careful about prescribing pain killers. Ironically, this has led those who got addicted with prescription drugs to turn to the street equivalents like fentanyl.

Anne Arundel County was one of the first in the region to see a dramatic spike in overdoses and deaths. Former County Executive Steve Schuh became one of the first suburban executives to confront the problem aggressively.

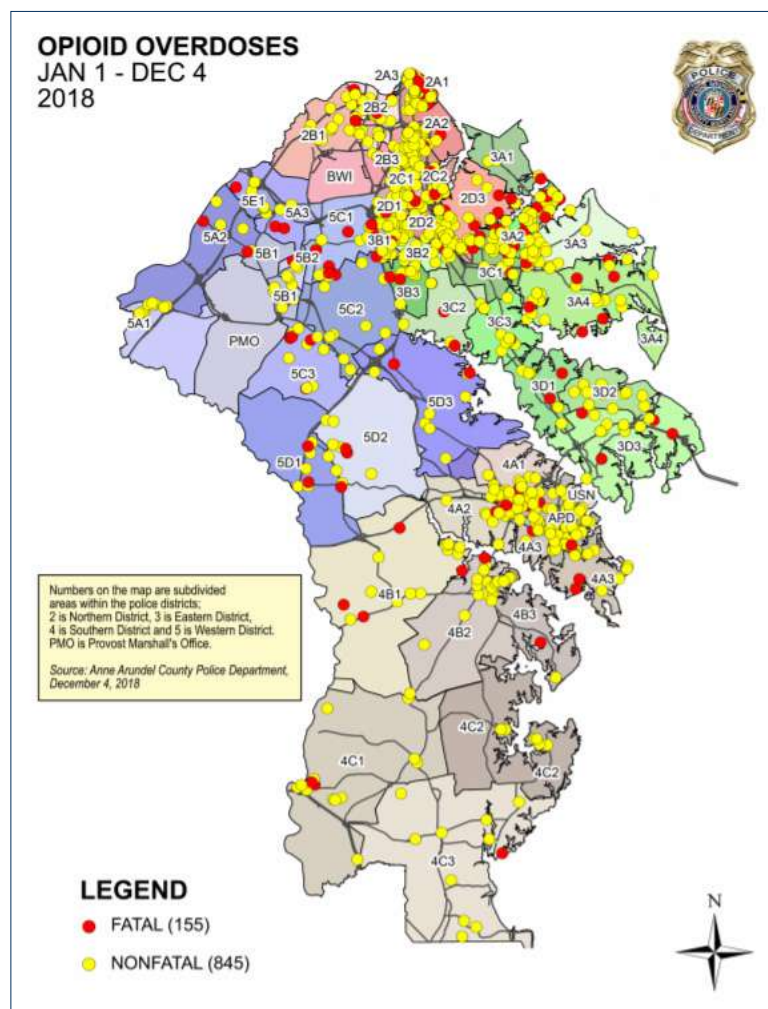
That's why Gov. Larry Hogan appointed Schuh as executive director of Maryland's Opioid Operational Command Center, much as the governor found a job for defeated Howard County Executive Allan Kittleman as a Workers Compensation commissioner. Both men have significant expertise in their new positions, Kittleman as an attorney with decades in the field.

Under Schuh, Anne Arundel County launched the Safe Stations program, which designates each fire and police station as a safe environment for individuals looking for assistance to start their path to recovery from heroin and opioid addiction. The stations have the anti-overdose drug, too.

The county also created “Not My Child,” an initiative aimed at providing the facts of prescription drug misuse and educating parents, families,



STATE POLITICAL
by Len Lazarick



and communities on the impact of substance use disorder.

The county has mobile crisis teams that work with police and emergency providers on addiction and mental health issues.

New County Executive Stuart Pittman and incoming State's Attorney Anne Colt Leitess are looking for a way to provide long-term residential treatment for addicts. There is a shortage of beds for such treatment.

Overall, the county and the state have a multi-prong approach to a problem that has shown no signs of abating. As of Dec. 11, Anne Arundel County has experienced 1,026 overdoses this year, only a slight .2 percent increase, but 159 deaths, an almost 10 percent increase from last year.

More diversity

As I wrote last month, the

November election increased gender balance in both the Anne Arundel County Council and its State House delegation. The council, all male for two terms, now has a majority of five



Bartlett

women on the seven-member body, three Democrats and two Republicans.

The county's five senators, all male for two terms, now has two Democratic women, both more progressive than the long-serving men they replaced.

The 15-member House delegation,

almost evenly divided between the parties last term, now is solidly Democrat with 10 Democrats and 5 Republicans. Two Democratic women took the seats of two Republican men.

The biggest change in the county's diverse representation came in District 32, which includes the area around BWI, Jessup and all the way south to Laurel. For the first time since Dr. Aris Allen represented the Annapolis area in the House in the early 1990s, the county will have two African American delegates, Sandy Bartlett and Mike Rogers.

At the BWI Business Partnership breakfast last month, Comptroller Peter Franchot gave a shout-out to Senator-elect Pam Beidle, who has long represented the area on both the County Council and in the House of Delegates.

In a brief conversation, Beidle said she planned to “pull together” the State House delegation and the council members of both parties to create a unified front on the issues facing the county.

“We have to work together,” Beidle said, particularly on the issues of overcrowded schools and poor public transportation.

Newly elected Del. Mike Rogers agreed. Rogers, 54, is a retired Army colonel, making him a rare breed in the legislature where the contingent of military veterans is small. As he



Rogers

went door knocking in the campaign, he found consistent concerns about schools and transportation.

Joining him in the House is Sandy Bartlett, 52, an intellectual property attorney from Maryland City who served two terms on the Democratic Central Committee and also teaches business law at the community college. During her campaign, Bartlett said education funding was a priority as well as improving low performing schools.

Incumbent Del. Mark Chang was also re-elected.

Committee assignments for the new delegates have not been announced.

New county executive, council members installed

Newly elected Howard County Executive Calvin Ball (D) took the oath of office and the county's new council members were installed during a public ceremony at Howard High School on Dec. 3.

During his first official address, Ball said he was honored to be county executive for all of Howard County and expressed a desire for Ellicott City to become "a national model for unity, safety, strength and resilience" under his administration.

He also laid out a broad vision for priorities in the next four years.

Working together, Ball said, the county can move toward making progress on building new schools, becoming a model for energy independence and innovation while preserving open space, creating a more business-friendly environment of economic growth, and helping those struggling with addiction, mental health challenges and homelessness.

"We can become the best example of embracing the future of agriculture and the quality of life for rural communities," he said. "I will [advocate for Howard County] with innovation, transparency, proactive and sensible leadership ... rooted in the values and quality of life we all cherish."

Future Focus

After taking office, the new council members also gave brief overview of their focus for their upcoming term of service.

"This was always a campaign about our kids, and what we leave for them," said District 1 Councilwoman Liz Walsh (D). "I'm inspired in what we could do, all of us together, in the next four years for our kids, neighborhoods, main streets and towns."

Stressing the need for inclusivity of all members of the county's communities, District 2 Councilman Opel Jones (D) pledged his commitment to "remaining a rational, fact-based, data-driven practitioner of issues, challenges, concerns and ideas. For those who did not vote for me, I hope to earn your support in the near future."

District 3 Councilwoman Christiana Mercer Rigby (D) said she will focus on creating opportunity for all residents. "We need a renewed commitment to our public education system, to affordable housing for seniors and families, and also to sustainable growth in our county."

Deb Jung (D), representing District



HOWARD POLITICAL

by George Berkheimer



Deb Jung, District 4, (above) and Christiana Rigby, District 3, (below) were among elected officials who met with Howard County Chamber members Dec. 4.

4, promised to listen to all sides and be accessible. "I will work hard to preserve our environment, support the most vulnerable among us, tackle our infrastructures, mitigate flooding in Ellicott City and keep our school system strong," she said.

District 5 Councilman David Yungmann (R) said he will work to continue to deliver a high quality of life while keeping the county on a sustainable economic foundation.

"We have a great group on this council and we're already finding common ground and ideas on which we can work together to make Howard County even better," he said. "I pledge above all to make doing my job a priority over keeping my job, and I hope my colleagues will all do the same."

Council Officers

Following the installation ceremony, the new council held its first legislative session and elected officers for the first year of their terms, which lasts through Dec. 2, 2019.

Council members selected Rigby to serve as council chair, with Jones serving as vice chair. Walsh will head up the Howard County Zoning Board, with Jung as vice chair, and Jung was tapped to chair the Liquor Board, with

Ulhorn, a 29-year veteran of the department and a third-generation firefighter, is the county's first female fire chief. She replaces former Chief John Butler, who resigned to accept a post as chief of the Fire and Rescue Department in Fairfax County, Va.

Uhlhorn served in various leadership roles throughout her career and held positions as the Fire Officer Association president and Safe Kids Coordinator.

"I was looking for an exceptional leader with demonstrated experience and vision, suited to solve not just the big problems of today, but the potentially bigger problems of tomorrow," said Ball. "[S]he has dedicated her life to protecting the residents of Howard County. Chief Christine Uhlhorn is an innovative thinker who always puts safety first."

"Educating, protecting, and serving Howard County is all I've known for the past 29 years," said Uhlhorn. "I'm humbled to be recognized for my leadership, appreciated for my values, and encouraged to implement a shared vision through County Executive Ball for continued inclusion within our fire department."

Apprenticeship Academy

The Howard County Public School System (HCPSS) announced the launch of a new career academy in December. Apprenticeship Maryland, which helps students gain sustainable employment and further education based on career pathways in manufacturing and Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) occupations, will begin in 2019.

The youth apprenticeship program offers on-the-job training for the information technology, construction and design, manufacturing, engineering and technology, and banking and finance industries.

The program is a partnership between the Maryland State Department of Education and the Maryland Department of Labor, Licensing and Regulation, HCPSS, community education, and local business partners and employers.

"Apprenticeship Maryland ... offers our students a new pathway to career success by enabling them to enter the workforce in high-skilled, high growth sectors while still in high school," said HCPSS Superintendent Michael Martirano.



Yungmann as her vice chair.

Moving on to external committee appointments, the council tapped Jung to serve as council representative to the Maryland Association of Counties Legislative Committee, and Rigby will serve as alternate.

Jung will also serve as the council's representative to the National Association of Counties, with Yungman as the alternate.

The council's next legislative session is scheduled for Jan. 7.

New Fire Chief

Ball named current Howard County Fire and Rescue Services Assistant Fire Chief Christine Uhlhorn as the department's new chief on Dec. 18.

Expert insights to help your business

Last month, I shared insights provided by three experts who participated in BBB's Meet the Mentors event. Those topics included things to consider when you establish your business, lease negotiation, planning for growth, commercial banking and more.

This month, I'll introduce the second group of mentors talking about marketing, HR, cybersecurity, and workers compensation insurance.

Marketing: Diane Devaney, Founder and President, *Devaney & Associates*.

When asked about marketing tools and strategy for a young company, Devaney says, "Don't just describe your company, position your company." She added that a business can implement this strategy on their website, in their elevator speech, and everywhere they market their company.

Devaney insists organizations should, "Tell me why I should work with you." In addition, you need to know your target market and your competition.

These days, every business needs a website and it should be professional. But being professional doesn't mean your site needs to be extensive. You can always add to and change it. "Digital [customer] contact information is critical," Devaney adds.

While I couldn't agree more, as a columnist wearing my BBB hat, I'll remind you to always disclose to your customers what data you collect. You need to post a privacy policy that explains how you'll use their information. In fact, the lack of a privacy policy is something that prohibits a business from obtaining BBB Accreditation. If you'd like to see samples or have us take a look at your website, our office is happy to assist.

When the discussion turned to the pace of today's changing technology, Devaney believes owners should, "Bring in a professional as soon as possible.



BBB ADVICE

by Angie Barnett

Digital campaigns change in months." What worked four months ago, may no longer work today. She recommends clients give the experts a project, the biggest pain point. If and when it makes sense, let them train your in-house staff to take over, and then let the pros tackle "the next biggest thing."

Human Relations & Cybersecurity: Angela Murphy, Chief Operating Officer, *EZ Shield*.

In light of historically low unemployment rates, recruiting and hiring the best talent may seem daunting to many business owners. But, Murphy advises, "Ask for referrals. Who do you know? Who's the best you know?" It's important to build a hiring plan, create a job description and establish how to measure for success.

She encourages businesses to look for low-cost and no-cost ways to help their employees. Bring in your healthcare partners, have a nutritional seminar, schedule a talk with your 401K provider, find someone to educate your employees about credit scores and how to improve them.

To fellow employers, Murphy asks, "Why would someone work for you?" Without hesitation, she adds, "Hire a fit for the company culture. People leave bosses, not jobs."

When the topic of trust was posed, Murphy said it comes down to three things:

- 1) Keep customer and employee data safe and protect their privacy.
- 2) Provide customers with good service. And, to

do that you need well-trained staff.

- 3) Be a BBB Accredited Business.

She continued by stressing the importance of having cybersecurity insurance. The policy is usually available as part of your commercial liability insurance. The policy will help you rebuild. If not, you're on your own. "Small businesses are a huge target," she says. "Sixty percent of small business that are breached are out of business within two years."

Workers' Compensation Insurance: George Johnson, Territorial Account Executive, *Chesapeake Employers' Insurance Company*.

Johnson understands that new business owners are generally fee sensitive. So, when it comes to finding the best insurance coverage at the best price, he tells them, "Go find an independent agent that has many carriers he can shop." Not only should you do that at the onset of forming your business, but Johnson argues, "Go to the marketplace every two to three years and shop. Think of your business as a consumer."

If your business employs one person, you need workers' compensation insurance, says Johnson. "If you don't have it," he says, "you will pay twice what the carrier will pay if there's an issue."

Johnson also cautions executives that a workers' compensation policy is required should they employ a domestic worker in their home.

A workers' compensation policy doesn't just protect you when it comes to your own employees. Johnson likes to remind everyone to ask for a copy of a company's certificate of insurance whether they're working at your home or your office. Otherwise, you bear the risk if the company or worker is not insured and an accident occurs.

Angie Barnett is president and CEO of the Better Business Bureau of Greater Maryland.

New opportunities, initiatives for 2019

It is the start of a new year, which brings new opportunities and new initiatives as we look forward to the 12 months to come.

Columbia Association's board of directors is currently in the process of reviewing the budget for Fiscal Year 2020, which is the second year of CA's two-year budget cycle. In 2018, the board of directors passed the budget for Fiscal Year 2019 (which runs from May 2018 through April 2019) and a conditional budget for Fiscal Year 2020 (which runs May 2019 through April 2020).

The public – including residents, representatives of village community associations, advisory committee members and others – still has opportunities for input at CA Board work sessions and meetings, which are, respectively, scheduled for the second and fourth Thursdays in January and February.

While the budget for Fiscal Year 2020 is yet to be approved, there are priorities, including specific projects, that we at CA are looking forward to in calendar year 2019. Columbia Association will continue to



FROM CA PRESIDENT

by Milton Matthews

update our facilities and infrastructure. Supreme Sports Club is set to undergo additional improvements beyond the work completed there in 2018. The tentative plan for the first phase is to renovate the upstairs fitness area, as well as the shower areas.

We will replace the wading pool at Running Brook Pool with a water play feature and will complete ADA renovations to the wading pool at Hawthorn Pool. Also, there are additional renovations scheduled in 2019 for the Columbia Horse Center, continuing with a list of recommendations identified in a recent facility assessment.

And our investment in Columbia's open space is ongoing, including pathway renovations, pond improvements, and upgrades to or replacement of

numerous boardwalks and bridges.

The Millennials Work Group is expected to finalize its findings and recommendations, following a year in which the work group looked at how CA can better serve and reach individuals between the ages of 17-35, who presently are one of Columbia's largest demographic groups.

We are working to improve CA's website and make it easier for everyone to use, from finding the information you are looking for to registering for classes.

Internally at CA, we are excited about launching a new human resources information system, including features that will present more opportunities for our learning and organizational development programs. Though it is not something the public will notice, the platform will save tremendous time and effort for our team members, which will then allow us to focus more energy on serving our customers and the community.

Milton Matthews is president and CEO of the Columbia Association.



CENTRAL MARYLAND CHAMBER

by Raj Kudchadkar

Spotlight on Tax Cuts and Jobs Act (TCJA)

The Central Maryland Chamber is committed to supporting small businesses throughout the region. Our bi-monthly seminars provide vital information and supports to help small businesses thrive! Please join us for our first seminar of 2019 to review key tax changes in the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act (TCJA) affecting small businesses and individuals. The passage of TCJA ushered in major tax reform that took effect in 2018 and significantly impacts most small businesses.

Barry Fields of Bormel, Grice and Huyett, PA will walk executives through important tax changes that affect small businesses such as depreciation, disallowance of entertainment expenses and more. He will also explain the new deduction for Qualified Business Income.

Join us for this free small business seminar on Wednesday, January 16th from 9:00am – 10:00am. A light breakfast will be provided and sponsored by Speedpro Imaging Annapolis. Seating is very limited, so please register early at www.CentralMarylandChamber.org.

Legislative Breakfast

Anne Arundel County, Howard County, and Prince George's County all have newly elected leadership! All three jurisdictions have new county executives, new county councils, and new state delegations. There have been a lot of changes in government and we need to better understand what those changes mean for the business

community.

Our first legislative forum will be a joint-chamber breakfast for which we have invited the Anne Arundel County Executive, County Council, and State Delegation. As of mid-December, the following leaders have confirmed their participation:

Stewart Pittman, Anne Arundel County Executive; Sarah Lacey, District 1; Andrew Pruski, District 4 (Chairman); Amanda Fiedler, District 5 and Jessica Haire, District 7.

From the State Delegation, the following are confirmed to attend: Senator Pam Beidle, District 32; Senator Sarah Elfreth, District 30; Senator Ed Reilly, District 33; Delegate Seth Howard, 30B; Delegate Mark Chang, District 32 and Delegate Heather Bagnall, District 33.

This legislative breakfast will be held on Monday, Jan. 14 from 7:30 a.m. to 9:30 a.m. A full breakfast and beverages will be provided by Blackwall Barn & Lodge. The event is \$35 for chamber members and \$45 for non-members. This legislative breakfast will be your prime opportunity to learn about initiatives on the horizon that could impact your business! To learn more or register for the event please visit www.CentralMarylandChamber.org.

New Membership Director

Karen Russell has joined the Central Maryland Chamber as its new Membership Director. She comes to the chamber with a business administration degree from West Virginia University and over 20 years of executive-level experience in sales and membership. She is a past Senior Account Executive with Baltimore Marriot Waterfront & Inner Harbor at Camden Yards Hotels and most recently served as an Account Executive with White Coat Productions.

She is an extremely effective relationship-builder who will surely enhance the chamber's membership experience. We are very excited to have Karen join the chamber team! She can be reached at Karen@CentralMarylandChamber.org.



HOWARD COUNTY CHAMBER

by Leonardo McClarty

Howard Chamber Tackles Opioid Epidemic in 2019

The country is in the midst of an opioid epidemic and our state and county have both been impacted.

According to the Howard County government, opioid overdoses are on the rise in our community. As of Dec.

6, 2018, the Howard County Police Department reported 213 opioid overdoses this year alone, and that includes 40 people who died.

This is a crisis that affects every part of our county, including the business community.

As we started planning our events calendar for 2019, we knew it was our responsibility to help our members, and the business community at large, come to a better understanding of opioid addiction, what programs are already in place in our community and how businesses can be a part of the solution.

We invite our members and anyone

OPIOIDS, EMPLOYMENT & BUSINESS

Join us for a discussion about how substance abuse is impacting the business community, and how businesses can be part of the solution.

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 30, 2019
11:00 AM – 1:30 PM

HOLIDAY INN COLUMBIA EAST/JESSUP
7900 WASHINGTON BLVD., JESSUP, MD 20794

Moderator:
ZACH SNITZER
Director of Business Development, Maryland Addiction Recovery Center

Panelist:
JAMES E. FAGAN, III
Labor & Employment Law, Offit Kurman

Panelist:
BOB CLAIRE
Modern Lighting

Panelist:
Maryland Department of Labor, Licensing and Regulation Representative

ANNUAL FOUNDATION & LEGACY PARTNERS:
Apple, Columbia Foodcoops, JESUP STATE UNIVERSITY, Howard Hughes, HOWARDTECH, PNC, M&T Bank

from the larger Howard County business community to join us on Jan. 30 for a discussion on Opioids, Employment and Business moderated by Zach Snitzer, director of business development for the Maryland Addiction Recovery Center.

Snitzer will lead the discussion with panelists including James E. Fagan, III, Labor & Employment Law, Offit Kurman, Bob Claire, General Manager, Modern Lighting Company and a representative from the Maryland Department of Labor, Licensing and Regulation.

You can register for the event, Opioids, Employment & Business, at www.howardchamber.com.

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HOWARD COUNTY CHAMBER



Anirban Basu and Leonardo McClarty at the annual Economic Forecast Breakfast for the Howard County Chamber, Nov. 28.

Massive Changes Coming to GSA's Schedules

In the biggest change to Multiple Award Schedules (MAS) in 30 years, the U.S. General Services Administration (GSA) announced on Nov. 27 that it will merge the agency's 24 Schedules into one consolidated schedule by the end of 2020.

This change modernizes the federal acquisition process, while also improving customer service, reduces duplication for all vendors, and, most importantly, makes it easier for small businesses to access the schedules program.

Dubbed the "Federal Marketplace Initiative," the new process addresses feedback from GSA stakeholders about improving the Schedules experience, which was solicited over the course of a year through events, meetings, and surveys. The GSA noted that the initiative will be implemented in three to four phases over the course of 24 months to "incorporate stakeholder feedback throughout the process."

The first phase will see the creation of the new consolidated schedule. The second phase, which may be



GOVERNMENT CONTRACTING

by Gloria Berthold Larkin

combined with the first, will be the shutting down of the current individual schedules.

In the third phase, currently individual schedule holders will be migrated to the new schedule through mass modification while maintain the same contract numbers and expiration dates.

The final phase will be the migration of multiple contract schedule holders; however, how this will occur has not yet been determined and will operate on a case-by-case basis for each contract.

Over 10 million commercial products and services are offered by commercial firms through long-term GSA Schedules, leading to roughly \$31 billion spent each year through MAS. Despite this, the process for finding and purchasing contracts has always been cumbersome. The new

consolidated schedule aims to remedy this.

"The consolidation to a single GSA Schedule will result in reduced cost and administrative burden which will be of tremendous benefit to GSA Schedule contractor holders as well as future bidders," said Global Services President and CEO, Courtney Fairchild. "The consolidation will also provide a single storefront for government purchasers that may have been confused by the differences in the 24 different Schedule contracts as well as the terms and conditions for each."

Many of the products and services offered do not fit within just a single schedule, which adds to the confusion that is often faced by vendors and federal buyers. The new list now allows for customers to find and purchase products and services from one Schedule, rather than sifting from

various Schedules to find the solution that fits for them.

The streamlined list may also become more appealing to smaller businesses who are often deterred by the complexity of the federal procurement process, as well as the amount of time the entire process takes. This may mean a larger boost of small businesses seeing growth in the federal marketplace.

While the new schedule does bring about a much-welcomed change in federal procurement, the details for how this change will take place have not yet been outlined.

In their news release on the topic, the GSA strongly urged anyone interested in learning more to attend the Federal Marketplace Initiative Industry Day on Dec. 12 to learn more about the new initiative.

Gloria Larkin is president and CEO of TargetGov and a national expert in business development in government markets. Email glorialarkinTG@targetgov.com.

Awarded Contracts

The following information is regarding awarded contracts and can be used to develop prime contractor, subcontractor and teaming partner relationships on these and other opportunities.

The Concourse Group, LLC, Annapolis, MD, won a \$29,000,000 contract for professional services in support of the Department of Navy's Public Private Venture and Real Estate Programs from the Naval Facilities Engineering Command. <http://theconcoursegroup.com/>

AAI Corp., doing business as Textron, Hunt Valley, MD, won a \$152,707,618 contract modification for logistics services from the U.S. Army Contracting Command. <http://www.textron.com/>

BAE Systems Technology Solutions & Services Inc., Rockville, MD, won a \$28,893,602 contract modification to provide systems engineering and integration services in support of the Trident II strategic weapons system, the SSGN attack weapon system, and strategic weapon surety from the Strategic Systems Programs. <https://www.baesystems.com/>

Melwood Horticultural Training Center

Inc., Upper Marlboro, MD, won a \$8,217,493 contract modification to exercise option three for custodial services at the U.S. Naval Academy Complex, Annapolis from the Naval Facilities Engineering Command. <https://www.melwood.org/>

Federal Resources Supply Co., Stevensville, MD, won a \$19,569,771 firm-fixed-price contract for refilling of fire suppression bottles and systems from the U.S. Army Contracting Command. <http://www.federalresources.com/>
BAE Systems Technology Solutions and Services Inc., Rockville, MD, won a \$13,903,935 firm-fixed-price contract for the operation and maintenance of Navy communication, electronic, and computer systems from the Naval Supply Systems Command Fleet Logistics Center Pearl Harbor. <https://www.baesystems.com/>

Lockheed Martin Corp. Mission Systems and Training, Baltimore, MD, won a \$7,105,135 firm-fixed-price contract for the manufacture of spare and repair parts used in the MK-41 Vertical Launching System from the Naval Supply Systems Command Weapon Support. <http://www.lockheedmartin.com/>

Arora Group Inc., Gaithersburg, MD, won a \$85,457,545 firm-fixed-price contract to provide personal and non-personal services from the U.S. Army Health Contracting Activity. <http://www.aroragroup.com/>

URS Federal Services Inc., Germantown, MD, won a \$20,000,000 contract for logistic support services, maintenance, supply and transportation from the U.S. Army Contracting Command. <http://www.aecom.com/>

Thales Defense and Security, Inc., Clarksburg, MD, won a \$13,999,410

contract for repair of 58 dome sonars in support of the H-60 airborne low frequency sonar system from the Naval Supply Systems Command. <http://www.thalesdsi.com/>

Grove Resource Solutions Inc., Frederick, MD, won a \$14,704,521 contract to provide systems engineering support for Space and Naval Warfare Systems Center Pacific command, control, communications, computers, and intelligence programs from the Space and Naval Warfare Systems Center.




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HCPSS renews Conservancy partnership

For more than 15 years, the Howard County Conservancy and Howard County Public School System (HCPSS) have worked closely together to give students hands-on experiences to learn about the wonders of the natural world, land preservation, and responsible environmental stewardship.

HCPSS and the Conservancy recently renewed its long-standing partnership during a Pointers Run Elementary School field trip to Conservancy grounds.

“The strong partnership between the school system and Conservancy provides hands-on experiences to complement student’s classroom learning,” said HCPSS Superintendent Michael J. Martirano. “I’m grateful to the Conservancy for its support of our students’ work, which has had a positive impact throughout our county and beyond, and look forward to our continued collaboration in providing these valuable learning experiences.”

During the field trip, Pointers Run Elementary school students met a

screech owl, conducted a soil test, and hiked the grounds to identify changes in landscape and habitat. Over the years, Conservancy staff have worked with HCPSS science coordinators to align their programs and field trips with school system curricular objectives, Maryland Science Standards and environmental literacy standards.

On-site field trips and school-based programs give elementary, middle and high school students the opportunity to learn about the local watershed, soil science, monarch butterfly migration, Maryland reptile and amphibian habitats, the importance of biodiversity.

“We are so pleased to renew our county-wide partnership with HCPSS. Our curriculum based programs get more than 18,000 students outside for science learning each year,” said Meg Boyd, Executive Director, Howard County Conservancy. “Hands-on exploration of soil, streams, trees, rocks and bugs is the best way to learn about nature and develop future environmental stewards.”



Meg Boyd, executive director of the Howard County Conservancy, and Dr. Michael Martirano superintendent of Howard County Public Schools, sign a 15-year agreement.

Executive director named for BWI Business Partnership

Gina Stewart was appointed as the BWI Business Partnership’s Executive Director, effective Dec. 5.

Stewart will take over from COL Ret. Edward Rothstein, who was serving as Interim Director. The selection was made after an extensive regional search and selection process led by the Board of Directors.

“We are very pleased to announce this appointment,” reported Sam Minnitte, Partnership Board Chair. “Gina will bring leadership and insight to the Partnership’s programs and a deep sense of commitment to our region’s transportation and economic development initiatives. She has served nonprofits, business, and government at many levels, in executive and leadership levels, and has a breadth of perspective and experience.”

Stewart’s resume includes over 25 years of business and economic development that has spanned the central Maryland region. She recently held the position of Senior Business Development Representative for the Maryland Department of Commerce.

Her previous experience included Business Development for the commercial real estate and construction



Gina Stewart

I am pleased to be spearheading the organization’s visioning process determining its future evolution.

industries with companies such as: Manekin LLC, Merritt Properties and Mullan Contracting.

Stewart has been a long standing member of the Partnership and

has served as a Board of Directors member, Membership & Sponsorship Chair. These roles bring a breadth of knowledge and experience that will be valuable to the Partnership.

“I am very excited to lead the Partnership to new heights in continuing its mission of transportation advocacy and economic development for the region. I am also pleased to be spearheading the organization’s visioning process determining its future evolution. I am looking forward to broadening our reach, working

with our regional partners both in the private and public sectors to make the BWI Business Partnership, the most influential organization in central Maryland,” Stewart said.

The BWI Business Partnership is an organization of major local and regional businesses and local, state and federal government agencies. The central Maryland region - with BWI Airport, NSA, Ft. Meade and Arundel Mills Mall as its economic engines - has led the state in job growth over the last five years.



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Bello to chair CMC board

Mary Bello has been named the new board chair for the Central Maryland Chamber (CMC). She has served as manager, physician relations at Anne Arundel Medical Center for nearly a decade.

Schuh to run OOOO

Gov. Larry Hogan has appointed former Anne Arundel County Executive Steve Schuh as executive director of Maryland's Opioid Operational Command Center. Schuh will replace Clay Stamp, who will return to Talbot County as the assistant county manager and emergency services director.

Board of Ed welcomes members, leaders

New members were recently sworn in by the Howard County Board of Education. They are Mavis Ellis as chair, Kirsten Coombs as vice chair, and Vicky Cutroneo, Jennifer Mallo, Sabina Taj and Chao Wu.

Cyphers hires Jans

The Cyphers Agency, of Crofton, has hired Michael Jans as graphic designer. Jans previously worked in print and digital advertising, and created branding and design services.

Miller's Grant founder to retire

Geary Milliken, President/CEO of Carroll Lutheran Village, The Lutheran Village at Miller's Grant, and the newly formed Lutheran Social Ministries of Maryland, will retire in June of 2019. He began his tenure as President/CEO in 1994.

Through his nearly 25 years at Carroll Lutheran Village in Westminster, Milliken oversaw the construction of the Diven House for assisted living, Krug Chapel, and the consolidation of administration offices; the construction of the Wakefield Overlook neighborhood, which doubled the size of the Carroll Lutheran Village campus; the planning and construction of The Lutheran Village at Miller's Grant in Ellicott City; and the founding of Lutheran Social Ministries of Maryland, a parent organization to manage the two senior living communities.

He initiated an in-house philanthropy department, an in-house therapy program, fundraising golf tournaments for both communities, developed an employee scholarship program, and the annual *Creative Expressions* magazine featuring resident art and creative writing.

The board of trustees for Lutheran Social Ministries of Maryland will launch a search for a new President/CEO after January 1, 2019.



PEOPLE IN BIZ

Schulz replaces Gill

Gov. Larry Hogan has appointed Kelly Schulz as secretary of the Maryland Department of Commerce. Schulz currently serves as secretary of the Maryland Department of Labor, Licensing and Regulation (DLLR). She replaces Mike Gill, who held the position for the previous four years.

In her role at DLLR, Secretary Schulz is responsible for managing an agency with nearly 2,000 employees and an operating budget of more than \$375 million.

Live! Casino appoints Felton

Live! Casino & Hotel has appointed Nikolina Felton to senior vice president of marketing. She previously served as vice president of loyalty marketing for the property.

PGCMLS announces new CEO

Roberta Phillips has been selected by the Board of Library Trustees as the CEO of the Prince George's County Memorial Library System (PGCMLS). Phillips, who currently works for the Richland Library in Columbia, S.C., will begin her new job in mid-January 2019.

Arundel panel names Leib

The School Board Appointment Commission voted for retired county government employee Bob Leib to fill the school board's District 30 seat. Leib, a U.S. Naval Academy graduate, is also a retired Navy surface warfare officer.

Thomas graduates from LMD

Tammi Thomas, vice president, marketing, for Columbia-based TEDCO, is part of the Leadership Maryland (LMD) 2018 graduating class. She was among 50 applicants chosen to complete its eight-month learning program focused on social, economic and environmental issues.

Remick to run Black Bears

Robyn Remick, a former vice president of marketing and events at ESPN, has been named president of the Odenton-based Maryland Black Bears of the North American Hockey League. She is the first female team president in league history.

The Arc hires Dols

The Arc Maryland, of Columbia, has hired Sharon Dols as office manager. She has worked for 15 years with students, developing outreach and social justice programs. She was most recently employed at Archbishop Spalding High School, in Severn.

HOCO police chief retires

After a 35-year career with the Howard County Police Department, Police Chief Gary L. Gardner retired Dec. 31.

It has truly been an honor and pleasure working with so many wonderful people over the past 35 years. I have been blessed to serve alongside the finest men and women in law enforcement, as well as an exceptional civilian and volunteer staff," said Chief Gardner. "While this was a challenging decision, I look forward to the future and spending more time with family. I am proud of what we have accomplished over the past four and a half years, and I know the agency will continue to build upon a foundation of excellence."

During Chief Gardner's tenure, Howard County saw significant reductions in crime and is on pace to report record lows in some categories in 2018. Chief Gardner also created and expanded a new Community Outreach Division; expanded the Mental Health Unit, which includes a state-licensed counselor; established new youth programs, like the Youth Advisory Council and Teen Court, and assigned a full-time youth liaison officer; launched a Pathway Patrol unit to put officers on bikes throughout the extensive trail system in Columbia; added a full-time officer as a police liaison for the county's growing Asian community; expanded partnerships through the faith community and various multi-cultural and specialty-needs groups; and implemented training in the areas of Fair and Impartial Policing, De-escalation Techniques and Customer Service.

"For over three decades, Howard County Police Chief Gary L. Gardner has dedicated his professional life to his sworn brothers and sisters of the Howard County Police Department while risking his safety and sacrificing time away from his family in order to protect us," said Howard County Executive Calvin Ball. "He was a pillar of great character in our community. We appreciate him and his family for their unwavering commitment to our safety and security. I thank Chief Gardner for 35 years of service to the residents of Howard County and wish him well in his future endeavors."

Throughout his career, Gardner has served in nearly every component of the police department, including as the deputy chief for administration, commander of the criminal investigations bureau, chief of staff, commander in the patrol division and public information officer.

Gardner's contributions and accomplishments over three decades have included crime-fighting and public safety strategies to address the county's evolving population and changing needs. He oversaw the realignment of patrol beats for improved response services; implementation of a crime analysis-driven system for better allocating resources in patrol operations; development of the James N. Robey Public Safety Training Center as the head of the police planning team; and creation of the department's Police Memorial Courtyard and Garden at headquarters.



Gary L. Gardner

BIZ ROUNDUP

MSA releases Pimlico study for new track

The Maryland Stadium Authority (MSA) has completed Phase Two of Baltimore's Pimlico Race Course Study, which revealed that the cost of replacing the 148-year-old facility with minimum capital improvements would cost approximately \$424 million.

Key findings included the following:

- The physical condition of the facility presents significant challenges, which, if not addressed, may threaten its continued existence and the success of the Preakness Stakes.

- Despite its physical condition, there do not appear to be situational factors such as location, accessibility, the surrounding neighborhood, etc. that would negatively affect Pimlico Race Course's ability to remain the long-term home of the Preakness Stakes.

- The study proposed an extensive renovation of the existing facility to address issues related to code, safety and security, operational efficiency, revenue enhancement, visitor experience and accessibility. The order of magnitude cost estimate range to complete the renovation was between \$248 million and \$321 million.

The initial Pimlico Race Course Study was released in February 2017. The full version of the new report is available at www.mdstad.com/studies/pimlico-race-course-study-phase-1-2.

Ocular Technology provides Alzheimer's early detection

Results from a recent study from JAMA Ophthalmology have revealed that a specific type of non-invasive eye test is helping to assess risk for Alzheimer's disease, and a Linthicum company that offers a managed eye care plan is backing the procedure.

One in 10 Americans older than age 65 has Alzheimer's, while one-third older than 85 have the disease. The new research shows that eye doctors can detect small alterations in retinal blood vessels that are known to be biomarkers for Alzheimer's disease – years before it begins to affect memory.

“By using a non-invasive technique known as optical coherence tomographic angiography (OCT-A),

researchers looked at a variety of optical biomarkers from people with known preclinical Alzheimer's and those without,” said Dr. Mark Ruchman, CMO, Versant Health, of Linthicum. “They found that people in the very early stages of the disease consistently had changes to the retina. As such, the OCT-A holds promise for the early detection of Alzheimer's disease for patients at risk, possibly before symptoms of cognitive decline appear.”

“The reality is one in every five Medicare dollars goes to someone with Alzheimer's disease,” says Elizabeth Klunk, RN, BSN, CCM, vice president, medical management, Versant Health. “Early detection through the non-invasive OCT-A eye exam offers hope to patients and their families.”



Cardin, Van Hollen endorse climate change reports

U.S. Senators Ben Cardin and Chris Van Hollen (both D-Md.) have joined a Senate resolution outlining key findings of the recent Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) report and the recent National Climate Assessment. The resolution affirms the signing members' recognition and acceptance of these findings, and calls for bold action to combat climate change. The senators were joined on the resolution by 23 of their Senate colleagues.

Notably, the IPCC report found that the Northeast Region of the United States – which includes Maryland – will see the largest temperature increase in the country, and the warming will occur here as

much as two decades before global average temperatures reach such a similar milestone. The report also finds that the Chesapeake Bay will experience stronger, more frequent storms, an increase in precipitation events, an increase in bay water temperatures and a rise in sea level.

“The Trump Administration wants to bury this new report because it doesn't align with the president's completely unhinged claim that climate change is a 'hoax.' Unfortunately for them, ignoring facts never succeeds in making them any less true,” said Cardin, a senior member of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee. “The consequences of our inaction on climate change can be found everywhere, from the record-breaking wildfires in California to the repeated, historic flooding in Ellicott City. This report highlights how these and other climate consequences will have an increasingly catastrophic effect on our economy – unless we act now.”

On Oct. 8, the IPCC released a report outlining the consequences of rising global temperatures and the ways in which climate chaos will become substantially worse as the planet continues to experience pre-industrial levels of warming. The report concludes that unless the current path of climate change is slowed, massive impacts – such as limited water supply availability, sea-ice free Arctic summers, mass die-offs of coral reefs, and intense and unprecedented heat waves – will become reality as soon as 2040.

State electric vehicle tax credits all gone

The Maryland Department of Transportation's Motor Vehicle Administration (MDOT MVA) announced that the Vehicle Excise Tax Credit, which has been available to the purchasers of qualified electric and hybrid plug-in vehicles, has been depleted.

Since funding of the fiscal 2019 program began in July, \$3 million in rebates have been requested, which is the full funding allocated by the Maryland State Legislature for this fiscal year. Since July 2016, the Vehicle Excise Credit has provided more than \$7.2 million in rebates and helped place more than 2,500 electric vehicles on Maryland roadways.

The monies for the Vehicle Excise Tax Credit were included in the Maryland Clean Cars Act of 2017. The legislation allows a tax credit of up to \$3,000 for electric and plug-in hybrid vehicles with a sale price up to \$60,000. During the 2017 legislative session, funding for the Plug-In Electric Vehicle Tax Credit program was increased by more than 30%.

Currently, there are 15,074 registered electric and plug-in hybrid vehicles in operation in the state; during the past two years, the number of registered EVs in Maryland have doubled. Since 2015, the number of EV charging stations in Maryland have increased 35%.

Permit fails, Tastee Diner lives

The Laurel Board of Appeals was scheduled to hear an application for a Special Exception application on Dec. 20 concerning a request to allow the opening of a medical cannabis dispensary at 118 Washington Boulevard, home of the Tastee Diner.

However, in a surprise twist to the saga, city planning commissioners rejected a permit that would have turned the city landmark into a marijuana dispensary. The five-member commission voted unanimously to deny the permit sought by Pure Hana Synergy, pointing out that there is already a medical cannabis dispensary operating nearby, with a second set to open in the neighborhood soon.

Odenton addiction center proposed

The Pascal Community Services Intercept is in the process of relocating from Severna Park to the Odenton Medical Center, at 1215 Annapolis Road. The mental health outpatient facility links clients to appropriate substance abuse services.

While the organization's 16-bed crisis site is still located at the old Crownsville State Hospital grounds, it is hoped that a new facility will rise, also in Odenton, almost directly across the street from the medical center. The proposed new facility would accommodate 32-bed site under roof on land that is currently the site of two houses; they would be incorporated into the new design.

BIZ ROUNDUP

Columbia safest city in America

WalletHub's 2018 Safest Cities in America survey has revealed that Columbia is the safest city in the United States. The personal finance site studied 182 cities, including the 150 most populated U.S. locales, across 39 key indicators, including home and community safety, natural disaster risk and financial safety.

Columbia ranked No. 4 in home and community safety, a category that weighted murder and terrorist attacks, while also considering the number of mass shootings, rapes, thefts, traffic fatalities, etc.; for natural disaster risk, it ranked No. 63, which took into account floods, tornadoes, earthquakes, hurricanes, wildfires and other risks; and for financial safety, Columbia checked in at No. 34, considering an unemployment rate, poverty rate and other factors.

The survey also noted that Washington, D.C., has the highest number of law enforcement officers per capita and ranked at No. 155 on the list, checking in at No. 166 for home and community safety, No. 80 for natural disaster risk and No. 61 for financial safety; Baltimore City ranked No. 156; it listed at No. 155, No. 67 and No. 149 in the three categories, respectively.

Woz U announces Upskilling partnership with Allegis

Woz U, Apple Co-Founder Steve Wozniak's education as a service company that transforms how individuals are educated with personalized, tech-based career training, announced a pilot program with CareerCircle, a company funded by the Hanover-based Allegis Group.

CareerCircle takes a candidate-first approach to connecting talent with partners that can enable their skills growth and access to new career opportunities. Woz U's Full-Stack web development, cybersecurity and data science programs will be offered to talent in Baltimore, Chicago, Boston and Charlotte through immersive, instructor-led and self-paced online courses at CareerCircle.com.

Aimed at solving the industry's skills gap problem, the partners are developing new ways to create talent on a micro and macro level. Users can immediately access Woz U's content and delivery system for career training courses, as well as align their career goals with CareerSkilling, mentoring and coaching opportunities. Plans for a full rollout, with additional courses and more skill sets, are set for later in 2019.

"The number of available jobs continues to exceed the number of job seekers in the United States," says Neil Bryson, senior vice president of digital transformation at Allegis Group. "While information technology is a natural starting point, we will expand our CareerSkilling initiatives into non-IT skill sets, like health care, quickly to help support the demand for new talent in the gig economy."

Time honors Capital-Gazette staff

Time magazine has chosen various "Guardians and the War on Truth" for its annual Person of the Year award, and the staff of Capital-Gazette Newspapers, of Annapolis, are among those saluted on one of four covers. Capital-Gazette's editorial board wrote that "despite the death of our colleagues on June 28, we've carried on. We've put out the newspaper, just as Chase Cook vowed that day."

Others saluted were slain Washington Post Columnist Jamal Khashoggi; Reuters journalists Wa Lone and Kyaw Soe Oo, who are represented in photos held by their wives; and Maria Ressa, editor of the Rappler news website in the Philippines, who is facing a possible 10 years in prison.

UHY merges with bgr CPAs

Columbia-based UHY Advisors and UHY LLP (UHY) have expanded its mid-Atlantic office through its merger of the professional services firm Berman Goldman & Ribakow (bgr CPAs), also of Columbia. The merger doubles the size of UHY in the Maryland area. Marc Rubin, managing partner of bgr, and Steve Wolf, partner, and their 20-plus colleagues will

be joining the UHY office in Columbia.

"The addition is part of UHY's growth strategy to add quality firms and partners in the region, expand our footprint, provide added services and gain critical mass," said Anthony Frabrotta, chairman and chief executive officer, UHY Advisors.

Cybersecurity event planned for APL

Organizations will have the opportunity to recruit from a pool of aspiring cybersecurity professionals by becoming a sponsor at the annual Mid-Atlantic Collegiate Cyber Defense Competition (MACCDC), which is set for March 28-30 at the Kossiakoff Center at The Johns Hopkins University Applied Physics Laboratory, in North Laurel.

Top qualifying cybersecurity teams from the mid-Atlantic's two- and four-year colleges and universities will be competing. They'll be tasked with maintaining an existing network infrastructure and engaging in business injects and real-world IT activities, while being attacked by a team of "hackers." This year's MACCDC champion will be defending the MACCDC's role as the national champion for the previous two years. For more information, visit <http://maccdc.org/sponsors>.

Swift acquired by NuMSP

NuMSP, a growing national managed service provider offering IT and cybersecurity solutions, announced its entry into the Eastern Seaboard SMB IT services market with the acquisition of Maryland-based Swift Systems, a full-service managed service provider (MSP) offering comprehensive IT solutions for small and mid-sized businesses that operates an office in Columbia.

This acquisition, the fifth for NuMSP, continues its buildout of a national managed service platform targeted to the small and mid-size business (SMB) market. SMB organizations face rapid advances in technology, making it increasingly difficult for smaller businesses to stay current and realize the full ROI on their IT investments. To meet

this challenge, NuMSP is building a nationwide company with the scale and resources to deliver advanced IT services to SMBs that will rival incumbent solutions at Fortune 500 companies.

Versant Health partners on Vision Loss Simulator

Linthicum-based Versant Health, a national managed eye health and vision plan company, has partnered with Transitions Optical to create a Vision Loss Simulator to help people see how failing eye health can impact your vision. The Vision Loss Simulator was sent to 10,000 vision care providers to use in their practice to educate their patients. With this tool, viewers can see through the eyes of someone living with glaucoma, cataract, diabetic retinopathy, presbyopia, glare and macular degeneration.

"The Vision Loss Simulator allows patients to see for themselves 'what if' long before the reality of any potential vision impairment sets in, as well as allowing caregivers to see for themselves the impact vision loss is having on their loved ones," said Nate Kenyon, vice president of provider operations and support, Versant Health.

Dragos raises \$37M Series B

Hanover-based Dragos Inc., developers of the Dragosthreat detection and response platform, has raised \$37M in Series B funding. The new investment comes at a time of rapid growth in the Industrial Control System (or ICS) cybersecurity market, and specifically, demand for Dragos' industry-leading asset identification and threat detection software.

"Industrial equipment is one of the last largely unprotected vectors for cyberattack, one with potential for massive damage to the global economy including loss of human life," said Joydeep Bhattacharyya, partner at Canaan. "The Dragos threat detection and response platform delivers an unmatched solution to a fast-growing list of large industries and customers, and we are thrilled to partner with this team of leaders in the industry."

GOV ROUNDUP

Career academy launched

The Howard County Public School System (HCPSS) will launch a new career academy, Apprenticeship Maryland, which helps students gain sustainable employment and further education based on career pathways in manufacturing and Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) occupations.

The youth apprenticeship program provides students the opportunity to “earn and learn” through on-the-job training in information technology, construction and design, manufacturing, engineering and technology, and banking and finance.

Participating HCPSS seniors will complete at least 450 hours of paid work-based training under the supervision of an eligible employer as well as related instruction. The students benefit from the program by earning a salary while learning valuable and marketable industry skills, receiving instruction at the worksite from a skilled mentor, and gaining technical skills and experience in an area of employment interest, while still in high school.

Leaders encourage FARM program use

Howard County Executive Calvin Ball and Howard County Public School System (HCPSS) Superintendent Michael Martirano released a video urging families to take advantage of support for which they qualify – specifically the Free and Reduced Meals program (FARMs).

In the video, Ball and Martirano experience the school lunchline the way a student receiving FARMs assistance and a student not receiving the financial assistance would. Showing that the experiences are identical, they hope to eliminate stigmas associated with the program so that students may receive the support they need.

The FARMs rate in Howard County is 22.5 percent which is up from the 2017-18 school year. Martirano has made connecting more families to benefits offered as a result of FARMs eligibility a major priority for the school system. To learn more about the benefits of the FARMs program, check



Construction of the long-planned second sheet of ice at Piney Orchard Ice Arena is well underway. It is slated for completion this winter.

eligibility status and apply, visit www.hcpss.org/farms.

Bridge in Columbia complete

Improvements have been completed to the pedestrian bridge that crosses Route 29 in Columbia. The improvements included the installation of a new spiraling geodesic tube around the bridge, upgraded lighting and additional safety enhancements.

A feasibility study on bridge upgrades began in 2014 and was completed in 2015. Public meetings and opportunities for input were held in fall 2016 and a design study was completed in December 2016. The spiraling geodesic tube was the clear community choice among four options for the bridge. In addition to enhanced lighting, the county is in the process of upgrading the security cameras to allow the police department to access clearer images from the bridge.

Laurel accepting resumes for panel

Laurel Mayor Craig Moe is accepting citizens' resumes for appointment to the new Education Advisory Committee. Set up to strengthen the relationship between the City of Laurel, the Prince George's County Board of

Education, local schools and students, Resolution No. 5-18 was passed by the Laurel City Council on Sept. 24; it established the Education Advisory Committee to develop and recommend programs, projects and other initiatives impacting the educational development of Laurel's citizens and students.

Resumes may be sent to Sara Green, Chief of Staff, 8103 Sandy Spring Road, Laurel, MD 20707; or emailed to Laurelmayor@laurel.md.us.

DPW seeks input

The Howard County Department of Public Works' (DPW) Bureau of Environmental Services Recycling Division released an online survey to gather community input regarding recycling habits at home and in the workplace.

The survey, available at www.HowardCountyRecycles.org, is part of the DPW's effort to evaluate the county's residential and business recycling education and outreach programs. Responses will be used to refine the division's education and outreach campaigns in an effort to increase the County's recycling rate to 45%.

In addition to the survey, the DPW will also conduct focus groups to gain additional input from both residents and businesses. An outside, focus group recruiting firm, You Can Group,

will be recruiting participants over the phone. The survey can also be accessed at TellHCRcycles.org.

CAPA partnership encourages involvement, advocacy

The Howard County Public School System (HCPSS) has partnered with the Chinese American Parent Association of Howard County (CAPA) to encourage collaboration, communication and mutual understanding among HCPSS staff, students and families with Chinese background.

The agreement calls for CAPA representatives to collaborate with the HCPSS International Student and Family Services Office to offer an International Parent Leadership Program for Chinese families. CAPA will offer parent-friendly panel discussions to help Chinese families new to Howard County learn about the variety of HCPSS offerings available for students and parents. Topics will include dual enrollment, Gifted and Talented programs, managing school transitions and college readiness.

CAPA members will also collaborate with school staff to support school celebrations and international nights, provide information about Chinese food history, and participate as classroom speakers to share Chinese culture and experiences as immigrants.

ALL AROUND Town



Photos by Nina K. Photography

The Central Maryland Chamber

The Central Maryland Chamber (CMC) ushered in the holiday season with its traditional party at The Great Room at Historic Savage Mill. The silent auction is always a popular feature at the event.

Photos by Pam Long Photography

The Howard County Chamber

held its annual Jingle Mingle party at Laurel Park Race Track. It was a festive celebration of the season and the end of a successful year.

Raj Kudchadkar, CMC CEO and President thanking event sponsors, members and silent auction donors for their support



Left to right: Jonathan Williams of Real Projectives, Martin Fisher of Proshred, Mike Cammarata of Tide Creek Financial Group and Raj Kudchadkar, CMC CEO & President enjoy good company and great food."



Kathy Berlin (left) and Cathy Yost (right) of The Business Monthly enjoy meeting friends



M&T Bank colleagues getting into the holiday spirit. Left to right: Jeremy Schneider, board member Helaine Gulliams, Meghan Belcher and Tyler Schepers.



Donald Kropfelder, Susan G. Komen Maryland, Mark Thompson, The Maryland Jockey Club and Leonardo McClarty, Howard County Chamber.



Dan Medinger, Advertising Media Plus, and Ryan Brown, Howard County General Hospital.



Members of the Young Professional Network of Howard County's Board, David Erskine, Atlantic Financial, Inc., Antony Justin, Howard Hughes Corporation, Nicholas Williams, Morgan Stanley, Elyssa Auerbach, Maryland Association for Justice, Inc., MaryBeth Dulin, Mary Kay and Mark Cruz, Tower Federal Credit Union.



David Anderson, chair, Howard County Chamber Board of Directors (from left to right), Jeff Agnor, Davis, Agnor, Rapaport & Skalny, LLC, Gina Abate, Edwards Performance Solutions and John Olenick, PSA Financial.

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