

THE DAILY RECORD

PATH TO EXCELLENCE

A WOMAN'S GUIDE
TO BUSINESS

SEPTEMBER 2016

ELITE EDUCATORS

Maryland's Women
College Presidents

BACK TO NATURE
at a cutting edge
Columbia facility

Me Time:
DANCING
IT OUT





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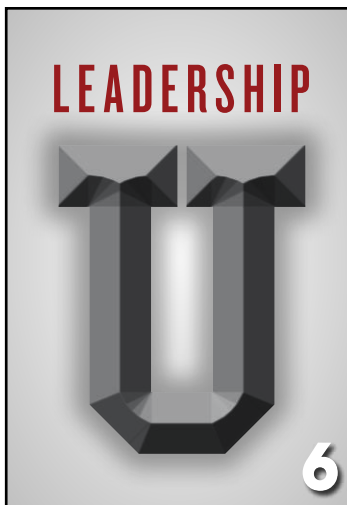
PATH TO EXCELLENCE

SEPTEMBER 2016

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Letter from the publisher

Last month, we celebrated the one-year anniversary of Path to Excellence. Yes, it's been one year since we expanded our coverage of women in business around the state with this magazine and online at TheDailyRecord.com/path-to-excellence/. And it's been a great year!

We launched these products as part of our 20th Anniversary of Top 100 Women. The intent of the magazine has been to bring us closer, to hear each other's stories and to network. To that end, we've been successful and we look forward to another great year together.

In this issue, I am delighted to share with you lessons in wisdom from 10 women college presidents across the state. In the nation, only about one in four or 26% of four-year colleges or universities is led by a women. Here in Maryland, that number rises to one in three, which means we are exceeding the national average for women in higher education leadership – what great news in the month that marks the start of school!

Speaking of school, education is big focus of our Top 100 Women's volunteer efforts, particularly the education of girls. Jean Waller-Brune, Top 100 Woman, talks about



Suzanne E. Fischer-Huettner
Publisher,
The Daily Record

what it took to open Baltimore's Lillie May Carroll Jackson Charter School, which is now in its second year.

Our Q&A this month is with Sandi Timmins, executive director of the House of Ruth Maryland and Top 100 Woman, and Larissa Johnson, an energy program manager and Leading Woman, shares stories of the five women who shaped her path.

Summer may be ending, but we have a story on the Robinson Nature Center in Columbia to get you away from the office, if only for a few minutes, and a few tips on how to make that work space more green.

Our next Path to Excellence networking event will be held Wednesday, Oct. 19, from 5:30 to 7:30 at The Country Club at Woodmore. I would like to meet you, so please register today at www.thedailyrecord.com/path-to-excellence/calendar/!

Until then, we want to hear your feedback as well as your story ideas. Please contact me at Suzanne.Huettner@TheDailyRecord.com.

Suzanne E. Fischer-Huettner

TECH TIP



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In my career, I've seen a lot of expensive or even homegrown creative management tools come and go. Often lacking in features or too focused on traditional project management needs, the software always seemed to encumber our workflow rather than enhance it. Here I've shared the software that has not only made my job easier as a creative lead at Planit, but has also improved my team's output.

InVision - This powerful platform has streamlined our creative process and strengthened our design project management. While we regularly use the moodboard feature to gather inspiration or ideate on a visual language, our digital team benefits most from the design and prototyping capabilities. Organized by project, we upload designs into InVision where we can collaborate with copywriters and developers, and I can review my team's work—providing comments and approvals that are stored for tracking purposes. InVision's prototyping tool allows us to view designs within the context of a device and uncover potential user experience issues long before we get to development.

Gone are the days of pinning up low-res jpegs or flipping through a PDF for clients, because we also leverage InVision for presentation. Whether we're launching a web meeting, showcasing a prototype in person, or providing a password-protected link for review, we now have one system that not only stores our creative but allows us to seamlessly share it with stakeholders.

A lot of our creative process still happens offline—whiteboarding, sketching, Post-it note mosaics—but finding the right technology to transition from the big idea into successful execution has certainly helped my team keep up with today's fast-paced design environment.

Thank you to **Jess Brown** for this month's Tech Tip. If you have a Tech Tip you'd like to feature in an upcoming issue of Path to Excellence, please contact Jessica Gregg at Jessica.Gregg@TheDailyRecord.com or 443-524-8155.

► FEATURED IN THIS MONTH'S PATH TO EXCELLENCE

MARYLAND'S TOP 100 WOMEN

Six women featured in this month's issue are Top 100 Women honorees



Juliette Bell



Jean Waller-Brune



Kristen Franceschi



Kathleen Hetherington



Janet Dudley-Eschbach



Sandi Timmins

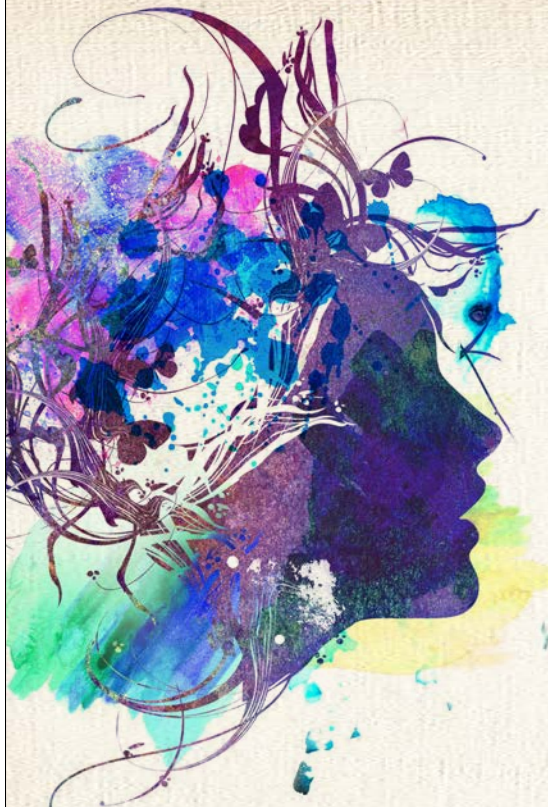
Leading Women



Larissa Johnson



Sheila Bair



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WHAT'S IN YOUR PURSE?

In each issue of Path to Excellence, we'll ask a successful woman, "What's in your purse?"

In each issue of Path to Excellence, we ask a successful woman, "What's in your purse?"

For Dunbar High School health teacher Rohan Lindsay, teaching has always been in her blood.

"My dad was a principal, my mom was a teacher," Lindsay said. "It's always been a big part of my life."

Lindsay has been teaching in Baltimore city public schools for her entire career, almost 25 years. She went to Pennsylvania State University for her bachelor's degree in health education, and then got her master's degree at Notre Dame of Maryland University.

"I love teaching, I love changing lives," Lindsay said. Currently she teaches classes of freshmen and seniors at Dunbar, which is the age group she prefers. While she feels like she can connect and have better conversations with high school students, she's spent her fair share of time teaching middle school.

"My years in middle school have been tremendous," said Lindsay, who taught fifth through eighth graders for more than 15 years. "It taught me to be strong and flexible."

For Lindsay, teaching young teenagers can be difficult because they're like the "middle child."

"They're trying to experiment, but they're not quite adults, and they're going through a lot of changes," Lindsay said.

Dunbar High School, which is next to Johns Hopkins Hospital, is a magnet high school that prepares students for health professions with a science, math and technology-focused curriculum. The school doesn't emphasize health professions as it once did though, according to

Lindsay, and she hopes to bring back the health focus. Lindsay teaches an "Exploring Health Careers" class, where she shows students job choices beyond being a doctor or nurse. She also teaches a health care research ethics class for seniors.

Maximilian Franz/The Daily Record



1. Tea bags/tea holder – Lindsay brings tea with her wherever she goes and loves hosting tea parties.
2. Fan – This fan is from Jamaica where Lindsay was born.
3. Book – Lindsay likes to have something to read with her – her favorite genres are spiritual, education-related or historical romance.
4. iPhone – Lindsay's phone background is her maternal grandparents, whom she says are her "world." The picture is from a trip she and her family made to Jamaica.
5. Comb – "I always use the comb – it's major," Lindsay said.
6. Starbursts/crackers – Snacks are an essential for Lindsay – she said she's always stocked, whether it's for herself, her friends or her grandchildren.
7. Dunbar pin – Dunbar's assistant principal gave Lindsay this pin as a teacher appreciation gift.
8. Clinique lip stick – "I live and die with this lip gloss," Lindsay said.

"I love both [classes,]" Lindsay said. "Because I majored in health, I always wanted to come to Dunbar."

No matter where she is, though, teaching for Lindsay is all about the relationships with the students.

"It's not easy, teaching today. You have to be called to it," Lindsay said. "As much as students challenge you, they look to you. ... You have to be very forgiving, and you have to be willing to start again

each day."

As chair of her department, Lindsay has had experience in administration, but she said she prefers being with other teachers "in the trenches." While she doesn't know what the next few years will bring, she said she always has to have a class to teach.

"I'm always trying to learn more, to make changes, looking for new ways to engage my students," Lindsay said. "But I do know that I'm making an impact."

LEADERSHIP



At
Maryland
colleges,
women
presidents
mentor,
support,
dream

By Gina Gallucci-White
and Jessica Gregg

The numbers truly are a point of pride, President Tuajuanda Jordan of St. Mary's College in Maryland said.

In this state, small in geography, but prominent in the world of education, eight women preside over one of Maryland's 21 four-year colleges or universities.

Across the nation, 26% of presidents at four-year colleges and universities are women, according to the American Council on Education, a Washington, D.C.-based association that represents more than 1,600 colleges and universities. But in Maryland, that number is 38%, more than 10 points above the national average.

"That's so impressive, especially for a state our size," said Jordan, who credits the women in her family with pushing her to remain in school to earn bachelor's and graduate degrees, and to start a path that eventually led to a college presidency.

At Coppin State University in Baltimore, 75% of students are women (In the U.S. overall, 57% of college students are women), and when Maria Thompson's appointment as president in 2015 was announced, social media greeted the news with #girlpower. Thompson said she is more than happy to be a role model for

students and believes the different ways that women lead are getting more appreciation these days as world problems become more complex and new solutions are needed.

"We listen ... well, because that's what we do," she said. "It's not 'my way or the highway,' because we don't lead that way."

In the U.S., 33% of community colleges are led by women, while in Maryland 55% of community colleges – or 10 out of 18 schools – have a women president. (See a full list of the women who preside over Maryland's community colleges on page 11).

As students returned to classrooms last month, we talked with all eight women who lead a four-year school in the state, plus two community college presidents,

SEE LEADERSHIP PAGE 8

BY THE NUMBERS

26%

Percentage nationwide of four-year colleges and universities with female presidents

38%

Percentage in Maryland of four-year colleges and universities with female presidents

"This program is an experience that lets us work on ourselves, and to be the leaders we know we can be."

Kristie Snedeker,
Director of Clinical Operations,
UMMC Shock Trauma Center.

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ELITE EDUCATORS

MEET THE 10 COLLEGE PRESIDENTS WE SPOKE WITH ABOUT HIGHER EDUCATION



Sheila Bair
Washington College



Juliette Bell
University of Maryland
Eastern Shore



Andrea Chapdelaine
Hood College



Janet Dudley-Eshbach
Salisbury University



Kathleen Hetherington
Howard Community
College



Tuajuanda Jordan
St. Mary's College
of Maryland



Sandra Kurtinitis
Community College
of Baltimore County



Kim Schatzel
Towson University



Maria Thompson
Coppin State University



Marylou Yam
Notre Dame
of Maryland University

LEADERSHIP

Continued from page 7

and asked them about their mission, what students need to know before they graduate and what best prepared them for their jobs.

"My job as a leader is to create momentum – to either support people or to clear the path."

Kim Schatzel, Towson University

The presidents are: Sheila Bair, Washington College; Juliette Bell, University of Maryland Eastern Shore; Andrea Chapdelaine, Hood College; Janet Dudley-Eshbach, Salisbury University; Kathleen Hetherington, Howard Community College; Tuajuanda Jordan, St. Mary's College of Maryland; Sandra Kurtinitis, Community College of Baltimore County; Kim Schatzel, Towson University; Maria Thompson, Coppin State University and Marylou

Yam, Notre Dame of Maryland University

Here is what they shared with us:

What do you feel is your mission as a college president today?

"I want to make sure our students are well prepared, both academically and financially, to enter the world once they graduate. Being prepared academically means having critical thinking skills, having strong communication skills, and being able to adapt in a rapidly changing global economy. Being financially prepared means carrying as little debt as possible and being knowledgeable about how to manage that debt."

Sheila Bair, Washington College

"My job as a leader is to create momentum – to either support people or to clear the path."

Kim Schatzel, Towson University

"Also important is to be a spokesperson and advocate for the value of private liberal arts colleges, which has been the target of increased public skepticism. Research has amply demonstrated the significant return on investment of an

education like the one Hood provides, not only financially but also in terms of societal benefit and personal well-being, yet that message does not seem to be heard. We need educated citizens who feel obligated to contribute to the public good.”

Andrea Chapdelaine, Hood College

“Workforce development. Whether you want to be a poet, an engineer or a nurse, we get your ready for the world of work.”

Sandra Kurtinitis, Community College of Baltimore County

What do today's students need to know before they graduate?

“Students need to know how to be leaders — leaders in their own lives. How to organize their time and their careers. How to lead once they leave here. We make sure there are plenty of opportunities here for our students to have leadership roles.”

Maria Thompson, Coppin State University

“When I ask leaders in business, government, and other organizations what they want to see in the individuals they hire, I always hear the same thing: Employers want graduates who excel in critical thinking and reasoning. They expect that new hires will have excellent speaking and writing skills, and that job candidates will present themselves well. Obviously they want a strong work ethic with the ability to operate independently as well as collaboratively.”

Janet Dudley-Eschbach, Salisbury University

“We need to equip our students with both the hard and soft skills to do well in the world of work. I was an English major and all I wanted to do was to study John Donne or Milton. What I wasn't doing was thinking of myself as someone who had to go to work. We're way more practical now, especially at the community college level, helping students make connections, whether through internships or externships.”

Sandra Kurtinitis, Community College of Baltimore County

“The basic message is don't worry. Prepare to be innovative and creative. Obtain international experience so you can be a global citizen. Expect to change jobs.”

Tuajuanda Jordan, St. Mary's College of Maryland

Why education?

“I've always wanted a career in education. I wasn't sure whether I'd teach classical guitar, geology, or

Spanish (all fields I studied before finally settling on the latter), but I saw myself in a university or school setting. I believe there is no higher calling than teaching; through teaching we are building the foundation of future generations. I also love the arts, but don't think I had the talent to make a living as an artist.”

Janet Dudley-Eschbach, Salisbury University

“Given my previous experiences working for the New York Stock Exchange, the U.S. Treasury Department, the Commodity Futures Trading Commission, and the FDIC, I could certainly have remained in banking and finance. I was drawn to the presidency at Washington College because I was looking for an opportunity to give back. I'm a member of the Baby Boomer generation that's had the lion's share of the opportunities and the responsibilities over the past several decades. And I'm concerned that we're not giving our young people a particularly robust economy. I'm concerned that we're not giving them a financial system that's as stable as it should be. So I wanted to do my part, at least for the students of Washington College, to prepare them well for the next phase in their lives.”

Sheila Bair, Washington College

“If you want to see the American dream in action, visit your local community college. Opportunities abound and the focus is on the students at community colleges because of their access and affordability. If I weren't in education, I probably would have gone into health care. My life's focus has been on service to others, and I believe education and health care are two key areas where one can best help other people.”

Kathleen Hetherington, Howard Community College

“Having spent the better part of 25 years in higher education, I cannot imagine doing anything else.”

Marylou Yam, Notre Dame of Maryland University

What best prepared you for this job?

“The position I held directly previous to this one — as provost of a private liberal arts college in Pennsylvania. In that role, I was fortunate to have a brilliant and supportive boss (the president) who gave me many opportunities to learn aspects of this job and who was always willing to guide me (and still does). I do believe being a faculty member was important as well because you gain a true understanding of the core of this enter-

SEE LEADERSHIP PAGE 10

WOMEN WHO LEAD MARYLAND'S COMMUNITY COLLEGES

Cynthia Bambara,
Allegany College of
Maryland

Mary Way Bolt,
Cecil College

Elizabeth Burmaster,
Frederick Community
College

Charlene M. Dukes,
Prince George's
Community College

Kathleen Hetherington,
Howard Community
College

Sandra Kurtinitis,
Community College
of Baltimore County

Dawn Lindsay,
Anne Arundel
Community College

Dianna G. Phillips,
Harford Community
College

DeRionne P. Pollard,
Montgomery College

Barbara A. Viniar,
Chesapeake College

THE ULTIMATE COLLEGE (PRESIDENTS') READING LIST

As college freshmen across the state received their dorm assignments, supply lists and other necessary paperwork this summer, they more than likely received a reading assignment. In the spirit of required reading, we asked the 10 college presidents we interviewed what their students were reading – and what they were reading as well. The titles we received range from mystery to historical fiction to life-changing nonfiction. Read on!

“Did You Ever Have Family” Jim Clegg; “This mystery is all about the importance of family and perseverance.” Tuajuanda Jordan, St. Mary’s College of Maryland

Goldfinch, Donna Tartt; “Oh my god, it’s an odyssey. It’s really good.” Maria Thompson, Coppin State University

Gone with the Wind, Margaret Mitchell; “I just finished re-reading it. I’m going to put ‘War and Peace’ on my summer reading list. That will take me forever, too!” Sandra Kurtinitis, Community College of Baltimore County

Grit To Great, Linda Kaplan Thaler and Robin Koval; Juliette Bell, University of Maryland Eastern Shore

The Heminguses of Monticello: An American Family, Annette Gordon-Reed; Marylou Yam, Notre Dame of Maryland University

Made to Stick: Why Some Ideas Survive and Others Die, Chip and Dan Heath; “It’s a good book for change making,” said President Kim Schatzel of Towson University, who picks each summer a book that she, her husband, their two children and their daughter-in-law read over vacation. Past picks have included Anthony Doerr’s Pulitzer Prize-winning, *All the Light We Cannot See*.

Outcasts United, Warren St. John; “The book speaks to how people of different origins can work through their differences, and the text sheds light on many of the issues confronting our increasingly diverse U.S. population.” Janet Dudley-Eschbach, Salisbury University

Positive: Surviving my Bullies, Finding Hope, and Changing the World, Paige Rawl with Ali Benjamin; “It is a powerful story of surviving bullying and also serves as an important reminder of how much harm can be done just because someone is viewed as ‘different.’ I cannot think of a more timely conversation.” Andrea Chapdelaine, Hood College

Saving the Places We Love: Paths to Environmental Stewardship, Ned Tillman; Kathleen, Hetherington, Howard Community College

Ways to Disappear, Idra Novey; “It broaches some of the same questions we ask of our students to consider—the difference between truth and appearances, the power of language and its relationship to reality, and how we can sometimes find our way by getting lost.” Sheila Bair, Washington College

LEADERSHIP

Continued from page 9

prise – teaching and learning – in the classroom.”

Andrea Chapdelaine, Hood College

“The lessons I learned as a child – fairness, respect, hard work, compassion, self-discipline – are ones that help me to carry out my job as a servant leader every day.”

Juliette Bell, University of Maryland Eastern Shore

“Prior to Notre Dame, I spent much of my career at a similar institution in New Jersey. With my experience in nursing education serving as the basis of my leadership skills, I had the opportunity to work across different divisions of the university. Over time I progressed from being a faculty member to associate dean of nursing to eventually provost and vice president of academic affairs. I frequently sought after and learned from mentors and my many colleagues, and I understood that everyone’s role on a college campus matters.”

Marylou Yam, Notre Dame of Maryland University

What was your college experience like?

“I had two college nicknames, ‘Power’ and ‘Quiet Storm.’ I didn’t do a lot of talking, but I had a lot of focus.”

Tuajuanda Jordan, St. Mary’s College of Maryland

“I attended a small, private, historically black college in my hometown of Talladega, Alabama. I had a wonderful college experience where I had many opportunities to grow and develop. I had wonderful faculty who encouraged and challenged me. It was in college that I fell in love with science and research. I graduated with a degree in chemistry in three and a half years as valedictorian of my class. Subsequently I went on to earn a doctorate in chemistry as a result of my undergraduate experience.”

Juliette Bell, University of Maryland Eastern Shore

“I have attended a community college, a state college, and two private universities on my educational path, culminating with the attainment of my doctorate degree. My community college experience was the most transformative. I attended college during the civil rights movement, the women’s movement, and the end of the Vietnam War. My classmates were from all walks of life and the classroom experience was rich and vibrant with perspectives from many different points of view.”

Kathleen Hetherington, Howard Community College

“It was really transformative for me, because I was able to meet people from all over the country and live someplace I had never lived before.”

Kim Schatzel, Towson University

“I was a first generation student so I was overwhelmed and homesick at first. I struggled to find my niche. Academically, high school was not terribly challenging and thus I had not acquired the study skills I needed. Although it was a difficult transition, looking back I am grateful for the struggle because it helps me better understand what my students may be experiencing. Eventually I found my interests both in and out of the classroom, great friends and a wonderful faculty adviser who became a lifelong mentor and friend. There is no doubt that college had a transformative effect on my life, just as we hope it does for all students.”

Andrea Chapdelaine, Hood College



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Paula Dofat, director of college counseling at Baltimore Leadership School for Young Women, advises a student on her college choices. Maxmilian Franz/The Daily Record.

LIFE PREP

Getting Baltimore girls ready for college, careers

by **Andrea Cwieka**

With a high school graduation rate of 69.7, Baltimore educators have long been looking for ways to better prepare city youth for succeeding in both public and private high schools as well as later in life.

For girls, that preparation can happen in middle school — a vulnerable but important time in their education.

“It’s a critical time for girls,” Laurel Freedman, executive director of Lillie May Carroll Jackson School, said. “It’s a time when they tend to lose their voice.”

But her school and two others — the Baltimore Leadership School for Young Women and Sisters Academy of Baltimore — are changing students’ lives and the landscape of city education. While all at different stages, these three schools are focusing on girls’ education, both in and out of the classroom.

Baltimore Leadership School for Young Women graduated its first class of seniors this year. One hundred percent were accepted to college.
Maxmilian Franz/The Daily Record

Baltimore Leadership School for Young Women

“College readiness begins in middle school,” Dr. Shanaysha Sauls, CEO of Baltimore Leadership School for Young Women, put it bluntly.

The charter school is the only public all-girls combined middle and high school in Baltimore. While each middle school grade has around 100 students, in high school the number drops to 50-75 girls per year. However, they have had a landmark retention rate from eighth to ninth grade this year, keeping almost 90 percent of their students.

“This past year, we had 98 eighth grade students, and we retained 85,” Sauls said. “That’s the highest number of eighth grade retention we’ve ever had,” adding that the school wouldn’t be able to accept any applicants for high school.

In part due to the 100 percent college acceptance rate, more girls have been choosing to stay at BLSYM. The class of 2016 was accepted to Johns Hopkins University, New York University, University of Maryland, University of Oregon and more.

To help support the recent graduates, the school has hired an alumni coordinator whose duties include helping the graduates



navigate financial aid and periodically checking in on them.

“Our girls come to us with infinite dreams and horizons in terms of what they want to be,” Sauls said. “As a school, we learned that we’re not just teachers, we’re also second moms and dads to them.”

In addition to academic staff, the school has also enlisted a support staff who helps the students with skills like conflict resolution and

SEE PREP PAGE 14



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Kierra McCollum, Deara Parker, Autumn Walker and Caira Lee wore their class stoles to Sisters Academy's graduation this year. The four women are members of the school's first graduating class, the Class of 2008.

Photo courtesy of Sisters Academy of Baltimore

PREP

Continued from page 13

provides emotional support, along with a full-time college counselor who works with students and families.

"We have the support you would see at an independent school," Sauls said.

The school also offers a variety of extracurricular programs, including a robotics team, sports, a drama club, environmental sustainability programs and an award-winning step team. BLSYM is also on its way to becoming CTE-certified in its computer science training.

With the various programs the school offers and because of its status as a public charter school, Sauls said it can sometimes be a struggle to ensure the school has all the resources it needs to fully support each student for all seven years.

"We have to go above and beyond to deliver the resources to our students – we can't really do it in a traditional way," Sauls said. In addition to city funding, the school also hosts a yearly breakfast to help raise money and shine a light on female leaders in the community.

"People haven't really seen what we're trying to do before," Sauls said. "The notion that we can take a girl regardless of where she started and make her ready for college is something we don't really talk about a lot in public schools – we have really had to create it for ourselves."

Sisters Academy of Baltimore

At Sisters Academy of Baltimore, girls in grades five through eight learn, do chores and participate in extracurricular activities 7:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. each day. The students are from West Baltimore's underserved neighborhoods.

"It is a faith-based school, a model that has worked in Baltimore," said school president Sister Delia Dowling, citing the success of all-boys schools like Saint Ignatius Loyola Academy. "It kind of came out of people's desires for another choice in education back in the early 2000s."

Since the school's start in 2004, 100 percent of the graduates from the first four classes, 2008 through 2011, earned a high school diploma. Eighty-six percent of these high school grads are currently enrolled in a two or four-year college. One hundred percent of the graduates from 2011 through 2014 attended high school. Ninety-two percent of these graduates are attending or have graduated from a private, Catholic, or selective public high school with a college-preparatory curriculum.

For Dowling, providing support post-graduation and getting parents involved are key.

"We really keep offering support," Dowling said, adding that the academy helps students apply to private schools, checks in with the students at school and offers help to students who are struggling.

"Our vision and mission is to identify girls of promise who really think that there is more to education what they had experienced, and give them the best," Dowling said.

Caira Lee, a 2008 graduate, said that the school prepared her for success both academically and socially. Lee graduated from College of Wooster in 2016.

"I had a support base that followed me through high school and college," Lee said. "If I forgot lunch at home, or if I had a parent-teacher conference that my family couldn't make it to, or if I needed help with homework, I could call."

A school like this gave her sense of pride and identity: "It feels like you have accomplished something, you didn't just go through motions of public school," Lee said. "For some of these girls, it's the first time that they are paid attention to meticulously for four consecutive years by the same people who have their best interests at mind."

Lillie May Carroll Jackson Charter School

Lillie May Carroll Jackson Charter School, fresh out of its inaugural year, is a charter school closely tied with Roland Park Country School, an all-girls private school in Baltimore.

The idea for the charter school was formed when former Baltimore City Public Schools CEO Andres Alonso brought leaders of Baltimore

independent and public schools together in 2008 to work on improving public education in the city.

"We had to have a lot of tenacity of purpose and know that we really want to do this," said Jean Waller-Brune, a member of the LMCJS board of directors and former head of RPCS. "It took a lot of research, a lot of working with Baltimore city public schools."

In June 2013, RPCS was granted the nation's first charter awarded to an independent school, according to a Johns Hopkins School of Education press release.

For its first year, the school took on a group of 78 fifth and sixth graders from more than 30 different elementary schools, all of whom were reading and writing below their grade level, executive director Laurel Freedman said.

She and other school leaders took inspiration not just from other all-girls schools in Baltimore city but also from nearby independent schools – which brought them to their partner, Expeditionary Learning.

Expeditionary Learning is an "approach to school" that puts "academic achievement on

"It's no secret that our kids are not achieving to the levels we hope they are...We have plans to get them on or above grade level, and we want to get them ready to succeed in rigorous high schools."

Laurel Freedman, executive director of Lillie May Carroll Jackson Charter School

the same level as character development," and includes professional development for teachers, Freedman said. EL also emphasizes integrating academic disciplines and community service.

"We're teaching things every day like integrity, perseverance and inquiry" to students, Freedman said. The EL method is inspired from methods and techniques used in independent schools, and grew out of collaboration between the Harvard Graduate School of Education and Outward Bound.

The new school is already seeing success in their students. According to the school's May iReady assessment, 14 students were at the 6th grade level – meaning four students improved one grade and 10 improved by two. However, currently, 36 percent test at the 5th grade level, and 44.5 percent are below.

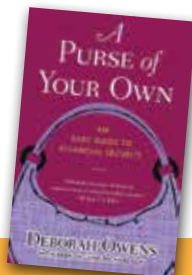
"Our goal is to help girls get into highest achieving schools in city," Freedman said. "It's no secret that our kids are not achieving to the levels we hope they are...We have plans to get them on or above grade level, and we want to get them ready to succeed in rigorous high schools."

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NATURE & nurture

Robinson Nature Center shows visitors the outdoors while providing example of sustainable design

By Rachel Wallach • Special to The Daily Record

SEE NATURE PAGE 18

It may be an educational facility, but on first impression, the Robinson Nature Center looks more like a ski resort—minus the mountains. The building itself soars above the Middle Patuxent valley, all clean wooden lines and walls of windows. Landscaping spills from all sides, giving way to forested trails. Inside, two levels of nature exhibits draw individuals, families, field trips, birthday parties, off-site meetings, and weddings.

Open since 2011, the 18-acre Columbia center was created to help the community connect with the natural world while also modeling how sustainable design can help preserve it, community liaison Pamela Reese said. Both the enjoyment and the education start in the parking lot, whose porous concrete allows rainwater to filter through its surface and recharge groundwater supplies. The building—one of the first in Maryland to achieve the highest LEED certification of Platinum—features solar panels, geothermal

A GREENER WORKPLACE

For those interested in bringing sustainability practices to the office, Reese offers these suggestions:

- Talk to the property manager about planting native species to use less water and support the environment
- Turn out lights when not in use (the ones at Robinson turn off automatically when the room empties)
- Talk to office managers about installing a filtration system to use the existing plumbing for drinking water instead of importing bottles
- Stock the kitchen with plates, cups, and utensils in lieu of disposable plastic
- Bring no-waste lunches to work
- Lobby your business to undertake a cleanup day or other environmental project

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“When you see how a hike promotes a sense of wonder, of what can we do, and what it does for the human spirit, it’s all worth it.”

**Pamela Reese, community liaison
for Robinson Nature Center**

NATURE

Continued from page 17

heating, repurposed materials including sunflower-seed countertops and cork floors, low-flow sinks, and a green roof over its lower-level education wing.

“Our green roof is unique because lots of them are not accessible,” Reese said, gazing down from the balcony at the picnic tables among the native plantings and pollinators growing there. Upon this same balcony, an opera diva serenaded visitors last fall during the annual Harmony & Hops event, which also featured jazz, classical, and electroacoustic performances accompanied by local craft beers and gourmet sliders. It’s also where staff and visitors gather in the late afternoon to watch the orioles return to their nests near the stream.

Around the building’s other side, a stage, log tunnels, bear benches, and a construction zone dot the Nature Place, where kids play freely. “It’s a more gentle, soft way for people to get to know outside,” Reese said. She added that outdoor spaces often help kids with and without sensory challenges participate on more equal footing.

Inside, light stencils on the tall windows prevent bird strikes. The stone and wood lining a cozy sitting area were reclaimed from the farmhouse that belonged to Anne and James Robinson, whose gift made possible both the center and the James & Anne Robinson Foundation that helps to support it. On the floor, a to-scale, hand-painted map depicts the Chesapeake Bay and the Middle Patuxent and Patapsco tributaries.

In the discovery room, kids explore a touch tank, puppets, and a field station with binoculars. Behind the live animal exhibits sits the animal care room, which is also the site of research projects that staff conduct with the University of Maryland, Baltimore County (on oriole migration) and the U.S. Department of Agriculture (on insects that reflect stream quality).

The next exhibits highlight the historic, from arrowheads and



bones to a glimpse into the operations of the mills of Simpsonville, as the town was once known. From there, visitors

can enter the Life of the Forest exhibit, which spirals down in a journey from tree canopy to forest floor, simultaneously representing the cycles of the seasons and day into night.

“It’s built for 5-year-olds,” Reese said, bending to view the fish within a waist-high vernal pool.

While more than 200 volunteers help with the center’s activities, its camps, classes, and other programming are led by degreed professionals using curricula aligned with the Common Core science standards. But most of the learning happens by experience, Reese said, as visitors’ connections with nature and one another raise both questions and answers.

“For some of these global problems and issues we’re facing, we need ways people can work cooperatively and in relationships,” Reese said. “When you see how a hike promotes a sense of wonder, of what can we do, and what it does for the human spirit, it’s all worth it.”



GREEN DAY: Pamela Reese, above left, stands among the black-eyed Susans that are just some of the Robinson Nature Center's native plantings. The center has more than a mile of unpaved, wooded trails, above right, and inside, a to-scale map, left, depicts the Chesapeake Bay.

Photos by Maximilian Franz/
The Daily Record



Dr. Andrea Chapdelaine, Hood College's president; Karlys Kline, Top 100 Woman; Donna Wilson, Chesapeake Employers Insurance; Chloe Scott, 2016 Top 100 Women Circle of Excellence Scholarship Winner, and Frederick County Executive Jan Gardner, Top 100 Woman.



Dr. Andrea Chapdelaine invited the audience to learn more about Hood College.



Frederick County Councilwoman Jessica Fitzwater listened to businesswomen share stories about their work.

Big crowd at Hood College welcomed for Path to Excellence networking event

Mark your calendar

The next Path to Excellence networking event will be held on Wednesday Oct. 19, from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. at The Country Club at Woodmore. To RSVP, visit TheDailyRecord.com/path-to-excellence/calendar/.

More than 80 women gathered at Hood College in Frederick on June 20 for The Daily Record's latest Path to Excellence networking event.

"Sometimes in Frederick, we feel we are on the edge of the metropolitan area, so it's good to see everyone here," Frederick County Executive Jan Gardner, a Top 100 Woman and one of the evening's co-hosts, said. Women need opportunities to network, she added, because they "get things done through relationships and working together."

Along with Gardner, the evening's co-hosts were Karlys Kline, Top 100 Woman and founder of the Women's Giving Circle of Frederick County, as well as Dr. Andrea Chapdelaine, president of Hood College, who spoke about the warm community welcome she received when arrived at the school last year.

The three co-hosts selected the Women's Giving Circle as the nonprofit partner for the event, in honor of the group's 10th anniversary. Event attendees brought children's picture books, which the Giving Circle planned to distribute to YMCA Head Start centers in the county.

The evening's reception sponsors were Wells Fargo and Chesapeake Employers Insurance.



Julianna Albowicz and Lori Folmer



Mary Lim-ieng and Annamarie Coughlin



PATH TO EXCELLENCE 2016/2017 PUBLICATION AND NETWORKING SCHEDULE

Don't miss the opportunity to meet successful women across the state of Maryland. The Daily Record will feature women leaders and their passions and personal stories in the Path to Excellence magazine. Numerous times a year we will bring Top 100 Women, Leading Women and business professionals together in different parts of the state to network, build business and mentoring relationships and give back to the community.

Visit TheDailyRecord.com/path-to-excellence to learn more.

October 2016

Publication: Oct. 7

Networking Event:

Prince George's County on
Oct. 19

November 2016

Publication: Nov. 4

Networking Event:

Wicomico County, TBD

January 2017

Publication: Jan. 6

March 2017

Publication: March 3

Networking Event: TBD

May 2017

Publication: May 5

July 2017

Publication: July 7

Networking Event: TBD

September 2017

Publication: Sept. 1

November 2017

Publication: Nov. 3

Networking Event: TBD

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Go to www.TheDailyRecord.com/path-to-excellence for details about the Path to Excellence magazine, to sign up for Path to Excellence news alerts and networking alerts and to read one-of-a-kind content written by and for Maryland's women in business professionals.

To register to attend these free networking events
visit www.TheDailyRecord.com/path-to-excellence/calendar

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5 WOMEN WHO **CHANGED MY LIFE**



LARISSA JOHNSON

Energy Program Manager

Department of Environmental Protection, Montgomery County

Leadership is often defined by key characteristics, in fact, Forbes has a list of 10. When I was chosen for the 2015 Leading Women Award, I took some time to reflect on women who have influenced me throughout my life. I chose the five attributes that have made the biggest impact on my life and aligned them with a woman (or women) who helped shaped who I am today.



Linda McKinley

Mother

Honesty: Most people say their mother is the most influential person in their lives for good reason. My mom is the epitome of a strong woman; she was a working, single mother who graduated from college while raising three kids. She is by far the most honest person I know. She tells people she is a cancer treatment survivor, because it was the healing that was the most challenging. Though that is not the answer they expect, that is the one they get because she is honest and often blunt and to the point. She is whom I go to if I need help with something at work or in my personal life because she is able to be objective, she sees the whole picture, and is honest with her response. It's not always the answer that I want to hear, but I know it is always the right one.

Lisa and Michelle Pilato

Former Dance Teachers

Confidence: Obviously as a dancer, you have to have confidence to get up on a stage and perform. Lisa and Michelle went above and

In each issue of Path to Excellence, we ask one of our Top 100 Women or Leading Women honorees to name five women who have influenced her, personally and professionally. Do you know a Top 100 Woman or Leading Woman who should be featured here? Email Special Products Editor Jessica Gregg at Jessica.Gregg@TheDailyRecord.com.

beyond as teachers to instill in me a strong sense of self confidence and a healthy body image. I was not blessed with perfect feet and the typical dancer body, but they impressed upon me the importance of passion and bringing your whole self to the stage and it is something that I carry with me in everything I do.



Beth Lawrence

Father-Aunt

Optimism: My mother raised me as a single parent until we were lucky enough to have my aunt step into the role I lovingly refer to as father-aunt. My aunt has an infectious laugh and the ability to see the good in all things; she is rarely swayed by negativity and lives her life with tremendous grace

and religious faith. She lives with the realization that no one's cup is half full or half empty, but that our cups are refillable and it is your choice to determine how you want to see your cup. I am so grateful for her perspective because it makes me a better person every day.



Samantha Kappalman

Former Boss and Current Mentor

Communication: As the former communications director for Maryland Department of Environment who is now with the Hatcher Group, Samantha puts

communication is at the forefront of what she does and she is dang good at it, too! She not only taught me the basics of communicating to varied

groups of stakeholders, from the general public to elected officials, but she taught me how to be an authentic speaker, one who doesn't compromise her personal beliefs or her integrity to get the job done. I know that the reason I have such a strong voice in the environmental movement today is a direct result of my relationship with her and I try to summon her whenever I am in tricky situations.



Janet Lawrence

Grandmother

Inspiration: My grandmother instilled in me a passion for travel and following my heart. She didn't write me a letter or sit me down for a conversation, but she led by example and I followed. When my grandfather retired, my grandmother was 20 years younger, but took to the road as they sold everything and moved into their motorhome to travel the country. I was just entering middle school and this had such a profound impact on my life. All I could talk about and wait for was the day I would retire and travel. After my grandfather passed, we realized that there is no time like the present. She encouraged me to travel the country solo for two years and even gifted me with a trip to Peru (my bucket list trip). Without her, I may have lived in the same town for my entire life.

My grandmother instilled in me a passion for travel and following my heart.

She didn't write me a letter or sit me down for a conversation, but

SHE LED BY EXAMPLE AND I FOLLOWED.

Q & A: WHAT WAS YOUR PATH?

Sandi Timmins **Executive Director** **House of Ruth Maryland**



What initially drew you to your current position?

I started as a volunteer on the hotline at the House of Ruth Maryland. Intimate partner violence is an incredibly pervasive issue and there is such reluctance for people to speak out. I wanted to be there to support women who are dealing with this horrifying situation.

I came to understand some of the challenges the agency was facing as it was managing increasingly high demand for services. Believing that I could help, through my professional experience in facilitating and stewarding organizational change, I offered to shift my volunteering time to assist with this. Working with House of Ruth Maryland leadership, I helped design and implement changes to position the organization for the current and future needs of the community. Several years later, when the executive director position opened, I was so invested in the agency

that I couldn't imagine a scenario where I didn't move forward into this position.

What do you like most about your job?

I am in a position to leverage the talent of our staff and our connections in the community to make a difference in the lives of the people we serve. Being a part of bringing together direct services and resources to provide to individuals who are suffering the impacts of abuse is success for me. Equally important is the influence we use, and the programs we create, to change attitudes,

beliefs and systems that allow abuse to continue. I'm proud of the impact House of Ruth Maryland has, and will continue to grow, as we move our community to awareness, support and accountability.

How do you find a way of integrating your passion into your everyday life?

It's not hard as rarely a day goes by that I don't have someone tell me their story of how partner violence impacted their lives. Their mother was abused, they themselves were abused, a daughter, a coworker, a friend. And when those stories are shared, it simply refuels my passion to put an end to this once and for all. In everyday life we have to support the victims, rally the community, and with a strong and steady hand let abusers know that their behavior will never be tolerated.

Describe what role mentoring has played in your career?

While I have not had one person I would consider my mentor, I have been continually influenced by people around me. I greatly respect the experiences of others, and am intentional in seeking diverse perspectives. I try to surround myself with people who know far more than I do, and am not shy about asking their advice.

You've reached the top of your field. Are there goals you are still striving for?

Absolutely! We have some exciting projects coming up and I feel like I'm just getting started! My ultimate goal is to see House of Ruth Maryland become even more integrated in the Baltimore community and increase our role in reducing violence against women.

What advice do you have for other women hoping to follow your same career path?

Be flexible. Be open to unexpected opportunities. I started my career in the newspaper industry and have been fortunate to be able to shift directions that gave me the variety of skills that I needed to do the job that I have now. In this day and age, it's no longer a straight path, but lots of side and twisting paths that make up a successful career.

SANDI TIMMINS

Title: Executive Director

Organization: House of Ruth Maryland

Family Details: Two caring, successful daughters and five amazing grandchildren

Career Details: I began my career in the for-profit sector following a path of managing operations and human resources, established a successful consulting practice, and in an unanticipated way landed in a position of leadership in a nonprofit agency. It's where I was meant to be, but didn't know it as I was establishing my career.

Favorite Book: I prefer novels, and my favorite continually changes based on what I've recently read.

Top Vacation Destination: Anywhere with my grandkids

Hobbies: Travel, photography, cooking

“In this day and age, it's no longer a straight path, but lots of side and twisting paths that make up a successful career.”



FINDING FREEDOM IN DANCING'S RHYTHMS



Dancing has always brought goodness to Kristen Franceschi's life. For starters, she met her husband on the dance floor at a Stanford University party.

She was in law school, he was in engineering school and the party was at Stanford's French house. She spoke French; he is French and taught her his nation's version of the jitterbug.

They kept on dancing. But with careers and kids – Franceschi is a partner with DLA Piper, specializing in public finance – the jitterbug became the thing to do at the occasional wedding. The Sparks resident and her husband would show off the French dance for other guests, who thought their moves were impressive. But that was it.

Then Franceschi, a former basketball player and an avid runner, hurt her knee,

had to have surgery and “never felt the same.” For Christmas, her husband and daughter gave her four weeks of dance lessons and once again dancing returned to her life.

“It makes me feel alive. I absolutely love what I do professionally and I am very good at it – I wouldn't want to be a professional dancer,” Franceschi admitted. Dancing, however, is liberating. “I just get out there and dance and smile.”

Franceschi does compete, usually in several competitions year.

“Ironically this is a sport where you have more competition in the older categories,” she said, mostly because empty nesters have the means and the time to travel to competitions.

To ready, she practices three to four times a week at the Atlantic Ballroom in Towson. When she gets the chance, she also trains with Mazen Hamza, a well-known competitor, who dances at the Stardust Ballroom in Bellmawr, New Jersey. That's right, New Jersey – Franceschi drives close to two hours to dance.

“He's just so awesome, beyond belief,” Franceschi said. “If I can have a lesson in New Jersey, I get in the car and go.”

But there's more to her dancing than just a passion to move. Five years ago, Franceschi was diagnosed with colon cancer that later metastasized in her lungs. Five weeks after lung surgery, Franceschi and her partner, John Carey, competed in nationals, which were held in Baltimore, and won at the silver level and placed second at gold, or top level, for her age group.

“You can imagine how happy my surgeon was to hear that I was competing,” Franceschi said with some sarcasm. “(But) I was a woman on a mission. I wasn't going to give up the thing I wanted to do.”

Since her diagnosis, Franceschi has endured three years of chemotherapy, two years of lung surgeries and experimental naturopathic treatment. And dance competitions. In fact, Franceschi will compete again this month. Cancer is a “miserable journey,” she admitted. Work has helped, but dancing “let me be free and it has kept me alive,” she said.

Me Time is a regular feature that shares the ways our readers recharge when they are not at work. Are you a Top 100 Woman or Leading Woman with an interesting hobby? Send your Me Time story to our special products editor Jessica Gregg at Jessica.Gregg@TheDailyRecord.com

MOVERS & SHAKERS

Each issue of Path to Excellence features women on the move. Please share your promotions, new positions and other professional milestones at thedailyrecord.com/movers.



Tracey Jackson |
ATLANTIC FEDERAL

Tracey Jackson has been named vice president of finance with Hunt Valley-headquartered Atlantic Financial Federal Credit Union. Jackson brings vast credit union experience with her after spending the past 11 years in various finance positions with MECU of Baltimore Inc. Jackson will lead AFFCU's finance and accounting team and is tasked with maintaining the credit union's strong financial stability as it pursues dynamic growth strategies.



Gina Zuk Gerber | ABEL COMMUNICATIONS

Gina Zuk Gerber, who has been with Abel Communications for almost six years, was recently promoted to senior vice president. In this new role, Gerber will focus on running the day-to-day operations at the firm and manage Abel's growing team of account managers. During her time at the company, Gerber has worked with a range of clients providing exceptional content development, strategic planning, and media relations services. She has helped Abel

Communications grow from five accounts and two employees to more than 20 accounts and 13 employees, with the addition of high profile Baltimore-based accounts such as STX and Medifast. Prior to joining Abel Communications, Gerber worked in marketing & communications positions at a Fortune 500 bank and national non-profit organization. Gerber, a graduate of Towson University, is the current president of the Baltimore Public Relations Council, the oldest public relations organization in Baltimore.



Pamela Gilmour |
FINANCIAL FITNESS

Pamela Gilmour, founder and CEO of Financial Fitness, was elected vice president of the Alzheimer's Association Greater Maryland Chapter board of directors. Sharing a mission connection with the non-profit, she also has run half marathons, raising more than \$32,000. A member of the Kennedy Krieger planned giving committee and the Towson Chamber of Commerce board of directors, Gilmour has served on the Women in Insurance and Financial Services national board, growing the organization to more than 1,000 members and helping launch several new chap-

ters. Recognized in the industry and the community, Gilmour was named National Association of Women Business Owners-Baltimore Chapter's Woman of the Year and featured in Financial Services – Women at the Top. The Bucknell University alumna earned CPA, CASL, CFP, CLU and ChFC certifications.



Kimberly A. Saunders |
U. OF MD. SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK

Kimberly A. Saunders, PhD, MS has been named assistant dean of admissions with the University of Maryland School of Social Work. Saunders will focus on recruiting diverse, qualified and committed students to the Master's of Social Work program. Prior to her arrival, she served as the executive director of Pre-College and TRIO Student Success Programs, and director of the McNair and University Undergraduate Scholars Program at the University of Delaware. She also previously served as the director of the Student Diversity Office, and the Diversity Summer Internship Program at the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health. She received a Master's of Science degree from Shippensburg University and a doctorate in higher education administration from George Mason University.

UNIVERSITY of MARYLAND, BALTIMORE



THE UMBRELLA GROUP at the University of Maryland, Baltimore helps women to achieve their potential, find their voices, and feel empowered in the workplace. We work to engage a community who supports the advancement of women into leadership roles and who champions women at all levels.

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Who Reads the Record?

Diane Bell-McKoy

CEO, Associated Black Charities

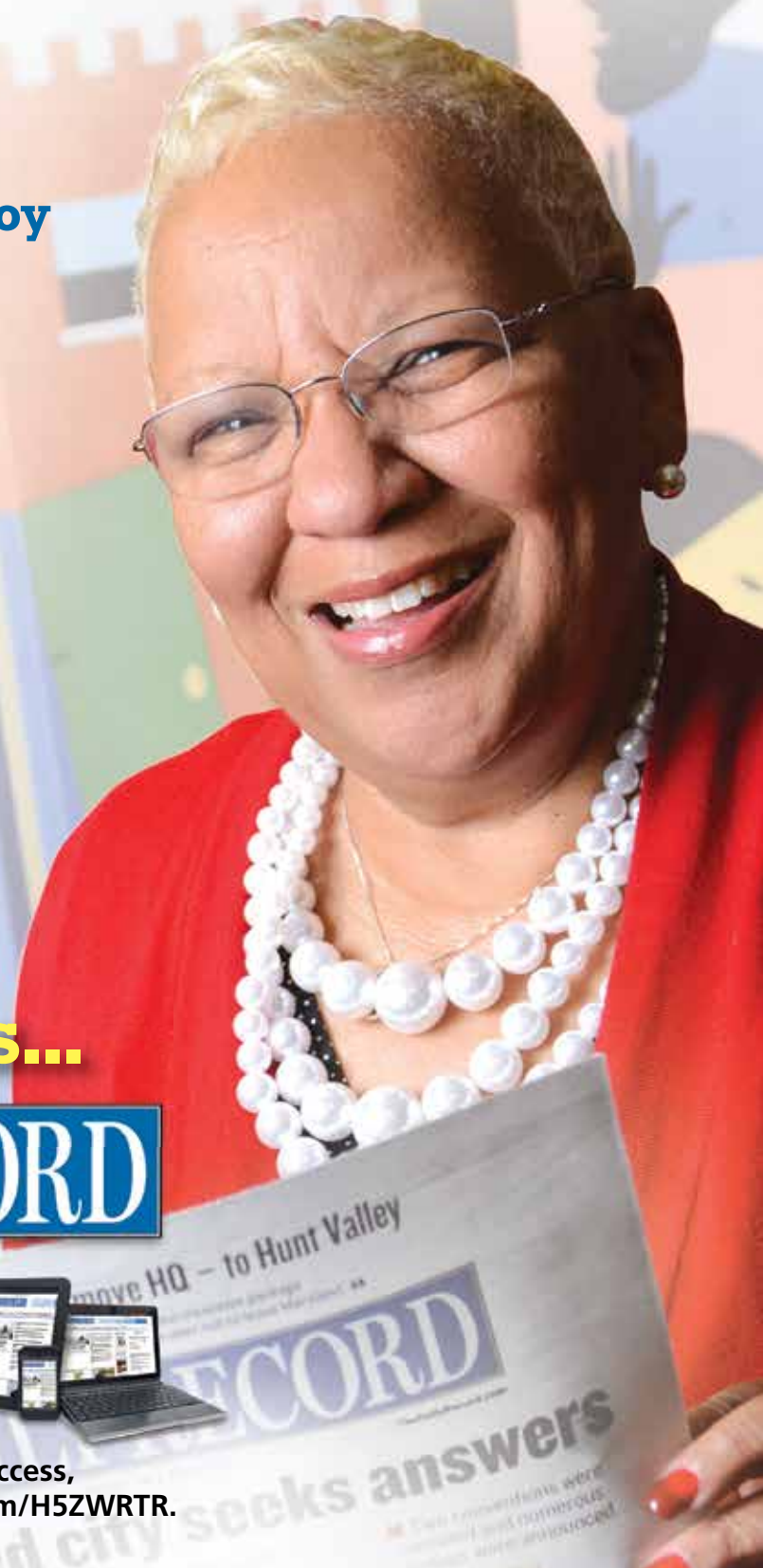
“The Daily Record provides me with a much needed perspective critical to accomplishing Associated Black Charities’ goal of closing the economic divides in the city of Baltimore.”

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2016-2017 AWARD EVENTS



THE DAILY RECORD



August 25, 2016

The Pier 5 Hotel | 5:30pm

The VIP List recognizes Maryland's leaders who are 40 years old or younger based on their professional accomplishments, community service and a commitment to inspiring change.



September 22, 2016

BWI Hilton | 5:30pm

Most Admired CEOs honors talented business CEOs and nonprofit executive directors whose leadership and vision are admired by those around them. Winners are selected based on professional accomplishments, community service and the letters of reference submitted by coworkers, board members and community leaders showing the CEO's leadership and vision.



October 13, 2016

American Visionary Art Museum | 5:30pm

Innovator of the Year shines a light on the individuals and companies who have created new products, services or programs that have had a positive effect on their business, industry or the community.



December 5, 2016

The Annapolis Westin | 5:30pm

Leading Women celebrates women who are 40 years old or younger for the tremendous accomplishments they have made so far in their careers. They are selected based on professional community involvement and a commitment to inspiring change.



March 23, 2017

Grand Lodge of Maryland | 5:30pm

Influential Marylanders honors individuals who have made significant impacts in their field and continue to be leaders in Maryland. Selections are made by The Daily Record's editors for extraordinary contributions in the following areas: Civic leadership, communications, education, finance, freestyle, general business, health care, law, philanthropy, real estate and technology.

MARYLAND'S



April 24, 2017

Meyerhoff Symphony Hall | 4:30pm

Maryland's Top 100 Women recognizes high-achieving Maryland women who are making an impact through their leadership, community service and mentoring. Three-time winners are inducted into the Circle of Excellence.



May 11, 2017

BWI Hilton | 5:30pm

Leadership in Law recognizes Maryland's legal professionals – lawyers and judges – whose dedication to their occupation and to their communities is outstanding. This event also honors up-and-coming lawyers through the Generation JD award and identifies exemplary careers through the Lifetime Achievement Award.



June 28, 2017

Gertrude's at the Baltimore Museum of Art | 5:30pm

20 in Their Twenties honors Maryland's up-and-comers who are in their 20s. Honorees are chosen on the basis of professional accomplishment, civic involvement and impact of achievement. The program celebrates the best and brightest under 30.

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