



**Michelle Daugherty Siri, Esq.**

Michelle Daugherty Siri is the Executive Director of the Maryland Legal Services Corporation, the state's largest funder of civil legal aid. Established in 1982 by the legislature, MLSC's mission is to ensure low-income Marylanders have access to stable, efficient and effective civil legal assistance through the distribution of funds to nonprofit legal services organizations. Through this role, she sits on the Access to Justice Commission and the Attorney General's Access to Counsel in Evictions Task Force. Ms. Siri brings over two decades of experience as an attorney and advocate, as well as the perspective of having been an MLSC grantee, to her new role.

A first generation Iranian-American, she moved to Baltimore in 1999 and obtained her J.D., with honors, from the University of Maryland Carey School of Law in 2002. After practicing in the private sector for five years, and the public sector for seven years advising the Department of Juvenile Services in the areas of labor and employment law as an Assistant Attorney General, she transitioned out of the daily practice of law. Following her passion for fighting for justice she spent nearly nine years as the Executive Director of the Women's Law Center of Maryland ("WLC"), a statewide nonprofit dedicated to ensuring the physical safety, economic security, and bodily autonomy of women across Maryland just prior to joining MLSC.

In 2022, Ms. Siri undertook her first official foray into politics when she was asked to serve as running mate for gubernatorial candidate, and former U.S. Secretary of Education, John King. While the campaign was ultimately not successful, the experiences and knowledge gained have been invaluable.

In addition to her professional career, Ms. Siri spends much of her free time supporting the community through a variety of local and statewide organizations. In 2021 she was appointed to the Maryland Equal Pay Commission and in 2023 was elected to the Maryland State Bar Association's Board of Governors. A past President of the University of Maryland Carey School

of Law Alumni Board, the Board of Planned Parenthood of Maryland, and the Board of the Maryland Legislative Agenda for Women, she also served as the Vice President of the Board for the Maryland Network Against Domestic Violence. She is currently a member of the Executive Council for the Baltimore County Bar Association and the Maryland Bar Foundation Board of Directors. A founding member of the Marylanders for Reproductive Choice coalition, Ms. Siri is helping to lead the current movement to establish reproductive freedom as a constitutional right in Maryland.

A Fellow of the Public Policy Conflict Resolution Program, the Maryland Bar Foundation, and the Towson University Professional Leadership for Women, as well as an active member of Executive Alliance, Ms. Siri firmly believes in the role of women uplifting other women through mentorship and networking. Most recently, she was part of a cadre of women attorneys who established The Riveters, Maryland's first law club dedicated to uplifting women in the law. She has been awarded The Women's Bar Association's Rita C. Davidson Award, the Baltimore County Bar Association's Judith P. Ritchey Award, the Daily Record's Leadership in the Law award, and is a member of the Daily Record's Circle of Excellence for having been named three times to Maryland's Top 100 Women.

She currently lives in Baltimore County with her husband, two teenage sons, and two rescue dogs. In her spare time, when not at a swim meet or soccer game, she loves to bake anything from cupcakes and cookies to profiteroles and pies. In order to maintain that hobby and her health, she is also an avid runner, having completed 18 half-marathons, one full marathon, and 5 triathlons. She is frequently found planning her next opportunity to travel and attend live music shows.



**Monique Ashton**  
**Rockville Mayor**

Monique Ashton, MPH, is the Mayor of the City of Rockville. Monique is also President of the Montgomery Chapter of the Maryland Municipal League and District 5 Vice President at the state level. She is a liaison to the Environment Commission and Rockville Housing Enterprises, as well as the Council of Governments Climate Energy & Environment Policy Committee.

Professionally, Monique is an Executive Vice President, bringing her business expertise to work for the city. In this executive role, Monique has helped launch biotech businesses, planned national award-winning health initiatives, and advanced efforts to address disparities in health. She has also worked to expand small business innovation research efforts at several NIH Institutes and Centers.

Monique is a civil servant who actively works to create inclusive economic opportunities for everyone in the Rockville community. Monique has expanded access to affordable and attainable housing, accelerated Rockville Environment and Climate Action initiatives, supported greater Vision Zero public safety, greater small business outreach and economic development, and advanced equity and inclusion efforts within the City of Rockville. She has also fostered support for the public servants who serve the city, leading an effort to develop the City's first parental leave program. She has been a strong advocate for critical projects to expand access to services for youth, seniors, and unrepresented Rockville residents.

Monique is a fiscally focused civil leader – she successfully negotiated with the County Executive's office and County Council, culminating with the passage of the Expedited Bill 2-22, Montgomery County Municipal Revenue Program (Tax Duplication), which helped bring millions of dollars back to municipalities. In FY25, this victory will bring \$8M back to the City of Rockville and each year thereafter.

Prior to being on Council, Monique was a MCCPTA Cluster Coordinator representing 7 schools in Rockville and has led and helped develop several local PTAs. She planned community program activities and helped successfully advocate for the development of a new Bayard Rustin Elementary School. She served on the boundary study and school naming principal selection committees and worked closely with school administrators. She led the effort to develop the City's first Education Commission.

In her professional career, she previously worked for the US Surgeon General, HHS Office of Minority Health, Office of Global Health Affairs, and CMD Region II. She is a graduate of NYU and George Washington University, where she was inducted into the Delta Omega Honor Society. Monique also has a certificate in Health Care Reform from the University of Western Cape, South Africa. She was honored to serve as a Presidential Management Fellow and received multiple awards for her work. Monique serves on the advisory board of the Maryland Women's Business Center. She has two children and is married to a partner who also focuses on living a purpose-driven life.



**Ashlie T. Bagwell**

An experienced lobbyist, Ashlie T. Bagwell joined Harris Jones Malone (HJM) in 2013 after spending the previous decade as a government relations professional in Annapolis and throughout Maryland. Bagwell's vast experience and excellent reputation among Maryland legislators and government officials are invaluable assets to HJM and its clients.

Before joining the team, Bagwell worked six years as a Government Relations Consultant at an Annapolis lobbying firm. In that position, Bagwell represented many diverse clients, including many companies and organizations headquartered or located in Montgomery County.

Bagwell boasts an impressive record of accomplishments on behalf of her clients. She attributes much of her success to her ability to work closely with clients to develop a strategic plan of action based on that client's specific short-term and long-term goals. Bagwell takes great pride in her ability to quickly become well-versed in clients' issues. As appropriate, she works closely with other stakeholder groups to build consensus and, when necessary, reach a compromise. She regularly attends meetings of various boards, task forces, and workgroups, representing her clients and their interests.

Bagwell is proud of the successes that she has achieved on behalf of clients, often prevailing under the most challenging of circumstances. One such success story involves HJM's work on behalf of the Maryland Medical Dispensary Association (MDMDA). Bagwell coordinated a multi-year effort to establish tax parity, at least at the state level, for medical cannabis licensees. Because medical cannabis businesses are illegal under federal law, they cannot write off business expenses like other businesses. This is particularly burdensome for medical dispensaries. In the final days of the 2022 General Assembly session, legislators amended a larger, cannabis-related bill by including language that addressed this issue, known as 280e. While this does not completely solve medical cannabis licensee's tax predicament as it relates to 280e, it does provide some much needed relief.

In 2021, Bagwell led a local effort to expand wireless coverage and capacity in Montgomery County by passing a zoning text amendment that established a regulatory framework for small cells. This heavily debated zoning text amendment focused on residential areas in the County, which proved far more controversial than the previously passed zoning text amendment for commercial areas. Nevertheless, Bagwell was successful in moving forward this measure because she was able to help craft a message and a strategy that resonated with stakeholders and Councilmembers.

Throughout her career, Bagwell has built strong relationships with members of the Maryland General Assembly, as well as legislators and agency representatives in county and local governments throughout the state. Over the years, she has built particularly solid relationships with elected officials, policymakers, and community members in Montgomery County, making her an asset to HJM clients with issues before the Montgomery County Council or the Montgomery County Delegation. Her versatility has allowed her to represent clients seamlessly in a wide range of policy areas.

Bagwell contributes her time to public policy issues specifically relating to matters that affect girls and women. Through the years, she has served as the Advocacy Program Director for Maryland Girls' State, the Chair of Planned Parenthood Advocates of DC, Maryland and NoVa, and as a Member of the Board of Directors for the Planned Parenthood of Metro Washington DC Action Fund. In addition, Bagwell serves as a mentor with Leadership Montgomery Emerging Leaders and member of NARAL Pro-Choice Maryland.

In 2022, Bagwell received the "Community Service Award" from the Maryland Government Relations Association. She was named one of Daily Record's "Leading Women" and in 2004 she was a recipient of the Women Information Network's "Women of Achievement" award.

Ashlie T. Bagwell earned her Bachelor of Arts and Master's Degree in Public Health from the University of South Carolina. The combination of Bagwell's extensive knowledge and education makes her an outstanding advocate for her clients.



**Laurie-Anne Sayles**  
**Montgomery County Council**

Laurie-Anne Sayles is a change agent, a policymaker, and an advocate who believes you can achieve any goals you set for yourself if you work hard. This life has afforded her many opportunities to overcome challenging situations and use her life experiences to fuel a steadfast commitment to helping others who are less fortunate. She has fought for expanded access to early childhood education, a \$15 minimum wage, a cleaner, safer, healthier environment, equal rights, and immigration reform, just to name a few.

Elected in 2017, Laurie-Anne made history, becoming the first African American councilmember in Gaithersburg, and she has hit the ground running ever since.

In the National League of Cities, she chairs its Community and Economic Development Committee and serves on its Board of Directors. She also served on its Transportation and Infrastructure Services Committee and two of its constituency groups - twice on the National Black Caucus of Local Elected Officials as Region 3 Director, and Second Vice Chair of Women in Municipal Government. She was the 2020 WIMG Leadership Award winner.

Recognized for her substantial community involvement and advocacy for increased female representation in public service, Laurie-Anne was awarded the 2018 Daily Record Top 100 Women in Maryland award.

Laurie-Anne also chairs the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments' Chesapeake Bay & Water Resources Policy Committee and serves on the Board of Directors of the Maryland Municipal League (MML), and is a member of its Legislative Committee.

Laurie-Anne Sayles was born and raised in Maryland and is the youngest of six children to Hilda and Perry Sayles. Her parents immigrated from Jamaica in search of the American dream and instilled a value of service, advocacy, and compassion, which has shaped her political and professional career.

Laurie-Anne currently lives in Gaithersburg and has a daughter, Mikayla, who is a Montgomery County Public School and University of Maryland, College Park, School of Communications graduate. During her free time, she enjoys hiking the Muddy Branch trails in Gaithersburg, supporting small businesses across the county, and volunteering wherever she is needed to fulfill her passion for helping others.

## **Career**

With over a decade of a career in public service, Laurie-Anne has shaped local, regional, and national policy; promoted educational and health equity; advocated for environmental protection; and encouraged thousands in voting, campaigns, and other parts of the political process.

Throughout her career in public health, Laurie-Anne has advocated for health equity and access to care. Professionally, she previously served as a senior consultant with the U.S. Food and Drug Administration, working to ensure the manufacture and distribution of effective and safe drugs, treatments, practices, and medical products for all residents in the United States. She has also worked as a Paraeducator and Substitute Teacher with MCPS and Senior Project Manager in consultation with the Nature Conservancy and the National Institutes of Health.

## **Education**

Laurie-Anne earned her: Bachelor of Science in Public Health from the University of Maryland, College Park, and a Master of Public Administration from the University of Baltimore School of Public Administration, where she received a graduate fellowship to hone her policy making skills at the Schaeffer Center for Public Policy.





**Kate Stewart**  
**Vice President, Montgomery County Council**

Kate Stewart was elected to serve Montgomery County's fourth council district in November 2022, representing North Bethesda, Kensington, Garrett Park, Takoma Park, Silver Spring, and parts of Chevy Chase. She was elected by her peers to serve as the Vice President of the Council through December 2024 and is the chair of the Government Operations and Fiscal Policy and Audit committees. Kate also serves on the Council's Transportation and Environment committee. Kate also held the position of Chair of the Board of Directors for the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (COG) for 2023.

On the Council, Kate has led efforts on pivotal issues such as fiscal responsibility, housing affordability, economic development, and ensuring healthcare access for the LGBTQ+ community. At the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments, she has driven efforts for electric vehicle infrastructure, secured additional resources to address chronic homelessness, and convened regional leaders to close WMATA's budget gaps.

Prior to joining the County Council, Kate served as the Mayor of Takoma Park for seven years. Kate and her husband Jon have been residents of Montgomery County for nearly 30 years, where they raised two children, Jamie and Bridget, both Montgomery County Public School graduates.