

MONTGOMERY COUNTY
COMMISSION FOR WOMEN

WLB
Women's Legislative Briefing

2024



Arlinda J. Clark, Esq.

Arlinda J. Clark, Esq. has been a resident of Montgomery County for more than ten years. Her affinity toward enhancing the lives of others and addressing social action matters led her to develop several programs to address diversity and other social issues within Montgomery County on behalf of Zeta Phi Beta Sorority, Incorporated – Eta Pi Zeta Chapter, a community-conscious, action-oriented, non-profit organization. Arlinda served in several leadership positions within Zeta Phi Beta Sorority, Incorporated to include providing legal services on behalf of the National Legal Advisory Council, leading the state as a State Director of Pennsylvania and Parliamentarian for the State of Maryland, and providing her expertise through several local positions and chairmanships. Arlinda is also a member of the National Association of Parliamentarians.

Professionally, Arlinda is a corporate regulatory and compliance attorney with responsibilities that require her to plan, advise, execute, and monitor various regulatory and technology matters. She received her Juris Doctor degree from Pennsylvania State Dickinson School of Law and her Bachelor's degree in Business Administration from the University of Central Missouri. She is admitted to practice law in Washington, D.C. and Pennsylvania. Arlinda's professional affiliations led her to assist the Pennsylvania Securities Commission as a former member of the Advisory Council. She currently serves on the Legal Ministry and Social Action Committee for her church. Arlinda resides in Silver Spring, MD.



Dr. Anne Khademian

Dr. Anne Khademian was named to serve as the Universities at Shady Grove's third executive director in October 2020, following a nationwide search and her appointment to the post by Dr. Jay Perman, Chancellor of the University System of Maryland. As executive director of USG – a regional higher education center of USM in Montgomery County, with programs from nine universities on one campus – Dr. Khademian also holds the title of Associate Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs for USM.

Before joining USG, Dr. Khademian served most recently as a Presidential Fellow and professor at Virginia Tech, where she enjoyed a stellar 17-year career that included several years as director of the School of Public and International Affairs. A longtime resident of Montgomery County, Maryland, she served in her presidential fellowship in Virginia Tech's Research Center in Arlington, near Washington, D.C. In that capacity, she supported the collaborative implementation of "Beyond Boundaries" initiatives, working across the university's campuses and stakeholder committees to support organizational innovation and growth.

With nearly three decades of experience in higher education, Dr. Khademian is a nationally recognized scholar and author in the areas of inclusive leadership and organizational change. As director of the School of Public and International Affairs in Virginia Tech's College of Architecture and Urban Studies for seven years, she led the school through a period of significant growth and transformation, including the introduction of new academic degrees and programs;

increased student enrollment; new faculty hires; forging of new global partnerships and initiatives; and extended outreach into the local community.

Dr. Khademian's research focuses on leadership and organizational culture, inclusive management, policy networks, and the work of organizations involved in homeland security and financial regulation. She is the author of three books: *Working with Culture: The Way the Job Gets Done in Public Programs* (CQ Press, 2002); *Checking on Banks: Autonomy and Accountability in Three Federal Agencies* (Brookings, 1996); and *The SEC and Capital Market Regulation: The Politics of Expertise* (University of Pittsburgh Press 1992). She has also published numerous articles on public management and public policy.

Dr. Khademian is a fellow of the National Academy of Public Administration, an independent, nonprofit, and nonpartisan organization established by Congress to assist government leaders in building more-effective, efficient, accountable, and transparent organizations.

As part of her leadership in the community, Dr. Khademian serves on the boards of both the Montgomery County Chamber of Commerce and the Montgomery County Economic Development Corporation. She is also on the Board of Directors for the American Red Cross, National Capital Region for the Montgomery, Howard and Frederick Counties Chapter and the Board of Directors for Smart City Works. In addition, she is a member of the Leadership Montgomery CORE Class of 2023.

Dr. Khademian holds a B.A. in Political Science and a Master of Public Administration from Michigan State University, and a Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) in Political Science and Government from Washington University in St. Louis, Missouri. She was a cross country and track star while at Michigan State and in 2016 she was inducted into the university's Athletic Hall of Fame.

Dr. Khademian also hosts a video podcast series called "**This is USG**" and an audio podcast entitled "**AKA Innovation**," which showcases innovative leadership and business practices that can help to drive transformation and innovation in education.



Isabel Argoti

Isabel Argoti is a first-generation professional with proud roots from Ecuador. She holds a strong passion for developing youth programs, helping first-generation students, advocating for women and girls, and continuing her local involvement in Montgomery County, Maryland, where she grew up. Isabel is a community connector using her lived experiences and creative talents to strengthen community programs and services. She is currently the Deputy Director of Programs at Community Bridges, Inc. -- a leadership and empowerment organization for MCPS girls grades 4-12 and beyond. Previously, Isabel worked at the National Park Service and U.S. Department of Interior managing the Every Kid in a Park program. She established the Career Mentoring Initiative at Collegiate Directions Inc. In 2022, she was awarded the Rising Star Award from the Montgomery County Business & Professional Women. Currently, Isabel serves on the Montgomery County Commission for Women, is a Board Member for AMP Global Youth, is Vice President for FlanCake by Gaby, a family-run business. Isabel graduated from the University of Virginia with a B.S. in Architecture and earned her Nonprofit Management Executive Certificate from Georgetown University. In her free time, Isabel enjoys spending time with her family, crafting graphic designs, and enjoying some good coffee!



Jodi Danis

Jodi Danis has been a Montgomery County resident for 18 years, and an advocate for women and girls for over three decades. She is an attorney whose long career of public service has included enforcing federal civil rights laws to protect women from sex discrimination and sexual harassment in state and local government workplaces, such as fire departments, police departments and schools. Jodi also has advocated on behalf of reservists in the uniformed services and individuals with disabilities. She currently protects the rights of work-authorized immigrants and other workers to obtain and keep their jobs without facing unnecessary hurdles based on their citizenship status or national origin.

Jodi started her advocacy on behalf of women and girls as a college student at the University of Pennsylvania. She spent two summers as an intern at the then-New Jersey Commission on Sex Discrimination in the Statutes, where she researched and organized a public hearing on sex discrimination in the health care field. As a law student at Harvard Law School, Jodi served as a victim witness advocate with the Battered Women's Advocacy Program, and as an editor of the *Harvard Women's Law Journal*. After completing a federal appellate clerkship in Arizona, Jodi was an associate at Arnold & Porter, and served as an appellate attorney in the Office of General of the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission.

Jodi and her two sons have volunteered with the Tacy Foundation for over six years, supporting that organization's mission of empowering children and teens in the DMV area to share hope with hospital patients, senior citizens, and disadvantaged youth through the power of music. She has served as a site supervisor to facilitate student musical performances at senior citizen residences and rehabilitation centers in the County. Jodi has also served as the MCCPTA Liaison for the PTA of Burning Tree Elementary School. Jodi grew up in New Jersey and lived in Washington, D.C. before moving to Montgomery County.



Patricia Prather

K. Patricia Prather is an extraordinary change agent in the marketplace. Her passion to strategically create camaraderie between diverse stakeholders for the purpose of one common goal is beyond amazing. One of her greatest passions is working as a motivational advocate for the youth for over 20 years. As a resourceful bridge builder, she has an ardent love for community outreach, especially to the recovery community and persons experiencing homelessness.

Pat or Patricia as she is fondly called by her peers and colleagues, is a gifted and influential leader in her community. She is very compassionate about working with the youth in Montgomery County. She is an invaluable and influential mentor to many youths throughout Montgomery County, especially her young ladies and it is important to her to meet them where they are! Before Covid, she facilitated a recovery bible study at the local detention center and offers grief support to mothers that have lost their youth to gun violence or to the streets. Patricia is passionate about healing after a loss, she leads a monthly grief encouragement group at a women's treatment center in Baltimore, Md.

The STYLES girls mentoring group was recognized by Governor Wes Moore and the Baltimore Ravens for their outstanding gift of kindness in the community. She recently won the outstanding employee award for her commitment to reducing the number of lives lost to addiction. She led the Harm Reduction team at Montgomery County Coalition for the Homeless to become the first shelter in the state of Maryland to be recognized as an Overdose Response Program. In 2019,

Patricia was one of the two African American finalists to receive the March of Dimes Heroines of Washington award.

Patricia is a new and evolving author, penning her first autobiography entitled, “Healing the Little Girl Within” which will be released in 2024. She was educated in Montgomery County, Maryland Public Schools. Studied Psychology at Liberty University; Youth Development at Montgomery Community

College; Non-profit Management at Duke University and Community Advocacy at Montgomery County Community Action. Pat is a Montgomery County native, residing in Rockville, MD. She is the mother of two beautiful daughters, grandmother of seven and great grandmother of one.

“Wisdom is her strength. Faith and prayer are her weapons!” ~ K. Patricia Prather

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Sami Saeed

Mr. Sami Saeed was elected to serve a one-year term on the Board by middle and high school students of Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS).

He is currently a senior at Richard Montgomery High School. Before becoming Student Member of the Board, he served as a Policy Research Associate on Arvin Kim's SMOB Advisory Cabinet. Mr. Saeed was also the former Class SGA President during his Sophomore year and the School-Wide SGA President during his junior year. He was a member of the Richard Montgomery Public forum debate league during his Freshman and Sophomore years, where he and his partner won first place in their league. He also wrote for the Richard Montgomery Tide and the MOCO student during his Sophomore year, covering topics that ranged from mental health to social media. Mr. Saeed also served a one-year term as a Commissioner for the Montgomery County Commission on Youth and Children, where he advocated for financial literacy and nutrition education. As well as being involved in School and County-wide leadership, he is also a certified workshop presenter for the Maryland Association of Student Councils.

Mr. Saeed serves as a member of the Board's Policy Management Committee and the Board's Communication and Stakeholder Engagement Committee.



Brooke Lierman
Maryland Comptroller

Brooke Lierman is the 34th Comptroller of the state of Maryland and the first woman to be independently elected to one of our state's constitutional offices. After running a strong, policy-focused and grassroots-led two-year campaign, she was elected with over 60% of the vote in November 2022. She is an attorney by training, practicing as a civil rights and disability rights lawyer for many years, and prior to her election as Comptroller, she served for 8 years a member of the House of Delegates representing part of Baltimore City. While in the House, she spent time in leadership roles on both the Appropriations Committee and the Environment and Transportation Committee. Additionally, she was the House Chair for the Joint Committee on Pensions, sat on the Joint Committee on Ending Homelessness, and founded the Maryland Transit Caucus. Brooke successfully passed landmark legislation to invest in and improve public transit and public schools; prohibit the suspension and expulsion of young students; fund evidence-based gun violence prevention programs; aid sex trafficking victims; close loopholes in affordable housing laws, and create the office of statewide broadband. As Comptroller, she is dedicated to creating a Maryland that is more equitable, more resilient, and more prosperous so that all Marylanders can reach their full potential. She and her husband and two school-age children live in Baltimore City.



Marc Elrich
County Executive, Montgomery County

Marc Elrich was elected as Montgomery County Executive on Nov. 6, 2018. He had previously served three terms (12 years) on the Montgomery County Council as an at-large member, being first elected in 2006. He served as a Councilmember on the Takoma Park City Council from 1987-2006. For 17 years, he was a teacher at Rolling Terrace Elementary School in Takoma Park.

As a County Councilmember, he was the chief sponsor of several landmark pieces of legislation and programs. He led the successful effort to increase the Montgomery County minimum wage in coordination with surrounding jurisdictions to \$11.50 an hour and subsequent legislation that will eventually increase the minimum wage to \$15 an hour. He was the first elected official to propose building a Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) system throughout the County to address Montgomery's transportation and environmental problems. Ground was broken in Fall 2018 for the first BRT line, which will run along Route 29.

Throughout his political career, he has been a champion of improving tenants' rights and for making developers pay for a greater share of the infrastructure cost to build schools and transportation solutions. He was a leader in the fight to preserve Ten Mile Creek in the Clarksburg area by limiting the proposed development that would have threatened the health of Montgomery County's last best stream which flows into the County's backup water reservoir.

Personal Background

Marc was born in Washington, D.C., and moved to Montgomery County at a young age. He attended McKenney Hills Elementary School, Montgomery Hills Junior High School and Einstein High School. After attending the University of Maryland, he and his wife raised their family in Takoma Park: daughter Jamie and sons Josh, Dougie and John. John and Dougie, who they fostered, have Down syndrome. John, now 52, still lives with Marc. Jamie, her husband Victor and their children live around the corner from Marc—in a house he built.

Getting Involved in Politics

Marc says his observation of racial injustice is a large part of what motivated him to get involved in politics. Growing up, he witnessed "blockbusting" firsthand when a real estate agent came to his door to talk to his mother. "The idea that my mother was being told that black families moving into a neighborhood would depress the property values and destroy the neighborhood sounded wrong to me then," said Marc.

By 1958 at the age of 9, Marc said most of his friends were black. He had the growing realization that they were not treated the same way he was and did not have the same opportunities he had. He participated in Dr. King's March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom and got involved in the civil rights movement. As a student at the University of Maryland, he worked to desegregate the campus bookstore, College Park businesses and local apartments. He also got actively involved in the Vietnam anti-war movement.

He started doing community and tenant organizing in Montgomery County around 1980. In the 1990s he was active in numerous resident efforts for more responsible land-use policies, including the fights to prevent three mall projects from being built in downtown Silver Spring. He advocated for the alternative of build street-facing, street activating retail, which essentially was what was finally built there. "I ran for elected office because I thought I could make more of an impact on these and other issues in more systemic ways than I could ever make given three minutes to testify in front of a microphone," he said.

Achievements as a County Executive

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County Executive Elrich has been focused on an overarching vision of making Montgomery County a more equitable and inclusive place to live and work. Since becoming County Executive

he has launched the Early Care Initiative – to provide more access to pre-k education to help improve kindergarten readiness, signed the landmark Racial Equity and Social Justice Bill, making Montgomery County the first County in Maryland to do so, launched our 4Business Initiative, opened small business resource centers around the county, and reformed our procurement process adding a preference for local business and making it more transparent and user-friendly, including the “Solicitation Tracker” – which allows people to check the status of any solicitation throughout the process. He has also undertaken an extensive process to engage residents and experts in addressing climate change. More recently, he has begun a Reimagining Public Safety task force with a diverse group of community members. Since March he has been addressing the pandemic and the many consequences for businesses, residents and workers.

Experience as an Elected Official and Teacher

Marc was first elected to the Takoma Park City Council in 1987 and served until 2006, when he was first elected to the County Council. As part of the Takoma Park Council, he was involved in immigrant rights, sanctuary legislation, strengthening the city's rent stabilization law, passing a law recognizing domestic partnerships, creating day laborer sites and introducing and passing resolutions opposing both Iraq wars.

From 1989 to 2006, he also taught at Rolling Terrace Elementary School in Takoma Park, one of the highest-poverty public schools in Montgomery County. While teaching, he also attended Johns Hopkins University where he earned a Master's in Teaching. He taught fourth grade for 14 years and fifth grade for three years.

"My experience teaching was what reinforced to me that, if we really want to close the opportunity gap and help kids succeed, we need to address the destabilizing impacts of poverty," said Marc. "Kids experience stress when they don't know where they are going to live the next month, and it is really hard to ask a kid whose stomach hurts on Monday morning because he or she has not eaten a hot meal since Friday lunch to focus on school. I have seen firsthand how helping families economically can have a major impact on kids' lives."



Andrew Friedson
President, Montgomery County Council

Andrew Friedson is the District 1 Councilmember proudly representing Bethesda, Chevy Chase, and Potomac in Montgomery County, Maryland for his second term. Andrew was elected in 2018 as the youngest Councilmember in Montgomery County history and continues to make history as the youngest ever Council Vice President. He continues to serve the only place he has ever called home. He chairs the Planning, Housing, & Parks (PH) Committee and serves on the Government Operations & Fiscal Policy (GO) Committee.

Councilmember Friedson established a \$100 million revolving Housing Production Fund and spearheaded legislation to incentivize smart growth housing near transit. He co-authored the County's largest-ever climate investment with the Montgomery County Green Buildings Now Act and sponsored legislation to provide guaranteed paid parental leave for County employees. He has been a consistent advocate for transparency in County government and has led efforts to strengthen financial oversight and the County ethics law, improve the budget process, and reform the County's property tax system. He is a leader for working families and sponsored the Paid Parental Leave and Right to Nourish bills to make sure Montgomery County continues to attract and retain talent so we can best serve our residents. He's been referred to as the "economic and fiscal center of the Montgomery County Council." Friedson has received the Montgomery County Chamber of Commerce Legislator of the Year, Public Policy Leadership Award from the Center for Nonprofit Advancement, the BCC Rescue Squad's Hiram Musgrove Memorial Award, and the Glen Echo Park Advocacy Award.

Andrew has become known for his work enhancing quality of life, growing the local economy, and modernizing county government with a pragmatic, data-driven approach. He has built broad coalitions to tackle big issues to make Montgomery County more attractive, accessible, and affordable for families and businesses.