



Human Rights **HALL OF FAME** *Tenth Induction*

Recognizing visionary leadership, outstanding achievement and altruism on the road to eliminating discrimination, championing justice and equality and advancing human rights for all the people of Montgomery County.

2018 Inductees

Tufail Ahmad

Dr. Mark Bergel

Dr. Marilyn H. Gaston

Reverend Kenneth N. Nelson

Dr. DeVance Walker Jr.

Bishop Paul L. Walker Sr.

A World Enriched

One's life is measured from the time he or she is born to the time they leave this earth. The achievements, the successes, the goals attained and the heights reached – all point to a life well lived. But for those who contribute to the lives of others – they see those lives contribute to the lives of yet others . . . and so, the whole world is enriched.

James L. Stowe, Director
Montgomery County Office of Human Rights

Program

PRELUDE IN ATRIUM ~ Halley Shoenberg Trio

WELCOME

James L. Stowe, *Master of Ceremony*
Director, Montgomery County Office of Human Rights

PRESENTATION AND POSTING OF COLORS

Montgomery County Police Honor Guard

NATIONAL ANTHEM

LIFT EV'RY VOICE AND SING MONTAGE

The Balm in Gilead, Inc.

GREETINGS

The Honorable William England
Chair, Montgomery County Human Rights Commission

The Honorable Hans Riemer
President, Montgomery County Council

SPOKEN WORD ~ "Varietate Concordia"
Fredrica Deegbe, NAACP ACT-SO Program

MUSICAL SELECTION

"In A Mellow Tone" by Duke Ellington
Halley Shoenberg Trio

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF GUESTS

AND HALL OF FAME MEMBERS

Reverend Mansfield Kaseman (HOF Member, 2014)

PRESENTATION OF JOINT PROCLAMATION

The Honorable Hans Riemer
The Honorable William England
Christine Clarke (HOF Member, 2006)
Chair, Hall of Fame Planning and Selection Committee
James L. Stowe

MUSICAL SELECTION ~ "I Was Here"

(UN World Humanitarian Day)

Nyrene McGaw-Johnson, NAACP ACT-SO Program

SPECIAL REFLECTIONS AND TRIBUTE TO SILVIA RODRIGUEZ
Hall of Fame Member (2001)
Jackie Simon, (HOF Member, 2001)

SPECIAL MUSICAL SELECTION
“What A Wonderful World” by Louie Armstrong
Halley Shoenberg Trio

RECOGNITION OF SELECTION AND PLANNING COMMITTEE
Christine Clarke

HISTORY OF HUMAN RIGHTS HALL OF FAME & SELECTION PROCESS
Blanca Kling, (HOF Member, 2004)
Hall of Fame Selection and Planning Committee

RECOGNITION OF 2018 HALL OF FAME INDUCTEES
AND VIDEO PRESENTATION
Blanca Kling
Christine Clarke
James L. Stowe

— *Induction Ceremony* —

TUFAIL AHMAD
DR. MARK BERGEL
DR. MARILYN H. GASTON
REVEREND KENNETH N. NELSON
DR. DEVANCE WALKER JR.
BISHOP PAUL L. WALKER SR.
by
The Honorable Isiah Leggett
The Honorable William England

REMARKS
The Honorable Isiah Leggett

CLOSING THOUGHTS
James L. Stowe

RECEPTION IN ATRIUM
Halley Shoenberg Trio

Human Rights HALL OF FAME 2018 *Salutations*



OFFICE OF THE COUNTY EXECUTIVE
ROCKVILLE, MARYLAND 20850

Isiah Leggett
County Executive

November 29, 2018



Dear Friends,

On behalf of all Montgomery County residents, I want to congratulate the nominees for this year's Montgomery County Human Rights Hall of Fame. All our nominees have made personal sacrifices and major contributions to advance human rights in Montgomery County. Their visionary leadership and forward-thinking has steered Montgomery County to become a more inclusive community focused on tolerance, civility and goodwill.

In our County, of many different faiths, cultures and socioeconomic backgrounds, it is not our differences that make us a great, it is our willingness to accept and embrace our differences.

In 2001, one of the biggest honors of my career came when I was inducted into the first Human Rights Hall of Fame. It is a privilege to be part of such an esteemed group who have broken down barriers and made a lasting impact on Montgomery County. This year I welcome, Tufail Ahmad; Dr. Mark Bergel; Dr. Marilyn Hughes Gaston; Reverend Kenneth Nelson; Dr. DeVance Walker Jr.; Bishop Paul Walker Sr. into the 2018 Montgomery County Human Rights Hall of Fame.

I extend my heartfelt appreciation to the Montgomery County Human Rights Hall of Fame planning committee for their efforts to make this a wonderful celebration.

Isiah Leggett
County Executive

Human Rights HALL OF FAME 2018 *Salutations*



OFFICE OF HUMAN RIGHTS

November 29, 2018

HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION



The Montgomery County Commission on Human Rights salutes each of the 2018 inductees to the Montgomery County Human Rights Hall of Fame. We find great hope in celebrating the power of an individual to affect the greater good. We appreciate and applaud the significant contributions each of you as individuals has made to our community.

The Commission enthusiastically endorses your theme “Diversity: Is Working For Our County.” Our 15 members serve as volunteers, appointed by the County Executive and confirmed by the County Council. The Commission members are broadly representative of the diverse population of our County and we firmly believe that the strength of our community and the key to our ongoing wellbeing as a community is vested in our ability to learn, live, work and grow together. Collectively and individually, we must continue to work to eliminate discrimination, prejudice, intolerance and bigotry in housing, recreation, education, health employment, public accommodations and other areas that may manifest themselves.

We must also continue to be unrelenting advocates for the rights of all of the residents of Montgomery County. This year marks the 50th Anniversary of the Fair Housing Act of 1968, and while we have made tremendous strides toward equal access to housing options and other areas such as employment and public accommodations, yet consistent justice and equal opportunity still remain unavailable to some far too often.

We must therefore celebrate our great diversity and be ever vigilant in our promoting justice, goodwill, cooperation and understanding and positive human relations among all County residents.

On behalf of all the Commissioners, I am honored to share our appreciation and gratitude for your lifelong commitment to civil and human rights and extend our congratulations to you the members of the 2018 Class of the Montgomery County Human Rights Hall of Fame.

Sincerely yours,

Montgomery County Human Rights Commission

Human Rights HALL OF FAME 2018 Salutations

Montgomery County, Maryland



OFFICE OF HUMAN RIGHTS

Isiah Leggett
County Executive

James L. Stowe
Director

November 29, 2018

Over fifty Years ago this country celebrated the signing into law one of the most significant pieces of legislation in the history of this country. It was the Federal Fair Housing Act of 1968. This act places before the American people the concept, foundation and then the open and accessible house was not an option but rather the “law of the land” and a comprehensive civil right for all. And over Fifty-One Years ago Montgomery County preceded this important Civil Rights milestone with its own law, the Open Housing Law of 1967. It is fitting today that we recognize those who have provided the effort and commitment in moving Montgomery County then and now to a place where the rights and privileges of all our community is an essential core value.

On behalf of the Office of Human Rights let me add our congratulations to all of the Inductees who are formally being inducted into the 2018 Human Rights Hall of Fame. We salute you all for your dedication and commitment to make Montgomery County such a wonderful place to live, learn, work and raise a family. Your efforts and determination to advance human and civil rights in our community, of providing a safety net for those who are disenfranchised and in need and your overall willingness to provide leadership and vision have served to inspire all of us to continue the legacy.

We want to thank all of the Nominators of all our Nominees and express our sincere appreciation for them taking the time to share their Nominees’ story with the Human Rights Hall of Fame Selection and Planning Committee. Our special thanks also to the family members and well-wishers for your encouragement, love and support for our Inductees. We are aware of the huge sacrifices you make in sharing our inductees’ many talents, time and skills for the betterment of Montgomery County.

Lastly, we thank all those involved in making this event possible. Our endless gratitude to the Human Rights Hall of Fame Selection and Planning Committee, the staff of the Office of Human Rights, the Human Rights Commission, the Office of the County Executive, and all the various county departments who assisted in the planning and execution of this great program. And thanks to Christine Clarke, Chair of the Human Rights Hall of Fame Selection and Planning Committee and Beverly Marshall staff liaison and Elena Tracy staff assistant for their outstanding facilitation and coordination of this inspiring event.

Sincerely,

James L. Stowe, Director
Montgomery County Office of Human Rights



LARRY HOGAN
GOVERNOR

STATE OF MARYLAND
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR



November 29, 2018

Human Rights Hall of Fame
Montgomery County Office of Human Rights
Germantown, Maryland

A Message from Governor Larry Hogan

Dear Friends:

Welcome to the tenth annual Human Rights Hall of Fame induction ceremony! It is my pleasure to provide this message to you on this exciting occasion.

This event will honor and recognize individuals who have fought for the rights of all Montgomery County residents through their courageous advocacy and determination.

I would like to thank the Montgomery County Office of Human Rights Director James Stowe and all of tonight's recipients for their tireless work in securing and protecting the rights of others. Your efforts are a true testament to what it means to support those in your community.

Best wishes for an enjoyable evening recognizing these extraordinary men and women. I wish you the best of luck in continuing this good work for years to come.

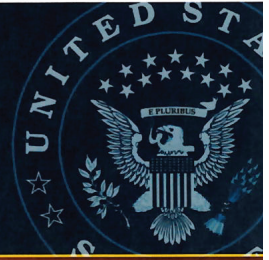
Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Larry Hogan".

Larry Hogan
Governor

Human Rights HALL OF FAME 2018 *Salutations*

U.S. SENATOR BEN CARDIN



www.cardin.senate.gov



@SenatorCardin



SenatorBenCardin



@senatorcardin

November 29, 2018

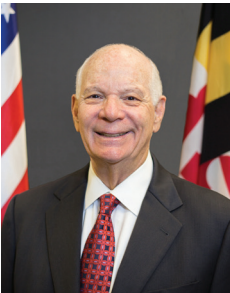
Dear Friends:

I would like to extend a warm welcome to everyone attending the Human Rights Hall of Fame Induction Ceremony hosted by the Montgomery County Office of Human Rights. This is a wonderful event that recognizes individuals who have made outstanding contributions to the protection of human rights in our communities.

Many inductees are emerging leaders in their fields, others were trailblazers during their time. All have made protecting basic human rights their life's work. Past inductees have made significant contributions in the fields of education, working conditions, homelessness, and justice under the law.

A respect for human rights is the most fundamental marker of a healthy democracy, and an issue that I have made a hallmark of my time in office. If we hold that the rule of law and equal justice under law are universal ideals, then we must be vigilant in upholding human rights. All people regardless of disability, gender, race, color, or creed deserve to be protected and supported by our communities.

The Montgomery County Office of Human Rights is committed to investigating instances of hate, violence, and discrimination to create a more tolerant and justice society where all Montgomery County citizens can thrive. I am pleased that you hold this annual ceremony to recognize individuals who are dedicated to upholding these sacred ideals. Thank you to the Office of Human Rights and congratulations to the inductees. I wish you the best for a joyful event.



Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Ben Cardin".

Benjamin L. Cardin
United States Senator

Human Rights HALL OF FAME 2018 *Salutations*



Chris Van Hollen
U.S. Senator



November 29, 2018

Dear Friends:

I am honored to extend my congratulations and appreciation to the 2018 inductees into the Montgomery County Human Rights Hall of Fame. Your courage, activism, and lifelong advocacy on behalf of our community are an inspiration to us all.

The theme of this evening's program – "*DIVERSITY Is Working For Our County*" – is a celebration both of Montgomery County's inclusiveness and of the individuals who help fashion it. Tufail Ahmad, Mark Bergel, Marilyn Hughes Gaston, Rev. Kenneth Nelson, DeVance Walker, and Bishop Paul Walker, Sr. have each worked to ensure that no one in our community is left behind. Tonight, the Human Rights Hall of Fame acknowledges the outstanding accomplishments of this exceptional group of people.

You have my deepest gratitude for all that you do. Congratulations!

Sincerely,

A large, fluid, blue ink handwritten signature of Chris Van Hollen. The signature is written in a cursive style, with the first name 'Chris' being particularly prominent and stylized.

Chris Van Hollen
United States Senator

Human Rights HALL OF FAME 2018 *Salutations*



JOHN P. SARBANES
3RD DISTRICT, MARYLAND
MEMBER OF CONGRESS

November 29, 2018

*Montgomery County Office of Human Rights
10th Human Rights Hall Induction Ceremony*

Dear Friends,

It is a pleasure to extend my warmest greetings to all of those gathered for the Montgomery County Office of Human Rights' 10th Human Rights Hall of Fame Induction Ceremony. It is an honor to welcome this year's distinguished honorees and guests.

Since 2001, the Montgomery County Office of Human Rights has honored individuals who dedicate their lives to the fight for human and civil rights in Montgomery County. This year, we honor those individuals that have shown strong leadership, dedication and courage in the fight to ensure rights for all those who reside in Montgomery County.

I applaud the efforts of The Montgomery County Office of Human Rights and all the inductees in the Human Rights Hall of Fame. Best wishes for a wonderful event and continued success in all your future endeavors.



Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "John P. Sarbanes".

John P. Sarbanes
Member of Congress



Human Rights
HALL OF FAME
Tenth Induction

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2018 Inductees

Tufail Ahmad

Dr. Mark Bergel

Dr. Marilyn H. Gaston

Reverend Kenneth N. Nelson

Dr. DeVance Walker Jr.

Bishop Paul L. Walker Sr.

Human Rights **HALL OF FAME** *2018 Inductee*

Tufail Ahmad

Tufail Ahmad was born in India, migrated to Pakistan and then to America where he served Pakistan in the United Nations. He established his own international trading company. After retiring, he founded the Montgomery County Muslim Council, which pursues equal social, economic, educational and political development opportunities for all.



In addition to civic involvement, Mr. Ahmad co-founded the Montgomery County Muslim Foundation.

Mr. Ahmad spearheads multiple benevolent initiatives to assist needy residents such as feeding the homeless and coordinating food drives for local food pantries. He provides meals and distributes supplies to deserving families through his work with organizations, such as the Feeding the Homeless program, Thanksgiving Meal and Holiday Gift Basket programs and the Mobile Food Pantry. His work with a senior transportation initiative makes it possible for seniors to engage and integrate in the community.

Beyond these achievements, Mr. Ahmad supports other nonprofits throughout the year such as the Friendship Picnic and sponsorship of the Hispanic Gala. He serves on the Hunger Relief Committee and Welcoming Our New Neighbors program for the Neighbors in Need Working Group of the County Executive's Faith Community Advisory Council.

Mr. Ahmad's service also includes the Governor's Commission on Asian Pacific American Affairs; Committee for Montgomery; Montgomery County Executive Ike Leggett's transition team; Upcounty Citizens Advisory Board; the Montgomery County Asian American Advisory Board; the Faith Community Advisory Council, Prevention and Intervention of Violence Committee and the Solidarity Programming Committee.

The unwavering efforts in building social cohesion has earned Mr. Ahmad many prestigious awards, including the Polin Award; Marriott Spirit to Serve Award; Governor Martin O'Malley's "Governor's Volunteer Service Certificate," and the Neal Potter Path of Achievement Award.

Human Rights **HALL OF FAME** *2018 Inductee*

Dr. Mark Bergel

Dr. Mark Bergel, the founder, president and CEO of A Wider Circle, has worked tirelessly to ensure that everyone is guaranteed their basic human rights and can live a life free from the inhumanity of poverty. In 2001, while teaching at American University, Mr. Bergel volunteered with his students to deliver food to needy families. He learned that many families lived without the essentials needed for daily life. These families had no furniture - they slept on floors and ate meals in their bathrooms because there was no other place off the floor.



After witnessing the conditions endured by many of these families, Mr. Bergel took a vow of service not just to help, but to build an organization to eradicate poverty. He converted his living room into a nonprofit office and founded A Wider Circle.

Today, Mr. Bergel works 15 hours a day, seven days a week to end this crisis. In 2008, he chose to give up sleeping on a bed, so he could stay connected with those living in need and understand some of the discomfort that accompanies poverty.

A Wider Circle has grown from a small team of interns working in his living room, to an organization with nearly 60 staff members, operating out of a 38,000 square-foot center in Silver Spring. To date, the organization has served more than 225,000 people and hosted more than 30,000 volunteers yearly.

A Wider Circle emphasizes program creation aimed to get individuals and families out of poverty. In addition to providing professional clothing for work and job interviews to those looking to enter and re-enter the workforce, A Wider Circle provides comprehensive workforce development programming, including resume assistance, interview prep, job readiness “boot camps” and volunteer job coaches who provide a year of support to individuals as they look for work and enter the workforce.

Mr. Bergel travels throughout the region to speak to people from all backgrounds and sectors to educate about the poverty crisis. While speaking to groups, he often asks a simple question: “What is okay for your child?” Simply put, if the conditions of poverty into which many are born are not okay for your child, it is not okay for any child.

Human Rights **HALL OF FAME** *2018 Inductee*

Dr. Marilyn H. Gaston

Dr. Marilyn H. Gaston has dedicated her life to improving medical care for poor and minority families and promoting health care equality for all Americans.

Internationally recognized for her leadership, she continues to combat sickle cell disease and changes in management of children with this illness to significantly decrease suffering and mortality in the world, including Maryland. Dr. Gaston's groundbreaking research proved the effectiveness of giving children with sickle cell disease long-term penicillin treatment to prevent septic infections.

For the past five decades, Dr. Gaston worked tirelessly to increase access to quality health care and improve the health of poor, underserved and minority children and their families. As a physician, she devoted her career to clinical research, teaching medical students and residents and administering local, state and federal programs services for underserved families and communities.

Dr. Gaston achieved the rank of Assistant Surgeon General of the United States and Rear Admiral and is the first African-American woman to direct a Public Health Service Bureau in the U.S. Public Health Service.

For more than 15 years, Dr. Gaston has served on Montgomery County's African American Health Program (AAHP) Executive Committee, which supports the mission of AAHP; advocates for the elimination of health disparities for African-Americans and people of African descent in Montgomery County, educates on health disparity issues and researches and reports current legislation concerning health disparities.

In 2006, Dr. Gaston was inducted into the Maryland Women's Hall of Fame. She received the National Medical Association's Lifetime Achievement Award and their prestigious Scroll of Merit award. The American Medical Association presented her with the Dr. Nathan Davis Award. The Gaston Scholars, named in her honor, is an annual honorary scholarship, which provides two underprivileged, and minority first year students with a full, four-year medical school scholarships. In addition, the College of Medicine recently honored her with the Distinguished Alumnae Award.

After retiring from 35 years of service with the U.S. Public Health Service, Dr. Gaston continues to be active, locally and nationally, in her fight to increase access to quality health care and improve the health of poor, underserved and minority families. Dr. Gaston currently serves as the president and co-founder of a nonprofit designed to assist socioeconomically diverse African-American women change behavior and improve their risk factors for chronic disease.

Dr. Gaston is most proud of the work she had done in collaboration with Dr. Gayle Porter focusing on the health and wellness of African American Women. The two co-authored the book "Prime Time: The African American Woman's Complete Guide to Midlife Health & Wellness." In addition Dr. Gaston and Dr. Porter co-founded and co-developed the program "Prime Time Sister Circles."



Human Rights **HALL OF FAME** *2018 Inductee*

Reverend Kenneth N. Nelson

Reverend Kenneth Nelson has served as senior pastor of the Seneca Community Church in Germantown since 2006. His spiritual journey of caring, worship and community outreach has improved hopes, aspirations and filled the needs of many people in Montgomery County.



Reverend Nelson has served as president of the International Council of Community Churches Ministers Group, and an officer of Montgomery County's Black Minister's Conference. He is a tireless advocate who actively engages in community outreach to address civic concerns.

As the director of business and community outreach for over 20 years at Montgomery College's Workforce Development and Continuing Education unit, he has helped students, community representatives, and professionals achieve their academic and professional goals.

Reverend Nelson advances personal and professional improvement for people and communities by supporting and achieving life changing initiatives. His leadership and association experience includes American Cancer Society North Nashville; Black Ministers Conference of Montgomery County (past president); Boy Scouts of America National Capital Area Council (district and region chair); YMCA Montgomery Village (past board of directors); Caring Matters (board of directors) Montgomery County Executive's African American Advisory Group; Wheaton-Kensington Chamber of Commerce (past board of directors) and Wheaton Urban District Advisory Committee.

He has worked with the American Heart Association, Worksource Montgomery, Montgomery Hospice, and Chamber of Commerce in Bethesda, Rockville, Silver Spring, Germantown and Gaithersburg.

In 2007, and 2010, Reverend Nelson was selected by Montgomery County's Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Commemorative Committee as a program participant for Montgomery County's annual Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. celebration. Reverend Nelson has received several awards and appreciations for his contributions to the community.

Human Rights **HALL OF FAME** *2018 Inductee*

Dr. DeVance Walker Jr.

Dr. DeVance Walker Jr. worked as the first minority liaison to a Montgomery County Executive and has served as a liaison for former county executives Doug Duncan, Charles W. Gilchrist and Sid Kramer.



As education chairman for Montgomery County Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Dr. Walker initiated a youth award program to recognize students of Montgomery County Public Schools. The focus is to identify students, who exemplify one of the five national achievers:

W.E.B. Du Bois (academic achievement), Duke Ellington (arts), Reverend Martin Luther King Jr. (citizenship), Jesse Owens (athletics) and Paul Robeson (versatility). This is now an annual program for the fraternity.

As NAACP vice president, Dr. Walker collaborated with numerous others including former NAACP President George Sealey to bring the Reverend Martin Luther King Jr. national memorial from an ideal to completion.

While working at Montgomery County's Department of Economic Development, Dr. Walker created a Small Business Mentorship Program to ensure small businesses can succeed in Montgomery County. The program attracted businesses and aided to retain new businesses in the County. More than 300 small businesses have participated in the program.

Dr. Walker made his mark throughout Montgomery County by serving on a variety of boards and committees including an appointment by Maryland Governor Parris Glendening to serve as a commissioner for the Maryland's Trial Courts Judicial Nominating Commission. He also served as vice chairman and chairman of Montgomery County's Diversity Council and the board of directors for Florence Crittenton Services of Greater Washington.

Dr. Walker continues to serve on the Capital Region Minority Supplier Development Council's Board of Directors, which helps minority businesses build capacity to contract with local governments and other agencies.

Human Rights **HALL OF FAME** *2018 Inductee*

Bishop Paul L. Walker Sr.

Bishop Paul Walker Sr. founded the Healing and Deliverance Ministry Inc. in 2002. Over many years, his passion for the ministry expanded to include the dual purpose of teaching the word of God and Christian principles focused on community outreach that took the ministry outside the brick and mortar walls of the church.

Bishop Walker is the creator, founder, and executive director of the “Healing Yourself Outreach Life Skills Program” (HYOP), which provides professional development opportunities, leadership skills, certifications, apprenticeships, career portfolios, interviewing skills, character education and links to self-help community agencies.

Bishop Walker’s visionary leadership of HYOP is multi-dimensional in addressing the dual need of clothing and hunger issues for low to middle income populations. It provides “first-class” character training, education, and life skills that can make a positive difference and help diminish the effects of racial and social discrimination and advances human rights for all. For some, this intervention and character training may be a factor that can change a cycle of poverty, ignorance, underemployment, unemployment and crime. For others, it can represent the opportunity to fulfill God’s purpose in their lives.

Bishop Walker strives to utilize every available “pulpit” in his efforts to raise awareness about community-impacting programs. He has presented his programs to various organizations including the Montgomery County Board of Education, Department of Juvenile Services, Department of Health and Human Services and other government officials.

Bishop Walker personally sacrificed for his community and ministerial work. He has made financial sacrifices, as well as physical sacrifices to ensure the work of the ministry and his community programs ran without interruption. In 2015, Bishop Walker was diagnosed with thyroid cancer, and he pushed his way through the treatment and radiation process, continuing to serve his ministry. He was ultimately diagnosed as cancer-free.

In 2017, he lost his eldest daughter unexpectedly. Even through this great loss, Bishop Walker continued to serve the community and his ministry through his grief and pain, putting the needs of others before his own. Bishop Walker’s motivation through these times was to ensure that all individuals have the equal right to serve as productive citizens in the community, that all individuals are provided a second chance to live a positive impactful life, and that the spiritual needs of his congregation are met.



Human Rights **HALL OF FAME** *Special Tribute*

Silvia S. Rodriguez (HOF Member 2001)

Silvia S. Rodriguez lifted her voice to ensure all citizens had equal access in employment, public accommodations and housing; to increase minority representation; and to provide educational opportunities. Ms. Rodriguez was an instrument of change throughout her professional life, her personal campaigns and her fiery spirit. She always said, “discrimination is alive and well and we must do what we can to eliminate it!” Silvia truly validated these words through her actions and deeds. Silvia chaired the Maryland Commission on Human Relations (MCHR) now the Maryland Civil Rights Commission. During her tenure with the Commission, she spoke continuously to protect civil and human rights for all Marylanders.



Silvia was a broker and owner of Silvia International Realty and had experienced discrimination firsthand; and she was dedicated to eliminating prejudice and remedying the far reaching effects of discrimination particularly in housing. While at MCHR, Silvia initiated a statewide investigation on fair housing by conducting hearings throughout the state. She established the Systemic Investigation Unit and the Community Outreach Unit which implemented new technologies to increase accessibility to the MCHR.

Silvia was instrumental in securing stronger Maryland civil rights laws and killing bills that would have weakened civil rights. In 1981, Silvia served on the Montgomery County Human Relations Commission and served on the Fair Housing Interagency Coordinating Group.

Silvia lent her voice to the Achievement Initiative for Maryland Minority Students Council in the late 90's. In July 1999, the Maryland Association of Equal Personnel recognized Silvia for many contributions within the civil rights area.

Silvia was selected as part of the inaugural class of the Montgomery County Human Rights Hall of Fame in 2001. Her tireless efforts to improve the lives of all members of our community and her fight for equal justice and fairness continued throughout her life and represent the gold standard of advocacy and dedication. Silvia will be missed but not ever forgotten.

Sponsors

Montgomery County Executive Isiah Leggett
Montgomery County Council
Montgomery County Human Rights Commission
Montgomery County Office of Human Rights
Montgomery County Department General Services
Montgomery County Department of Police
Montgomery County Office of Public Information
BlackRock Center for the Arts

Photos of Inductees

Suresh K. Gupta (2012)

2018 Planning and Selection Committee Members

Christine Clarke, Chair (2006)
Warren Fleming (2010)
Suresh K. Gupta (2012)
Samira Hussein (2002)
Charles Kauffman (2014)
Blanca Kling (2004)
Barron Oakcrum (Human Rights Commission Representative)
Anita Neal Powell (2006)
Vernon Ricks (2008)
Terry Vann (2016)
Harvey Zeigler (2006)

(Year Inducted into Hall of Fame)

Staff

James Stowe

Anis Ahmed

Loretta Garcia

Beverly Marshall

Olivia Mazzaferro

Elena Tracy

Special Thanks

Bob Deutsch, Deutsch, Inc.

Alyona Aleksandra

Doug Burdette

Tom Edwards

Brad Watkins

Staff and Volunteers at BlackRock Center for the Arts

Chef Gail Owens, Catering 2 You, Inc.