

Montgomery  
County Executive  
Marc Elrich

PRESENTS  
THE 2024

MONTGOMERY  
**serves**  
*Awards*  
honoring those who serve

**Tuesday, June 25**  
**6:30 pm**

**Rosborough Theater**  
**GAITHERSBURG, MARYLAND**

Produced & Sponsored by

 **Montgomery County**  
**VOLUNTEER CENTER**



# Awards Program

## GREETINGS

Faith McNeill, Manager, Volunteer Center

## WELCOME & RECOGNITION OF ELECTED OFFICIALS

Emcees Chandler Parr & Mark Roper

## REMARKS

County Executive Marc Elrich

## VOLUNTEER BUSINESS OF THE YEAR AWARD

***Awarded to The Monitor Group, LLC***

Presented by Dave Silbert, Co-founder of So What Else?

## VOLUNTEER GROUP OF THE YEAR AWARD

***Awarded to AARP Foundation Tax-Aide Montgomery County, MD***

Presented by Stuart Rosenthal, Publisher and Editor, *The Beacon Newspapers*

## NEAL POTTER PATH OF ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

***Awarded to Bruce Adams and Mary Canapary***

Presented by Chuck Short, Former Special Assistant to the County Executive, and Jimmy Frazier-Bey, Homeless Services Division Manager, City of Gaithersburg

## STUDENT SERVICE LEARNING

***Top SSL Earners by Grade Level***

***Student Service Spotlight***

## YOUTH VOLUNTEER OF THE YEAR AWARD

***Awarded to Tejusvi Vijay***

Presented by Shella Cherry, MCPS Director, Student Leadership & Extracurricular Activities, and Donna Kleffman, MCPS Coordinator, Student Leadership & Student Service Learning

## VOLUNTEER OF THE YEAR AWARD

***Awarded to Wendy Kent***

Presented by Kate Stewart, Montgomery County Councilmember

## INEZ ZEIGLER MCABEE AND WILLIAM HARVEY ZEIGLER HUMANITARIAN AWARD

***Awarded to Warren Fleming***

Presented by Kamonte McCray, Serenity Moore, and Rose Zeigler

## ROSCOE R. NIX DISTINGUISHED COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP AWARD

***Awarded to Catherine Leggett, Joyce Siegel, and W. Gregory Wims***

Presented by County Executive Elrich

## CONCLUSION

# Program Production

## **ORGANIZERS**

Montgomery County Office of Community Partnerships  
Shawn Ellis, Acting Director

Montgomery County Volunteer Center  
Faith McNeill, Manager

Office of Human Rights  
Jim Stowe, Director

## **RECEPTION**

Asbury Methodist Village

## **PRODUCTION**

### **Producer**

Tawania McFadden, TMAC

### **Video Production & Video Narration**

Shannon Farney, Office of Broadband Programs

## **PROMOTION**

The Beacon Newspapers

## **JUDGES OF AWARDS**

### **Montgomery Serves Awards**

Alvi Escobar, Christine King and Julien Labiche

### **Neal Potter Path of Achievement Awards**

Jean Dinwiddie, Barbara Selter and Kate Stein

Dear Friends:

I am delighted to host our 2024 Montgomery Serves Awards event to recognize the essential role that volunteers play in the success of Montgomery County and to honor some of our County's most distinguished volunteers and community servants.

Our talented and committed residents are Montgomery County's greatest resource. We have so many who have contributed so much to make our community the special place it is today, and it is difficult to choose among the many wonderful people.

It is a privilege for me to be able to present Catherine Leggett, Joyce Siegel and W. Gregory Wims with the Roscoe R. Nix Distinguished Community Leadership Award. The Nix Award is our County's equivalent to the Presidential Medal of Freedom, the nation's highest civilian award. This award honors those who, over the course of their distinguished lives of service and community leadership, have substantially improved the quality of our community. The community builders who receive this award will stand as role models for future generations.



The Neal Potter Path of Achievement Award honors two County residents 60 years old or better for their lifetime of volunteerism. Bruce Adams and Mary Canapary are this year's winners, and they certainly exemplify Neal Potter's example of the power of giving back through service. The Office of Human Rights recognizes Warren Fleming with the Zeigler Humanitarian Award for dedication to uplifting the human condition through leadership and commitment to community unification for positive change. The Montgomery Serves Award recognizes exemplary volunteer service performed in the previous calendar year, and I am delighted to celebrate Wendy Kent, Tejusvi Vijay, The Monitor Group, LLC, and the AARP Foundation Tax-Aide Program of Montgomery County, MD for the service they gave this past year.

My thanks to those who have worked so hard to make this event a great success—all of you who nominated people for the awards, selected the honorees and came out tonight to celebrate our County's proud tradition of volunteer community service.

I want to give special thanks to Faith McNeill, Lindsay Niemoller and Cassandra Smith of our Volunteer Center for organizing this event. They were supported by The Beacon Newspapers, Commission on Aging, Montgomery County Public Information Office, Shannon Farney with the Office of Broadband Programs, Office of Community Partnerships and many others. Our emcees, Chandler Parr and Mark Roper, help to make this annual event a night to remember!

With Appreciation,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Marc Elrich". The signature is fluid and cursive, written over a light blue background.

Marc Elrich, Montgomery County Executive





## Chandler Parr, Emcee

Chandler Parr is a producer, anchor and reporter. She currently works at NBC Washington as a producer. Before landing a job in D.C., Chandler worked at WRDE Coast-TV News in Delaware as a weekend anchor. Chandler was born and raised in Montgomery County.

She graduated from the University of Maryland with a bachelor's degree in broadcast journalism. During her time at UMD, she worked for Maryland Football and was a veteran of the Maryland Cheerleading squad. In her free time, you can find Chandler at a Pilates class or traveling around the country.



## Mark Roper, Emcee

Mark Roper is a public information officer for Montgomery County Government, managing communications for a portfolio of County offices and departments to foster community engagement.

Mark has a diverse background in media and communications. Prior to working for the County, Mark spent 11 years working as a TV news reporter in various newsrooms across the country including KSFY-TV in Sioux Falls, South Dakota; WPMT-TV in Harrisburg-York, Pennsylvania; and WMAR-TV in Baltimore. Mark has covered presidential visits, investigated carnival ride safety regulation in South Dakota which led to the passing of new legislation and produced a series of segments focused on bringing new attention to unsolved missing persons cases in Maryland.

Mark worked as a creative content manager for Sony Pictures Entertainment where he supervised the production of promotional video content for more than 250 films and television shows. Mark also worked for a boutique public relations firm in Los Angeles, specializing in award campaigns for the Oscars and Golden Globes, and publicity campaigns for independent and foreign-language films, documentaries and television shows.



## HONOREES

# VOLUNTEER BUSINESS OF THE YEAR



### The Monitor Group, LLC

The Monitor Group, LLC is a distinguished financial services and wealth management firm serving individuals, families and small businesses nationwide. Beyond its professional excellence, The Monitor Group is deeply committed to community service and philanthropy. It embodies its family-owned, mission-based ethos by consistently giving back.

The Monitor Group is dedicated to providing sustainable and impactful service that empowers both recipients and the community. In 2023, the company increased its local impact by supporting non-profit organizations such as the Personal Care Foundation, So What Else? and the Montgomery County Family Justice Center. The Monitor Group worked to create connections between these non-profits, establishing a mutual support network. This initiative enhanced the collective efficacy of these organizations, leading to greater community impact. One key part of this effort was The Monitor Group's decision to join the board of the Personal Care Foundation. Their vision inspired the relocation of the Personal Care Foundation's headquarters to So What Else?, strengthening the ties and collaborative efforts between the two organizations.

The introductions made by The Monitor Group between the Personal Care Foundation and the Montgomery County Family Justice Center Foundation have not just been symbolic but have had a significant impact. This partnership has been instrumental in providing continuous support for survivors of domestic abuse, offering them the necessary resources and assistance to restart their lives. Additionally, The Monitor Group's connections with So What Else? and local businesses have contributed to organizing camps for underprivileged youth in Montgomery County, MD and Washington, DC, providing these children with important educational and recreational opportunities.

The Monitor Group exemplifies what it means to be a socially responsible business. A testament to its positive workplace culture and dedication to its team, Bethesda Magazine proudly recognized The Monitor Group as the second-best place to work in 2022. This accolade underscores the firm's philosophy that a supportive, engaged team is integral to its mission of community service. Their approach to strategic partnerships and commitment to sustainable support models reflect a deep-seated devotion to making a lasting, positive impact. The Monitor Group's efforts have uplifted countless individuals and families and set a benchmark for corporate community involvement.

—Nominated by Laura Starr Ramos

## HONOREES

# VOLUNTEER GROUP OF THE YEAR

### AARP Foundation Tax-Aide Montgomery County, MD



The AARP Foundation Tax-Aide Program of Montgomery County stands as a beacon of community service, providing necessary tax preparation assistance to Montgomery County residents. With a particular focus on serving seniors and low-income clients, this dedicated group of volunteers exemplifies the spirit of volunteerism and community support.

The strength of the Tax-Aide Program lies in its passionate and experienced volunteers. Primarily comprised of retired individuals, these volunteers bring a wealth of knowledge and a strong commitment to serving their community. Many have been volunteering for over eight years, with some boasting more than two decades of dedicated service. This longevity is a testament to their unwavering dedication and their vital role in assisting residents during tax season.

Convenience and accessibility are hallmarks of the program, with free tax preparation assistance offered at multiple locations throughout Montgomery County. Tax-Aide volunteers undergo rigorous training and testing each year to become IRS-certified tax preparers. This ensures that they are well-equipped to provide accurate and up-to-date tax help. The commitment to maintaining high service standards is evident in the careful preparation and thoroughness of the assistance provided.

During tax season, Tax-Aide volunteers donate an impressive average of more than 150 hours each to ensure the program runs smoothly. This significant time investment reflects their dedication to alleviating the stress and complexities of tax preparation for those who need it most. The volunteers' efforts help individuals navigate the often-confusing tax landscape and foster a sense of community and support. In 2023, more than 140 Tax-Aide volunteers worked as a team to prepare 3,780 federal tax returns at 19 sites across the County with \$3,530,262 in refunds to clients.

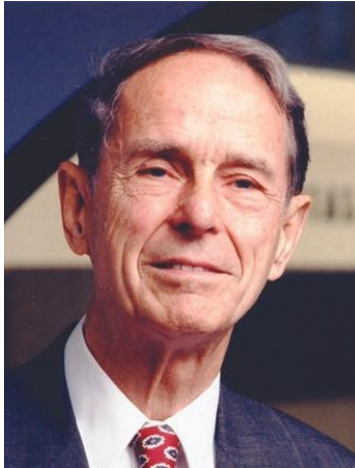
The Tax-Aide Program of Montgomery County is part of the national Tax-Aide Program operated by the AARP Foundation, a well-respected organization known for its advocacy and support for seniors. The Tax-Aide program is a shining example of community service in action. The program's experienced and dedicated volunteers, comprehensive training, and commitment to serving seniors and low-income clients make it an invaluable resource for the community. Their hard work and generosity simplify the tax preparation process and exemplify the profound impact that dedicated volunteers can have on the lives of others.

—Nominated by David Gill

## NEAL POTTER

### PATH OF ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

*The Neal Potter Path of Achievement Award each year honors two county residents 60 years old or better whose accomplishments, enthusiasm, and lifelong commitment to volunteer service make them outstanding role models for those of all ages. The Path of Achievement Award was established by County Executive Doug Duncan in 1998. In 2009, County Executive Ike Leggett named the award to honor the extraordinary lifetime of achievement of former County Executive and County Councilmember Neal Potter. The award has been co-sponsored by the Montgomery County Commission on Aging and The Beacon Newspapers. The 2024 honorees were selected by a panel organized by the Commission on Aging.*



### About Neal Potter

Neal Potter was a model public citizen. Raised on a dairy farm near Cabin John and trained as an economist, Potter dedicated his life to serving others from both a global and local perspective. In the 1940s, he was present at the meeting that launched the World Federalist Association. In the 1950s and 1960s, he was active in a wide variety of civic activities in Montgomery County.

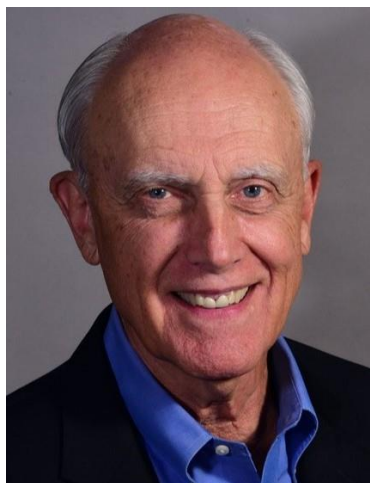
He organized the Citizens' Committee for Fair Taxation and served as president of the Citizens' Planning Association. In five terms as a member of the Montgomery County Council (1970-1990 and 1994-98) and one term as our County Executive (1990-94), he focused on fiscal responsibility and sound land-use planning. Neal Potter began his distinguished quarter of a century of county government service at the age of 55. He died in 2008 at the age of 93. In 2009, Former County Executive Ike Leggett named the Path of Achievement Award to honor the memory of his extraordinary lifetime of achievement.

### PAST HONOREES

**1998** Donna Dorros • Charles Pritchard • Vernetta Reynolds • Murray Stein • William Tait  
**1999** Nina Clarke • Margaret Coleman • John Harvil • Richard Kelly • Kermit Mohn  
**2000** George Cohen • Ellis Klioze • B. Eugene Neal • Lolo Sarnoff • Donald Torr  
**2001** Martin Galvin • Adrienne Lees • Helen McCarron • Herman Meyersburg • Loise Sullivan  
**2002** Helen Bowman • Doris Day • Francis Farrow • Horace Saunders • William Wellington  
**2003** Ling Cheung • Betty Lichtenstein • Maryrose Rogolsky • Patricia Zannie  
**2004** Anne Elward • Austin Heyman • Pearl Isenberg • Kenneth Putkovich • Rosalie Silverberg  
**2005** Irene Booth Coleman • William H. Graham • Margaret McRory • Robert Silberg • Lowell & Betty Tripp  
**2006** Nguyen Minh Chau • Marilyn D'Antuono • Marian Fox • Theodore "Ted" Hannah • Mary "Flo" Hill  
**2007** Helen Abrahams • Chester Kneller • Karen Montgomery • Eloise Strand • Sammie Young  
**2008** Ruth Emerson • John Lopes • John G. Miers • Irene Spector • Joann Woodson  
**2009** Virginia "Ginny" Gilbert • Msgr. Ralph Kuehner • Robert Mabie • Rev. Samuel Myers (aka Jim Dandy) • Dorothy Nelson  
**2012** Tufail Ahmad • Ruby Rubens  
**2013** Marcine Goodloe • Joyce Siegel  
**2014** Joe Howard • Mona Negm  
**2015** Jean Brady • Karin Wilson  
**2016** Gene Counihan • Sarah Gotbaum  
**2017** Miriam Kelty • Marilyn Symonds  
**2018** Sharyn R. Duffin • Chih-Hsiang Li  
**2019** Karen Bashir • Jacqueline Frazier  
**2020** Robert Marques • Wolfgang Mergner  
**2021** Nancy Aldous • Delores Cole  
**2022** Charlotte Tacy Holliday • The Honorable Chung K. Pak  
**2023** Dr. Carol Garvey • Ulessly "Bernie" Relf, Jr.

## HONOREES

## NEAL POTTER PATH OF ACHIEVEMENT AWARD



## Bruce Adams

As a lifelong resident of Montgomery County, Bruce Adams has devoted his life to volunteer service and civic engagement. With degrees from Princeton University and the Georgetown University Law Center, Bruce's rich impact includes serving as an elected official, civil servant, advocate and volunteer.

From 1986 to 1994, Bruce served as an elected member of the Montgomery County Council, a role that significantly shaped his impact on the community. His wide-ranging initiatives include the award-winning Community Service

Day, a ban on smoking in shared workspaces and working towards recycling 50% of the County's waste. Other notable contributions include the Montgomery Housing Initiative, the Commission on Child Care and the Capital Crescent Trail. For these, he received the 1993 Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments' Scull Metropolitan Public Service Award and was named a 1998 Washingtonian of the Year by Washingtonian magazine.

With a vision to improve the economic competitiveness and quality of life of the Washington metropolitan area, Bruce founded A Greater Washington, aligning the efforts of business and community leaders to achieve this common goal. His impact was further amplified when he returned to county government as the Director of the Office of Community Partnerships. During his 11 years in this role, he established Montgomery County's Sister Cities program, created an annual World of Montgomery Festival and promoted volunteer community service. He also reinvigorated the Charles W. Gilchrist Immigrant Resource Center and created advisory groups for ethnic and faith communities, demonstrating his ability to create and implement community-focused programs.

Bruce's impact goes far beyond his career. He has volunteered on dozens of government advisory boards, commissions, community nonprofit boards and special committees. Over the years, Bruce showed commitment to supporting the education and leadership skills of youth, volunteering in various educational settings, including as a teacher of the John W. Macy, Jr. Leadership Seminar with Montgomery County Public Schools and as founder of the Lazarus Leadership Fellows Program at Bethesda-Chevy Chase High School, the Bethesda Community Baseball Club, Field of Dreams after school program in Anacostia and the Cal Ripken Sr. Collegiate Baseball League.

Bruce continues to serve the community today, currently on the boards of the Bethesda Community Baseball Club, the Coalition for the Capital Crescent Trail, Cal Ripken Sr. Collegiate Baseball League, Montgomery Sister Cities, Scotland Juneteenth Heritage Festival and the Fields of Dreams program.

—Nominated by Catherine Leggett

## HONOREES

### NEAL POTTER PATH OF ACHIEVEMENT AWARD



#### Mary Canapary

Mary Dolan Canapary, a beacon of selfless service and compassion in Montgomery County, has dedicated her life to supporting the vulnerable and marginalized members of the community. Since the inception of The Lord's Table (officially the Gaithersburg Community Soup Kitchen, Inc.) in 1984, Mary has been at the forefront, serving as the volunteer manager and de facto president up until 2018, often sacrificing her personal time for the greater good.

With an unwavering commitment spanning over four decades, Mary has overseen the distribution of over 500,000 hot meals, a testament to her dedication. Her leadership extends beyond the kitchen as she has determinedly recruited, organized and managed approximately 400 volunteers from various religious and civic institutions. Embodying the organization's mission of providing nourishment and support to those in need, Mary also leads a volunteer team that counsels guests of The Lord's Table on housing, addiction counseling and free medical resources.

Mary's passion for addressing homelessness led to her active participation in other impactful initiatives in the community. She played an essential role in establishing The Wells Robinson House, a safe haven for individuals transitioning out of long-term addiction rehabilitation. Further demonstrating her commitment to social issues, she also served on the committees that laid the foundation for creating the Rockville Home Builders Care Assessment Center, which provides shelter and services to homeless men, and the Dwelling Place in Gaithersburg.

Mary has received numerous accolades for her extraordinary contributions, including the Distinguished Citizen Award, the Friend of Gaithersburg Award and the 2023 Women Making History Award from the Montgomery County Commission. Her selection as the Grand Marshal for the Saint Patrick's Day Parade at Rio in 2022 further highlights her esteemed status within the community.

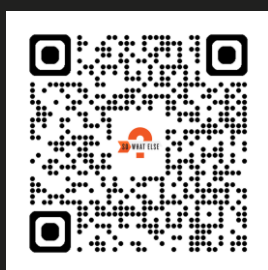
Mary's legacy of compassion and service inspires countless individuals within The Lord's Table and beyond. Her unwavering dedication to alleviating the suffering of the less fortunate is a shining example of the power of kindness and the profound impact one individual can have on their community.

—Nominated by Sue Rambo

## Join the So What Else Volunteer Community!



CAN WE DO TO HELP?



So What Else's mission is to improve the lives of children and families living in underserved communities in the Baltimore-Washington Metro Area by providing food security, access to basic necessities, and high-quality out-of-school time programs in literacy, athletics, and the visual and performing arts while inspiring young people to give back to the community by creating volunteer opportunities for individuals of all ages.

To support this work, we host a number of volunteer opportunities across the region in fields such as food recovery, teaching, event support and more. We strive to make volunteer service accessible & meaningful for people of all backgrounds, experiences, interests, capabilities, and capacities.

**Sign up at [www.SoWhatElse.org](http://www.SoWhatElse.org)  
Click, Get Involved!**

## **Montgomery County VOLUNTEER CENTER**

VISIT OUR WEBSITE TO FIND HUNDREDS  
OF WAYS TO **VOLUNTEER!**

Find Service Opportunities for

- ★ Professionals
- ★ Retirees / 50+ Volunteer Network
- ★ Students / SSL Hours
- ★ Families
- ★ Groups
- ★ Everyone!



**Learn more at [MontgomeryServes.org](http://MontgomeryServes.org)!**

## HONOREES

**STUDENT SERVICE LEARNING**

The Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) Student Service Learning (SSL) Program supports hands-on learning by promoting student engagement in service opportunities to increase their civic knowledge, character and social development and overall academic success. Every public school student in the state of Maryland is required to complete at least 75 hours of service-learning to earn a high school diploma. MCPS recognizes the following students for earning the highest number of SSL hours out of all MCPS students in their grade level.

**6<sup>TH</sup> GRADE****Saanvi Lanke**

Shady Grove Middle School  
555 SSL Hours

**7<sup>TH</sup> GRADE****Elijah Hillard**

Parkland Middle School  
839 SSL Hours

**8<sup>TH</sup> GRADE****Abigail Eisenhart**

Hallie Wells Middle School  
1007.5 SSL Hours

**9<sup>TH</sup> GRADE****Cailyn Farrell**

Poolesville High School  
1175.5 SSL Hours

**10<sup>TH</sup> GRADE****Jayson Lee**

Poolesville High School  
1528 SSL Hours

**11<sup>TH</sup> GRADE****Paula Sales Corpuz**

Gaithersburg High School  
2652 SSL Hours

**12<sup>TH</sup> GRADE****Edin Levy**

Einstein High School  
2066.5 SSL Hours



## HONOREES

# STUDENT SERVICE LEARNING

Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) partners with the Montgomery County Volunteer Center to connect students with more than 2,000 nonprofit organizations in Montgomery County and the surrounding metropolitan area. Service-learning allows students to learn from and work alongside experts as they apply their knowledge of topics covered in the classroom to address real-world and community issues. For the 2023-2024 school year, MCPS wishes to spotlight the following students for their dedication to making a meaningful impact on the community through service-learning.

## MCPS Student Service Spotlight

### **Ruby Rojas**

12th Grade, Richard Montgomery High School

Ruby is passionate about helping young people. She re-established the Richard Montgomery Ambassadors group to assist new, mostly international, students in adjusting to life in the US. She also worked with the SAIL program, tutoring younger students to improve their academic success. Ruby co-founded the STEM bound club and has made a significant impact on new students transitioning to the school system. Her leadership is inspiring, and she is highly engaged with students and staff, exceeding expectations with her commitment to service and positive spirit.

—Nominated by Mr. Paul Craft, Counselor at Richard Montgomery High School

### **Veronica Sulima**

12th Grade, Poolesville High School

Veronica spends most of her time volunteering with Great and Small, a non-profit organization that provides therapeutic riding opportunities for children and adults with disabilities. Her volunteer service involves assisting program participants, caring for and training horses and supporting the organization's mission to help the disabled community through riding and horse training. Her experiences have given her greater empathy and patience, which she brings to her academic pursuits and participation with advocacy groups. She remains humble about her achievements and continues volunteering because of her passion for the positive impact she has on the disabled community.

—Nominated by Mr. Ramon Snow, Counselor at Poolesville High School

### **Airyck Dvorak**

8th Grade, North Bethesda Middle School

Airyck has made a tremendous impact on his peers. He has committed his passion for the role-playing game Dungeons & Dragons to develop a safe space for students with disabilities to learn and grow. Airyck's dedication and leadership have motivated his peers, who would otherwise feel isolated, to attend school and practice teamwork, communication and collaboration skills that can be useful both in and out of the classroom. Airyck has played an essential role in providing a space where everyone feels included and welcomed.

—Nominated by Mrs. Leigh Mayfield, Resource Teacher for Special Education at North Bethesda Middle School

## HONOREES

# YOUTH VOLUNTEER OF THE YEAR



### Tejusvi Vijay

Tejusvi Vijay, a Gaithersburg resident and junior in the Science, Math, and Computer Science Magnet Program at Montgomery Blair High School, exemplifies dedication and passion for community service. With over 800 hours of volunteer work, Tejusvi's contributions have significantly impacted various elements of her community, particularly in STEM education.

Tejusvi's involvement with FIRST (For Inspiration and Recognition of Science and Technology) Robotics teams since 5th grade highlights her long-standing commitment to technology and robotics. Honored with the 2023 Young Adult Mentor Award at the Maryland FIRST LEGO League State Championship, she mentors two FIRST LEGO League robotics teams for elementary and middle school students, sharing her expertise and enthusiasm. Through summer camps and virtual information sessions, Tejusvi has inspired over 200 students globally, fostering a love for technology and robotics.

In the summer of 2021, Tejusvi discovered her passion for working with younger students when she volunteered at a two-way immersion Title 1 elementary school as part of the MCPS Extended Summer Learning Opportunities program. Fueled by her experience, she collaborates with the English Language Learner program at Montgomery Blair High School, leading a robotics club for English Language Learners. She has introduced club members to programming concepts using Scratch and LEGO robotics activities while guiding them and encouraging public speaking through class presentations and community events.

Inclusivity and diversity are fundamental to Tejusvi's commitment to STEM education. As the captain of Blair's Code Girls club and a campus ambassador for the University of Maryland's Technica Hackathon, the world's largest hackathon for underrepresented genders, she actively promotes inclusivity in technology. Her leadership in these initiatives ensures that more students from all walks of life can access valuable STEM learning opportunities, fostering a more diverse and inclusive future in the field.

Tejusvi has a strong interest in public policy and community advocacy, evident from her participation in County Councilmember Sayle's Youth Advisory Council. In this role, she engages with local leaders to address community issues and develops policy proposals for positive change. Additionally, Tejusvi is actively involved with Speak Up, a non-profit organization that provides free summer classes to improve students' public speaking and research skills. As an organizer and instructor for Speak Up, she helps students develop essential communication skills, making a significant impact on education.

With her passion for technology and education, Tejusvi is deeply committed to designing innovative solutions to make STEM education more accessible. Her extensive volunteer work and string leadership reflect her dedication to empowering others and making a lasting impact on her community.

—Nominated by Karen He

## HONOREES

# VOLUNTEER OF THE YEAR



### Wendy Kent

Wendy Kent's journey is a testament to the power of following one's passion and leveraging it for community service. After launching her career as a graphic designer in 2000, Wendy pursued her dream of attending culinary school and becoming a classically trained French pastry chef. Her culinary expertise flourished during her five-year tenure at Bistro Bis in Washington, DC. However, Wendy's true calling emerged as she shifted her focus to volunteer work, using her skills to serve the unhoused guests at Miriam's Kitchen as a volunteer cook and pastry chef.

Wendy's commitment to community service extended beyond the kitchen. She became actively involved with Manna Food Center, initially as a Smart Sacks volunteer coordinator for three schools. In this role, she managed food distribution to children at risk of hunger over the weekends. Wendy's dedication and organizational prowess soon led her to serve as the volunteer coordinator at the Manna Choice Pantry at 4 Corners in Silver Spring. Here, she ensured that families had access to essential groceries in a dignified manner.

A significant milestone in Wendy's volunteer journey was her instrumental role in establishing a family pantry at Takoma Park Middle School. This pantry provided students and their families with discreet access to food through administrators, counselors and teachers, ensuring no one went hungry. In addition to regular pantry access, they organized monthly large-scale food distributions, offering produce, dairy, meat and shelf-stable foods to school families.

As the COVID-19 pandemic loomed and the school faced closure, Wendy and three feeder elementary school PTA presidents proactively distributed pantry food to local families, ensuring continued support despite the challenging circumstances. In March 2020, this initiative evolved into Tommy's Pantry. Wendy, alongside three local PTA presidents, led the effort with remarkable resilience and community spirit, demonstrating their unwavering commitment to their community.

Currently, Wendy serves as the President of Tommy's Pantry, which has grown to serve 350 individuals and families twice monthly. The pantry provides shelf-stable food, culturally appropriate food options, fresh produce and wellness boxes containing essential items not covered by SNAP, such as laundry detergent, toothpaste, menstrual products and deodorant. These wellness boxes are crucial in preserving the personal dignity of those they serve.

Wendy Kent's dedication to community service through Tommy's Pantry and other volunteer roles highlights her exceptional commitment to addressing food insecurity and supporting the well-being of her community. Her efforts have not only provided essential resources but have also fostered a spirit of compassion and solidarity, making a profound impact on countless lives.

—Nominated by Paula Howalczyk

## INEZ ZEIGLER MCABEE AND WILLIAM HARVEY ZEIGLER HUMANITARIAN AWARD

*The Zeigler Humanitarian Award each year honors an individual in recognition of dedication to the principles of uplifting the human condition, through leadership and selfless acts of compassion and commitment to the unification of our community toward positive change. This is prescribed in the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights to which we recommit ourselves through proclamation on Human Rights Day every year. Montgomery County is pleased that the award is named in honor of the extraordinary contributions of Inez Zeigler McAbee and William Harvey Zeigler in the fight for civil rights, social justice and equal access for all residents of Montgomery County.*

### About Inez Zeigler McAbee & William Harvey Zeigler

Ms. Inez Zeigler McAbee and Mr. William Harvey Zeigler, siblings from a family of 13 children, were born and raised on a farm in Damascus, Maryland. Both advocated for integration, justice and equality throughout their lives.



Ms. Inez Zeigler McAbee's contributions to humanity were motivated by her conviction that one voice singing in the darkness can light the world. Through her endeavors, she shed light on community common grounds and created unexpected collaborations to achieve universally beneficial goals. Her dedication, perseverance and optimism never overshadowed her sheer grace. She was a homemaker, caretaker, gardener, singer and mover and shaker who used her extraordinary skills to serve those in need and advance society.



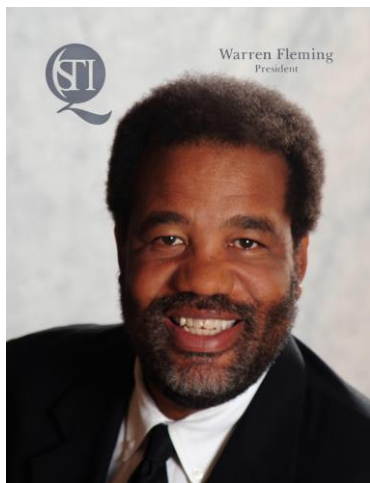
Mr. William Harvey Zeigler was a community and civic activist, mentor and historian. Mr. Zeigler's interest in civil rights began at an early age. When he was growing up, segregation was law. He often "tag teamed" with his sister in the struggle for integration and equality for all minorities in Montgomery County. During his lifelong pursuit for equality and justice, his accomplishments included striking down job discrimination and promoting the hiring of African Americans in Government agencies, in the Montgomery County Public Schools and in the Montgomery County Fire Department.

### PAST HONOREES

**2021** Inez Zeigler McAbee • William Harvey Zeigler

## HONOREES

### INEZ ZEIGLER MCABEE & WILLIAN HARVEY ZEIGLER HUMANITARIAN AWARD



#### Warren Fleming

As the President of the Damascus Connection Committee, Warren Fleming provides a voice for the UpCounty region of Montgomery County. Over the years, he has spearheaded numerous projects to preserve, share and educate about African American history and notable sites in the community. Named the Humanitarian for Montgomery County in 2010, Warren has received state-wide recognition from elected officials for his humanitarian and community services.

During grade school, Warren attended Augusta Military Academy in Fort Defiance, Virginia, where he developed his people skills by interacting with students of diverse backgrounds. Upon graduation, Warren declined football scholarships from several universities and decided to attend Virginia Computer College. After graduating from Virginia Computer College in 1974, he was one of five students selected by NASA to work at Goddard Space Flight Center in Greenbelt, Maryland, where he was tasked to code in a computer language known as Fortran-66, navigating the General Electric weather satellite, Nimbus. This catapulted him into a decades-long successful career. Warren went on to work for companies like General Electric and Honeywell Federal Systems, where he became a known entity throughout the Pentagon for his overall knowledge of software and computer hardware. Warren returned to the DMV in 1996 and founded Quality Solution Technology, Inc., which became a Top 100 Minority Business Enterprise (MBE) firm from among over four thousand MBE firms across the East Coast.

In 2004, Inez McAbee, Harvey Zeigler and Delores Brown invited Warren to the coordination meeting for Evening in Paris, a community organization that led efforts to provide support services for minorities in the Damascus Area. During this meeting, Inez and Harvey discussed the need to broaden their services and increase capacity. As a result, they started the Damascus Connection Committee and named Warren president. As president of the nonprofit organization, Warren increased support services for marginalized communities and helped raise awareness of community resources. He also led various efforts, including testifying before the County Council to secure \$1,000,000 in funding for the Josiah Henson Museum.

Today, Warren continues his work to address civil rights issues and promote the historical preservation of minority contributions in Montgomery County. He works with organizations like The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission to install Historical Markers at significant sites across Montgomery County. Warren proudly serves as a voice for community members and continues to embody the characteristics of a Human Rights champion in Montgomery County.

## ROSCOE R. NIX DISTINGUISHED COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP AWARD

*The Roscoe R. Nix Distinguished Community Leadership Award is presented by the County Executive to individuals who, over the course of their lives, have made extraordinary contributions to the quality of our community at the very highest levels of excellence. This prestigious award was established by County Executive Ike Leggett to honor community icon Roscoe Nix, who gave half century of service to Montgomery County. First presented in 2012, the Nix Award is the county's equivalent of the Presidential Medal of Freedom, the local version of the nation's highest civilian award.*



### About Roscoe R. Nix

Roscoe R. Nix, a champion of civil rights, was one of the major architects of modern Montgomery County. Born in Greenville, AL, Nix served in the U.S. Army during World War II and graduated from Howard University. He and his wife Emma moved to Montgomery County in 1968 with their two children. Professionally, Nix was a peacemaker who traveled the nation on behalf of the Justice Department's Community Relations Service to help resolve conflicts in communities experiencing civil unrest.

At home in Montgomery County, he was the County's leading advocate for equity and justice. A staunch critic of de facto school segregation, Nix became the second African American elected to the Montgomery County Board of Education in 1974. As the president of the County's chapter of the NAACP from 1980 to 1990, he was a fearless and tireless advocate for educational excellence and social, economic, and political justice. The County's annual African American Festival of Academic Excellence, which celebrates the academic achievements of African American students, is among his proudest accomplishments. He was inducted into the Montgomery County Human Rights Hall of Fame in 2001. He died at the age of 90 in January 2012.

### PAST HONOREES

**2012** Roscoe R Nix • Charles "Chuck" Lyons • Connie Morella **2013** Odessa Shannon • Carol Trawick • Teresa Rios Wright **2014** Reverend Leon Grant • Dr. Michael Lin • Nancy Scull **2015** Jennie Forehand • Inez Zeigler McAbee • Tom Perez **2016** Vivian Bass DeLawrence Beard Gustavo Torres **2017** Mark Bergel • Sol Graham **2018** Tufail Ahmad • Brian Frosh • Linda Plummer **2019** Charlotte Coffield • Ike Leggett • David Rodich **2020** Dr. Winston Anderson • Jenny Sue Dunner • Anita Neal Powell **2021** Byron A. Johns • Blanca Kling • Diego Uriburu **2022** The Honorable Nancy Kopp • Mona Negm • Kenneth Nelson **2023** Chih Hsiang Li • Joann Woodson

## HONOREES

### ROSCOE R. NIX DISTINGUISHED COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP AWARD



#### Catherine Leggett

Catherine Leggett has always aspired to serve the community. At a young age, her mother and grandmother instilled in her the values of education, hard work and a strong moral compass. Catherine began her professional career as a Social Worker after earning a Bachelor of Arts in sociology and psychology from Howard University in Washington, D.C. Her goal was to effectuate change. Feeling like she was only putting a band-aid on the problems facing her community, she enrolled in Law School at Howard University. After graduating from Law School, Catherine initially became a criminal attorney. Once again feeling like she was only addressing the symptoms of her community's issues she transitioned into employment law with the goal of making a real difference for workers.

As an employment lawyer, Catherine's work with companies like American Airlines and her 13-year tenure as the head of personnel at Hechinger, an American chain of home improvement centers, was marked by her commitment to promoting equal rights, diversity and inclusion. She actualized her vision to help workers at Hechinger, bringing about significant changes such as the first African American woman manager at a hardware store, the first woman to drive a forklift and by being one of the first companies to employ prisoners from Lorton, VA in their stores. These achievements stand as a testament to her dedication and the impact she continues to make today.

While at Howard University's School of Law, Catherine met her husband and former County Executive Ike Leggett. As the former first lady of Montgomery County, Catherine's contributions to the community extended beyond her legal career. She worked with many not-for-profit organizations and brought a spotlight to the arts in Montgomery County. Her efforts to raise awareness of arts through initiatives such as the annual Executive Ball and her service as a board member for Imagination Stage, Strathmore Music Center, and Olney Theater have been instrumental in fostering a vibrant arts scene in the county. Her dedication to sharing the beauty of the arts with the community and children is evidence of her belief in their potential.

Catherine takes great pride in her family and the achievements of her children and grandchildren. Throughout her life, she is especially proud of the times when she has contributed to helping organizations achieve their mission of supporting the most vulnerable members of our community. Her involvement with Montgomery County's Family Justice Center was instrumental in establishing a safe space for women and individuals impacted by domestic violence to access resources such as legal assistance, protection, counseling and employment opportunities.

Catherine is the senior vice president for Human Resources at International City/County Management Association-Retirement Corporation, a nonprofit, independent financial services corporation focused on providing retirement security for the public sector. A proud wife, mother, and grandmother, Catherine says being of service makes her the happiest. In tough times, her belief in the truth and the rightness of things motivates her to continue reaching out and lifting up the most vulnerable people of Montgomery County.

## HONOREES

## ROSCOE R. NIX DISTINGUISHED COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP AWARD



### Joyce Siegel

Joyce Siegel is a dedicated community advocate whose impact spans housing, education and human rights. As the proud mother, grandmother and great-grandmother of a wonderful family, Joyce credits her family for their unwavering support throughout her endeavors.

One of Joyce's most notable achievements is her pivotal role in redeveloping the Scotland community. Scotland was once an extensive Black community, stretching on both sides of Seven Locks Road from Democracy Boulevard to beyond Tuckerman Lane, with some families living on the site of what is now the Cabin John Shopping Center. In partnership with Scotland's residents, neighbors and her husband's dramatic black-and-white photographs, Joyce's leadership drew public attention to the poor living conditions in Scotland and was instrumental in the "Save Our Scotland" campaign in the 1960s. This led to the construction of 100 new homes on what remained of the "old" Scotland and aided the passing of a federal rent support program. Joyce remains actively involved in the community, ensuring the legacy of Scotland continues.

Joyce, a Smith College "dropout," returned to school and earned a bachelor's degree from the University of Maryland and a master's degree in public administration from the Washington branch of USC. In the mid-1960s, she joined forces with other Montgomery County residents to establish a Citizen's Human Relations Commission, which was crucial in encouraging the County to create its own Human Relations Commission. Joyce was also a founding member of the Bernie Scholarship Awards Program, which, by 2023, provided nearly 900 scholarships to low-income Montgomery County residents. Her commitment to social justice extended to her long service on the board of Interfaith Works and her tenure as President of the Interfaith Housing Coalition.

Joyce's contributions have been widely recognized. In 1970, she was awarded the Smith College Medal, an award from the National Conference of Christians and Jews and the Make America Better Award from the Montgomery County Board of Realtors. She was part of the inaugural group inducted into the County's Human Rights Hall of Fame. She also served on the Housing Opportunities Commission board for 10 years before becoming its Public Affairs Officer. Her dedication to sustainability was honored in 2013 with a Maryland Clean Energy Award. In 2013, Joyce received the Neal Potter Path of Achievement Award, acknowledging her decades of tireless service to the community.

Guided by her favorite maxim, "apathy is not an option," Joyce Siegel's life exemplifies the power of commitment, community and action. Her legacy continues to inspire those who strive to make a difference.

## HONOREES

### ROSCOE R. NIX DISTINGUISHED COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP AWARD



#### W. Gregory Wims

As a champion of community change and a long-time advocate for victims' rights, Greg Wims has dedicated his 50-year career to public service. Deeply rooted in District 39 as a sixth-generation resident, Greg grew up on the land his great-great-grandfather purchased after slavery was abolished. Driven by his humble beginnings, Greg has devoted his life to ensuring that anyone who requires assistance receives the support they deserve.

Greg's commitment to public service began early. After graduating from high school, he was elected to the Maryland Youth Commission, where he advocated for lowering the voting age in Maryland from 21 to 18. In the early 1970s, Montgomery County Executive James P. Gleason appointed Greg to the Montgomery County Maryland Human Rights Commission, making him the youngest member at the time. In 1974, he became the first male Head Start teacher in Montgomery County, demonstrating his commitment to education and early childhood development.

Greg's influence extended to the national stage when he joined the congressional campaign of U.S. Representative Newton Steers in 1976. He became Steers' chief legislative officer, marking him as the first African American from Montgomery County to work on Capitol Hill. He later served as a legislative assistant to U.S. Representative Melvin H. Evans. In the 1980s, Greg worked on Ronald Reagan's presidential campaign and served in the Reagan administration until 1989. He then founded his own government consulting firm, Hammer and Nails, Inc.

Greg has also made significant contributions through the non-profit sector. He has served on over 30 non-profit boards, including Holy Cross Hospital, the Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay and Adventist Hospital. In 1996, he founded the Victims' Rights Foundation in the historic Stewart Town community after learning of the violent and tragic deaths of three women whose bodies were found aside a road in Greenbelt, Maryland. In 2002, he founded the Sniper Victims' Fund to support those affected by the sniper shootings in the Washington DC Metro Area. Together, the foundation and fund have raised over \$2,000,000 providing a voice and support to victims of violent crimes. In 2016, the Victims' Rights Foundation expanded its mission to include support for education. They partnered with Rotary International to promote girls' education and, in 2017, opened a preschool in Kogelo, Kenya.

In the 1990s, Greg served in several roles for the NAACP, the Montgomery County NAACP and the NAACP Maryland State Conference. Greg also liaised with Montgomery County's minority community for the Montgomery County Police Department. In 2000, he was named executive director of the Montgomery Business Alliance and membership director of the Montgomery County Chamber of Commerce. In 2021, Greg was appointed by Montgomery County Executive Marc Elrich as the UpCounty Regional Services director, where he served until January 2024 when he started in his elected role as the District 39 delegate at the Maryland General Assembly.

Greg continues his legacy of uplifting residents by tackling key issues in education, affordable housing, economic expansion and public safety. For completing 45,000 hours of community service, Greg received an Honorary Doctorate from the School of the Great Commission Theological Seminary. His lifelong dedication to public service and community advocacy inspires all who strive to make a difference.

# CONGRATULATIONS & THANK YOU TO OUR IMPRESSIVE 2024 NOMINEES

Choosing our honorees was not at all easy. We are grateful for the impressive nominations & appreciate those who volunteer to make Montgomery County an even better place to live, work, play, raise a family and retire!

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## 2024 NOMINEES

AARP Foundation Tax-Aide Montgomery County, MD, AmeriCorps & Volunteers at CASA - Citizenship and Tax Preparation, Amin Mahmoud, Amy Fitzgibbons, Ava Goodson, Bone Builders Volunteer Leaders, Candra Hardy, Cathleen (Cathie) Cooper, Children of Persia, Chloe Wharton, Comfort Cases, Deborah and Christie, Desmond Wharton, Digital Empowerment Team, Emerging Leaders Advisory Council, Franco American Society of Draguignan, Fredy Gonzalez Lopez, Friends of the Olney Farmers Market, Gary Friend, Genevieve Augustin, Grace Minano Lopez, Hadassah Alabi, HarvestShare MD, Healing Yourself Outreach Program (HYOP), Hettie Fleming, Islamic Community Center of Potomac (ICCP), Jaiden Brackenridge, Jessica Rabin, Joshua Singer, Kai Zou, Karolina Holiat, Keiyana Jackson, Krista Vega, Laura Jablonover, Leadership Montgomery, Lisa Walker, Lucinda Snow, M. Ashraf Meelu, M. Ashraf Meelu, Martina Tinong, Marvin Lynch, Mithran Karthic, Montgomery County Commission on Aging, Montgomery Philharmonic, Nancy Deprey, Nicholas Clements, Raj Awasthi, Rex Garcia, Robert Ziobro, Ronald Argueta, Sanjana Amara, Shirley Shannon, State Farm, Stuart Chime, Stuart Chimes, Sujit Hegde, Tejusvi Vijay, The Monitor Group LLC, Vernon Ricks, Wawen Ewimbi, Wendy Kent, Will Fermaglich, Zuenia Karim