



**Maryland Women's Hall of Fame
&
Maryland Young Women
Leaders Award**

2023 Induction and Awards

*Celebrating Women
Who Make History and
Build Our Future*

Thursday, March 16, 2023

Presented by

Maryland Commission for Women

Women Legislators of the Maryland General Assembly, Inc.

Maryland Department of Human Services

The Foundation for the Maryland Commission for Women, Inc.

Maryland Commission for Women

51 Monroe Street, Suite 1034 ■ Rockville, MD 20850

www.marylandwomen.org



Tawanda A. Bailey, Chair

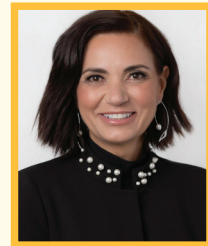
The Maryland Commission for Women was first established in 1965 and was set in state law in 1971. An office in the Department of Human Services, the Commission is a 25-member advisory board whose duties outlined in its enabling legislation include: study the status of women in our state, recommend methods of overcoming discrimination, recognize women's accomplishments and contributions, provide informed advice to the executive and legislative branches of government on the issues concerning the women of our state, and direct attention to the critical problems confronting women. Commissioners are appointed to four-year terms by the Governor, with confirmation by the Maryland State Senate, and serve without compensation.



*Maxine Griffin Somerville
First Vice Chair*

Officers

Tawanda A. Bailey, Chair, Frederick County
Maxine Griffin Somerville, First Vice Chair, Charles County
Roberta Pardo, Second Vice Chair, Anne Arundel County



*Roberta Pardo
Second Vice Chair*

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Row 2 (L-R) Kristi S. Halford, Eugenia Henry, D. Kaprece James, Lauren Lambert, Patricia McHugh Lambert, Esq., Christine Lee, Brenda McChriston,

Row 3 (L-R) Jenny Pena Dias, Carole Jaar Sepe, Evelyne Steward, Lenita A. Walker, Monica Watkins, Rev. Dr. Tamara E. Wilson, Yun Jung Yang, Esq

Staff:

Judith Vaughan-Prather, Executive Director | Tammy Wise, Management Associate

Letter from Secretary López Department of Human Services



Rafael López, Secretary

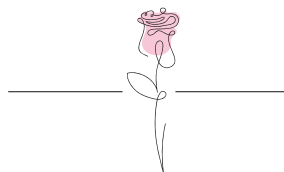
On behalf of the more than 1 million Marylanders we serve and the more than 5,000 Maryland Department of Human Services employees, I offer my heartfelt congratulations to the extraordinary women who will be inducted into the Maryland Women’s Hall of Fame this year, and to the exceptional young women who will receive the Maryland Young Women Leaders Award, we salute you.

March is Women’s History Month, a time to recognize and honor the significant contributions that women have made throughout our history. It is also a time to acknowledge and celebrate the phenomenal women who are making history right here in Maryland. From groundbreaking scientists to community leaders and activists, Maryland is home to countless women who have built our state’s past and continue to shape its future.

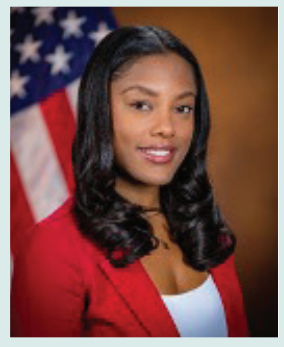
Our Department is the proud home of the Maryland Commission for Women, and we are pleased to support its work to assure that every resident, regardless of gender or identity, has access to the same opportunities to achieve their very best. Our kinship with the Maryland Commission for Women is grounded in our mutual hallmarks of perseverance and ethical responsibility toward improving the lives of all.

Let us continue to empower and uplift women as allies in the work to create a more equal and just world for all. We commend the Commission for Women for this work and extend our very best wishes to all of this year’s honorees.

Secretary Rafael López
Maryland Department of Human Services



2023 Achievement and Recognition Committee



Lauren Lambert
ARC Chair

Lauren Lambert, Chair
Lenita Walker, Vice Chair
Christine Lee, Vice Chair

Committee Members:

Andrea Bottner, Deborah Cartee, Beth Anne Dorman,
Judith Emmel, Patricia Lambert, Brenda McChriston,
Evelyne Steward, Yun Jung Yang, Tawanda Bailey,
Maxine Griffin Somerville, Roberta Pardo

Since the inception of the Maryland Women’s Hall of Fame in 1985, the Commission for Women has memorialized the often unknown or overlooked contributions of women to our state’s and our nation’s history.

Every year in March, we recognize women whose achievements are of historic significance and whose accomplishments help to advance the rights of women and girls. Each year, the Commission for Women also recognizes young women in high school with records of academic excellence, outstanding leadership and extraordinary community service.

The theme for our celebration of Women’s History Month this year is ***Celebrating Women Who Make History and Build Our Future.***

In March, 2023 we are inducting five extraordinary women into the Maryland Women’s Hall of Fame, and we are recognizing five young women – future leaders, every one – with the Maryland Young Women Leaders Award.

Much appreciation is due to all the ARC Committee members who worked so hard on this project this year.

Please explore this website to learn more about the Commission for Women, The Maryland Women’s Hall of Fame, the Maryland Young Women Leaders Award, and to learn more about each of our honorees.

Thank you!



2023 Maryland Women's Hall of Fame

Lenita Walker, ARC Committee Vice Chair



Lenita Walker

This year, as we celebrate Maryland women who have made history, we honor the first American woman to set foot on the Antarctic continent. We honor the first Latina elected to public office in Maryland, and the judge who established the first mental health court in Maryland. We will honor an extraordinary military official and a former state Senator and Secretary of Aging.

These exceptional women all had a vision of a better world, and on this website, we pay tribute to them and thank them for their extraordinary service and selfless dedication.

The [Maryland Women's Hall of Fame](#) is a rich source of biographies of women who made significant and lasting contributions to the history and culture of our state and our nation. Established in 1985 as a partnership between the Maryland Commission for Women and the Women Legislators of Maryland, the Hall of Fame honors Maryland women whose lives and work are of historic significance to the economic, political, and cultural life of the state.

Each year the Maryland Commission for Women and the Women Legislators of Maryland call for nominations of women who have made history in fields such as the arts, athletics, business, community advocacy, education, government, the humanities, human rights, law, medicine, the military, philanthropy, and science. We are so appreciative of the independent, all-volunteer committee representing leaders from across the state that reviewed the nominations and selected those to be inducted into the Hall of Fame this year. Biographies of the honorees are displayed at the website of the Maryland State Archives at: <https://msa.maryland.gov/msa/educ/exhibits/womenshallfame/html/index.html>. A physical exhibit of the Maryland Women's Hall of Fame is located on the campus of Notre Dame of Maryland University in Baltimore.



2023 Maryland Women's Hall of Fame Selection Committee

- Dr. Kara French**, Professor, Salisbury State University
- Dr. Ida Jones**, Board of Directors, Maryland Women's Heritage Center
- Dr. Traki Taylor**, Provost & VP, Frostburg State University
- Lenita Walker**, Commissioner, Maryland Commission for Women
- Lauren Lambert**, Commissioner, Maryland Commission for Women

Maryland Women's Hall of Fame Honorees

1985 – 2022

1985

Margaret Brent *
Rachel Carson*
Hon. Rita C. Davidson *
Hon. Gladys Noon Spellman
Harriet Ross Tubman*

1986

Lillie Carroll Jackson *
St. Elizabeth Ann Seton*
Henrietta Szold*
Jeannette Rosner Wolman
H. Margret Zassenhaus, M.D.

1987

Clara Barton*
Frances Ellen Watkins Harper*
Juanita Jackson Mitchell
Mary Shaw Shorb, Ph.D.
Helen Brooke Taussig, M.D.*

1988

Hon. Barbara Ann Mikulski
Sadie Kneller Miller *
Mary Eliza Risteau *
Martha Carey Thomas *
Verda Freeman Welcome

1989

Bertha Sheppard Adkins *
Eugenie Clark, Ph.D.
Hon. Lavinia Margaret Engle*
Lena King Lee
Estelle R. Ramey, Ph.D.

1990

Hon. Lucille Maurer
Enolia Pettigen McMillan
Pauli Murray*
Adele Hagner Stamp *
Mary Lemist Titcomb*

1991

Rita R. Colwell, Ph.D.
Mary Elizabeth Lange*
Claire McCardell*
Bessie Moses, M.D.*
Alta Schrock, Ph.D.

1992

Annie Armstrong*
Anna Ella Carroll*
Rose Kushner
Hon. Margaret Collins Schweinhaut
Carmen Delgado Votaw

1993

Hon. Rosalyn Blake Bell
Lucille Clifton
Elizabeth King Ellicott*
Jean Spencer*
Martha Ellicott Tyson*

1994

Hon. Rosalie Silber Abrams
Mary Elizabeth Banning*
Harriet Elizabeth Brown
Hon. Constance A. Morella
Mary Adelaide Nutting*

1995

Jill Moss Greenberg

Mary L. Nock*
Amanda Taylor Norris, M.D.*
Nettie Barcroft Taylor
Euphemia M Goldsborough
Wilson*

1996

Madeleine L. Ellicott*
Ethel Llewellyn Ennis
Mary Digges Lee*
Brigid G. Leventhal, M.D.*
Barbara Robinson

1997

Diane L. Adams, M.D.
Sol del Ande Mendez Eaton
Catherine R. Gira, Ph.D.
Hon. Helen L. Koss
Rosa Ponselle*

1998

Constance Ross Beims
Mary Katherine Goddard*
Elaine Ryan Hedges*
Mary Carter Smith

1999

Florence Riefler Bahr*
Lillian C. Compton*
Edith Houghton Hooker*
Elizabeth Fran Johnson
Bernice Smith White

2000

Constance Uriolo Battle, M.D.
Lois Green Carr
Sonia Pressman Fuentes
Josephine Jacobsen
Rosetta Stith, Ph.D.

2001

Kathleen Feeley, S.S.N.D.
Misbah Khan, M.D.
Charmaine Krohe, S.S.N.D.
Eunice Kennedy Shriver
Sandra W. Tomlinson, Ph.D.

2002

Mabel Houze Hubbard
Florence P. Kendall
Mary Young Pickersgill*
Hon. Lorraine Sheehan

2003

Viriginia Walcott Beauchamp
Edith Clarke*
Hon. Kathryn J. DuFour
Ruth L. Kirschstein, M.D.
Etta H. Maddox*
Deborah A. Yow

2004

Emily Edmonson*
Nancy Grasmick, Ph.D.
Esther McCready
Margaret Byrd Rawson
Vivian V. Simpson*

2005

Shoshana S. Cardin
B. Olive Cole*
Susan R. Panny, M.D.

Edyth H. Schoenrich, M.D., M.P.H.

2006

Susan P. Baker
Liebe Sokol Diamond, M.D.
Bea Gaddy*
Marilyn Hughes Gaston, M.D.
Rebecca Alban Hoffberger
Grace Snively*

2007

Colonel Annette M. Deener
Sally T. Grant
Prasanna Nair, M.D., M.P.H.
Karen H. Rothenberg, J.D.,
M.P.A.
Hon. Audrey E. Scott

2008

Eleanora Fagan, "Billie
Holiday" *
Ramona McCarthy Hawkins,
R.Ph.
Ellen Moses Heller
Hon. Pauline Menes
Toby Barbara Orenstein
Emily Wilson Walker, M.D.*

2009

Ilia Feher*
Diane Griffin, M.D., Ph.D.
Harriet Legum
Allyson Solomon
Anne St. Clair Wright*

2010

Claire M. Fraser-Leggett, Ph.D.
Anne Catherine Hoof Green*
Irene Morgan Kirkaldy*
Almira Hart Lincoln Phelps
Bernice R. Sandler, Ph.D.
Lillie D. Shockley

2011

Lucy Diggs Slowe*
Carol Greider, Ph.D.
Barbara Holdridge
Ligia Peralta, M.D.F.A.A.P.,
F.S.A.H.M.
Gertrude Poe
June Willenz

2012

Maureen Black, Ph.D.
Margaret Dunkle
Hon. Diana Gribbon Motz
Hon. Nancy Kopp
Alice Manicur, Ed.D.
Gwendolyn Rooks

2013

Hon. Helen Delich Bently
Hon. Jean B. Cryor*
Charlene Mickens Dukes, Ed.D.
Hon. Ellen Sauerbrey
Linda Shevitz
Beatrice Tignor, Ed.D.

2014

Dorothy Bailey
Agnes Kane Callum

Renee Fox, M.D.
Susan Goering
Henrietta Lacks*
Ann Cipriano Rees

2015

Hon. Beverly B. Byron
Gail de Planque, Ph.D.*
Mary S. Feik
Katherine L. O'Brien, M.D.
Linda Singh
Sue Fryer Ward*

2016

Sophia Arabatzis Balis, D.D.S.
Oretha Bridgwaters-Simms
Mary C. Goodwillie*
Elaine Danforth Harmon*
Joanne Katz, Sc.D.
Lizette Woodworth Reese*

2017

Marsha Coleman-Adebayo, Ph.D.
Carolyn W. Colvin
Hon. Donna Edwards
Mary Elizabeth Garrett*
Katharine Blodgett Gebbie, Ph.D.*
Kathleen Genevieve "Katie" Ledecy
Helen Maroulis
Lilian Welsh, M.D. *

2018

Sandra I. Barnes, Esq.
Sandra Williams Ortega, Ph.D.
Emily Saunders Plummer *
Rita L. Robinson
Hattie N. Washington, Ph.D.

2019

Hon. Marielsa A. Bernard, Esq.
Augusta T. Chissell*
Dominique Dawes
Virginia Hall*
Hon. Rosa "Rosie" Gumtaotao Rios
Evelyn Williams Townsend*
Phyllis B. Trickeett
Pauline Woo Tsui*

2020

Victorine Quille Adams*
Evelyn O. A. Darden
Claire L. Parkinson, Ph.D.
Nancy Grace Roman, Ph.D.*
Leslie R. Wolfe, Ph.D.*

2021

Elizabethn "Liz" Bobo
Margaret Briggs Gregory Hawkins*
Rev. Dr. Ruby Reese Moore
Nancy K. Welker, Ph.D.
Celeste Revillon Winans*

2022

Dorothy (Dottie) Toplitzky Blum*
Mary Cleave, Ph.D.
Gloria Richardson*
Beatrice (Bea) Rodgers
Odessa M. Shannon*

* Posthumously inducted



Brigadier General Janeen L. Birckhead
Maryland National Guard

Nominated by Timothy Gowen, Military Commander

Brigadier General Janeen L. Birckhead serves as the Commander of the Maryland Army National Guard and is dual-hatted as the Deputy Commandant for Reserve Affairs at the U.S. Army War College. She was commissioned as a distinguished military graduate through the Reserve Officers Training Corps at Hampton University, earning a bachelor’s degree in Political Science. She holds a Master’s in Management from the University of Maryland.

Her military education includes the Chemical Officer Basic Course, the Adjutant General Officer Advanced Course, the U.S. Army Command and General Staff College and the U.S. Army War College where she earned a Master’s in Strategic Studies.

Brig. Gen. Birckhead previously served as the Director of Legislative Affairs for the Maryland National Guard. Her command assignments include the 70th Regiment – Regional Training Institute, Aberdeen, MD; the 581st Troop Command Battalion, Hagerstown, MD; the Soldier Readiness Battalion, Reisterstown, MD; and B Company, 229th Main Support Battalion, 29th Infantry Division, Reisterstown, MD.

Brigadier General Birckhead mobilized under OEF/OIF, serving as the Tiger Team Leader and Designated Military Officer for the Office of Administrative Review for the Detention of Enemy Combatants. In 2011, Brig. Gen. Birckhead deployed as the Deputy, Current Operations, Security Partnering, and International Security Assistance Force, Kabul, Afghanistan.

Brig. Gen. Birckhead’s military decorations include the Legion of Merit, Defense Meritorious Service Medal, Meritorious Service Medal, Army Commendation Medal, Air Force Commendation Medal, Army Achievement Medal, Army Reserve Components Achievement Medal, National Defense Service Medal, Armed Forces Reserve Medal, NATO Medal, Overseas Service Ribbon, Army Reserve Components Overseas Training Ribbon, and Afghanistan Campaign Medal.

In her civilian capacity, Ms. Birckhead is a Senior Advisor in the Bureau of Trust Funds Administration, Assistant Secretary of Indian Affairs in the U.S. Department of the Interior, Washington, DC. She began her civilian career in Washington, D.C. in the U.S. Senate. Her subsequent civilian career positions included State Equal Employment Opportunity Manager, Special Agent in Charge for the Defense Security Service, and Deputy Chief of Equal Opportunity and Civil Rights at the Office of Personnel Management, joining the Bureau of Indian Affairs, as the Director of Civil Rights and Equal Employment Opportunity for the U.S. Department of the Interior in 2010.

“Each time I put on my uniform, I remember the sacrifices of those that came before me, and I know there will be others who will climb higher because of my work. I won’t know their names, and they may not know mine, but together we will change the world.”



The Honorable Charlotte M. Cooksey
Retired Judge, District Court of Maryland

Nominated by: Marilyn Moses, Maryland Crime Victims Resource Center

The Honorable Judge Charlotte M. Cooksey was a visionary and an innovator who used her position to advocate for the disenfranchised, particularly women, who interfaced with the criminal justice system. Her judicial activism was novel then and would be considered so now.

Charlotte M. Cooksey was born in 1947 in Baltimore, Maryland. She was raised and received her early education in New Orleans, Louisiana. In 1968, she received her B.A. from Tulane University and her J.D. from Loyola University School of Law in 1971. She started her legal career as a Lyndon B. Johnson “Great Society” VISTA (Volunteers in Service to America) attorney for the Legal Assistance Corporation in New Orleans, 1971 – 1972.

Shortly after completing her VISTA service, she returned to the city of her birth, Baltimore, to pursue her career at Maryland Legal Aid. While there, she started a unit for representation in child in need of assistance cases. The CINA Project has become a state-wide initiative. She left Legal Aid to assume her first position in Maryland’s court system as a Master in Chancery, Division of Juvenile Causes, Baltimore City Circuit Court in 1979. After four years as a Master, she was appointed to the District Court of Maryland, District 1, Baltimore City, in 1983 at the age of 35. Judge Cooksey served as an Associate Judge on the District Court for 25 years, until she retired in 2008. Her last six years on the bench were spent as the presiding judge of Baltimore’s Mental Health Court, the first such court in Maryland - a problem-solving court that Judge Cooksey created.

Among the state’s first judicial officers to recognize the biological basis of addiction and the criminalization of the mentally ill, Judge Cooksey effectively advocated a seismic shift in judicial approach. She was willing to risk her reputation by promoting experimental approaches that could have failed. In the mid-1990s, she supported a pilot acupuncture program for drug addicted women in Baltimore’s jail. She played a key role in a demonstration project designed to address chronic school truancy. This program was selected as a finalist for the U.S. Department of Justice’s Herman Goldstein Award. In 2002, Judge Cooksey presided over a group of cases alleging excessive heat and other unhealthy conditions in the Women’s Detention Center. She visited the facility and, appalled by her observations, ordered health exams and a proposed alternative housing plan. A civil rights investigation ensued and a federal court ordered improvements. In 2007 she, along with other women judges and partners, was instrumental in the creation of the Pregnant Women’s Transitional Program, Chrysalis House Healthy Start, which provides holistic and trauma sensitive care to pregnant women offenders.

In 2012, she wrote the court’s Mental Health Procedures Manual, still used by the judiciary today. Judge Cooksey’s enduring contributions to Maryland’s citizens were the creation of the state’s first mental health court; its problem-solving court progeny across the state; elevating our state’s judicial approach to the mentally ill; and normalizing a humane treatment approach to marginalized populations in the criminal justice system

“It has been my experience that success in positively impacting a systemic or societal problem comes not from one person’s work alone, but rather from the collaboration of many.” – Hon. Charlotte M. Cooksey



The Honorable Ana Sol Gutierrez (Retired State Legislator)

Nominated by: Marlene Rivas

Ana Sol Gutierrez is the first Latina elected to public office in Maryland – in 1990 to the Montgomery County Board of Education and in 2002 when she was elected to the House of Delegates in the Maryland General Assembly.

Born in Santa Ana, El Salvador, she moved with her family to Silver Spring, Maryland when her father was appointed as one of the founding directors of the World Bank International Monetary Fund in 1949. As a child, she lived both in Maryland and in San Salvador, El Salvador.

She attended Montgomery County Public Schools for primary, middle school and high school, graduating from Bethesda-Chevy Chase High School in 1960. She attended Pennsylvania State University and spent her junior year abroad in Geneva, Switzerland where she attended Université de Geneva for the 1962 – 1963 school year. She graduated in 1964 with a B.S. in Chemistry. She is tri-lingual, being fluent in English, Spanish and French.

Gutierrez continued her graduate education with studies at George Washington University and The American University, leading to a Masters degree in Management Technology and Computer Sciences.

After marrying in 1965 and working as a computer analyst in Geneva, Switzerland, she and her husband returned to live in Chevy Chase, Maryland. She has three sons and has maintained her residency in Chevy Chase for more than 50 years, having purchased her home in 1968.

From 1975 to 1981, she and her family lived in Venezuela, Bolivia and Peru where she taught computer science courses at national universities before returning to Maryland in 1981.

Gutierrez was elected to the Montgomery County Board of Education in 1990 and served two four-year terms, including serving as President of the Board in 1994. In 2002, she was elected to the Maryland House of Delegates and served there for 16 years representing Montgomery County District 18. She is the first Latina ever elected to public office both in Montgomery County and in Maryland, and she is the first Salvadoran-American ever elected to public office anywhere in the United States. She was twice recognized among the “100 Most Influential Hispanics in the USA” by Hispanic Magazine, and twice named among Maryland’s Top 100 Women by *The Daily Record*. She served on national boards including the National Association of Latino Elected and Appointed Officials, Will/WAND, the National Hispanic Caucus of State Legislators, and serves as a Trustee of Capitol University - an engineering college in Laurel, Maryland.

A chemist and computer systems engineer by profession, Gutierrez was appointed by President Clinton in 1994 as Deputy Administrator for Research and Special Programs (RSPA) at the U.S. Department of Transportation. She worked for more than 30 years in information technology in the public and private sector with major IT firms on government contracts at NASA, FAA, USDOT, the Education, and State Departments. She is a recognized leader and role model for women in the fields of science and technology (STEM).

Her many years of service and clear focus on fighting for social justice, human rights and education equity include fighting to protect women’s/human/civil rights through her support of the Marriage Equality Act, in-state tuition and equal access reforms such as ensuring eligibility for Maryland drivers’ licenses for all, regardless of immigration status. She championed efforts to expand language access both for state government services and in public schools. She worked to establish the Seal of Bi-Literacy to recognize dual language competency in high schools throughout Maryland. Her important legislative initiatives included: stronger gun control laws mandatory reporting of “lost” guns; reducing bullets in gun magazines; protecting consumers from fraud/abuses; expanding health services to women, the disabled, immigrants and families of low income. She fought for increases in the Maryland minimum wage and promoted fair taxation reforms. Del. Gutierrez promoted passage of balanced budgets and fiscal responsibility as Chair of the House Committee for Management of Public Funds and as a member of the House Appropriations Committee, Health and Human Services and Public Safety Subcommittees. She also served on the House Judiciary Committee, was a member of the Women’s Caucus, and helped found the first House New American and Latino Caucus.

“We must dedicate ourselves whenever and wherever possible to ensure that all children – no matter their gender, race, ethnicity, family heritage or birth place – have opportunities to achieve their fullest individual potential. I believe opportunity doors are opened especially through wide access to equitable, high quality education, health and social services, and reliable community supports.” – Ana Sol Gutierrez



**The Honorable Gloria Lawlah
(Retired Educator, State Senator and Maryland Secretary of Aging)**

Nominated by: Oretha Bridgewaters Simms, Alpha Kappa Alpha

Born in Newberry, South Carolina in 1939, Gloria Gary Lawlah is a teacher by profession. She completed her undergraduate education at Hampton University earning her B. S. Degree in Social Science in 1960 and a Masters of Arts Degree from Trinity University in 1970 with a major in English and Administration. She served as a teacher and administrator in the District of Columbia Public Schools from 1965 to 1995. Moving to Prince George's County Maryland in 1973 with her husband Jack and three children, John, Gloria and Gary, she met Congresswoman Gladys Noon Spellman who so inspired her that she immediately became actively involved in politics, serving as third vice president of the NAACP and supporting its

efforts to integrate the Prince George's County Public Schools.

In 1982, she was elected to the Prince George's County Democratic Central Committee and then to the Maryland House of Delegates in 1986. Four years later, in 1990, she was elected to the Maryland State Senate on a "Pro-Choice" platform becoming the first Prince George's woman in history elected to the Maryland Senate. She served in the Maryland State Senate until 2007 and served as Federal Liaison for Bowie State University.

During her tenure in the Maryland General Assembly, in addition to sponsoring bills providing billions for education, she secured funding and co-sponsored legislation that led to the construction of National Harbor in Oxon Hill with the Gaylord Hotel as anchor, chaired the commission to rebuild the Woodrow Wilson Bridge, moved to relocate the Metro Green Line terminus to Branch Avenue, sponsored legislation for construction of all six casinos to include MGM and sponsored the construction of a new Oxon Hill High School.

She was appointed by Governor Martin O'Malley to Secretary of Aging for the state of Maryland, serving two terms from 2007 to 2015. During her tenure, she led policy initiatives to address the needs of the rapidly growing population of seniors, in general, and for the increasing number of seniors who suffered with forms of dementia including Alzheimer's disease. She also implemented strategies to encourage seniors to "age-in-place" extending their lives while saving millions in tax dollars.

Senator Lawlah is the recipient of numerous awards, including the Prince George's County Women's Hall of Fame, 1992; Mothers Against Drunk Driving, Bridge to Educational Excellence in Maryland Public Schools, University of Maryland Dental School Humanitarian, 2002; The Daily Record Maryland's Top 100 Women and Pfizer Visionary Leadership, 2004; Health Facilities Legislator of the Year, 2006; Women in Government Outstanding Service, 2013 and Women Legislators of Maryland Lifetime Achievement, 2022. She is the founder and organizer of the 1000 Maryland Women Political Action Committee, and serves as president of Women Legislators of Maryland Foundation, Incorporated.

She is an active member of numerous community organizations and continues to mentor women running for and elected to political office.

*"Learn from the past, focus on the present and prepare
for the future." – Gloria Lawlah*



Edith “Jackie” Ronne Polar Explorer and Geographer (1919 – 2009)

Nominated by Dr. Joanna Kafarowski

Edith “Jackie” Ronne (RON-ee) was a polar explorer, writer and Antarctic authority. She was the first female member of an Antarctic expedition, the first American woman to visit Antarctica and one of the first two women to overwinter there.

Ronne was a true daughter of Maryland with strong family ties to the state. Her mother’s family, the Parletts, lived in Baltimore for over a century while her father’s family lived in Havre de Grace for generations. She spent her early years in Baltimore and, as a teen, lived with her aunt and uncle in Chevy Chase. A 1928 graduate of Goucher College and one of the first female physicists employed by the National Bureau of Standards, Merriell Maslin Gardner had a significant influence on her niece. Ronne attended Eastern High School in Baltimore and graduated from George Washington University in 1940. She was a lifelong resident of Maryland and lived in Bethesda for over 50 years.

Ronne worked for the Department of State, but her life focused on Antarctica. She was an active volunteer committed to geographic and scientific organizations including the Society of Woman Geographers for which she served as its President from 1978 to 1981, the Antarctic Society, the American Polar Society, the National Society of Arts and Letters and the Explorers Club, amongst others.

One of her most notable accomplishments was participating as a vital member of the Ronne Antarctic Research Expedition (1946 – 1948). During the 18 months the team spent in Antarctica, she was the official communications expert, media liaison and historian. Ronne wrote or edited all articles about the expedition and was also the assistant geophysicist, chief advisor to her husband and counsellor to the team. Initially, the 20 male team members bitterly opposed her inclusion on the team and were appalled to learn that Ronne would take over as leader if something were to happen to her husband during the voyage. This scientific expedition was hugely successful as it gathered critical data and created new maps of Antarctica’s coastline and proved that Antarctica is one continent. A significant geographic feature, “Edith Ronne Land,” was named in her honor, and later, upon further discoveries, was renamed “Edith Ronne Ice Shelf,” and later the “Ronne Ice Shelf” – a rare honor for a woman of non-royal birth. In 1964 Ronne was awarded the Antarctic Service Medal.

For more than four decades, Ronne wrote and lectured about Antarctica. She was a fierce defender of the legacy of her explorer husband, Finn Ronne, and a keen political strategist, advocating for American support of the first Antarctic Treaty. In 1971, she and her husband were flown by the U.S. Department of Defense to the South Pole to commemorate its discovery 60 years earlier. An early pioneer in Antarctic tourism, she was an invited lecturer on many Antarctic expedition and cruise ships. In her lifetime, she made a total of 16 trips to Antarctica.

In 2004, she signed the prestigious American Geographical Society Fliers’ and Explorers’ Globe – an honor granted only to the world’s leading explorers and aviators.

An inspiring mentor to female explorers, she assisted many through her philanthropic work. The Finn Ronne Memorial Award (Explorers Club) and the Ronne Award for Antarctic Research or Exploration (Society of Woman Geographers) were established by Ronne to help Antarctic scientists and explorers.

Ronne’s work as an Antarctic pioneer paved the way for other women who would work in, explore and make policy decisions about Antarctica far into the future.

“Almost despite myself, I had become a true Antarctic. I was the first woman to overwinter as a member of a pioneering Antarctic expedition.” - Edith “Jackie” Ronne

2023 Maryland Young Women Leaders Award

Christine Lee, ARC Committee Vice Chair



Christine Lee

The Maryland Young Women Leaders Award was first established as the Women of Tomorrow Award in 1997 to recognize extraordinary young women who have demonstrated an exceptional commitment to leadership, community service and academic excellence. In 2021, the name of the award was changed to more accurately reflect its purpose of recognizing and encouraging future women leaders. With a generous donation received from the Pai Ping Foundation to the Foundation for the Maryland Commission for Women, the honor will include a \$500 scholastic award for each student. Five extraordinary young women were selected for this award from the thirty-eight nominations received from across the state. We are very pleased to introduce these outstanding students and future leaders



2023 Maryland Young Women Leaders Award Selection Committee

Judy Carbone, Board of Directors, American Association of University Women (AAUW MD)

Sarah David, Esq., Board of Directors, Women's Law Center of Maryland

Magdalena Navarro, Commissioner, MD Commission on Civil Rights

Christine Lee, Commissioner, Maryland Commission for Women

Lauren Lambert, Commissioner, Maryland Commission for Women





**Indu S. Bodala, 11th Grade
Glen Burnie High School, Anne Arundel County**

Nominated by Shirley Wais, Signature Program Coordinator, Anne Arundel County Public Schools

Indu S. Bodala is a dedicated student who has a passion for learning and service to her community. She is currently one of four representatives from her school on the county Student Service Learning Leadership Team (SSLLT).

Indu was raised by her grandmother until she was 4, while her parents advanced their careers. Her grandmother strongly believed in instilling strong cultural roots and beliefs, so she placed an emphasis on teaching Indu her mother tongue, Telugu from a young age before she learned English.

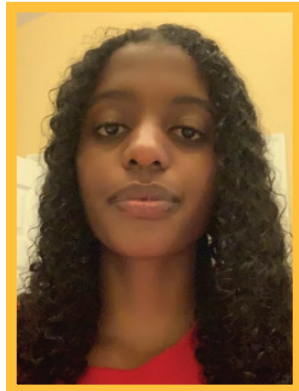
When Indu entered the school system she was placed in ESOL. Indu shared that she felt alienated and incompetent in her academic mastery. Her determination and love for learning pushed her to grow and eventually she developed a love for literature, which helped her with her language learning. This love for literature and learning has provided her with the tools she has used to develop into an amazing young leader. She is now enrolled in honors and AP classes.

Indu is a part of the Biomedical Medical Allied Health Magnet (BMAH) at Glen Burnie, Vice President of the Student Government Association: (2021-2022 and 2022-2023), Principal's Advisory, Treasurer of the French National Honor Society, National Honor Society, President of the National Science Honor Society, National Math Honor Society, Vice President of school chapter and a State Officer Health Occupations Students of America (HOSA), Interact (service learning club), Chief Editor Newspaper, and Head coordinator of the Equity Leadership Team.

Indu participates in a number of community service activities. She's a part of the Joint Commission on the Opportunity Gap, serving as the student commissioner, appointed by her County Executive and school system Superintendent. The commission works to bridge educational inequities and gaps faced by minority students. She also serves on the Chesapeake Regional Association of Student Councils as the Secretary of Service (2021-2022), Vice President (2022-2023), Student Service Learning Leadership Team, Mental Health Teen Advisory for the Board of Education: Appointed by her school Principal, Teen Advisory for The Superintendent, Youth Feminist Task Force Maryland Chapter.

Indu is passionate about student advocacy, service to others, and promoting equity and inclusion in our school community as well as within AACPS. She stands apart from her peers as a student leader working to create a better world for students and the residents of Anne Arundel County. Indu's contributions will leave a lasting impression on her peers, teachers, and her community.

“The key to ending bigotry is embarking on a journey of education and an immersion of the world around you. Open your eyes, ears, and heart, embrace the differences, and uncover the ugly.” – Indu S. Bodala



**Mahlet Mesfin, 12th Grade
Crofton High School, Anne Arundel County**

Nominated by Justin Ryan, School Counselor, St. Charles High School

Mahlet Mesfin is dedicated to math and sciences and has taken ten Advanced Placement classes. Mahlet is a Crofton High senior who gives her all to whatever she does. She is one of two daughters, twins, of immigrants from Ethiopia. Her strong foundation of faith and positive character are indicative of their upbringing.

Mahlet is a student leader who is dedicated not only in the classroom, but also to her family. Her father runs the Upper Marlboro Veterinary Hospital, a small business that is run by the family. She is a member of Service Learning Leadership Team - Chair of Sub-Committee, Leader of the Crofton Service Club, Anne Arundel County Police Department Minority Youth Advisory Council, and an intern for Office of Service Learning. She also conducted research on bird migration under the mentorship of NASA scientist, Dr. Emily Wilson.

Over the summer of 2022 Mahlet helped run two weeks of service camp for middle and high school students. She also developed a workshop on grant writing that will be shared with students from around the county.

Mahlet's awards include: Certificate from the College Board National African American, Recognition Program, August 2022, Grade 12, AP Scholar with Distinction, July 2022, Grade 12, Sociedad Honoraria Hispánica, June 2022, Grades 11, 12, Mu Alpha Theta, June 2022, Grades 11, 12, Appointed Assistant Vice President National Honor Society, April 2022, Grades 11, 12, Science National Honor Society, October 2021, Grades 11, 12, Reviewed students' science fair projects and provided corrections, Working on creating summaries of science courses for course selections, Certificate of Recognition from the NASA Environmental Task Force, May 2022, Anne Arundel County Science and Engineering Expo - 1st place in Animal Science, March 2022, EJI Racial Justice Essay Competition - 2nd place, December 2021, Superintendent's Honor Roll, Grades 9, 10, 11, Gold Presidential Award for Service, November 2020, and Maryland Governor's 2022 Youth Service Awards - Honoree, April 2022.

She has over 200 hours of service to organizations including: Bello Machre, Anne Arundel County Public Libraries, Annapolis City Parks and Recreation, Kindness Grows Here, Crofton Civic Association, Gigi's Playhouse in Annapolis, Orphan Grain Train – Millersville, Walk the Walk Foundation, and the Marshall Hope Foundation.

*“As a leader, persevering through the many obstacles you’ll face is
the only way to make a difference.” – Mahlet Mesfin*



**Alondra Moreno Santana, 12th Grade
Easton High School, Talbot County**

Nominated by Tammy Nies, School Counselor, Easton High School

Alondra Moreno Santana is a senior at Easton High School in Easton, MD. Her parents are from a small, mountainside town in Mexico, and so she has spent her childhood immersed in Latin culture. As a Hispanic woman, she has not had many role models who look like her. When she was younger, she believed that she couldn't do as much as her peers, because she felt underrepresented. Now, this motivates her to hold and, more importantly, prosper in her leadership positions to be that representation for other Hispanic students, such as the younger students she teaches at Easton Elementary School, and especially her younger siblings.

Alondra is currently ranked fourth in her class. She is taking five Advanced Placement (AP) courses and has previously taken four AP courses prior to her senior year. She has earned all As. She excels academically and has challenged herself more each year. When her AP BC Calculus class would not fit in her schedule, she received special permission to have the class added as an independent study class where she attends the class during her lunch, is provided the work, and completes it on her own. She was also awarded AP Scholars with Honors because of her amazing scores on her AP exams.

Alondra is the Student Member of the Board of Education, and is responsible for attending their monthly meetings as the student representative. As president of the Latin Honor Society, she leads their meetings each month and helps teach elementary students Latin. She is Vice President of the Maryland Junior Classical League, winning the 3rd place in the advance certamen at their State Convention. She is also President of the National Honor Society, President of the National Art Honor Society, Co-founder of the Art Club at Easton High School, and has been the Editor of the Yearbook Club since 10th grade.

For community service, is a buddy for Unified Sports with the Elementary School. She helped start a tutoring program, host a charity event that raised \$2000 for Johns Hopkins Children's Center, and paint a mural for a local dentist office. Since 10th grade, she has been a member of the Ecology Club and Key Club, both which participate in community service projects such as picking up trash in the community and teaching STEM to elementary students. Alondra participated in Project Clean Stream, helping to clean local waterways. She has volunteered at the local Waterfowl Festival since 9th grade, helping in many capacities including assisting the Financial Director. She is also an intern for the Art Academy Museum and MY Tech Clinic.

*“When you are able to let go of the fear of failure at last and simply ride the waves, there will be great satisfaction in singing the words
‘I did it.’” – Alondra Moreno Santana*



**Ilka Tona, 12th Grade
Middletown High School, Frederick County**

Nominated by Paula Langley, School Counselor

Ilka was born in Rwanda, and has lived in three different countries – Rwanda, Sierra Leone, and the United States. In 2016, her family immigrated to the United States, settling in Maryland. Ilka is currently a senior at Middletown High School, and she has been very involved in academic and extracurricular activities.

Ilka has made it her mission to expose herself to the most rigorous coursework possible. As a freshman, she was one of 17 students to take Advanced Placement (AP) US History. She was also the only freshman to take French 4. During her time at Middletown High School (MHS), Ilka has taken and has excelled in 11 AP courses. She is also enrolled in two Frederick Community College math courses. Ilka is ranked third out of 258 students; her GPA is a negligible 0.021 less than the first ranked. Her quest for knowledge is not limited to the instruction she receives; she is constantly reading non-fiction and fiction. Ilka is the only MHS senior to have accomplished the “Maryland State Seal of Bilingualism” in her junior year. This award recognizes students who excel in language learning, which is measured by rigorous proficiency assessments. Ilka is highly proficient in both English and French.

Ilka is a strong, passionate, empathic leader at MHS. She serves as President in three MHS academic organizations, while leading her peers with kindness and purpose. Ilka is enthusiastic about making a difference in the world. Working as the President of Key Club has been most important to her because she directly impacts her local community. She leads other members with volunteer projects, such as Relay for Life, Salvation Army and Kiwanis fundraisers, making blankets for the Linus Project, and food and book drives. Additionally, Ilka volunteers with her family at their church.

The most impressive item on her resume is Ilka’s neuroscience internship with the Johns Hopkins University NIMH Center for Brain Sciences. Ilka successfully completed the arduous application and was accepted as an intern in the competitive summer internship in 2022. Ilka researched various topics in neuroscience, but she was also able to choose a subtopic of interest to research. Ilka focused on how trauma reshapes the brain. She focused on the neurobiological and chemical imprints of trauma in victims. The program emphasized collaboration and team building, and solidified Ilka’s interest in majoring in neuroscience on a pre-medicine track, hoping to go to medical school and specialize in neurology.

She is the leader of many organizations and is a model student. In addition to her leadership at MHS, she has recently been appointed to the County Council Immigrant Affairs Board, where she serves as a student representative. She is a strong advocate for immigrant youth. She actively recommends policy to support the Frederick County immigrant community. Ilka is currently working as a junior volunteer at Frederick Health Hospital. Ilka is talented and creative. She gardens, paints watercolors, writes, studies art history, reads, knits and crochets. She loves life and believes in the beauty of everyday experiences and discovering new, artistic endeavors. She also has a love for Formula One racing.

“To live authentically and unapologetically is to be free.” – Ilka Tona



**Amanda Wang, 10th Grade
River Hill High School, Howard County**

Nominated by Dr. Chao Wu, Howard County Board of Education

Amanda Wang has a perfect 4.0/4.0 GPA and is challenging herself with 4 Advanced Placement classes and 2 dual enrollment college classes in her sophomore year. Amanda serves as Treasurer in her high school’s largest service club, Angel’s Network and is an active member of the River Hill Village Association Teen Advisory Committee. She served the Student Government Associate at her Chinese school for 5 years as Treasurer, Secretary, and Vice President. Amanda is also an active Girl Scout for over eight years and a Silver Award recipient. Amanda has earned the Presidential Volunteer Service Gold Award for four consecutive years.

Amanda believes that youth have the power to create change. She started her own community service project during her 4th grade summer. From 2016 to 2018, Amanda drew 200 pieces of self-designed animal T-shirts with the help of her brother, Arthur, and friends and raised over \$3000 for the Ellicott City flood relief.

In 2020, Amanda and Arthur started a nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization, Clarksville Youth Care Group(CYCG), whose mission is to empower youth through meaningful community service. Over three years, 150 students have stepped up and made a positive impact on the community.

In 2020, after noticing the nation-wide PPE shortage, 53 CYCG students from 15 schools made 3660 reusable DIY face shields and donated them to 100+ hospitals and clinics across seven states.

In 2021, Amanda initiated the Teacher Care Kits project with Arthur, hand-sewing school-themed mask sets to support teachers practically and emotionally after discovering the large stress educators experienced during COVID. CYCG delivered 1700+ kits to 64 Howard County Public School System(HCPSS) schools. Amanda also sewed masks for low-income families, band students, as well as government officials. She was nominated for 2022 HCPSS Friend of Education Award.

In 2022, Amanda initiated the Back-to-School Appreciation Kits to support the larger school community including teachers, staff and bus drivers. CYCG handmade 1000+ Appreciation Kits to 50 schools, and the Transportation Office. The appreciation kits were showcased at Howard County Library: Miller Branch. Amanda also led a summer Farmer’s Market booth to raise funds by selling DIY products to promote youth community service and upcycling. She coordinated a blanket drive that donated 200+ blankets to hospitals, homeless shelters and needed families. CYCG was honored with the “Rise to the Challenge with Sunrise Distinction Award” by Howard County Executive Calvin Ball and was the only youth group honoree.

“Everyone has the potential to be a leader.” – Amanda Wang

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