



# 2019

MARYLAND COMMISSION FOR WOMEN

# Annual Report



JULY 1, 2018  
JUNE 30, 2019



# MARYLAND COMMISSION FOR WOMEN

*July 2018 – June 2019*

## Commissioners

**Yun Jung Yang, Chair**

**Tawanda A. Bailey, First Vice Chair**

**Carole Jaar Sepe, Second Vice Chair**

**Homayara Haque Aziz (ret. April 2019)**

**Lee Bachu**

**Tammy Bresnahan**

**Deborah Cartee**

**Gloria Chang**

**Maureen G. Colburn**

**Amanda L. Costley**

**Melissa Hough Curtin**

**Eugenia Henry**

**Lauren Lambert**

**Patricia Lambert (appt. May 2018)**

**Bonnie Nelson Luna**

**Brenda McChriston**

**Ishrat Memon**

**April Nyman**

**Roberta Pardo**

**Patrisha Robinson (ret. October 2018)**

**Corinna Yi-Yuan Kuo Shen**

**Evelyne S. Steward**

**Ummu Bradley Thomas**

**Tamara England Wilson**

**Marylou Yam**

## Staff

**Judith Vaughan-Prather**

**Executive Director**

**Tammy Wise**

**Management Associate**

## Volunteers

**Program Assistant: Bev Thoms**

**High School Student Intern: Sydney Yi**

# MARYLAND COMMISSION FOR WOMEN

## 2018 – 2019 ANNUAL REPORT

### TABLE OF CONTENTS

Maryland Commission for Women.....	4
Message from the Secretary.....	5
Message from the Chair .....	6
Report of the Executive Director.....	7
Voices of Maryland Women Listening Tour.....	11
Commissions for Women Roundtable .....	17
Legislation & Public Policy .....	19
2019 Hall of Fame & Women of Tomorrow.....	21
Status of Women in Maryland (SWIM) Project .....	25
Women’s Leadership Summit Planning.....	26

## MARYLAND COMMISSION FOR WOMEN

---

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
- Direct attention to critical problems confronting women

Commissioners are appointed by the Governor to four-year terms, with confirmation by the Maryland State Senate, and serve without compensation.



**Members of the Maryland Commission for Women at the March 20, 2019 Hall of Fame/Women of Tomorrow Ceremony.** Pictured from left to right, back row: Commissioners Roberta Pardo, Brenda McChriston, April Nyman, Marylou Yam, Eugenia Henry, Deborah Cartee, Corinna Shen, Gloria Chang, Tamara England Wilson, Lauren Lambert, Maureen Colburn, Amanda Costley, and Evelyne Steward; Front row: Bonnie Nelson Luna, Tawanda Bailey, Yun Jung Yang, Carole Sepe and Ishrat Memon.

## MESSAGE FROM THE SECRETARY

### LOURDES R. PADILLA

---



The Maryland Department of Human Services (DHS) is the state’s primary social service provider, serving over one million people annually. DHS, through its 24 local departments of social services, aggressively pursues opportunities to assist people in economic need, provide preventive services, and protect vulnerable children and adults in each of Maryland’s 23 counties and Baltimore City. We are also home to the Maryland Commission for Women.

The Commission for Women helps DHS achieve its goals by serving as a voice for over half the population of our state – and for some of our most vulnerable residents. The Commission’s role as an advocate for the women and girls of Maryland positions it as a valued advisor on issues including domestic violence and sexual assault, human trafficking, mothers and poverty, work and family, equal access to opportunity, and much more.

We commend the Commissioners’ work to recognize women’s contributions to our state’s history and to encourage young women to exceed all expectations as they create our state’s future. We were inspired by the lives of the eight extraordinary women who were inducted into the Maryland Women’s Hall of Fame and the five exceptional young women who were honored with the “Women of Tomorrow Award” in March 2019.

DHS so very much appreciates the hard work, expertise and time donated by the 25 volunteer members of the Commission to help make Maryland a place where all our residents lead productive lives as respected members of our community. We are proud to have the Commission as our partner as we pursue our vision of a Maryland where people independently support themselves and their families and where individuals are safe from abuse and neglect.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Lourdes R. Padilla".

Lourdes R. Padilla  
Secretary, Maryland Department of Human Services

## MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

### YUN JUNG YANG, ESQ.

---



It is my honor to present the annual report of the Maryland Commission for Women, covering our work from July 2018 through June 2019. It has been an extraordinary year, and we owe much appreciation to Governor Larry Hogan and to Secretary Lourdes Padilla for their constant support.

During this past year, the Commission completed and published the report of its two-year long Voices of Maryland Women Listening Tour and released the report and its findings at a conference on the campus of Notre Dame of Maryland University in Baltimore on August 18, 2018. The voices of the women who participated in the 19 public forums and the state-wide on-line survey that made up that listening tour now serve as our guide in setting the Commission's agenda and priorities.

Prominent among those voices was the concern that there are too few women in leadership positions – in the public sector, the corporate world and the halls of academia. To address that issue, the Commission for Women has begun planning a women's leadership summit to be held in commemoration of the ratification of the 19th amendment to the U.S. Constitution, guaranteeing that voting rights in the U.S. may not be denied on the basis of sex. The summit, which will be held on the exact 100th anniversary of that date – August 26, 2020 – will be a partnership between the Commission for Women, and many other women's advocacy groups in our state.

In addition, the Commission has initiated in-depth research on the Status of Women in Maryland (SWIM). Through the Listening Tour, we heard the opinions and concerns of women and girls across the state. The next step is to examine the facts underlying those concerns. The SWIM research project will highlight data describing the position of Maryland women and girls in a number of areas including education, the economy, the workplace, health, the justice system and, of course, leadership. The research project was designed in this year, and will get underway in the fall of 2019, to be completed and published at the 2020 Women's Leadership Summit. In March of 2019, we inducted eight absolutely extraordinary women, including Augusta Chissell who played a critical role in the Suffrage Movement, into the Maryland Women's Hall of Fame. We also honored five outstanding high school students as Women of Tomorrow, and we undertook an ambitious legislative advocacy agenda.

It has been my privilege to work with my colleagues on the Commission for Women and to have been elected Chair of this extraordinary organization. My thanks go to my sister officers on the Commission – First Vice Chair Tawanda Bailey and Second Vice Chair Carole Jaar Sepe – to the committee chairs and to all the Commissioners who devote so much of their time, effort and expertise to this important work.

## REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR JUDITH VAUGHAN-PRATHER

---

On June 21, 2018, the Commission for Women elected its officers for the coming two years. It was the first time in a long time that all three offices were open and three new officers were elected: Yun Jung Yang, Chair; Tawanda Bailey, Vice Chair and Carole Jaar Sepe, Secretary. Under the new leadership, the Commission initiated a summer study of its much discussed and outdated bylaws, with recommendations coming to the full Commission at the first meeting of the new program year.



On September 20, the Commission unanimously approved the thoroughly revised bylaws. Most of the revisions were to reorganize the content, eliminate duplications and resolve conflicting rules. In addition to all that, five more significant changes were approved:

1. The titles and responsibilities of the three presiding officers were changed from “Chair, Vice Chair and Secretary” to “Chair, First Vice Chair and Second Vice Chair” to more accurately reflect the actual duties and responsibilities.
2. The order of ascendancy in the instance of an officer vacancy occurring mid-term was revised such that the Vice Chair assumes the role of Chair for the remainder of the term and the Second Vice Chair assumes the role of First Vice Chair, etc.
3. The six standing committees were reduced to two: Policy and Legislation (PAL) and Achievement and Recognition Ceremony (ARC – covering the Hall of Fame and Women of Tomorrow Awards).
4. The capacity was established for up to two ad hoc committees to address specific issues or new initiatives in any year, and
5. The eligibility for the Women of Tomorrow Awards was limited to high school students only.

As the Commission began its new program year, operating under new rules, its committees swung into action. The reports of the work of those committees follow, and the Commission undertook a number of other activities over the course of the year:

- In July, 2018 Commission Chair Yang and Executive Director Vaughan-Prather participated in an event in Queen Anne’s County launching the initiative to establish a Museum of Maryland Women’s History in Centerville.
- The Executive Director represented the Commission at the conference of the National Association of Commissions for Women in Los Angeles, August 1 – 4, participating as a speaker in a panel launching NACW’s Voices of Women in America project, modeled after the Maryland Commission for Women’s Voices of Maryland Women Listening Tour.

- On August 9, the staff represented the Commission at the Governor’s press conference on human trafficking.
- In response to the August 18 release of the Voices of Maryland Women Listening Tour and Survey Report, Chair Yang, accompanied by the Executive Director, participated in a number of events:
  - September 11 – TV News interview at Prince George’s Cable TV
  - September 15 – Featured speaker at AAUW Montgomery County’s meeting
  - September 22 – Panelist on women’s issues at a Museum Day presentation at the Maryland Museum of African Art
  - September 25 – Received a citation from the Governor for the project
- On September 19, Commission staff met with staff of the Maryland Department of Behavioral Health Gender Specific Services to consider strategies for collaboration
- At its October meeting, the Commission received a briefing from Amanda Rodriguez, Chief Counsel for Policy and Legal Advocacy who discussed the work of the University of Maryland SAFE Center for Human Trafficking Survivors, and in response, it took two actions:
  - A formal relationship between the Commission and the SAFE Center was established in the form of a liaison; Commissioner Costley was appointed to serve in that role, and
  - The commission agreed to collaborate with the Maryland SAFE Center to help build a network of attorneys providing low-cost legal services to victims of human trafficking.
- The MCW was a “promotional partner” for the Maryland Women’s Business Center’s annual awards luncheon on October 17. The Commission helped publicize the event and displayed materials at the luncheon. Commissioner Memon represented the MCW at the event which was attended by 150 entrepreneurs and business women.
- A new 8-panel (4-panel front and back) brochure outlining the MCW’s mission and activities was designed and published.
- MCW staff met with the Deputy Assistant Secretary and the Director of Discretionary Grants in the Division of Workforce Development and Adult Learning at the Maryland Department of Labor, Licensing & Regulation (DLLR) in Baltimore on October 30 to discuss possibilities for collaboration between the Commission for Women and DLLR. DLLR was seeking funding from the U.S. Department of Labor Women’s Bureau to develop job-readiness services to women recovering from substance addictions. The Commission wrote a letter of support for DLLR’s proposal for funds, and later assisted with state-wide outreach to solicit proposals from potential service providers. Commissioner Sepe participated in a committee with DLLR staff to select the successful bidder for this service.
- The Commission, at the request of the Governor’s office, provided recommendations for the Mother of the Year Award sponsored by American Mothers, Inc. Commissioners Pardo and Yang attended a ceremony at the State House on November 2 where the Governor presented a citation to his nominee.
- On November 13, Chair Yang was presented the Rita C. Davidson Award by the Maryland Women’s Bar Association at a ceremony in Hanover. Commissioners and staff attended.
- The Commission Staff participated in a conference at the invitation of AARP in Washington D.C., discussing positive workplace strategies.



- Emily Saunders Plummer, a woman enslaved on the Three Sisters plantation in Lanham in the 1800s, was inducted in the Maryland Women’s Hall of Fame in 2017. An event in her honor and celebrating her induction was held on Sunday, February 10 at the Riversdale Mansion. Commissioners Bailey and Thomas represented the Commission at the event.
- The Commission participated in several Women’s History Month activities in March:
  - On March 8, International Women’s Day, the MCW’s three officers (Commissioners Yang, Bailey and Sepe) and the Executive Director met with a delegation of women from the Philippines, to discuss advocacy for women and girls in the U.S. and the Philippines. The delegation was brought here by the World Trade Center Institute International Visitor Leadership Program in Baltimore.
  - On March 10, Commission Chair Yang was presented the “Shining Star Award” by Montgomery Women at its annual “Power Tea” event. Also attending were Commissioner Shen and the MCW Executive Director.
  - On March 12, First Vice Chair Tawanda Bailey joined the Frederick County Commission for Women in receiving a proclamation of Women’s History Month by Frederick County Executive Jan Gardner.
  - On March 21, Governor Hogan issued a proclamation of Women’s History Month in Maryland. It was presented to the Commission for Women at the annual Women’s Hall of Fame/Women of Tomorrow Awards Ceremony.
  - On March 25, Commissioner Cartee represented the Commission at a reception featuring the paintings of Maryland First Lady Yumi Hogan at the Weise Gallery in Baltimore.
  - On March 31, Commissioners Bailey and Sepe participated as speakers in a panel discussion at a conference sponsored by the Maryland chapter of the National Organization for Women (NOW) and the Maryland Women’s Heritage Center. Commissioners Lambert and Bachu also attended.
- Commissioners Bailey and Curtin represented the Commission on the planning committee, and Commissioner Curtin attended a three-hour conference at the Maryland Correctional Institution for Women held on April 13 featuring round-table discussions with professional facilitators focusing on mental health issues.
- On April 28, Commissioners Thomas, Shen, Chang, Luna, Yang and Memon, along with the MCW staff, attended an event with a visiting delegation from the Global Federation of Chinese Business Women. The Global Federation is chaired by MCW Commissioner Henry. The next day, Chair Yang, at Commissioner Henry’s invitation, was the featured speaker at a meeting with the Federation in Annapolis, describing the work of the MCW. She was accompanied by Commissioner Shen and Executive Director Vaughan-Prather.
- In the summer of 2018 and throughout the month of May 2019, high school student intern Sydney Yi worked in the MCW office. Among other tasks, she developed an index of all 180 inductees in the Hall of Fame, by field of endeavor.
- In May, the Commission supported the Maryland SAFE Center by helping publicize an Attorney Training on the issue of human trafficking.
- On May 17, Executive Director Vaughan-Prather participated as a panelist on “Public Sector Efforts to Increase Women’s Economic Empowerment” in a program hosted by the Institute for Women’s Policy Research and the Program on Gender Analysis in Economics of the Department of Economics at the American University, sponsored by the U.S. Department of State’s Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs Fulbright program.

- At its June 10 meeting, the Commission received a briefing from the American Association of University Women Senior Program Associate, Sarah Spencer, about AAUW’s new Work Smart Initiative. The project is designed to teach women wage negotiation skills as part of a larger effort to reduce the gender-based wage gap in the U.S.
- Commissioners Bachu and Thomas, along with MCW Chair Yang and Executive Director Vaughan-Prather attended the June 13 “Suffrage Tea” hosted by the Commission to Commemorate the 100th Anniversary of the Passage of the 19th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, and First Lady Yumi Hogan at the U.S. Naval Academy in Annapolis to launch a year of celebrations and commemorations.
- Executive Director Vaughan-Prather met with the newly appointed members of the Prince George’s County Commission for Women on June 18 to discuss the work of Commissions for Women in general, the National Association of Commissions for Women, and the work of the MCW specifically.
- Over the course of the year, the Commission emailed a total of 27 issue and health alerts to its distribution lists of more than 1250 individuals and posted more 50 announcements on its Facebook page, with 2,683 followers as of June 30, 2019.
- In addition to all these activities, Commissioners served as liaisons representing the Commission for Women in the meetings of the following organizations:
  - Maryland Women’s Heritage Center
  - Maryland Women’s History Museum
  - The WAG Foundation – the Fund for Maryland’s Women and Girls
  - The Maryland Legislative Agenda for Women (MLAW)
  - The Commission to Commemorate the 100th Anniversary of the Passage of the 19th Amendment to the Constitution of the United States
  - The Women’s Legislative Briefing Planning Committee
  - Incarcerated Women Moving Forward Steering Committee
  - The National Association of Commission for Women (NACW)
  - The Maryland Maternal Mortality Review Board
  - The Maryland SAFE Center

## VOICES OF MARYLAND WOMEN CONFERENCE REPORT OF THE LISTENING TOUR AND SURVEY

August 18, 2018  
Notre Dame of Maryland University

On a warm Saturday morning in August, more than 100 individuals gathered on the beautiful campus of Notre Dame of Maryland University (NDMU) in Baltimore City. They traveled from across the state – as far away as Garrett County in the far western panhandle and Caroline County on the eastern shore – for a briefing on the report of the Maryland Commission for Women’s Voices of Maryland Women Listening Tour and Survey initiative.



The Commission launched its Voices of Maryland Women Listening Tour in July 2016 and traveled more than 3000 miles across the state over the next two years conducting a series of 19 public forums inviting women to “talk to us” about the challenges they face in their everyday lives. During this time, the Commission also conducted an on-line survey, in four languages, so that women who could not get to the forums could still lend their voices to the project.

The goals of this initiative were to:

- Assess the needs of women across Maryland’s diverse regions
- Identify and define challenges facing the women of our state
- Strengthen collaboration with and among local women’s groups, service providers and county Commissions for Women
- Develop an action plan to address identified issues

More than 1400 women lent their voices to this initiative. The forums attracted 723 Maryland residents and another 684 completed online surveys. Listening sessions were held in collaboration with each of the 14 county Commissions for Women across the state. At each public forum, the participants identified what they considered to be the “top five” challenges facing women in their jurisdictions. The result is a report outlining the “top five” issues identified by Maryland women state-wide and steps they thought would help address those issues in their communities. DHS Secretary Lourdes Padilla was briefing on the findings on August 10 and Lt. Governor Boyd Rutherford was briefing on August 13.

The August 18, 2018 conference was designed to release the report and to discuss further how county Commissions for Women and others may address the challenges identified.



The conference was opened by Delegate Mary Washington who welcomed the conferees to Maryland Legislative District 43 and brought greetings from the city of Baltimore and from the Maryland General Assembly. She eloquently urged the attendees to think and act inclusively as they address the issues under consideration at the conference.



Notre Dame’s president, Dr. Marylou Yam, welcomed all those in attendance to the University’s campus and described its rich history of encouraging and supporting women’s education and the movement toward greater equality.

Maryland Commission for Women Chair Yun Jung Yang, who led the Voices of Maryland Women initiative, and Commissioner Ummu Bradley Thomas presented a detailed briefing on the project and the report of its findings, including the “top five” issues identified by the women across the state who participated.

MCW Vice Chair Tawanda Bailey moderated a panel discussion, with an expert on each of the top five issues, including:

- Dr. Inga James, President and Executive Director, Heartly House in Frederick and President, Maryland Network Against Domestic Violence Board of Directors



- Sulma Guzmán, Esq., Workplace Justice Project, the Public Justice Center in Baltimore
- Kim Burton, Director, Older Adults Programs, Mental Health Association of Maryland
- Major General Linda Singh, Adjutant General, Maryland National Guard
- Margaret Williams, Executive Director, Maryland Family Network

Following the briefing and panel presentations, the conferees divided into “Table Top Discussions” on each of the five issues. At each table, in addition to the panelist on that topic, an “issue expert” joined the conversation. Issue experts included:

- Dr. Marylou Yam, President, NDMU
- Laura Jessick, SAFE/SART Policy Advocate at the Maryland Coalition Against Sexual Assault
- Nikki Thompson, Senior Policy Advocate at the Job Opportunities Task Force
- Dr. Anne Lin, Dean of the School of Pharmacy, NDMU
- Joan Webb Scornaienchi, Executive Director, HC DrugFree
- Michaele Cohen, President of the Maryland Legislative Agenda for Women
- Christina Peusch, Executive Director of the Maryland State Child Care Association

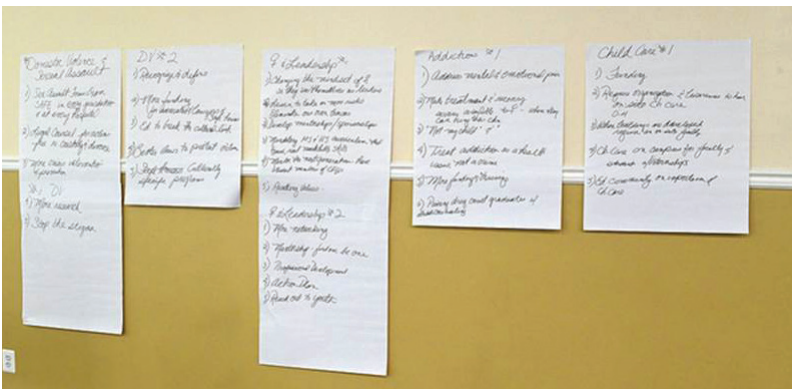




The Table Top discussants were asked to consider the “top five issues” identified in the report and covered in the panel discussion, and to develop lists of actions that each of the participants might undertake to address that issue in her or his own community or organization. Commissioner Tamara Wilson moderated the reports to the full conference of the strategies they identified:

### Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault

1. Advocate better laws to protect victims: actively support the re-authorization of the Violence Against Women Act (VOWA)
2. Insist that Sexual Assault Forensic Exam (SAFE) Kits be available in every jurisdiction and at every hospital, throughout the state
3. Recognize and define what is meant by domestic violence and sexual assault
  - Use education to break the cultural link to violence against women
  - Work to develop culturally specific programs
  - Ensure that both women and men are educated on this issue
  - Acknowledge and work to eliminate the stigma associated with domestic violence and sexual assault
4. Support the provision of more crisis intervention and prevention services
  - Encourage more funding for advocates, lawyers and safe houses for survivors
  - Advocate free legal counsel regarding divorce and child custody for survivors
5. Ask for more research on this issue



### **Paid Time Off**

1. Develop programs that provide workers information about existing laws to encourage wider usage
2. Provide information and trainings for employers to ensure effective implementation of current laws and policies
3. Recognize employers and showcase CEOs who are implementing women-friendly programs ( i.e., best places to work awards and/or certifications)
4. Advocate expansion of the Family and Medical Leave Act ( FMLA) to provide paid leave (Commissions could lead effort as a priority on their legislative agenda)
5. Review the Maryland 2018 Family and Medical Leave Insurance (FAMLI) Task Force Report to determine next steps for implementation



### **Women and Drug Abuse or Addictions**

1. Demand training for medical professionals on appropriate pain management strategies for both physical and emotional pain
2. Advocate treatment and recovery services that are appropriate for women with children
3. Campaign for rehabilitation services for pregnant women and their newborn babies
4. Ask for more funding for rehabilitation services and more training for service providers
5. Promote the treatment of addiction as a health issue, not a crime, including:
  - Addressing the mental and emotional pain that leads to substance abuse and addiction
  - Enhancing “drug court” by offering graduates affordable counseling
  - Encouraging programs like “Not My Child” and other proven effective services



### **Too Few Women in Leadership Positions**

1. Develop mentorship and sponsorship initiatives for women and girls, such as:
  - “Find One/Be One” or “Mentor Maryland”
  - Student members of Commissions for Women and other boards
2. Build leadership programs into middle and high school curriculum that provide real-world skills and encourage girls to advance in corporate, public and academic careers.
3. Promote professional development that encourages women leaders in the corporate world as well as in politics
4. Actively expand inclusive networking opportunities
5. Encourage women to see themselves as leaders



## Access to Affordable, Quality Child Care

1. Support increased funding for child care services
2. Encourage child care facilities on college campuses for both faculty and students; include internships for students preparing for careers in early childhood education
3. Advocate incentives that encourage organizations and businesses to provide their employees with on-site child care for ages 0 – 4 years
4. Propose that new construction of office buildings includes space for on-site child care facilities
5. Educate the community on the importance of child care



Delegate Trent Kittleman congratulated the conferees on the meaningful discussions and insightful recommendations. She mentioned the importance of working across political party lines on issues of common concern and described the work of the Caucus of Maryland Women Legislators. She invited the conferees to be in touch with the Caucus and with individual legislators to continue to advance these proposals.

Speaker Pro-Tem of the Maryland House of Delegates Adrienne Jones closed the conference with an inspiring call to action. She advised the attendees not to be complacent, that it is not enough to attend a conference like this one. It is important to put into action the strategies discussed today. She encouraged the participants to contact their legislators, to work to support these proposals, and to take the lead in advocating for Maryland's women and girls.







# COMMISSIONS FOR WOMEN ROUND TABLE MEETING

## REPORT OF THE LISTENING TOUR AND SURVEY

Saturday, November 17, 2018  
Notre Dame of Maryland University  
Baltimore, MD

**O**n a chilly, rainy day in November, 32 representatives of 11 Commissions for Women from the various jurisdictions of Maryland gathered to share information, ideas and strategies for improving the lives of women and girls in their communities.

Maryland has 23 counties and the city of Baltimore. Fourteen of these have an officially established advisory board on women's issues – a Commission for Women. Ten of those commissions sent a delegation to this meeting, organized by the Maryland state Commission for Women (MCW). Represented at the meeting were delegations Anne Arundel, Baltimore, Calvert, Charles, Frederick, Harford, Howard, Montgomery, Prince George's and Washington Counties.

The Commission for Women Roundtable Meeting was held in concert with the annual fall conference of the Maryland Legislative Agenda for Women (MLAW). The MCW invited each county/city Commission for Women (CFW) to send two representatives to the MLAW Conference and to stay later for the CFW Roundtable Meeting. In this way, the CFW representatives can hear from state-wide women's advocacy organizations about issues that will be considered in the Maryland General Assembly in 2019. They then have time to meet with representatives of other Commissions for Women in our state to learn from each other and to discuss strategies and issues unique to these governmentally-established advisory boards.

Three speakers addressed the Roundtable: Mary Margaret Revell Goodwin discussed the plans to establish a Museum of Maryland Women's History in Queen Anne's County – with the goal of opening in 2020. Amanda Rodriguez of the University of Maryland SAFE Center for victims of human trafficking invited the commissions to help establish a state-wide network of attorneys who will offer legal services at a reduced fee to trafficking victims. Amanda Costley discussed the Maryland Women's Hall of Fame and Women of Tomorrow Awards and urged the commissioners to consider nominating women and girls from their communities for these honors.

After these presentations, the MCW provided a briefing on its Voices of Maryland Women Listening Tour and the findings in its recently published report, outlining the "top five" issues identified by the women who participated in the public forums and the survey. The commissioners were asked to share their commissions' top three projects for this year, and charts were created to see whether and how the commissions are addressing those top five issues:

In addition to their work on these issues, the Commissions for Women across the state are working on many other challenging and important projects:

- Eliminating discrimination against women wearing hijabs (Baltimore County)
- Financial literacy, including senior women and Social Security (Calvert County)
- Women's Health Expo (Calvert County)

- Financial literacy programs for youth, young adults and adults (Charles County)
- Women’s History Award (Charles County)
- Purses for a Purpose Project for homeless women (Charles County)
- Safe after-prom parties (Charles County)
- Comedy with a Cause – for veterans transitioning back into the community (Charles County)
- Writing to political candidates asking each “What are you going to do for women?” (Frederick County)
- Five events each month educating community on existing resources (Frederick County)
- “Hope in Handbags” project for homeless families (Harford County)
- Jobs Expo (Harford County)
- Feminine Hygiene Product Drive for women’s shelters (Howard County)
- Annual Women’s Legislative Briefing (Montgomery County)
- Status of Women Report – every 10 years (Montgomery County)
- Organizing a Lobby Day in Annapolis (Montgomery County)
- Financial Literacy Programs (Montgomery County)
- Services for recently released incarcerated women (Montgomery County)
- Breast Cancer Awareness Walk (Washington County)
- Women’s Expo with 16 seminars (Washington County)
- Hosting meetings and forums in the community (Washington County)

Commissions for Women generally have big challenges and scarce resources. All in attendance agreed that they can share ideas, and encouraged each other to stay in touch. A successful project in one jurisdiction can serve as a model for a successful project in another. The local CFWs were strongly encouraged to support and participate in the annual Women’s Legislative Briefing in Montgomery County on January 27, 2019, and to consider helping the UMD Safe Center develop its state-wide network of attorneys for victims of human



trafficking. The Commissions for Women in Maryland can work together, and independently to address issues at the local level and those that can be addressed collectively at the state level.

## LEGISLATION AND PUBLIC POLICY COMMITTEE

**Chair:** Commissioner Tammy Bresnahan

**Members:** Maureen Colburn, Amanda Costley, Melissa Curtin, Carole Jaar Sepe



The Maryland Commission for Women’s enabling legislation charges it with the responsibility to “inform the executive and legislative branches of government on issues concerning women, including offering testimony on these issues before legislative and administrative bodies.” To carry out that duty, the Commission wrote to the Maryland General Assembly numerous times over the course of the year offering advice on legislation that impacts women. In January, 2019 the Commission send letters of congratulations to all the Maryland General Assembly standing committee chairs and vice chairs. During the 2019 Legislative Session, the Commission delivered testimony on the following 13 bills:

- HB0122/SB0209 – Protective Orders – Relief Eligibility – Rape and Sexual Offenses  
This bill amends the definition of persons eligible for relief in a protective order to include a victim of rape or sexual offense or attempted rape or sexual offense in any degree.  
FAILED
- HB1107/SB0518 – Discrimination in Employment – Pregnancy and Childbirth  
This bill would have expanded existing pregnancy discrimination laws to include not only women with pregnancy-related disabilities but also women with healthy pregnancies who also need reasonable accommodations.  
DIED IN COMMITTEE
- •SB0264 – Family Law – Child Support for Post Secondary Education – Jurisdiction of the Court:  
This bill would have allowed the court to retain jurisdiction for child support until age 21 for those enrolled in post-secondary college education or a vocational training program.  
UNFAVORABLE REPORT
- HB0634/SB0738 – Labor and Employment – Salary Information Disclosures  
The bill was intended to ensure that women do not carry lower earnings and pay discrimination with them from job to job by prohibiting employers from seeking and relying on job applicants’ salary history  
DIED IN COMMITTEE
- HB1249/SB0657 – HIV Prevention for Rape Victims: This bill would have provided rape survivors with emergency medication to prevent HIV infection following an assault  
PASSED
- HB0782/SB0691 – Criminal Proceedings – Motion to Vacate – Human Trafficking (True Freedom Act of 2019): The proposed bill would have expanded Maryland’s current vacating convictions law to allow criminalized survivors of human trafficking to remove crimes other than prostitution from their criminal records  
DIED IN COMMITTEE
- HB0715/SB0419 – Correctional Services – Prerelease Unit for Women – Requirement to Operate: The bill would have required the Commissioner of Corrections to provide prelease services for incarcerated women equal to those provided to incarcerated men.  
DIED IN COMMITTEE

During the Commission's April 18 meeting, it decided that if these bills are introduced in the 2020 session of the Maryland General Assembly with the same provisions, the Commission will support them again and does not have to reconsider each one.

In addition to this work, the Commission also participated in the Maryland Legislative Agenda for Women (MLAW) although it did not sign onto the MLAW legislative platform this year. A delegation of commissioners and staff attended the MLAW Annual Fall Conference in Baltimore and its legislative wrap-up session in the spring in Annapolis. Commissioner Bachu and Curtin served as members of the MLAW Board of Directors.

The Commission was also an active sponsor of the 2019 Women's Legislative Briefing. The Briefing was held Sunday, January 27 at the Universities at Shady Grove in Rockville. This is the largest annual women's conference in the state with an attendance of 500 – 700. Commissioner Bresnahan and Executive Director Vaughan-Prather participated as panelists. Commission Chair Yang attended the President's Networking Session and Management Associate Tammy Wise created and staffed the MCW exhibit, with assistance from high school student Sidney Yi. The MCW was a community co-sponsor of the Briefing.

In the 2018 session, the Commission supported and the Maryland General Assembly passed SB0598/HB0797 - Correctional Services - Inmates - Menstrual Hygiene Products which mandates "each correctional facility in the Division of Corrections to have a written policy and procedure in place requiring that menstrual hygiene products be provided at no cost to a female inmate at certain times; requiring the Director of the Patuxent Institution and the managing official of a correctional facility to ensure that the correctional facility has a sufficient supply of menstrual hygiene products to meet the needs of the inmate population at all times." Governor Hogan signed that bill into law and it was to take effect October 1, 2018. However, on June 5, 2019, the Washington Post reported that some eight months later, the law is still not being implemented. The Commission wrote to the newly appointed Secretary of the Maryland Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services commending his stated commitment to take immediate steps to enforce this law and urging him to ensure that it is implemented fully and as soon as possible. The MCW further asked that he share with it the steps that will be taken and the timeline for full implementation of SB0598/HB0797, and offered to be of any appropriate assistance in ensuring that women incarcerated in this state have equal access to services and equitable living conditions as incarcerated men.

# 2019 ACHIEVEMENT AND RECOGNITION COMMITTEE

## MARYLAND WOMEN'S HALL OF FAME & MARYLAND WOMEN OF TOMORROW AWARDS

**Chair:** Deborah Cartee

**Members:** Amanda Costley, Bonnie Luna, Ishrat Memon, April Nyman, Carole Jaar Sepe, Corinna Shen, Ummu Bradley Thomas



Deborah Cartee, Chair Achievements & Recognition Committee

On March 21, 2019, a crowd of nearly 200 attended the culminating ceremony celebrating the accomplishments of Maryland women and young girls. The Maryland Commission for Women along with the Women Legislators of the Maryland General Assembly inducted eight extraordinary women into the Maryland Women's Hall of Fame at a program in the Miller Senate Office Building (MSOB) in Annapolis. The ceremony included the introduction of five exceptional high school students who were presented the Women of Tomorrow Award. Former Ambassador and Congresswoman Connie Morella guided the program as Mistress of Ceremonies. Maryland's First Lady Yumi Hogan attended the ceremony presenting a proclamation of Women's History Month in this state. DHS Secretary Lourdes Padilla brought greetings and presented each of the honorees with a citation from Governor Larry Hogan. Senator Susan Lee sponsored the Commission's use of the MSOB Conference Centers for the event.

**The Maryland Women's Hall of Fame** was established in 1985 as a joint initiative of the Commission for Women and the Women Legislators to recognize and honor Maryland women whose accomplishments are of historic significance to the state and to provide an archive of their biographies. Since 1985, more than 180 Maryland women have been inducted into the Hall of Fame including Rachel Carson, Harriet Tubman, Clara Barton, Billie Holiday, Henrietta Lacks and The Honorable Connie Morella.



Yun Jung Yang, MCW Chair with First Lady Yumi Hogan



The Honorable Connie Morella



2019 Maryland Women's Hall of Fame Inductees (L-R): Fred Evans accepting for Marielsa Bernard, Phyllis Trickett, Lorna Catling (niece of Virginia Hall), Treasurer Rosie Rios, DHS Secretary Lourdes Padilla, Carla Chissell (great niece of Augusta Chissell), Johnette Lanham (for Evelyn Townsend), Garrick Tsui and Lynette Lee (children of Pauline Woo Tsui)

The Maryland Women's Heritage Center maintains an exhibit of the Hall of Fame: [www.mdwomensheritagecenter.org](http://www.mdwomensheritagecenter.org). The biographies of all the inductees are posted on the website of the Maryland State Archives: <http://msa.maryland.gov/msa/educ/exhibits/womenshall/html/whflist.html>.

The Calls for Nominations for both the Hall of Fame and the Women of Tomorrow Awards were issued in October, 2018. For the Hall of Fame, the Commission received 23 nominations of notable women from all walks of life and from all across the state.

An independent, all-volunteer selection committee was formed to review the submissions and make the difficult decision of whom to induct into the Hall of Fame in 2019. The Selection Committee members included:

- Rachel Mygatt, Board of Directors, Maryland Women's Heritage Center
- Delegate Susie Proctor, Maryland General Assembly
- Magistrate Hope Tipton, President, Women's Bar Association of Maryland
- La'Kenya Walter, Co-President, Business and Professional Women of Maryland (BPW/MD)
- Susan Wierman, Co-President, American Association of University Women (AAUW Maryland)

The individuals inducted into the Maryland Women's Hall of Fame in 2019 are:

- **The Honorable Marielsa A. Bernard**, Senior Judge, Montgomery County Circuit Court
- **Augusta T. Chissell (posthumous), Suffragist**
- **Dominique Dawes**, Olympic Champion
- **Virginia Hall (posthumous)**, World War II Civilian Intelligence Operative
- **The Honorable Rosie Rios**, 43rd Treasurer of the United States
- **Evelyn Williams Townsend (posthumous)**, Community Advocate
- **Phyllis B. Trickett**, Community Advocate
- **Pauline Woo Tsui (posthumous)**, Co-founder, Organization of Chinese American Women



Charles Pink and the Honorable Connie Morella

During the ceremony, Charles Pinck, President of the Office of Strategic Services Society (OSS Society) presented a replica of the Congressional Gold Medal awarded collectively to the members of the OSS in recognition of their superior services and major contributions during World War II, in honor of Virginia Hall's induction into the Maryland Women's Hall of Fame.

**The Women of Tomorrow Award** was established by the Commission for Women in 1997 to recognize and commend extraordinary young women who have demonstrated a commitment to leadership, community service and academic excellence. Nominations are received from educators, civic, community and religious leaders across the state.

This year, 60 students were nominated, representing 22 of Maryland’s 24 major jurisdictions (23 counties and Baltimore City), and 48 different schools. An all-volunteer selection committee reviewed the nominations, and met in Annapolis to make the final decision.



2019 Maryland Women of Tomorrow  
(L-R): Caitlyn Stachura, Sierra Kurtz, Josephine Oshagbemi, and Isabella Yang with DHS Secretary Lourdes Padilla.

The members of the 2019 Women of Tomorrow Selection Committee were:

- Linda Fihelly, Co-President, Business and Professional Women of Maryland (BPW/MD)
- Dr. Suzan Harkness, Associate VP for Academic Affairs, Notre Dame of Maryland University
- Catherine Hill, Executive Director, Women’s Legislative Caucus
- Michelle Siri, Esq., Executive Director, Women’s Law Center of Maryland
- Kate Campbell Stevenson, Co-President, American Association of University Women (AAUW Maryland)
- Ummu Bradley Thomas, Board Member, Maryland WAG Foundation



Yamini Ananth receives award with Commissioner Deb Cartee, DHS Secretary Lourdes Padilla and MCW Chair Yun Jung Yang

From that large pool of outstanding students, the five honorees selected were:

- |   |  |   |
|---|--|---|
| • <b>Yamini Ananth</b> , 12th Grade<br>Altholton High School<br>Howard County   | • <b>Josephine Oshagbemi</b> , 12th Grade<br>Watkins Mill High School<br>Montgomery County       | • <b>Isabella Yang</b> , 12th Grade<br>Winston Churchill High School<br>Montgomery County |
| • <b>Sierra Kurtz</b> , 11th Grade<br>Lansdowne High School<br>Baltimore County | • <b>Caitlyn Stachura</b> , 12th Grade<br>Archbishop Spalding High School<br>Anne Arundel County |   |



Eugenia Henry for Global Federation of Chinese Business Women

The Commission for Women partnered with the Maryland WAG Foundation – the Fund for Maryland’s Women and Girls to develop financial support for the ceremony.

Generous support was donated by Platinum Sponsor Global Federation of Chinese Business Women – Baltimore Chapter.

Silver Sponsors include the Women Legislators of the Maryland General Assembly, Inc., Comcast Corporation, Modern International Enterprises and CCR Wealth Management. In addition, Chiling Tong, SCB Management Consulting, the OSS Society, Inc., Sou C. Wonglee and Grace Huang were all Bronze Sponsors. The Maryland State Conference of the NAACP, SVC Media, Inc., and Dr. Marylou Yam were all Supporters of the event.

Friends included Dr. Valencia Campbell, Amanda Costley, Melissa Curtin, Maureen Colburn, Linda Fihelly, Janet and Craig Gralley, Jennifer Kerwin, Abby Marsh, Alicia Martin, Lily Openshaw, Jacquelyn Raines, Joan Webb Scornaienchi, Carole Jaar Sepe, Judith Vaughan-Prather and Yun Jung Yang. Their donations, plus a number of smaller donations from attendees were all deposited to the Maryland WAG Foundation.

This year, for the first time, the DHS Communications Office Director of Creative Services produced a video for the MCW combining clips from the Hall of Fame honoree interviews with photos from the ceremony to offer a memorable visual record of the event and the honorees. The presentation is available on the Commission’s website and Facebook pages.





## THE STATUS OF WOMEN (SWIM) RESEARCH INITIATIVE

**Coordinating Team:** Yun Jung Yang, Chair;  
Tawanda Bailey, First Vice Chair; Carole Jaar Sepe, Second Vice Chair

The Commission launched its Voices of Maryland Women Listening Tour in July 2016 and traveled more than 3000 miles across the state over the next two years conducting a series of 19 public forums inviting women to “talk to us” about the challenges they face in their everyday lives. During this time, the Commission also conducted an on-line survey, in four languages, so that women who could not get to the forums could still lend their voices to the project.

The result is a report outlining the “top five” issues identified by Maryland women state-wide:

- Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault
- Paid Time Off for Extended Parental and Medical Leave
- Women and Drug Abuse or Addiction Problems
- Women in Leadership Positions
- Access to Quality, Affordable Child Care

The participants listed steps they thought would help address those issues in their communities. A conference was held in August 2018 to release the report to the public and to discuss further how the challenges identified could be addressed.

At its February 21, 2019 meeting, the Commission decided that the next step is to gather data on the status of women in our state, particularly with regard to each of these “top five” issues. The Commission has heard the concerns of the women who participated in the Listening Tour. Now, to appropriately and effectively address the issues raised, the Commission plans to objectively examine the data on all women in the state. Its records indicate that the last time such a study was conducted was in response to the 2000 Census – with data that is now almost 20 years old.

The Listening Tour was opinion researched, asking women to tell us what they need, think and experience. The Commission for Women hopes now to conduct an in-depth demographic study, using secondary analysis of existing data sources and applying a “gender lens,” disaggregating the information on women, to determine the extent to which they are impacted in each field. Data sources would include census data, police and crime reports, health reports, economic, employment and education information, and more.

Specifically, the research would include an in-depth look at statistics in the following fields:

- Overall Demographics
- Women, Work and the Economy
- Women and Education
- Woman and Health
- Women, Safety and the Justice System
- Women and Leadership

The goal of this project is to produce a fact-based report on the Status of Women in Maryland, to be released at the planned August 2020 Maryland Women’s Leadership Conference, scheduled to commemorate the 100th anniversary of women gaining the right to vote in the United States. The information presented in this report is intended to serve to as a guide in the development of policies and legislation that will ensure brighter futures for all the residents of Maryland.

To conduct the data analysis and write the report with a goal of releasing the findings and recommendations at the 2020 Women’s Leadership Conference in August of that year, the Commission hopes to hire a researcher. The Governor’s Office agreed to make \$30,000 available for this purpose.

To find a qualified contractor, a solicitation for bids was developed and should be posted by the DHS Procurement Office by the end of June 2019.

---

## 2020 WOMEN’S LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE

**Chair:** Eugenia Henry

**Members:** Tawanda Bailey, Maureen Colburn, Melissa Hough Curtin, Lauren Lambert, Carole Jaar Sepe, Corinna Shen, Evelyne Steward, Tamara Wilson, Marylou Yam, Roberta Pardo, Yun Jung Yang

**A**t the September 20, 2018 Commission meeting, the Commission established an ad-hoc committee to plan and implement a conference both to commemorate the 100th anniversary of the passage of the 19th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution granting women the right to vote (August 26, 2020), and to focus on women’s leadership, since “too few women in leadership positions” was one of the top five issues identified in the Voices of Maryland Women Listening Tour.

The consensus was that the conference will:

- Be statewide in focus – inviting the county and city commissions for women as partners
- Highlight women’s leadership, offering seminars on women’s leadership development
- Include focus on developing a pipeline for girls to become the leaders of the future, possibly inviting high schools or other youth organizations to collaborate
- Be held in Annapolis
- Require no fee to attend (Maryland WAG will be asked to raise funds for the conference)
- Include a focus on the history of women’s rights in the U.S.
- Be organized in partnership with other state-wide women’s organizations such as the Commission to Commemorate the 100th Anniversary of the Passage of the 19th Amendment to the Constitution of the U.S., and the Maryland Women’s Heritage Center.

An initial steering committee was established but it was also agreed that all commissioners will contribute to this event.

During FY 19, work began on developing a partnership with the Maryland WAG Foundation – the fund for Maryland’s Women and Girls, which was invited to partner with the Commission on this project. WAG began work to develop and seek sponsorships for the program to keep the costs to the participants as low as possible. Commissioners also began work identifying possible sites for the conference, and developing a preliminary outline for the content of the day, including seminar topics, target audience, and potential keynote speakers. Historic figures involved in the Suffrage Movement in Maryland were also identified with the plan to include a special Maryland Women’s Hall of Fame induction ceremony as part of the conference. By the end of the fiscal year, the Maryland Women’s Heritage Center had committed to a \$25,000 sponsorship of the event, and the date of Wednesday, August 26, 2020 was selected for the Conference.





**Maryland Commission for Women**  
**51 Monroe Street, Suite 1034**  
**Rockville, Maryland 20850**  
**301-610-4523**  
**[www.marylandwomen.org](http://www.marylandwomen.org)**



Larry Hogan, Governor  
Boyd K. Rutherford, Lt. Governor  
Lourdes R. Padilla, Secretary

