



The December Maryland Women's Monthly Newsletter is here!



Reflecting on 2024: Challenges, Resilience, and Our Shared Future

What an amazing 2024 this has been! It may have felt like a roller coaster ride, but we made it through, showcasing the tenacity of women. As natural "movers and shakers," we get things done, even when challenges feel immense.

This year marks the start of my first term as Chair, a role I am deeply honored to hold as we uplift women across our state. I am excited to recognize Ariana Kelly as our new

Executive Director, whose knowledge and leadership bring energy and vision to the Commission. We also welcomed seven new commissioners whose passion and experience will strengthen our work.

This year tested our resolve but reaffirmed the power of resilience, collaboration, and leadership. Together, we've worked to uplift women, address systemic barriers, and ensure equity and opportunity become lived realities for all.

Looking ahead, I am filled with hope—not only for what we've accomplished but for what's to come. When women unite to challenge the status quo, lift as we climb, and lead with courage, there's no limit to what we can achieve.

May you enter this season with rest, reflection, and purpose. I look forward to continuing this journey with you in the new year—stronger, more united, and hopeful for what we can build together.

Wishing you peace, joy, and abundance this holiday season.

In gratitude and solidarity,
LaShaune Stitt
Chair, Maryland Commission for Women

UPCOMING EVENTS





I've Endured: Women of Old-Time Music Exhibition Opening - Friday, January 3, 2025 at 6:00 p.m. in Baltimore. Celebrating the influential contributions of women of old-time music through captivating displays and storytelling. Through March 1 at the Creative Alliance Main Gallery. Free for everyone.

Holiday Period Drive - all month in Annapolis: The Anne Arundel Library is collecting essential period products to ensure everyone in our community has access to the products they need. The greatest need is currently for pads of all sizes.

Women Legislators of Maryland Opening Reception - Tuesday, January 7 at 6:00 p.m. in Annapolis: Celebrating the 53rd Anniversary of the first Women's Caucus in the Nation. Tickets and sponsorships are available at multiple price levels.

Reproductive Justice Maryland Legislative Reception - Thursday, January 9, at 7:00 p.m. in Annapolis: A chance to connect with RJM leadership, advocates, and community members who are passionate about advancing reproductive justice in Maryland. Tickets are \$20.

Say, Sister! Festival - Starts Friday, January 10 at 6:00 p.m. in Baltimore: A diverse and revolutionary celebration of women in roots music.

Maryland Coalition Against Sexual Assault (MCASA) Legislative Reception - Thursday, January 16 at 6:30 pm in Annapolis: Bringing together legislators, advocates, and community members to support policies on sexual assault prevention and survivor support. Tickets are available at multiple price levels. All proceeds support work in Annapolis and across the state.

Montgomery County Commission for Women 2025 Women's Legislative Briefing - Saturday, January 25 at 11:30 a.m. in

Rockville: This event unites advocates, policymakers, and emerging leaders to address issues affecting women and girls and preview the 2025 legislative session. Tickets and sponsorships are available at multiple price levels.

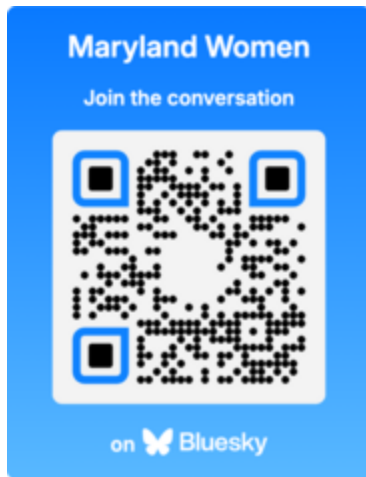


Are you hosting a public event addressing women's rights in Maryland? We'd love to hear about it! Please use this form to send us details or email us at C4.Women@maryland.gov.



New LinkedIn Account

We're excited to announce the launch of our new LinkedIn page for the Maryland Commission for Women! Follow us on LinkedIn to stay connected and informed about our initiatives, events, and advocacy efforts. Connect here, and please spread the word!
[Linkedin.com/company/maryland-commission-for-women/](https://www.linkedin.com/company/maryland-commission-for-women/)



"Maryland Women" Bluesky Starter Pack!

Have you been meaning to join Bluesky? Or, have you joined but don't know who to follow? Scan this QR code to sign up for Bluesky and get started with our "Maryland Women" starter pack. If you've already signed up, the QR code will take you directly to our starter pack so you can add 'Maryland Women.' We've created an instant online community by adding all of Maryland's female elected officials and individuals and organizations who support women's rights in Maryland to our starter pack. If you don't want the starter pack you can still follow the Commission on Bluesky at [@mdc4w.bsky.social](https://bsky.app/profile/mdc4w.bsky.social). The starter

pack can be accessed at the link below or by scanning the QR code above! Go to <https://go.bsky.app/GB1LcqY> You can also find us on Facebook and Instagram [@marylandcommissionforwomen](https://www.facebook.com/marylandcommissionforwomen) or X at [@mdc4w](https://twitter.com/mdc4w). Join us today!

Towson University Student Panel

Commissioner Pat Lambert participated in a Women in Leadership panel recently at Towson University. Organized by the Center for Student Diversity, she presented on a panel titled "Discovering and Celebrating your Professional Identity."





30 years of MLAW!

The Commission celebrated 30 years with the Maryland Legislative Agenda for Women (MLAW) during their annual conference last month. MLAW is a coalition dedicated to advocating for policies that advance the status and rights of women across the state. The Commission is proud to have been the original home, staff, and fiscal sponsor for MLAW's first ten years.

It was wonderful to connect with so many passionate advocates and leaders in person, including Lt. Governor Aruna Miller, U.S. Senator Chris Van Hollen, and Delegates Bonnie Cullison, Charlotte Crutchfield, Michelle Guyton, Pamela Guzzone, Nicole Williams, Jessica Feldmark, Ken Kerr, Linda Foley, and Sara Love. A special highlight of the day was the recognition of Ariana Kelly, the Commission's Executive Director, who received a Lifetime Achievement Award. Commission Chair LaShaune Stitt delivered a touching speech celebrating MLAW's incredible 30 years of advocacy and impact.

POLICY AND ADVOCACY





Women in Elected Office

Anne Arundel County: [Congresswoman-elect Sarah Elfreth](#) will resign from the Maryland Senate on January 2, 2025, and a successor will be nominated by the Anne Arundel County Democratic Central Committee and appointed by Governor Wes Moore. State delegates Shaneka Henson and Dana Jones have both applied to fill the vacancy. Looking ahead to 2026, Anne Arundel County Councilwoman [Allison Pickard](#) is among the first to announce her candidacy for Anne Arundel County Executive.

Baltimore City: State Senator [Jill Carter](#) has been appointed by Governor Wes Moore to serve on the state Board of Contract Appeals. To fill the vacancy, the Baltimore City Democratic Central Committee will select a replacement to recommend to the governor in January.

Baltimore County: Another County Executive replacement will occur in Baltimore County on January 6. [On the shortlist](#) for the council to vote on, there are also two women, Maryland State Senator Katherine Klausmeier and Yara Cheikh.

Montgomery County: The Montgomery County Council recently elected County Councilwoman [Kate Stewart](#) to serve as President in 2025. But despite these gains, no woman has served as [County Executive](#) in Montgomery County.

Prince George's County: [Angela Alsobrook's](#) historic win for Senator left a vacancy in the Prince George's County Executive position, which is being filled in the interim by [Tara Jackson](#), who previously served as the County's Chief Administrative Officer. On May 27, 2025, a special election will be held. Among the [candidates running](#), there are currently three women: [Aisha Braveboy](#), the State's Attorney for Prince George's County, and Jolene Ivey, Chair of the Prince George's County Council, and Tonya Sweat.

Washington County: In Hagerstown, Delegate [Brooke Grossman](#) is stepping down, and women running for the empty District 2B seat include Dr. Aitza Haddad Nunez and Mary McPherson.



The First Female, Black-Owned Oyster Bar In Maryland, The Urban Oyster is Making Waves in the Culinary World

Succeeding in the culinary world is challenging, even under the best circumstances. Statistics show that out of one million restaurants in the U.S., only 8% are Black-owned. Even more striking, just 2,800 of those are owned by Black women—representing less than one-third of 1%.

Congratulations to the MCASA 2025 Visionary Award recipients

Each year, MCASA is proud to honor three exceptional visionaries who have made a significant impact by taking action and driving meaningful change. These individuals have shown remarkable leadership and compassion in their dedication to ending sexual violence in Maryland. This year's honorees are Delegate Vanessa E. Atterbear, Shannon Temple, and Joyce King.



Latinas in Montgomery and Prince George's Counties, your voice is vital! Maryland Latinos Unidos is conducting a quick, anonymous survey to improve maternal healthcare and shape support programs for our community. Share your experiences today—it only takes 10–15 minutes to make a meaningful impact! Please help spread the word.

SHARE YOUR VOICE ON MATERNAL HEALTH CARE FOR LATINAS!



Are you:

- Pregnant or
- A parent who has previously given birth?

Do you live in:

- Montgomery County
- Prince George's County?

Do you identify as a Latina?

WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU!

Maryland Latinos Unidos is conducting a survey to learn about your experiences with maternal health care in Montgomery and Prince George's Counties.

Why Participate?
Your responses will:

- ✓ Help us understand the current state of maternal health care.
- ✓ Shape future programs and support for mothers like you.

Quick & Easy!

- ⌚ Takes only 10-15 minutes.
- 🔒 Completely anonymous—your privacy is protected.



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YOUR VOICE MATTERS. TOGETHER, WE CAN IMPROVE

¡COMPARTE TU VOZ SOBRE LA ATENCIÓN DE SALUD MATERNA PARA LATINAS!



- Estas Embarazada o
- Eres una madre que ya ha dado a luz?

¿Vives en el:

- Condado de Montgomery o
- Condado de Prince George?

¿Te identificas como Latina?

¡QUEREMOS ESCUCHAR DE TI!

Maryland Latinos Unidos está llevando a cabo una encuesta para conocer tus experiencias con la atención de salud materna en los condados de Montgomery y Prince George's.

¿Por qué participar?

Tus respuestas:

- ✓ Nos ayudarán a entender el estado actual de la atención de salud materna.
- ✓ Formara futuros programas y apoyos para madres como tú.

¡Rápido y Fácil!

- 🕒 Solo toma 10-15 minutos.
- 🔒 Completamente anónimo: tu privacidad está protegida.



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TU VOZ IMPORTA. ¡JUNTAS, PODEMOS MEJORAR LA SALUD MATERNA EN NUESTRA COMUNIDAD!

IN THE NEWS





No women will lead House committees for the first time in 2 decades

For the first time in two decades, no women will lead any of the 17 standing committees in the U.S. House of Representatives during the 119th Congress, as all chair positions have been assigned to white men.

Cervical cancer deaths drop among young women

A study shows a steep decline in deaths which is credited to the HPV vaccine.

The 2024 State Maternal Mental Health Legislation Report highlights significant advancements in state-level policies aimed at improving maternal mental health care, including expanded screening, support programs, and insurance coverage. The report underscores the importance of legislative action to address the growing maternal mental health crisis, emphasizing the need for continued efforts to close gaps in care.

A Huge Design Flaw in CPR Dummies Could Have Deadly Consequences

CPR training manikins may contribute to bystanders hesitating to perform CPR on women, potentially leading to lower survival rates for female cardiac arrest victims.

Older women are changing the face of the U.S. labor force. One out of 10 workers in the United States are women over the age of 55. Necessity is often a reason, but so is dedication and purpose.

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