

COMMUNITY

Around the County from A2

Bowie, MD: **Carla Rose**, College of Letters and Science, Bachelor of Science, Computer Sciences

Hyattsville, MD: **Linda Pheng**, School of Education, Doctor of Philosophy, Educational Policy Studies

—Mike Klein, University of Wisconsin-Madison

Local Student Titilayo Sunday Named to Spring 2023 Dean's List at Albany College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences

ALBANY, N.Y. (July 26, 2023)—Albany College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences (ACPHS) announces its Spring Dean's List recipients. There were 275 students named to this honor for Spring 2023, which is awarded to full-time students who have successfully completed their coursework with a semester grade point average (GPA) of 3.5 or higher out of a possible 4.0 score.

Among those named to the Dean's List is **Titilayo Sunday** of Largo, MD, who is pursuing a Doctor of Pharmacy.

The students honored study programs across ACPHS' array of academic offerings including include Biomedical Technology, Clinical Laboratory Sciences, Microbiology, Pharmaceutical Sciences, Pre-Med, and Public Health, as well as graduate programs: Doctor of Pharmacy, Biomanufacturing and Bioprocessing, Biomedical Sciences, Clinical Laboratory Sciences, Cytotechnology and Molecular Cytology, and Pharmaceutical Sciences.

The students come from various cities throughout New York State, 19 additional states across the country, US territories including Guam, Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands, and countries including Canada, India, Kenya and South Korea.

—Kristin Marshall, ACPHS

UAlbany Announces Graduates of 2023 Commencement

ALBANY, N.Y. (July 24, 2023)—Marking the culmination of their hard work and success, the University at Albany celebrated more than 4,200 students who received their degrees at the University's 2023 Commencement ceremonies. This includes summer, fall and winter semester recipients from the 2022–2023 academic year.

The following students have graduated from the University at Albany: Hyattsville, MD: **Gregory Fields**, Doctor of Philosophy, Educational Policy & Leadership

—Michael Parker, University at Albany

Community Day in Suitland

By JANICE EUELL
Pilgrimage Christian Church

SUITLAND, Md. (July 21, 2023)—On Saturday, July 15, 2023, Pilgrimage Christian Church, located at 5105 Silver Hill Road, celebrated Community Day. Reverend Brenda Cardwell, Pastor, invited members of the church and the community to join her for a day of fun, unity, and partnerships. "We want to encourage a more ecumenical celebration of life, so that our community can grow and prosper," she said.

Pastor John A. McCain, of the 21st Century Church of God, was an invited guest from Elkridge, Maryland. He officiated the program with the assistance of Janice Euell, Community Planner and Organizer. Invited guest speakers included: Dr. James Dula, PhD., Patricia Ramseur, Prince George's County Health Official, Darin Hensley, Director of Operations at the Durant Center, located in Suitland.

The event had at its core, the offer of quality-of-life services for unhoused women, men, children, and Veterans through Pastor John's already successful Agape Gift Bags Sock Ministry. Coming soon, Pastor John will offer services to homeless and others in need of assistance for counseling, housing, medical services at Pilgrimage in conjunction with the Church.

Reverend Cardwell is already improving lives of those in need through her ministry by offering free food every Saturday, from 10 a.m.–2 p.m. at the church.

There was delicious fried fish, courtesy of Joe Young, the fried guru, with whom everyone who tasted that fish fell in love.

Pastor McCain's vision is to work closely with Reverend Cardwell to hone his pastoral delivery as he develops his oratorical skills under her tutelage.

In addition, church members celebrated Reverend Brenda for 36 years of serving the Lord with cake, flowers, awards, donations, and plenty of love and admiration. She, in turn, presented awards to a few of her diligent members for their continued and much appreciated Service: Brenda Smith, Ernest Fletcher, Doreen Greenwell, Zymira Lofland, Michael Ealey, Reverend Judith Bowles, to name a few. Congratulations to everyone!

For additional information, please call 301-366-7672.

FedChoice Charitable Foundation Announces Winners of its Teachers' Aid Program (TAP) Award

By PRESS OFFICER
FedChoice Charitable Foundation

LANHAM, Md. (July 27, 2023)—The FedChoice Charitable Foundation is helping teachers TAP into funds to support classroom programs and student development. The Foundation is thrilled to announce the winners of its inaugural Teachers' Aid Program (TAP). TAP provides small educator grants (\$250 maximum grant per educator) for K–8 teachers of math, business, economics, or general elementary education to be used for any direct classroom expenses, including, but not limited to, supplies needed to fund a project for the classroom, basic supplies the classroom may be lacking, supplemental items to enhance classroom learning or an experience to enhance classroom learning.

After careful review, the Foundation Board selected three winners who received grants to use in their classroom projects. Entrants submitted applications online explaining how they would use the money to support their educational efforts.

The TAP grants winners are:

Ms. Michelle Hibbert (Cora L. Rice Elementary School, Landover, MD)

Ms. Marie Biabo (Cora L. Rice El-

ementary School, Landover, MD)

Ms. Kimberly Byrd (Dranesville Elementary School, Herndon, VA)

Michelle Hibbert shared: "There are no words that can express my gratitude as a recipient of the first TAP grant from FedChoice Charitable Foundation." Ms. Hibbert will be using the funds to create a garden with students to plant and harvest crops to promote healthy eating.

Marie Biabo, her fellow teacher at Cora L. Rice Elementary School will be using the funds to purchase materials for the Reading and Writing Club she facilitates. Ms. Biabo said: "I am very appreciative of the TAP grant I received from FedChoice. Closing the Reading and Writing gap of our young learners is very important, yet doing so with the necessary materials is even better. A big thank you to FedChoice for supporting the educators of our community."

Finally, Kimberly Byrd hailing from Herndon, VA-based Dranesville Elementary School noted: "I am both humbled and honored to have been selected as one of the TAP grant winners. Thank you to FedChoice Charitable Foundation for recognizing educators and helping us make a positive impact in our classroom and on our students' development." Ms. Byrd will be using her grant funds

to purchase fine motor and sensory activities so that students have ample opportunities for hands-on learning and exploration.

Brett Noll, Chairman of the FedChoice Charitable Foundation, stated, "We have a profound appreciation for teachers and recognize how often many educators dip in their own pockets to fund school projects or even make sure all students have the supplies they need for success. The FedChoice Charitable Foundation and our entire Credit Union is honored to have an opportunity to help these outstanding individuals prepare their students for the future."

FedChoice Charitable Foundation partners with public, charter and private schools in the Maryland, Washington, DC and Virginia area to provide teachers with small grants to help offset the cost of supplies and classroom materials. We want to encourage more teachers to apply for the next grant cycle this fall. The information will be available on our website: www.fedchoicegives.org

The FedChoice Charitable Foundation was founded in 2017 and offers financial well-being and positive impacts in local communities while being a resource, advocate, and champion for the Federal Community.

Former Silver Spring Resident Serves Aboard U.S. Navy Warship in Mayport

By RICK BURKE
Navy Office of Community Outreach

MAYPORT, Fla. (July 18, 2023)—Petty Officer 2nd Class Etienne Nikiema, a former resident of Silver Spring, Maryland, is serving aboard USS Winston S. Churchill, a U.S. Navy warship, operating out of Mayport, Florida.

Growing up in Burkina Faso, Africa, Nikiema graduated from Lycee Provincial De Zorgho in 2017 and joined the Navy five years ago. Additionally, Nikiema earned a Master of Law from Maitrise En Droit De L'Universite De Rennes Law School in Rennes, France, and a Master's in Software Engineering from Georgetown University.

"I joined the Navy for the military background as a U.S. citizen and for the benefits it has to offer," said Nikiema.

Winston S. Churchill is a guided-missile destroyer that provides a wide range of warfighting capabilities. The destroyer is a multi-mission ship that can operate independently or as part of a larger group of ships at sea. The ship is equipped with tomahawk missiles, torpedoes, guns and a phalanx close-in weapons system.

More than 300 sailors serve aboard Winston S. Churchill. Their jobs are highly specialized, requiring both dedication and skill. The jobs range from maintaining engines to handling weaponry along with a multitude of other assignments that keep the ship



PHOTO BY MASS COMMUNICATION SPECIALIST 1ST CLASS BRYAN NIEGEL, NAVY OFFICE OF COMMUNITY OUTREACH

Petty Officer 2nd Class Etienne Nikiema

mission-ready at all times, according to Navy officials.

With 90 percent of global commerce traveling by sea and access to the internet relying on the security of under-sea fiber optic cables, Navy officials continue to emphasize that the prosperity of the United States is directly linked to trained sailors and a strong Navy.

"Our mission remains timeless—to provide our fellow citizens with nothing less than the very best Navy: fully combat ready at all times, focused on warfighting excellence, and committed to superior leadership at every single

level," said Adm. Mike Gilday, Chief of Naval Operations. "This is our calling. And I cannot imagine a calling more worthy."

Serving in the Navy means Nikiema is part of a team that is taking on new importance in America's focus on strengthening alliances, modernizing capabilities, increasing capacities and maintaining military readiness in support of the National Defense Strategy.

"The Navy is a global force that empowers the entire U.S. Armed Forces," said Nikiema. "The Navy protects land, air and sea, unlike any other branch."

Nikiema and the sailors they serve with have many opportunities to achieve accomplishments during their military service.

"My proudest accomplishment is pushing myself as a person and becoming more resilient in life," said Nikiema.

As Nikiema and other sailors continue to train and perform missions, they take pride in serving their country in the United States Navy.

"The Navy gives me a sense of pride and service," said Nikiema. "I'm part of the one percent of our population that is doing what many don't or can't do."

Nikiema is grateful to others for helping make a Navy career possible.

"I would like to thank my wife, Ines, my kids, Noah, Grace and Imelda, and all my good friends who help keep it together when I am away," added Nikiema.

Metro Begins Rollout of New, Higher Faregates to Stop Fare Evasion

By PRESS OFFICER
WMATA

(July 24, 2023)—Metro has begun installing new higher, stronger faregates at Fort Totten Station as part of a systemwide rollout. The design improves upon the original prototype door following months of testing and modifications. The new doors are now 55-inches tall, twice as strong, and more resilient.

The installation at Fort Totten is expected to be completed overnight, followed by Pentagon City. The faregate modifications will be installed in phases with plans to retrofit faregates throughout the system over the next year. The first 10 stations are expected to be completed by early fall.

"Over the past several months, our team has been testing different prototypes to get to this final design. We have

already seen a reduction in fare evasion and expect the higher gates will be more of a deterrent," said Metro General Manager and Chief Executive Officer, Randy Clarke. "The bottom line is fare evasion is not okay, and we will continue our efforts to ensure everyone is respecting the community's system and each other."

The new design includes an L-shape door panel that extends over the faregate to minimize gaps between the openings. The increase in barrier height from the original 28 to 48-inch prototype to 55 inches will also make it more difficult to jump over faregates. The new height is taller than a hockey net or nearly half the height of a standard basketball hoop.

The swing doors are made of a polycarbonate which is 200 times stronger than glass, lighter weight, and more durable. The final design also includes

more robust hinges and a more powerful motor to strengthen the door. As stations are retrofitted with the new barriers, Metro is also raising the height of fencing and emergency gates.

Metro will install a single door panel for all regular faregates, and double door panels at the wider gates for accessibility and wheelchairs. Following Fort Totten and Pentagon City, the first phase of new faregates will be installed at Bethesda, Vienna, Mt Vernon Sq, Addison Rd, Congress Heights, Wheaton, Federal Center SW, and Court House stations. Metro will notify customers prior to work beginning at stations through in-station signage and on Metro's Faregate Retrofit Project page.

In addition to the faregate modifications, Metro's stepped-up enforcement efforts have also helped to change behaviors and reduce fare evasion.



PHOTO COURTESY WMATA

The faregate modifications will be installed in phases with plans to retrofit faregates throughout the system over the next year.

Last month, Metro also launched a new income-qualified reduced fare program, Metro Lift, to provide a 50 percent fare discount to customers who qualify for SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program) benefits in the District, Maryland, and Virginia. To

date, more than 1600 customers have enrolled, taking nearly 17,000 combined trips.

For more information about Metro's comprehensive efforts to modernize its fare system, visit wmata.com/faremodernization.