

2023

MARYLAND MINORITY TOURISM REPORT



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Key:

MMTR: Maryland Minority Tourism Report

MD-DOC: Maryland Department of Commerce

MD-OTD: Maryland Office of Tourism Development

MTDB: Maryland Tourism Development Board

DMOs: Maryland Counties Tourism Offices

BAATC: Baltimore African American Tourism Council, Inc. Post Office Box 3014. Baltimore, MD 21229 443-983-7974

Executive Summary

Goal: Making Maryland #1 in Multicultural Tourism!

During the eight years of former Governor Larry Hogan, Maryland State and County Tourism Offices shared over \$200 million in governmental tourism funding subsidies. The State of Maryland Travel and Tourism industry is reaching an all-time high in billions in direct economic impact. Baltimore City tourism industry is generating \$10 billion annually. Ocean City is seeing crowds coming back to pre-Covid-19 attendance levels. The Orioles are winning and Camden Yards' stands are filling up. Based in Prince Georges County, the Washington Commanders football team is generating millions of dollars for the Maryland economy. The Baltimore Ravens football season kicked off to another year of sellout crowds. Maryland casino's revenue is topping \$170 million in monthly generated revenue. Major concerts, festivals and sports events are generating millions of dollars for Maryland's tourism economy.

However, in Maryland tourism, who is being left behind? Across the State, Black museums, attractions, historic sites, tourism and preservation sites were facing unique challenges, that was before COVID-19 hit us in March 2020. Being excluded from the \$200 million in Maryland tourism funding really hampered minorities in Maryland tourism in their efforts to operate their tourism projects and programs. Mostly, run by volunteers, Black tourism organizations in Maryland were especially financially damaged during the worst of the pandemic. Being un-funded, receiving very little annual designated funding Black tourism organizations in Maryland, including the National Great Blacks in Wax Museum, lost 99% of their usual revenue during the three years 2020-2022. Historically, minority tourism firms rely on revenue being generated through their grant-writing, admission fees, events, programs and donations to operate, pay expenses, and provide any stipends to their mostly volunteer staff.

The 2023 Maryland Minority Tourism Report details in four parts how Black/Minority Tourism Organizations in Maryland have been and continue to be left behind.

The Black Travel Market: Is it a valuable and lucrative tourism market?

"Black U.S. leisure travelers spent \$109.4 billion on travel in 2019 – the most recent year reflecting normal travel spend prior to COVID-19, according to The Black Traveler: Insights, Opportunities & Priorities report, created by MMGY Travel Intelligence. The study was created earlier this year on behalf of Black traveler advocacy organizations to identify the needs, behaviors, and sentiments of the Black Travel community. It analyzes findings from MMGY Global's 2019 Shifflet Travel Performance/Monitor, which surveyed 4,800 Black leisure travelers within the United States, and a 2020 survey of 200 members of the National Coalition of Black Meeting Professionals (NCBMP).

The spend was generated by 458.2 million Black U.S. traveler stays, which represents 13.1 percent of the U.S. leisure travel market. The report also found that in 2019 Black leisure travelers took an average of three overnight vacations and spent an average of 13.1 nights in paid accommodations. U.S. Black travel parties spent an average of \$600 on each overnight leisure stay, with an average stay of 2.5 nights for each trip. The economic value of African American travelers has increased in 2018 to **\$63 billion** from \$48 billion in 2010. African American "cultural" travelers are the highest spenders, with an average per trip spend of \$2,078 versus \$1,345 for all African American travelers.

The February 2023 CIAA Tournament (a gathering of HBCUs) generated a total economic impact of \$29.6 million, which supported 1,504 part-time and full-time jobs and generated \$2.5 million in state and local taxes. This financial success was made possible by the State of Maryland, Baltimore City, and the Local Organizing Committee. -In addition to total economic impact, the tournament generated \$17.7 million in participant and spectator off-site spending, with \$5.4 million spent in the food and beverage sector, \$4 million in lodging, \$3.4 million in entertainment and attractions, \$3.2 million in retail spending, and \$1.7 million in transportation and local rideshare companies."

The **2023 Maryland Minority Tourism Report (MMTR)** reveals the absence of significant diversity, inclusion, or equity for minority firms in Maryland tourism. It is our hope that the Maryland Department of Commerce will immediately

implement some policy reforms, staff realignments and a critical review, and if necessary, a change in the leadership within the Maryland Office of Tourism Development.

The MMRT reviewed the State/County Tourism Budgets, MBE/WBE/SBR/VSBE procurement statistics, Grants and Staffing, Marketing, Outreach, Diversity, Inclusion, Equity participation within the State of Maryland and its County tourism offices.

MMRT Summary of Findings:

Part 1: State of Maryland Tourism Budgeting is restricted to OTD, MTDB and the DMOs while simultaneously excluding all African American tourism organizations. This has created an unfair labor practice and provides certain governmental entities with unrecognized monopoly on receiving and utilizing public dollars for tourism staffing (salaries and benefits), operations, travel, printing, registrations, memberships, advertising, marketing, outreach, and funding of general and miscellaneous expenses. Non-governmental minority tourism organizations are forced to exist, struggle to achieve goals and objectives and mostly work as “volunteers.” This creates a real sense of tension within Maryland tourism industry as well as has fostered continuing adverse effects on increasing Maryland tourism revenue. According to the MD-OTD websites, there are twenty-eight state and county tourism organizations who share in over \$42 million yearly. There are at least two statewide minority tourism organizations who are deprived of being included, therefore left out of the tourism subsidy coming from State and County tourism budgeting. Not only are they left off the Maryland tourism website but also completely left out of State tourism funding. This is the legacy of being left behind by the former Hogan administration.

Maryland tourism recognizes and promotes the twenty-eight entities that they designate as recognized State and County tourism entities. They exclude BAATC and other minority tourism organizations. The MD Department of Commerce should enact immediate reforms to enable African American/minority tourism firms based in Maryland to be recognized, appreciated and supported with equitable annual designated tourism funding and other available resources.

Recommendation: Restorative Economic Justice for Maryland African American Tourism Organizations
Governor Wes Moore is respectfully requested to (1) allocate \$25 million per year over the next four years to foster the growth and further development of African American tourism in Maryland, (2) create the MD Division of African American/Multicultural Tourism reporting directly to the Secretary of Commerce, (3) provide immediate COVID-19 tourism recovery grants to Maryland’s African American/minority tourism firms, sites, attractions and organizations.

Part 2: DOC-OTD procurements with MBE/WBE/VSBE/SBR

Except for the MD-SBR (Small Business Reserve), the Department of Commerce has not (under its previous leadership) reached 10% of the State of Maryland mandated goal of 29% for MBE procurements.

Part 3: OTD Staffing, Grants, Marketing & Outreach, Supporting NGTO (non-governmental tourism organizations)
There is concerning lack of diversity within the DOC-OTD, especially as it relates to the glaring absence of any people of color in high ranking or policy/decision making positions within OTD. Presently, the highest-ranking person of color within OTD is a budget officer who has been stuck in low level positions for decades.

Part 4: There are some specific examples of concern that lead to the conclusion that the State of Maryland Department of Commerce must establish a State of Maryland Department of Commerce Division of African American/Minority/Multicultural Tourism.

Part 5: There are twelve specific recommendations presented to alleviate the issues and problems listed in the MMTR.

Maryland Minority Tourism Report, September 29, 2023
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2023 Maryland Minority Tourism Report

Part 1. STATE/COUNTY TOURISM SUBSIDIES

What is the role of Minorities in Maryland's \$17 billion tourism industry?

In Maryland's \$17 billion tourism industry, the Baltimore African American Tourism Council, Inc. is a minority-owned tourism organization located here. Since 1996, BAATC has served as Maryland's exclusive statewide African American tourism advocacy organization.

Focusing on the significant role and tremendous cultural, economic, and social impact that African Americans have on Maryland's tourism, the Baltimore African American Tourism Council, Inc. has been left behind in equity funding provided for Maryland's tourism organizations.

DMOs: Destination Marketing Organizations

MTDB: Maryland Tourism Development Board

OTD: Office of Tourism Development

FISCAL YEAR 2018 TOURISM BUDGET AND MTDB GRANT AWARDS

Budget \$42 million | MTDB Grant Awards \$2.5 million

FISCAL YEAR 2019 TOURISM BUDGET AND MTDB AWARDS

Budget \$ 44 Million | MTDB Grant Awards \$2.5 million

Source: OTD annual report

In the last decade, Maryland's mainstream tourism offices (DMOs' & OTD) have collectively received over \$400 million in State tourism funding. During the same period, the Maryland Tourism Development Board has awarded over \$25 million in state tourism grants given exclusively to Maryland DMOs.

During this ten-year period, state funding for BAATC and other non-governmental tourism entities operating within the State of Maryland has been limited. Minority-owned tourism firms including BAATC have been financially handicapped in our work to ensure Maryland tourism is diverse and inclusive. Our work has been of particular interest and economic benefit to the State, our citizens, and our visitors.

Throughout the State, for over an extended period, BAATC has continued to provide counseling, guidance, leadership and advocacy as a statewide educational heritage tourism and preservation organization without receiving significant tourism funding support. Most of our tourism programs have been accomplished with almost no funding out of the State's tourism budget.

However, our tourism programs have been of great benefit to everyone. BAATC tourism programs have drawn Ambassadors, Governors, Congressmen, Senators, Mayors, notable Americans, descendants of enslaved, descendants of Douglass, Tubman, Mitchell, Tyson, Latimer, and thousands of others to our State. Our heritage tours have drawn guests from all over the world, enabling them to have a culturally enriching experience in Maryland.

Working together, we can change this inequity in State funding for Maryland's tourism organizations.

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Part 2. DOC-DMOs Level of MBE/SBR/VSBE Procurements

The following section (MMTR part 2) reveals the MD Department of Commerce MBE/SBR.VSBE procurement data covering Fiscal Year 2015-2022. The results are extremely disappointing.

Contents

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- B. Secretary Kevin Anderson statement
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- E. MD Department of Commerce MBE/SBR/VSBE Procurement Statistics 2015-2022

Governor Wes Moore Signs Executive Order to Strengthen Government Accountability for Maryland's Minority Business Enterprise Program, 2/16/2023.

ANNAPOLIS, MD — Governor Wes Moore today signed executive order # 01.01.2023.03 to underscore his administration's commitment to strengthening participation, compliance, and accountability for Maryland's Minority Business Enterprise program. The executive order—the first minority business enterprise-related order issued by any Maryland governor—will provide the Moore-Miller administration with data to assess Maryland's current Minority Business Enterprise program performance and inform program development strategy.

"I've said this before and I will say this again, I am data driven and heart-led; the data shows that we are not meeting the mark in our Minority Business Enterprise program, so my heart is saying we must do everything we can to not only meet our goals, but exceed them," said Governor Moore.

"Our administration has the most diverse cabinet in history, and it's critical that we take the first step forward in delivering more access and opportunities to our minority-owned businesses in order to create a more economically competitive and inclusive state."

"As secretary, my goal is to work in partnership with Governor Moore to ensure we are greater in tune with our minority-owned businesses," said Maryland Department of Commerce Acting Secretary Kevin Anderson. "What we learn will enable us to strengthen our partnership with our minority-owned businesses, which in turn will help strengthen our state's economy." Source: governor.maryland.gov/news/press/page.

Institutional Racism-defined

Institutional racism, also known as systemic racism, is defined as policies and practices that exist throughout a whole society or organization and that result in and support a continued unfair advantage to some people and unfair or harmful treatment of others based on race. It manifests as discrimination in areas such as criminal justice, employment, housing, health care, education and political representation [add: contracting, business opportunities, entrepreneurship]

The term *institutional racism* was first coined in 1967 by Stokely Carmichael and Charles V. Hamilton in *Black Power: The Politics of Liberation*. Carmichael and Hamilton wrote in 1967 that, while individual racism is often identifiable because of its overt nature, institutional racism is less perceptible because of its "less overt, far more subtle" nature. Institutional racism "originates in the operation of established and respected forces in the society, and thus receives far less public condemnation than [individual racism]".

Institutional racism was defined by Sir William Macpherson in the UK's Lawrence report (1999) as: "The collective failure of an organization to provide an appropriate and professional service to people because of their color, culture, or ethnic origin. It can be seen or detected in processes, attitudes and behavior that amount to discrimination through prejudice, ignorance, thoughtlessness, and racist stereotyping which disadvantage minority ethnic people.

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Part 3. OTD STAFFING, GRANTS, MARKETING & OUTREACH, NGTO (non-governmental tourism organizations)

MD Department of Commerce (MD-DOC) formerly, the MD Department of Business and Economic Development.

MD-OTD: Maryland Office of Tourism Development

- A. Staffing
- B. Grants
- C. Marketing & Outreach
- D. Supporting MD-Non-Governmental Tourism Organizations. (NGTO)

A. Staffing

The staff at the Maryland Office of Tourism Development (MD-OTD) are very diligent and dedicated towards making Maryland tourism the best of any tourism department in the country. Working together, sharing resources, and establishing standards for proper communications, marketing and outreach is where we can further assist them in their efforts towards Making Maryland # 1 in Multicultural Tourism, a title that a certain city to the North once proudly claimed. This designation enabled them to tap into millions of new tourism dollars for their city, state, and their business community. The Black Travel and Tourism Market is a fantastic tourism stimulator, revenue generator and a true economic driver. Earlier this year, Baltimore hosted its second of five CIAA Men's and Women's Basketball Tournament, drawing 70,000 people with an economic impact of over \$29 million. In June 2023, it is estimated that 300,000 patrons attended the AFRAM festival bringing new revenue to the City and State.

In the 1990s, I began attending tourism meetings at the OTD office. I recalled attending a meeting there during the fall of 1998. One of our minority tourism stakeholders, the late Stephanie Gilliam, asked the OTD staff the following question "Each time we come here, we have to continually reintroduce ourselves to members of the OTD staff, can your office please hire an African American staff member, so we can have some consistency." Later, we would meet other OTD staff members, African Americans, who were working behind the scenes We met LuWanda Jenkins, the late Doris Wilson, Lucinda Williams, and Dr. Godfrey Pratt.

In 2003, Ms. Courtney Funn, an African American lady from Prince George's County was hired as an Associate Deputy Secretary-Special Assistant to the DBED Secretary. Ms. Funn became the highest-ranking minority within OTD. Courtney was excellent. *"As associate deputy secretary, she helped promote tourism as well as business and economic development for small, minority-owned businesses. She oversaw the administration of multicultural tourism outreach programs, coordinated meetings between business owners and state officials and played a key role in strategic networking at workforce development conferences. "She was one of those people who knew everyone, and everyone knew her," Lt. Gov. Michael S. Steele said. "And believe me, you were better off knowing her. She often brought to the table smaller businesses that otherwise might have been forgotten."*

Ms. Funn, age 63, passed away in 2005. Her position at OTD has never been filled.

Another DBED staffer, not employed within the OTD department, was an African American man named Victor "Vic" Scott. Vic was hired by DBED in 2005. His position was Small Business Program Specialist and Ombudsman. He was extremely dedicated to his duties and responsibilities. Vic was very well-known, well-liked and an all-around asset to the State Office of DBED, and to minority business owners. In 2018, former Secretary Shulz transferred Mr. Scott to the MD Department of Labor.

In 2017, we met Ms. Kat Evans, at that time, she was a "database manager". Kat was often seen at OTD outreach events or at the annual MD Travel and Tourism Summit. In 2018, I was honored to present her with a Charm City Tourism

Award. Recently, I inquired “who is the highest-ranking African American currently employed within the MD-DOC-OTD?” The answer was Kat Evans, a budget officer.

Where does that leave us? Presently, there are few African American or people of color in any high-level, policy-making positions within OTD. Among the OTD staff, African American men are a rarity; they may be employed in “behind the scenes” positions.

Based on the research found on the Maryland tourism website, we find the disturbing absence of Asians, Hispanics and African American men working within this State agency. Maryland tourism staffing (paid positions) are lacking in Diversity, Inclusion and Equity. The State of Maryland’s population is a little over 6.1 million people. African Americans comprise approximately 30% of the State’s population.

Maryland now holds the distinction of being a state with a minority majority population. A review of the level of diversity within the Department of Tourism, the Destination Marketing Organizations and the Maryland Tourism Development Board would reveal whether the State Tourism paid staffers are reflective of the State of Maryland’s population and the State’s pledged commitment to Diversity, Inclusion and Equity.

Suggestions and recommendations to address the above staffing issues.

1. The State of MD should immediately create a MD Department of Commerce Division of African American & Multicultural Tourism. I recommend Ms. Kat Evans be appointed as the inaugural Senior Director, with an appropriate salary, benefits, an adequate annual designated budget, and necessary staff.
2. I would strongly recommend for consideration the following persons to be added as staff to the Division of African American & Multicultural Tourism are:
Ms. T. Adriana Lee, Hispanic Affairs Outreach Manager, Comptroller’s Office of Maryland
Mr. Corey Lewis, Assistant State Archives, MD State Archives
Mr. Tony White, former communications & outreach director, City of Baltimore, Mayor/Governor Martin O’Malley staff.
3. I highly recommend bringing back Victor Scott as the Senior Director of Strategic Industries and Entrepreneurship.
4. These are dedicated and committed public servants. They love our State and our citizens. These are people we can count on.

B. Grants

The MD Tourism Development Board (MTDB) is provided \$2.5 million annually to provide cooperative tourism grants. Sadly, although these dollars are Maryland taxpayers’ funds, these state tourism grants, (via enabling legislation) are restricted to being provided exclusively to the Maryland counties tourism offices, Visit Baltimore, and Ocean City tourism entities (DMO).

These tourism grants range from \$20,000 to \$300,000.00 per year. In FY 2018, Visit Baltimore received a MTDB state tourism grant for over \$319,000.00. That same year, Ocean City had an annual tourism budget of \$6.8 million and the MTDB granted Ocean City a \$575,677.00 tourism grant. Yet, African American tourism entities in Maryland are shut out.

In FY 2018, MD-DOC-OTD, MTDB, DMOs collectively received over \$50 million in state and county tourism funding. No African American or minority owned tourism organizations were included in this designated state/county funding.

In 2019 and 2020, after years of discussing our concerns about the above situation with OTD and the MTDB with no success, I led a statewide coalition of minority tourism stakeholders to introduce Senate Bill 628 and House Bill 1387/1441, to expand the requirement that the MTDB provide tourism grants to certain tourism organizations by including nongovernmental tourism organizations. Bill sponsors were Delegate (now Senator) Benjamin Brooks and Senator Jill P. Carter.

Bill Hearings were held in the Senate Finance Committee and the House Ways & Means Committee. We were careful and continued to state that we were not seeking funding already designated to the DMOs. Former Governor Hogan, in his supplemental budgets, provided OTD with an extra \$600,000 to \$1 million per year in extra tourism funding.

Currently, I am not aware of any significant state tourism grants provided to any tourism entity other than government agencies. Few of the DMOs offer a significant tourism grant to tourism-based entities in their county.

C. Marland-OTD Tourism, Marketing and Outreach:

This category is especially important, and it is exceedingly difficult to truly determine its effectiveness. Information sharing and resource sharing could be improved within this agency. OTD does provide limited opportunities for tourism outreach and marketing. Pricing costs and advertising fees in the Destination Maryland Magazine are prohibitive for many of our small minority tourism companies. We rarely see African American owned business and other minorities tourism organizations having a prominent display advertisement in the Destination MD Magazine. Working closer with Maryland's African American tourism stakeholders, OTD could develop a better collaborative effort towards leading all Maryland tourism stakeholders to increase statewide awareness, exposure and shared success.

MD Tourism does have an annual tourism summit, fam tours, press tours, information releases and outings that we all should be aware of and invited to participate in. I know it is rare that we receive these invitations excepting mostly zoom meetings. A lot that is happening at OTD is shared afterwards in their newsletter which is well done.

Our minority tourism business owners should be a top priority to ensure we are all on the same page and understanding which diversity and inclusion programs OTD is creating.

Establishing a Maryland Department of Commerce Division of African American & Multicultural Tourism, with Ms. Kat Evans, serving as its Senior Director is a positive step in the right direction to get us going with a daily focus and intent on Making Maryland # 1 in Multicultural Minority Tourism!

D. Supporting MD-Non-Governmental Tourism Organizations. (NGTO)

On a County-by-County basis, it is exceedingly difficult to determine how much business each DMO is doing with Black-owned businesses and other minority owned businesses. What is the percentage and dollar amount of their spend over the last eight years with locally owned minority businesses? This information should be available for public review. This vital information will reveal exactly where we stand as a state in actual measurable terms for true diversity, inclusion, and equity in all levels of government tourism budgeting and spending.

Baltimore City, Harford County and Baltimore County have been incredibly supportive of African American preservation efforts in their counties. In 2022, Visit Baltimore and Worcester County were the only DMOs to support, A Taste of Soul (ATOS), a new Maryland "green book" highlighting African American tourism sites, attractions and businesses.

Good news, the 2024 edition of the A Taste of Soul, Maryland travel & tourism guide has gained the support of several DMOs. The county tourism offices of Anne Arundel, Talbot, Calvert, Howard, Visit Baltimore and Worcester has placed a paid advertisement within the next edition of the ATOS guide. Additional fact-finding and research is required from each DMO to accurately determine what percentage of tourism contracting each county DMO is currently offering to minority business in their respective counties.

Working together we can Make Maryland # 1 in Multicultural Tourism!

BAATC, is willing to assist in this effort.

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Part 4. Lack of Diversity, Inclusion, Equity in tourism programming, advertising, publications.

OTD PRINTED MATERIALS

Another covert issue of concern is the OTD lack of specific inclusion in their printed materials and on their website. Seemingly only organizations run by certain people are prominently included while other minority tourism organization information/events/programs are not listed or listed in less visible places.

Case-in-point:

Destination MD, the official Maryland Travel Magazine featured the Harriet Tubman Mural on the front cover. The Tubman article appears on pages 16-19. Although the article is entitled "Honoring 200 Years of Tubman", the article makes no mention of the 23-year-old State of Maryland Harriet Tubman Day of Remembrance. The article mentions only one of the UGRR entities connected to the African American organizations and entities in Maryland that work tirelessly on Tubman and the UGRR. In the current issue of the Destination Maryland magazine, pages 49-53 cover Maryland UGRR stories. In this 5-page article, little is mentioned about Maryland African American owned entities and Black tourism organizations programs and activities involving the Underground Railroad.

Another issue of concern: in State tourism designed, produced, printed, and distributed publications the Maryland Governor's picture and name appears on page two of these publications. Former Governor Hogan was pictured on page 2 of every issue of the Destination Magazine and his photo appeared also in every issue of the MD African American Heritage and in each issue of the MD Underground Railroad publication.

What is missing in all three new OTD publications is Governor Wes Moore picture and his signature welcoming incoming tourists and visitors to Maryland.

During his eight years as Governor on page two of the Destination MD magazine, a picture of Governor Hogan with his entire family appears. On page 2 of the Fall 2023 issue, there is no message or photo from our Governor Wes Moore, nor even his signature. Same is true with the newly released MD African American Heritage Guide and the MD Underground Railroad guide, no picture of Governor Moore. This is not appropriate.

OTD ADVERTISING AGENCY CONTRACT

In years past, OTD awarded its \$7 million annual Advertising Agency contract exclusively to white-owned ad agencies. We question why no Black-owned or minority-owned advertising agency has ever been awarded this contract. A review of this contract over the last five-ten years is necessary to determine the level of MBE/WBE/SBR/VSBE percentage of participation in this contract.

LACK OF INCLUSION ON THE "VISIT MD" WEBSITE

The Visit MD websites does not list BAATC or any African American Tourism entities as industry partners and active participants in Maryland tourism industry.

OTD -Lack of significant support for African American Tourism programs and Initiatives before, during and post COVID-19.

State of MD Harriet Ross Tubman Day of Remembrance (2000-2023)

In 2000, my organization (BAATC) led the effort to establish March 10th annually as the official State of Maryland Harriet Ross Tubman Day of Remembrance. For 21 years, BAATC organized and hosted Tubman Day tributes in nearly every Maryland county and encouraged other groups to join in and host a Tubman Day program. Earlier on OTD (MD-Office of Tourism Development) stated they would only support my tourism programs on a case-by-case basis. Tubman Day became the primary program that OTD would provide consistent support.

OTD provided a small grant of \$5000 per year to produce the annual State of MD Tubman Day program. In most years they would be active presenters at the Tubman Day event in Annapolis. One particular year, I requested OTD to support another BAATC tourism program, the Charm City Tourism Awards and Symposium. In this program my first guest speaker was the Ambassador from Botswana. OTD stated that if they were to provide \$1000 in support of the CCTA, it would be deducted from the \$5000 annual Tubman Day grant. This is what happened.

The elements of the (2000-2021) Tubman Day program included an annual request to the sitting Governor to issue the annual State of Maryland Governor's Tubman Day proclamation, and to issue a Governor's Citation to the annual recipient of the Harriet Tubman Lifetime Achievement Award. In 2019, without any explanation, former Secretary Kelly Shulz discontinued the \$5000 Tubman Day grant. In 2021, 2022, and 2022, OTD did not provide any support to the annual State of Maryland Harriet Tubman Day of Remembrance program.

In 2020, under the former Governor Hogan, OTD began to promote the month of September as International Underground Railroad Month in Maryland. They requested the Governor to issue an official proclamation to designate it as such. The issue here is OTD is apparently more inclined to provide more significant support to their in-house Underground Railroad program but not so much for minority organized Tubman Day activities and programs.

OTD has provided an insufficient level of support for the Baltimore African American Tourism Council, Inc. (BAATC) tourism programs before, during and post COVID-19. These programs include the Harriet Tubman Day program, Mid-Atlantic African American Tourism Summit, the Charm City Tourism Symposium & Awards and presently the A Taste of Soul tourism initiative. During the pandemic MD Department of Commerce had access to millions of dollars of Covid-19 relief funds which they did not provide any significant support to minority tourism entities existing within the State of Maryland. Where did the MD DOC-\$759 million of COVID relief money end up? Did any African American tourism entities receive any substantial tourism funding from DOC during Covid? MD Department of Commerce during COVID provided BAATC with a small grant.

Excerpt from MD Tourism website (pulled from Visit MD website, September 5, 2023)

[EDA Grant Information | VisitMaryland.org](#)

Governor Hogan announced that \$9.6 million has been awarded to the Maryland Department of Commerce Office of Tourism to support tourism marketing, promotion, and development throughout the state. The funding is through the U.S. Department of Commerce Economic Development Administration's (EDA) \$750 million American Rescue Plan: **TRAVEL, TOURISM & OUTDOOR RECREATION PROGRAM**. The program specifically provides \$510 million in state tourism grants to advance the economic recovery and resiliency of communities where the travel, tourism, and outdoor recreation industries were hardest hit by the COVID-19 pandemic.

"The tourism industry has shown its strength and determination since the beginning of the pandemic. Over the last several months, our administration has worked hard to support local hospitality businesses with grants to sustain them through the health emergency," said Governor Hogan. "This new EDA funding will help our state and regional tourism offices do what they do best – invite people to Maryland and enjoy all that our state has to offer."

From the \$9.6 million in funding, \$2.8 million will be used to award the 25 officially recognized Destination Marketing Organizations (DMO) so they can invest in inviting residents and visitors back to restaurants, entertainment venues, wineries, breweries, attractions, shops, and services in communities across the state.

Partnerships are vital to the success of the tourism industry, and \$1.9 million will be awarded to state and local government agencies, economic development organizations, and other industry partners to further develop tourism opportunities across Maryland. Specifically, this is focused on opportunities where the industry benefits from visitor spending, including events designed to encourage overnight travel and events surrounding hospitality training and workforce development.

Because Maryland's natural resources and outdoor recreation are vital to residents and citizens alike, these entities will be awarded \$2 million to create access to outdoor recreational activities and provide educational resources about recreating responsibly.

"We are incredibly grateful to receive nearly \$10 million from the Economic Development Administration in support of our state's tourism and recreation sectors," said Maryland Commerce Secretary Mike Gill. "These funds will help each of Maryland's five regions increase visitation, boost business sales, and support the workforce throughout the industry."

The remaining \$2.9 million will be used by the Office of Tourism to support its 18 SCENIC BYWAYS marketing promotion to drive visitors to Maryland's towns, attractions, and accommodations along these routes.

WHAT DOES DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND INCLUSION MEAN?

In the context of racial equity, disparity, diversity, and inclusion are integral in developing systems that evenly distribute resources to historically marginalized and underserved groups by taking each person's unique set of circumstances into account.

Diversity

Diversity is important when considering how historically underrepresented groups have been barred from participating in every aspect of society. When you allow everyone a seat at the table to voice their concerns and provide solutions to community issues they are directly affected by, no one person is holding the microphone, creating a shift in the balance of power.

Equity

Equity acknowledges the systems that have kept marginalized groups from political, social, cultural and economic spheres of influence—often to the downfall of specific groups of people. Equity is ensuring that access, resources, and opportunities are provided for all to succeed and grow, especially for those who are underrepresented and have been historically disadvantaged. The goal for equity is to promote justice, impartiality and fairness within the procedures, processes, and distribution of resources.

Equity means all persons are paid commensurate with their job duties and performance regardless of their race, sex, age or other personal factors. Equity means everyone is provided with resources to succeed. Equity means opportunities are provided equally to everyone with a focus on merit and not privilege. Equity calls on leaders to provide resources and to provide decision making authority to groups that have historically been disadvantaged and requires an understanding of the root causes of outcome disparities within our society.

Inclusion

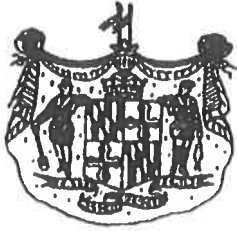
Inclusion creates a welcoming atmosphere where all people, regardless of race, gender or sexuality, can feel welcomed and are able to actively participate in society without any threats of harm or intimidation. By celebrating and accepting people's differences, we create a more empathetic world.

Source: Washington.edu, unitedwaynca.org

2023 Maryland Minority Tourism Report

Part 5. Recommendations

1. Establish the State of Maryland Division of African American & Multicultural Tourism
2. Appoint Kat Evans as the Senior Managing Director reporting directly to the Secretary of Commerce.
3. Hire Corey Lewis (MD Archives) and T. Adriana Lee (Comptroller's Office) as staff to DMHT.
4. Appoint Victor Clark (DLLR) as the DOC Senior Director of Strategic Industries and Entrepreneurship.
5. Provide DAAMT with an annual designated budget of \$5.5 million with a 20% set-aside for statewide African American/Minority Tourism Development Grant Fund.
6. Provide BAATC with an annual state tourism grant to serve as the statewide Multicultural and Heritage Tourism Consultant & Ambassador.
7. Direct the MD-DMOs to create mini-tourism grants for African American/minority business during tourism-related activities and tourism programs in their counties.
8. Ensure the MD DOC, OTD, DMOs and DMHT to firmly adhere to the State's MBE/SBR/VSBE procurement policies.
9. Ensure that Maryland's African American/minority owned tourism firms have increased presence on the MTDB.
10. Ensure that Maryland's African American/minority tourism businesses are prominently featured in Maryland tourism magazines, Visit MD website, marketing and outreach campaigns and at the Maryland welcome centers.
11. MD DOC, OTD, MTBD must comply with prompt payment directives for MBE/WBE/VSBE/SBR companies.
12. These state tourism reforms must be protected and held in binding for this and all subsequent administrations.



The State of Maryland
Executive Department

EXECUTIVE ORDER
01.01.2023.03

Reporting of Procurement Activity and Minority Business Enterprise Compliance

- WHEREAS, In 1978, the State of Maryland established the Minority Business Enterprise (MBE) program to increase economic opportunity and participation for minority and women-owned firms in State government procurement;
- WHEREAS, Since 2013, the State of Maryland has had a statewide MBE participation goal of 29% in all qualifying state procurement expenditures;
- WHEREAS, Since 2013, the State of Maryland has consistently failed to meet its statewide MBE participation goal, thereby depriving Maryland's MBE communities of meaningful opportunities to participate in State procurement activities and to receive hundreds of millions of dollars in procurement awards;
- WHEREAS, The State of Maryland is firmly committed to identifying and implementing policies, procedures, regulations, and legislation that promote increased MBE participation, compliance, accountability, and transparency; and
- WHEREAS, As the State of Maryland works to make progress on these goals, it is imperative that the Governor receive current data on the performance and compliance of agencies and departments participating in the MBE program.
- NOW THEREFORE, I, WES MOORE, GOVERNOR OF THE STATE OF MARYLAND, BY VIRTUE OF THE AUTHORITY VESTED IN ME BY THE CONSTITUTION AND THE LAWS OF MARYLAND, HEREBY PROCLAIM THE FOLLOWING EXECUTIVE ORDER, EFFECTIVE IMMEDIATELY:

A. Definitions.

1. "Participating Agencies" means those procurement units required to report MBE participation and compliance data to the Governor's Office of Small, Minority, and Woman Business Affairs (GOSBA).
2. "Jurisdiction" means each of Maryland's 23 counties and Baltimore City.

B. Within sixty (60) days of the issuance of this Executive Order, all Participating Agencies shall submit a report to the Governor detailing the Participating Agency's procurement activity since July 1, 2022. The report shall include the following:

1. The quantity of procurement solicitations issued;
2. The quantity and the cumulative dollar value of contract awards;
3. The quantity and the cumulative dollar value of contract modifications;
4. The quantity and the cumulative dollar value of contract renewal options exercised;
5. The quantity of procurement solicitations issued with MBE goals;
6. The quantity of contract awards with MBE goals;
7. The number of contracts modified that had MBE goals;
 - a. The number of contracts that met their MBE goals at the time of the modification;
 - b. The number of contracts that did not meet their MBE goals at the time of the modification;
8. The number of contracts whose renewal options were exercised that had MBE goals;
 - a. The number of renewed contracts that met their MBE goals at the time of the renewal option being exercised;
 - b. The number of renewed contracts that did not meet their MBE goals at the time of the renewal option being exercised.

C. Within sixty (60) days of the issuance of this Order, all Participating Agencies shall submit a report to the Governor detailing the outreach and marketing efforts to MBE firms that the Participating Agency conducted related to procurement solicitations from July 1, 2022, to the date of the issuance of this Order.


D. Within sixty (60) days of the issuance of this Executive Order, the Maryland Department of Transportation, in its capacity as the State's official MBE certification agency, shall submit a report to the Governor with the following information:

1. By jurisdiction, the total number of businesses certified as an MBE;
2. By jurisdiction, the total number of Maryland-based businesses certified as an MBE;
3. By jurisdiction, the number of African American-owned businesses certified as an MBE;

4. By jurisdiction, the number of Hispanic-owned businesses certified as an MBE;
 5. By jurisdiction, the number of Asian-owned businesses certified as an MBE;
 6. By jurisdiction, the number of Native American-owned businesses certified as an MBE;
 7. By jurisdiction, the number of Woman-owned businesses certified as an MBE; and
 8. By jurisdiction, the number of Disabled-owned businesses certified as an MBE.
- E. Any Participating Agencies who are required to submit MBE performance and compliance reporting data to GOSBA for Fiscal Year 2022 but have not done so by the date of the issuance of this Executive Order, must submit the mandatory data to GOSBA within 15 days of the issuance of this Executive Order.
- F. Participating Agencies shall implement this Executive Order in a manner that is consistent with all applicable statutes and regulations. Nothing in this Executive Order shall operate to contravene any State or federal law or to affect the State's receipt of federal funding.
- G. If any provision of this Executive Order or its application to any person, entity, or circumstance is held invalid by any court of competent jurisdiction, the provisions or applications of the Executive Order are severable, and all others shall remain in effect to the extent possible without the invalid provision or application.


GIVEN Under My Hand and the Great Seal of the State of Maryland, in the City of Annapolis, this 16th day of February, 2023.





Wes Moore
Governor

ATTEST:



Susan C. Lee
Secretary of State

MBE aka Minority Businesses Eliminated:

0

Much thanks to waning interest in Maryland's MBE program mainly due to its lack of oversight and enforcement by the Governor and his cabinet Secretaries.

by Lou Fields, published Baltimore Times Newspaper, November 18, 2021

FY 2019, Maryland procurement contracts totaled \$6.865 billion.

Maryland MBE procurement contracting goal is 29%.

29% of \$6.865 billion = \$1,990 billion for MBE/WBEs.

MD state agencies did only 14.14% = \$971 million

FY 2019, MBE net loss =\$1 Billion!

Thirty years ago, while attending a meeting of the Baltimore City Board of Estimates, I met a MBE warrior known as Jolly. He was the president of the Maryland's Minority Contractors Association. His full name was Arnold Merion Jolivet, Sr., an attorney who was an alum of Morgan State University and the University of Maryland Law School.



I wondered how this dedicated minority business advocate could have earned the nickname Jolly. He was at that BOE meeting raising holy hack about the lack of Black Business inclusion on Baltimore City contracts which meant the denial of millions of dollars for Black businesses in the construction trade and other industries. Jolly was one of Baltimore's most revered fighters and advocates for Black business inclusion, equity and parity in City and State procurement contracts.

Today, I am wondering what Jolly would think about the current state of Maryland's Minority Business Enterprise program since only 7 out of Maryland's top 22 state agencies are reaching the state's procurement goal of 29%. The statewide average is a little over 14%. African American businesses and other minorities are losing out on a BILLION DOLLARS in annual MBE/WBE revenue. Reviewing the top 15 state agencies that did over \$100 million in annual contracts, they collectively averaged 14%, less than 50% of the state's 29% procurement goal in fiscal year 2019.

Blacks and other minority businesses are losing out on serious money here in Maryland. This hurts our communities, our competitiveness, hinders our progress in creating Black wealth, decreases employment, entrepreneurial and housing opportunities, adversely effects neighborhood and community development efforts, and seriously erodes the level of public trust in government agencies and elected officials. Worse yet, it sets the breeding ground for criminal activities that continue to flourish in neglected and underserved communities.

Two years ago, I was conducting a series of diversity meetings with the Maryland Department of Commerce Office of Tourism Development and the Maryland Tourism Development Board. Newly hired Commerce Secretary Kelly Schulz did not seem surprised nor annoyed that the agency she was placed in charge of was only doing 3% towards the State's 29% MBE procurement goal. Secretary Schulz has thrown her hat in the ring as a republican candidate for Governor in the next year's primary.

Leave it to me to check into her agency's latest results in MBE procurement. The 2020 annual report of the Governor's Office of Small, Minority & Women Business Affairs (formerly GOMA) shows that in fiscal year 2019, under the

leadership of Secretary Schulz, her agency, the Maryland Department of Commerce was doing a miserable 9.09% in MBE procurements, less than one third of our State's 29% goal. Her campaign literature quotes her saying "We have come a long way over the past few years, but there is still so much work to do. I'm running for Governor so we can fulfill the great promise and potential of our state." We have heard such rhetoric during every campaign season.

Leave it to me to check on the MBE record of another gubernatorial candidate- Peter Franchot, the long-serving Comptroller of Maryland. Peter has been somewhat of an enigma, a Democrat, but often siding with the republic Governor on matters coming before the Maryland Board of Public Works.

In January 2019, while looking over the State Board of Public Works contract awards I was searching for detailed information on Governor Hogan's funding allocation for the Harriet Tubman and Frederick Douglass statues that was erected in State Capitol Building. While searching I ran across a State award from University Maryland University College (UMUC) showing it was seeking the Board of Public Works approval for two advertising contracts valued at \$250 million each, totaling half a billion dollars. What perplexed me about these two digital advertising contracts was the lack of any MBE/WBE procurement requirements. UMUC had gotten a waiver although Maryland has a mandated goal of 29% for large scale procurements. I held a series of meetings with their chief Diversity and Inclusion Officer. They were quite surprised when I challenged them. Although not much happened they did change their name from UMUC to University Maryland Global Campus. They continue to receive major contracts from the Department of Defense to teach English to American allies overseas.

Franchot was there the day that the UMUC sought BPW approval of the two \$250 million contracts. Franchot voted on and approved this injustice without asking a single question. This cost MBE/WBE over \$150 million in potential lost revenue. Peter was clearly not sensitive, nor did he show any interest in questioning the lack of minority business inclusion on these two large multimillion State contracts. For fiscal year 2019, the GOSMWBA report reveals that Franchot only reached 15.34% towards a goal of 29% for his Comptroller's office procurement contract awards. Yet, he is on the campaign trail promising Blacks he is going to be the one who gets Baltimore fixed once and for all.

Who is questioning the Governor's use of Executive privilege in awarding millions in emergency sole source no-bid contracts during the COVID 19 pandemic? Who is monitoring the young Mayor's handling of \$641 million dollars in American Rescue Plan Act funds? Is his staff experienced in ensuring fairness, inclusion, and equity in such a huge financial undertaking, especially in a city with huge financial woes including a City Hall that has been raided by FBI agents twice in the last decade over bad money deals?

I wonder what attorney Jolivet would be saying and doing about these disturbing trends.

Congressman Parren Mitchell, Justice Marshall, Bob Clay, Ray Haysbert, Walter Carter, Terry Addison, Dorothy Brunson, Steven R. Pace, and many others have passed on leaving today's unmanned mantle of MBE leadership in a much deepening void. Who are...where are...today's advocates for Minority Business Enterprises inclusion and parity on all public contracts?

As the late Dr. Levi Watkins stated when delivering the keynote speech at the annual meeting of the Greater Baltimore Black Chamber of Commerce, "We are all too silent."

Is there anyone?

Black Tourism Reports & Statistics

Black Travel Trends & COVID: How an Underserved Market is Transforming Travel

By [Lawrence Phillips](#), [Heather Kelly](#)

25 May 2021

Key findings about black adventure travelers:

- When asked what they look for when they plan a trip, adventure is a key component with 54% of travelers looking for that in their trip. Private day trips, historical/heritage tours, and food tours are the most popular activities amongst Black travelers. In the upcoming seminar, destinations and activities that have attracted Black travelers for the various levels of adventure will be outlined.
- While many people were forced to change their travel plans because of the pandemic, travel did not stop altogether for most Black travelers. Because 58% of those surveyed travel for mental health, many deem travel to be an essential part of their livelihood. This is an important aspect to consider when desiring to attract black consumers even for adventure-based travel. To that end, the survey revealed that many travelers either modified or postponed travel plans while only 37% canceled travel plans completely.
- The majority (63%) of travelers plan to increase their travel once the pandemic is over. A year with less travel has made travelers antsy and has highlighted the fact that "life is short, [and] there is so much to see." Of these 63%, the majority are excited to travel more internationally:

From the [2021 Black Travel Survey: Trends and the Impact of COVID-19 Report](#)

What do Black travelers look for when they plan a trip?

- 67% want to do something cultural with the local people
- 58% are interested in trying the local food and beverage
- 54% look for adventure activities
- 41% want to do something "Black" (i.e., finding the Black connection to a destination)

See full article at: <https://www.adventuretravelnews.com/black-travel-trends-covid-how-an-underserved-market-is-transforming-travel>

<https://www.nytimes.com/2021/07/27/travel/black-travelers-diversity-inclusion.html>

<https://blacktravelalliance.org/the-black-traveler/>

<https://www.travelandleisure.com/travel-tips/travel-trends/black-travel-movement>

<https://www.travelagentcentral.com/your-business/stats-black-u-s-leisure-travelers-spent-109-4-billion-2019#:~:text=The%20spend%20was%20generated%20by,13.1%20nights%20in%20paid%20accommodations>

<https://www.virginia.org/plan-your-trip/black-travel/>

<https://www.visithersheyharrisburg.org/articles/post/vhh-introduces-new-cultural-guide-the-black-travel-experience/>

<https://www.globenewswire.com/news-release/2018/12/20/1670310/0/en/African-American-Travel-Represents-63-Billion-Opportunity.html>

Case in point: The economic impact of a Black Basketball Tournament

CIAA extends Baltimore deal as attendance ticks upward

By Steven J. Gaither

Posted on June 8, 2023

The CIAA and Baltimore have decided to continue their relationship for another year, extending its run through 2026. “We are proud that the CIAA Tournament will call Baltimore home for the next three years. The tournament belongs in Charm City, and this report proves it,” said Governor Wes Moore. “In order for this to be Maryland’s decade, it needs to be Baltimore’s time. Each year, this tournament is our opportunity to showcase what our state has to offer, bring people to Maryland, and drive economic growth.”

“The CIAA has embraced the “Charm City” as our tournament home over the past two years. Each year, we have attracted new fans with a focus to increase attendance at our championship basketball games, Fan Fest, and other ancillary CIAA events,” said Commissioner Jacqueline McWilliams. “Baltimore is a cultural destination that aligns perfectly for our alumni and fans in February, one of my favorite months to celebrate sports and culture. We are proud to partner with Visit Baltimore and the entire community to harness the legacy of the CIAA and to make lasting impact in the community that we can see, feel, and celebrate. We look forward to another exciting CIAA Basketball Tournament in 2024 and extending through 2026.”

Here are five other key numbers from the Baltimore/CIAA partnership.

The 2023 tournament had approximately 38,450 fans in attendance at the CFG Bank Arena over 22 basketball games during its 5-day run in Baltimore, exceeding 2022’s attendance by 5.6 percent. In total, there were 63,844 individuals based on initial turnstile numbers including media, student athletes, coaches, staff, and other individuals who entered the arena during tournament week with a paid ticket as well as folks who entered without a paid ticket.

The CIAA Tournament generated a total economic impact of \$29.6 million, which supported 1,504 part-time and full-time jobs and generated \$2.5 million in state and local taxes. This financial success was made possible by the State of Maryland, Baltimore City, and the Local Organizing Committee. -In addition to total economic impact, the tournament generated \$17.7 million in participant and spectator off-site spending, with \$5.4 million spent in the food and beverage sector, \$4 million in lodging, \$3.4 million in entertainment and attractions, \$3.2 million in retail spending, and \$1.7 million in transportation and local rideshare companies.

“I am grateful for the twelve presidents’ confidence in Baltimore to continue hosting the tournament through 2026,” said Al Hutchinson, president, and CEO of Visit Baltimore. “The CIAA is an excellent example of what major events and conventions are doing for our city’s tourism recovery in terms of economic impact, and we are absolutely thrilled to welcome them to Baltimore for an additional year.”

Throughout the tournament planning process, the Baltimore Sports Tourism Development Council engaged 118 minority-owned businesses to be a part of the tournament which had a direct economic benefit of \$1,249,028 to those businesses. In addition to the total economic impact that the event contributed to area hotels, restaurants and attractions, the City of Baltimore, State of Maryland,

Visit Baltimore and the Local Host Committee made a \$1.2 Million donation to the CIAA General Scholarship Fund that supports the conference’s 12 member institutions, made up of Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs), and its students. This generous donation was made possible by the local businesses that make up the Local Host Committee, along with corporate contributions from partners including Whiting Turner, Bank of America, Under Armor, CareFirst, Verizon, Wells Fargo, Tom Joyner Foundation, BGE, BWI Thurgood Marshall Airport, the Baltimore Orioles, the Baltimore Ravens, Horseshoe Casino, Fraport USA, DTLR, T. Rowe Price and many others.

SOURCE: hbcugameday.com

July 26, 2023

To: Secretary Kevin Anderson, Maryland Department of Commerce

From: Lou Fields, President, BAATC/BBH Tours

Re: My Reflections on OTD Staff

I admire the staff of the Maryland Office of Tourism Development. Since 1998, we have partnered together and worked on many important heritage tourism initiatives, especially the development and promotion of African American tourism product development initiatives. The OTD staff are very diligent and committed individuals working on behalf of the citizens of Maryland. Bar none, our state's tourism leadership, staff and employees are getting it done.

On several occasions, BAATC has officially recognized their efforts.

- In 2010, BAATC presented the late Congressman Elijah E. Cummings with the "Man of the Year Award." On the same program, BAATC presented Ms. Marci Ross with the "Maryland Tourism Official of the Year Award."
- In 2017, BAATC presented Managing Director Liz Fitzsimmons with a Charm City Tourism Award.
- In 2018, BAATC presented OTD Budget Officer Kat Evans with a Charm City Tourism Award.
- In 2018, MD-OTD presented me with the Bicentennial Frederick Douglass Partnership Award.

All Marylanders should be aware of the work the OTD staff are doing and join me in applauding and showing our statewide appreciation to all the members of the OTD staff. I am proud of them as they are dedicated public servants putting in a significant effort every day on behalf of the citizens of Maryland.

The most problematic issue that confronts us in Maryland tourism is not the members of the OTD staff. Our present and most pressing issue in Maryland tourism has to do with the history of the Maryland Department of Commerce selective and restrictive funding enhanced by political mandates and combined with enabling legislation as to which Maryland-based tourism organizations are eligible to receive State funding for Maryland tourism programs, initiatives, tourism events, marketing, and outreach.

Presently, all designated State funding for tourism programs is restricted to governmental entities which creates a sense of tension in Maryland tourism. A closer look at the MD-DOC adherence to our State's MBE and VSBE procurement is very troubling. This is where those of us who are Maryland tourism stakeholders should focus our immediate attention. We must work together to determine if our fact-finding reveal facts that merit a change in the MD Department of Commerce tourism funding, policies, and adherence to Maryland's MBE/VSBE procurement goals.

Please refer to BAATC's 2023 Maryland Minority Tourism Reports. I have presented part one of this report to Secretary Anderson. Later today, I will be submitting part 2 of this report to Secretary Anderson.

BAATC/BBH Tours continues to service thousands of Maryland citizens, organizations and incoming tourist groups, families, and visitors.

Our shared objective: Working Together towards Making Maryland Tourism Fair for Minorities!

Let Us Seek Clarity, Avoid Confusion.

Working together Works!

Lou Fields
President

Lou Fields Bio

LOU FIELDS is the co-founder and President of the Baltimore African American Tourism Council of MD, Inc. Since 1996, collaborating with co-founder the late Steven Pace, Errol E. Brown, Sr. and other supporters, the Council continues to serve as the exclusive statewide tourism organization focusing on the continued growth and development of African American tourism in the State of Maryland. In 2006, Lou served as the foundering president of the Greater Baltimore Black Chamber of Commerce. In 2010, Lou founded BDX and established the BDX Live Talk Show. Airing since 2014, Lou's shows are aired on Radio One and social media. Excerpts from previous shows are stored at www.bdxlive.biz. With over four decades experience in tourism and hospitality, Lou remains active in Maryland/Baltimore tourism and heritage preservation sectors.

The Council's mission "*is to research, preserve, protect and promote Baltimore/Maryland's African American History & Culture, and to utilize this heritage as a vital and beneficial product and a very important part of the Baltimore/Maryland tourism industry.*"

The Council provides services to families, school groups, communities, organizations, and public entities that need heritage tourism development programs, research assistance and information and referral services. Other Services include tours, lectures, exhibits, and special events such as dedications and tributes to notable and unknown Baltimoreans/Marylanders.

Through the Council's tourism division, we provide educational heritage tours in Baltimore and across Maryland, including the popular [Frederick Douglass Path to Freedom Walking Tour](#) in historic Fell's Point Baltimore, Maryland. Click here to view the C SPAN (2001) coverage of this tour. <https://www.c-span.org/video/?164528-1/fells-point-walking-tour> .

In my book, the *Maryland Black Facts "Calendar" Book* you will find useful information and items for discussion and further research to assist students and adults to become better acquainted with the African American Experience in Baltimore and throughout the State of Maryland. My book, *Freedom Seekers, the Story of Early Abolitionists in Antebellum Baltimore* is available for sales and signings. My current book is titled A TASTE OF SOUL, a culinary tourism guidebook listing Black Businesses, tourism partners, special events and service providers. See at www.atasteofsoul.biz .

Presently, I am serving as one of Visit Baltimore – CIAA Ambassadors. I continue to host, coordinate and service incoming tourist groups, family reunions, meetings, and conferences in our State.

Lou Fields contact: cell 443.983.7974 | email: bbhtours@gmail.com | www.bdxlive.biz .

The Council's projects include...

- A TASTE OF SOUL, a charm city culinary tourism B2B program
- BDX LIVE TALK SHOW (2014-2020)
- Royal Theater Monument on Historic Pennsylvania Avenue
- Frederick Douglass Historic Trail, Tour, and Markers in Fell Point (National Network to Freedom Program)
- Harriet Ross Tubman Day - State of Maryland [March 10th]
- Maryland Black Writers Guild, founded in 1998.
- Buffalo Soldier Day in MD [February 20th], 1998
- African American Historic Society of Western MD, 2003
- Maryland Underground Railroad Coalition, National UGRR gatherings.
- Maryland AA Tourism Alliance & Travel Network
- 31st Annual Black History Month Program
- Establishing the Baltimore City American Tourism & Heritage Preservation Commission
- Charm City Cultural Heritage Tourism Symposium w/Ambassador Secretse of Botswana
- Charm City Tourism Awards (2017-)
- Legacy in Racing VIP Reception, Grand Prix of Baltimore
- Leon Day Negro League Park
- Langston Hughes Literary Forum & Book Fair
- Greater Baltimore of Black Chamber of Commerce (2006)

- Mid-Atlantic African American Tourism Summit (MAAATS)
- Black Dollar Exchange business network

Awards of Recognition...

- Community Service Award (Nov 5, 2022)
- Distinguished Service Award for Leadership in Heritage Tourism & Entrepreneurship (July 4, 2022)
- Harriet Tubman Lifetime Achievement Award (2022)
- Charm City Buccaneers Sponsor Award (2022)
- Empowerment Temple Black History Leader Award, February 2019
- Louis S. Diggs Historian Award, 2019, Baltimore County Government, Louis S. Diggs
- MD General Assembly Citation, Speaker Delegate Michael Busch and Speaker Pro Tem Delegate Adrienne Jones, February 2019
- Frederick Douglass Partnership Award, MD Office of Tourism, 2018
- Baltimore Radio Listeners Award Salute, MLK Weekend 2018, Alex McCamey, Radio One.
- Living History Honor Award (2017), Baltimore City Historical Society
- Malcolm X Legacy Award, Success Scholars, 2017
- Torch of Success Award by Women of Pride, Dec 2016
- GBBCC 10th Anniversary Founder's Award, October 2016
- Underground Railroad Advocate's Award, UGRR Free Press
- 2013 Apex Travel & Tourism Award for Distinguished Service, Black Meetings & Tourism
- SBA – Maryland Minority Small Business Champion of the Year Award, May 20, 2011
- NAACP Thurgood Marshall Legacy Award, October 26, 2010
- Greater Baltimore Black Chamber of Commerce- Founder's Award, May 28, 2009
- Keeper of the Flame Award – A Good Black Man, Inc., July 15, 2007
- Distinguished Black Marylander Award-Towson University, February 2002
- Maryland African American Heritage Preservation Award, October 6, 2006
- International Network to Freedom Award, March 11, 2000
- Outstanding Achievement & Community Service Award-Balt City Community College, April 28, 2007
- Community Service Recognition-Unv. of Maryland – Baltimore County
- Outstanding Citizen Award-Flair Modeling Agency, June 1, 2003
- Outstanding Advocate Award-Blacks in Baseball,
- Mayoral Citation Awards from Mayor DuBurns, Mayors' Schmoke, O'Malley, Dixon, Rawlings-Blake, Young, Pugh.
- Citizen Awards for tourism and preservation from Governors' Glendening, Ehrlich, O'Malley, Hogan
- Congressional Citation from Congressman Elijah Cummings, Senator Barbara Mikulski
- Citations from State Senate of MD, State Senate of Missouri, State Senate of Delaware
- The Legislative Black Caucus of Maryland, State Senators, Delegates, Speaker Busch, Speaker Jones, Baltimore City Council, Anne Arundel, Baltimore, Frederick counties.



Group Tours



Site Visits



Family Reunions

Photo credits: Lou Fields

From Lou Fields, cell 443.983.7974, email: loucfelds2@gmail.com

Professional references

- This list is a partial listing of my professional references, however my impact in the travel and tourism industry has national and international supporters.
- dress.
- This is a private list for use only for their feedback on this report. Please do not distribute, misuse, or share this list.

Dr. Clara Smalls, Professor of African American History, Salisbury University (retired)

Email: clsmall@salsibury.edu

Dr. Joanne Martin, CEO, National Great Blacks in Wax Museum

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Wayne Frazier, MD Washington Minority Companies Association

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Meisha Rosenberg, Editor, Author, Boston, Mass

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Chery Mcleod, MD Commission on African American History & Culture (MCAACHC)

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Janice Curtis Greene, MD Commission of African American History & Culture

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Steven Lee, Heritage Museum, MCAAHC Commissioner

Email: heritagemuseum@usa.com

Francine Allen, District Director, Congressman Elijah Cummings (retired)

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Terrance Bailey, Talbot County (Frederick Douglass descendant)

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Ernestine "Tina" Wyatt, WDC (Harriet Tubman descendant)

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Vince Leggett, Blacks of the Chesapeake, Anne Arundel County, Annapolis, MD

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Miriam Stanicic, USNA, Annapolis, MD

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Sandi Williams & Deborah Buchanan, Sandy Spring Slave Museum, Montgomery County

Email: Williams.sssm@gmail.com

Joan Carter Smith, Howard County Center African American Culture

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Sandi Mallory, WEAA 88.9fm (retired)

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Ray Banks, Negro League Baseball Museum of MD, Baltimore County, Owings Mills

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Peter H. Michaels, Cooling Springs Farm, Frederick, MD

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Peter Brooks, Cab Calloway's grandson

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Breanna Dix, Worcester County Tourism

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Email: leronn.herbert@maryland.gov

Brian Robinson, Ron Lytle, Washington County, African American Historical Society of Western MD

Email: rlytle2017@gmail.com

Bill Curtis, Positive Products Only

Email: positiveproductsonly@gmail.com

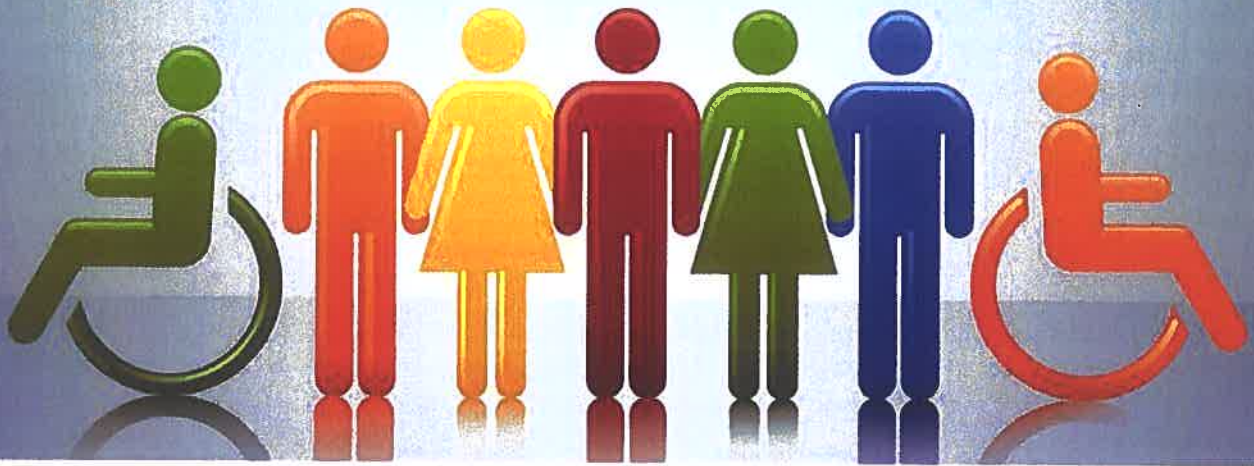
Ron Burke, Washington Informer

Email: rburke@washingtoninformer.com

Joy Hall, Manager, Reginald Lewis Museum, Email: joy.hall@lewismuseum.org

Notes

DIVERSITY, EQUITY & — INCLUSION —



DIVERSITY
ASKS

WHO
— IS IN —
THE ROOM



EQUITY
ASKS

WHO IS
— TRYING TO —
GET IN THE ROOM
BUT CAN'T



INCLUSION
ASKS

— HAVE —
EVERYONE'S
IDEAS BEEN
HEARD



Section 1. Policy. On my first day in office, I signed Executive Order 13985 (Advancing Racial Equity and Support for Underserved Communities Through the Federal Government), which established that affirmatively advancing equity, civil rights, racial justice, and equal opportunity is the responsibility of the whole of our Government. Executive Order on Diversity, Inclusion, Equity & Accessibility. President Biden, June 25, 2021.