



Black History Month celebration

The Charles County Public Schools (CCPS) Department of Community Engagement and Equity coordinated a Black History Month celebration. The fourth annual Black History Month celebration was held Feb. 28 at the Jesse L. Starkey Administration Building. Each year, staff members participate by wearing items that highlight Black culture and achievements. Staff members are encouraged to wear all-black attire, Greek attire and/or any Black cultural attire. Children’s books written by Black authors were displayed in the lobby of Starkey to be enjoyed by visitors.

Behavioral Health Conference March 9

Charles County Public Schools (CCPS) will hold a Behavioral Health Conference 3-6 p.m., Thursday, March 9, at Thomas Stone High School. March 9 is a two-hour early dismissal day for students.

Mike Veny, mental health speaker and best-selling author, will give the keynote address.

Parents and guardians can learn ways to support their children with mental health.

Workshops will be held for middle and high school students where they can learn more about how they can support their mental health.

To register and receive event updates, [click here](#). Thomas Stone is at 3785 Leonardtown Road in Waldorf.

Bradshaw named 2023 Teacher of the Year for CCPS

Michelle Bradshaw, a veteran special education teacher at Maurice J. McDonough High School, was named the 2023 Charles County Public Schools (CCPS) Teacher of the Year during a Feb. 23 ceremony held at St. Charles High School.

Bradshaw was among the five finalists for the title. Other educators named as finalists include Kimberly Cline, a kindergarten teacher at J.C. Parks Elementary School, Jennifer DeAtley, a reading resource teacher at Berry Elementary School, Kelsey Graham, a special education teacher at Dr. James Craik Elementary School and Rachel Proctor, an art teacher at Mt. Hope/Nanjemoy Elementary School.

Among the four, one will be selected to represent Charles County in the 2023 *The Washington Post* Teacher of the Year Awards program. The nominee will be named later this spring.

Shortly following graduation from State

University of New York at Oswego, where she earned a bachelors in English literature, Bradshaw started a teaching career. She has spent the past 27 years at McDonough where she teaches students in the ACHIEVE program.

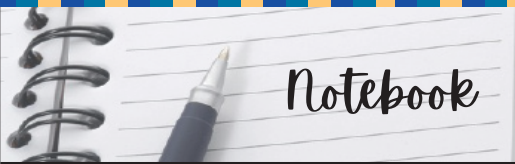
“I was in her life skills class at McDonough,” Edwin T. Willie II wrote in a nomination letter. “She deserves all the awards possible for a teacher. I loved being her student ... and because of her I learned many important skills. She treated me with respect, helped build my confidence and encouraged me to try new things.”

Bradshaw said she strives to improve the functional academics of her students with the in-



Michelle Bradshaw

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On the cover

Pictured on the front cover are CCPS employees honored at the February Board of Education meeting. From left are Inthanong “Pandy” Watrous, special education instructional assistant, J.P. Ryon Elementary School; Edward Davis, math teacher, General Smallwood Middle School; and Ava Morton, career and college advisor, Thomas Stone High School. To read more about the outstanding employees, [click here](#).



Honoring the past

CCPS high school students recently had the opportunity to [interview alumni](#) of Pomonkey High School, the county’s first Black high school that saw its last senior class graduate in 1969 with an integrated student body. Members of the Pomonkey High School Alumni Association sat down with CCPS students and Doria Fleisher, community engagement coordinator with the Charles County Government, to talk about high school experiences, challenges and celebrations of the Black experience in Charles County. In the video series, Thomas Stone High School senior Adriana Young speaks with [Aaron Kane](#); Matthew Nelson, a senior at Westlake High School, chats with [Doris Mason](#); and Henry E. Lackey High School sophomore Kennedy Hall speaks with [William “Billy” Thomas](#).

At-a-glance calendar

The CCPS 2023-2024 at-a-glance calendar has been published online for students and staff. The Board of Education in December 2022 approved the school calendar for next year. Dates listed are subject to change. To view the at-a-glance calendar, [click here](#).

Online safety sessions set for parents March 16

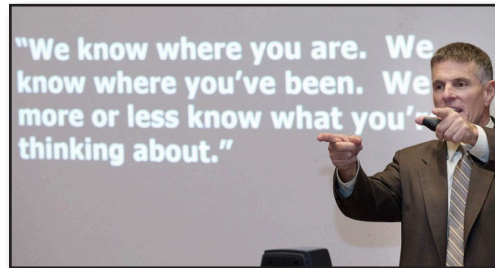
A free internet safety presentation for parents and teens 16 and older will be held Thursday, March 16, to provide information on keeping children safe on the internet.

The program is designed to equip parents and caregivers with information and resources they can implement to ensure their children are accessing the internet safely.

Guest speaker Vincent DeVivo, community outreach specialist with the U.S. Attorney’s Office, District of Maryland, will present Innocence Stolen: Protecting our Children Online from 6 to 7:30 p.m. March 16 at Dr. Thomas L. Higdon Elementary School. The presentation is open to the Charles County community.

The presentation will help parents learn how to protect young people from negative and criminal influences online while providing prevention and intervention strategies and internet safety resources for parents and families to use.

The program does not tell children “What not to do” on the internet. DeVivo said that some children may use informa-



Vincent DeVivo, community outreach specialist with the U.S. Attorney’s Office, speaks at a school event during an Innocence Stolen program.

tion learned from Stolen Innocence to misuse the internet. The presentation discusses topics that could be disturbing to young students including predatory behavior and sexting. It will also discuss topics related to cyberbullying, internet predators and social networking. Higdon is hosting the program, but it is open to the public.

[Click here](#) to register for the March 16 Innocence Stolen event at Higdon. The school is at 12872 Rock Point Road in Newburg.

Dual immersion program coming to CCPS

Charles County Public Schools (CCPS) will launch its first [dual language, two-way immersion program](#) at the start of the 2024-2025 school year. The program will start in August 2024 at Arthur Middleton Elementary School in Waldorf.

The first two grade levels to participate include both prekindergarten and kindergarten students. These students will receive instruction in two languages – English and Spanish – throughout their elementary school years. After the launch of the program, the next grade level will be added each school year. The program will fully be implemented at Middleton at the start of the 2029-2030 school year. With the start of the 2029-2030 school year, all students who attend Middleton will participate in the program.

The goal of a dual language immersion program is for students to be bilingual and biliterate rather than just fluent in English. The launch of the program is part of the

Blueprint for Maryland’s Future legislation’s focal area to accelerate the achievement of English learners.

Middleton was identified as the launch school for the program because it currently has the highest English as a Second Language (ESOL) population of students in Charles County.

Middleton staff will not be required to be bilingual but CCPS will begin to hire such staff to support the program. The CCPS Office of Human Resources will soon survey staff to determine how many are bilingual, other languages in which staff may be proficient in speaking and reading, and to gauge interest in those who would like to work in the dual language, two-way immersion program.

Middleton staff was recently briefed about the launch of the program. Middleton staff, along with members of the CCPS office of teaching and learning, hosted community information sessions for families.

tion of increasing their independence by developing a rapport with them while fostering mutual understanding and respect.

She finds lessons in everyday tasks. “My classroom is not merely academic-based. My students quickly learn our classroom is a safe place where we work together, support one another, help each other improve and celebrate one another’s victories,” Bradshaw said.

At McDonough, Bradshaw is the advisor for RAM Friends Club/Best Buddies which creates friendship matches between club members with and without disabilities.

She has been a co-collaborator with the Teacher Academy of Maryland (TAM) program at McDonough since 2012. Bradshaw has served as a mentor for ACHIEVE teachers, organized Polar Plunges and worked at Unified track meets.

Through her efforts, ACHIEVE students are valued members of the McDonough fRAMily, Principal Darnell Russell said. “Ms. Bradshaw is an advocate for her students and is passionate about involving them in the school community,” he said. “She makes sure that her students have many opportunities to socialize and be positive contributors toward the success of our school.”

Bradshaw will represent Charles County in the 2023 Maryland Teacher of the Year Awards program later this year.

The Maryland Teacher of the Year pro-



Fab Five — Five Charles County Public Schools (CCPS) teachers were named finalists for the title of 2023 Teacher of the Year for CCPS. From left are Rachel Proctor, art teacher at Mt. Hope/Nanjemoy Elementary School, Kelsey Graham, special education teacher, Dr. James Craik Elementary School, Jennifer DeAtley, reading resource teacher, Berry Elementary School, Kimberly Cline, kindergarten teacher, J.C. Parks Elementary School, and Michelle Bradshaw, special education teacher, Maurice J. McDonough High School. Bradshaw was named 2023 Teacher of the Year for CCPS.

gram is sponsored by the Maryland State Department of Education.

Each year, CCPS holds a Teacher of the Year Award program. Schools nominate one teacher with administrators, students, staff and

families penning letters of support.

For a list of every CCPS teacher nominated by their school for teacher of the year, [click here](#).

SMOB scene — Student Member of the Board election cycle kicks off

Charles County Public Schools (CCPS) is seeking the next Student Member of the Board of Education of Charles County, also known as the SMOB. Current high school sophomores and juniors can apply for a term serving the 2023-2024 school year. Any interested student must also meet CCPS academic eligibility requirements.

The position of Student Member of the Board of Education in Charles County includes voting rights. The Student Member is a full member of the Board and can vote on most matters with the exception of the following: legal appeals; personnel matters; collective bargaining; the hiring, salary and evalu-



Amira Abujuma is a senior at North Point High School. She was elected as the Student Member of the Board in May 2022, and was sworn in June 2022.

ation of the superintendent; operating and capital budgets; and school openings, closings and boundaries.

The candidacy filing period opens Feb.

27 and closes March 13. The candidacy form, along with other materials related to the process, are posted on the Charles County Association of Student Councils (CCASC) website. [Click here](#) to access the CCASC website. To access the website, students will need to use their CCPS-issued technology username and password to log in. The website is not accessible to the public.

Flippin' cool! McDonough cheer is top of state pyramid

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CCPS provides nondiscriminatory equal access to school facilities in accordance with its Use of Facilities rules to designated youth groups (including, but not limited to, the Boy Scouts).

Maurice J. McDonough High School's varsity cheerleaders had an extra sweet Valentine's Day Feb. 14 coming in first place at the winter state finals.

The Maryland Public Schools State Cheerleading (MPSSC) State Finals were held at Harford Community College in Bel Air with teams from around the state taking to the mat demonstrating skills in tumbling, cheering, dancing, jumping and stunts.

McDonough placed first in the Class 1A division, besting teams from Boonsboro and Pikesville high schools which came in second and third, respectively. McDonough's team is coached by Tony Williams, a special education instructional assistant at the school. "These girls have had many months of team bonding, working together, motivating each other and getting to know each other," he said. "Our team is made up of athletes from all grade levels, who all respect each other and share the same love for the sport of cheerleading. We believe in building a true sisterhood, bonds that will last a



The Maurice J. McDonough High School varsity cheerleaders were named state champions in the Class 1A division of the Maryland Public Schools State Cheerleading state finals. Coach Tony Williams is pictured in the center.

lifetime."

The Rams were not the only Charles County Public Schools (CCPS) team that competed in the winter finals. Henry E. Lackey High School's team came in sixth in the 1A division. Westlake High School came in third in the Class 2A division, St. Charles High School placed fifth in the Class 3A division and North Point High School took fourth in the Class 4A division.

Williams spoke of the Lady

Rams athletes as being proactive, reliable and dedicated. His words could apply to most CCPS student-athletes. "In order to be a top tier high school athlete, you must put your studies and school-work first," Williams said, adding that support of family, friends, coaches and school administration allow students to succeed in the classroom and on the competition floor.

MPSSC holds state competitions in the fall and winter.

Personnel

Apply for positions online at www.cchoe.com/jobs/currentopenings.php. All teaching positions require a bachelor's degree and MSDE certification requirements.

Job openings

Coordinator for Early Learning Center — Early Learning Center at the College of Southern Maryland, 12-month position.

Administrative Intern — Piccowaxen Middle School, 11-month position. A bachelor's degree and Standard Professional Certificate issued by the Maryland State Department of Education are required. Apply by March 9.

Math Interventionalist — Malcolm Elementary School, 10-month position. A high school diploma is required with an as-

sociate's or bachelor's degree preferred. Apply by March 9.

CTE Automotive Instructional Assistant — Robert D. Stethem Educational Center, 10-month position. Apply by March 9.

Front Office Secretary — Walter J. Mitchell Elementary School, 11-month position. A high school diploma is required. Apply by March 9.

Middle School Instructional Assistant — All middle schools, 10-month position. High school diploma required. Apply by April 30.

Middle School Special Education Instructional Assistant — All middle schools, 10-month position. High school diploma required. Apply by April 30.

High School Special Education Instruction-

al Assistant — All middle schools, 10-month position. High school diploma required. Apply by April 30.

High School Instructional Assistant — All high schools, 10-month position. High school diploma required. Apply by April 30.

Elementary-level Mathematics Intervention Instructional Assistant — All elementary schools, 10-month position. Apply by July 1.

Academic Mentor — Location to be determined, 10-month position. A Maryland Standard Professional Certificate II is required with a master's degree or an Advanced Professional Certificate is preferred. Position open until filled.