

## **Mental Crisis Disrupts But Quickly Diffused as MWMCA Honors It's Top Leaders in Maryland**



**[Select Here for Honoree Names](#)**

The 14<sup>th</sup> Annual 2017 Spring Breakfast Meeting/Business Showcase Expo was a smashing success from the attendance turnout and the inclusionary honorees, prime businesses, and government entities present to share their procurements and knowledge at the expo and matchmaking. **[Select here for event pictures.](#)**

MWMCA is so proud of its rich tradition and heritage in being the Mid-Atlantic's connection between so many eager and willing practitioners of supplier diversity and minority business inclusion.

Jennifer Gilbert, Evening Co-Ancor, at WBFF-Fox 45 Baltimore, agreed to emcee the event for the third time and added a Broadway Showtime atmosphere, including lights, camera, and action. As MWMCA's CEO marched into Martin's West under the theme music of "Rocky Balboa" complete with boxing gloves autographed by the real champ, Sugar "Ray" Leonard, an honoree from 2012. Prior to Frazier's entrance, PNC Bank's Vice President and CRA Market Leader, Ramsey L. Harris, introduced Frazier and in return Frazier thanked Harris and PNC for being so inclusive in low and moderate income communities as well as banking with minority businesses.

The Baltimore Police Department Honor Guard marched into the ballroom in an elegant style and presented their colors. They did not miss a beat with precision steps all the way. Joy and respect could be seen on the attendees' faces as they marched out after the playing of the national anthem and the pledge of allegiance being recited by all.

Rev. Patrick D. Clayborn, Ph.D., Pastor of Bethel AME Church in Baltimore, delivered the invocation thanking businesses for being inclusive and reminding everyone that inclusion is what faith is all about.

## **Mental Crisis Disrupts But Quickly Diffused as MWMCA Honors It's Top Leaders in Maryland**

Howard County Executive Allan H. Kittleman, our “Most Distinguished Leader for Minority Business,” brought greetings from his great county and thanked the county council for providing him inclusive legislation on the Tax Incremental Financing (TIF) that The Howard Hughes Corporation received for the remake of Downtown Columbia. He also asked for more private corporations and real estate development and trusts to do more in opening up their opportunities. Howard County is open for business, he said.

Maryland Department of Transportation Secretary, Pete K. Rahn, provided a powerful message on the state’s continued openness to spend with MBEs, DBEs, and ACDBEs. He mentioned he is delivering on Governor Hogan’s vision of economic inclusion.

Daniel G. Ennis, Senior Vice President for Finance & Administration at Johns Hopkins University, provided a heartwarming update on Hopkins empowering Hopkins-Local and B-Local programs. Both enabling programs are providing fresh new employment for Baltimore City residents and certified minority-owned firms with new work never before achieved.

Sagamore Development’s President, Marc Weller, accompanied by Alicia Wilson, Vice President for Community Affairs and Legal Advisor, was presented with the honor of “Most Inclusive Master Developer of the Year.” Marc discussed Sagamore’s commitment to workforce training and development and shared an uplifting six-minute video clip on their manufacturing boot camp that has assisted 24 Baltimore City residents since, November 2016, with basic skill shop training and all landing fulltime employment.

Catherine E. Pugh, our “Most Inclusive Mayor for Minority Business,” and Baltimore’s 50<sup>th</sup> Mayor, reminded everyone that her city is a vibrant, economic, and cultural hub of Maryland. After she finished her speech, she eloquently introduced her Police Commissioner, Kevin Davis, who reminded everyone that his 3,000-person staff is there to serve and protect.

Immediately upon the program ending honoring the commissioner and 14 other honorees, Commissioner Davis and his group of police officers became first responders to an unknown man pointing a nerf gun at his head that caused a bomb threat at the venue. Even though the threat disrupted our signature annual event where over 1500 guest were present, it did not dampen the enthusiasm of our guests and supporters of minority business enterprise, we have since received many emails and phone calls asking us to not let this incident deter our mission of connecting large and small businesses to work together. At MWMCA we certainly feel a similar sentiment and intend to continue to be a voice for advocating for the inclusion of minority businesses but also become a new voice as an advocate for those dealing with mental illnesses because certainly the [gentleman who disrupted our biggest event of the year](#) was having a behavioral crisis that needs to be addressed. Though nothing was found, the entire building was evacuated, swept with x-ray cameras, and inspected by Baltimore County’s K-9 unit and police officers. A huge thankyou goes out to Commissioner Kevin Davis and the entire group of Baltimore City Police that immediately took charge of the incident and quickly implemented solutions that diffused the threat and enabled all of the guest and the venues staff to walk away safely and unharmed. MWMCA wishes to thank each of its 75 participating exhibitors and 12 matchmaking host companies for understanding the precautions that had to be taken to ensure everyone’s safety due to the circumstances. Most of all, MWMCA is grateful that our friends and colleagues made it home safely to their loving families.