



**2018
Annual Report**

**Governor's Commission on
African Affairs**



Letter from Governor

Dear Friends,

I am pleased to present to you the 2018 Annual Report of the Governor's Commission on African Affairs. This report highlights the dedicated work of the Commission over the past year.

I would like to thank the Commissioners for their review and recommendations throughout the process. You remain committed to honoring the legacy your community has made and celebrating the diversity in this great state. My administration will continue to share your rich heritage with other citizens and pass over your contributions to the next generations to come.



I would like to ask all of you to continue to participate in civic engagement and collaborate with the Commission. The 2020 census approaches, and the role of our communities is enormous. Your voice should be heard. You are the ones who can address the unique needs and strengths of your community. Our administration will do our best to share important information and opportunities for community improvement through the Commission.

I would like to congratulate the Commissioners on this accomplishment again and show appreciation for leadership and commitment.

Thank you for empowering Marylanders and our communities. I look forward to working with you further in the future.

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read "Larry Hogan". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Larry Hogan
Governor of Maryland

Letter from Executive Director

Dear Friends,

The strength of Maryland comes from the diversity and vibrancy of our communities. Their distinctive culture and traditions make Maryland more embracing and inclusive. The Governor's Commission on African Affairs has taken an important role to engage, educate, and empower those communities. The Commission has assisted the Hogan Administration in focusing on how it can change Maryland for the better, especially for ethnic populations.

Through our cultural and ethnic commissions, we are educated about African community's beautiful culture, history, and heritage. More importantly, we have been able to address the issues your community faces and to stand together to find solutions suitable for you. The 2018 activities, projects, and initiatives of the Commission improved our neighborhoods and strengthened their solidarity.

I would like to congratulate the Governor's Commission on African Affairs and each of the Commissioners who serve as representatives for Governor Larry Hogan and your respected communities. Congratulations to Chair Ngozi Azubike as her dedication is truly appreciated.

I also would like to applaud the Commission's Administrative Director Kevin R. Craft for his continued support and hard work.

With your perseverance of participation and leadership, the Commission will continue to meet its goals and vision.

Thank you.



Steven McAdams
Executive Director
Governor's Office of Community Initiatives



Letter from Commission Chair

Dear Distinguished Officials, Community Leaders and Friends,

It is my pleasure to present to you the Governor's Commission on African Affairs' 2018 Annual Report.

In an effort to continue moving our initiatives forward and expanding on the success of the previous years, the Commission focused its efforts towards building a stronger and more dynamic work plan to better meet the needs and concerns of Maryland's African diaspora.

During 2018, the Commission was pleased to work with the Governor's Office of Small, Minority, & Women Business Affairs, Maryland's Secretary of State's Office, and all of the Governor's Ethnic/Cultural Commissions on several "Legislative Nights" that serve to introduce the Governor Hogan's most current legislative agenda, with the express goal of engaging our community members on issues that are most important to our communities.

For 2019, the African Commission is looking forward to further developing more of a "grassroots" effort to reach Maryland's African diaspora where they live, work and worship. Governor Hogan's objective to "Change Maryland for the Better" is alive and well within his Commission on African Affairs.

Thank you,

Ngozi Azubike
Chair
Governor's Commission on African Affairs



INTRODUCTION

Since the start of the Hogan Administration in 2015, the Commission has maintained an aggressive outreach strategy that has aimed to identify and address the needs and concerns of the African diaspora community in Maryland. In 2018, the Commission created opportunities to expand on small business initiatives with the second Maryland Business Forum that featured presentations from the Maryland Department of Labor, Licensing and Regulation, the Prince George's County Economic Development Corporation, the Governor's Office of Small, Minority, & Women Business Affairs, and the Maryland Department of Commerce.

What We Do

Promote cultural exchange, religious traditions, and international commerce

Engage diaspora communities in civic participation

Support next generations





COMMUNITY PROFILE

Over 200,000 African-born have made Maryland their home. More than half have linguistic and/or cultural ties to African nations.

Maryland is one of the top five states in the U.S. with the largest numbers of African immigrants.

The population of the African diaspora community in Maryland occupies approximately 10% of the total Black/African American population in the state.

Silver Spring in Montgomery County, Maryland is among the top ten cities in the U.S. with the most residents born in in Nigeria.

Responders identify themselves with an ethnicity: Sub-Saharan African, Nigerian, Ethiopian, Ghanaian, Cameroonian, Liberian, Sierra Leon, Kenyan, Grenadian, South African, Cape Verdean, and Congolese.

Source: American Fact Finder 2017 estimates, American Community Survey 2010 and 2017, American Immigration Council 2012

ACTIVITIES

International Youth Pageant

The Little Malaika International Boys and Girls Cultural Pageant was held at the F. Scott Fitzgerald Theater in Rockville. The pageant brought local children (ages 6-12) together to showcase their talents and poise as the yearly culmination of a program designed to teach leadership and teamwork. Featuring interviews, dance, singing and spoken word performances, the kids were clearly having a great time.



Nigerian American Lawyers Association Gala
Executive Director Steve McAdams and Director Kevin Craft joined the Nigerian American Lawyers Association for annual awards and fundraising gala. United Peoples of African Congress president Sylvester Okere was among a number of leaders in Maryland's African diaspora community to be honored.

College Students Support

Mr. Kehinde Oreagba, former Chair of the Governor's Commission on African Affairs, were in attendance with his wife at the reception hosted by a Commissioner Remi Duyile to support young students in the community.





Annual Ramadan Iftar

Commissioner Mohammed Bah and his wife joined First Lady Yumi Hogan at the annual Ramadan Iftar dinner at Government House. Further demonstrating his administration's commitment to greater diversity and inclusion, Governor Hogan invited faith, business and community leaders from across the state to freely exercise their religious beliefs in the "People's House."

Premier Health Express Urgent Care Opening

Several Ethnic Commission appointees joined our leadership and staff for the grand opening of Premier Health Express Urgent Care in Columbia, MD. The unique clinic is the first of its kind to focus on veteran's health care. The clinic was founded by a partnership that includes husband and wife Dr. Samuel Nokuri and Dr. Ofundem Nokuri, Warrior Centric Healthcare, and American Diversity Group, which is spearheaded by South Asian American Commissioner Mayur Mody.



National Organization of Sierra Leoneans in North America Annual Gala

Director Kevin Craft is pleased to join with Commissioner Suna Nallo for the National Organization of Sierra Leoneans in North America Annual Awards and Fundraising Gala. NOSLINA (National Organization of Sierra Leoneans in North America) was started in the Capital Region, and continues to rely heavily on the native Sierra Leonean population in Maryland.



ARTNERSHIPS

African Art Museum of Maryland
AWE Descendant Washington DC Metro Chapter
National Organization of Sierra Leoneans in North America
A Unity System
United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization Center for Peace
World Association of Academic Doctors
United Peoples of African Congress
Maryland's Sister States Program
Little Malaika International
Premier Health Express Urgent Care
Sierra Leone Association of Artist and Musicians
AMIP News
Swahili Village
African Union Mission
Nigerian American Lawyers Association
Montgomery County African Advisory Group
World Trade Center Institute

Mission of the Commission

Remaining consistent with the current executive order, the mission of the Governor’s Commission on African Affairs responds effectively to the needs and concerns of Maryland citizens who have immigrated from African countries through expanded outreach and engagement with individuals and organizations in the community.

Commission Members


Chair - Kehinde Oreagba
Workman Belesse
Frederick Nnoma-Addison
Olaolu Adewole
Muharijah Gadah
O. Felix Obi
Mohammed Bah
Darlene M. Ajayi
Guy P. Djoken
Joanne A Oport
Joshua M. Nzueni
Kate F. Ndi
Dr. Henrietta Okoro
Honorable Cy Okoro
Nate Roberts
Ngozi Ironi-Azubike
Remi Duyile
Samuel B. Moki
Sheila P. Jennifer
Suna Nallo
Kamissa Camara

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