



SENIOR
LEADERSHIP
TEAM

Milton W. Matthews
President/
Chief Executive
Officer

Susan Krabbe
Vice President/
Chief Financial Officer

Dan Burns
Director of
Sport and Fitness

Jane Dembner
Director of Planning
and Community Affairs

Sheri Fanaroff
General Counsel

Janet Loughran
Executive Assistant
to the President/CEO

Dennis Matthey
Director of Open Space
and Facility Services

Ron Meliker
Director of
Human Resources

Michelle Miller
Director of
Community Services

Laura Sitler
Chief Marketing
Officer

Chuck Thompson
Chief Information
Officer

Jackie Tuma
Director of
Internal Audit

March 2019

Office of the President/CEO

The President/CEO was invited to participate in the Spending Affordability Advisory Committee's (SAAC) briefing to the Howard County Council on 11 March. The SAAC members discussed the findings and recommendations in its final report for FY 2020, and answered questions from the Council members.

The President/CEO was invited by the Howard County Executive's Office to attend the Gateway Innovation Center Kick-Off and Hard Hat Tour on 13 March. At the event, County Executive Ball signed the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Howard County Economic Development Authority (EDA) for the Center, which will serve as a nexus of resources for innovation and small, minority-, woman-, and veteran-owned business creation and support. The Center will focus on industry sectors such as cybersecurity technologies, healthcare IT and medical technologies, agricultural technologies, and government solutions providers.

The Downtown Columbia Arts and Culture Commission (DCACC) held a special event on 15 March to introduce "Soulful Symphony" as the first resident orchestra of Merriweather Post Pavilion. Darin Atwater, Artistic Director of the DCACC, is also director of Soulful Symphony. Soulful Symphony is composed of about 75 predominantly African-American and Hispanic musicians, and plays works of music blending American pop, soul, Hip Hop, classical, and gospel genres. A series of concerts will be held this summer; dates and programs will be announced shortly.

The Downtown Columbia Partnership (DTCP) will host the third annual "Books in Bloom" at Merriweather Post Pavilion on 2 June. Other upcoming events include the "Clyde's 10k" on Sunday, 14 April and "Bike to Work Day" on Friday, 17 May.

Administrative Services

Highlights

Monica McMellon-Ajayi joined Columbia Association on 25 February as Director, Human Resources. Ms. McMellon-Ajayi, who holds the Society for Human Resources Management (SHRM) designation as a Senior Certified Professional (SHRM-SCP), has senior-level human resources experience with a federal government contractor, the Baltimore Sun Media Group, and the American Nurses Association. Ron Meliker, former HR director, will continue working with CA as project leader for implementation of Dayforce, the new human resources information system.

Sport and Fitness

Highlights

CA Member Jena Jones, who trains at the Columbia Swim Center, began competing in the Special Olympics World Games in Abu Dhabi on 14 March.

Joan Lovelace, Hobbit's Glen LPGA Golf professional, was invited to participate in a Pro-Am tournament with three amateurs from Washington, D.C. at the Port Royal Golf Club in Bermuda on 8-14 March 2019. The event was a four-day event - best ball of the four gross and net. Ms. Lovelace placed tenth in the professional division.

The Clippers swim team completed one of its best short-course championship seasons to date. The Clippers finished second at the Maryland State 14 & Under Championship Meet, which is the highest finish in team history. Later in March, the Clippers achieved 363 personal bests at the Maryland Swimming Junior Championship Meet.

Challenges

After a region-wide decline in golf participation last year, regaining lost members and customers for the two golf courses is a priority challenge for the team in spring 2019.

Opportunities

The membership team has begun meeting with Columbia corporations and apartment/condo complexes to discuss corporate membership opportunities.

Planning and Community Affairs

Highlights

Outreach efforts are underway to attract individuals to serve on the newly chartered Millennials Advisory Committee. Columbia Association (CA) is seeking volunteers between the ages of 19 and 35. Anyone who lives, works or attends school in Columbia is encouraged to apply. The application process is open until 29 March. Interested individuals may apply online at ColumbiaAssociation.org/joincommittee. This is a unique opportunity for a younger demographic to help shape the future of Columbia and advise Columbia Association on how its programs and activities can meet the needs of millennials.

Open Space and Facility Services

Community Improvement and Capital Projects

Highlights

Recently completed work includes ADA-compliant improvements at the Phelps Luck Pool and Neighborhood Center parking lot, prefabrication of 10 bridges for installation in open space areas, and refurbishment projects at the Blue Sea and Southwind tot lots.

Challenges

The much higher-than-average rainfall totals are negatively impacting outdoor construction-related activities and completion schedules. Government-mandated changes in material specifications for treated lumber, when combined with much higher than average rainfall, have caused the premature failure of several T swings in Columbia tot lots. For future work, staff has initiated the use of metal swing framing in lieu of wood to prolong the lifespan of tot lot equipment.

Opportunities

Staff is continuing to move long-term structural maintenance responsibilities associated with CA's pond inventory to Howard County.

Energy Management

Highlights

The installation of a 40kW solar photovoltaic system at Columbia Athletic Club was completed, making it the seventh CA facility capable of generating a portion of its power from renewable sources.

A community energy meeting was held on 28 February at the Owen Brown Community Center, with more than thirty residents in attendance. Eleven participants signed up for a solar assessment that evening and five contracts have been signed for solar panel installation.

A high efficiency ENERGY STAR HVAC unit was installed at Kahler Hall.

Opportunities

Howard County recently announced aggressive energy and climate goals that may offer potential collaboration on sustainability projects.

Open Space Operations

Highlights

Columbia Cleanup Day will be held on Saturday, 30 March, with volunteers simultaneously picking up trash that has accumulated at open space locations in all ten villages. This is the tenth year that Columbia Cleanup Day has been held. Open Space team members will participate in the cleanup efforts.

Additional efforts are underway to reduce the amount of litter throughout Columbia, including on properties owned by the State Highway Administration and Howard County.

Challenge

The combination of high winds and saturated soil conditions this winter has increased the volume of tree removal and tree debris clean up. Tot lot mulching, which is highly weather dependent, was delayed for much of the winter.

Community Services

Highlights

To commemorate Women's History Month, Columbia Archives and the Columbia Art Center have collaborated in celebrating women in the arts through *Visionary Women: The Journey, Art About Women By Women*, which opened 8 March. As a part of the programming the Columbia Archives moderated an artist roundtable, “*Voices of the Journey: Expressions of Art About Women by Women*”, an inaugural event in Howard County, held on 17 March at the Columbia Art Center.

The Camps Program finished “Early Bird Registration” on 28 February and had a slight increase in enrollment from last year. New camps, such as Lacrosse Camp and Basketball Camp, were added to this year’s lineup.

The Volunteer Center Serving Howard County, in collaboration with the Association of Community Services (ACS), hosted a presentation on 12 February by the Taproot Foundation, an organization that connects highly skilled volunteers with nonprofit projects. Thirty-five people attended, representing twenty organizations.

Team members from the School Age Services Program participated in a training session conducted by Playworks, a national organization dedicated to teaching teachers. Team members learned to teach games to students and to facilitate participation in the games, once the rules and skills were mastered.

Opportunities

Bunny Egerton, Manager and Michelle Hefflin, Assistant Manager of the School Age Services Program will participate in the Hammond High School mock interview day. This event is for rising seniors who present their individual resumes to local business leaders in mock employment interviews.

Columbia Art Center will host its first All-Teen “Open Mic Night” on Friday, 22 March from 7-9pm for ages 12-17. Recognized author and poet Faye McCray will host the event. Teens will have the opportunity to share their poetry and essays inspired by the theme *Choose Civility*. Prizes will be awarded to the best performers.

The open mic night will be followed by “Blackout Poetry” on Saturday, 30 March. Designed for tweens/teens/adults, author Faye McCray will lead participants through creative writing exercises using old newspaper articles and books.

Communications and Marketing

Highlights

Communications and Marketing (C&M) developed and disseminated numerous communications to the public about the Community Benefit Association proposal. A sampling of these efforts included questions-and-answer documents, advertisements in local newspapers, posting of all related information and documents on a dedicated webpage, working with local media, emails, and more.



Beginning in mid-February, we expanded our digital advertising reach for CA and Haven on the Lake memberships working with our new media agency GKV. Ads are geo-targeted to Howard County IP addresses. In addition, ads were also created focusing on the “Try Us for Free for One Day” offer for Haven on the Lake and other CA facilities. Golf membership ads, with a push to try the Fairway Hills ForeLess program, were added to the rotation in the beginning of March.

The digital marketing team continues to show lead generation growth year over year. Digital leads grew 159% from mid-February through mid-March compared to a year ago. The efforts are helping to contribute to the strong sales growth we are seeing in new memberships.

Challenges

While our advertising efforts are yielding millions of impressions and generating traffic to our landing pages, the traffic is not converting well into leads for our memberships. We are examining our landing pages, developing new ones based on best practices, and will be testing these soon to drive stronger lead conversion.

CA in the News

Recent coverage in the media included coverage of the Community Benefit Association proposal by the Columbia Flier and Business Monthly; and various mentions of Columbia Association programs, services and events within Howard Magazine’s annual Guide to Howard County.

Upcoming Events

CA’s “Healthy Eating” series begins on 25 March. The kickoff event is sold out, but can be viewed live at <http://columbiaassociation.org/healthyeating> at 7:00pm on 25 March.

In celebration of the tenth anniversary of the Columbia Art Center’s Blossoms of Hope theme invitational show, it will present “One More Than Nine: 10 Years of Hope Through Art and Words,” 12 April-5 May 2019. More than 70 artists and writers will present works that convey the enduring spirit of Blossoms of Hope – perseverance, courage, strength and thriving. A reception and awards ceremony will be held on Friday, 12 April from 6-8pm.

Thought of the Month

“Celebrate tradition, but do not be limited by it. Remember that leaders of the past made decisions that led to the success of the association today. Changing things should not be about an indictment of the past, but maintaining relevancy in the realities of today and tomorrow.”

*Susan Avery, CAE
CEO, International Association of Plastics Distribution*