



SENIOR  
LEADERSHIP  
TEAM

**Milton W. Matthews**  
President/  
Chief Executive  
Officer

**Susan Krabbe**  
Vice President/  
Chief Financial Officer

**Dan Burns**  
Director of  
Sport and Fitness

**Sheri Fanaroff**  
General Counsel

**Janet Loughran**  
Executive Assistant  
to the President/CEO

**Dennis Matthey**  
Director of Open Space  
and Facility Services

**Monica McMellon-Ajayi**  
Director of  
Human Resources

**Michelle Miller**  
Director of  
Community Services

**Laura Sittler**  
Chief Marketing  
Officer

**Chuck Thompson**  
Chief Information  
Officer

**Jackie Tuma**  
Director of  
Internal Audit

## September 2019

### ***Office of the President/CEO***

Columbia Association (CA) was honored by Visit Howard County as one of its Howard County “Partner of the Year” industry award recipients. CA was one of 13 businesses and organizations recognized for their collaboration on arts and cultural events in Downtown Columbia. Awards were presented at Visit Howard County’s annual meeting on 13 September 2019.

Money Magazine ranked Columbia as No. 20 on its “Best Places to Live 2019” list. New criteria, including consideration of any community with more than 50,000 people and the breakdown of communities of 300,000 or more into neighborhoods, were used to determine the rankings. The No. 1 “Best Place to Live 2019” was Clarksville, Tennessee.

Howard Community College (HCC) was recognized as a “Great College to Work For” by The Chronicle of Higher Education for a record 11<sup>th</sup> consecutive year. With this recognition, HCC became one of only two community colleges (and the only Maryland community college) to have received this prestigious honor every year that community colleges have been eligible.

The President/CEO was one of several Howard County Chamber board and staff members who participated in the Chamber’s first inter-city visit on 15-17 September. The group traveled to Somerset County, New Jersey, an area facing challenges and issues similar to those in Columbia and Howard County. The Chamber representatives met with Somerset County officials to discuss topics such as downtown revitalization, transportation, affordable housing, environmental stewardship, recovery from natural disasters, and improving community health and well-being.

The President/CEO attended a press conference hosted by Howard County General Hospital on 13 August announcing the launch of a new rental housing assistance program designed to ensure opportunities for low- and moderate-income families to live near their workplace in Columbia. The Hospital became the first employer to participate in the “Downtown Columbia Live Where You Work” Program, operated by the Columbia Downtown Housing Corporation. The program, which was created as part of the Downtown Columbia Plan, provides subsidies to workers to improve the affordability of participating rental units, with the cost of the subsidy shared by the employer and the Housing Corporation.

The Howard County Economic Development Authority (HCEDA) began Phase Two of construction on the Howard County Innovation Center. Phase Two involves construction of a new assembly space and lobby on the first floor, as well as the creation of two new classroom spaces, an executive board room, and the renovation of the HCEDA’s administrative offices on the fifth floor.

## ***Administrative Services***

### **Highlights**

The CliftonLarsonAllen auditors presented their audit reports to the Audit Committee on 23 July. CA received unqualified, or "clean," opinions on both CA's financial statements and the 401(k) plan financial statements, and only two management letter comments on CA's financials and one deficiency on the 401(k) plan, which are very good results.

During the meeting, the auditors met just with the Audit Committee with no CA staff members present. After that discussion, the Audit Committee chair, Jim Young of Howard County Hospital, shared their praise of our team's hard work, professionalism and cooperation with the outside auditors and the great results. One of the things Jim said that resonated strongly with me is that he noted it is obvious that our team shows up for work every day with CA's best interests at heart. This is what it means to put the mission and the organization before our own personal work interests, and why it matters so much to CA and to me that we are committed to doing our all-out best for CA first.

Time-keeping and payroll through Dayforce, our new HRIS System, went live in July. The purpose of this system is to integrate all of our payroll and human resources information into one system, to provide self service capabilities for our team members and to ultimately move to a paperless environment so that there is more time to focus on our clients and our mission. Additional Dayforce modules are scheduled to release in 2019 and into January 2020 for our team members. The modules and timelines are as follows:

- 4 October 2019 - Learning and Development
- 28 October 2019 - Recruiting & On-boarding
- 4 November 2019 - Benefits Enrollment
- 13 January 2020 - Performance Management

Training for our team members will be provided to ensure successful use of all of these modules.

## ***Sport and Fitness***

### **Highlights**

#### **Golf**

On 9 August, Fairway Hills Golf Course hosted the First Tee of Howard County's 18th Annual Golf Tournament sponsored by Chesapeake Systems. The event raised almost \$30,000 for junior golf in the area. Over 100 players enjoyed the new bridge, great course conditions, and Outing Pavilion. More than 20 volunteers and 12 First Tee participants managed the event.

#### **Community Health**

The Community Health division's "Healthy Eating" series continued with "Spice Up Your Vegetables." Mary's Land Farm hosted the event which focused on the benefits of spices as presented by Dr. Jyothi Rao (CA Medical Advisory Board member and co-owner of Shakthi Health & Wellness). Chef Kia Gibian (WildeThyme Catering) demonstrated the preparation of recipes, with 70 guests enjoying samplings of the dishes.

## **Tennis**

On Saturdays from 6 September until the first week of November, approximately 50 junior tennis players are assembling at Wilde Lake Tennis Club for the 1st Annual Fall Season of Junior Team Tennis. Matches are from Noon - 2 p.m. weekly, weather permitting. This event challenges the skills of the players in a fast format team setting.

## **Supreme Sports Club**

Supreme Sports Club opened the newly renovated upper locker rooms and pool on Monday, 16 September. Both spaces have a fresh, modern look, with the upper locker rooms featuring individual showers. Renovations continue in the arena and on the main fitness floor.

## **Opportunities**

The sales team recently negotiated a corporate membership for Medstar Health. This provides us an excellent marketing tool to use when meeting with other companies moving into the new office spaces in Downtown Columbia.

## **Challenges**

We continue to work to create a strong member experience while improving the facilities for our members during the Supreme Sports Club renovations.

# ***Planning and Community Affairs***

## **Highlights**

Staff from the Office of Planning and Community Affairs collaborated with Howard County's Office of Transportation on several transportation initiatives, proposals, and opportunities in the County.

- Continue to partner in the efforts to implement a Complete Streets policy and ultimately contribute to a rewrite and update of the Design Manual.
- Contribute input on development of an e-scooter policy in anticipation of private businesses setting up electric scooter sharing operations in the County.
- Participate in the feasibility study and concept planning for various shared use paths around the County.

Staff from the Office of Planning and Community Affairs reviewed draft plans, commented on development proposals and attended planning related public meetings for initiatives throughout the Columbia community and environs.

- Continued to track the redevelopment proposals for the Hickory Ridge Village Center. The Zoning Board is currently holding hearings on the proposal and it is anticipated their discussions will continue for several more meetings.
- Staff is closely monitoring and reviewing submittals for the Lakefront North development proposal by Howard Hughes Corporation.
- Staff updated the [Development Tracker](#), which provides information on development related meetings and submitted proposals for sites in and near Columbia. This is revised at least monthly and is available on-line at <http://bit.ly/developmenttracker>.

## ***Open Space and Facility Services***

### **Community Improvement and Capital Projects**

#### **Highlights**

Long Reach – Rebuilt boardwalk LRBR-36.

Owen Brown – Installed new swings at tot lot OB-12.

Town Center – Rebuilt the center island at Oakland Manor. The project included installation of new paver parking areas, new irrigation, grading, sodding, and planting new trees and shrubs.

Kings Contrivance – Paved and backfilled 4,620 linear feet of pathway.

Supreme Sports Club - Phase 1A of the renovations was completed, which included locker room reconstruction and natatorium upgrades. Work has begun on the next three phases of upgrades, which include new roofing over the south wing of the facility, cardio and fitness room renovations, and renovations to the arena area.

Ice Rink – Phase III of facilities improvements was completed and the Ice Rink opened on schedule.

Athletic Club – Tennis Center improvements were completed and the center reopened on schedule, with refinished courts and line striping, new nets, and screen curtains.

#### **Challenges**

Overall construction activity in the greater Baltimore-Washington region continues to absorb more contractor resources than are available, increasing the cost of work and extending construction timelines.

## **Energy Management**

#### **Highlights**

A 20 kilowatt solar photovoltaic (PV) system was installed on the roof at Kahler Hall which will provide approximately 20% of the annual electricity usage at the facility. Planning for solar PV projects at Slayton House, Long Reach Tennis Club, and Swim Center continued with installation expected later this year. High efficiency LED pole lights were installed at the Lake Elkhorn dock pathway resulting in energy savings and improved light quality.

A community energy meeting is planned for 8 October in the village of River Hill. And another dehumidifier/window AC unit recycling event is being planned with BGE at the Sports Park on 16 November.

#### **Opportunities**

Howard County recently announced aggressive energy and climate goals that may offer potential collaboration on sustainability projects. Columbia Association is considering a promotional partnership with Baltimore Gas and Electric to increase participation in their Quick Home Energy Checkup program for residents.

## **Open Space Operations**

### Highlights

Landscape Services kicked off the fall planting season at Kennedy Gardens earlier this month by planting 1,000 perennial plugs that will be enjoyed by the human, avian and insect visitors next year.

### Challenges

Tree limbs and logs remain along some pathways in the Villages of River Hill and Kings Contrivance from the recent tornado and subsequent storm damage. We are working through the priorities; however, it will take several additional weeks to safely remove all of the debris.

### Opportunities

County Executive Dr. Calvin Ball recently announced a County initiative to become a Bee City. CA was represented at the event and will have representation on the County's Pollinator committee. We are currently planning lawn alternative test/demonstration plots using several different combinations of plant species with the goals of reduced mowing and increased pollinator habitat while balancing the use and aesthetics of open space.

## **Watershed Management and Open Space Enhancements**

### Highlights

CA staff, in partnership with volunteers from the Community Ecology Institute (CEI), finished the last of six pollinator gardens in open space in August. CA staff and volunteers from CEI will conduct maintenance and plant replacement when needed.

Staff presented Bugs That Bite at the Repair Cafe and Skill Share on 7 September.

Construction is complete on the two bioretention facilities built in open space behind the Faulkner Ridge Townhomes in Wilde Lake.

### Challenges

Obtaining funds for rain gardens that fall outside of the current rain garden grant program continues to be a challenge.

## **Community Services**

### Highlights

Jennifer Harding, a Maryland native who recently moved back from Katy, Texas, joined Columbia Association as the new School Age Services Operations Director. While in Texas, she was the Senior Director of Youth Development for the YMCA of Greater Houston. Jennifer also is an alumnus of UMBC with 18 years of experience in childcare.

Columbia Art Center participated in the Howard County Police National Night Out Kick-Off Neighborhood Party on Tuesday, 6 August in Long Reach. The Art Center team provided family art activities, raffle drawings, and give-aways. More than 45 people of all ages visited the activities tables, including eight new residents. Columbia Art Center also provided a selfie station in front of a handcrafted butterfly mural, which was popular with the youth and teens.

Volunteer Center Serving Howard County collaborated with Prepare for Success and Columbia Association by posting signs in CA facilities and promoting the collection of school supplies for local students in need. CA's Fun Committee turned the collection into a competition to encourage giving.

Pam Simonson, Volunteer Center manager, was appointed chair of the Association of Community Services (ACS) Education and Professional Development Committee. The committee supports ACS programming to strengthen and enhance personal and organizational skills to improve service(s) in the community.

Columbia Community Exchange (CCE) Time Bank presented a Service Dog Therapy Dog Seminar on 22 August at The Barn. Fifteen people attended the session, which was led by a Time Banker who discussed the laws, training and public access for service animals, therapy dogs and emotional support animals. It was the second session offered on the topic.

Columbia Art Center Galleries is hosting its annual Faculty/Student exhibition from 12-29 September. The show features 160 artworks by 55 teachers and students, including ceramics, paintings, photographs, drawings, fiber, glass, jewelry, mixed media, and more. The show is being held as part of the Howard County Arts Council's Road to the Arts.

### Opportunities

Columbia Archives invites the community to participate in the 19th annual Columbia Archives [BikeAbout](#) on 28 September — a free, fun and informative tour spotlighting Columbia's history and the connectivity of its pathway system. This year, participants will ride on a well-marked, family-friendly, easy six-mile route that begins and ends at the Long Reach Village Center. This year's theme — Village Voyage — will enable participants to learn and enjoy the pathways within the village of Long Reach and discover historically exciting aspects of the Columbia story. We also have some new features this year, including a drumline performance, an art activity stop, and a soccer demo.

The BikeAbout will begin at 9:30am, with riders able to start up until 10am and complete the ride by noon.

Columbia Archives has partnered with the Downtown Columbia Arts and Culture Commission, owners of the Merriweather Post Pavilion, to honor archives history month with an event on Friday, 18 October entitled ***"Music and Memories: Recording the Community's Legacy."*** The event, which will be held from 4:00-8:00 p.m. in the backstage areas of Merriweather Post Pavilion, will celebrate the storied histories of Columbia and its beloved — and renowned — concert venue.

Interactive stations will provide opportunities to share memories of Columbia as well as to speak with individuals and organizations committed to preserving Columbia's legacy. The archives will also encourage participants to donate their Merriweather memories for preservation in Columbia Archives.

## ***Communications and Marketing***

### Highlights

Our biggest accomplishment in this time period was the launch of CA's new website. Communications about the launch began in late July and continued through the rest of August. The new website, which went live on August 19, is easier to navigate, more intuitive, has a brand new events calendar and a

fresh, new look. Interest in the website was high; the email announcing the new site had the highest recorded click-through link (of nearly 2,100 click-throughs), driving traffic to CA's homepage.

We supported leads for CA and Haven memberships with digital banner ads, paid search ads, social media, and Pandora radio. With an additional objective of increasing daily round play while also promoting golf memberships, we advertised the ForeLess special offer at Fairway Hills Golf Club through a campaign that combined targeted eblasts with digital banner ads. The banner ads targeted golfers in Howard County as well as visitors to competing golf clubs in the area. Results were positive, with nearly 11,000 emails opened and 1,327 clicks to the ForeLess webpage to obtain the voucher.

In August, we tried a new tactic to increase awareness and leads for memberships, in particular with a younger demographic. We offered a special incentive — a chance to win a Lululemon gift card — if people became a lead and activated their free pass in one of our fitness clubs or at Haven. The initiative was promoted via social media and reached more than 44,000 people. Leads were strong, with more than 200 for the three weeks the promotion was live. Membership results will be evaluated in late September to determine the overall effectiveness.

Our digital leads grew 501% in August 2019 compared to a year ago and up 119% compared to July 2019. We held our second Instagram takeover in late August, which followed a day in the life of one of our personal trainers. This second takeover saw engagement increases since the first one held in July (7,800 total impressions vs. 4,800).

### **Challenges**

While CA's new website has launched, we will continue to optimize it with fresh copy, image updates, and search engine optimization (SEO) efforts. The team is evaluating and taking action on many of the internal reviewers' comments and corrections needed.

### ***CA in the News***

Recent coverage in the media included mentions of a pair of Columbia Art Center events (the Student/Faculty Exhibition and Pet Portrait Paint Night) in the Columbia Flier and OurCommunityNow.com, respectively; mentions of CA's pickleball courts in a Baltimore Sun article about the sport; a feature about Long Reach Tennis Club's construction on ForConstructionPros.com; and a mention of Haven on the Lake's free outdoor yoga class in the Howard County Beacon.

### ***Thought of the Month***

*"Every attempt to reach new milestones holds opportunities for us to learn, adjust, and progress."*

Jim Bridenstein  
NASA Administrator