



Speaker Biographies

ECONOMIC & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

MODERATORS:

Senator Antonio Hayes, *District 40, Baltimore City*



Antonio's service to Baltimore began 25 years ago, when he became an officer in his community association. That spirit of service goes hand-in-hand with his commitment to action, a commitment Antonio learned by watching his great grandmother usher neighbors to the grocery store from his childhood home in Penn North. Antonio's grandmother taught him that being present is important, but that delivering is what makes a difference. Over the next two and half decades of Antonio's career as a Community Organizer, Legislative Director, and Assistant Deputy Mayor, he has delivered time and again for Baltimore.

Today Antonio serves as the Chief of Staff for the Baltimore City Department of Social Services, where he helps children who have been abused or neglected, and low-income families in need of public assistance. His job is to do the most, for those who have the least. During his time at the Department of Social Services, Antonio's team has reduced the number of children in foster care by over 58%. They achieved that success by improving the children's rate of placement with long-term families.

Delegate Benjamin Brooks, *District 10, Baltimore County*



Delegate Benjamin T. Brooks, Sr., is a member of the House of Delegates of Maryland, serving the 10th Legislative District for Baltimore County. He has served since January 14, 2015. Along with being Chief Deputy Majority Whip, he is a Member of the House Economic Matters Committee, Chairman of the Public Utilities subcommittee and also serves on the Alcoholic Beverage subcommittee.

As an entrepreneur, Delegate Brooks has over 40 years of experience in the business sector. Having signed the front side of payroll checks has afforded him the ability to view legislation objectively from several perspectives. As a strong advocate for small business, he understands one must balance business needs with community concerns. He also understands that success is not easy because the road "to success" is always under construction. Providing a pathway to prosperity is one of the Delegate's missions. Having reliable access to capital for our diverse citizenry will foster entrepreneurial expansion and systemic growth. The net result will be Maryland securing its position as one of the most progressive and affluent states in the union.

Delegate Brooks is a native of Sumter, South Carolina. After fulfilling his military obligations, which included completing a tour in Vietnam, he graduated with his B.S. in Accounting from South Carolina State University. He currently resides in Woodstock, MD with his wife of over 47 years.



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Wanda Best, *Co-Chair, CRA Baltimore Initiative*



Wanda Gibson Best is a connector of resources. Wanda is the Executive Director of the Upton Planning Committee. This position allows her to use many of skills learned throughout her career. Her grassroots community organizing began at an early age in the South Carolina 4-H Extension Programs while representing the State of South Carolina across the Country in leadership roles. Wanda graduated from South Carolina State University with a BS degree in Foods and Nutrition and with a triple minor in Biology, Chemistry, and Business. She furthered her education with a master's degree in Public Administration. Wanda worked as a Dietician in a comprehensive health center in Charleston, SC and the remote islands. There she managed and delivered direct services to the Women Infant and Children Program, Home Health Program, and Migrant Camp Nutrition Program. Wanda was the manager of the food production department of a medical university hospital which included two satellite hospitals. There she supervised 65 employees that produced 8000 meals per day. Wanda worked for USDA for more than twenty years as the program analyst for a five-million-dollar federal food safety and quality program of the US land grant system. She has had a career centered around public health and economics. Wanda has maintained her dietician license for thirty years and continues to practice as a Nutritionist and Dietician.

NaTasha Horton, *Vice-President, Regional Community Development Manager, Truist Bank*



NaTasha Horton is currently a Vice-President, Regional Community Development Manager at Truist Bank formerly SunTrust Bank. NaTasha is a graduate of the University of Phoenix, where she received her MBA in Business Management with a minor in Human Resource Management.

NaTasha has over 24 years of banking experience and has held various roles within the bank from: Teller, Head teller, Branch Manager, Area Manager, @Work Sales Specialist, Business Banker, Treasury Sales Officer to her current role as Community Development Manager. NaTasha is a native of Baltimore with extensive ties to the community. She is responsible for leading community reinvestment and development programs across the State to include specific programs and initiatives focused on affordable housing, small business and community development outreach.



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She represents Truist across the State of Maryland on various boards and committees to include: Go Northwest, South Baltimore Learning, The Greater Baltimore Urban League, Morgan State's EDAC, and her membership with the Baltimore Alumnae Chapter of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. NaTasha has served on the Baltimore City Workforce Board (appointed by Mayor Stephanie Rawlings-Blake) and The Baltimore County Commission for Women under former Baltimore County Executive, Kevin Kamenetz. In 2014, she was awarded one of Baltimore's top honors of being named Baltimore Business Journal "Top 40 under 40". NaTasha resides in Baltimore County with her daughter Kiearra.

Austin McKenzie, Assistant Vice President, Mid-Atlantic Region, Relationship Manager, M&T Bank



Austin McKenzie is a relationship manager within M&T Bank's Business Banking Group. In the scope of his role, Austin spearheads the bank's lending efforts to small and medium sized companies within a designated territory. Austin has wealth of experience providing capital and treasury solutions to professional firms, non-profit organizations, contractors, biotech companies, and real estate investors. Austin has served on several non-profit boards. In addition, he is actively involved in various community organizations in Greater Baltimore. Throughout his career, Austin has worked closely with a plethora of black-owned companies and organizations to secure access to capital for mission-driven initiatives and growth strategies.

Monica Mitchell, Vice President, Government and Community Relations Maryland and Greater Washington DC Regions, Wells Fargo



Monica Mitchell has over 20 years' experience in banking and community development. In her role, Monica leads Corporate Philanthropy and Community Development work for the Maryland and Greater DC regions, responsible for affordable housing, workforce development, entrepreneurship and financial education efforts for low-to-moderate income communities, with a personal passion to address the intersectionality of these issues with public health outcomes.

She has a passion to educate and motivate individuals and families to reach their full potential through economic empowerment and has conducted hundreds of financial capability seminars for businesses, schools, governmental groups and non-profits. Monica is a passionate volunteer and regularly mentors and job shadows with young women in high school and college who are pursuing careers in banking and corporate social responsibility.



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In August of 2015, after years of planning and under Monica's leadership as founding president of the board, the all-girls Lillie May Carroll Jackson Public Charter School opened in Northeast Baltimore City. Lillie May currently serves almost 300 young women from across Baltimore City in 5th-8th grades.

She has spoken regionally in various seminars, conferences, radio and tv shows addressing topics such as Education, Community Development, Corporate Volunteerism, Women in Business and Leadership, Social Responsibility, Philanthropy, and Career Development.

Derrick Perkins, *Greater Washington Market Executive, Bank of America*



Derrick Perkins is the Market Executive for the Greater Washington DC. His primary role is to help meet the local market goals of connecting businesses, families, and individuals to the banking and investment teams. He also leads the effort to deploy the bank's resources in the market to address social and economic concerns and build strong communities.

Prior to accepting the role as Market Executive, he was a Senior Relationship Manager with coverage of affordable housing developers based in Suburban MD, Washington, DC and Virginia. His responsibilities also included leading the Bank's national Charter School construction lending efforts. Derrick joined NationsBank in 1998 in the Consumer Credit Card division as an account Manager in Norfolk, VA.

In 2000, Derrick accepted a role as a Portfolio Management Associate in the Business Banking division in Richmond, VA. In 2002, Derrick relocated to Mclean, VA to work in the Middle Market banking group as a credit analyst and eventually an Underwriter. After four years in the Middle Market banking Derrick accepted a role within Community Development Lending, underwriting affordable housing developers and charter school facilities. Derrick accepted his current role as Market Executive in 2018.

Derrick holds bachelor's from Hampton University and a Masters in Urban and Regional Planning from Virginia Commonwealth University. Derrick lives in Upper Marlboro, MD. Derrick is on the Boards of Virginia Housing Alliance, Volunteers of America National Services and Housing Association of Nonprofit Developers.