

## African Affairs Advisory Group Meetings and Events

Montgomery County Executive Marc Elrich attended the African Affairs Advisory Group meeting in mid-November to address the African community, share his priorities, and answer questions. This meeting brought together community stakeholders, including East County Regional Director Mr. Jewru Bandeh, who gave a presentation on East County community services, resources, and opportunities that are available to the African community, as well as other county residents.



Other East County regional providers/partners included the Department of Recreation, Montgomery College, Gilchrist Center, Manna Food, DHHS, Sheppard Pratt/FSI, Inc. In addition, a U.S Census Bureau Partnership Specialist highlighted the importance of the Census.

The African Affairs Advisory Group serves as a liaison between the County government and the African community. African Affairs Advisory Group holds its monthly meeting every second Thursday of the month from 7 pm to 8:30 pm at the Civic Center Downtown Silver Spring. For more information please feel free to email at [harrieta.shangarai@montgomerycountymd.gov](mailto:harrieta.shangarai@montgomerycountymd.gov)

In December 2019, Captain Sonia Pruitt of the Montgomery County Police Department Community Engagement Division addressed the members of the African Affairs Advisory Group (AAAG). She emphasized the need for partnerships between community members and the County police. The African Affairs Advisory Group is eager to collaborate in addressing identified gaps and challenges, which may be barriers to building relationships and enhancing community trust. Additional topics included the MCPS School Boundary Analysis and Blueprint for Maryland's Future, which addresses student performance and challenges facing the County's public school system.



- please see next page-



The Montgomery County African Affairs Advisory Group (AAAG) held its “Inception” Happy Hour on December 19, 2019 at the Society Lounge on Georgia Avenue in Downtown Silver Spring. This event aimed to reach out to a broader community, share information about AAAG, and invite community members to attend its monthly meetings. Following a brief presentation from AAAG co-chairs, participants were presented with a short survey and an opportunity to sign up for regular county updates and community-related information. Special thanks to event partners - African American Advisory Group, Caribbean American Advisory Group, Delegate Jheanelle Wilkins - and community members who attended the event.

### **The Montgomery County Sister City Fundraiser**

On December 13, 2019, The Ethiopian Student Association of Montgomery College, in collaboration with the Gondar, Ethiopia Sister Cities Committee, held a fundraiser at Montgomery College Cultural Arts Center Theater. Funds raised will help rebuild Fasiledes High School in Gondar, Ethiopia.

### **Challenges for Immigrant Parents**

On December 21, 2019, Immigrant Community Services and The Barrie Law Center hosted a workshop that explored the parenting challenges faced by immigrant families in the United States. This workshop, held at the Silver Spring Civic Center, provided valuable information to immigrant parents about the process of acculturation and the positive outcomes of bicultural identity for their first generation American children and immigrant children raised in the United States. Parents were guided through activities that facilitated understanding and increased awareness of stressors and traumatic events that may have a significant impact on child learning and development. Other areas of focus included immigration and the current political climate, which add additional stress to immigrant families and affect their children. Approximately 30 people attended this event, which marked the beginning of a series of workshops with a focus on immigrant parent/child relationships and the navigation of the U.S. system. Dr. Rabiatsu E. Barrie, a clinical psychologist and professor at Adler University in Chicago, facilitated the workshop.

