

OCTOBER 2025 ; ISSUE 5

MARSHALL HEIGHTS COMMUNITY
DEVELOPMENT ORGANIZATION



NEWSLETTER



Racquell Perry
Program Manager,
Pennsylvania Avenue East
Main Street

Pennsylvania Avenue East Main Street

What an unforgettable night on Pennsylvania Avenue SE! Thank you to our neighbors along Penn Ave, the entire Southeast DC community, and the District as a whole for showing up and showing out for Art All Night 2025. With 20+ activations across six sites — three Art All Night locations and three Dine All Nite experiences — spanning nearly a mile, thousands of residents and visitors joined us to celebrate community, creativity, and our theme: “We Are One.” From the stunning works of local DMV artists featured in the Legacy Lounge at Life Enhancement Services, to the laughter and joy of Open Play, to the bustling Silver Coast Marketplace (honoring the legacy of DC’s historic Silver Coast), the night was full of energy, connection, and culture. And, of course, Black Alley brought the house down as they closed out an unforgettable celebration. We extend our heartfelt gratitude to all the artists, vendors, partners, and neighbors who made this year’s Art All Night so special — we couldn’t have done it without you.



Pennsylvania Avenue East Main Street, Cont...

During this year's Art All Night celebration, Councilmember Wendell Felder proudly presented Earl Howard Studios with the Pennsylvania Avenue East Main Street Legacy Business Award — a recognition of their decades-long dedication to capturing the stories, milestones, and memories of our community. As one of the corridor's most beloved and enduring businesses, Earl Howard Studios has been more than just a photography studio — it's been a cornerstone of creativity, a trusted partner for families and organizations alike, and a living archive of Southeast DC's history.

From timeless portraits and professional headshots to weddings, graduations, and community events, Earl Howard Studios has helped generations of residents preserve life's most meaningful moments. **If you're looking for exceptional photography and a team that truly understands the heart of this community, visit them at 2528 Pennsylvania Ave. SE, Washington, DC 20020.**





Blythe Patenaude
Director of Business Development



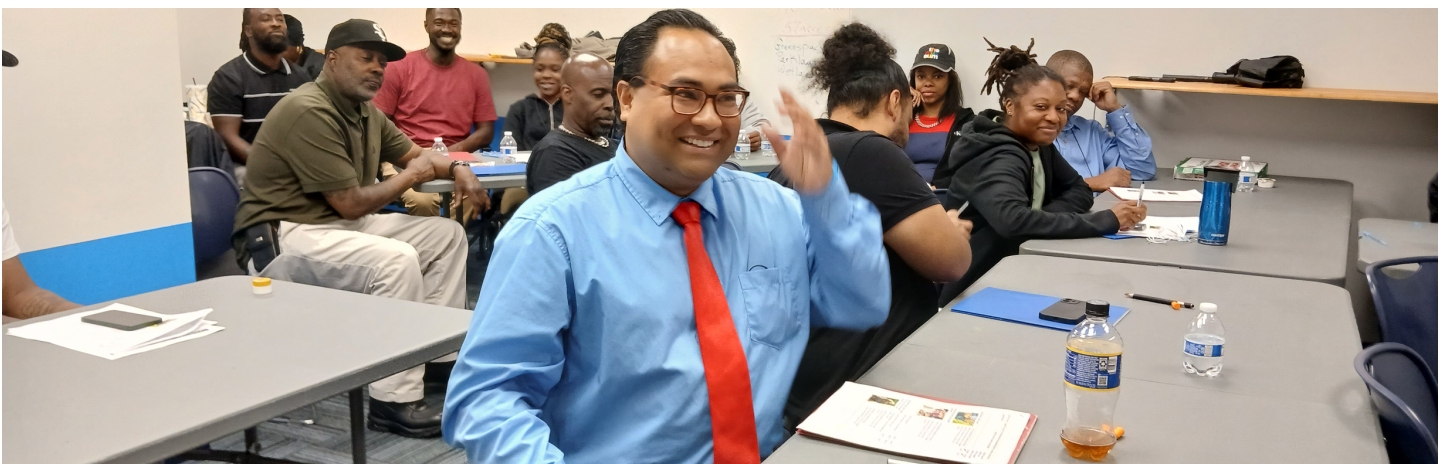
Workforce Development

September proved to be a busy month with continued back-to-school events and year-end closeouts of grants. The Workforce Unit received a \$175,000 award from DOES to continue our premium Job Readiness Training program and to additionally provide 240 safety certificates for those entering the construction industry.

MHCDO provided 16 DOES Project Empowerment graduates with OSHA-10 training as they prepare to enter their Work Experience (WEX) phase of on-the-job work. We partnered with the Minnesota Avenue MedStar Wellness Center's Resource Day which was held at Benning Road for MedStar clients.

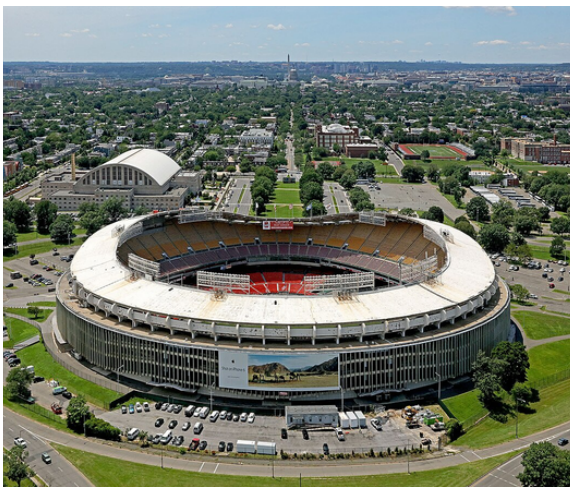
Workforce Development is now accepting applications for the new Job Readiness Training course which will begin in the middle of October. Participants will receive certificates in Construction CORE, OSHA-10, Fall Prevention, CPR, Food Handlers, and Food Managers over a 6-week period including basic job readiness skills, and digital and financial literacy training.

Those interested in applying should obtain an application at 3939 Benning Road, NE at the Front Desk or call Blythe Patenaude for more information at (202) 650-5649.





Eldridge R. Allen
Director, Small Business Development Program



Small Business Development

Excited By The Return of The Commanders and RFK Stadium Redevelopment

Ward 7 is welcoming back The Commanders and MHCDO is excited for our small business community to be part of the redevelopment of the RFK stadium! From our Small Business Development Program (SBDP) and Workforce Development Program, MHCDO seeks to prepare individuals, emerging entrepreneurs and local small businesses for the opportunities presented by the RFK Stadium redevelopment in Ward 7 Washington, DC. Through our existing service areas and programs, MHCDO will be providing targeted training, establishing local business cohorts, fostering connections between entrepreneurs and developers, and creating pathways for local businesses to participate in the construction and ongoing operations of the new stadium and surrounding area. MHCDO will be working closely with the DC Department of Small & Local Business Development (DSLBD) to identify and prepare emerging contracting businesses in Ward 7 for opportunity readiness and bidding. Understanding the importance of strong operational structures and capacity building of small business for effective scaling, MHCDO's SBDP is fashioning the components for "business back-office systems support" to assist small businesses in areas such as administrative support, accounting, bookkeeping, data/records management, taxes, and legal structure/compliance.

MHCDO wants to help small businesses East of The River answer the question, "Are you ready for what's next?"

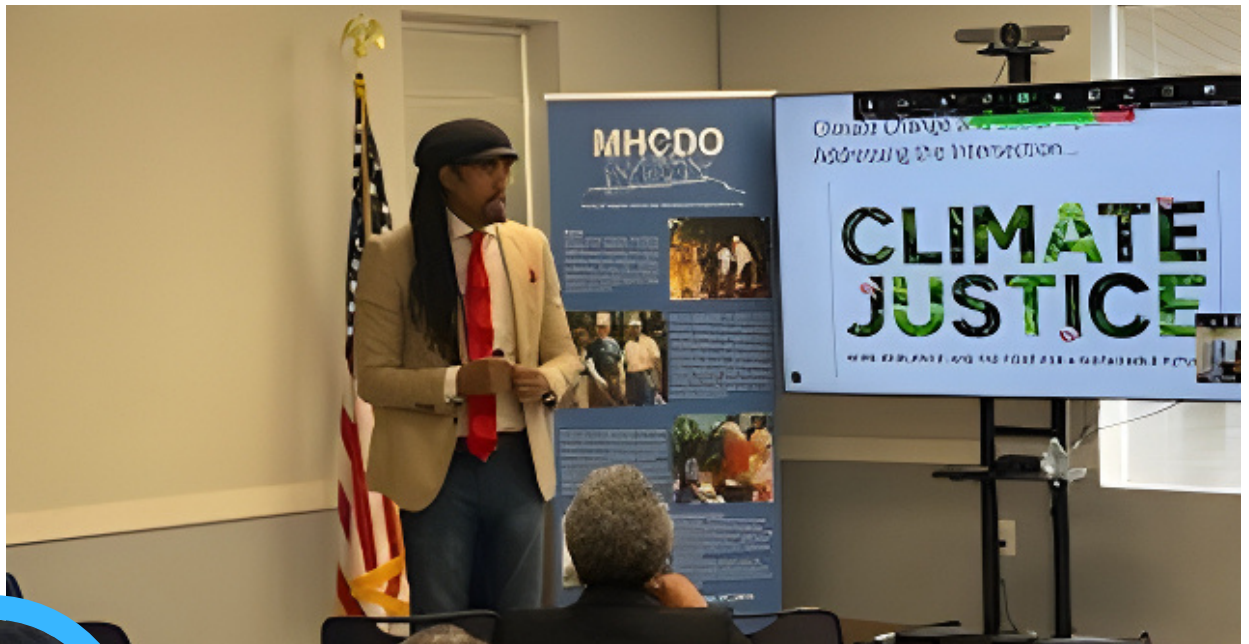


Paul Spires
Program Manager,
Deanwood Heights
Main Street

Deanwood Heights Main Street

Deanwood's highlighted event in September was "Parents Who Like To Party" at Strand. We were able to bring in over 75 patrons and give them information on our efforts in Deanwood including upcoming event as well as PAEMS Art All Night. Community engagement and cross promotion while supporting our local businesses is a great ingredient to community development.





Mary Dade
Housing Program Manager

I learned a lot from Chief Lawson (speaker from DC Fire Department). Hearing from his experience and the local leaders and their experience was insightful and relevant.
-Conference Attendee

Housing Department

Marshall Heights held its 2nd Annual Readiness Conference on Friday, September 20. The theme of the conference was to show the impact on how climate change intensifies existing inequities and what we can do to prepare, respond and rebuild stronger. Keynote speaker Dr. Jylena Sheats of Tulane University spoke of “Climate Change, Mental Health, Resilience, and Hope: Bridging History, Community, and Action”, and Keynote Speaker Dr. Mustafa Ali, Environmental Justice Activist (pictured above), spoke about “Social Justice issues focused on revitalizing our most vulnerable communities”. This year we involved registrants to participate via Zoom. The conference had a global span all the way to Greece and collectively we had approximately 55 in attendance. The decision to involve more of a global audience was to show that climate change does not impact all communities equally. Rising temperatures, stronger storms, and more frequent floods often intensify existing social and economic inequities. Low-income families, communities of color, seniors, and those with limited access to healthcare or housing are often the first to experience the harshest consequences and the slowest recoveries. Climate change magnifies these disparities by straining resources, threatening livelihoods, and deepening cycles of vulnerability that already exist.



**Reverend Porter Lawson, DC Fire Department-
4th Battalion Fire Chief**



Keynote Speaker: Dr. Mustafa Santiago Ali



Sponsor Clark Premier Realty Group

Housing Department , Cont...

To prepare effectively, we must prioritize equity in readiness planning. This means ensuring that the most at-risk populations have access to early warning systems, resilient housing, reliable transportation, and comprehensive emergency plans. Building partnerships across government, community organizations, and private sectors is key to creating inclusive strategies that address both immediate risks and long-term resilience. Preparing in this way is not only about protecting infrastructure—it is about safeguarding people, their dignity, and their ability to thrive.

Responding and rebuilding stronger requires a shift in perspective: disasters are not equalizers, but amplifiers. Recovery efforts should include policies that direct resources to underserved communities, investments in sustainable infrastructure, and support for local leadership. By embedding equity into climate action, we can ensure that rebuilding does not simply restore the status quo but creates a stronger, more resilient society for everyone. True readiness is measured not only by how we withstand disasters, but by how we rise from them—fairer, stronger, and more united.

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Each speaker was well educated and informative
on global readiness.
-Readiness Conference Registrant

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