



# BARRY GLASSMAN

HARFORD COUNTY EXECUTIVE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## **Second Harford County Youth & Family Resource Festival Serves 1,200**

**BEL AIR, Md.**, (April 24, 2019) - Smiles were all around as more than 1,200 attendees gathered for the second biennial Harford County Youth & Family Resource Festival on April 13 in Bel Air. Held at Harford Community College's APG Federal Credit Union Arena, the festival connected families and youth of all abilities with local resources and organizations, and was presented by the Harford County Department of Community Services' Office of Children, Youth and Families, and the Office of Disability Services under Harford County Executive Barry Glassman. More than 125 local exhibitors shared important resources with families throughout the day on topics including summer camps, tutoring, summer employment, services for children with disabilities and delays, behavioral health services, college application support, and fingerprinting and ID services.

Summing up the festival's importance to local families was Karen H., mother of a 13-year-old boy with Down syndrome.

"Thank you so much for having this event; it is an answer to my prayers!" She went on, "I recently moved to Harford County and had no idea that there was anything like this out there to help us ... I feel so much hope, I can't believe Stuart might even learn to ride a bike, and I am grateful!"

Families at the festival happily joined in interactive presentations from Rick Waterhouse Presents; Mama Bear Yoga; Augmenting Ability; Steve Gambrell with Extreme Family Outreach; Harford Community College, and a dance performance from the Harford Dance Center at the Bel Air Athletic Club. Entertainment at the event included character appearances from the 501st Legion; Harford Community College's mascot "Screech"; mascots from the Aberdeen IronBirds and Boys and Girls Club, and free shaved ice samples from Kona Ice of Bel Air. Exhibitors also

provided many other activities for children and adults alike, including Buttons, a miniature horse from the gentle herd at Chesapeake Therapeutic Riding (CTR).

“This was a great event for CTR,” Cathy Schmidt, CTR’s executive director, said. “We met potential clients and connected with current ones. We were able to network with our community partners and establish new connections with potential partners.”

The resource festival would not have been possible without enthusiastic and generous support from the community.

“Sponsoring the festival was a natural fit for APG Federal Credit Union,” Chief Marketing Officer Brian Wilcox said. “We are committed to building stronger families for a stronger community, and to the inclusion of individuals of all abilities.”

In addition to APGFCU, sponsors included the Bel Air Athletic Club, Harford County Department of Social Services, Harford County Local Management Board, Harford County Office of Drug Control Policy, Harford Mutual Insurance Company, Catholic Charities, Harford Community College, Harford County Community Mediation Program, Harford County Public Library, Harford County Public Schools, Jones Junction, The Arc Northern Chesapeake Region, The EPICENTER at Edgewood, and Towson University NE Maryland. In-kind donors included the Aberdeen IronBirds, The Arena Club, Charm City Run, Chick-fil-A, Kelly’s Hair Design, and Wegmans, as well as over 50 volunteers.

“The 2019 Resource Festival was an outstanding success, linking families to resources and raising awareness about programs available to service providers,” Amber Shrodes, director of Harford County Department of Community Services, said. “We are deeply grateful to all of our sponsors, donors, partners, and volunteers, and especially to Harford Community College for their continued support.”

To see a full photo gallery of this year’s festival, visit Harford County Community Services on Facebook or at

<http://www.harfordcountymd.gov/2070/Youth-Family-Resource-Festival>.



*Cathy Schmidt, executive director of Chesapeake Therapeutic Riding tells Abigail, 7, Gabriel, 5, Annabelle, 3, and their dad how to introduce themselves to Buttons, the miniature horse at the 2019 Youth and Family Resource Festival.*




*Jenny Buffington and her mother, Erin, pose with a character from the 501<sup>st</sup> Legion at the 2019 Youth and Family Resource Festival.*



*Mom Nakia Blackwell makes sure her 8-month-old son Liam's car seat is safe with a representative from UM Upper Chesapeake HealthLink Community Outreach at the 2019 Youth and Family Resource Festival held April 13.*

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