

# Barrio de Langley Park

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## IMMIGRATION REFORM NOW?

In his first news conference after reelection, President Obama said he will try to get a comprehensive immigration reform bill passed early next year. In his proposal, he will surely include a path to permanent residency and then citizenship, and the stone wall gang will at the least insist on further enforcing the borders and perhaps a very firm e-verify. Perhaps the wall-to-be will be twenty feet high with deadly shocks greeting any potential climber. And the e-verify will close any business whose manager even in error hires someone undocumented—perhaps even thinks of hiring someone who might be undocumented.

The lead editorials in the 12 and 18 November 2012 issues of the Washington Post followed these headings:

### Fix Immigration Now New Hope on Immigration

Democrats and Republicans are now at the stage of talking with each other, and maybe that will result in serious cross-party negotiations. Of course, most Democrats want a fairly comprehensive reform; and Republicans have something narrower in mind. What about Dreamers? What about adult workers? What about citizenship for those born in the USA?

There's more about immigration on Page 2.

## POVERTY: ONE OUT OF SIX!

The latest calculations by the Census and the Bureau of Labor Statistics, taking some basic expenditures and transfers into consideration, set the US poverty rate at 16.1% - that is, one out of every six human beings in the country. For Latino/as, it is one of four!

Last year the U.S. Census Bureau, with support from the Bureau of Labor Statistics, released the first report describing research on the Supplemental Poverty Measure (SPM). The SPM extends the information provided by the official poverty measure by including many of the government programs designed to assist low-income families and individuals not included in the current official poverty measure.



Clearly, the better situation is characterized as male, older, Euro, native, and in a suburb. Those most frequently in poverty include young females who are Black or Latina, and foreign born non-citizens living in a city.

Among Latino/as, the highest poverty rates are among Hondurans, Puerto Ricans, Mexicans, Dominicans, and Guatemalans.

Maryland's poverty rate based upon a 2009-2011 average is 14%, that is, below the national figure. Our neighbors? Virginia = 13%, West Virginia = 12%, Pennsylvania = 12%, Delaware = 14%, and DC 20%. Don't go to California without a job; it's poverty rate is 24%. But maybe Iowa should be considered; it has a poverty rate of 8%! (But it's cold!)

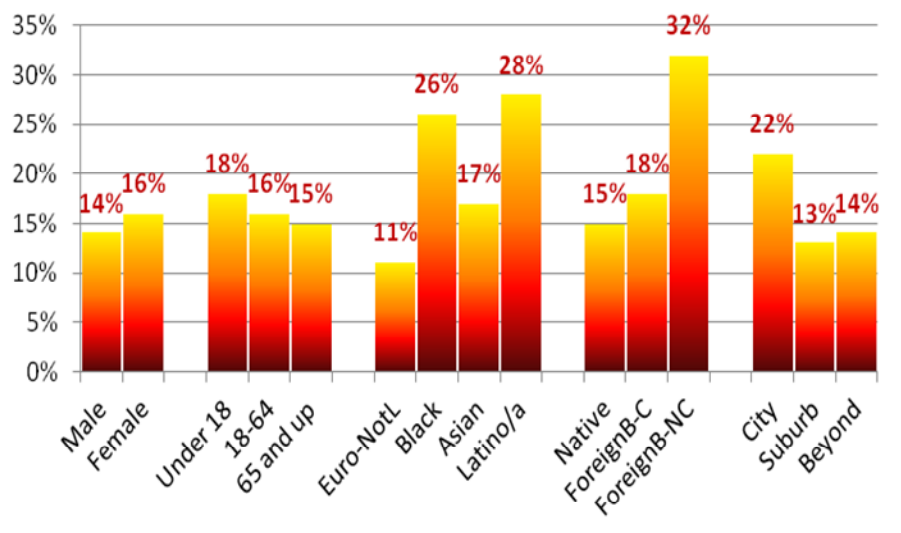
## Unemployment



The most recent data on county unemployment in Maryland indicate that Prince George's County's figure is 7.2%. The highest figure is Baltimore City at 11.2%, and the lowest is Montgomery County's 5.3% followed by Howard County's 5.5%.

The demographic breakdown at the state level shows that women (6.8%) have a lower unemployment rate than men (7.2%), but the reverse is the situation for Latinos (6.4%) and Latinas (7.8%). In general, the younger the person, the more likely he or she is to be unemployed. But the pattern reveals a U-curve; that is, there is very high unemployment among the young and comparatively low unemployment in the middle years of 35-44 years of age, but then the figure moves upward. Clearly, Maryland residents in the 55-64 age group have a difficult time (re-)entering the workforce. That pattern holds for Latinos and Latinas. In the Langley Park area? A guess is 40% unemployed—a tragic situation. That of course means that there is a high rate of poverty in the area.

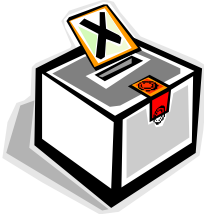
## Poverty: New Calculations



# NEWS AND NOTES

## THE VOTES: IS MARYLAND TWO STATES?

### Is the USA two countries?



In the recent election, three key votes were to expand gambling, to allow gay marriage, and to enable young undocumented immigrants to pay in-state rates for college tuition. Only three state jurisdictions voted in favor of all three, whereas eight voted against all three. Can you guess which ones? Here's a clue: The "yes" jurisdictions favored Obama and the "no" jurisdictions favored Romney. The answers are below.

Nationally, Obama supporters were in these categories: young; female; Black, Latino/a, Asian; unmarried; gay, lesbian, bisexual; working mothers with children under 18; less education than a college graduate; in a city over 50,000 population; Jewish or (barely) Catholic. Romney's biggest supporters were Euro born-again or evangelical men. So Maryland is not so different.

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## THE VOTES: DEMOCRATIC PLOT REVEALED

Ann Coulter, the right winger of [anncoulter.com](http://anncoulter.com), "revealed" the plot: "Most Americans don't realize that, decades ago, the Democrats instituted a long-term plan to gradually turn the United States into a Third World nation. The country would become poorer and less free, but Democrats would have an unbeatable majority!" So we will become Ghana (great dancers) or Thailand (wonderful food) or Algeria (ah, the Rai music!)—or some combination of the three. Hum. Well maybe not. The Met Opera and the Smithsonian and Times Square and UCLA et cetera are just too appealing. And we have psychiatrists here to treat Ann Coulter.

## THE VOTES REELECTED DONNA EDWARDS

Congresswoman Edwards has been re-elected, and if that happens one more time, she will represent the Langley Park area because the district realignment (the district gerrymandering!) is placing the area in District 4. She is willing to take up great challenges: first, she challenged oldtime Congressman Al Wynn; in the recent election, she opposed the more-gambling question on the ballot. She argued: "Gambling is not the answer for a county that has struggled to overcome political corruption, low student advancement, and a dearth of high-paying jobs." The gambling bill passed, and we shall see if the impact is positive or negative.



So, residents of the Langley Park area, be ready for Ms. Edwards after the 2014 election.

## IMMIGRATION REFORM

From the *Huffington Post* (15 November 2012): "There is now increased appetite for reform, and a bill for undocumented youth may be an easier haul than broader legalization efforts. Members of Congress and the president have said they are working now on an immigration plan that would be comprehensive, but some Republicans seem more likely to chip off the issue of young unau-

thorized immigrants into its own legislation. [Senator] Rubio spokesman Alex Conant told *HuffPost* the text is 'a working draft of what Sen. Rubio began working on over the summer.' Senator Rubio has said that his proposal would be permanent and legalize the status of undocumented young people in America without creating a special pathway to citizenship. ... We are still working on the timing and specifics of our legislation, with the goal of permanently solving the problem with broad, bipartisan support."

A good guess is that the Democrats will not accept a narrow bill, and House of Representatives Republicans will try to block a comprehensive bill. Interesting dynamics are in the future, but for undocumented immigrants the dynamics are life-shaping with opportunity or hardship in the balance.

## IMMIGRANTS: WE NEED THEM!

There are many reasons why immigrants are needed. One is innovation! As Thomas McCraw of the Harvard Business School has written, "Understanding how immigrants have fueled innovation through history is critical to making sure they continue to drive prosperity in the future."\* So innovation is another reason why we should have more of an open door immigration policy. But the opposition is understandable: quite a few people (heavily biased in the direction of mature Euro men!) don't want change; they are afraid of change. Hey Euro men: change is happening, like it or not, so you'd better adjust.

\*<http://www.nytimes.com/2012/11/02/opinion/immigrants-as-entrepreneurs.html?pagewanted=all>



## IMMIGRANT MAKES IT

The story is about Jacqueline "Wendy" Thompson-Marquez. "Thompson-Marquez was once an undocumented nanny and house cleaner. She arrived in the United States from Peru in 1987 and spent eight years working for two families in Takoma Park, taking the Metro to night school at Montgomery College and then the University of Maryland, where she earned a degree in business administration in 1995." And now she is the producer of the documentary film, *Harvest of Empire: The Untold Story of Latinos in America*. It's about the devastation caused by US actions against socialist parties and rebels in Central America that led many residents to flee to El Norte. Surely these fleeing men and women deserve the papers to be permanent residents of the USA. There's an article about Thompson-Marquez at [http://www.washingtonpost.com/lifestyle/style/2012/11/14/19300650-2454-11e2-ba29-238a6ac36a08\\_story.html](http://www.washingtonpost.com/lifestyle/style/2012/11/14/19300650-2454-11e2-ba29-238a6ac36a08_story.html)

## PG HAS GOOD POLICE OFFICERS

If you want to be impressed by the work of officers working in Prince George's County, check out the monthly awardees. The most recent set can be found at <http://pgpolice.blogspot.com/2012/11/pgpd-honors-officers-of-month.html>. Sure, not all officers are heroes\* (they even make silly inappropriate videos once in awhile), but quite a few are. And the Langley Park area definitely has some notable police heroes.

\*We even hear that not all professors and good teachers!

## GOOD COPS NOT EVERYWHERE

A former Elizabeth NJ police officer charged with shaking down illegal immigrants for cash while working

FOR ALL THREE: Baltimore City, Montgomery Co., and Prince George's Co. AGAINST ALL THREE: Carroll Co., Cecil Co., Garrett Co., Harford Co., Kent Co., Queen Anne Co., Talbot Co.



in the traffic division, pleaded guilty to official misconduct and faces five years in prison when he is sentenced in January. He was indicted on 58 counts of bribery, extortion and misconduct for pulling over Latino-looking drivers, then demanding money. He told his victims they would be turned over to immigration officials if they didn't pay. That's a sad story, but it raises the question: how many other officials are engaging in shakedowns? Are there some shakedown officials in suburban Maryland?

### SEX OFFENDERS

Prince George's County is home to the second highest number of sex offenders in the state—800—according to the Maryland Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services. The state total is 8,151 sex offenders.

### PG COUNCIL

**Farmers' Market:** Councilmembers want the county to have more farmers' markets. Good idea. Most farmers' market offerings are healthy. In the Langley Park area, there is an established market: Crossroads Farmers' Market. It is expertly managed; maybe its managers can be persuaded to hold a market on a second day in Langley Park, perhaps on the grounds of the Community Center.

**Fines for Loitering:** Do councilmembers want to break up groups of young people hanging around for reasons of friendship? A Federal District Court in Chicago ruled that loitering laws were not constitutional; after all, we do have freedom of assembly. Let's hope that any police action based on a loitering law is very carefully overseen.



Loitering!??

Justice John Paul Stevens: "In this instance, the city has enacted an ordinance that affords too much discretion to the police and too little notice to citizens who wish to use the public

streets. [The ordinance is] a violation of freedom of assembly. It criminalized status, not conduct... It allows and even encourages arbitrary police enforcement. ... [It is] impermissibly vague on its face and an arbitrary restriction on personal liberties." Perhaps members of the Council should study the First Amendment!

### HEALTH

**Diabetes:** Latinos develop diabetes 1.5 times greater than Euro-Americans, thus Latinos are one of the top racial and ethnic groups at a high risk of diabetes. What's the problem? Many researchers think that Latino Americans run a higher risk of having diabetes due to inherited genes from ancestors. In addition, poverty, lack of health care, and food traditions are barriers to preventive and diabetes management care. Does the reader know if he or she has diabetes? If not, check it out. If the reader wants to minimize the threat or consequence, one step in the right direction is to avoid fatty foods and high sodium. Salt can raise blood pressure, and people with diabetes should limit salt intake, particularly if they have hypertension, are overweight, or both.

**Costs:** Some weeks ago, a senior member of the BLP staff cut his finger badly. It was a weekend, and so he went to an emergency room. Wow, is that expensive! For example, an M.D. looked at the finger for a few minutes; the charge is \$445! The first lesson is not to cut your finger badly. But the second might be to seek an urgent care facility rather than an emergency room. Several such facilities are close to Langley Park.

### GW RESEARCH IN LANGLEY PARK

George Washington University researcher Mark Edberg has received a grant from the National Institutes for Health for \$5 million to fund a five-year project investigating health disparities among immigrant Latino communities. Edberg is an associate professor in the Department of Prevention and Community Health in the School of Public Health and Health Services.

The funding comes from NIH's National Institute on Minority Health and Health Disparities, and names GW as an "exploratory research center" on Latino immigrant health disparities. The goal of the grant is to address several co-occurring health disparities among Latino immigrant youth—substance abuse, violence, and sexual risk—that often share contributing factors. During the five-years of the grant, Edberg and his colleagues will work closely with community partners in Langley Park to collaborate on reducing disparities and to implement an intervention program that will attempt to reduce the instances of these conditions.

There are four main "cores" to the grant: the university-community collaborative partnership structure; a community intervention called ADELANTE which will involve youth and families in Langley Park; a training core, which will provide GW public health graduate students with opportunities for research and involvement in the test community as well as opportunities for community members to educate GW students and faculty about Latino immigrant health disparities; and a community outreach core, which will involve youth and community members from Langley Park in health literacy programs as well as the development of communications to help "brand" the intervention.

The ADELANTE intervention builds upon similar work completed in the Langley Park community between 2006 and 2010 and funded by the Centers for Disease Control. This pilot study identified some of the factors that contribute to youth violence in a socially marginalized community setting, including issues of family conflict/cohesion, school barriers, low community efficacy, and norms related to gangs and violence. This component will involve close collaboration with the Maryland Multicultural Youth Center, which will include the training of Latino youth peer advocates, a drop-in center for youth and families, community capacity-building activities and developing other social support systems for young people.

"The most common thing we hear from youth about gang involvement is 'the gang has my back,'" Dr. Edberg said. "It's a social support system where they don't have one. So one thing we're doing is to build a youth-related social support system that we hope will reduce the need for gang involvement and other high-risk activities."

"We're trying to establish evidence that you can't solve these problems without working at various levels. Too often, programs work at just one level—like a school curriculum or a family intervention," he said. "This may be effective within a narrow domain, but does it translate to the real world? We want to help marginalized communities grow their own capacities."

For more information, contact Edberg at [medberg@email.gwu.edu](mailto:medberg@email.gwu.edu).

To Councilman Will Campos and  
The Transitional Neighborhood Initiative Staff

## HOW ABOUT IT?

It's great that William Paca Elementary School has a mural that has positive indications of reading, eating healthy food, and exercise in the sunshine. Congratulations to the school and PGCPS.

There are many blank walls in Langley Park, and some of them are almost begging for murals. The most obvious wall is the one in the Langley Park Plaza facing west and looking towards New Hampshire Avenue. And there are others at the elementary school and community center. One or more murals would be placemaking for the area. Here's hoping!

## POTTERY EXHIBIT AND SALE

The Langley Park Community Center again hosted the semi-annual event featuring pottery made at the Center's ceramics studio. The work of the potters is very professional because most of the work has been created by professionals. The two events of 2012 have passed, but for home or office or gift, take advantage of the events in 2013. (Thanks to Lourdes Sulc for the photograph.)



## PURPLE LINE UPDATE

Transportation funding is becoming ever more urgent. It is being widely reported that all of our transportation systems—roads, bridges, and transit—are facing a funding crisis and by 2018 Maryland won't have enough money to maintain existing transportation infrastructure, let alone build any new infrastructure. See, for example, reports in the *Washington Examiner* on November 13 ("MD running out of transportation money, state analysts warn") and on November 17 ("States running out of money for roads, transit.")

The shortage might well block Purple Line construction, at least into the 2020s. That's the light rail line that may connect Bethesda to New Carrollton via Langley Park and College Park. The arrow on the map points to the proposed Takoma-Langley Crossroads station.

The *Gazette* has reported that leading county, municipal, community and business leaders are asking state lawmakers to make transportation a top priority in the upcoming legislative session. They want highway user revenues restored. And they want the Transportation Trust Fund replenished for projects like the 16-mile Purple Line.

Yes, transportation funds are needed; a slight increase in the gasoline tax would help. But what about the demands for education and health? These sure aren't abundant times, and supporting one sector may deprive another. So let's wish our governor and representatives in Annapolis and the District of Columbia the wisdom to do the best job possible.

For the pro side of the Purple Line matter, a good source is <http://www.purplelinenow.com/>.



## WHAT & WHEN



Here we list upcoming ALP activities and other events that are called to our attention. Have an event to list? If so, send information well in advance to [actionlangleypark@yahoo.com](mailto:actionlangleypark@yahoo.com).

## 2012

November—Registration for activities at the Langley Park Community Center: there will be basketball leagues (boys and girls 5 to 14), tutoring (ages 6 to 13), ballet and tap (ages 3, 4, 5), Karate (ages 5 to 13), ceramics (ages 6 to 12), and more. Call 301 445-4508 for information.

Dec 1—Health Festival for the Family, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at Iglesia San Bernardo, 5700 St. Bernard's Drive, Riverdale Park. Information: [info@ventanilladesalud.org](mailto:info@ventanilladesalud.org).

Dec 15—Hermanidad Fiesta, 11 a.m. - 1 p.m. at Langley Park Community Center. Gifts, games,, snacks, more.

Dec 21—Capital Area Foodbank at Langley Park Community Center, 11 a.m. One share of food per household. Bring your own bags.

## 2013

Jan 1—HAPPY NEW YEAR!!

Jan 8—Mis Quince Open House at the Community Center, 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. Check it out! It's a great experience for a young girl becoming a young woman.

May 5—Langley Park Day, a festival of music, dance, food, information, and especially health (there's a big health fair included as part of the event). The whole world is invited!!! Everything is free except purchases of foods or crafts. Time: Noon to 4 p.m. Location: Langley Park Community Center. Volunteer doctors, nurses, dancers, musicians, clowns, and guides will participate; other volunteers are all welcome (let us know). Residents ear and far: come one, come all!



## Jobs: Nursing et cetera

Prince George's County Public Schools (PGCPS) is offering immediate employment to qualified Registered Nurses (RNs) and Licensed Practical Nurses (LPNs) to serve as school nurses throughout the school district. For more information, call 301-749-4722.

From a Yahoo.com feature: The health industry "already has an enormous and growing backlog of unfilled, and high paying jobs. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics' monthly JOLTS (Job Openings and Labor Turnover Survey) report, of 3.2 million private job openings right now, nearly one-fifth of them (or 632,000 to be precise) can be found in the healthcare and social assistance category.

"From dental hygienists to cardiovascular technicians to lab assistance and occupational therapists, the demand for workers is high. Interestingly, so is the demand for support staff that keep the offices running and the bills humming, as giant institutions need to keep the lights on and their campuses safe."

One is led to wonder what's wrong with our supply system? Why aren't schools of nursing graduating a sufficient number of nurses to meet the increasing demand—increasing because of the aging of the population? Yes, we can get nurses from the Philippines, but is that the best supply channel?