



***A Pre-Release  
Conference for Women of the  
Maryland Correctional  
Institution for Women  
Jessup, Maryland  
Saturday, October 4, 2008***



Conference logo design by Leesa Radja

Dear Participant,

Welcome to MCIW's first "Women Moving Forward" pre-release conference. The conference was initiated by the National Association of Women Judges, (NAWJ), the nation's leading voice for women jurists dedicated to ensuring equal justice and access to the courts for women, minorities and other historically disfavored groups. Warden Shell was immediately receptive to NAWJ's idea of a pre-release conference, and she and Judge Serrette organized a steering committee of dedicated women that made it happen.

The goal is to provide you with resources and information to support your successful transition from MCIW. A dynamic keynote speaker, Vicki Lopez Lukis, experts in financial management, housing, education, drug, alcohol and mental health resources, employment, resume writing, family reunification, anger management, yoga, and a few women who have managed well after MCIW, will help you determine whether you have done all you can to prepare for release. At the end of the day, we hope that you will be able to answer the following questions:

- Do you have identification papers?
- Do you have a completed transitional services plan?
- Will you have a probation or parole officer to report to following release?
- Do you have a list of all of the programs you took advantage of while incarcerated, such as GED classes, occupational skills training and employment at Maryland Correctional Enterprises?
- Do you know how to go about looking for employment? Do you have a resume ready and some people you can use as references?
- Where will you likely live?
- How will you get needed medications?
- Where will you get mental health counseling? Drug counseling?
- What are your family reunification plans?

All of us on the steering committee, the presenters who volunteered their time, the persons and organizations that made donations, and those who supported this pre-release conference care about you and want you to succeed. We hope you find the information useful, the speakers stimulating, and the contacts reassuring. The people and organizations here today are also available to support you once you have left MCIW.

We wish you much success and urge you to call upon us and to tap the resources provided to build a healthy, satisfying future.

Warmest regards,

Judges Brenda P. Murray and Cathy Hollenberg Serrette, Co-Chairs

# Women Moving Forward Steering Committee

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In loving memory of Charlotte Sokoloff  
Judge Julia B. Weatherly  
Dr. Kathleen White

***Special Thanks to Our In-Kind Service Providers:***

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Mars Supermarkets  
Maryland Commission for Women  
Maryland State Department of Education, Correctional Education Program  
Maryland Department of Human Resources  
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Ann Quasman, *Women Talk Live*, WVIE 1370 AM  
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Brenda M. Shell, Warden, Maryland Correctional Institution for Women  
Jeffrey Swilley and the Prince Georges' County Economic Development Corporation  
Karen Taylor, Suited to Succeed, Inc.  
U.S. Army  
Inez Watson  
Adrien Carver Watson  
Zonta International and the Zonta Clubs of Maryland and Washington, DC

***A special thanks to the many volunteers assisting the  
Conference presenters and facilitators.***



<b>Friday Evening October 3, at 7:00 p.m.</b>	Gymnasium	Registration & Materials pick up
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## Agenda for Saturday, October 4, 2008

<b>8:30 a.m.— 9:50 a.m.</b>	Gymnasium	Welcome Introductions Keynote speaker: Vicki Lopez Lukis
<b>10:00—10:50</b>	See Workshop Schedule Insert	Workshop Session I
<b>11:00—11:50</b>	See Workshop Schedule Insert	Workshop Session II
<b>12:00 pm—1:30</b>	Gymnasium	Lunch and Fashion Show Ann Quasman & MCIW Women
<b>1:40—2:30</b>	See Workshop Schedule	Workshop Session III & Job Interviews
<b>2:30—4:00</b>	Gymnasium	Plenary Session on Employment Employers often make up their minds whether to hire you 60 seconds into the job interview! Do you know how to make the most of this first minute? This session on finding a job will help you to get your job interviews off to a great start. You'll also learn how to tell an employer why you deserve a second chance, what you are good at doing, and what you're not good at doing. You'll learn how to dress for your interview, how to check out possible employers, what questions you should ask an employer, and what questions you shouldn't ask. Employers will attend this session, so along with learning how to improve your interview skills, you'll get job leads.
<b>4:00—4:30</b>	Gymnasium	Closing Ceremonies

<b>Session I: 10:00 am to 10:50 am</b>	<b>Session II: 11:00 am to 11:50 am</b>	<b>Session III: 1:40 pm to 2:30 pm</b>
		<b>Job Interviews</b> for pre-selected participants.  <b>Rm:</b>
<b>Workshop 1: Money Smart—To Your Credit and Charge It Right</b> <u>Joan Lok</u> will discuss credit reports, the purposes that they serve, how they are used, how to order a copy of your credit report, and how to read and understand what it could mean for you. She will also describe how to manage your credit card debt responsibly, and what you should do if your credit card is stolen.	<b>Workshop 1: Money Smart—To Your Credit and Charge It Right</b> <u>Joan Lok</u> will discuss credit reports, the purposes that they serve, how they are used, how to order a copy of your credit report, and how to read and understand what it could mean for you. She will also describe how to manage your credit card debt responsibly, and what you should do if your credit card is stolen.	<b>Workshop 1: Money Smart—To Your Credit and Charge It Right</b> <u>Joan Lok</u> will discuss credit reports, the purposes that they serve, how they are used, how to order a copy of your credit report, and how to read and understand what it could mean for you. She will also describe how to manage your credit card debt responsibly, and what you should do if your credit card is stolen.
<b>Workshop 2: Financial Education Seminar</b> <u>Gwendolyn D. Skillern, CPA,</u> will discuss the importance of achieving financial stability and the tools needed to do so that include a monthly budget, managing credit and debt, “paying yourself first,” investing for long-term goals, and 50 money-saving tips.	<b>Workshop 2: Financial Education Seminar</b> <u>Gwendolyn D. Skillern, CPA,</u> will discuss the importance of achieving financial stability and the tools needed to do so that include a monthly budget, managing credit and debt, “paying yourself first,” investing for long-term goals, and 50 money-saving tips.	<b>Workshop 2: Financial Education Seminar</b> <u>Gwendolyn D. Skillern, CPA,</u> will discuss the importance of achieving financial stability and the tools needed to do so that include a monthly budget, managing credit and debt, “paying yourself first,” investing for long-term goals, and 50 money-saving tips.
<b>Workshop 3: Financial Right on the Money: Creating a Monthly Budget</b> <u>Shelley Wahlgren</u> will offer information about various aspects of personal financial budgeting. After the seminar, attendees should be able to: understand how to form a budget, recognize the benefits of creating a monthly budget, and have the tools to create a monthly budget.	<b>Workshop 3: Financial Right on the Money: Creating a Monthly Budget</b> <u>Shelley Wahlgren</u> will offer information about various aspects of personal financial budgeting. After the seminar, attendees should be able to: understand how to form a budget, recognize the benefits of creating a monthly budget, and have the tools to create a monthly budget.	<b>Workshop 3: Financial Right on the Money: Creating a Monthly Budget</b> <u>Shelley Wahlgren</u> will offer information about various aspects of personal financial budgeting. After the seminar, attendees should be able to: understand how to form a budget, recognize the benefits of creating a monthly budget, and have the tools to create a monthly budget.

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10:50 am**

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**Session III:  
1:40 pm to  
2:30 pm**

### **Workshop 1: Money Smart—To Your Credit and Charge It Right**

Joan Lok will discuss credit reports, the purposes that they serve, how they are used, how to order a copy of your credit report, and how to read and understand what it could mean for you. She will also describe how to manage your credit card debt responsibly, and what you should do if your credit card is stolen.

### **Workshop 2: Financial Education Seminar**

Gwendolyn D. Skillern, CPA, will discuss the importance of achieving financial stability and the tools needed to do so that include a monthly budget, managing credit and debt, “paying yourself first,” investing for long-term goals, and 50 money-saving tips.

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<p><b>Workshop 4: Transitional/ Supportive Housing</b>  <u>Vaile Leonard</u> will share information about the Baltimore Area Association for Supportive Housing (BAASH), a supportive housing collaborative, and other transitional housing options, and discuss the rights and responsibilities women have who select this option. Many are unaware of the expectation of transitional housing or that there is an umbrella organization with certified housing requirements.</p>	<p><b>Workshop 4: Public Housing Assistance and Subsidy Programs</b>  <u>Diane Jones</u> will discuss the Rental Assistance Program (RAP), Section 8, and other programs offered in Baltimore for minorities or special populations, and will provide information on how to find similar programs elsewhere in the State of Maryland.</p>	<p><b>Workshop 4: Homeownership – Habitat for Humanity Housing</b>  <u>Tonier Cain, PIL</u> (Previously Incarcerated Lady) will discuss the Habitat for Humanity Home Ownership program throughout Maryland and other areas and general considerations for home ownership.</p>
<p><b>Workshop 5: Educational Opportunities Topic:</b>  <u>Krista Mahler</u> will present an overview of what the South Baltimore Learning Center offers including Pre-GED, GED classes, Adult Basic Education classes, the Community Technology Center and Basic Computer Classes, as well as the External Diploma Program (an alternative to the GED).  <u>Beckie Lessey</u> from Howard County and <u>Michelle Frazier</u> will describe educational opportunities located outside Baltimore.</p>	<p><b>Workshop 5: Educational Opportunities Topic:</b>  <u>Krista Mahler</u> will present an overview of what the South Baltimore Learning Center offers including Pre-GED, GED classes, Adult Basic Education classes, the Community Technology Center and Basic Computer Classes, as well as the External Diploma Program (an alternative to the GED). <u>Beckie Lessey</u> from Howard County and <u>Michelle Frazier</u> will describe educational opportunities located outside Baltimore.</p>	<p><b>Workshop 5: Educational Opportunities Topic:</b>  <u>Cheneda Carter Kane</u> will present an overview of what the Maryland Educational Opportunity Center offers to persons seeking to attend college. She will discuss the three sources of financial aid: Federal, state and private, and discuss “needs based” as opposed to “academic based” financial assistance. She will also cover the subject of college admission and hopes to respond to many questions.</p>
<p><b>Workshop 6: Resources for Drug, Alcohol, &amp; Mental Health</b>  <u>Terry Brown</u> will focus on mental health recovery. Mr. Brown will identify the tools necessary to maintain mental health and explain how to use those tools to achieve a successful recovery.</p>	<p><b>Workshop 6: Resources for Drug, Alcohol, &amp; Mental Health</b>  <u>Carlos Hardy</u>, MHS, and <u>Shirley Baskerville</u> will focus on drug and alcohol recovery. The presenters will discuss the dangers that threaten success and propose options and identify programs that offer methadone maintenance and intensive outpatient substance treatment.</p>	<p><b>Workshop 6: Resources for Drug, Alcohol, &amp; Mental Health</b>  <u>Carlos Hardy</u>, MHS, and <u>Shirley Baskerville</u> will focus on drug and alcohol recovery. The presenters will discuss the dangers that threaten success and propose options and identify programs that offer methadone maintenance and intensive outpatient substance treatment.</p>

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<p><b>Workshop 7: Walking in My Shoes</b> Steering Committee Member <u>Virginia Quillen</u> will moderate a discussion among <u>Monica Cooper</u> and <u>Lilly Logan-Dorsey</u> about their successful transition back into society and what they would have done differently while in MCIW to make that transition easier.</p>	<p><b>Workshop 7: Walking in My Shoes</b> Steering Committee Member <u>Virginia Quillen</u> will moderate a discussion among <u>Monica Cooper</u> and <u>Lilly Logan-Dorsey</u> about their successful transition back into society and what they would have done differently while in MCIW to make that transition easier.</p>	<p><b>Workshop 7: Walking in My Shoes</b> Steering Committee Member <u>Virginia Quillen</u> will moderate a discussion with <u>Tonier Cain</u> on successful transition back into society and what she would have done differently while in MCIW to make that transition easier.</p>
<p><b>Workshop 8: Resume Writing</b> <u>Dr. Keisha Stephenson Taylor</u> will conduct an interactive session aimed at enabling women to prepare an effective resume and application and will include suggestions on how to deal with the fact of incarceration. She will discuss how to deal with a criminal conviction and how to file applications online. Dr. Taylor hopes to employ a number of laptops in her treatment of computer employment applications. <u>Beth Crimi</u> will also demonstrate how to do a "Kiosk job application</p>	<p><b>Workshop 8: Resume Writing</b> <u>Dr. Keisha Stephenson Taylor</u> will conduct an interactive session aimed at enabling women to prepare an effective resume and application and will include suggestions on how to deal with the fact of incarceration. She will discuss how to deal with a criminal conviction and how to file applications online. <u>Beth Crimi</u> will also demonstrate how to do a "Kiosk job application</p>	<p><b>Workshop 8: Resume Writing</b> <u>Dr. Keisha Stephenson Taylor</u> will conduct an interactive session aimed at enabling women to prepare an effective resume and application and will include suggestions on how to deal with the fact of incarceration. She will discuss how to deal with a criminal conviction and how to file applications online. <u>Beth Crimi</u> will also demonstrate how to do a "Kiosk job application</p>
<p><b>Workshop 9: Reconnecting with Families</b> <u>Tara Leaman</u> and <u>Tonie Rhones</u> will lead a discussion that explores the many issues that women leaving MCIW will face reuniting and/or interacting with children and families.</p>	<p><b>Workshop 9: Anger Management</b> <u>Ann Hosmer's</u> goal is to improve the level of communications between individuals. She will focus on power – how we gain it, share it, and give it away. She will also discuss alternative ways to express anger and teach how to resolve problems through dialogue.</p>	<p><b>Workshop 9: Yoga</b> <u>Angel Shannon</u> will discuss how yoga helps us to change what we cannot endure and endure those things we cannot change. The session will teach postures that can release tension and open up energy sources, and provide information on meditation and breathing techniques that will enhance mental clarity and terminate self-doubt, and fear.</p>

## Conference Presenters & Facilitators

**Shirley Baskerville**, a graduate of the University of Baltimore, has been the Program Director at Chrysalis House, Inc., Crownsville, MD, for eleven years. She has served on the Governor's Task Force to study the availability of treatment, and has served on the Board for Damascus House.

**Terry Brown** is the Vice-President, Resource Development for Baltimore Behavioral Health, a leading edge health care organization that provides outpatient and treatment-on-demand service to those needing assistance for mental health and substance abuse issues.

**Tonier Cain** is the former Director of Advocacy Services for Tamar, Inc. She currently works for Arundel Habitat for Humanity as the Volunteer Coordinator. She is also a National Spokesperson for Trauma Informed Care and consults for the National Association of State Mental Health Program Directors. Ms. Cain is a board member of "We Care and Friends" a nonprofit that financially assists addicts to get treatment, feed the homeless in the Annapolis area and lead the youths to positive thinking. Tonier Cain is a consumer advocate who has spoken nationally on trauma, incarceration, and recovery. She is a member of the Protection and Advocacy for Individuals with a Mental Illness (PAIMI) Council, a federally-required advisory body that reviews and guides work funded under the PAIMI grant. She has also worked as a case manager and Director of Advocacy Services for a private non-profit in Annapolis, MD. Ms. Cain is featured in the documentary "*Behind Closed Doors: Trauma Survivors and the Psychiatric System*".

**Monica Cooper** is a Baltimore native with special interests in Literature, Black Studies, and Sociology. Ms. Cooper is a student at Baltimore City Community College and in the spring of 2008 was selected as the recipient of the Howard P. Rawlings Award that bestows a grant of \$1800 towards her tuition. In addition, Ms. Cooper received the Dean's List Award and, in recognition for her academic achievement, was one of the honorees recognized at the Community College Banquet in March. Ms. Cooper is noted for her love of learning and her good will towards all. As an advocate for youth, Ms. Cooper is a volunteer for the Department of Juvenile Services.

**Beth Crimi** is a teacher with the Office of the State Superintendent's Correctional Education Program.

**Michelle Frazier** has a Bachelor of Science Degree from Morgan State University and a Masters Degree from Johns Hopkins University. Before joining the Maryland State Department of Education, Ms. Frazier taught at Coppin State College and was the coordinator of tutorial services at Baltimore City Community College. Ms. Frazier has twenty-eight years as an educator in K12, post secondary higher education and adult literacy.

**Carlos Hardy, MHS**, is a graduate of Lincoln University and holds a Master's Degree in Human Services (MHS). Mr. Hardy is Executive Director, National Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence. Mr. Hardy has fourteen years experience as a direct-service provider and treatment recovery advocate. He has been with the Baltimore City Citizens Planning and Housing Association, the South Baltimore Shelter for Men, and the Light Street Housing Corporation. Mr. Hardy was a principal architect of the BAASH initiative.

## Conference Presenters & Facilitators

**Phil Holmes** is Vice President for Public Policy and Development for Goodwill Industries of the Chesapeake. In 2007, Goodwill served more than 5000 residents of Central Maryland and the Eastern Shore and helped more than 2200 Marylanders to get part and full-time employment. In 2000, Phil helped to design Goodwill's re-entry program for men and women leaving prison. This program, called SEETTS, annually serves 600 men and women leaving prison to return to Baltimore City. Phil chairs the Goodwill Industries International Re-entry Task Force and has helped to shape re-entry programs operated by Goodwill's across the nation.

**Ann Hosmer** is a seasoned trainer with expertise in the development, implementation and evaluation of specialized programs, with special emphasis upon personal empowerment, effective communication skills, conflict resolution, and employment readiness. Ann is certified by the National Institute of Corrections as an Offender Workforce Development Specialist (OWDS) Certified Trainer. She is a contributing author to the book entitled The Spirit of Women Entrepreneurs.

**Diane O. Jones** is the Manager of the Baltimore Housing Northwest Community Action Center, which works with low-income families to identify services and programs. Ms. Jones is a native of Dayton, Ohio. She earned an Associate of Arts degree from Sinclair Community College, a Bachelor of Science in Mental Health Administration from Morgan State College, and a Masters in Social Work Administration from the University of Maryland at Baltimore.

**Cheneda Carter Kane** is a graduate of the University of Baltimore and Coppin State College where she had a dual major, Sociology and English. Ms. Carter Kane has been a Counselor/Resource Specialist with the Maryland Educational Opportunity Center for four years. She is also a motivational speaker and author. "Pits, Prose and Poetry" is a published work, and the "Wings of a Woman" is a work in progress. Ms. Carter Kane is the mother of three and the proud grandmother of one daughter.

**Donna Kouneski** earned a BS in Business Administration from the University of Baltimore. She has been employed with the Office of the Public Defender (OPD) since January 15, 1987, most recently in the role of Director of Human Resources for the last 8 years. As the HR Director she is responsible for administering all HR related services including payroll and timekeeping, recruitment and hiring, employee/employer relations, benefits, classification and compensation, budgeting and training. OPD is a statewide agency with offices in every Maryland County, comprised of over 1100 professional, paraprofessional and support employees.

**Tara Leaman** is Deputy Director of Our Place DC, an organization that services the needs of women inside and released from incarceration and their children. Our Place DC also runs a residence for homeless women.

**Vaile Leonard** is a member of the Executive Staff, Baltimore Area Association of Supportive Housing and also directs a transitional house – Light of Truth Center.

**Lilly Logan-Dorsey** works at the Crossroads Center (a treatment facility for substance abuse) and is a student of Health Information at Catonsville Community College. She is in her final stage at Marian House. Ms. Logan Dorsey sits on the board of the National Women's Prison Project and is involved with Out for Justice.

## Conference Presenters & Facilitators

**Joan Lok** is a Community Affairs Specialist with the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation. The FDIC is the Federal agency that regulates this nation's savings and loan institutions. The FDIC promotes financial stability and public confidence in the nation's financial system. In that role, it encourages financial institutions to meet the credit needs of the community and promotes laws, regulations, and programs that protect and educate consumers.

**Vicki Lopez Lukis**, a graduate of the University of Notre Dame, is the Statewide Expansion Director for the Girls Advocacy Project, Inc., (GAP), a project in the State of Florida that focuses on female juvenile offenders while they are in detention awaiting trial and/or placement in commitment programs. GAP, which was initiated by NAWJ member Judge Cindy S. Lederman, operates in partnership with the Florida Department of Juvenile Justice. Ms. Lukis is also a volunteer focused on working with women in prison and ex-offenders. In 1999, Ms. Lukis began serving a twenty-seven month sentence following a conviction of one-count of mail fraud for actions that occurred while she served as a member of the Board of County Commissioners in Lee County Florida. President Clinton commuted her sentence in 2000, and Florida officials restored her civil rights in Florida in 2004. Ms. Lukis is the recipient of many awards and honors since her release.

**Krista Mahler** is the Volunteer Outreach Coordinator at the South Baltimore Learning Center, a community based non-profit providing functional literacy in addition to career preparation services to residents in the Baltimore area. Krista has an MSW from University of Maryland, Baltimore, and has a Bachelor's degree in Social Work from Luther College in Iowa. Krista has been the Volunteer and Outreach Coordinator at the South Baltimore Learning Center for almost one year. Prior to moving to Baltimore two years ago for grad school she was a community development volunteer in the Peace Corps in the Republic of Moldova and is originally from Colorado.

**Pamela Paulk** is a Vice President at Johns Hopkins Hospital and is a community leader in efforts to hire qualified members of minority populations.

**Ann Quasman**, Quality Life and Wellness Coach, EFT Practitioner Workshop Facilitator and Speaker, Since 1997, Ann has studied with a variety of teachers and trainers to learn self-care techniques to enhance healthier living and to promote making healthier choices. A major focus of Ann's work is in helping people "de-compartmentalize" their life and learning to live life with awareness and intention. She believes these two ingredients are the essential part of the recipe. Ann incorporates ideas and techniques to awaken and strengthen awareness and intention in her workshops and in her individual wellness coaching sessions with clients. Ann is the Founder of Living in Your Heart, LLC – a company that provides workshops on a monthly basis in Maryland and suburban D.C., and also offers private workshops and retreats for groups. She is the co-host of the weekly radio talk show, *WomanTalk Live*, on WVIE 1370 AM in Baltimore.

**Virginia Quillen** is currently a weekend manager at Chrysalis House, a non-profit in-patient treatment facility for women and their children. She earned a BS from the University of Maryland in Business Management and is currently pursuing a dual Master's program, an MBA and MS in Project Management, also at the University of Maryland.

**Tonie Rhones** is manager of Our Place DC's Camille's Place, an emergency transitional housing for women released from prison who are homeless and HIV positive.

## Conference Presenters & Facilitators

**Becky Lessey** has worked in Adult Education at Howard Community College since 1983. She is currently the Director of Basic Skills and Special Populations Programs in charge of services for adults needing a high school diploma, reading, writing and math competence and those needing to learn English as a Second Language. In addition, she coordinates workplace skills classes in the community and on site at businesses. She established a successful work readiness program for the Howard County Detention Center that has been taking place for the last 11 years.

**Angel Shannon** is a Registered Nurse and Integrative Health Educator. She received her credentials in Yoga Therapy from Yama Therapeutics in Baltimore and is registered with Yoga Alliance, an internationally recognized registry for professional yoga practitioners. A

critical care nurse for over fifteen years, Angel blends solid knowledge of western medicine with a life-long passion and study of Eastern healing traditions. Using the tools of Yoga and Ayurveda, Angel founded One Dharma Yoga & Wellness where she conducts classes, workshops and private yoga therapy for holistic health and healing.

**Gwendolyn D. Skillern, CPA**, is Senior Vice President and General Auditor for CareFirst BlueCross BlueShield where she is responsible for directing internal audit services, for all essential operations. Over the course of her career Ms. Skillern has held various positions in public accounting, corporate finance and internal auditing. Ms. Skillern is a member of the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants, the Institute of Internal Auditors, the National Coalition of 100 black Women and the Board of Directors of Marian House, a non-profit organization. She received her BS from the University of California at Berkeley and her MBA from Stanford University.

**Dr. Keisha Stephenson Taylor** holds a Master's Degree in Education Administration and a Doctorate in Innovation and Leadership and is a school change coach at CSSR.

**Shelley Wahlgren** is a Financial Advisor for Edward Jones of Dunkirk Maryland. She assists her clients in understanding their personal goals from college savings to retirement and helps them create long-term strategies for their investments while emphasizing a well balanced portfolio. She holds a B.S. degree in Business Management from the University of Maryland - University College and an A.A. degree in Business Administration from the College of Southern Maryland.

















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