



# LECTURE SERIES

## FALL 2023

SEPTEMBER 6, 2023 – JANUARY 31, 2024

### September 6, 2023 - **Welcome Back Event**

We have 64 new members this fall! Although this “welcome back” event is designed to welcome and orient new members, *ALL* members are encouraged to attend. We will review the history, purpose, and operational aspects of our volunteer-run group. Come to this event to meet new members, catch up with old friends, and find out how you can help out and get involved. (As with speaker events, refreshments will begin at 9:30, the program will run from 10-11, and we will have ample time for Q&A.)

### September 13 - **Geraldine Brooks**

Australian-born Geraldine Brooks is an author and journalist who grew up in the western suburbs of Sydney. Brooks won the Pulitzer Prize in fiction in 2006 for her second novel, *March*. Her novels *Caleb’s Crossing*, *The Secret Chord*, and *People of the Book* were New York Times best sellers. Her first novel, *Year of Wonders*, an international bestseller translated into more than 25 languages, is currently under film option to Olivia Coleman. Her latest novel *Horse*, is an Amazon best book selection.

### September 20 - **Kim Callinan**

While there is 100 percent certainty that we will die, very few people take the steps necessary to ensure their loved ones are prepared to make healthcare decisions on their behalf. The consequences of not planning can be devastating: invasive treatments that rob patients of quality of life, years of unnecessary suffering, and family members in the untenable position of having to make uninformed life-altering healthcare decisions. It doesn’t have to be this way. Learn how to become an empowered consumer so that you – or your loved ones – can make treatment decisions that allow you to Finish Strong. Kim Callinan is the President and CEO of Compassion & Choices. During her tenure she has played a leadership role in beginning to foster a more diverse, equitable, and inclusive movement, launching the Finish Strong initiative, and authorizing and implementing medical aid in dying in six new jurisdictions. Kim speaks frequently at conferences, testifies before state legislatures, conducts policy briefings, and serves on committees as an expert on end-of-life care options.

### September 27 - **Reemberto Rodriguez**

Reemberto Rodriguez was born in Cuba, raised in the American South, and currently lives in Silver Spring. For many years, he served as one of the County's five regional directors, making him the key liaison between elected officials and the greater Silver Spring community. Rodriguez is now an Affiliate Instructor with the National Center for Smart Growth at the University of Maryland. His lecture will take us far from home to focus on Havana's art and culture. Rodriguez travels to Havana frequently, most recently leading a study abroad course for the University of Maryland School of Architecture, Planning, and Preservation. Sharing personal photographs, he will discuss Havana's historical context and current challenges through the lenses of its rich art and culture.

### October 4 - **Amy Lopez**

Amalia "Amy" Lopez is a nonprofit leader with a career focused on positive youth development programming and operations. As the deputy director for Girls on the Run of Montgomery County, she uses data to drive her passion for empowering girls and pioneered initiatives to do so in an accessible and inclusive way. Since the pandemic, youth mental health has become a crisis, with one quarter of young people showing signs of depression. Compared to their male peers, adolescent girls experience faster rates of decline in physical activity levels; lower levels of confidence in, and positive perception of, their academic abilities; and higher rates of anxiety and depression. Girls on the Run works to prevent these adverse outcomes by empowering girls to know and activate their limitless potential. The program accomplishes this mission through an intentional and evidence-based curriculum that promotes social-emotional learning, critical life skills, and healthy attitudes and behaviors among adolescent girls. Lopez will discuss the state of youth mental health and share evidence on how Girls on the Run's research-backed curriculum has proven its effectiveness.

### October 11 - **Lynne Zarate**

Lynne Zarate earned a Master's degree in chemical engineering with highest honors from the Georgia Institute of Technology and a Master's in Environmental Engineering from the Johns Hopkins University. After joining MCPS in 2003, she took the helm of a new division in 2020 to foster system-wide change towards mitigation of climate change, and to improve climate preparedness and resilience across the county. Earlier in her career, she worked as a contractor for NASA, USDOT, an international paper company, and Georgetown University, where she managed chemical waste and environmental engineering programs – experiences that propelled her towards the mission that guides her work today. Zarate will discuss "Sustainability in MCPS, 2023: From Policy to Practice." MCPS has been a leader in K-12 environmental sustainability for over 40 years. In 2022, the Board of Education adopted a transformative sustainability policy. This presentation will explore the many simultaneous practices, programs, and projects that have been launched to take equitable action towards a fully sustainable community as we act locally while thinking globally.

### October 18 - **Janet Crouch**

A life-long Marylander who has lived in Howard County for more than 30 years, Janet Crouch and her husband Jeff gradually filled their garden with native plants to benefit pollinators and provide food and shelter for wildlife. In 2017, the Crouches' homeowners' association (HOA) demanded that they replace their native plant garden with grass. This led to a years-long battle that cost the Crouches many thousands of dollars in legal fees. Ultimately, the Crouches prevailed and were able to retain virtually all of their garden. In 2021, their case spurred the adoption of Maryland legislation (<https://mail.google.com/mail/u/0/?tab=cm#inbox>), which prohibits HOAs from banning the cultivation of native plant gardens. The law represents a major victory for Maryland – not just for the gardeners among us, but also for the insects, birds, and other animals that call our state home.

### October 25 - **Dorothy Canter**

Dorothy A. Canter, Ph.D., is an expert in the decontamination of bioterrorism agents and played an important role following the 2001 anthrax attacks. After a distinguished career in her field, Dorothy turned her attention to leading the Rosenwald Park Campaign. She is a long-time National Parks Conservation Association volunteer, having served on the Board of Trustees for nine years. In 2017, she founded the campaign to establish a National Historical Park honoring humanitarian Julius Rosenwald and the Rosenwald Schools. Canter will discuss her campaign to honor this Jewish philanthropist who dedicated his wealth and energy to building schools across the South to educate young Black students.

### November 1 - No Program (MCPS closed)

### November 8 - **Aaron Posner**

Stories are not only told, they are re-told, and re-told, and re-told again – often transforming over time to reflect both the teller and the audience for whom they are being told. Aaron Posner has spent much of his career in the theatre engaged in these acts of theatrical re-imagination. In particular, he has found the works of Chekhov and Shakespeare to be fertile and enjoyable ground to explore in new and personal ways. He will discuss the ways he engages with classic stories. Posner is a theatre director, playwright, teacher, former Artistic Director of two major regional theatres, and a tenured Professor in the Department of Performing Arts at American University. He was the founding Artistic Director of Philadelphia's Arden Theatre Company, and also ran Two River Theatre in Red Bank, New Jersey. He has directed nearly 200 productions at major regional theaters across the country. His re-imagining of Chekhov's *The Seagull*, entitled *Stupid Fucking Bird*, was one of the 10 most produced plays in the country in 2015 and has had more than 250 productions worldwide. Posner also co-directed a new adaptation of Shakespeare's *The Tempest* at Round House Theatre in Bethesda last season. His other widely-produced and published plays include *JQA*, *Life Sucks*, *No Sisters*, *District Merchants*, *Who Am I This Time? & Other Conundrums of Love*, *The Chosen*, and *My Name Is Asher Lev*. He has won 20 regional theatre awards, including Helen Hayes Awards, Barrymore Awards, the Outer Circle Critics Award, and the John

Gassner Prize. He lives just outside of D.C. with his wife, actress Erin Weaver, and his amazing daughter, Maisie.

#### November 15 - **Lauren Rhue**

Lauren Rhue is an Assistant Professor of Information Systems in the Department of Decision, Operations, and Information Technologies at the Robert H. Smith School of Business at the University of Maryland. Her research uses empirical and econometric methods to explore the economic and social implications of technology including artificial intelligence. Believing in technology as a force for positive economic change, she is interested in investigating the economic implications of technology platforms for traditionally disadvantaged populations. Rhue earned her PhD in Information Systems from New York University's Stern School of Business. She will discuss the bias in AI and other topics.

#### November 22 - No program - (MCPS closed for Thanksgiving)

#### November 29 - **Douglas Tallamy**

Recent headlines about global insect declines and three billion fewer birds in North America are a bleak reality check about how ineffective our current landscape designs have been at sustaining the plants and animals that sustain *us*. To create landscapes that enhance local ecosystems rather than degrade them, we must 1) remove the invasives on our property and 2) add the native plant communities that sustain food webs, sequester carbon, maintain diverse native bee communities, and sustain our watersheds. This approach to conservation empowers everyone to play a significant role in the future of the natural world.

Douglas Tallamy is the T. A. Baker Professor of Agriculture in the Department of Entomology and Wildlife Ecology at the University of Delaware, where he has authored 111 research publications and has taught insect-related courses for 41 years. Chief among his research goals is to better understand the many ways insects interact with plants and how such interactions determine the diversity of animal communities. His books include *Bringing Nature Home*, *The Living Landscape* (co-authored with Rick Darke), *Nature's Best Hope* (a New York Times Best Seller), and *The Nature of Oaks* (winner of the American Horticultural Society's 2022 book award). In 2021 he co-founded Homegrown National Park with Michelle Alfandari. His awards include recognition from The Garden Writer's Association, Audubon, The National Wildlife Federation, Allegheny College, Ecoforesters, The Garden Club of America, and The American Horticultural Association.

#### December 6 - **Laura Hankin**

Laura Hankin is the author of *The Daydreams*, *Happy & You Know It*, and *A Special Place for Women*. Her musical comedy has been featured in publications like *The New York Times* and *The Washington Post*, and she is developing projects for film and TV. She lives in Washington DC, where she once fell off a treadmill twice in one day. She

will discuss how she weaves current social and cultural issues into engaging page-turners, the publication process, and what goes into making a career as an author.

#### December 13 - **Jon Eisen**

Jon Eisen is President of The Eisen Group, an urban planning and architectural firm which has helped design some of the most iconic areas in and around Washington DC. Some well-known projects and neighborhoods include The Holocaust Museum, National Harbor, Half Street, Bethesda Row, Crown Farm, Park Potomac and One Loudoun. Eisen and his team bring innovative branding to mixed-use spaces. He creates an identity for each project while balancing form, function, economics, and sustainability. Eisen will discuss some of the joys and challenges about being part of the planning, design, and architectural process of such high-profile spaces.

#### December 20 - **Jill Furman**

Jill Furman is an attorney and serves as the Director of the Office of Compliance in the Center for Drug Evaluation and Research at FDA. She manages compliance and enforcement of federal drug laws that protect the public from unsafe, ineffective, and poor-quality drugs. Earlier, as Deputy Director of DOJ's Consumer Protection Branch, she enforced federal consumer protection laws. Furman will speak about her career in federal government service and some of the challenges of protecting the interests of consumers nationwide.

#### December 27 - No program (MCPS winter break)

#### January 3, 2024 - **Dr. Michael Lauer**

Integrity breaches in research cannot be dismissed as merely the acts of a few bad actors. Institutional culture and oversight are critical elements, especially in an environment in which the credibility of the scientific enterprise is commonly questioned. Dr. Michael Lauer, M.D. will discuss ethics and integrity in biomedical research. He will describe efforts by NIH and by NIH grant recipients to address ethics and integrity concerns, including research misconduct, sexual and non-sexual harassment, foreign interference, peer review violations, and dishonest representation. Lauer is the Deputy Director for Extramural Research at the National Institutes of Health (NIH), where he serves as the principal scientific leader and advisor to the Director of the NIH on all matters relating to the substance, quality, and effectiveness of the NIH extramural research program and administration. He has received numerous awards, including the NIH Equal Employment Opportunity Award of the Year and the Arthur S. Flemming Award for Exceptional Federal Service in recognition of his efforts to grow a culture of learning and accountability.

### January 10 - **Rolando Sanz**

Rolando Sanz is the co-founder, CEO, and Producing Artistic Director of Young Artists of America (YAA) at Strathmore, serving Montgomery and Howard counties. In addition to building YAA into a premier youth performing arts organization, Sanz consults for and programs music, theatre, and dance events for the region's leading venues and for Maryland Public Television. Sanz is a classically trained opera singer who performed as a principal artist for over a decade with the nation's leading symphonies and opera companies, including the Metropolitan Opera, and serves on the faculty of various esteemed arts training programs. A graduate of Yale University School of Music, Sanz has sung the national anthem for the Baltimore Orioles Opening Day ceremonies since 2012 and is currently a Helen Hayes Awards judge. Sanz will speak about the state of the performing arts world in the aftermath of the pandemic.

### January 17 - **Therese McNerney, DPT**

Therese McNerney has a doctorate in physical therapy and has been practicing for 37 years. She founded Precision Physical Therapy and focuses on manual therapy, orthopedics, customized exercises, and Pilates. She uses a hands-on approach in a one-on-one environment to manage musculoskeletal problems. She has written four physical therapy textbooks and multiple articles on rehabilitation. She is certified in dynamic neuromuscular stabilization and dry needling, and has been a professional Pilates instructor since 2001. New research suggests that some core-strengthening strategies are incorrect and potentially harmful. McNerney will discuss the importance of the core as it relates to posture and exercise.

### January 24 - **Nicole Cutts**

Dr. Nicole Cutts is a clinical psychologist, success coach, founder of Vision Quest Retreats, and author of *The Adventures of Isabelle* series – novels based on the heroine's quest. Her mission is to help more women clarify and achieve their vision of success for their life's work. She also helps women to see their own lives as heroine's quests, to inspire them and increase their resilience. She will discuss how and why to re-imagine your life as a hero/heroine's quest. She will also describe the process of writing her heroine's story via her books in *The Adventures of Isabelle* series.

### January 31 - **Don Pelles** -

Don Pelles, Ph.D. ([hypnosissilverspring.com](http://hypnosissilverspring.com)), is a hypnotherapist, NeuroLinguistic Programming practitioner, and Spiritual Life Coach. He helps his clients with anxiety, depression, pain management, smoking, weight, and other challenges, so as to resolve their difficult issues and thus transform their lives. He will discuss hypnosis (using altered states to achieve the results clients want) and guide attendees through several self-hypnosis exercises. Time permitting, he will also demonstrate some pain control techniques. Hypnotherapy is Pelles's third successful career. As a mathematics professor, he made significant contributions to the field, and later worked as a software developer. He is married to a previous WMG speaker, Rosalyn Pelles; they have four grown sons and four grandchildren.