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MARYLAND COMMISSION FOR WOMEN ELECTS NEW LEADERSHIP



Roberta Pardo, Tawanda Bailey, Maxine Griffin Somerville

At its June 16th meeting, the Maryland Commission for Women elected Commissioner Tawanda Bailey as its new Chair. Commissioner Maxine Griffin Somerville was elected First Vice Chair and Commissioner Roberta Pardo was elected Second Vice Chair. The three officers were each elected to serve two-year terms (2022 – 2024).

Chair Tawanda A. Bailey is a long-time resident of Frederick County, Maryland and was appointed to the Commission for Women in April 2016. She was elected First Vice-Chair in June 2018, and served two consecutive terms. She has co-chaired the Commission for Women’s Education and Outreach Committee, has served on the Voices of Maryland Women Listening Tour Committee and the Public Relations and Communications Committee. She represented the Commission on the steering committee planning the annual Women Moving Forward Conference at the Maryland Correctional Institution for Women.

Ms. Bailey retired from Frederick County Government in 2019 after 31 years of service and is now a Compliance Officer with Howard County’s Department of Fire and Rescue Services, where she is responsible for implementation and oversight compliance with State and Federal privacy regulations. She is also the small business owner of Bailey Massage and Wellness – specializing in chronic pain management and stress management.

Over the course of her career, she has been involved with many health and social services programs providing services for adults and children, including: Section 8 Housing, Rental Allowance Assistance, Office for Children and Families, Healthy

Families Frederick, Heartly House and pre-hospital healthcare. In addition, she has mentored those in teen youth programs and was an advocate for victims of abuse.

Ms. Bailey is very active on numerous committees and boards in her community. She presently serves on the Board of Directors for the Frederick County Mental Health Association and sits on the Governance Committee. She is a volunteer Emergency Medical Technician with the United Steam Fire Engine Company and is a member of the Board of Directors. She mentors young women interested in Fire and Rescue. She is a part of the Downtown Frederick Partnership focus group on Diversity, Equity and Inclusion.

Ms. Bailey is a 2020 graduate of the Frederick County Chamber Leadership Frederick Program. She received recognition from the Frederick County's Commission for Women as "Up and Coming Woman of the Year" in 2020.

First Vice Chair Maxine Griffin Somerville is a long-time resident of Charles County, Maryland and was appointed to the Maryland Commission for Women in July 2020. She served as Vice Chair of the Achievement and Recognition Committee coordinating the 2022 Maryland Women's Hall of Fame, and was the coordinator for the 2021 Roundtable Meeting of Commissions for Women in Maryland.

An active member of her community, Mrs. Somerville served on the Charles County Commission for Women for eight years (2011-2019) where she served as chair for four years. She belongs to several organizations including Women of Action Charles County and Top Ladies of Distinction, Southern Maryland Chapter where she sits on the Status of Women Committee. She is a volunteer community mediator with the Charles County Mediation Center and is a member of the NAACP and National Council of Negro Women. She served seven years on the Alumni Association Board of Old Dominion University. She held several positions including President and Vice President of the Black Alumni Council (BAC) at Old Dominion University. While President, she led the creation of the Ronald L. Horne Scholarship, named in honor of the first African American to graduate from what is now known as Old Dominion University.

Ms. Somerville is the Vice President of Human Resources for EngenderHealth, a global health women's organization and is the owner of a human resources consulting practice. She is a speaker, consultant, community advocate, career coach, and strategic professional in human resources and human capital management. A certified human resource professional, she holds both the SPHR and SHRM-SCP certifications. She is a co-author of the best-selling book, "Dear Fear: Twenty Lessons on Living Your Best Life on the Other Side of Your Fear" and "Black Woman by Birth, Champion by Choice."

Ms. Somerville holds a Master of Public Administration in Nonprofit Human Resources from The George Washington University and a Bachelor of Science in Psychology from Old Dominion University.

Second Vice Chair Roberta Pardo is a native of Brazil with dual citizenship. An accomplished artist, she has lived in Maryland since 2000. She spent most of her youth traveling the world and is fluent in six languages. Prior to focusing on art, she was an international horse rider and trainer, competing for her native country and in numerous international competitions. Her background is in Industrial Design and Fine Arts. Her education includes FAAP (Fundação Armando Alvez Penteado) in Sao Paulo, Brazil and Art Center College of Design in Pasadena, California. Her great passion is Street Art for its connection between art and environment. She resides in Severna Park, Maryland and is actively involved with the art scene in the area. She is a board member for the Arts Councils of Anne Arundel County and the Indian Creek School. For the past two years, Ms. Pardo has chaired the Commission's Achievement and Recognition Committee which sponsors the Maryland Women's Hall of Fame and the Maryland Young Women Leaders Awards.

The Maryland Commission for Women is a 25-member advisory board first established by the Governor in 1965 and set in state law in 1971. Commissioners are appointed to four-year terms by the Governor, with confirmation by the Maryland State Senate. Commissioners serve four-year terms without compensation. The office of the Commission for Women is located in the Maryland Department of Human Services.

The Commission's enabling legislation mandates that the Commission's duties include:

- Study the status of women in the state
- Direct attention to critical problems confronting women
- Recommend methods of overcoming discrimination
- Recognize women's accomplishments and contributions
- Provide informed advice to the executive and legislative branches of government on the issues concerning the women of Maryland