



THE MARYLAND MUNICIPAL LEAGUE
The Association of Cities and Towns

PRESS RELEASE

Contact: Justin Fiore, 410-295-9100, JustinF@mdmunicipal.org

Frederick Mayor Michael O'Connor, MML Award Winners, and Keynote Brandon Fleming Headline Tuesday at MML's 75th Summer Conference

(June 26, 2024) Annapolis, Md. – The [Maryland Municipal League's](https://www.mdmunicipal.org/) (MML) Summer Conference continued Tuesday in the Ocean City Convention Center, featuring a keynote address by Brandon Fleming, the launch of Mayor Michael O'Connor's term as MML President, and the announcement of several League award winners.



Brandon Fleming, the assistant coach of debate at Harvard University, founder of the nationally acclaimed Harvard Diversity Project, and author of *Miseducated*, challenged attendees to go the extra mile for those they serve in his keynote speech. “The only way to change minds, is to change hearts,” shared Fleming while talking about how an unexpected leader changed the trajectory of his own life.

In the afternoon, MML CEO Theresa Kuhns provided an update on the League, highlighting all of the new events we've undertaken alongside moving our headquarters to State Circle in Annapolis. The Maryland Municipal League did more than move its mailing address,” said Kuhns. Together, we have moved the needle as an organization.” She then announced the new MML Board of Directors, and the presidency officially changed hands from Mayor John Carroll of Galena to Mayor Michael O'Connor from the City of Frederick. President O'Connor becomes the first full-time mayor to ascend to the role in 44 years.

Building on the incredible accomplishment of Mayor Carroll's initiative to visit all 160 local governments in Maryland during his term, President O'Connor noted the value of the stories they heard along the way and plans to emphasize the potential they have to elevate the League as the premiere voice for communities across the State.



There were also several municipal awardees recognized at the closing general session.

Selected by the Maryland City/County Management Association, the 2024 Employee of the Year Award was presented to Susan Petito, Ocean City's Director of Recreation and Parks. As highlighted by the Town of Ocean City's nomination, "Susan is a positive, dedicated, fair, quality-minded leader who cares greatly about the Town and its success. Susan has provided visionary leadership, bringing her employees together to continually improve the quality of life for the residents of and visitors to Ocean City."

President Carroll also took time to recognize MML's Municipal Officials Hall of Fame honorees. To qualify, a candidate must be a current or former official who has held elected municipal office for at least 20 years. With the induction of these new officials, there are now 301 MML Hall of Famers, with a cumulative 6,536 YEARS of municipal service.

The 2024 Hall of Fame Inductees:

- Mayor Pat Irish Mahoney, Chesapeake Beach
- Commissioner Earl M. Piner, Sr., Elkton
- Former Commissioner, David Hooper, Hebron
- Commissioner Jean A. Broomell, Elkton
- Commissioner Gary Lee Wiltison, Luke
- Commissioner Thomas Dewey Clayton, Luke.

The MML Lifetime Achievement Award honors a current or former elected or appointed official who has demonstrated outstanding service to Maryland municipal government and to MML. This year's honoree is Diane Foster, Taneytown Councilmember. Councilmember Foster served three years on the MML Board of Directors and multiple years on the Legislative, Engagement and Outreach, and Conference Planning Committees. Diane also represented MML on the State's Blue-Ribbon Commission on Transportation Funding and has contributed to dozens of municipal, county and community programs.



Lt. Governor Aruna Miller closed the session, reiterating the Moore-Miller theme that those who are closest to the issues are also closest to the solutions. She also referred back to Brandon Fleming’s speech and shared some of her own early challenges in life before inspiring the membership to lead with empathy.

Elected officials and staff continued to network and attend workshops on various topics, including on securing sustainable water, building the public service pipeline, and winning state and federal grants. In addition to even more great courses, members had the opportunity today to meet with numerous cabinet secretaries to talk about the issues and opportunities in their jurisdictions.

#

About The Maryland Municipal League:

The Maryland Municipal League (MML) was founded in 1936 and serves as the collective voice of 160 municipal governments and the 2 million Marylanders it represents. A voluntary, non-profit, nonpartisan association controlled and maintained by city and town governments, MML works to strengthen and support municipal government through advocacy and the development of effective leadership. Through its membership in the National League of Cities MML offers legislative representation in Washington, urban research programs, and a national municipal government information exchange. MML is the only statewide organization in Maryland composed solely of municipal officials and devoted to the promotion of all branches of municipal administration.

