

## READERS RESPOND

## Internships should be paid. Period.

Education reporters Naomi Harris and Jocelyn Gecker highlighted a seldom-discussed but critical barrier affecting the workforce in Maryland (“Unpaid internships face new scrutiny as barriers to careers,” Sept. 30). I spent a 33-year career in public education, first as a special-education teacher then as a school social worker. Two years of my life were spent paying tuition to a university for the privilege of working to learn at an unpaid job, the first as a teaching intern and the second — four years later — as a social work intern. While what I learned in each was a critical part of my professional training, the struggle was intense.

By the time I took unpaid leave from the school system to complete my social work degree (there was no other way to complete the internship requirement), I had been self-supporting for four years and like most folks, I had bills. Squeezing the part-time jobs around the 32 hours per week of internship and nine graduate credits each semester of concurrent required classes was exhausting.

But I was one of the lucky ones. I only had to support myself.

Right now, we have a workforce crisis in Maryland in both teaching and social work. It is critical that we do all that we can to make these professions accessible to those who want to serve in them. Paid internships would go a long way toward attracting our best and brightest to this important work.

I call on our next governor to make this a priority.

— Gail Martin, Catonsville

## Still a future for women's colleges

Several years ago when many of the women's colleges were going coed, Cedar Crest College in Allentown, Pennsylvania, was faced with a similar situation.

Muhlenberg College, a men's college a mile away, was interested in combining our two colleges under one umbrella. When the alumnae found out it was not going to be an equal partnership as it was presented, the alumnae complained and complained loudly. The result? Cedar Crest is still a women's college and since then has led by three strong dedicated women presidents.

Don't give up Notre Dame of Maryland University alumnae (“Tough choices for women's colleges,” Oct. 6!)

— Dorothy Carpenter, Reisterstown

## Legalized pot will require health warnings

The polls suggest that Question 4 legalizing recreational marijuana in Maryland will pass in November. I am encouraged that The Baltimore Sun's endorsement of the constitutional amendment clearly highlights the public health issues with marijuana (“Vote ‘for’ statewide ballot Question 4: Legalize adult use of cannabis in Maryland,” Oct. 12).

If this measure passes, then the detailed regulations get decided by legislative committee. The citizens of Maryland deserve strong health warnings on cannabis products. The scientific evidence clearly shows that today's marijuana, which is significantly more potent than that of the 1960s, can cause increased traffic fatalities, psychosis, increased depression and suicide among other health issues, including pregnancy complications, in some individuals.

We have health warnings on all medications and many everyday products, and they absolutely must be a part of the upcoming regulations.

— Kevin G. Becker, Sparks Glencoe

## So very grateful not to watch Fox News

Kudos to Peter Jensen for watching Fox News so I don't have to (“What's the plan for Republican-abandoned cities?” Oct. 12). I personally avoid Fox News like the plague that it is.

I recall a survey a few years back. To find out who was best informed on current events, they grouped people into four categories: Those who read only newspapers, those who watch all manner of TV news, those who watch no news or read no newspapers, and those who only watch Fox News.

The people who only watch Fox News finished last. Enough said.

— John D. Schulz, Cockeysville

## Attack on hijab-wearing students a serious matter

The headline on a recent commentary, “As protesters decry Iran's repressive policies, anti-hijab rhetoric rises in Baltimore and beyond” (Oct. 10), fails to account for how aggravated assault is a bit more serious and potentially life-threatening than rhetoric.

In fact, a young woman was brutally assaulted in a Baltimore school, with the aid of a Baltimore school employee, for voluntarily wearing a hijab. Have the alleged perpetrators been criminally charged for causing traumatic brain injuries to the victim? Are they still allowed in school?

The people who caused these injuries are every bit as culpable as the mullahs in Iran. Perhaps we can do something about evil and hatred here.

— Lawrence Silberman, Burtonsville



## ENDORSEMENTS

## Ball for Howard County executive; McCoy, Newberger for school board

## County executive

Howard County voters face an enviable circumstance in choosing between two well-qualified candidates for county executive.

The incumbent, Calvin B. Ball III, a Democrat and the first African American individual elected to the post, has an inclusive vision that speaks to the heart of the county's ethos. The challenger, Allan H. Kittleman, a moderate Republican who held the office before Ball's election four years ago, has proved himself a dedicated public servant. Each is more than capable of leading Maryland's most prosperous subdivision.

But we believe Ball — Columbia resident, Woodlawn High School graduate and holder of a doctorate in education from Morgan State University — should remain in office as county executive for another term. His vision of the county as not only a place where public schools excel and the quality of life is high but as welcoming to people of differing races, religions and income levels is crucial for its continued success.

From fostering affordable housing and public transit to supporting the public school system's redistricting plans that promote greater equity, Ball, 47, seeks to expand opportunity, and surely no Maryland subdivision is better positioned to achieve that goal than Howard County.

That's not to suggest the former County Council member and council chair has no room for improvement. His office's failure to comply with public information laws in a particular instance (as revealed by what is, admittedly, a highly partisan lawsuit) and his choice to accept campaign donations from special interest groups instead of participating in the county's public financing system he has claimed to support are missteps we don't want to see repeated.

But any objective review of the last four years must note that Ball has made progress on flood protection and school construction, demonstrated bold leadership in the early days of the COVID-19 pandemic, pushed the county toward better environmental practices — from using solar energy to strengthening forest conservation efforts — and was willing to take the politically unpopular



Allan Kittleman, left, congratulates Calvin Ball on his victory for Howard County executive at Kahler Hall in Columbia on Election Day in 2018. Kittleman is challenging Ball for the position in the upcoming election. **BRIAN KRISTA/BALTIMORE SUN MEDIA**

step of increasing the county's fire and rescue tax to finance much-needed new stations and increase the number of firefighters and rescue personnel.

Ball has set the county on a healthy path that should continue.

We should also note that his challenger, Kittleman, the one-time state senator and minority leader from West Friendship who turns 64 on Oct. 20, has not only demonstrated a willingness to seek bipartisan consensus but also the rarest of traits in politicians: frankness and humility.

He has admitted, for example, that as county executive he was wrong to veto the campaign public financing law that he has taken advantage of this year to fund his campaign. His middle-of-the-road sensibilities are especially valued in 2022, when the top of his party's ticket is populated by extremists. The Maryland GOP could use a lot more candidates like Kittleman if it wishes to remain relevant in statewide contests.

## Board of Education

In the Howard County Board of Education race, voters will elect two new at-large members from four nomi-

nees on the ballot. Jacky McCoy and Dan Newberger are the best candidates to fill these nonpartisan seats. McCoy is a former math teacher at Long Reach High School; Newberger is a Navy veteran, PTA member and an advocate for public schools. Both are committed to working with students, educators and parents to ensure Howard schools fully recover from pandemic learning losses.

**Editor's note:** Endorsements coming Thursday: select Baltimore City charter amendment questions.

*The Baltimore Sun editorial board endorses political candidates in races that are of particular importance to our readers for reasons such as the critical nature of the work, the tightness of the election contest and the dearth of available information that occurs when an office has no incumbents competing for it. We make our conclusions after reviewing a range of data, including: the candidates' campaign materials and responses to The Sun's voter guide questionnaire, news stories written about the candidates, debates they've participated in, and interviews we've conducted with community leaders or the candidates themselves.*

## CARTOON GALLERY

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