

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**JANUARY 10, 2017**

## **Six Harford County Students Serving in Annapolis as Student Pages**

Six high school seniors were selected to serve as student pages for the 2017 Maryland General Assembly, including Matthew Siebold and Hector Belarmino of Bel Air High School; Charles Musante and Ryan Lepp of C. Milton Wright High School; Amanda Dorsey of Edgewood High School; and Abigail Corona of Fallston High School.

Pages were hand-selected following a grueling application process that included a written test and an extensive oral interview before a 12-person committee, consisting of peers and educators from around the county, who tested the applicants on their knowledge of politics and other various topics. Based on a published rubric, the five highest scorers have the honor of being a page in Annapolis; the sixth highest score on the rubric is the alternate who will replace anyone who cannot serve due to illness.

“This is a once-in-a-lifetime, behind-the-scenes experience for prospective law, government and policy students to experience first-hand the inner workings of state government and politics,” said J. Patrick Whitehurst, coordinator of the student page program in Harford County and Fallston High School government teacher.

A Student Page Breakfast was held December 8 at Patterson Mill High School, and the newly-named pages spent the morning getting to know each other and the elected officials they will assist during the session. They were afforded the opportunity to ask questions and exchange contact information. The pages’ parents, as well as school and elected officials, were invited to the breakfast, hosted by the Patterson Mill’s Foods and Hospitality Management students.

Keynote speaker and former student page Delegate Mary Ann Lisanti shared this with the pages, “We are a diverse team that goes to Annapolis to represent you and do the work of the people. We don’t take this job for granted. Now you will have a backstage pass and an inside look at citizenship. This is a golden opportunity, and I hope it does for you what it did for me. I hope these two weeks sparks your desire for public service.”

Harford Delegate Rick Impallaria also addressed the pages, stressing how unique the experience will be as they witness elected officials from different experiences and areas all working together for the greater good. “We are looking forward to working with each of you, so please stop by our offices.”

In addition to Delegates Lisante and Impallaria, other elected officials in attendance were Senators Wayne Norman and Robert Cassilly and Delegates Susan McComas, Kathy Szeliga, Teresa Reilly and Andrew Cassilly.

Board of Education of Harford County Vice President Joseph Vohskul and Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum, Instruction & Assessment Susan Brown brought greetings from the school system.

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## PAGE TWO: STUDENT PAGES IN ANNAPOLIS

Dr. Brown commended the pages for having been selected following the intense application process. “We are so proud of this accomplished group of students who were selected to serve as student pages in Annapolis this year. The student page program is an incredible opportunity for the students to interact with elected officials and see first-hand how the Maryland Legislature works. We know they will be great representatives for the school system,” said Dr. Brown.

Mr. Matthew Siebold, 17, is captain of both the Varsity Swimming Team and the Academic Team and serves as a member of the Student Government Association. Mr. Siebold has accepted an appointment to the Naval Academy.

Mr. Charles Musante, 18, is on his school’s Swimming Team and is a member of the Theatre Club. Outside of school, he coaches Arena Club Aquatics Summer Swimming. Mr. Musante plans to major in political science post high school graduation.

Mr. Ryan Lepp, 17, is captain of the Boys Volleyball Team and is also on the Basketball Team and Lacrosse Team. He is a member of the National Honor Society, Math National Honor Society, Science National Honor Society, German National Honor Society, Senior Class Council, Robotics Club, and Stand Up for Autism Comedy Show. Outside of school, he volunteers at his grandfather’s retirement home and his church and worked during the summer at Fountain Green Swim Club. He plans to attend the United States Military Academy West Point in the fall.

Miss Amanda Dorsey, 17, is in the International Baccalaureate Program and is the student member on the Board of Education of Harford County. She also serves as Student Government President, Senior Class President, and Student Training Coordinator for the Maryland Association of Student Councils. She is former president of the Harford County Regional Association of Student Councils. In addition, she is founder of the Leadership Development Program at Deerfield Elementary School. Miss Dorsey plans to major in neuroscience and minor in political science in her post high school studies.

Miss Abigail Corona, 17, is co-editor in chief of her school’s student newspaper, president of the National English Honor Society, member of the National Honor Society, and editor of the literary magazine, *Troubadour*. She plans to attend American University in the fall.

Mr. Hector Belarmino, 17, is a member of the Drama Company, founder of his school’s Human Rights Club, treasurer of the Anime Club, a member of the National Honor Society, and treasurer of the French Honor Society. Outside of his school commitments, he works as a dishwasher at Pairings Bistro. Mr. Belarmino hopes to attend Syracuse University of University of Maryland College Park.

The pages will serve in the 2017 legislative session that began this month and continues through April. They will spend two, non-consecutive weeks with host families in Annapolis while serving in either the House of Delegates or the Maryland Senate. The pages are paid a stipend to cover their living expenses.

The statewide Student Page Program in Annapolis has been ongoing for about 35 years. Every high school in the county is urged to participate in the program, and each school has an equal chance of having its candidate(s) score in the top five to become a page in Annapolis.

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*Student pages in photograph, left to right: Abigail Corona, Ryan Lepp, Charles Musante, Amanda Dorsey, Matthew Siebold. Not in photo: Hector Belarmino.*