

The ZMM CONNECTION NEWSLETTER

February 2024

“Building a Better World for Women and Girls”

Vol. 3 Issue 1

Zonta Club of Mid-Maryland Board of Directors:

Nicole Barnes President

Tammie Edwards 1st Vice President

Denise Dobson McDonald 2nd Vice President

Carol Gardner Secretary

Tanya Duckett-Brennan Treasurer

Erma Barron Director

Alice Ross Director

Stanita Scott Director

Virginia Moore Immediate Past President



SAVE THE DATE - The next Membership meeting is March 14, 2024, at 7pm. We will be in person at the Old Bowie Towne Grille (8604 Chestnut Ave, Bowie, MD 20715). Please make your best effort to be in attendance.



This is our opportunity to engage and continue our work to make a difference in the lives of women and girls. Please make plans to attend.

Message from the President

Greetings ZMM Members,

As I navigate the second year as President of Zonta Club of Mid-Maryland, I am filled with pride. We have achieved many successes and have impacted our community in a positive way. It is my honor to work alongside you as we work with commitment, diligence, and passion to build a better world for women and girls. From our advocacy work to our impactful service projects, WE MAKE A DIFFERENCE!



I would like to thank each one of you, long standing and new members, for your participation, enthusiasm, and tireless efforts as we strive to fulfill the mission and vision of Zonta. My hope is that our Chapter continues to grow in an exciting and innovative direction...MULTIPLYING OUR SUCCESS AND IMPACT.

Throughout my Presidency, I have made it my priority to be inclusive and to heed and elicit feedback and from all members. My focus is to enrich your experience as members. If you have ideas, recommendations, comments, improvements, or even criticisms, please contact me or any of our Executive Board Members to convey your thoughts. There is a lot of work to be done, so I challenge you to elevate your level of enthusiasm and engagement for service, advocacy, and fundraising strategies as we move forward.

During this Black History Month, I would like to recognize Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., and his dedication to service. *“Everybody can be great because everybody can serve.” ... “Life’s most persistent and urgent question is: What are you doing for others?”*

I’m looking forward to a fantastic year and am grateful for all that you do as a member of Zonta Club of Mid-Maryland.

Yours in Service and Advocacy

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Nicole Barnes'.

Nicole Barnes
President, Zonta Club of Mid-Maryland



Let's Celebrate Black Girl Magic!

BLACK
HISTORY
MONTH

As you know, February is Black History Month. This is a time in which we focus our attention on the contributions of African Americans. As members of Zonta Club of Mid-Maryland, let's take this opportunity to celebrate a few of our own amazing members. Get to know...

Zontian Carol Gardner, a woman who loves the arts and new adventures!



Carol Moseley Gardner was born and raised in the Nation's Capital. She was educated in the metropolitan area, graduating from Patrick's Academy. She majored in English at the University of Maryland Eastern Shore. Carol is a member of the Peoples Congregational United Church of Christ, participating in numerous ministries of the church, which include the Board of Trustees, Peoples Neighborhood Federal Credit Union, Board of Christian Education, Scholarship Committee, and co-chair of the Nominating

Committee. She was a member of the Girl Scouts of the National Capital Area and continues to support this organization.

Carol is the Executive Assistant to the Director's Office of the Smithsonian Institution's National Museum of the American Indian. Previously, Carol served as Executive Assistant to the National President of The Links, Incorporated; Public Relations Assistant for Ringling Bros. Barnum & Bailey Circus; and Administrative Assistant at Marriott International Corporation Headquarters.

An activist at an early age, Carol has participated in events supporting reproduction rights, the Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday, Women's Rights, HIV/AIDS, and the LGBTQIA+ community. Carol joined Zonta International, Mid-Maryland Chapter in April 2022, and currently serves as secretary.

Carol is a patron of the arts and enjoys exploring unique dining experiences and traveling. She delights in spending time with her family and is the proud mother of Cameron Edward Gardner.



Zontian Lisa Taylor, a woman of many talents and passions!



When she's not swinging a golf club, Lisa is conquering the greens and proving that life is all about the perfect balance (and maybe a hole-in-one or two). A true golf enthusiast, she's the reason why the local golf courses have waiting lists!

But that's not all! Lisa's love for adventure doesn't stop at golf; she's also a newly licensed sailor of the Chesapeake Bay. With the wind in her hair and the sea beneath her feet, she's the captain of her own destiny!

Professionally, Lisa's a seasoned pro in Human Resources turned Management Analyst at the National Institutes of Health. She's been navigating the world of data and reports for over a decade, and believe us, she's got it all under control!

Lisa is not just a pro at work; she's a fierce advocate for women and girls through her long-standing affiliations with Dress for Success, House of Ruth, and the Baltimore Women's Giving Circle. She's a superhero in disguise, fighting for justice and empowerment!

And let's not forget her newest hobby – renovating their Cottage on the Bay, acquired during the pandemic. From paint swatches to power tools, Lisa's turning her cozy retreat into a dreamy escape, one DIY project at a time!

With Lisa, every day is a new adventure, and every challenge is just another opportunity to shine. She's got style, grace, and a heart as big as the Bay itself!



Zontian Keisha Clark, a woman who loves black culture and history!

Born in Washington, DC and Raised in Prince George's County, Maryland. Zontian Keisha above all is a devoted and loving mother to her precocious and energetic 7-year-old son.

Professionally, Zontian Keisha is a hospitality professional, who also has over 17 years of experience in professional fundraising for local nonprofit organizations, where she specializes in Special Events and Donor Engagement.

If you know Zontian Keisha, you must know that she is a PROUD graduate of Tuskegee University. She loves her beloved Alma Mater and has been active member of the local Alumni club for decades. Zontian Keisha's love of service and helping to better the community has always been a common thread in her life.

Not only is a member of her Alumni Club, but she also serves on the Board of Directors for a local Food Warehouse and Pantry nonprofit organization in Prince George's County.

In her spare time, she absolutely loves to travel; both domestically and internationally. Keisha loves great cuisines, spending time with her friends and family and is always willing able to plan gatherings for a good time! She has a deep appreciation for history and will watch any type of historical documentary. Zontian Keisha is fascinated with Genealogy and has been researching her family tree for the past year 3 years and has uncovered relatives/ancestors from the as early as the mid 1800's.

Interesting facts about Zontian Keisha:

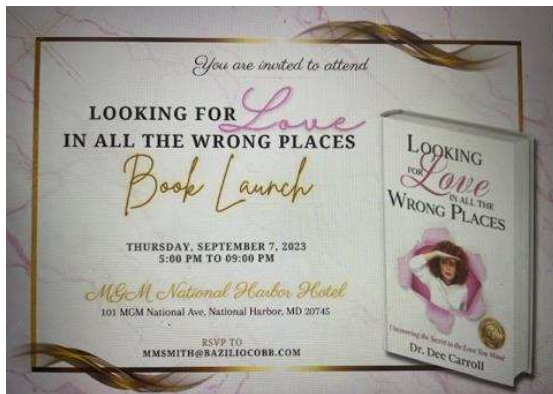
- She loves music particularly Stevie Wonder and D'Angelo
- Loves to visit museums
- Huge Spike Lee Fan and has met him on two occasions
- One day has a goal to curate an experience Black Culture





Zontian Dee Carol, a woman who inspires and empowers!

Dr. Dee is a “phoenix,” having obtained a new life for herself and exemplifying personal growth and development. She rose from the hot and sulfuric ashes life placed at her feet and found the strength to persevere through overwhelming odds. Mastery of personal growth, the pinnacle of success, and moving beyond life’s obstacles are the foundation of Dr. Dee’s offering as an author, life coach, and speaker.



Today, she is a global powerhouse, driving forward inspiration and empowerment in others. Dr. Dee is renowned for the use of her incredible passion and captivating personal experience in support of your move beyond trials, tribulations, and adversities.

She’s known as an empowerment author, speaker, and coach who has captivated audiences worldwide with her story of transformation and reinvention!



Dr. Dee spent over twenty years in HR and management, founded and led a multimillion-dollar firm, and holds degrees in psychology and business administration and management, with aspirations toward an advanced degree in divinity with a focus on Christian counseling.

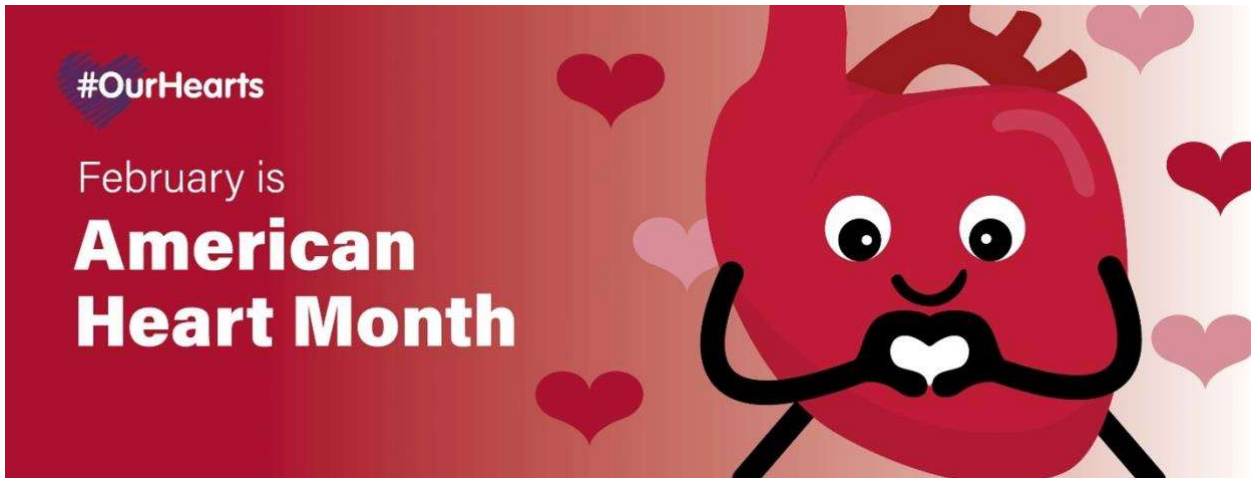
In her second book, *Looking for Love in All the Wrong Places*, you’ll learn how to permanently change the game, moving beyond the patterns that keep you stuck and hurting. Dr. Dee will show you how to:

- Overcome your fears around dating
- Stop falling into the same traps
- Love your life even while waiting for true love
- Attract the right partner
- Discover the number-one secret to permanent love and personal happiness

Don't let the past write the future. And *don't* give up.

Simply open the pages of this book today and start writing a tomorrow with *true* love at the center!





YOU MATTER - Protect Yourself Against Heart Disease

February is almost here! In recognition of American Heart Month, let's focus more attention on raising awareness about heart health and cardiovascular diseases. You can support the health of your heart by implementing positive changes in your lifestyle today. Adopting healthy habits and getting regular screenings help to manage your risk for heart disease and stroke.

February 2, 2024 was National Wear Red Day. Thank you to those Zontians who checked in via email to celebrate their enthusiastic participation (President Barnes, Zontians Edwards, Sias, Clark, Ross, Hill)

[Are You Heart Smart? What to Know for a Healthier Heart](#)

Heart disease is the leading cause of death in the United States. One in five deaths is due to heart disease, even though the disease is largely preventable.

Keeping your heart healthy starts with living a heart-healthy lifestyle. But first, you need to get smart about your heart. Knowing what causes heart disease, what puts you at risk for it, and how you can reduce those risks can help you make informed decisions to protect your heart and keep it strong.

You will find an array of health education materials from NHBLI at the links below:

- Choosing Heart Healthy Foods and an array of **Fact Sheets**.
- Don't forget to **Get Enough Good Quality Sleep**
- **"Halt the Salt: 5 Ways to Cut Down on Sodium and Improve Your Heart Health"**

Inspiring Journey of a Heart Disease Survivor

After two heart procedures, she's celebrating her 70th birthday with a half-marathon - You will be sure to find inspiration in a story of strength and perseverance written by Emily Halnon of the American Heart Association News, about the amazing story of Geneva Humdy. Learn more about her bout with a heart diagnosis and recovery during COVID and her mission to help others detect and manage heart conditions.





MLAW Conference – November 4

Conference Overview and Updates

*Zontian Janelle Johnson-Lester
Advocacy Committee Co-chair*

Eyes on the Prize: When Women Vote, We All Win: MLAW Fall Conference

In November, leaders of state-wide organizations and advocates addressing issues of concern to women of Maryland, participated in a conference to identify potential legislative initiatives for the 2024 Maryland General Assembly. Eighteen bills were presented at the conference for consideration. A ballot was sent to MLAW members who voted on the top priorities which made up the official 2024 Legislative Agenda.

Zonta Club of Mid-Maryland had representation at the November 4, 2023 MLAW Conference at UMBC, Catonsville. President Nicole Barnes and Zontian Janelle Johnson Lester were in attendance.

The 2024 Maryland Legislative Session began on January 10, 2024, and will conclude on April 8, 2024. The following bills will comprise MLAW's 2024 Legislative Agenda. The issues selected are listed below. The descriptions of each bill can be read [here](#).



The nine bills selected are:

- Sexual Crimes - Definition of Consent and Repeal of Force
- Sexual Solicitation of a Minor
- Firearm Background Check Denial - Law Enforcement and Victim Notification
- Joint resolution affirming the federal Equal Rights Amendment as the 28th Amendment to the United States Constitution
- Home Care Worker Misclassification: Residential Service Agencies - Reimbursement - Personal Assistance Services
- Dignity in Access to Healthcare Act
- Criminal Injuries Compensation Board - Victims of Nonfatal Strangulation
- Wage Transparency*Gender Affirming Care Protection Act

(Note: The first four bills listed were presented to Zonta Club of Mid-Maryland during the November General Body Meeting.)

Zontian Janelle Johnson-Lester attended the MLAW Legislative Briefing on Wednesday, February 7, 2024, at 5pm.

Final Thought: ***Cooperative action is the basis upon which MLAW operates.***

Zonta Club of Mid-Maryland is a Sponsor of the FEWCARES Breast Cancer 5K Walk/Run

Zonta Club of Mid-Maryland members supported the Federally Employed Women's first annual FEWCARES Breast Cancer Awareness 5K Walk/Run on Saturday, October 28, 2023 along the beautiful National Harbor trail, located Maryland starting from the National Park Police Substation across from the MGM National Harbor. Our members joined in the battle against breast cancer, sponsoring one of two snack and water station along the trail.

Over 200 individuals registered for the event, and more than half came out from neighborhoods throughout the area to support the FEWCARES outreach mission. Breast cancer is the most common cancer in women in the U.S. except for skin cancers. Walkers, runners, volunteers, and sponsors come together to honor cancer survivors and raise awareness about reducing breast cancer risk.

The day included a walk around the National Harbor Trail, music, give aways, blood pressure and temperature checks, and educational, water and snacks tables. The excitement and energy were on display during the pre-walk warmup which included a trainer led stretch and fun filled line dancing.

For many, the walk and message were personal.



"Wonderful event...Survival is Love, with the strength of one and the support of many" – 6 Years and Counting."

– LaShawn Sias, Cancer Survivor, Member, Zonta Club of Mid-Maryland

"Participating in the breast cancer walk was an opportunity to honor my niece who lost her 20-year battle to breast cancer; and, to show support for the many other women, men and their families who are fighting this disease We want to let them know that they are not alone."

– Joyce Bynum, FEW, Women of Justice Chapter President,

Zontian LaShawn Sias and three more brave, beautiful Cancer Survivors

Data shows that between 1989 and 2019, the death rate from breast cancer dropped 42%. This 5K Awareness Walk/Run is one of many ways that organization work to save more lives. ZMM’s support of this event and events like this saves lives.

“Each year there are over 240,000 cases of breast cancer diagnosis and about 1 in 8 US Women will develop invasive breast cancer in her lifetime. Zonta Mid-Maryland knows that raising public awareness alongside of FEW Cares means we are one step closer to finding a cure for such a life altering disease.” - Nicole Barnes, President, Zonta Club of Mid-Maryland (Sponsor)

This is event personified ZMM’s vision of “Building a Better World for Women and Girls”.



Left to Right: Zontians Tammie Edwards, Alice Ross, Lisa Taylor, Nicole Barnes, LaShaun Sias, Jennifer Jones
Zonta Club of Mid-Maryland Sponsored Water and Snack Table (Zontian Alice Ross and Guest Phyllis Williams)



5K Walkers led by the FEW National President, Pamela Richards

Zonta Club of Mid-Maryland Birthing Kit Service Project



Proud to announce the Birthing Kits sent to Sierra Leone have been well received and a video was sent with the first twins born utilizing the kit and wrapped in the receiving blankets. In the video the kits were presented to the Wellington Community Health Center. They expressed their Sincere gratitude and appreciation for the kits. They later asked President Barnes if they could name one of the babies "Nicole" after her, our illustrious President Nicole Barnes. They wanted to find a way to name the other baby "Zonta". What an honor to be asked and a wonderful expression of appreciation. Uganda delivery update to come.



VP Tammie Edwards adds the receiving blankets to each of the just under 200 Birthing kits to be donated to Uganda and Sierra Leone.



The Wellington Community Health Center in Sierra Leone. Patricia Somperia is the Director of the Clinic.

See More of Zonta Club of Mid-Maryland in ACTION!

2023 Women Incarcerated Project

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The Women Moving Forward Conference was held on October 23, 2023. ZMM members assembled preapproved bags filled with thoughtful items to be gifted to the incarcerated women of the Jessup Correctional Facility who are going through the re-entry program. The goody bags included items such as tissues, toothpaste, deodorant, ink pens, napkins, Zonta branded journals and more. A special thank you to the ZMM Service Committee and all ZMM members who volunteered their support for this worthy cause. Tanya Duckett-Brennan, Monique Murdock, and Nicole Barnes gave recaps of the day in the November General Body Meeting.

District 3 Conference

The Zonta District 3 Conference was held October 6, 2023 – October 8, 2023 in Baltimore, Maryland.



The District 3 Governor's Conference aims to empower women and girls through service and advocacy. There are discussions on strategies for building a better world and making a lasting impact in their lives.

District 3 officer elections were held in advance of the in-person conference on October 1-2, 2023.

Congratulations to President Nicole Barnes who was elected Area 3 Director for the next term.

ZMM contributions to the Conference included a Spa Basket and donations for school supplies.



Thanksgiving Holiday Hope Project – Family Justice Center



With the aid and support of dedicated supporters such of Zonta Club of Mid-Maryland, the Prince George's County Family Justice Center remains a client-centered and survivor-driven safe haven for its clients.

ZMM's contributions to the Thanksgiving Holiday Hope provided resources for many in need. Nicole Barnes, Alice Ross, and Monique Murdock delivered the donations. Gift cards were also purchased for the Family Justice Center Holiday Hope Program.

Zonta Club of Mid-Maryland Celebrates the Holidays!

ZMM enjoyed a festive time with a wonderful Christmas dinner, a gift exchange, and paint party which highlighted the skills of ZMM's blooming artist.

Thank you to the planning committee: Denise Dobson-McDonald, Keisha Clark, and LaShawn Sias





- **Young Woman in Public Affairs Award**

The Young Women in Public Affairs (YWPA) Award is open to young women, ages 16-19, who demonstrating leadership skills and commitment to public service and civic causes. ZMM award is \$500 for 1st Place and \$250 for 2nd Place. Applications are due **FRIDAY, MARCH 1, 2024**. For more information, please contact Zontian Cleopatra White at Cleopatra@whitefam.net

Applications for the 2024 YWPA awards are now available on the [Zonta International](https://www.zonta.org/) website. All YWPA 2024 information is available to be downloaded from the Zonta website in the MY Zonta/Tools/Award, Scholarship and Fellowship Tools. District 3 Applications are due to our District 3 YWPA Committee Chair, Winifred Easterling, by **FRIDAY, MARCH 15, 2024**.

- **Zonta Convention Brisbane 2024**

[Zonta Convention Brisbane 2024](https://www.zontaconvention.com/) is just a short 22 weeks away! Join the countdown to the convention starting on 27th June. It is a 4-day event organized by *Zonta International* and will conclude on 30-Jun-2024. Learn more at [zontaconvention.com](https://www.zontaconvention.com/).



- **2024 Mothers Stepping Out Against Domestic Violence and Human Trafficking 5K Walk**

Date: Saturday, May 11, 2024, \$45 per person.

Partnerships with other Member Organization available - \$100 (receive \$10 back on each participant from their membership)

POC: Zontian Stanita Scott

- **Love Yourself, Sister! Health, Healing, & Humanity**

Date: Saturday, April 6, 2024, More Information to come.

POC: Zontian Keisha Clark



- **Human Trafficking/Domestic Violence (Gender Based Violence) Symposium**

Date: Saturday, April 27, 2024, South Bowie Library, 10:00 am – 2:00 pm

POC: Zontians Jannelle Johnson Lester and Jennifer Jones

Congratulations



ADD YOUR VOICE MEMBERSHIP WINNERS

Congratulations to the Zonta Club of Baltimore Metropolitan!

Congratulations to the Zonta Club of Frederick!

Congratulations to the Zonta Club of Mid-Maryland!

We are so proud to have three clubs from our district in the top 30 recruiters in their size tier for the 2023 Add Your Voice Membership Campaign. As a top 30 winner in their tier, these clubs will be recognized in The Zontian magazine. They have also received letters of congratulations from Zonta International President Ute Scholz.



On behalf of President Nicole Barnes, VP and Membership Committee Chair, Tammie Edwards, and Committee Members, we hope you enjoyed this edition of the ZMM Connection. Please provide future content to Zontian Edwards at ZontaMMTEdwards@gmail.com, Subject line: Newsletter Content.