



Montgomery County Executive Marc Elrich
Presents the 2021

Inez Zeigler McAbee and
William Harvey Zeigler
HUMANITARIAN AWARD
and the
Roscoe R. Nix
DISTINGUISHED COMMUNITY
LEADERSHIP AWARDS

Friday, December 17, 2021 ■ 12:00 p.m.

Executive Office Building
Executive Auditorium Lobby Level
101 Monroe Street
Rockville, Maryland

Produced and Sponsored by Montgomery County Government

December 17, 2021



Dear Friends:

I am delighted to host this special inaugural Inez Zeigler McAbee and William Harvey Zeigler Humanitarian Award and the 2021 Roscoe R. Nix Distinguished Community Leadership Awards event to recognize the essential role that volunteers play in the success of Montgomery County and to honor some of our County's most distinguished volunteers and community servants. Our talented and committed residents are Montgomery County's greatest resource. We have so many who have contributed so much to make our community the special place it is today.

It is a privilege to present William Harvey Zeigler the inaugural Inez Zeigler McAbee and William Harvey Zeigler Humanitarian Award and Byron Johns, Blanca Kling and Diego Uriburu with the Roscoe R. Nix Distinguished Community Leadership Award.

The Zeigler Humanitarian Award is given in recognition of dedication to the principles of uplifting the human condition, through leadership and selfless acts of compassion and commitment to the unification of our community toward positive change. This is prescribed in the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights to which we recommit ourselves through proclamation on Human Rights Day every year. I am particularly pleased that the award will be named in honor of the extraordinary contributions of Inez Zeigler McAbee and William Harvey Zeigler in the fight for civil rights, social justice and equal access for all residents of Montgomery County. This award is being presented today as part of our Human Rights Day proclamation.

The Nix Awards honor an advocate who helped build a foundation of equity and educational excellence for our modern Montgomery County. The Nix Award is our County's equivalent to the Presidential Medal of Freedom, the nation's highest civilian award. This award honors those who, over the course of their distinguished lives of service and community leadership, have substantially improved the quality of our community. The community builders who receive this award will stand as role models for future generations.

My thanks to those who have made this event possible today.

With Appreciation,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Marc Elrich". The signature is fluid and cursive, written in a professional style.

Marc Elrich
Montgomery County Executive





2021 AWARDS PROGRAM

RECEPTION

WELCOME

Emcees Allison Seymour and Marc Clarke

REMARKS AND PRESENTATION OF JOINT PROCLAMATION

The Honorable Marc Elrich, Montgomery County Executive
and

The Honorable Gabe Albornoz, Montgomery County Council President

INEZ ZEIGLER McABEE & WILLIAM HARVEY ZEIGLER HUMANITARIAN AWARD

AWARDED TO HARVEY ZEIGLER

Award Introduction by James Stowe

Director of Montgomery County Office of Human Rights

Rose Zeigler, Serenity Bush and Warren Fleming

Video Presentation

Remarks by Harvey Zeigler

ROSCOE R. NIX DISTINGUISHED COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP AWARD

Award Introduction by

County Executive Marc Elrich, Veretta Nix and Susan Nix-Webster

AWARDED TO BYRON JOHNS

Presented by County Executive Marc Elrich and Shirley Brandman

Video Presentation

Remarks by Byron Johns

AWARDED TO BLANCA KLING

Presented by County Executive Marc Elrich, Officer Carlos Cortes and Sergeant Rebecca Innocenti

Video Presentation

Remarks by Jason Kling

AWARDED TO DIEGO URIBURU

Presented by County Executive Marc Elrich and Sonia Mora

Video Presentation

Remarks by Diego Uriburu

CONCLUSION

Inez Zeigler McAbee & William Harvey Zeigler

HUMANITARIAN AWARD



Ms. Inez Zeigler McAbee and Mr. William Harvey Zeigler, siblings from a family of 13 children, were born and raised on a farm in Damascus, Maryland. Both advocated for integration, justice and equality throughout their lives.

Ms. Inez Zeigler McAbee's contributions to humanity were motivated by her conviction that one voice singing in the darkness can light the world. Through her endeavors, she shed light on community common grounds and created unexpected collaborations to achieve universally beneficial goals. Her dedication, perseverance and optimism never overshadowed her sheer grace. She was a homemaker, caretaker, gardener, singer, and mover and shaker who used her extraordinary skills to serve those in need and advance society.

She served as president of her class at Rockville High School and as president of the Montgomery County Homemakers' Club, the first Upcounty African American organization for women. As president of the Damascus Ecumenical Association, she led efforts to integrate the United Methodist Church in Damascus. She was among the first African Americans to serve on the Damascus Elementary School PTA and worked tirelessly to integrate the County's public school. As a member of the NAACP, Ms. McAbee was dedicated to improving race relations. She was the first African American resident to dine in a previously "white-only" restaurant in Damascus, and she brought public transportation to the Damascus area. She worked at voter registration drives and actively campaigned for political candidates devoted to human rights issues.

Ms. McAbee received countless public accolades, including induction into the Montgomery County Human Rights Hall of Fame in 2004 and was a posthumous recipient of the Roscoe R. Nix Distinguished Community Leadership Award. County Executive Ike Leggett said: "Inez McAbee looked injustice square in the eye, and injustice blinked. By sheer force of personality and persistence, Inez McAbee helped tear down the walls of segregation and paved the way for the beloved community we are building here in her native Montgomery County." Inez Zeigler McAbee died on July 24, 2014 at the age of 99.

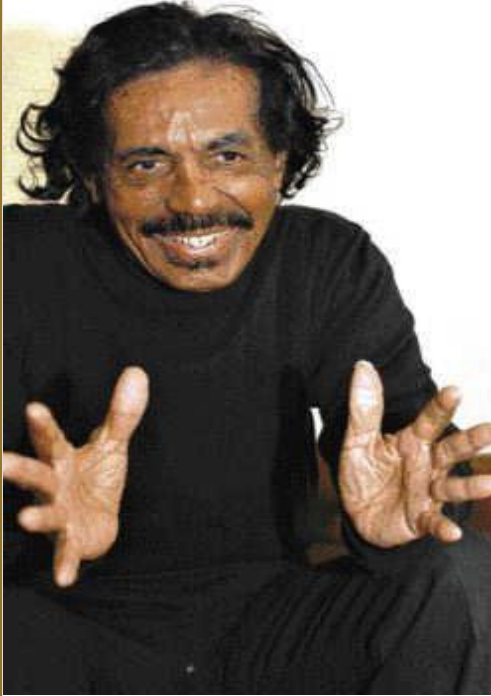
Mr. William Harvey Zeigler is a community and civic activist, mentor, and historian. Mr. Zeigler's interest in civil rights began at an early age. When he was growing up, segregation was law. He often "tag teamed" with his sister in the struggle for integration and equality for all minorities in Montgomery County. During his lifelong pursuit for equality and justice, his accomplishments included striking down job discrimination and promoting the hiring of African Americans in Government agencies, in the Montgomery County Public Schools and in the Montgomery County Fire Department.

As a community activist, Mr. Zeigler's passion and interest in assuring equal rights for all citizens led him to many critical roles to serve the community. Having experienced discrimination, he lent his support to activist groups to integrate movie theaters, amusement parks and other public facilities in Montgomery County. Mr. Zeigler spearheaded efforts to add a Black History curriculum to the Montgomery County Public School System. Like his sister Inez, Mr. Zeigler's contributions to the community have garnered him numerous civil rights and community awards including the Human Rights Hall of Fame and the African American Living Legend Award, to name just a few.

As pioneers before, during and after the civil rights movement, both Inez and Harvey Zeigler's lifelong commitment to civil rights, community service, and local activism provide a fitting resume and list of distinguished accomplishments make it more than appropriate for the County Executive's Humanitarian of the Year Award to be renamed the Inez Zeigler McAbee and William Harvey Zeigler Humanitarian Award from this day forward to be presented to like-minded Montgomery County residents each year on Human Rights Day.

Inez Zeigler McAbee & William Harvey Zeigler

HUMANITARIAN AWARD



HARVEY ZEIGLER

Mr. Harvey Zeigler was born in 1920 at a time when the community did not provide many opportunities for African Americans. During his early years growing up in Damascus he was only allowed to attend segregated schools, which had limited accommodations. Mr. Zeigler was a member of the United Methodist Church but was denied entrance in the White congregation. He couldn't eat in restaurants or attend theaters and recreational centers.

When he left the Army after serving in World War II, the local American Legion post would not accept him into its ranks because he was African American. In 1947, he founded an AMVETS charter in Frederick. The group provided a wide variety of educational, housing and employment services to veterans and is still active today. "I wanted to do something to help the people who had just come back from the Army," he said.

Mr. Zeigler's volunteer services included mentoring youth in the church and community and serving on numerous committees such as Suburban Fair Housing, Church Trustee and Administrative Board and Youth Advisor. An avid historian, he assisted in identifying numerous African American historical events located in Montgomery and Frederick Counties for historical research projects. Mr. Zeigler's lifelong commitment to civil rights, community service, and local activism garnered him numerous civil rights and community awards. He was inducted into the Montgomery County Human Rights Hall of Fame, selected as a Visionary Elder of the National Visionary Leadership Program of Howard University, received the NAACP Award for Valuable Service in the Cause of Justice and Full Citizenship of the Montgomery County Branch, and received the District 14 Marie Ferrington Life Service Award. In addition, he advocated and received a \$250,000 grant for seed money for the renovation for a historical Museum in Damascus. This site is now known as the Damascus Heritage Society.

Mr. Zeigler also established the Damascus Connection Committee to advocate legislative and social service support to residents in Upper Montgomery County. He is a member of the African American Democratic Club of Montgomery County.

Roscoe R. Nix
DISTINGUISHED COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP AWARD



BYRON A. JOHNS

Byron A. Johns has been a leading advocate for educational equity for over 10 years, and currently serves as the Education Chair for the Montgomery County branch of the NAACP. Since moving to Montgomery County, he has also served as the NAACP Parents' Council Chair and is co-founder of the Black and Brown Coalition for Educational Equity and Excellence. At the state level, he worked to form the Maryland Coalition to Reform School Discipline in collaboration with the ACLU, Open Society Institute, Advocates for Children & Youth, Maryland Disability Law Center, and Office of the Public Defender. This resulted in the passage of several bills improving the welfare of Maryland's children, banning the suspension of young learners and reducing the disparity in discipline for student of color.

In 2019 Mr. Johns was honored by the Montgomery County Board of Education with the Distinguished Service to Public Education award. During the COVID-19 pandemic while schools were virtual, he led efforts working with the Children's Opportunity Fund, Montgomery County Public Schools, private childcare providers, and public/private funders to raise nine million dollars to serve 1500 students with Educational Equity Hubs — safe, supervised, technology enabled in-person learning facilities that support low-income students for whom virtual learning was ineffective.

Mr. Johns has been a technology leader in the telecommunications and information systems industry for over forty years, and currently is Vice President for a private firm supporting Federal government agencies. He previously held executive positions at Capital One Financial Corporation, responsible for Information Technology; Convergys Corporation, responsible for international operations in Australia and Latin America; and with AT&T Bell Laboratories, responsible for research and development of cellular wireless technologies.

Mr. Johns graduated from the Morehouse College and Georgia Tech with Bachelor of Science degrees in Physics and Electrical Engineering and received his Master of Science degree in Computer and Electrical Engineering from the University of Michigan. He also is a graduate of the Yale University Executive Management Program. He has published in the IEEE Mobile Communications Industry journal and is a member of the World Affairs Council. He is a past member of the Board of Trustees for Mount Saint Joseph College and the University of Cincinnati's Foundation Board of Trustees.

Roscoe R. Nix

DISTINGUISHED COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP AWARD



BLANCA KLING

Blanca Kling, who passed away in January 2021, served Montgomery County residents for four decades as a media spokesperson, community leader, and victims' rights advocate.

"Blanquita," as she was often referred to by many in our community, had a long track record of public service and a lifetime of dedication to County government and its constituents.

In 1980, Ms. Kling began her public service career with the Montgomery County Police Department as a Victim Specialist in the Fourth District located in Wheaton. In 2005, she continued her selfless advocacy to County residents when she transferred to the Department's Community Engagement Division as the Hispanic Liaison in the Public Information Division.

During her tenure with the Police Department, Ms. Kling assisted in crime prevention efforts, and helped launch anti-gang programs at schools and street safety campaigns. She visited crime scenes and worked tirelessly and compassionately to help victims of crimes and other public safety incidents.

Through her compassion for others, Ms. Kling became a pillar in the Latino community, where she would often appear on television and radio to inform, forge authentic relationships, and build bridges of communication between Spanish speaking residents and the police force. No matter how challenging the need was, she relied on her deep faith to move mountains for those less fortunate or in deep despair. She has been described as the "voice and ears of the police" within the County's Latino community.

In 2016, Ms. Kling was nominated by then U.S. Congressman Chris Van Hollen to receive the Suzanne McDaniel Memorial Award for Public Awareness, by the U.S. Congressional Victims' Rights Caucus. This award is bestowed to individuals and organizations that have used their voice, through the media, to promote change for victims of crimes. Her unwavering service established valuable partnerships and initiatives and gave a voice to the needs of the Latino community. The number of people she helped during her career is immeasurable.

A native of Bolivia, Ms. Kling was the first in her family to migrate to the United States. She graduated from Bethesda-Chevy Chase High School and studied at Montgomery College. A devoted wife, mother, grandmother and mentor, she will be remembered for her dedicated service and significant contributions to supporting and uplifting the community.

Roscoe R. Nix
DISTINGUISHED COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP AWARD



DIEGO URIBURU

Diego Uriburu co-founded Identity in 1998 to help immigrant youth fleeing violence, natural disasters, and poverty in Latin America. Today, in pursuit of a just, equitable and inclusive society, Identity creates opportunities for Latino and other historically underserved youth to realize their highest potential and thrive. Like an extended family, Identity teaches and models for young people, ages 7-25, the social-emotional, academic and workforce skills they need to thrive in the modern world. Identity programs and services are provided after school, in the community and on playing fields and are complimented by family case management, mental health and substance abuse counseling, non-clinical emotional support, and recreation. Identity also works to empower parents to engage in their children's education and be champions for their success and the success of the community.

Mr. Uriburu has served as Executive Director of Identity since 2011. Under his leadership, the organization has grown from two volunteers to 100 employees, now benefiting more than 50,000 residents of Montgomery County each year. He is an influential voice in local and state equity conversations and on issues of health and wellbeing, workforce development, and public education.

Mr. Uriburu's commitment to social change has extended beyond his duties as the Executive Director of Identity. In 2019, Identity joined forces with the Montgomery County Chapter of the NAACP Parents' Council to form the Black and Brown Coalition for Educational Equity and Excellence, which is comprised of over 25 organizations committed to increasing equity in schools for Black, Brown and low-income children. He is a former co-chair and now member of Montgomery Moving Forward and the Latino Health Steering Committee. He serves on the Boards of WorkSource Montgomery (Workforce Development Board), the Montgomery County Positive Youth Development Initiative, and the Meyer Foundation.

Prior to co-founding Identity, Mr. Uriburu worked as a psychotherapist at community-based organizations in the Washington, D.C. area. In 2014, the White House selected him as a César E. Chávez Champion of Change for his work with Latino youth in Montgomery County. In 2016, he received the Montgomery County Executive's Advocate of the Year Award. In 2019, Mr. Uriburu received an honorary degree from Montgomery College, and won a scholarship from the Harvard Business School Alumni Club of Greater Washington to participate in Harvard's Strategic Perspectives in Nonprofit Management program. He is originally from Argentina and holds a master's degree in Clinical Psychology from the University of Belgrano in Buenos Aires.