



122 North Cross Street, Chestertown, MD 21620

MEDIA CONTACT:

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Doris S Mason, MSW, Executive Director

(443) 282-5607 (cellular)

(410) 810-2124 (office)

(866) 571-2637 (fax)

Email: dmason@kentgov.org

Website: www.uppershoreregionalcouncil.org

REGIONAL STAKEHOLDERS COLLABORATE TO LEVERAGE RESOURCES AND NETWORKS DURING THE UPPER SHORE REGIONAL COUNCIL'S 10TH ANNIVERSARY AND EXECUTIVE BOARD RETREAT

April 25, 2014 (Cecil, Kent and Queen Anne's Counties, Maryland) During the Upper Shore Regional Council's ("USRC") 10th year Anniversary Celebration and Executive Board Retreat, board members to include Senator Steven Hershey, Councilwoman Diana Broomell, Dr. Alan McCarthy, Councilman, Commissioner William Pickrum, Commissioner James Moran, and Commissioner David Dunmyer along with partner stakeholders cultivated relationships as they worked in groups to focus on 3/7 of the USRC's 2013-2015 vital strategic planning goals of : *Workforce Enhancement, Planning for Growth & Development and Retention and Attractions of Young Populations to the Region.*

Awards were given to representatives on behalf of Senator Barbara Mikulski (Linda Prochaska) and Senator Ben Cardin (Kimberly Kratovil), who were both recognized as champions to the shore at the retreat: Senator Cardin for encouraging communities to continue to "buy local" and Senator Mikulski for pioneering our high-speed internet fiber infrastructure, so that the shore can compete globally. Senator Cardin, although out of the country at the time of the retreat, released a MP4 video to the USRC congratulating them on their 10 years of service to the Upper Shore Region and USRC's strong support of agri-businesses in Cecil, Kent, and Queen Anne's Counties. Senator Mikulski's correspondence was read at the retreat, also congratulating the USRC on its many achievements.

The USRC presented timelines of its groundbreaking successes. In 2013, the USRC made exciting progress in its outreach initiatives towards networking and marketing of over 157 local agri-businesses consisting of Apiaries, Bakeries, Charter Services, Christmas Tree Farms, a Coffee Roasting Company, Dairy and Egg Farms, Fruits and Vegetable Farms, Grain Farms, Horse Stables, Meat Farms and Companies, Market Vendors, Nurseries, Petting Zoos, Restaurants, Retail Seafood, Vineyards and Wineries, Wool Product Farms, and Farmer's Markets through the use of a glossy Upper Shore Harvest Directory brochure circulated throughout the State, as well as globally through social media and the website. Stewart Bruce, Director of the Washington College, GIS Department presented on "*Leveraging the 25 mile radius and Innovative Technology GIS*". Mr. Bruce concluded his presentation after unveiling

the new SMARTPHONE APP, sponsored by the USRC, which will further market the agri-businesses (accessed in the Playstore by searching “Harvest Directory”).

Also honored at the retreat were the past Chairman, Commissioner William Pickrum (Kent County Commissioners) and the USRC’s current Chairman, Commissioner David Dunmyer (Queen Anne’s County Commissioner) for their leadership and guidance in the development process of USRC’s strategic plan, which was spearheaded by USRC’s Executive Director Doris S. Mason, MSW. The strategic plan focuses on 7 goals which include, broadband (high-speed internet), workforce, regional marketing/business attraction and youth retention/attraction.

Discussions on workforce enhancement and retention of the youth populations were provided by two very dynamic speakers. Jason Broadawater of Revenflo discussed “*Municipality Revitalization – Engaging Youth Populations/Crowd Sourcing in Planning and Designing our Downtowns*” and Donald Webster, Wye Research Center, University of MD Extension, discussed opportunities for watermen and farmers and presented on “*Remote Oyster Setting*”.

About Upper Shore Regional Council

The Upper Shore Regional Council (USRC) was created in legislation in October, 2003 (Chapter 100, Acts of 2003), as a regional planning and development agency for Cecil, Kent, and Queen Anne’s counties. The Council exists foster the physical, economic and social development of the region. For the development of the area’s human and economic resources, the Council initiates and coordinates plans and projects.

The Council is comprised of seventeen voting members. These include three commissioners, appointed by their county governing bodies; one municipal elected official, appointed by their municipal corporations, from each of Cecil, Kent and Queen Anne's counties; and those members of the General Assembly who have the major portion of their legislative election district in the region. In addition, the county administrators and remaining county commissioners from each of the three member counties, as well as the remaining legislators who represent the region serve as nonvoting ex officio members.