

## 2019 Conference Workshops and Information about our Panelists and Presenters

### 2020 Progressive Politics Panel

Navigating one's way through the 2020 Primary Election Cycle is turning out to be a very daunting task. Our panel has ideas worth noting about who is being heard, what factions appear to be gaining ground (the talk show circuit and real-life primary outcomes may be two wildly different things), and what we need to know to get through it all. The main focus will be on national candidates and issues.

Our Panel Moderator is **Michelle Ngwafon**. Michelle began her political career doing field work for the Obama for America campaign in 2012 and has worked on numerous other campaigns in various states since that election. She was the Deputy Field Director for the Maryland Democratic Party during the 2018 election cycle. She is a native Marylander, a member of the Montgomery County Democratic Central Committee, and recently made history as the first African American female president of the Montgomery County Young Democrats.

Our three other panelists are:

**Allison Galbraith** was a candidate in Maryland's 1<sup>st</sup> Congressional District Democratic Primary in 2018, and is presently vice-chair of the Maryland Democratic Party where she chairs the Rules Committee and serves on the Rural Equity Committee. She lives in Harford County where she owns a small consulting business specializing in federal contracting, program management and acquisition streamlining.

**Sarah Elfreth** is the youngest woman ever elected to the Maryland Senate. In the 2018 election cycle the district she won represents Annapolis and southern Anne Arundel County. She serves on the Budget and Taxation Committee and is the Senate chair of the Joint Committee on the Chesapeake and Atlantic Coastal Bays Critical Area. She lives in downtown Annapolis.

**Joseline Peña-Melnyk** is our third panelist. Joseline, a native of the Dominican Republic, emigrated to the U.S. with her mother and sister as a child where her mother worked in New York's garment industry. She is the first member of her family to attend college. She earned a law degree and worked in Eric Holder's U.S. Attorney's Office. She has represented Prince George's and Anne Arundel counties as a state delegate for ten years.

Sarah and Joseline were both endorsed candidates of the Maryland NOW PAC.

### Our two afternoon workshop topics are Intersectionality and Healthcare.

The topic of **Intersectionality** was suggested by a member of our conference committee and **Allie Moore-Simmons** was recommended as our presenter. The topic of Intersectionality studies the interconnected nature of social organizations such as race, class, and gender.

Allie started a business in 2015 which grew from her commitment to address racial tensions that have plagued communities here in Maryland and across the country. Her efforts toward this goal have evolved into a coalition of individuals hosting monthly public grassroots forums to discuss race known as “The Conversation Starters.” Allie’s business – The Change Starter, LLC – focuses on dismantling racism, one conversation at a time and involves online coaching, face-to-face groups, racial consultations, forums, workshops, and public speaking. Allie teaches in the Prince George’s public schools.

**Healthcare** is a second topic our committee wanted very much to address at this conference. Our speaker, **Roxana Segovia-Beltran**, comes to us from Healthcare-NOW, a grassroots organization that fights to end the health insurance crisis by educating and advocating for improved Medicare-for-all legislation, such as HR1384. This workshop will explore the healthcare issue as it is being defined by the candidates for president and Congress in the 2020 Presidential Primary and the major differences in these proposals as well as how they would be funded.

Maryland voters will choose among candidates for our Congressional delegation in the 2020 election cycle. Most of the incumbents for these seats don’t present a very broad range of proposals since many receive quite a bit of money from the healthcare industry and therefore only support ideas that prop up our existing system. Roxana is an advocate and an activist for progressive policies in healthcare as well as immigration and climate change. She lives in Howard County and is active in progressive politics there.