



# LEADERSHIP MARYLAND

## INFORMED LEADERS ... TOMORROW'S VISION

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## *New Leadership Program Begins in Southern Maryland*

*By Alan Dessoiff*

With the support and guidance of Leadership Maryland, a new leadership program has been started in Southern Maryland that seeks to enhance the regional identity of the tri-county area, address its issues from a regional perspective, and develop a cadre of future regional leaders in the government, business and nonprofit sectors.

The 30 members of Leadership Southern Maryland's inaugural Class of 2009—10 each from Charles, Calvert and St. Mary's counties, being selected this summer from among many more applicants—will kick-off the program at an orientation retreat Sept. 16-17 at Solomon's Island in Calvert County.

It will be followed by seven monthly one-day or two-day sessions that will explore issues including land use and the environment; housing and transportation; human services; healthcare; economic development, tourism and the defense industry; education and workforce development; and multicultural diversity.

For each session, the class will travel to a location within Southern Maryland that relates to that month's discussion topic. Some field trips also are planned to facilities including the Patuxent River Naval Air Station and the Indian Head Explosives Ordinance Disposal.

The first year of the program will conclude with a wrap-up and graduation dinner next May.

Leadership Maryland leaders and members of a small planning group that has been putting the new program together credit **Thomas H. Jarboe '06**, Chief Operating Officer of Technology Security Associates, Inc., in Lexington Park, with initiating the thought and planning process that led to Leadership Southern Maryland's creation.



**Thomas H. Jarboe '06**, Chief Operating Officer, Technology Security Associates, Inc.

Jarboe and other planning group members in turn commend the support and guidance they received from, among others, LMD President Nancy Minieri and Honorary Lifetime LMD Member and Facilitator Eliot Pfanstiehl, president and CEO of the Strathmore Hall Foundation in Montgomery



**Karen Holcomb**, Executive Director, Leadership Southern Maryland

Cherry Cove in Lexington Park.

Jarboe says he was motivated by his experience and the experience of other Southern Maryland members in LMD's Class of 2006. "When we began our LMD year, we were behind a lot of other class members because we really didn't understand what the purpose of a leadership program was," he says.

But as his class traveled to all regions of the state and saw leadership initiatives in other regions, "we decided that what we were going to take away from LMD was that Southern Maryland was in dire need of a leadership program of its own and to be successful, it had to be a regional program. So we set off to set it up," Jarboe says. The planning committee that he formed with members from his and other LMD classes, all from Southern Maryland, began meeting last May.

He sees three basic goals for the new program. One is to bring the three counties' government leaders closer together so that they begin looking at common issues from a regional perspective. "We don't have that now. We fight among ourselves for money from the state all the time," Jarboe says.

"We have some very good county leaders and this gives us a mechanism to get them all together and network so that they can share some of their ideas and challenges they have experienced. Everybody can gain from that kind of leadership experience," suggests **Delores Ann Martin '06**, Executive Director of the Chesapeake-Potomac Home Health Agency, Inc., in Hughesville.

Also important, Jarboe says, is to "enhance the social responsibility" of businesses and nonprofits in the three

County. "They have done so much to give us the benefit of their experience," says Karen E. Holcomb of California, Md., who has been appointed Leadership Southern Maryland's first Director.

"We're pretty enthused that all of us come from Leadership Maryland and we have its model in our hip pocket," adds **Raymond J. Wernecke '06**, Chief Operating Officer of

counties to take a regional view of common issues like protecting the Chesapeake Bay and Potomac Watershed.

Leadership Southern Maryland will "help to build a consensus around critical issues in the region, or at least an understanding of what those issues are," adds **Harriet S. Yaffe '01**, Executive Director of The Arc.

In addition, by creating a regional identity, the program can provide "a stronger voice" in the state on Southern Maryland issues "so that we don't have to totally depend on existing political structures," Yaffe says. "It won't just be the Southern Maryland delegations going to Annapolis. It will be the delegations and Leadership Southern Maryland."

State legislators from the three counties will be able to call upon "a cadre of informed leaders and talk issues with them and bounce ideas off them," says Wernecke. "We see this fostering a regional conscience. There are so many common solutions to the issues the three counties face. If we share them with a regional conscience, there are many opportunities for us to grow and be relevant," he says.

Another "pragmatic result" of the program that Jarboe sees is to become a "feeder" to Leadership Maryland's program and ultimately develop a cadre of future Southern Maryland leaders. The nonprofit community in particular "is always looking for good board members and this could be a potential source," says Yaffe.

The program will enable 10 "up and coming" leaders from each of the three counties every year "to gain some exposure and some experience dealing with government officials, understand the issues and challenges we face, and also get a better awareness of the opportunities and the gifts we have down here," says Wernecke.

For now, with "unbridled enthusiasm" from the planning committee, "we're generating some buzz in our communities and we're really excited. We're using the LMD network down here to help us spread the word," Wernecke says.

"It was Tom Jarboe's vision that got this started and it's been exciting to see his dream come to reality," concludes Martin.

For more information about Leadership Southern Maryland, go to [www.leadsomd.org](http://www.leadsomd.org).

*Alan Dessoiff is an independent journalist in Bethesda (adedit@verizon.net).*

**For more information on how you can become involved in Leadership Maryland, contact Nancy Minieri, president, at 410-841-2101, or visit [www.leadershipmd.org](http://www.leadershipmd.org)**