

**Prince George's Office of Community Relations' Human Relations Commission
Celebrates 45th Year**

Upper Marlboro, MD: On July 25, 2017 the Human Relations Commission celebrated its 45th anniversary in conjunction with the J. Franklyn Bourne Bar Association, which celebrates 40 years since its founding this year. The festivities, held at Newton White Mansion, included opening remarks by County Executive Rushern L. Baker, III, in which he highlighted the civil rights advocacy work by the Human Relations Commission, its Commissioners, as well as the J. Franklyn Bourne Bar Association. Yvette Lewis, Democratic National Committee Woman and Director of External Affairs and Engagement for U.S. Senator Chris Van Hollen, presented a powerful keynote address.

As well as honoring the Commission's work for the people of the county for the last forty-five years, the Human Relations Commission gave out four inaugural awards during the evening.

Dr. William Welch, former executive director of the Human Relations Commission and founder of Leadership Prince George's, was awarded The Theresa Douglas Banks "Shining the Light" Award, given to an individual who has a history of sustained service and dedication to civil rights and who exemplifies Ms. Banks' spirit of commitment to community and social justice.

The J. Franklyn Bourne Award, given to a lawyer or law firm that has committed itself to providing free or pro-bono legal services in order to protect civil rights, was presented to Stacie Reimer, Esq., Founder and Executive Director of the Amara Legal Center.

The J. Franklyn Bourne Bar Association was honored with The Dr. William Welch Award, given to a non-profit organization or institution that exemplifies the spirit of Dr. William Welch, who has dedicated himself to civil and human rights and sustained service to the residents of Prince George's County.

And the Lanham-based on-line education technology firm, 2U, Inc. was presented with The Commissioners' Award, given to a company or business in Prince George's County that has made strides in providing a positive, equitable work place.

It was our privilege to recognize and honor individuals and organizations for their tremendous contributions to Prince George's County. The celebration was a wonderful tribute to the hard work of the HRC's staff members and commissioners, both past and present, and an acknowledgement of our ongoing commitment to developing a county that is safe, fair, and equitable for all the people who live, work, and play here.

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