

Howard County Council Legislative Public Hearing
Acceptance of Nomination
March 18, 2019

Maxine Kellman-Allen, DVM, PhD, PMP

Commission for Women-Nominee

I would like to thank County Executive, Dr. Calvin Ball, for nominating me to the Commission for Women. Thank you Council Members for the opportunity to share a little of my background and my interest to serve on the Commission for Women.

Background:

- I am married and have two children and have been a Howard County resident since 2001.
- I am a licensed Veterinarian with a PhD in Immunology and Parasitology and a Certified Project Management Professional (PMP)
- I am an active member of the Columbia Alumnae Chapter of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. has a strong foundation of Sisterhood, female empowerment, social action and community enrichment.
- I am also a member of the Adult Branch of the Howard County NAACP, Co-Advisor for the Howard County NAACP Youth Council and Parent Advisor for the Howard County National Society of Black Engineers (NSBE) Jr Chapter-Next Generation Leadership Academy (NGLA).

Career:

- I work in the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services in the Office of the Secretary, within the Office of the Assistant Secretary for Preparedness and Response (ASPR).
- I am a Biotechnology Analyst and am the team leader for the National Biodefense Science Board (NBSB) a federal advisory committee, which provides recommendations to policies relating to All-Hazards (Natural (e.g. hurricanes, floods) or man-made).
- Past experiences include working in the Baltimore City Public School System to provide a safe and secure school climate conducive for learning and supporting families to improve student achievement.

Why do I want to serve on the Commission for Women?

- I am a public servant and I want to assist in advancing opportunities (educational and employment) for **All** women (youth and adults) in Howard County, and through these efforts strive to improve the lives of their families as a whole.
- I want to reach women in the County who may feel marginalized.
- I believe my stakeholder engagement skills will serve to benefit and enhance the work the Commission for Women wants to accomplish.

financial support from family, friends, and colleagues, the endowment has grown and helped many students realize their dream of a music education in the world class facilities at HCC.

A few years ago, I was in the first group of human library books at the Howard County library and shared my life story with community members. You may have seen me on the cover of Source magazine. I love writing and my stories have been published in HCC's literary journal, The Muse.

I believe my unique background would bring a fresh perspective to the work of the Howard County Women's Commission. If my nomination is approved, I will do my best to further the work of the Commission to address the needs and improve the lives of all women and girls in Howard County.

My thanks to County Executive Calvin Ball for putting forward my nomination and to the County Council for this opportunity to testify before you.

Thank you.

March 18, 2019

Testimony to Howard County Council in support of nomination of Farida Guzdar to the Howard County Women's Commission

Good Evening County Council members, members of the audience, and my former HCC colleagues behind the camera. My name is Farida Guzdar and I reside in the Village of Town Center in Columbia.

I have lived and worked in Howard County since 1985. Both my children attended Howard County public schools, played baseball and softball in local leagues, attended Howard Community College and even worked there during summer vacations. Thanks to the great education and opportunities in Howard County, both are doing well in their professions.

I retired from Howard Community College last year after 31 years of service, most of it as executive assistant to the president to President Emeritus Dr. Mary Ellen Duncan and current president Dr. Kate Hetherington. I had the privilege of working with two great women leaders and wonderful colleagues. I also had the opportunity to get to know our county and state delegates. I volunteered at college events and in the community, as a board member of the Foreign-born Information Referral Network, Women's Giving Circle, Neighbor Ride volunteer driver, president of my condo board, and board member of Columbia Association's International Multicultural Advisory Committee. All these experiences helped me learn and grow personally and professionally.

I grew up in India and came to the US 40 years ago as a young bride. I immediately adapted to my new environment and became a citizen in 1985. As the middle of three sisters, our mother raised us to be good wives and mothers and arranged our marriages. I married a physicist who had a brilliant career at the University of Maryland until his passing in 2011. Like him, I believed in education and even though I had a Bachelor of Arts degree from India, I took online classes while working and raising a family and earned a bachelor of science in business administration from the University of Maryland University College.

If you're wondering why I'm telling you my life story, it's because every experience I've had has prepared me to serve on the Howard County Women's Commission. I believe that everyone, including women and girls, have a right to be heard and treated equally and equitably, no matter who they are or where they come from.

I belong to a dwindling religious group called Zoroastrians who belong to the oldest monotheistic religion Zoroastrianism, started in ancient Persia, modern day Iran. Around the 7th or 8th century, due to religious persecution in Persia, some Zoroastrians left their country and came to India. Our ancestors came from the area around Pars or Persepolis and are therefore known as Parsees. Following in the footsteps of Parsees who are known for their charity, I established the Guzdar Family Music Endowment at Howard Community College in memory of my husband who loved playing the piano as a respite from physics. Thanks to