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Office of the Mayor
Gavin Buckley, Mayor
160 Duke of Gloucester Street
Annapolis, MD 21401-2517

AP-14-25

May 8, 2025

To: Alderpersons, City of Annapolis

From: Mayor Gavin Buckley

Re: Education Commission Reappointment

Pending your approval, I would like to reappoint Mr. Fortney "Fish" Stark to the Education Commission. Mr. Stark has served on this commission since 2022.

Mr. Stark's term will expire on 6/30/2028. A copy of his resume is attached.

Thank You.

GB/hrr

Reviewed by: Housing and Human Welfare Committee

 Favorable Unfavorable

Committee Chair

Date

Application Form

Profile

Fortney "fish"

First Name

Stark

Last Name

fishstark@gmail.com

Email Address

19 Dean St

Home Address

Annapolis

City

MD

State

21401

Postal Code

Are you a resident of the City of Annapolis?☒ Yes ☐ No**What ward do you live in? ***☒ Ward 1

Mobile: (304) 382-8448

Primary Phone

Alternate Phone

Which Boards would you like to apply for?

Education Commission: Submitted

Interests & Experiences**Are you an employee of the City of Annapolis?**☐ Yes ☐ No**Do you do business with the City of Annapolis?**☐ Yes ☐ No**Are you currently serving on any city boards or commissions?**☐ Yes ☐ No

Work experience (please answer here or attach resume or CV)

Head of Program and Curriculum at Legends, an education technology startup building positive mental health in kids Former Director of Programs at Peace First, a global youth development nonprofit that has trained and funded thousands of young people around the world to lead service projects Educational consultant, have worked with Child Trends, the Red Cross, the Aspen Institute, Lady Gaga's Born This Way Foundation, and others to create world-class youth development programs Got my start working as a paid mentor in college access nonprofits and training to be a preschool teacher at the Yale Child Study Center Areas of expertise: Social-emotional learning, youth mental health, service learning and youth civic engagement, positive youth development, program design + evaluation (Resume attached with additional info)

Educational background (Please answer here or attach resume or CV)

B.A. with a certificate in Education Studies from Yale University M.Ed. with a concentration in child development + psychology from Harvard University (Resume attached with additional info)

Other experience (volunteer experience, memberships, etc.)

Advisory Board, New Village Academy Board of Directors, Kindness Grows Here (a local anti-bullying nonprofit that works with AACPS) Volunteer Facilitator, Good Books Young Troublemakers Middle School Book Club at Park Books Ward 1 Alternate, Annapolis Democratic Central Committee President, District 30 Democratic Club (Resume attached with additional info)

Why are you interested in serving on a board or commission?

I grew up in Anne Arundel County and recently returned home in 2023. I have worked in the education field my entire career and am passionate about ensuring equitable treatment for all students, researching and embracing new approaches based on the latest data, and meaningful family engagement. I know the Education Commission does important work on all of these issues and I'd be glad to contribute.

[June_RESUME_Stark.pdf](#)

Upload a Resume

References

Joanna Tobin, Anne Arundel County Board of Education Member, District 6 (443-254-3546)
Dana Schallheim, Anne Arundel County Board of Education Member, District 5 (503-704-4857)
Romey Pittman, Founding Principal, New Village Academy (410-353-6577)

Demographics

Ethnicity

☒ Caucasian/Non-Hispanic

Gender

☒ Male

Sexual Orientation

☒ Straight/Heterosexual

08/27/1995

Date of Birth

Fish Stark

304-382-8448 ~ fishstark@gmail.com

Social entrepreneur, organizer, and expert in youth development; seeking an executive leadership position.

Education

Harvard University, Ed.M. in Human Development & Psychology, Graduate School of Education, 2022

Yale University, B.A. with Distinction in Political Science, Education Studies Scholar, 2017

Head of College & Dean's Prize for Service to New Haven

Work

Head of Program & Curriculum, Legends (formerly Ever Scouts) (2023-Present)

Legends is a tech startup that teaches positive mental wellness to 7-11 yos through interactive digital media.

- **Strategy:** Guided company through re-structuring as part of the leadership team, developed + implemented customer research strategy that drove new market positioning and partnered with CEO to drive investor/partner outreach.
- **Program Design:** Managed a design team of three to create a research-based framework for teaching positive mental health skills through the lens of confidence, and managed the design of over 150 research-based activities designed to build positive mental health in children.
- **Thought Leadership:** Created over 150 pieces of written and video content to help parents learn how to build confidence in their children, used in content marketing. Built an organic newsletter audience of over 5,000.
- **Evaluation:** Led concept design and managed implementation of the Confidence Profile, a new, research-based tool to measure child mental wellness.
- Managed finance and operations for a team of 4, including managing payroll, benefits, and an accounting contractor.
- Served on pitch teams responsible for raising \$6m+ in funding between Ever Scouts + Legends.

Head of Program & Curriculum, Ever Scouts (2021-2022)

Ever Scouts was a "next-generation," gender-inclusive Scouting program that taught 7-11yos social, emotional, and leadership development skills through interactive, instructor-led training.

- **Program Design:** Built proprietary model ("The 12 Keys") for teaching social and emotional learning; led a research team of 4 to design the program model for a new, digital approach to Scouting, including strategy for curriculum, instruction, assessment, and parent engagement. Piloted model as a summer camp, managing a full-time staff of 4.
- **Team Management:** Managed a Program & Curriculum Team of 9, including a Director of Research & Evaluation, Curriculum Manager, Instructional Manager, Instructors, Program Associate, and numerous consultants/curriculum designers, to build a highly successful "next-generation Scouting" program with 11 chapters across 5 cities.
- **Content Creation:** Worked collaboratively with creative team to create a best-in-class curriculum suite, including 30 hour-long, interactive trainings and 120 mini-lessons, that combined research-based teaching with engaging storytelling to help kids build core SEL skills. Provided research briefs to inform initial content scoping, gave line edits on script drafts, and even starred in video content.
- **Evaluation:** Led concept design for our Responsibility Quotient (RQ), a new format for measuring SEL proficiency through evidence-based stealth assessments.

Independent Consultant (2017-Present)

- Services include curriculum design, program design, facilitation, and youth leadership coaching. Clients include Child Trends, The Aspen Institute, Roundglass, the Lilly Family School of Philanthropy, and other educational initiatives.

Director of Programs, Peace First (2019-2021, Program Manager 2018-2019, Program Associate 2017-2018)

Peace First provides training, mentorship, & grants to youth activists around the world through a digital platform.

- Organizational lead for all program design, delivery, & evaluation. Managed a team of 12, including Director of Evaluation, Digital Product Manager, Senior Program Manager, regional program staff, and an admin.
- Oversaw all curriculum design, including a full rewrite of Peace First's flagship curriculum. Data showed that 95%+ of young people who completed the training measurably improved their empathy, collaboration, and self-confidence.
- Grew program participants by 600% over 2yrs with no budget increase through improved implementation & recruitment. Led global expansion of programming, hiring first staff in Asia, Africa, MENA, & Latin America.
- Served on fundraising team, including as lead on gifts + contracts up to \$75k and on the pitch team for gifts up to \$1mm, developed pitch materials and grant proposals for major donors and managed foundation relationships.

- Provided end-to-end management (search & selection, project coaching, event organizing, storytelling & reporting) for the Channel Kindness Awards, a bespoke campaign with Lady Gaga's Born This Way Foundation that supported young people to generate 25,000 acts of kindness along Gaga's Joanne World Tour route.

Co-Founder/Executive Director, *The Teaching Peace Initiative* (2011-2021)

- Build a peer-to-peer bullying prevention program, worked with state and district-level administrators to pilot Peace Teams that trained hundreds of peer leaders and engaged thousands of students in 15 states and Canada.
- Led design and writing of award-winning curricular suite teaching tolerance, bullying prevention, and conflict resolution to 3rd-5th graders, aligned with best practices in peer education and social-emotional learning.
- Raised \$15,000+ in direct and in-kind grants, including through national prizes and fellowships; managed volunteer team of 18 working in curriculum development and program administration.

Temporary Employee, *West Virginia Higher Education Policy Commission* (2017)

- Analyzed data through SPSS to create the 2017 High School Student Opinion Survey report, which tracks student attitudes about collegegoing. Updated state Higher Education Report Card and Financial Aid Comprehensive Report.

Dara Rei Onishi Fellow, *West Virginia Department of Education Office of Early Learning* (2016)

- Spearheaded development of 100pg West Virginia Pre-K & Kindergarten Implementation Guide: crafted comprehensive outline based on WVDE policy and other state guides, facilitated a working group of early childhood teachers to give feedback on outline and draft sections of guide, authored several sections.
- Developed 30-page statewide Early Math Handbook for Pre-K and Kindergarten teachers.

Organizing + Political:

President, *Speaker Mike Busch District 30 Democratic Club*, 2024-present

- Doubled club membership and re-instituted field program, mobilizing volunteers for thousands of voter contacts

Campaign Manager, *Dana Schallheim for Board of Education*, 2023-present

- Set record for fundraising in an Anne Arundel County Board of Education race; set record for votes won in a primary election in an Anne Arundel County Board of Education

Senior Advisor, *Darryl Brackeen for Secretary of State*, 2022

Finance Committee Member, *Aisha Wahab for State Senate*, 2022

Finance Chair, *Sergio Lopez for City Council*, 2020

Campaign Chair, *Haci Catalbasoglu for Board of Aldermen*, 2017

Candidate, *Fish Stark for Board of Aldermen*, 2015

Membership Coordinator, *Yale College Democrats*, 2014

Volunteer Canvasser and Organizer: *MD D30 Democratic Slate*, *John King for Governor*, *Kayla Young for House of Delegates*, *Amy Goodwin for Mayor*, *Justin Elicker for Mayor*, *Dan Malloy for Governor*, *Barack Obama for President*

Teaching (Classroom + Out-of-School-Time)

Youth Leadership Coach (Afterschool Program Co-Director), *American Friends Service Committee*, 2018-2021

- Co-led program development and delivery as a part-time employee for a youth leadership development program in the WV coalfields. Planned trainings, retreats, and events including college visits and advocacy at state capitol.

GRE Instructor, *Manhattan Review*, 2017-2018

Teaching Fellow (Paid Teacher-in-Training in Pre-K Program), *Calvin Hill Day Care Center*, 2015

Summer Teaching Fellow, *Squash Haven (SEA Urban Squash + Education Program)*, 2014

Volunteer Service:

Advisory Board, *New Village Academy, a Public Charter School* (2023-present)

Board of Directors, *Kindness Grows Here* (2023-present)

Advisor, *Mosaic: We Are Born To Learn* (2022-present)

Board of Directors, *International Bullying Prevention Association* (2018-present)

Board of Directors, *Calvin Hill Day Care Center* (2015-2017)

Board of Directors, *Downtown-Wooster Square Community Management Team* (2015-2017)

Commissioner, *City of New Haven Peace Commission* (2014-2017)

Charleston City Coordinator, *Go South* (2019)

