

NEWS RELEASE



Maryland Public Television

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Maryland Public Television marks milestone anniversary and honors outstanding individuals during “Celebrating the Legendary” event

OWINGS MILLS, MD – Maryland Public Television commemorated a milestone anniversary and honored outstanding individuals – both on-air talents and off-camera contributors – during ceremonies held on August 18. Nearly 200 individuals gathered in MPT’s Irene and Edward H. Kaplan Production Studio in Owings Mills for the event hosted by MPT President and CEO Steven J. Schupak and emceed by former chief executive Larry D. Unger.

The statewide public TV network marked the 60th anniversary of the establishment of public, educational television in Maryland; added four stars on its Wall of Fame and six former employees to its Alumni Honor Wall; and recognized an outstanding production partner during the event, titled “Celebrating the Legendary.”

Commission anniversary

The event began with a tribute to the 60th anniversary of the 1966 Maryland legislative act that established the Maryland Educational-Cultural Television Commission – forerunner of the current-day Maryland Public Broadcasting Commission – which brought the statewide public TV network into existence. MPT’s campus is located on the same Maryland Department of Natural Resources land that was originally leased by the commission from the Maryland Game and Inland Fish Commission (DNR today).

To mark the occasion, DNR Secretary Joshua Kurtz presented the network with a governor’s citation signed by Gov. Wes Moore, Lt. Gov. Aruna Miller, and Secretary of State Susan C. Lee. In his remarks, Secretary Kurtz highlighted DNR’s longstanding partnership with MPT as collaborators on an array of natural history programs and co-producers of [Outdoors Maryland](#), the series that has earned MPT more regional Emmy Awards than any other in the years since its 1988 debut.

Wall of Fame and Alumni Honor Wall inductions

Following the anniversary commemoration, attention turned to the unveiling of four stars on MPT's Wall of Fame and six plaques on its Alumni Honor Wall. Individuals added to the Wall of Fame, which recognizes prominent on-air personalities who have cultivated viewers, fans, and supporters in front of the camera, were:

- **John Aubuchon (posthumous):** The late John Aubuchon was a senior correspondent on [State Circle](#) for more than seven years of a 30-year journalism career that spanned coverage of the Vietnam War, the White House, and Maryland state government. A former president of the National Press Club and recipient of the 2002 Ted Yates Award, he is the namesake of the National Press Club's annual John Aubuchon Press Freedom Award.
- **Joanne Clendining:** Joanne Clendining serves as host of [Maryland Farm & Harvest](#). A three-time regional Emmy® Award winner with four additional nominations, Clendining has helped the popular weekly series reach more than 20 million viewers across its first 13 seasons, introducing audiences to the people, innovations, and traditions behind Maryland's agriculture industry.
- **Nate Howard:** Nate Howard is a four-time regional Emmy® recipient and versatile media professional who spent more than a decade as a [State Circle](#) reporter before hosting and producing news and public affairs, arts and culture, and documentary programs throughout his 20-year tenure at MPT. Howard founded Fade2Blac Video & Event Productions, Inc. in 2008, and today he continues to consult, pursue new creative ventures, and mentor the next generation of media professionals.
- **Al Spoler:** Al Spoler is a regional Emmy®-winning director, producer, and host who has spent more than 50 years in public media and contributed to countless MPT productions, including serving as producer and host of the documentaries *Brewed on the Bay*, *Chesapeake Wine Country*, and *The Maryland Harvest*. The [NATAS-NCCB Gold Circle](#) member has served as host of [Maryland Farm & Harvest's](#) "Local Buy" segments since the series debut in 2013.

Added to the Alumni Honor Wall, which acknowledges individuals who worked behind the scenes to drive MPT's success, were:

- **Ken Day:** Ken Day was a multi-Emmy®-winning writer and executive producer at MPT for 35 years. He created series such as [Chesapeake Collectibles](#) and *Artworks This Week* and produced the three-hour documentary [Maryland Vietnam War Stories](#). His credits also include producing the national documentary *Down in the Dumps: America's Garbage Crisis* and managing seven years of *America's Veterans: A Musical Tribute* specials.
- **Kathy Hudson:** Kathy Hudson is a prolific writer and media relations specialist who joined MPT in 1973 as a promotion manager and spent more than a decade successfully cultivating key relationships with regional TV critics to expand the network's viewership. She developed extensive promotional campaigns for notable broadcasts and later contributed to MPT's 50th-anniversary history book after pursuing a full-time writing career.
- **Marty Jacobs:** Marty Jacobs served as MPT's vice president and chief financial officer, providing vital fiscal management and securing capital funding under five chief executives during his nearly 48 years of state service. A former president of the Maryland Government Finance Officers Association, he was highly valued by his peers for his patience,

troubleshooting skills, and deep knowledge of state government budgeting.

- **Ann Klimas (posthumous):** The late Ann Chatterton Klimas worked at MPT for 24 years as a versatile writer and instructional designer who provided financial copy for *Wall Street Week With Louis Rukeyser* and served as head writer for the agricultural news program *Up on the Farm* before developing educational programs and websites, including the Webby Award-winning *Knowing Poe*. Beyond her work at MPT, she authored middle-grade textbooks and shared her talents by teaching writing courses at local universities.
- **Frank Leung (posthumous):** The late Frank Leung was MPT's first senior videographer, dedicating 33 years to framing perfect shots for regional and international productions while earning multiple Emmy® Awards. Remembered by his colleagues for his quick wit and generosity, he had a significant impact on acclaimed programs such as *Images of Maryland* and *Antarctica: A Presence on the Ice* with his shooting talent.
- **Marlene Rodman:** Marlene Rodman spent 38 years at MPT as a studio camera operator and field videographer, earning three regional Emmys® for her work on major series, music specials, and international documentaries. In addition to braving the elements for series such as [Outdoors Maryland](#) and [MotorWeek](#), her credits include *Wall Street Week With Louis Rukeyser*, the national Emmy®-winning *Wolf Trap Presents the Kirov: Swan Lake*, and many cooking shows, dramas, concerts, and sports programs.

MPT established its Wall of Fame in 2010 to recognize men and women who have brought distinction to its broadcasts since the network's debut in 1969. Past recipients are Dr. Frederick Breitenfeld Jr., Alfie Brown, Bob Callahan, John Davis, Lou Davis, Ethel Ennis, Rhea Feikin, Pat Goss, Robert W. Heck, Lary Lewman, Greg Otto, Charles Robinson III, Louis Rukeyser, Jeff Salkin, Natalie Seltz, Alec Webb, "Miss Jean" Worthley, and *Wall Street Week With Louis Rukeyser* panelists Eddie C. Brown, Frank A. Cappiello, Howard "Pete" Colhoun, B. Carter Randall, and Julius Westheimer.

Created in 2013, the Alumni Honor Wall display recognizes the significant contributions and service of selected MPT staff between 1966 and the present. Those selected for the wall must have been notable for their creativity and leadership during their time at the network. At present, 53 alumni are represented on the display.

MPT Executive Citation

To close the celebration, MPT President & CEO Steven J. Schupak delivered his first executive citation to independent filmmaker and longtime MPT collaborator John Paulson. Paulson was recognized for his 16-year partnership with MPT as a writer, director, editor, and producer on programs including *Outdoors Maryland* and *Maryland by Air*; Chesapeake Bay Week documentaries such as *The Chesapeake Bay Bridge: Spanning the Bay*, *Conowingo Dam: Power on the Susquehanna*, and *Chesapeake Beacons*; and culinary specials including *Eatin' Crabcakes: The Best I Ever Had*, *Eatin' Oysters: Chesapeake Style*, and *Eatin' the Chesapeake: The Five Feasts*.

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About Maryland Public Television

Maryland Public Television is a statewide, public-supported TV network and Public Broadcasting Service member offering entertaining and educational content delivered by traditional broadcasting and streaming on TVs, computers, and mobile devices via its [online video player](#) and the [free PBS](#)

[app](#). A state agency operating under the auspices of the Maryland Public Broadcasting Commission, MPT also produces local, regional, and national programming and frequently earns regional Emmy® awards for its work. MPT's commitment to educators, parents, caregivers, and learners of all ages is delivered through its [Maryland Center for Media Literacy & Education](#) and [Thinkport.org](#). MPT's year-round community engagement activities connect viewers with resources covering a wide range of topics. More information is available at [mpt.org](#).