



GSSCC Weekly Update

8601 Georgia Avenue, Suite 203, Silver Spring, MD 20910
301-565-3777 • info@gsscc.org • www.gsscc.org

December 1, 2014

Last Chance to Register for GSSCC's December Networking Breakfast

...scheduled for 7:30 a.m. this Wednesday, December 3 (one week early because of the December holidays), at **Eggspectation** (923 Ellsworth Drive). Click [here](#) to log in and sign-up today, Monday, December 1, and pay the early-bird admission price of \$20. Registrations after today will cost an additional \$10.

Mark Your Calendar for GSSCC's December After-Hours

...scheduled from 5:30 p.m. to 7 p.m. on Wednesday, December 10, at **Fenwick Beer & Wine** (1327 Fenwick Lane), and co-sponsored with **Alchemy by Carla Hall**, who will add a selection of sweet treats to the after-hours fare. Click [here](#) to log in and register.

Council Considering Two Workplace Bills

Two bills were introduced in the Montgomery County Council last week that will affect employers in the county. Outgoing Council President Craig Rice introduced legislation that would **change the effective dates of future increases in the County minimum wage** from October 1 to July 1 in the years 2015, 2016, and 2017. GSSCC members will recall that last year, Council voted to increase the County minimum wage beginning this October. Then, early this year, the Maryland General Assembly increased the State minimum wage with phased in increases on July 1 of each year through 2018. Councilmember Rice's bill seeks to synchronize the effective dates to simplify for employers the administration of the annual increases. A public hearing on the bill is scheduled for 1:30 p.m. on January 20, 2015. Also during last week's session, Councilmember George Leventhal, supported by Councilmembers Nancy Navarro, Cherri Branson, and Marc Elrich, introduced legislation that will **require employers to provide paid "sick and safe leave" to all employees**, including part-time staff. Bill 60-14 would require an employer to provide earned sick and safe leave at a rate of at least 1 hour for every 30 hours an employee works in the County up to 56 hours in a calendar year. An employee would have to be paid for earned sick and safe leave at the same rate and with the same benefits as the employee normally earns. A tipped employee would have to be paid at least the County minimum wage for each hour the employee uses earned sick and safe leave. A public hearing is tentatively scheduled for 7:30 p.m. on January 29. To read a copy of the bill and the introduction packet, click [here](#).

Welcome New Members and Returning Members!

Please join GSSCC in welcoming these new members and returning members in November: **Grosvenor; Habitat for Humanity; International Rescue Committee; Nova-Habitat, Inc.; Murphy Engineering & Construction, LLC; and Web Strategies.**

Thanks for Renewing!

GSSCC thanks the following companies for renewing their membership in August and September: **Achieving the Dream, Inc.; Adegá Wine Cellars & Café; AMR Commercial, LLC; Argyle Country Club; Arrow Bookkeeping; Berlin, Ramos & Company, P.A.; The Cameron; Capitol Outdoor; Copper Canyon Grill; Criminal Justice Policy Foundation; EBA Ernest Bland Associates, P.C.; Elite Personnel; Jalon Bookkeeping, LLC; The JBG Companies; Lumina Studio Theatre; MD State Dept. of Education & Rehab Services; PH RockWood Corporation; Premier Bank, Inc. Washington Division; Prestige Graphics Inc.; Real Living At Home; Research Financial Strategies; SEEC; Silver Spring Green; Spring Parc; United Therapeutics Corp.; and USPS Silver Spring.**

Register Today for GSSCC's Young Professionals Group Kick-Off Event

...scheduled for 5:30 p.m. on Wednesday, January 7, at **Denizens Brewing Co.** (1115 East West Highway). Invite

the young professionals in your business to come meet GSSCC's newest group at this exciting kick-off event. Click [here](#) to log in and sign-up by noon on Monday, January 5. Admission is \$10 for members; \$15 for non-members. Note: this event is open to all GSSCC member young professionals, and also those who are young at heart.

GSSCC MEMBER NEWS

* **Web Strategies** offers GSSCC members two opportunities to tap the power of the internet and grow their businesses. *Campaigns That Drive Action: Newsletters and Announcements*, scheduled at 9:30 a.m. on Wednesday, December 3, will focus on best practices for the small business or nonprofit seeking to make its email newsletters and announcements more effective. Click [here](#) for more information or to register. *Campaigns That Drive Actions: Offers & Promotions*, scheduled for 9:30 a.m. on Tuesday, December 9, will explore strategies for creating successful deals and promotions. Click [here](#) for more information or to register. Both seminars will be held in the GSSCC Conference room.

* The **Corporate Volunteer Council (CVC)** and **M&T Bank** invites GSSCC members to join in their efforts to adopt at least 100 families this year, through the Montgomery County Holiday Giving Project, providing underserved children and families with cheer during the holidays. There are four ways to get involved: adopt a family; host a toy drive; sponsor a food item; or volunteer to help transport gifts on December 18 or staff the open house and wrap gifts on December 19. Click [here](#) for more information.

* **See your company's news here!** GSSCC would be pleased to highlight news from our member companies in this section of the weekly e-news. Send us your information before close of business each Friday.

Promote Your Business by Hosting a GSSCC After-Hours

GSSCC is now accepting applications for 2015 Business-After-Hours hosts. Only GSSCC members can take advantage of this exclusive opportunity to showcase their businesses by hosting one of the Chamber's eight regular after-hours events. The host provides the venue and refreshments and GSSCC handles the promotion, through the Chamber's regular electronic newsletter, emails to members, on the web site, and via outreach to local business media outlets. Call or email [Laura Alin](#) for more information or to schedule a GSSCC After-Hours at your business.

See Your Company's Logo at Every Networking Breakfast and After-Hours

Let GSSCC highlight your company's logo on a roll-up banner displayed at each of the Chamber's regular monthly events -- the Networking Breakfast and Business-After-Hours. The Chamber is now selling positions for member-company logos on the 2015 banner, at the affordable price of \$300 for the year. The new banner will debut at the January After-Hours and be displayed at each regular networking event in 2015. That means sponsor logos will be on display near registration at 20 events during the year, for the amazingly low cost of \$15 per event. If last year is any indication, these spaces are sure to go fast, so please call Laura at (301) 565-3777, to reserve your spot.

December GSSCC Committee Meetings

* **Young Professionals Committee** – 4 p.m. on Wednesday, December 3

* **Government Affairs Committee** – 9 a.m. on Friday, December 5

* **Events Committee** – 9 a.m. on Tuesday, December 9

* **Economic Development Committee** – 9 a.m. on Thursday, December 18

* **Membership Development Committee** – No meeting this month

* **About GSSCC Committee Meetings** – All GSSCC members are welcome to participate in Chamber committees. Members are welcome to attend committee meetings to assess interest in joining a committee. Meetings are typically held in the GSSCC Conference Room. **RSVP is required and priority will be given to existing committee members when speakers are scheduled.**

Get Social with GSSCC!

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Thank you to our 2014-2015 GSSCC Partners

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Business Partners –AFI Silver Theatre; Bud Miller Associates, Inc.; Digital Industry; Discovery Communications; EagleBank; The Fillmore Silver Spring; Holy Cross Hospital; Lerch, Early & Brewer, Chtd.; Linowes & Blocher LLP; M&T Bank; The Tower Companies (The Blairs); United Therapeutics Corp.; Washington Property Company.

Partners – Adam S. Lowe Photography; Atlantech Online; Eggspectation; Signs By Tomorrow; Social & Scientific Systems, Inc.

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December 8, 2014

Don't Miss GSSCC's December After-Hours

...scheduled from 5:30 p.m. to 7 p.m. this Wednesday, December 10, at **Fenwick Beer & Wine** (1327 Fenwick Lane), and co-sponsored with **Whole Foods Market**, who will provide some of the hors d'oeuvres, and **Alchemy** by **Carla Hall**, who will add a selection of sweet treats to the after-hours fare. In the spirit of holiday giving, **GSSCC** and **Fenwick Beer & Wine** will be collecting winter clothing (especially scarves) and deodorant for the homeless served by **Shepherd's Table**. Click [here](#) to log in and register.

Mark Your Calendar for GSSCC's Young Professionals Group Kick-Off Event

...scheduled for 5:30 p.m. on Wednesday, January 7, at **Denizens Brewing Co.** (1115 East West Highway). Invite the young professionals in your business to come meet GSSCC's newest group at this exciting kick-off event. Click [here](#) to log in and sign-up by noon on Monday, January 5. Admission is \$10 for members; \$15 for non-members. Note: this event is open to all GSSCC member young professionals, and also those who are young at heart.

Ban the Box Bill Takes Effect on January 1

Legislation prohibiting employers from inquiring about an applicant's criminal history until the end of the initial interview goes into effect on January 1. Failure to comply can bring fines up to \$1,000 per violation. Despite numerous calls and emails to County government, including the Montgomery County Office of Human Rights (the agency responsible for enforcing the law), GSSCC has been unable to obtain specific information to provide to members. The Chamber will continue pushing the County to provide guidance to employers and forward to members any information received. Members who have specific questions should contact James Stowe at James.Stowe@montgomerycountymd.gov or 240-777-8490.

GSSCC MEMBER NEWS

* **Web Strategies** will present *Campaigns That Drive Actions: Offers & Promotions*, a workshop for GSSCC members interested in creating successful on-line deals and promotions. The seminar is scheduled for 9:30 a.m. this Tuesday, December 9, in the GSSCC Conference room.

* Congratulations to these GSSCC members selected among The *Best of Montgomery County* by *Gazette* readers: **Stronsniders Hardware** - first in the Hardware category; **Mid-Atlantic Federal Credit** union - first in the Credit Union category; **The Classics** - second in the Steakhouse category; **Mi Rancho** - second in the Mexican Restaurant category; **Maisie Dunbar Spa Lounge** - second in the Nail Salon category; **Hoover Fisher Florist** - third in the Florist category; and **Statland & Katz, Ltd.** - third in the Insurance Agent category.

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Mark Your Calendar for GSSCC 101

Whether you are a new GSSCC member or an established member looking to get the most from your membership investment, plan to attend **GSSCC 101** to learn how you can put your Chamber membership to work for you. Scheduled from 8:00 a.m. to 10:00 a.m. on Wednesday, January 7, at **Eggspectation**, this free breakfast event is first-come-first-served and by advance reservation only. Preference will be given to new members if the event is full. Click [here](#) to log in and register TODAY to learn more about how to maximize your membership investment and more.

GSSCC Member-2-Member – New Offer This Month

Chamber members support each other by doing business with each other and by offering members-only promotions and deals. GSSCC is pleased to announce this new offer in December. **Beautycounter** is offering free shipping

and gift wrapping for all holiday orders; and, those who book a makeup consultation will receive a free eyeliner pencil plus free shipping on any order. Contact Anne Morris at <https://Annemorris.beautycounter.com> or (301) 538-6212. To see other GSSCC Member-2-Member deals, [log in](#) to the member portal on GSSCC website. Is your business interested in offering a special GSSCC Member-2-Member promotion? Let us know by contacting Laura Alin in the Chamber office.

Promote Your Business by Hosting a GSSCC After-Hours

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Last Call: Your Company's Logo at Every Networking Breakfast and After-Hours

Let GSSCC highlight your company's logo on a roll-up banner displayed at each of the Chamber's regular monthly events – the Networking Breakfast and Business-After-Hours. Just a few spots are left for the 2015 banners, at the affordable price of \$300 for the year. The new banners will debut at the January After-Hours and be displayed at each regular networking event in 2015. That means sponsor logos will be on display near registration at 20 events during the year, for the amazingly low cost of \$15 per event. Call Laura at (301) 565-3777, by this Friday to secure one of the remaining few spots.

December GSSCC Committee Meetings

- * **Events Committee** – 9 a.m. on Tuesday, December 9
- * **Economic Development Committee** – 9 a.m. on Thursday, December 18, presentation on the new Progress Place, to be built as part of Washington Property Company's development in the Ripley Street area.
- * **Membership Development Committee** – No meeting this month
- * **About GSSCC Committee Meetings** – *All GSSCC members are welcome to participate in Chamber committees. Members are welcome to attend committee meetings to assess interest in joining a committee. Meetings are typically held in the GSSCC Conference Room. **RSVP is required and priority will be given to existing committee members when speakers are scheduled.***

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December 15, 2014

Remove the Box from all Employment Applications by January 1

Legislation goes into effect on January 1, 2015, requiring **all businesses with 15 or more full time employees** to remove questions about criminal arrests and convictions from their employment applications. The law also prevents employers from asking job candidates about criminal arrests or convictions until the conclusion of a first interview. GSSCC, in cooperation with other chambers in Montgomery County, had urged the County Office of Human Rights (responsible for enforcement) to publish guidance on the new law as early as last month. That information, linked [here](#), was finally posted on the County web site last week. Please note, however, there is an error in the information. Employers that violate the law will be subject to a civil fine up to \$1,000 for each violation payable to Montgomery County. This information is placed into the wrong column on the web site, which makes it appear that the law does not include this penalty. The chambers have pointed out this error and asked that the County correct it.

GSSCC Seeks Input on Bill to Require Paid Sick Leave for All Employees

Legislation that would require ALL employers to provide paid "sick and safe leave" to ALL employees in Montgomery County, including part-time and tipped workers is being considered by the Montgomery County Council. [Bill 60-14](#) would require employers to provide earned sick and safe leave at a rate of at least 1 hour for every 30 hours an employee works in the County up to 56 hours in a calendar year. GSSCC, in cooperation with the Gaithersburg-Germantown Chamber and the Greater Bethesda-Chevy Chase Chamber, is seeking member input on current paid sick leave practices. If you are a business owner manager, please take a moment to complete this very brief survey to help us determine how this legislation might affect your business. Click [here](#) to access the survey, or paste the following link into your browser: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/QFR3FVM>.

County Bill Would Accelerate Effective Date for Minimum Wage Increase

Last November, the County Council passed legislation that increased the mandatory minimum wage beginning October 1 of this year, with annual increases on that date in subsequent years through 2017. This past spring, the Maryland General Assembly increased the State's minimum wage and set subsequent increases to take effect on July 1 of each year. [Bill 59-14](#), introduced in County Council this month, seeks to synchronize the County and State effective dates, thereby changing the effective dates of future increases in the County from October 1 to July 1 in the years 2015, 2016, and 2017. If enacted, this legislation would cause the County Minimum Wage to increase from \$8.40 to \$9.55 on July 1, 2015, despite the fact that most businesses have already prepared their 2015 budgets using the previous figures. There will be a public hearing on Bill 59-14 next month, on January 20.

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GSSCC MEMBER NEWS

* Check out **The Urban Winery's** *Kickstarter* campaign. Be part of the first winery in downtown Silver Spring Find out more here: <https://www.kickstarter.com/projects/1088755137/the-urban-winery>. Check out **The Urban Winery** Facebook page [here](#).

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This Week's
Sponsor

The Townhomes of Chelsea Heights by EYA

December 22, 2014

Ring in the New Year at GSSCC's Young Professionals Group Kick-Off Event

...scheduled from 5:30 p.m. to 7 p.m. on Wednesday, January 7, at **Denizens Brewing Co.** (1115 East West Highway). Young professionals in GSSCC member businesses are invited to come meet GSSCC's newest group at this exciting kick-off event. Click [here](#) to log in and sign-up by noon on Monday, January 5. Admission is \$10 for members; \$15 for non-members. Note: All GSSCC members are invited to join the Young Professionals for this kick-off event.

New to GSSCC? New in your Company? Check out GSSCC 101

Whether you are a new GSSCC member, a new employee of a long-time member, or an established member looking to get the most from your membership investment, plan to attend **GSSCC 101** to learn how you can put your Chamber membership to work for you. Scheduled from 8:00 a.m. to 10:00 a.m. on Wednesday, January 7, at **Eggspectation**, this free breakfast event is first-come-first-served and by advance reservation only. Preference will be given to new members if the event is full. Click [here](#) to log in and register by Friday, January 2, to learn more about how to maximize your membership investment and more.

Look for the New and Improved GSSCC Weekly Update

The *GSSCC Weekly Update* is getting a facelift! Watch for the new and improved weekly GSSCC newsletter in January 5, 2015 issue.

MAKE THE CITY
PART OF YOUR NEW HOME

EYA.com

Discover the Townhomes of **Chelsea Heights**
in Downtown Silver Spring

New Townhomes with Rooftop Terraces from the \$700s
Steps from Metro, Shopping, Dining, and Entertainment

THE NEIGHBORHOODS OF
EYA

MHBR No. 7092

GSSCC MEMBER NEWS

- * **Bell Flowers** has teamed with a fellow GSSCC member, also locally owned, to offer an additional treats to any flower order. Now available for delivery along with gorgeous fresh flowers are mouthwatering caramels from **The Original Velatis**. Go to www.bellflowers.com. Once you select your flowers, you will be given the option to add caramels to your order.
- * Congratulations to **A Wider Circle** founder Mark Bergel on being recognized as a Washingtonian of the Year by Washingtonian Magazine. The story is in the issue on newsstands now.
- * **See your company's news here!** GSSCC would be pleased to highlight news from our member companies in this section of the weekly e-news. Send us your information before close of business each Friday.

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Mark Your Calendar for January GSSCC Committee Meetings

- * **Government Affairs Committee** – 9 a.m. on Friday, January 9, United Therapeutics Education Center, meet with Maryland District 20 Delegation – **RSVP required.**
- * **Events Committee** – 9 a.m. on Tuesday, January 13
- * **Economic Development Committee** – 9 a.m. on Thursday, January 15, discussion with staff from Montgomery County Department of Permitting Services.
- * **Membership Development Committee** – 9 a.m. on Tuesday, January 27.
- * **About GSSCC Committee Meetings** – *All GSSCC members are welcome to participate in Chamber committees. Members are welcome to attend committee meetings to assess interest in joining a committee. Meetings are typically held in the GSSCC Conference Room. **RSVP is required and priority will be given to existing committee members when speakers are scheduled.***

GSSCC Inclement Weather Policy

In the event of inclement weather, GSSCC follows the closing policy of Montgomery County Public Schools regarding cancellation of member meetings and events (Networking Breakfasts, Business After Hours, committee meetings, etc.) in the event of inclement weather. If Montgomery County Public Schools are closed for the day, all Chamber events for that day will be cancelled. If schools open two hours late, all morning Chamber events will be cancelled, and all other events and meetings from 11:30 a.m. on will be held as scheduled. If schools are dismissed early, all GSSCC afternoon meetings and evening events will be cancelled. However, there are times that an event may be held or cancelled due to the sponsoring company's policies and/or the discretion of GSSCC. The office will keep members apprised via our website, email, and social media outlets as promptly as possible. The GSSCC office will close only when the Montgomery County government declares a snow/weather emergency.

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Note: The GSSCC Office will be closed from Wednesday, December 24, through Thursday, January 1. The next GSSCC Weekly Update will be published on Monday, January 5.

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