

# Progress by Greater Crisfield Action Coalition

Branding, service worker training upcoming plans; next public meeting Jan. 5

For the Crisfield-Somerset County Times

The Greater Crisfield Action Coalition reports more progress in support of Crisfield's revitalization. The first is that the group's 501(c)(3) status has been approved by the Internal Revenue Service after just 3 months. According to people experienced in this process, gaining approval in such a short amount of time is extremely unusual. This speaks to the clarity of the group's mission to aid the citizens of the Crisfield area and to the quality of the application prepared by the GCAC Board and its advisors.

The leaders anticipate that confirmation of the corporation's charitable status will aid its fundraising

activities. With all bills paid, the next step is to raise sufficient funds to engage an Executive Director to move programs forward during 2016.

In addition, the group has applied to the U.S. Patent and Trademark office to register two trade/service marks that will be used to create brand recognition for Crisfield as it undergoes revitalization.

To bring a consistent message to advertising and promotion activities, the group proposes to use the registered mark "Uniquely Crisfield"™ as it positions the Crisfield area as the most unique tourist destination on the Eastern shore. The mark will be used in conjunction with brief descriptions of Crisfield's unique and tourist-worthy characteristics such as "Uniquely Crisfield - Crab Capital of the World" or "Uniquely Crisfield™ - Oyster Epicenter" or "Maryland's finest sunsets - Uniquely Crisfield".

This brand identifier provides wider and less seasonal options for describing Crisfield's attributes, while maintaining consistency of message.

The coalition would hope to use the mark for promotion in print, Web, social media, mail, radio, TV and roadside venues.

At the same time, as efforts are made to attract visitors to Crisfield, the group wishes to take steps to insure that visitors are delighted by their visit, returning home to share their positive experiences with others and making plans to return themselves. This may be accomplished by creating a unique and recognizable Crisfield hospitality signature that insures that residents and guests receive consistent and high quality service in all of their activities.

These activities may include dining, lodging, touring, purchasing of goods or services, or any other activity involving interactions among

individuals. The service mark "White Boot Hospitality" will be used to identify Crisfield's hospitality. White boot hospitality is a take-off on "white glove service" but with a unique Crisfield flare.

GCAC envisions creating a series of job training and credentialing programs under the White Boot Hospitality umbrella. These training programs would be geared to existing workers wishing to advance their careers and to those hoping to obtain documentation of skills qualifying them to enter the workforce. The credentials would be stackable, meaning that workers will be recognized for attaining increasing levels of skill and knowledge in a discipline.

For example, a restaurant worker might progress from bus service to casual dining service to fine dining service to front-of-house supervision.

See **Progress** — Next Page

## Progress

Continued From Previous Page

Credentials would also be latticed, meaning that the skills learned would be transferrable across disciplines. For example, the same skills learned for food service jobs may also apply to retail sales and eventually customer service management. By using competencies approved by the U.S. Department of Labor and industry trade associations, credentials will be recognized across the country, creating additional job opportunities for those completing the program.

GCAC will work with local business owners to identify the unique characteristics of Crisfield White Boot Hospitality that will be built into training programs. Criteria may also be established to recognize those businesses that employ white-boot-trained workers and adhere to the white boot principles. The program will assist unemployed



For the Crisfield-Somerset County Times/GCAC  
Leaders of the Greater Crisfield Action Coalition are, from left, Jay Tawes, treasurer; Keith Campbell; Angenette Stewart; Charlotte Scott, president; Isabelle Regester; Paul Regester, vice president; and Darlene Taylor, secretary. Not pictured is Erik Emely. The next public meeting is Jan. 5 at the Tawes Museum.

residents to enter the workforce and provide skills and experience to enable them to advance. It will help businesses by creating a supply of trained workers for both full time, seasonal, and part time positions. It will create additional demand for products and services, increasing the number of visitors coming to

Crisfield. And it will provide an incentive for businesses who may be considering investing in the area.

Availability of an adequately trained workforce and a development pipeline is a major consideration for businesses that are seeking new locations.

GCAC Board member Angenette

Stewart says, "I am very excited about the opportunity to provide training to help our residents prepare for jobs right here in Crisfield." GCAC Vice President Paul Register remarked, "Creating a flexible brand identity for Crisfield will help us to attract visitors to the area on a more consistent basis and with less seasonality. Hopefully someday Crisfield will be recognized as a year-round destination."

The next public meeting is 5 p.m. Tuesday, Jan. 5 at the Tawes Museum meeting room, where the board will discuss the components of the Five Year Action Plan that relates to business. For more information or to donate to support their activities, go to [www.GreaterCrisfield.org](http://www.GreaterCrisfield.org).

*Angenette Stewart 12-23-15*