



# Maryland Career Development Association

## October 2020 Newsletter

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### **Member Spotlight ~ Marc St. Hilaire, MCDA Board Member** **Interview conducted by Rachel Loock, MCDA Newsletter Committee Chair**

Marc is Senior Associate and Executive Recruiter with Isaacson, Miller (IM), one of the country's premier executive search firms. His work focuses broadly on executive recruiting for roles in academia, associations, and advocacy organizations. He's also on the Board of the MCDA. We recently caught up with Marc to learn a bit more about his career path.

*You've been with IM for almost 5 years. Prior to joining IM, you were a career counselor at American University. How did you decide to transition to executive recruiting?*

It was a combination of happenstance and intentionality. I had been thinking about moving into recruiting for some time, seeing it as a natural extension of my previous experience in career counseling, fellowship/study abroad advising and professional exchanges programming. I was also interested in making a switch to the private sector after more than a decade of working in the non-profit and higher education sectors. I was exploring campus recruiting when a friend and former colleague joined IM and shared information with me about the work that they did. It was appealing as it was a private company that specifically served the mission-driven sector. I applied, went through the interview process, and was hired.

*Can you describe the types of roles your organization typically recruits for?*

Approximately two-thirds of IM's business is recruiting for cabinet-level and other senior level roles in higher education (e.g., presidents, provosts, deans, vice provosts, chief functional officers, etc). We also do a lot of work for senior roles in the broader non-profit space in arts and culture, professional associations, academic medicine, advocacy, K-12 improvement, environmental conservation, and human services.

*What do you like most about the work you do there?*

I get to talk with very interesting, qualified and highly accomplished candidates across a number of different fields, often times fields that are of personal interest to me. For most searches, I am engaging and talking with scholars, leaders, and professionals at the top of their fields doing exciting work. Even in cases where a prospective candidate is not the right match for a specific opportunity, they are objectively still quite impressive. It's also fun to see the commonalities in what organizations look for in their leaders whether you are doing an academic dean search or a senior executive role for a non-profit organization.

*What do you find most challenging?*

The mechanics of conducting an executive search can be an exercise in project management and administration, ensuring all the moving parts are coordinated to get it across the finish line. Pre-Covid, the constant travel was a very challenging as being on the road can negatively impact one's health.

*How has the pandemic impacted executive search and specifically the work you do? Your thoughts on the short and long-term impact to career development and executive search?*

As a result of the pandemic, search firms and clients have been pleasantly surprised to see how much work they can accomplish virtually. The level of travel hasn't been the same and will probably not be the same moving forward, so most interviews and client meetings are over Zoom. Technology has simultaneously simplified certain logistics around interviewing candidates, while also complicating our work at the same time. With the economic impact of Covid, all professional services firms have to be nimbler and more responsive to pricing as companies may have fewer resources to spend on recruiting. Executive search firms are having to provide a lower price structure and provide the same level of service. Even before Covid, but more so now, search firms have to be more flexible in their processes and are expected to complete searches quicker than they have in the past, at a time when candidates may be more hesitant and need more time to consider relocating for a job during a pandemic.

*You recently joined the Board of the MCDA. What have you learned so far?*

I see a hunger for career development and a desire for perspectives from across fields, not simply counseling or university-based career services. MCDA members demonstrate a strong sense of mission and service orientation.

*What do you hope MCDA achieves over the course of this academic year?*

Giving people a sense of optimism, hope and perspective is especially important. Communicating that careers can still thrive, even during this challenging time. We also hope to broaden the membership in a way that represents the entire breadth of the career development profession and includes individuals from the talent management, recruiting, and the training and development space.

*Is there anything else you'd like to share with MCDA members and those thinking about joining the MCDA?*

I want to hear from them! Specifically, I'd like to hear their insights on topics they would like to see featured in MCDA panels and other thought leadership we can provide as a board. We also want to leverage social media in delivering our message to members and potential members and how we can enhance our presence, especially from a marketing perspective.

*According to your LinkedIn profile, you dabble in food picture taking as a creative outlet. What's your favorite food to photograph?*

I don't have a specific type of food I like to photograph, but BBQ tends to be a popular picture subject on my Instagram. Really it is any meal that has an inordinate amount of meat and/or a truly decadent dessert. The picture taking is more about remembering a delicious meal and having a "souvenir" of my travels to a particular country or city. To share your feedback with Marc, please reach out to him at [marc.sthilaire@gmail.com](mailto:marc.sthilaire@gmail.com)



**Marc St. Hilaire, MCDA Board Member**

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## **Federal and State Elections are Around the Corner**

**By Natalie Kauffman, M.S., NCDA Certified Career Counselor, CSP-I, NCCC, GCDF-I, MCDA Legislative Chair**



Are you ready to vote?

Election Day is November 3, 2020. Across the U.S., there are 11,198 candidates and 6,207 races. Since this year is a national election, it includes the selection of our next U.S. President. Will you be submitting a mail-in ballot, voting early, in-person or are you planning to cast your ballot on the actual Election Day?

If you require some preparation assistance for any of the three options, the *Maryland State Board of Elections* provides a helpful *MD Votes 2020* website:

[https://elections.maryland.gov/elections/2020/index.html?utm\\_source=google&utm\\_medium=search&utm\\_campaign=register-to-vote&gclid=Cj0KCQjwZ7BRDzARIsAGjbK2YBjuz7IUZCbliQYpBoonK3vCzp75EqAF\\_Lxh6wXqmu5cMug9mFTcAaAqiCEALw\\_wcB](https://elections.maryland.gov/elections/2020/index.html?utm_source=google&utm_medium=search&utm_campaign=register-to-vote&gclid=Cj0KCQjwZ7BRDzARIsAGjbK2YBjuz7IUZCbliQYpBoonK3vCzp75EqAF_Lxh6wXqmu5cMug9mFTcAaAqiCEALw_wcB)

The Maryland League of Women Voters website provides helpful 2020 Voters' Guides and is also available to assist with unbiased election information:

<https://www.lwvmd.org/>

You also can learn more about sitting, Legislative and Congressional Representatives through the following Maryland General Assembly link:

<http://www.mgaleg.maryland.gov/webmga/frmmain.aspx?pid=legisrpage&tab=subject6&poptype=find&popid=>

Select and click on either **Legislative** or **Congressional**, then click on **Lookup**, enter your address and zip code and click on the **FIND** button.

In the U.S. Congress, all Maryland residents share the same two U.S. Senators, Benjamin L. Cardin (D) and Chris Van Hollen (D). However, based on where you live, U.S. Representatives may differ. I'm in the 1<sup>st</sup> Congressional District so Andrew P. Harris (R) is my representative. What district are you in? Who is your Representative?

Every four years the president, vice president, one-third of the Senate, and the entire House are up for election (on-year elections). On even-numbered years when there isn't a presidential election, one-third of the Senate and the entire House are included in the election (off-year elections). A U.S. Senator's term of office is six years. (United States. Senate, <https://www.senate.gov/reference/Index/Elections.htm>) A U.S. Representative is elected to a two-year term. (United States House of Representatives, [www.house.gov](http://www.house.gov))

It's just as important to know your state representatives, especially in an election year! The term of each state senator and delegate is four years from the second Wednesday of January following the date of election. No limit is placed on the number of terms a legislator may serve. If a vacancy occurs in either house through death, resignation, or disqualification, the Governor appoints a replacement whose name is submitted by the [state central committee](#) of the same political party as the legislator whose seat is to be filled. All persons so appointed serve for the unexpired portion of the term. (Maryland Manual On-Line, <https://msa.maryland.gov/msa/mdmanual/html/mmtoc.html>)

Who is your state Senator? Mine is Senator Chris West (R) Who are your Delegates? Mine include, Delegate Michele Guyton (D), and Delegate Nino Mangione (R). Take the time to know your representatives, the committees they serve on and their voting record. And, remember to vote!



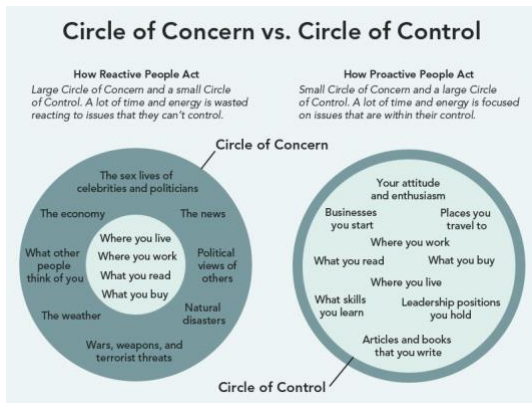
**Natalie Kauffman, M.S., NCDA Certified Career Counselor, CSP-I, NCCC, GCDF-I, MCDA Past President (2002-2003) and MCDA Legislative Chair**

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## Embracing Hope

by Karol Taylor, GCDFI, CSP, CCMC, JCTC, CCC, CBBS, Federal Career Counselor



Where do you find hope? It's so easy to focus on negative things during these stressful pandemic times, but that is the last thing we need to do. Keeping our spirits up can be hard work, so we need to put time and effort into dwelling on positive things.

Steven Covey in his book, *7 Habits of Highly Effective People's* Circle of Concern vs. Circle of Control model reminds us that we have control of our response to the world around us, and we have influence on the response of others, but we do not have control of the world at large. As Covey shared, it's important to put first things first—devote yourself

first to knowing and loving your own response to your immediate experience, and the world will take care of itself.

This coronavirus pandemic is testing our will power, and we're not even sure how long we have to endure these circumstances. People are feeling dejected and powerless. It can be easy to hang our heads and wallow in sorrow. But we've been tested before, and previous generations will certainly attest to our ability to find a guiding light during our time of struggle.

Challenge yourself to find a way to focus on positive things; look for things to feel hopeful about. Don't ignore our new reality, but please don't dwell on it. As a young friend once shared, "try not to allow negative thoughts to linger: you cannot stay in my mind without paying rent." Our goal is not to get sluggish or dull or weary in all this. My friend continued by saying, "you don't want to go dark." There's a legitimate reason why you may be feeling a bit crappy right now. You might be feeling a little over it. The physiological reason for this has to do with "surge capacity." Surge capacity is a collection of adaptive systems—mental and physical—that humans draw on for short-term survival in acutely stressful situations such as a natural disaster. The issue is that our surge capacity only allows us to adapt to major disasters if they are temporary. However, with the pandemic, the disaster stretches out indefinitely. The emergency phase has now become chronic. So, because this continues and on and on...., our surge capacity is depleted and it needs to be renewed.

Things you can do to feel better:

1. Accept that life is different now
2. Expect less from yourself.
3. Recognize the different aspects of grief (as discussed in the July Career Nuggets)
4. Look for activities, new and old, that continue to fulfill you
5. Focus on maintaining and strengthening important relationships.
6. Build regular practices into your life that promote resilience such as better sleep, good nutrition, exercise, meditation, self-compassion and saying no

Viktor Emil Frankl was a psychological theorist who survived the Holocaust. In his book, *Man's Search for Meaning*, Frankl talks about healing through meaning. While in the concentration camp, Frankl noticed that the people who lived through the ordeal did not lose hope. While we are not

currently in a human-induced situation, we still are in a situation where we need to find, and to dwell on, hope. Here are some quotes/ideas to remind you:

“If you change the way you look at things, the things you look at change.” -- Wayne Dyer  
“The last time this country experienced this level of civil unrest, the music was a whole lot better.” – FaceBook.  
“When we feel that we are at our weakest, sometimes the best pep talk can come from a song.” mamamia.com.au



Karol Taylor has been a member of MACD/MCA and MCDA for more than 17 years, 13 as an MCDA Board member and executive leader, and 8 on the MACD/MCA Board. Karol is an award-winning expert in the federal job search, but she also has expertise in leadership and organizational development. The emergence of COVID-19 motivated Karol to consider how people might respond in the new telework-place.

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**A Tribute to MCDA Past President, Janet Ruck**  
**By Natalie Kauffman, MCDA Legislative Board Committee Chair**



The MCDA Board of Directors was saddened to learn that Past President, Janet Ruck passed away on September 10, 2020. I first got to know Janet Ruck during my time as MCDA President-Elect and President. Janet was soon to begin her second career and to retire with the rank of Captain from her 27 years with the Commissioned Corps of the U.S. Public Health Service. She arrived at one of our association board meetings in her bright, dress white uniform and WOW-ed all of us who attended that meeting. She was articulate, inspiring, energetic and willing to be ALL IN! She was everything one hopes for in an active association member!

In Janet’s own words, she was a “woman who [was] ready to create her BEST life”. Her new life included a triple track: career development, time for family & friends and time for writing (or time to explore, get in touch with her inner self and experience life transformation). Across almost two decades, Janet immersed herself in and created her BEST Life. She provided career counseling and training for a number of federal agencies such as the U.S. Department of Labor and the U.S. Department of Health & Human Services. She also worked for a number of career, outplacement and

human Resource organizations such as REA Career Services, The White Hawk Group, and Vantage Human Resources. She also taught professional development classes as an Adjunct Faculty member at the Community College of Baltimore County.

In the third track of her BEST Life, Janet wrote and published three books and an online blog. The first two books she co-authored with past MCDA President, Karol Taylor. A photo of Janet gifting her final book, "You Anew: A Guide for the Woman Who is Ready to Create Her Best Life," to MCDA member, De Jackson, appears below.



Janet Ruck at MCDA's May 7, 2019 Skill Builder event, "Future Proofing Careers", held at Stevenson University.

Janet Ruck's Blog was titled "Geezer Goddess" because she passionately believed that Geezer + Goddess = Wise Lady! You can still access and read her online postings at this link: <https://www.youanewguide.com/blog>. I read every one. With some I laughed until I cried, with others I thought, "yes, this is me!" In her final listed blog, Janet shares, "Yep, here I am, in the stage that is the culmination of all that has come before me. The weight of others' opinions, coping, seriousness, and fun have created the possibility of the 60's. It's I-have-made-it-this-far-and-I-know-what-matters-to-me stage." For Janet, words, family, friends and providing exceptional career services mattered! Like Janet, may we all reach the "Know-What-Matters-to-Me-Stage." The MCDA extends our deepest condolences to her family, friends and colleagues.

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## Newsletter Article Submissions

MCDA welcomes article submissions on topics of interest to the career practitioner community. We are seeking articles that address emerging trends, best practices (especially as we navigate these uncertain times) and training opportunities. For best consideration, please submit articles (maximum length 700 words, although shorter is preferred) by the 15th of the month prior to the desired month of publication. The newsletter will be published monthly. The article deadline for the November issue is October 20th. For article submissions or questions, please email: Rachel Loock, Editor, [MCDA.Newsletter@MDCareers.org](mailto:MCDA.Newsletter@MDCareers.org)

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