

ST MARY'S

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The Public Honors College

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Dear Members of the Charles County Board of Commissioners:

I am writing to express my full and enthusiastic support for the donation and use of land at 16816 Country Lane in Waldorf Maryland to and for the Piscataway Conoy Tribe. Not only will this generous donation support the Piscataway Conoy tribal community's decades-long effort to preserve and protect the tribe's history, culture, and heritage for future generations, it will also serve as a central location for sharing the Piscataway Conoy tribal legacy with audiences who wish to learn more about the original people of Southern Maryland, past, present and future.

Located on an inactive missile area known as the Waldorf Nike Battery (aka Nike Site), this land has been a historically cherished property, having been the site of numerous cultural events and activities in the past. It is easily accessible for tribal members and visitors and holds tremendous potential to contribute to the tribal community and the greater Charles County and southern Maryland communities.

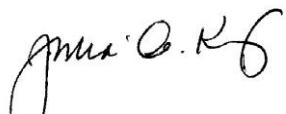
The need is great: despite the robust presence of contemporary Piscataway people throughout southern Maryland, there is currently no place where tribal members and visitors can go to learn about Native history *as told by Native people*. With the 400th anniversary of the state coming up (2034), such a facility is critical, as Commissioner Collins has said, "to tell the story."

This donation will go a long way to put that effort in motion. Under Tribal Chair Francis Gray's and the Piscataway Conoy Tribal Council's leadership, this donation will be put to excellent use and serve as an important gift to everyone interested in your historically important county and our great state.

This donation is the first step for enhancing the county's already impressive educational programs, promoting the economic benefits of heritage tourism in Southern Maryland, and fostering collaboration with neighboring communities. The donation is a win-win for all involved.

I am excited about the potential for this land donation and am hopeful for the bright future it will help create.

Sincerely,



Julia A. King, Ph.D.
Professor and Chair, Department of Anthropology