



Heritage Awards 2025

AWARDEES

Person or People award category: Junious Brickhouse of Montgomery is an internationally-recognized performer and educator who has been devoted to the cultural sustainability of urban dance for more than 40 years. In 2005, he founded the dance school Urban Artistry, through which he and his dedicated staff have mentored over 10,000 young people.

Person or People award category: Spyridon Koliavasilis of Montgomery has performed, taught, and researched traditional Greek music for over 20 years. Raised and trained in Greece, he is now a mainstay of Mid-Atlantic Greek-American communities, as well as the founder of the Mediterranean Notes Music School, where he has taught hundreds of students.

Person or People award category: Edwin Maysonet of Prince George's is the author of more than a thousand songs and poems highlighting the cultural identity of the Puerto Rican community in Maryland. He is also the former lead singer and drummer in *Raíces de Borinquen*, the first ensemble in the region to perform the Puerto Rican dance and percussion traditions of *bomba* and *plena*.

Person or People award category: Anuradha Nehru of Montgomery is an internationally acclaimed dancer, choreographer, and educator in the Indian classical dance form *Kuchipudi*. Since founding the Kalanidhi Dance School and Company more than 30 years ago, Anuradha has expanded it across the region and trained over 600 students in *Kuchipudi*.

Person or People award category: Samuel Wallace of Baltimore City has maintained and innovated Jamaican pottery traditions for over 30 years. He has mentored students across Maryland and the country, notably in the Jamaican coil technique, and facilitates an international exchange of pottery knowledge and innovation between Maryland and Jamaica.

Tradition award category: Russian folk dance is rooted in centuries-old Eastern European seasonal festivities and religious rituals. It is highlighted in Maryland through the multi-generational, greater Baltimore-based Kalinka Dance Ensemble, founded in 2002 by immigrants from former Soviet republics to preserve and celebrate their cultures.

PANELISTS

Christa Casazza (St. Mary's)
Durga Ekambaram (Howard)
Mona Margarita (Worcester)
Shyra Peyton (Prince George's)
Angel Rivera (Frederick)

OVERVIEW

The Heritage Awards recognize long-term achievement in the folk and traditional arts. Learn more on MSAC's website by [clicking here](#).