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FEATURED

Calvert Democrats honor service

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Staff photo by Tamara Ward

Hagner Mister, former Maryland secretary of agriculture, and Rep. Elijah Cummings receive the Louis L. Goldstein Award, named in of Maryland's former comptroller of the treasury of 40 years.

The Calvert County Democratic Central Committee hosted its 18th annual Louis L. Goldstein Dinner at the Rod 'N' Reel Restaurant in Chesapeake Beach on March 10 to recognize a select few Democrats for their volunteer, community and public service.

Many Democratic elected officials, candidates and supporters, including Del. Michael A. Jackson (D-Calvert, Prince George's), Maryland's Attorney General Brian Frosh (D), former Maryland Attorney General Doug Gansler (D) and Yvette Lewis (D), former Maryland Democratic Party chair, were on hand to celebrate the recipients and to re-energize the party.

"Your dedication to promoting good government in this county, in the state of Maryland and our country is precious," said Greg Brown, chairman of the Calvert County Democratic Central Committee. "If ever there was a time in the history of the United States, this is the time for the good people of Calvert County, and neighboring counties in Maryland, to act. We cannot sit back."

Brown, a Prince George's County high school teacher, Calvert County resident and former Republican, was vocal about the need for Democrats to vote and support those in public service.

This year, the central committee bestowed both Rep. Elijah Cummings (D-Md., 7th) and former Maryland Secretary of Agriculture Hagner Mister (D) with the committee's highest-level award, named after Louis Goldstein, Maryland's comptroller of the treasury for 40 years.

Senate President Thomas V. Mike Miller Jr. (D-Calvert, Charles, Prince George's) presented Cummings with his award after giving a glowing introduction.

"He is a congressman for as long as he wants to be. He could have been the United States senator this time. No offense to either one of you," said Miller, gesturing toward Reps. Chris Van Hollen (D-Md., 8th) and Donna Edwards (D-Md., 4th), who are both running for Sen. Barbara Mukulsi's (D-Md.) seat. "He could be president of the Maryland Senate. He could be anything he wanted to be. He is so popular and well respected."

Cummings acknowledged it has been an honor to serve with his fellow congressmen in attendance. He also recognized Calvert County 2015 Teacher of the Year Rob James of Huntingtown High School for his service and likened James' journey in overcoming learning challenges to what it is like to be a Democrat.

"Democrats ... we take our pain, turn it into a passion to do our purpose," said Cummings. "And those who have not been through the pain, we still make sure that we try as hard as we can to put ourselves in the shoes of those who are going through something."

Cummings attributed the campaign success of presidential candidates Sen. Bernie Sanders (D) and Donald Trump (R) on the campaign trail to listening to the needs of the voters.

“People are crying out,” said Cummings. “You may not like the people that show up. You may not like what Trump is saying ... [but] there are people screaming out. They want government to work for them and not against them.”

Cummings cited the water crisis in Flint, Mich., as a prime example of big government not listening to the people by overriding the mayor and city council to implement a change in the water source after the residents voted it down.

Former secretary of agriculture and full-time Calvert County farmer Buddy Hance presented the Goldstein Award to Mister, whom Hance credits with teaching him a lot about being a Democrat.

Mister spoke fondly about Louis Goldstein, his uncanny ability to remember everyone he met and his commitment to the Democratic Party.



“Every day for Louis Goldstein was Election Day. He worked hard for the party for many, many years,” Mister said.

Mister reflected on his career in public service, beginning in 1971 on the Calvert County Board of Education. Later, he would serve as county commissioner for eight years before becoming deputy secretary and then secretary of agriculture.

“I worked hard to represent the people of Calvert County to help prepare Calvert County for the 21st century,” said Mister.

Past recipients of the Goldstein Award include former senator Bernie Fowler, Sen. Miller and U.S. Rep. Steny Hoyer (D-Md., 5th), to name a few.

The Rev. Robert Hahn, senior pastor of the Chesapeake Church in Huntingtown, received the Community Service Award for his efforts to end hunger and increase job opportunities in Calvert County.

Prince Frederick resident Harriet Gossett and Carl Golie of Owings both received the Dan Pike Volunteer of the Year Award. The award's namesake, Pike, was a longtime central committee volunteer who died in 2013 while in service to the committee.

"The honorees were well deserved. It's nice to have all these people get together here and celebrate Democrats and remember my father," Louisa Goldstein said of the event held in her father's honor. "My father loved Calvert County. He loved the state of Maryland."