

BROWN ULMAN • 2014

KEN ULMAN

Howard County Executive Ken Ulman is known and respected for an approach to leadership that blends innovation and common sense, with a goal of providing the most efficient and effective government services possible. He has taken Maryland's sixth-largest jurisdiction to new heights in education, health care, environmental protection and economic development.

In 2006, at age 32, Ken became the youngest person ever elected County Executive in the State of Maryland. He brought energy and enthusiasm to the office, boosting public safety and other core services while managing wisely through the worst economic climate in generations. Ken launched the Healthy Howard health care access plan that gained national recognition for increasing coverage among county residents, and led the effort to bring state-of-the-art broadband fiber - the information technology infrastructure of the future - to Maryland. Voters endorsed his vision and he was re-elected in 2010.

Ken lives in Columbia, Maryland, with his wife, Jaki, and their daughters Maddie and Lily.

Ken's story

Ken's parents, Lou and Diana Ulman, are natives of Baltimore who were attracted in the 1970s to a new city being built in Central Maryland by visionary developer James Rouse. Rouse's Columbia was founded so that people of all races and classes could live side by side, and Lou and Diana decided to raise their family there.

Ken and his younger brother, Doug, were taught that public service was a vital component of a fulfilling life, and to approach every challenge as an opportunity.

Ken attended public schools in Howard County, and was a government and politics major at University of Maryland College Park, where he met his wife, Jaki, who was also active in student government. He obtained a law degree from the Georgetown University Law Center.

The family faced perhaps their greatest challenge when Doug was diagnosed with a rare form of cancer at age 19, and twice again after that. Doug returned to college, but was struck by the lack of resources and information available for someone his age. So the family launched an organization which became the Ulman Cancer Fund for Young Adults, now a leading provider of services to support, educate, connect and empower young adult cancer survivors.

In 2002, Ken ran for Howard County Council, with a campaign that emphasized civic engagement and a new vision for Downtown Columbia. Once elected, he led the fight to save Merriweather Post Pavilion, the iconic concert venue, from development. The successful effort brought together thousands of young people and arts advocates, and inspired him to take another political leap – this time for County Executive.

Under Ken’s leadership, Howard County been named a Top 10 Place to Live by Money Magazine three times, and government has grown leaner and more efficient, while also becoming more innovative.

Public safety has been a hallmark of the Ulman administration. Ken has added more than 70 officers to the Howard County Police Department since taking office. Ken has worked to make sure the County’s first responders have the resources they need, creating or expanding specialized units to target repeat offenders, domestic violence and mental health challenges.

Ken launched the Maryland Center for Entrepreneurship to make sure businesses have the resources they need to be successful, one of several efforts to position Howard to take advantage of the resources and growth at Fort Meade, the Johns Hopkins University Applied Physics Laboratory and the U.S. Cyber Command. To prepare for the jobs of the future, Ken also launched 3D Maryland, which brings cutting edge manufacturing techniques to fledgling businesses; and the Conscious Venture Lab, which nurtures companies and entrepreneurs who hope to do well by doing good.

Education has been a hallmark of the Ulman administration. Howard’s schools are consistently ranked No. 1 in Maryland, and Howard County ranks first on the state’s “education effort” index, which measures the amount of money spent as a share of overall available resources. The Howard County Public Library System was recently ranked No. 1 in all of North America by the prestigious Library Journal. In 2013, after several local incidents, Ken chose to tackle the scourge of bullying head on, launching Stand Up HoCo, a community-based effort that combines education and outreach with a unique online and web-based anonymous reporting tool to ensure that reports of bullying reach responsible

adults. The initiative has received national acclaim, and has been featured on stopbullying.gov.

Ken has made great strides in environmental sustainability, and made Howard the first in the state to adopt green building standards for public and private construction. Hybrid vehicles account for the largest percentage of the government's fleet of any place in the state. And in 2013, Howard County opened a composting facility to allow for an expansion of its innovative curbside food-scrap collection program, the largest of its kind in Maryland. State leaders are looking at Howard County for innovative solutions.

Faced with the worst economic crisis since the Great Depression, Ulman has enhanced critical services and helped save millions by working with public employees to end unnecessary spending. Because of smart management, Howard County has maintained the lowest unemployment rate in the state and has kept a AAA bond rating for 16 consecutive years. At the same time, Ulman launched a plan to add dozens of new police officers, and to modernize the Howard County Fire and Rescue Services to drive down response times and save lives.

In 2008, Howard County became one of the first communities in the nation to offer affordable access to health care for uninsured residents. The not-for-profit Healthy Howard Access Plan has earned numerous awards, including the "Government Innovation Award" from the Maryland Society of Public Administration and was the winner of the "Bright Ideas" award from the Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University. At the same time, Howard has been named by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundations as the healthiest county in Maryland three consecutive times.

Ken has also spearheaded regional transportation cooperative agreements and innovative approaches to attractive and sustainable workforce housing, to make sure employees are connected to the jobs of the future and can live and raise their families in one of the nation's most desirable communities.

Ken is the recipient of numerous awards, and was named a 'Tech Titan' by Washingtonian Magazine, a Top 25 'Doer, Dreamer and Driver' by Government Technology Magazine and a 'Regional Visionary' by the Greater Baltimore Committee for his leadership to bring broadband technology to Maryland. Hundreds of miles of fiber, funded by a federal grant managed by Howard County, has made Maryland one of the most wired states in the nation, connecting schools, libraries and government buildings and providing the technology infrastructure that will attract jobs.

Ken is president of National Democratic County Officials, an organization that serves as the voice of Democratic county officials across the U.S., and is on the executive committee of the

Democratic National Committee. He holds leadership positions in the National Association of Counties, including vice-chairman of the Health Steering Committee. Ken has also served as president of the Maryland Association of Counties and as chairman of the Baltimore Metropolitan Council, taking leadership roles in transportation, health care and fiscal affairs throughout Central Maryland.