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# Levitts discover time after sale of Chick & Ruth's in Annapolis



Former owner Ted Levitt reflects on life after Chick & Ruth's

By **Jess Feldman**  
Capital News Service

OCTOBER 4, 2017, 3:10 PM

**F**ollowing the sale of Chick & Ruth's Delly, Ted and Beth Levitt are more than ready to take advantage of something they never thought they'd have: time.

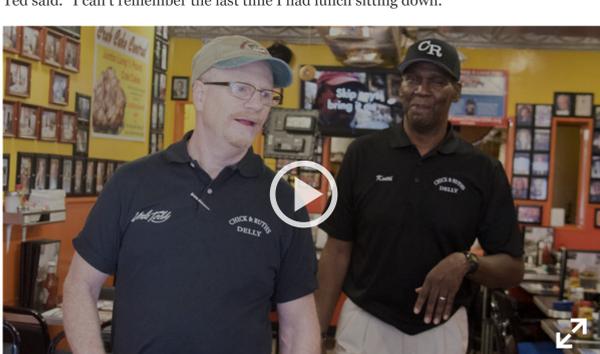
"Our whole life is the deli and we don't know anything else, I honestly don't even know what we're going to talk about," Beth laughed as she sat comfortably in her home in Crownsville. "We need time with each other, with our family and for ourselves."

From the day Chick and Ruth Levitt purchased the establishment in 1965, their son Ted has worked 52 weeks a year for 52 years.

Since they officially took over the family business in 1979, Ted and Beth have been in the deli most weekends, save for the rare, occasional vacation.

Beth's average day consisted of sitting in the basement with a pile of paperwork, keeping the place running from behind the scenes. As for Ted, it meant staying on his feet and constantly mingling with customers to make sure every individual was as happy there as he was.

"I get in an hour before we open at 5:30 a.m. and am on my feet right until closing time," Ted said. "I can't remember the last time I had lunch sitting down."



Annapolis landmark Chick and Ruth's Delly has been sold to new owner Keith Jones.

On the piano in the Levitts' foyer sits a sign recently given to them by a family friend that reads, "I'm not retired. I'm just getting started." As Ted sits on a lounge chair with his Yorkshire terrier Madi on his lap, he looks calm and content, ready for a new way of life.

The Levitts' reputation stems from the deli, yet what most people don't know is that Ted doubles as an avid engineer and collector, while Beth is a licensed real estate agent.

Ted has been collecting and working on cars since he purchased his first car, a 1933 Dodge Street Rod, when he was 17 years old. What was first a part-time, self-taught hobby will now become a daily routine.

"I just want to restore my cars," Ted said with a smile. "I've been a member of the Dodge Brothers Club for 38 years and the Rolls-Royce Owners' Club for 27 years but I haven't been to a single meeting yet."

In the basement of the Levitts' home behind a glass window sit car lifts, welding equipment, various building tools, 10 cars and two motorcycles, most of which were made before 1935. In a separate garage are two more Dodge Brothers classics from 1928.

On the wall of the main garage hang 12 clipboards — one for each car. Out of habit from clocking in at the deli his whole life, Ted has clocked in and out of his garage every time he restores anything ranging from a paint job to the carburetor.

In addition to materials, Ted has scrapbooks of photos that trace the lifelines of each of his cars. The most memorable photo to Ted, though, is one of Chick and Ruth in the back seat of their very first car on the day that Ted got it running again. Ruth Levitt died in 1986 and Chick Levitt died in 1995.

New owner Keith Jones, a California native and frequent customer of Chick & Ruth's, is honored to take over the holistic legacy of the deli and inn.

"What's unique about this place is its linkage to tradition, and I think it's my responsibility to maintain those traditions," Jones said. "Working with people of high integrity, like Ted and Beth, makes this transition that much easier."

The Levitts said they are looking forward to visiting their two children at least once a month. Scott, their son, works as an ER doctor in Oregon and their daughter, Lauren, is a real estate agent in New York City.

"I'm going to wake up every day and head over to Chick & Ruth's for breakfast," Ted said. "I'm looking forward to experiencing all the things that they like about the place. I can enjoy those now, too."



Owner Ted Levitt announced on social media Monday night that the longtime family owned business in Annapolis has been sold. (Joshua McKerrow)

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# Dreamers, immigrant-rights groups to sue Trump administration over DACA

Jess Feldman, Capital News Service    Published 4:16 p.m. ET Oct. 5, 2017



(Photo: Jess Feldman/Capital News Service)

As the deadline to apply for the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals program, or DACA, expired Thursday, program participants and immigrants-rights activists gathered to share stories and announce that they will continue the fight to stay in their home, America.

Officials at CASA announced they will sue the federal government over the elimination of the DACA program, which has given two-year renewable work permits to more than 800,000 immigrants who came into the United States as minors since the immigration policy was instituted in 2012.

CASA is the largest DACA-service provider in the state — headquartered in Langley Park, Maryland — and provides legal assistance and support to immigrants.

CASA and its legal team are suing the Trump administration on the basis that the government did not follow proper procedures in dismantling the program and was “motivated by an unconstitutional racial animus against Mexican and Central American DACA beneficiaries,” according to Fernanda Durand, CASA’s communications manager.

“And this is one step in a long fight,” said CASA’s Executive Director Gustavo Torres. “CASA has been fighting (alongside) the dreamers for many years.”

According to Durand, DACA participants — also known as dreamers — come from many different countries but the majority are Mexican and Central Americans, hence the specification within the lawsuit.

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If one’s DACA benefits expired before Sept. 5 or after March 5, 2018, they are not eligible for renewal and are subject to potential deportation, according to Jonathan Smith, a lawyer on CASA’s legal team from Washington Lawyers’ Committee for Civil Rights and Urban Affairs.

Missael Garcia, a 27-year-old DACA recipient for the past two years, led a group of about 20 hopeful dreamers in chants and songs that represented their cause. Garcia continuously raised his fist in the air and chanted, “Si, se puede,” — yes we can.

Garcia did not share why, but he was unable to renew his status. According to CASA’s legal team, many immigrants can’t renew either because of the time restraint or because they are unable to pay the \$495 fee to renew every two years.



**Jovani Rivera, a young DACA recipient, holds up a sign in front of CASA's Multicultural Center on Oct. 5, 2017. (Photo: Jess Feldman/Capital News Service)**

“My baby was literally born yesterday, so I am a new dad you know, joining the club of daddies. I think that being stable in this country with legal status is going to help me a lot to support my child now and I feel more determined to fight for her, fight for myself, for my situation and not just for mine, but for everybody in general.”

Other DACA recipients who shared their stories include Maricruz Abarca, a 29-year-old business owner and mother of three who came to the U.S. when she was 15, and Estefany Rodriguez, a 20-year-old dreamer who suffers from brain cancer.

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“Even though I am on a walker now, I will walk again,” Rodriguez said confidently while other dreamers held her at the podium.

Abarca received her GED in June 2016 after countless hours of studying, has a business license and takes classes at Baltimore City Community College in hopes of becoming a lawyer. Following the expiration of DACA, Abarca will no longer be able to continue running her three automotive-related businesses.

“I cried. I saw my husband, my mother, my kids running towards me and I got this diploma in my hand and that shows them that yes, you can do anything you want and now we want to get this opportunity. We need DACA.”

**More:** [Student work visa cuts could hurt Ocean City businesses \(/story/news/local/maryland/2017/09/07/trump-administration-j-1-visa-decision/636826001/\)](/story/news/local/maryland/2017/09/07/trump-administration-j-1-visa-decision/636826001/)

Daniella Acosta, a 17-year-old who has been a DACA recipient since she was 15, explained that despite the fear of uncertainty that followed the Trump administration's decision to end DACA, this lawsuit makes her optimistic.

"The plans you had are going to change because now, the opportunity that gave you a vision is took, so definitely everything that you think is one thing is another," Acosta said. "It gives you hope. We had the hope and then it was kind of took for a month, but this is giving you more of a chance to feel like DACA will stay and there may be a bigger opportunity for all of us."

The lawsuit is expected to be filed to the U.S. District Court located in Greenbelt, Maryland.

Other organizations named as plaintiffs in the suit include the Fair Immigration Reform Movement (FIRM), the Coalition for Humane Immigrant Rights of California (CHIRLA), One America, Make the Road Pennsylvania, Michigan United, Arkansas United Community Coalition and the Junta for Progressive Action.

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Nation & World

# Lawmakers weigh integrating services to break poverty cycle



Originally published November 7, 2017 at 12:34 pm

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By [JESS FELDMAN](#)

*The Associated Press*

ANNAPOLIS, Md. (AP) — To end multi-generational poverty, state and local agencies should integrate services such as early childhood development, temporary cash assistance and mental health programming, a governor-mandated commission told Maryland lawmakers Tuesday.

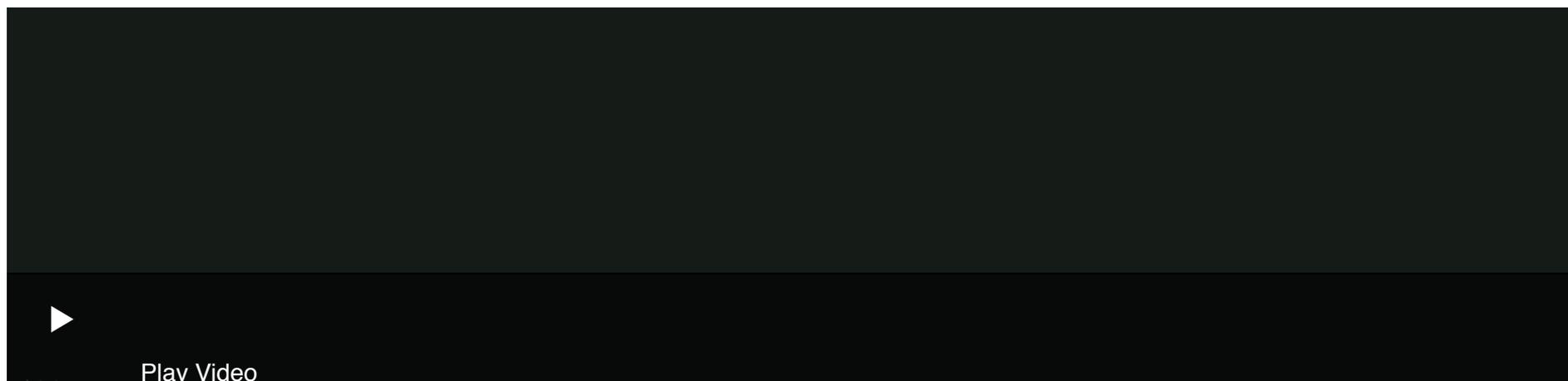
Two state legislative committees met Tuesday in Annapolis, Maryland, to evaluate the benefits of the two-generational approach, which looks at the needs of a family as a whole, rather than viewing children and parents separately. Proponents of this

approach consider early childhood development, economic assets, postsecondary and employment pathways and the importance of health and well-being in evaluating the needs of a family.

“This is a process for working toward benefiting whole families,” Sarah Haight, the associate director of Ascend at the Aspen Institute, a think tank that studies and advocates for a multi-generational approach to ending poverty, said Tuesday.

With a two-generation approach, for families with young children who have an annual income of \$25,000 or less, a \$3,000 annual increase throughout the years of early childhood yields a 17 percent increase in adult earnings for those children, according to data from Ascend.

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The institute said it has helped 3.5 million families annually in several states by pushing to integrate programs among agencies, including departments of human services and labor.

In 2016, Connecticut approved \$3 million in funding to establish pilot programs in six communities across the state, according to Ascend. Colorado and Tennessee are among other states that have coordinated their resources through leadership and rehabilitation programs to benefit low-income families.

“Recent census data shows that the number of Maryland children living in poverty would fill 2,434 school busses,” said Nicholette Smith-Bligen, executive director of family investment within the Maryland Department of Human Services. “That’s saying to us that this program (the two-generation approach) is critical.”

Allegany County, in rural Western Maryland, where 20 percent of the population lives in poverty, has already begun viewing their local systems with a two-generation approach. In the last six months, many agencies and departments in the county have worked together to establish a Head Start center, GED classes and financial education programs.

“It’s not a new program, it’s a change in the way we deliver services,” Courtney Thomas-Winterberg, the director of Allegany County Department of Social Services, told the committee members.

Thomas-Winterberg read out loud letters from several families within the county who have benefited from integrating services in Allegany County.

“No one was telling me what to do for the first time,” Thomas-Winterberg said one parent wrote. “They were actually asking me what I wanted to do.”

The county is creating a needs-based intake assessment that will connect a low-income family with the specific agency or agencies required for their circumstances. This opportunity allows families to have one set plan moving forward with intentionally linked services, which the commission hopes to replicate statewide.

“I think it’s absolutely a step forward,” Smith-Bligen told the University of Maryland’s Capital News Service. “I think that the committee seemed very interested in our work and what it could look like in the future and how they can help, so I think this is just the beginning.”

The commission is scheduled to release an interim report on or before Dec. 31, as required by Gov. Larry Hogan’s executive order, signed in March.



**JESS FELDMAN**

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# Legislators weigh recommendations to expand Prekindergarten

*Capital News Service*

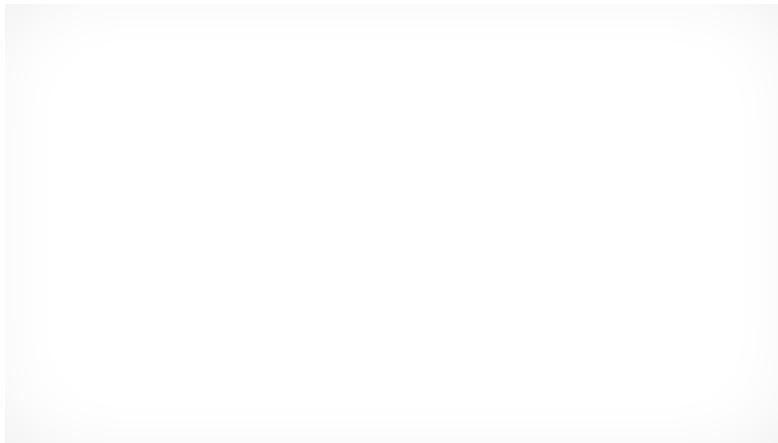
OCTOBER 11, 2017 5:56 PM

ANNAPOLIS, MD. — The state's income threshold for families to qualify for free prekindergarten should be increased by more than 60 percent, a state workgroup told a legislative panel this week.

A state House and Senate committee weighing universal schooling for 4-year-olds met on Tuesday and acknowledged the need for an increase in funding for the early education program statewide.

A workgroup formed to study universal access to prekindergarten was charged in April with presenting a report to the governor and the General Assembly by December.

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Universal, high quality, full-day prekindergarten should be accessible to all 4-year-old children through a variety of programs and providers with a combination of public and private funding, the state's education department, presenting the workgroup's findings, told the panel on Tuesday.

The legislative committee also took into account a report published in January 2016 by Augenblick, Palaich and Associates, a consulting firm in Colorado, that highlighted the need to offer more access to prekindergarten in Maryland and increase the

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number of high-quality spots available to serve 80 percent of the state's 4-year-olds.

According to the Colorado firm's data, 35.6 percent of 4-year-olds were enrolled in state prekindergarten in Maryland as of January 2016.

Maryland's enrollment is similar to neighboring states' — such as Delaware and Virginia, which have 5.6 percent enrollment and 17.7 percent enrollment respectively; however, other states have rates of prekindergarten enrollment greater than 70 percent, such as Florida, Oklahoma and Vermont.

Maryland currently mandates that each district provide at least a half day of free pre-K for 4-year-olds who are in households with incomes at or below 185 percent of the federal poverty level, which is \$45,510 for a family of four, according to Steven Hershkowitz of the Maryland State Education Association.

The income level qualification would be raised to 300 percent of the federal poverty level, or \$73,800 for a family of four, over a period of at least 10 years if the workgroup's recommendations are implemented.

The workgroup also suggests that funds flow through the state Department of Education and be distributed to school systems and community-based programs through a grant process.

The change would improve access for many families in the state who can't afford a private provider, but also aren't eligible for free programs.

Sen. Nancy King, D-Montgomery, the chair of the committee, said she supports expanding pre-kindergarten, but that funding will be a challenge.

"I'm definitely a believer in pre-k I'll tell you that," King said Tuesday. "Difference in abilities is outstanding, from someone who has had pre-k and someone who hasn't. You wonder

throughout the years who does catch up."

On Thursday, Maryland's Kirwin Commission on Innovation and Excellence in Education is scheduled to discuss revising funding for state education, as well as consider the proposal for universal prekindergarten.

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