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## **Maryland Women's Conference stresses financial independence**

by Sherry Greenfield | Staff Writer

The message from the Maryland Women's Conference in Frederick was simple – don't depend on a husband, boyfriend or significant other to provide financial security.

Women need to understand that it's up to them to be financially independent, said Allen C. Cox, managing director with the Maryland Coalition for Financial Literacy. Women should not depend solely on a man to provide them financial security.

"Having a man is not a financial plan," Cox said, at the Friday conference.

Margie Young of New Market got the message.

"I'm married and I want to make sure I know my finances," she said.

The Maryland Women's Conference, which attracted more than 200 women, was the first of its type in Frederick County. It was designed to give women a lesson on how to secure a solid financial future.

Financial experts provided women with information on retirement, legal issues, investing and estate planning at the Frederick Community College Conference Center.

Darby Jones, conference chairwoman, said she thought about putting the event on for the last eight or nine years because of her experience working in the financial sector.

As the vice president and senior trust officer for "My Bank" First United Bank & Trust, Jones said she has worked with women who know little about their home finances.

"I hope every woman here runs home and makes a change and a commitment to pay more attention to their financial future," Jones said. "My experience in dealing with people on the financial level is that few women know even a fraction of what they should about the state of their own personal and family finances."

Nearly nine out of 10 women will be solely responsible for their finances at some point, according to Jones.

"You don't have a choice," Jones said. "You gotta do this. You don't have to like it, you have to learn it."

The keynote speaker at the conference, Cordia Harrington, CEO and president of the Tennessee Bun Company, was there to drive home the point.

"My goal is to support Darby's vision," Harrington said. "And I hope to inspire women and share the hope that they can reach their goals."

The conference was sponsored by My Bank First United, Sylvana Institute for Medical Aesthetics and Shockley Honda.

Proceeds from \$25 admission fee will benefit the Frederick County Commission for Women's Woman to Woman Mentoring Program.

The Commission for Women develops and implements programs to educate the women of Frederick County on issues that range from childcare and health to domestic violence.

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