

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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2017 Man of the District Announces Judges, Featured Performer, Contestants, and MCs

Real Housewives of Potomac's Ashley Boalch Darby and WUSA9's Markette Sheppard join prominent DC women from the media, marketing, and theater on judging panel.

Washington, DC – Man of the District is excited to announce the judges, contestants, featured performer, and emcees that will appear at the May 22 event at Penn Social in Chinatown.

2016 Man of the District Judges



Ashley Boalch Darby – Star of Bravo's Real Housewives of Potomac, she is a Maryland native with a spicy personality and an unmatched drive to succeed. The oldest child in her family, Ashley grew up juggling multiple jobs to help support her single mom and younger siblings. When she turned 18, she attended the University of Maryland and bartended on the side to keep both her and her family financially stable. [Full Biography](#)



Markette Sheppard – Host of Great Day Washington on WUSA 9, the CBS station in our nation's capital, she's also winner of a 2017 national Telly Award and the 2016 CableFAX award for Best Talk Show Host in the region. [Full Biography](#)



Karen Maria Alston – Founder/CEO of Alston Marketing Group and an innovative women's empowerment non-profit called The Spectrum. Alston works with government and non-profits developing marketing campaigns in the Mid-Atlantic region of the United States. [Full biography](#)



Jessica Hansen – Hansen co-founded and currently serves as Artistic Director of Lean & Hungry Theater, which creates audio adaptations of Shakespeare and other classics to support teachers and students in the classroom, and to make quality theatre accessible to everyone. Lean & Hungry's shows are currently heard on public radio stations in eight states and the District of Columbia, with an estimated audience of 42,000 listeners for each show. [Full biography](#)



Elaine Perhach – Elaine serves as the Spa Director for Aura spa at VIDA Fitness. She has been nationally certified and licensed as a massage therapist since she joined VIDA in 2007. Elaine oversees all operations and development at VIDA Renaissance and assists in the company wide operation of Aura spa. [Full biography](#)

Featured Performer



Jesus Hernandez – Tenor Jesus Daniel Hernandez was born and raised in Juarez Mexico, and moved to the United States as a teenager. In 2003 Mr Hernández chose to enlist in the US Army, and soon after, volunteered to serve in a Chemical Unit being deployed to Iraq. In 2007, a chance encounter with Plácido Domingo in San Antonio, TX changed his life. After a concert given by Maestro Domingo, Specialist Hernández asked if he could sing for the great tenor to see what the Maestro thought of his voice. Upon hearing the young soldier sing,

Maestro Domingo invited the tenor to join the prestigious Plácido Domingo-Cafritz Young Artist Program with the Washington National Opera. [Full Biography](#)

The Man of the District Contestants

Each Man of the District contestant will present a 90--second talent of his choosing, model business wear, and answer an impromptu interview question related to the District. Half of the available points for competition are awarded for fundraising efforts and advance ticket sales.

[Full List of Contestants](#)

Masters of Ceremonies



Tara Lewis – Lewis is Yelp’s Senior Regional Director of Marketing and spends her days finding fun and creative ways to build community and connect people to amazing local businesses throughout over 20 cities across North America. Despite her travels, she remains in a committed relationship to her hometown of Washington DC, where she also serves as a #WeDC Ambassador and member of NFTE’s E-Council. [Full Biography](#)



Don Michael Mendoza – In January 2012, Don Michael co-founded La Ti Do and currently serves as its Executive Artistic Director. Recently, Don Michael also founded Producing The District; a new blog on his producing experiences in Washington, DC and in cities around the country. Through this, he offers the backstage perspective on the trials and tribulations of an often overlooked position when people think of the entertainment industry. [Full Biography](#)

About Man of the District

Man of the District is a 6-year-old event that has raised more than \$70,000 for Children’s National with every dollar staying in the District. Funds support research and training, purchase equipment, and pay for uncompensated care, all in support of the center’s mission to save and improve the lives of as many children as possible.

Competition will begin at 7 p.m. Each candidate will present a 90-second talent of his choosing, model business wear, and answer an impromptu interview question related to the District. Half of the available points for competition are awarded for fundraising efforts and advance ticket sales.

Tickets are now available for \$15 via [THIS LINK](#) or at the door beginning at 6 p.m. Penn Social is located at 801 E Street Northwest.

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Don Michael Mendoza, Executive Artistic Director of the La-Ti-Do DC/NYC cabaret series in partnership with the Miss District of Columbia Scholarship Organization, produces the Man of the District competition.