

www.baltimoresun.com/news/maryland/harford/belair/ph-ag-hoc-belair-casting-0522-20130519,0,2110509.story

## baltimoresun.com

### Nearly 1,000 turn out for Bel Air 'House of Cards' casting call

BY DAVID ANDERSON, [daanderson@baltsun.com](mailto:daanderson@baltsun.com)

2:33 PM EDT, May 21, 2013

An estimated 1,000 people came through the Bel Air Reckord Armory Saturday in the hope of landing a part on the second season of the Netflix television series "House of Cards."

"It was a great cross section of people, I think, that will allow us to depict all walks of life in Washington, D.C.," local casting director Kimberly Skyrme said.

"House of Cards" stars Oscar-winning actor Kevin Spacey as a scheming member of the U.S. House of Representatives, manipulating, double dealing and bullying his way to the White House. Set in Washington, the series has been filmed in Baltimore and Harford County. Havre de Grace has doubled as Gaffney, S.C., the hometown of Spacey's character, Rep. Frank Underwood.

Local production offices and soundstages were established in Joppa last year, and filming of the second season began in late April.

Skyrme, who is the owner of Kimberly Skyrme Casting of University Park in Prince George's County, and her staff took headshots and the resumes, and spent several minutes speaking with hundreds of men, women and children who came through the Armory gymnasium throughout the day Saturday.

"The line was wrapped around the block since 8:30 this morning," Mike Brown, a casting intern, said.

Tara Gorman, a Bethesda commercial real estate attorney, helped Skyrme with the casting process, sitting down with many of the hopefuls.

Many – including couples, families and groups of friends – had traveled from as far away as New York, New Jersey and south of Richmond, Va.

Gorman marveled at people's willingness to travel so far "to get in line to have a conversation for three to five minutes."

Laurel Rahn was one of those people. She made the roughly 90-minute trip from Alexandria, Va.,

advertisement

JPS A. BANK

TRAVELER Dress Shirts	2 for \$95
TRAVELER Suits	\$275
TRAVELER Sportcoats	\$200
TRAVELER Khakis	\$60

shop now

TRAVELER'S COLLECTION WORKS FOR YOU

to Bel Air, hoping to land a small speaking part or a spot in the background crowd.

Rahn has worked on a number of productions, the largest being the 2007 Will Smith film, "I Am Legend."

She was one of hundreds of extras portraying panicked Manhattanites trying to get off the island ahead of a worldwide plague turning humans into monsters.

"It would look really good on my resume to work on a show like this, for the cast that it has and the directors and writers," Rahn said of "House of Cards."

In addition to Spacey, the show stars Robin Wright of the Oscar-winning 1994 film "Forrest Gump," and has David Fincher at the helm as executive producer. Fincher also directed two episodes of the first season, and has achieved fame as the director of hit films such as "Se7en," "Fight Club" and "The Social Network."

Rahn arrived at the Armory around 4 p.m., after the lines had thinned, but she was able to catch Skyrme as she was leaving, and handed her resume and headshot to her in the rear parking lot.

Two casting calls were held last year at the Armory for "House of Cards."

"The people were the draw and the space itself was ideal," Skyrme said. "We had a lot of room for people to wait as well as for us to interview them."

She praised local officials such as Trish Heidenreich, Bel Air's director of economic development, and Armory Manager Dave Gigliotti for their assistance.

"It's always good to help out in the arts and the Armory, I feel, is a center of activity within the arts and entertainment district," Gigliotti said.

At Monday night's Bel Air town meeting, Mayor Edward Hopkins complimented Gigliotti and Heidenreich for their efforts in accommodating Saturday's casting call.

Noting that the event was "well attended," Hopkins said he hopes the visitors, many of whom he said were from outside Harford County, had a chance to look around Bel Air, eat at the local restaurants and visit other businesses in town.

Jack Gerbes director of the Maryland Film Office, said he spent a few hours at the Armory Saturday, helping with the casting call, and gave "kudos" to Heidenreich and Gigliotti for providing the local logistical support for the event.

"They see the benefit of having – in this case – 1,000 people come into downtown Bel Air," said Gerbes, of Forest Hill, who explained his agency is an "information, logistical and location resource" for film and television productions in Maryland.

Gerbes also discussed the economic impact "House of Cards" has had in Maryland so far. He said more than 2,100 Marylanders were hired to work on the first season as members of the cast and crew, and as extras.

The production also "purchased or rented" goods and services from more than 1,800 businesses and vendors in the state, including more than 300 in Harford County.

"Where film companies go they certainly leave money behind, so it's great for jobs -- great for

Maryland businesses," Gerbes said.