



Montgomery County, MD  
Department of Health and  
Human Services  
Office of Community Affairs  
[montgomerycountymd.gov](http://montgomerycountymd.gov)

Montgomery County DHHS  
Community Action Agency  
1401 Rockville Pike, 3rd Floor  
Rockville, MD 20852  
[montgomerycountymd.gov/  
communityaction](http://montgomerycountymd.gov/communityaction)  
Main: 240-777-1697  
MD RELAY: 711



# Montgomery County, Maryland

## Community Action Board

### Annual Report

### 2016-2017





## Our Mission:

*To reduce poverty and increase self-sufficiency among County residents through services, partnerships, and advocacy.*

Alternative formats of the Community Action Board Annual Report 2016-2017 are available upon request. To make a request, please call 240-777-1697. TTY users, please call MD Relay (711).



[mc311.com](http://mc311.com)

Call 311 or 240-777-0311

**Montgomery County Maryland  
COMMUNITY ACTION BOARD  
2016-2017**

**Chairperson: Pamela Luckett  
Vice Chair: Ron Jennings**

Alejandro Becerra, *Human Rights Commission*  
Mary Bennett, *Nonprofit Montgomery*  
Natasha Carter, *Armand Center*  
Stacy Coletta, *Department of Transportation*  
Lisa Conlon, *Board of Education*  
Jackie Dennard, *People's Community Baptist Church*  
Tiffany Jones, *Representative of the Head Start Policy Council and the Low-Income Community, Rockville*  
Tekele (Marie) Ghonda Gah, *Representative of the Low-Income Community, MidCounty*  
Gail Gunod-Green, *Housing Opportunities Commission*  
Laura Irwin, *Spanish Catholic Center, Catholic Charities*  
Agnes Leshner, *Montgomery's Kids*  
Pamela Luckett, *County Council Designee*  
Michael Lukpetris, *Representative of the Low-Income Community, Gaithersburg*  
Steve Ruffin, *Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity*  
Laurie-Anne Sayles, *Representative of the Low-Income Community, Gaithersburg*  
Michael Subin, *County Executive's Designee*  
Juliette Traore, *Representative of the Low-Income Community, Rockville*

The Community Action Board (CAB) serves in an advisory capacity to the County Executive and County Council, and as an advocate on behalf of the poor and working poor of the County. Members are appointed by the County Executive and confirmed by the County Council.

The Board has four areas of responsibility, as defined in its enabling legislation:

- *Assessing the needs and problems of low-income people in the County;*
- *Recommending programs to meet the needs and solve the problems;*
- *Reviewing the Community Action Agencies' staff implementation of those programs; and*
- *Maintaining County policy and service delivery from the point of view of low-income residents.*

The Montgomery County Community Action Board is the governing body for the Montgomery County Head Start Program and the Community Action Agency. An annual report on the Head Start program is required by Public Law 110-134 "Improving Head Start for School Readiness Act of 2007" reauthorizing the Head Start program, Sec. 644 (a)(2) [42 U.S.C. 9839].

The Community Action Board meets on the fourth Tuesday each month at 7 pm, except in July, August and December. Meetings are held at 1401 Rockville Pike, Room 3603, Rockville. The Executive Committee meets on the second Tuesday of each month at 4 pm at 1401 Rockville Pike, Room 3603 or 3316, Rockville.

Montgomery County will provide sign language interpreters and other special accommodations for Board meetings and programs upon request. Requests for accommodations must be made at least three business days in advance. Please call 240-777-1697 to make a request. TTY users, please call MD Relay (711).

*Inquiries may also be made through the County Executive's office:  
240-777-2528 or [CountyExecutiveBoard@montgomerycountymd.gov](mailto:CountyExecutiveBoard@montgomerycountymd.gov)*



## THE HISTORY OF COMMUNITY ACTION

On August 20, 1964, President Lyndon Baines Johnson signed into law, Senate Bill 2642, better known as the Economic Opportunity Act of 1964, declaring “unconditional war on poverty.” Title II of that law, provided for urban and rural communities to mobilize their resources to combat poverty through Community Action Programs. The most important provision of the Economic Opportunity Act was the requirement that Community Action Programs be developed, conducted, and administered with the maximum participation of area residents.

The following year, Community Action Agencies (CAA) were established, and Head Start programs opened around the country to provide comprehensive services—including health care, social services, and early education—to low-income preschool children. Since then, the Montgomery County CAA and its Board, have been charged with the responsibility of recommending programs to improve the lives of the County’s poor, the development of leaders within low-income communities, and the development of systems to increase their self-sufficiency, self-esteem and gain more control over their own lives. Today, the national Community Action Partnership network remains the largest single provider of Head Start programs.

The Community Action Board (CAB) serves as the governing body for the Montgomery County Community Action Agency and its Head Start program, and thus, has oversight responsibilities for its federally supported services. CAB shares program governance with the Head Start Policy Council and works closely with Montgomery County Public Schools, the delegate agency providing services under the auspices of the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS). As the federally designated grantee, Community Action Agency collaborates with DHHS Early Childhood, School Health Services, and myriad partner organizations.

Together, this strong partnership assures that some of

Montgomery County’s most economically fragile children, including those with disabilities, are receiving the education, health, nutrition, and social services they need to succeed in school. Parents are involved in all aspects of the Head Start Program, with representatives serving on the Head Start Policy Council as well as the Community Action Board.

Originally, a number of the County’s antipoverty services were delivered directly by Community Action Agency (CAA) employees. As the county’s population grew, and as the Community Action Board, advocates and county officials identified unmet needs, nonprofit community providers became important partners in addressing the needs of low-income residents, with the support of volunteers and a blended funding stream that includes, but is not wholly reliant upon, Montgomery County and other public funding. In addition to those direct services delivered by the Agency’s Takoma-East Silver Spring Community Action Center (TESS) staff and its Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) partnership, DHHS assigns its antipoverty contracts to CAA to monitor expenditures and strengthen services through technical support.



*President Lyndon Johnson signs the War on Poverty Bill in the White House Rose Garden during a ceremony in 1964. The legislation led to the establishment of several programs, including Community Action Agencies.*

### Enabling Legislation: Article IV. Community Action Agency, Sec. 27-40.

**Statement of policy:** “It is the public policy of the County to promote programs to create an awareness of poverty; promote coordination among private and public agencies concerned with poverty; promote better use of existing resources and develop leadership among poor citizens to solve community problems; and develop broad community strategies to attack the basic causes of poverty.”

(1976 L.M.C., ch. 1, § 1; 1977 L.M.C., ch. 28, § 10; 1977 L.M.C., ch. 30, § 15; 1997 L.M.C., ch. 25, §1.)

**In Sec. 27-41 (a),** it is further stated that “There is a Community Action Agency within the Executive branch of the County government. The Agency creates and maintains community action programs to encourage the use of public and private resources to enable low-income people to become self-sufficient; to reduce poverty in the County; to involve the low-income population in developing and carrying out anti-poverty programs in the County; and to make government more responsive to the needs of low-income people.”

## The Montgomery County Community Action Board : FY 2017 Year in Review

### Advocacy: Food and Nutrition

- Nov 2016 – CAB signed-on to Partnership to End Childhood Hunger in MD letter advocating for additional funding for Maryland Meals for Achievement, eliminating the “reduced” meals category in the FARMS program, and increasing the minimum Food Supplement benefit
- Feb 2017 – CAB submitted testimony in support of HB 273 – Summer Meals Expansion Grant Program
- March 2017 – CAB submitted testimony regarding the Maryland Cares for Kids Act, Maryland Meals for Achievement for Teens Bill, and the Hunger-Free Schools Act of 2017
- June 2017 – CAB signed-on to a Maryland Hunger Solutions letter requesting support for federal nutrition programs in the 2018 Farm Bill

### Advocacy: Housing

- Nov 2016 – CAB resubmitted a letter of support regarding Bill 19-15, which provides added protections for tenants in the County. The Council had been holding regular worksessions on the bill for over a year. The bill was unanimously passed by the Council on Nov. 29.

### Advocacy: EITC/VITA

- Nov 2016 – CAB signed-on to a Maryland CASH (Creating Assets, Savings, and Hope) Campaign letter urging Senator Cardin to become a leader on EITC expansion
- Feb 2017 – CAB signed-on to the Corporation for Enterprise Development (CFED) letter of to the House and Senate Appropriations Committees regarding supporting VITA funding
- April 2017 – CAB signed-on to National Consumer Law Center letter regarding consumer protections for prepaid cards

### Advocacy: Early Childhood Issues

- Feb 2017 – CAB submitted testimony in support of HB 452 - Employer Child Care Center and Employer-Provided Child Care Services
- March 2017 – CAB met with County Council Vice President Hans Riemer to discuss his proposal to expand part-day Head Start classes to full-day programs and to expand afterschool programs at high-poverty schools
- March 2017 – CAB participated in the County Executive’s annual meeting. Chair Pamela Luckett asked about plans to expand affordable Pre-K
- March 2017 – CAB submitted a letter to the Council requesting its support for expanding Head Start part-day classes to full-day programs
- May 2017 – CAB members attended a Council budget hearing to show support for expansion of Pre-K and Head Start in the County

### Advocacy: Work Supports/Self-Sufficiency/Safety Net Services

- Nov 2016 – CAB submitted a letter to County Council thanking the Council for passage of the Parental Leave Bill
- Dec 2016 – CAB sent a letter to Governor Hogan supporting an expansive paid sick leave policy for the state and opposing the Governor’s proposed plan that would only provide paid sick leave to workers employed by companies with 50+ employees
- Jan 2017 – CAB submitted a letter of support for Bill 49-16, establishing a microlending program in the County
- Feb 2017 – CAB submitted testimony in support of the Maryland Healthy Working Families Act
- Sept 2017 – CAB testified in support of Bill 28-17 to increase the County’s minimum wage to \$15/hour

### CAB Priorities

- Oct 2016 – CAB testified at the HHS Committee Roundtable Discussion for Boards, Committees, and Commissions regarding FY18 priorities
- Nov 2016 – CAB testified at the DHHS Community Budget Forum regarding the Board’s priorities for FY18
- Feb 2017 – CAB participated in the MCAP/CDN Legislative Action Day in Annapolis with staff
- March 2017 – CAB submitted a letter to the MD Dept of Budget and Management requesting additional funding for DHCD
- March 2017 – CAB met with County Council President Berliner to discuss the proposed federal budget cuts, Self-Sufficiency Standard, minimum wage increase, and other CAB priorities
- April 2017 – CAB testified at the County Council budget hearing re: CAB priorities, including protecting the safety net from federal budget cuts, expanding Pre-K/Head Start, and expanding afterschool programs

### Conferences and Trainings

- Oct 2016 – Board training on Head Start governing boards’ legal and fiscal responsibilities
- Nov 2016 – Board training on Head Start comprehensive services
- Dec 2016 – Board training on Head Start Performance Standards and Eligibility, Recruitment, Selection, Attendance & Enrollment (ERSEA)
- Jan 2017 – Board training on the Head Start Community Needs Assessment
- March 2017 – Board members completed online Open Meetings Act training
- April 2017 – Board training on Results Oriented Management and Accountability (ROMA)
- May 2017 – Board participation in the Maryland Community Action Partnership Conference
- Aug 2017 – Board participation in the National Community Action Partnership Conference
- Sept 2017 – Board training about the structure of the Head Start Policy Council



**Left:** CAB’s Executive Committee members are sworn in during the June 2017 CAB meeting.

**Right:** Chair Pamela Luckett and CAB member Jackie Dennard staff the Community Action table at the Women’s Legislative Briefing

## CAB Kicks-Off Leadership Development Institute



### Leadership Development Institute

In FY17, the Community Action Board developed and implemented an advocacy training program for low-income residents called the Leadership Development Institute (LDI). The LDI includes monthly workshops facilitated by CAB members that cover a variety of advocacy topics, including working with elected officials, storytelling, letter-writing, and developing testimony. The goal of the program is to teach participants basic advocacy skills so that they can better advocate for the needs of their communities. Participants had the opportunity to testify before the County Council during budget hearings held in the spring. In May 2017, sixteen participants successfully graduated from the very first LDI program. The LDI was honored with a National Association of Counties Award in the category of Civic Engagement and Public Information.



**Top Left:** LDI participants practice their original testimony before a mock County Council.

**Top Right:** LDI participants Hyun Martin, JoAnn Burl, and Ingrid Robinson at a County Council budget hearing.

**Bottom Left:** Brandon Beasely, one of the sixteen graduates of the very first LDI program.

**Bottom Right:** LDI graduates were invited to attend an alumni workshop in August about participating on a County Board, Committee, or Commission, or a non-profit Board.



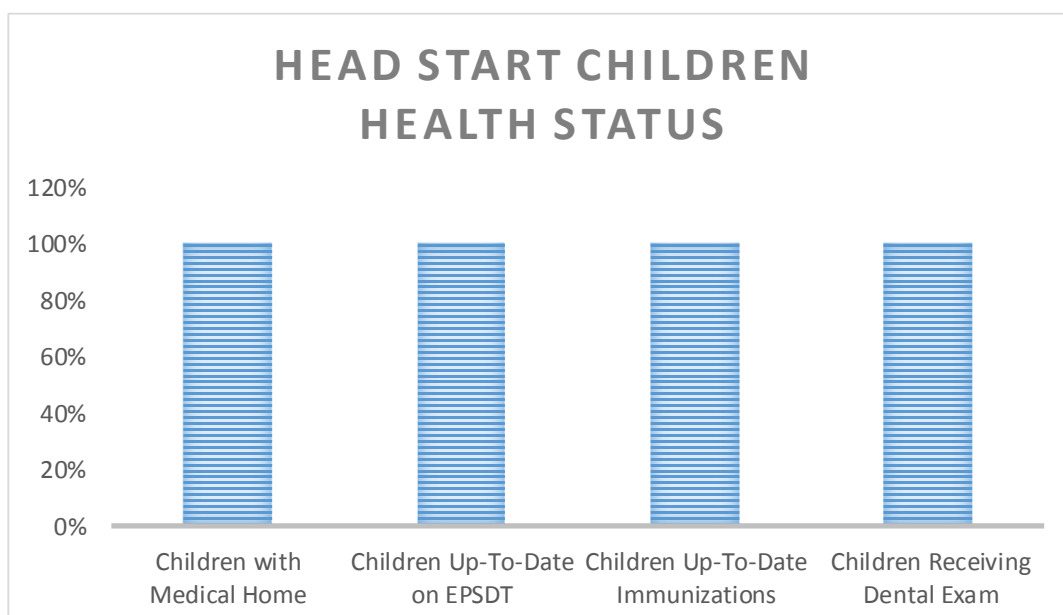
**HEAD START IN MONTGOMERY COUNTY** is a comprehensive program to prepare young children, ages 3-5, for success in school. Services are provided for low-income children and their families, including: developmentally appropriate pre-school education, health, dental, mental health, nutrition and social services; services to children with disabilities; and parent and family engagement activities. The Community Action Agency (CAA) is the Grantee agency for the County's Head Start program. Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) is the Delegate agency that provides direct services for eligible Head Start children and families.



### Family Engagement with Montgomery County's Head Start

<b>Services Received by Head Start Families SY16-17</b>	
Emergency/ crisis intervention (immediate needs for food, clothing or shelter)	100%
Housing assistance (subsidies, utilities, repairs)	10%
Mental health services	4%
ESL	24%
Adult education (including GED)	13%
Job training	5%
Substance abuse	0%
Child abuse and neglect	8%
Domestic violence	1%
Child support assistance	2%
Health education	1%
Assistance to families of incarcerated individuals	1%
Parenting education	23%
Marriage education	1%
Families that received at least one service	100%

### Percentage of Enrolled Children That Received Health and Dental Services in SY16-17



\*EPSDT—Early and Periodic Screening, Diagnostic and Treatment

## Head Start Enrollment

Head Start in Montgomery County is a school based program that follows the annual calendar of Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS), and has a federally funded enrollment of 648 children.

Head Start Enrollment	Total # Served SY 13-14	Total # Served SY 14-15	Total # Served SY 15-16	Total # Served SY 16-17
September	628	629	646	648
October	628	630	648	648
November	628	622	648	648
December	628	643	648	648
January	628	648	648	648
February	626	647	647	648
March	626	646	645	648
April	628	646	643	648
May	628	638	638	648
June	628	637	638	648
Attendance Rate	94.01%	91.63%	91.47%	95%
Avg. Enrollment	627.3	638.7	644.9	648

\*Based on enrollment reported to the Office of Head Start the 5<sup>th</sup> day of each month.

Enrollment figures over the past several years reflect a positive family attitude toward participating in the Head Start program. Teaching teams and family service workers collaborate with parents by providing support and problem-solving strategies to remove any barriers that may negatively affect enrollment.

## Trends

- Montgomery County served 71 three-year-old children over the course of the year, in four classes which served 15 three-year-olds each, and in three mixed age classes. It is estimated that over 1,000 three-year-old children are Head Start eligible based on census data; applications are expressly limited because of the few Head Start seats actually available for three-year-old children.
- Montgomery County served 660 four-year-olds during the course of the FY17 school year.
- Over 700 four-year-old children, with established eligibility for Head Start, were unable to be served by Head Start and were placed in MCPS Pre-K classrooms in compliance with state law. 3,675\* four-year-old children, whose eligibility is based on FARMS, were served by Pre-K. An additional 120 four-year-old children received Pre-K services through the Maryland State Department of Education's Pre-K+ program.
- Conservatively **only 40%** of the Head Start eligible children are served in our County by Head Start.

\*Source: data from MCPS regarding registration and enrollment rates for SY 16-17 ([montgomeryschoolsmd.org](http://montgomeryschoolsmd.org)) and PIR report from August 2017.



**Left:** Staff at New Hampshire Estates Elementary School deliver lunch to students in the Head Start program.

**Right:** Students and parents participate in the Head Start Health Fair.



## Ready for Kindergarten

At the start of the 2016-2017 school year, MCPS Head Start teachers administered the Early Learning Assessment (ELA), the pre-school version of the Maryland State Department of Education's (MSDE) Kindergarten Readiness Assessment (KRA). ELA also aligns with the Head Start Early Learning Framework (ELOF) and supports teachers in developing individualized lesson plans for children. Both the ELA and KRA use age-appropriate performance tasks that measure specific skills and observations of children's work and play to determine what each entering kindergartener knows and is able to do in four specific domains: Language & Literacy, Mathematics, Physical Well-Being & Motor Development, and Social Foundations. The ELA measures the skills and behaviors that children learned prior to entering kindergarten.

Assessment Outcomes	
Children from low-income households are ready for kindergarten	30% (compared with 60% of children from mid-to-high income households)
Children who previously attended Head Start exhibited the foundational skills and behaviors that enable a child to fully participate in the kindergarten curriculum, that is <i>demonstrating readiness</i> consistently	43%
<i>Approaching readiness</i> , that is, showed some of the foundational skills and behaviors that are needed to participate in the kindergarten curriculum	34%
Showed <i>emerging readiness</i> , in which children displayed minimal foundational skills and behaviors needed to meet kindergarten expectations successfully.	17%



**Left:** Head Start parents are honored by MCPS staff and partners.

**Right:** Local Head Start parents joined parents from across the country for Head Start Day on the Hill.

**Financial Audit:** Montgomery County has an annual Independent Auditor's Report on Internal Control, Financial Reporting and on Compliance and Other Matters, based on an Audit of Financial Statements Performed in Accordance with the *OMB Uniform Administrative Requirement 2 CFR Chapter I, Chapter II, Part 200 et al.* A copy of the Audit for the year ending June 30, 2016, can be found at the County's website: <http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/Finance/financial.html>. The most current Montgomery County MD Report on Expenditures of Federal Awards for Fiscal Year 2016 was performed for the County Council and County Executive by CliftonLarsonAllen LLP, Certified Public Accountants and Consultants.

**FY17 COMPARISON OF HEAD START FEDERAL BUDGET AND EXPENDITURES & FY18 PROPOSED HEAD START FEDERAL BUDGET**

Category	FY17Budget	FY17Expenditures*	FY18 Budget
Personnel/Fringe Benefits	4,376,720	4,347,785	4,376,720
Travel	12,500	23,798	12,500
Supplies and Equipment	45,356	47,363	45,356
Contractual	256,455	242,875	256,455
Training/Technical Assistance/Other	59,780	86,720	59,780
Subtotal Federal	4,750,811	4,748,541	4,750,811
Non Federal Share	1,187,703	1,187,703	1,187,703
Total	5,938,514	5,936,244	5,938,514

\*The Montgomery County Head Start Program experienced a personnel lapse during FY17.

**Personnel** for Head Start includes: MCPS Head Start staff (e.g., teachers, paraeducators, speech pathologists, psychologists, social workers, social services assistants); and DHHS staff: community health nurses, school health room aides, a dental hygienist, a nurse administrator, a community services aide, a Head Start program manager, a program aide, and an administrative specialist.

**Travel** includes costs associated with reimbursing staff for travel to Head Start sites to provide health and dental services, and for staff and parents to attend training and national, regional, and state conferences.

**Supplies** include Child and Family services supplies; instructional materials for Head Start classrooms, including literacy, mathematics, science, music and art materials; and office supplies such as postage, paper products, printer supplies and other registration materials.

**Contractual services** include MCPS's administrative service funds for the Audit Requirements of the OMB Uniformed Guidance Subpart F. Contractual health costs includes specialty dental treatment providers, not available through insurance or dental clinics, and Mobile Medical Care, Inc. to provide contractual Head Start Nurses. Community Action Agency (CAA) contractual services includes training for the Policy Council and Community Action Board on shared governance and methods to achieve board goals within a government structure.

**Other** funding within MCPS covers a variety of expenses including training & staff development, child liability insurance, parent services such as training, parent/child mathematics and literacy activities, bus transportation for classes to attend field trips, reimbursement of mileage for home visits and parent meetings for teachers, paraeducators, special needs teacher, and social service assistants. **Other** funding for CAA provides assistance with costs for family related activities, and supplies necessary to conduct various meetings. These funds provide a range of administrative supports to the Montgomery County, MD, Head Start Program such as local travel costs for contract and grant monitoring. **Other** funding for School Health includes costs associated with continuing education and performance standards training for Head Start School Health Room nurses, technicians and hygienists and providing educational training experiences and materials for parents, students and paraprofessional staff.

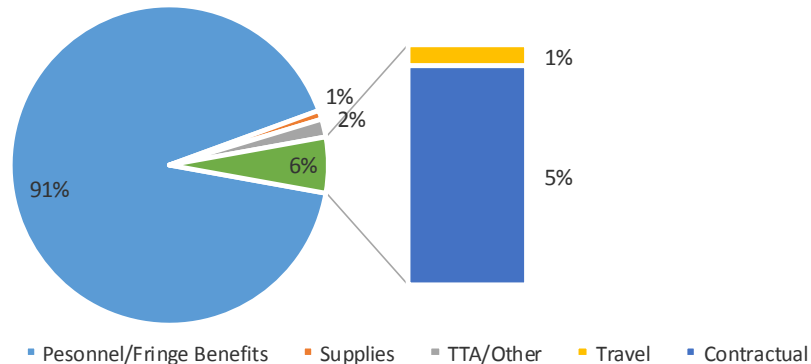
## Head Start Budget Basics:

**School Year 2016-17 = Fiscal Year 2017**

### Montgomery County Head Start Funding Sources FY`17

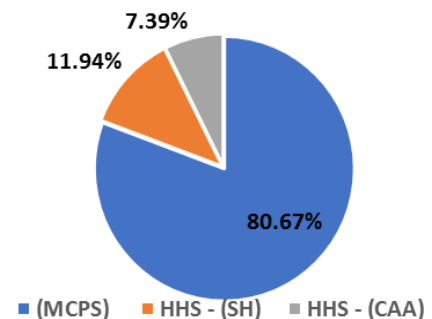
Source	Amount
Federal	\$4,750,811
MSDE State Supplemental	\$113,536
MSDE Child Development Grant	\$113,536
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$4,977,883</b>

### FY17 Head Start Federal Budget Expenditures



(MCPS)	80.67%	<b>\$3,832,684</b>
HHS - (SH)	11.94%	<b>\$567,051</b>
HHS - (CAA)	7.39%	<b>\$351,076</b>
<b>Total Budget for Federal Funds:</b>		<b>\$4,750,811</b>

### FY17 HS Federal Budget Allocation



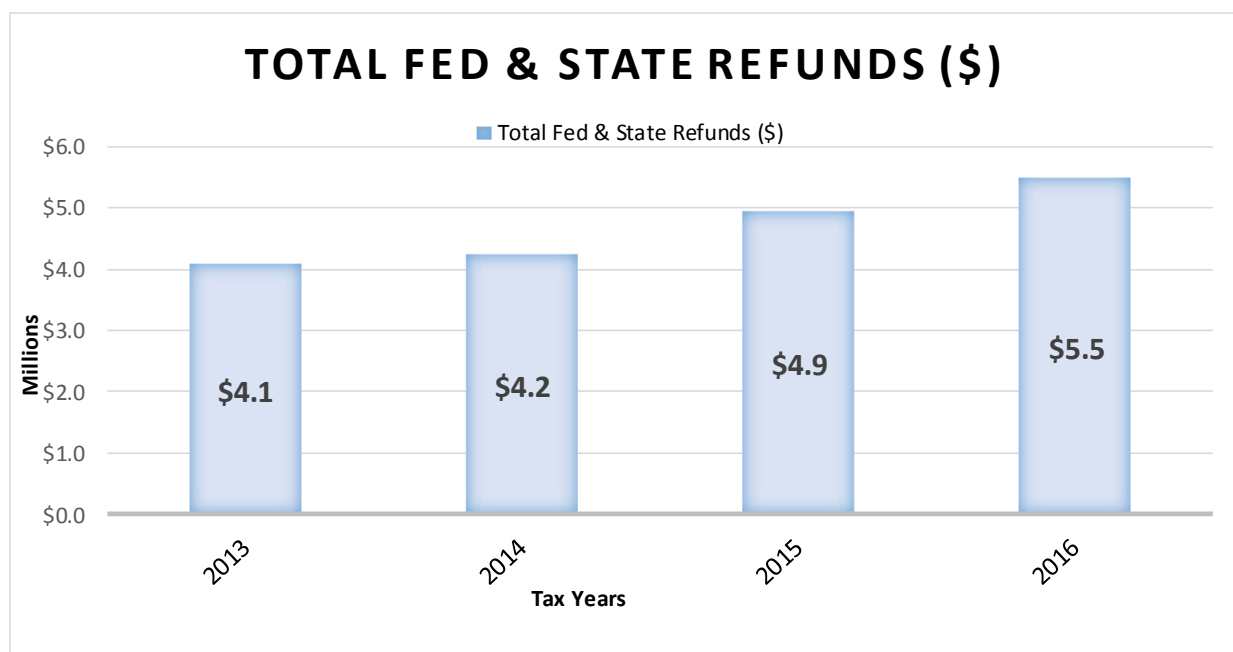
CAB member and Head Start Policy Council Representative Tiffany Jones and CAB Vice Chair Ron Jennings participated in a Council Budget Hearing to show support for Head Start expansion. CAB members are pictured here with then County Council Vice President Hans Riemer, who led the efforts to add funding to the budget for this proposal. The FY18 budget includes funding to expand 10 part-day Head Start classes to full-day programs.



## VITA and Financial Education Partnership

The Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) Program provides free tax preparation services, financial education, and Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) outreach to low to moderate income residents at several sites throughout Montgomery County. VITA relies on the critical support of over 100 volunteers throughout the year. Volunteers serve as greeters, tax preparers, food resource navigators, interpreters, and schedulers. The VITA program strives to meet the needs of special populations, including Limited English Proficient residents, seniors, disabled residents, small business owners, and family child care providers.

### The VITA Program's Impact: The EITC in Montgomery County



**Left:** VITA volunteers participate in a training session in preparation for the tax season.

**Right:** The CAA VITA program was the recipient of Governor's Award for Service.

## Tax Year 2015 Results

During Tax Year 2016, VITA returned over \$5 million in state and federal refunds to 2,204 households. VITA taxpayers owed nearly \$1 million to the state and federal governments.

TAX YEAR	# RETURNS	TOTAL FED & STATE REFUND (\$)	AVE FED & STATE REFUND	EITC RETURNS	FEDERAL EITC	STATE EITC	COUNTY EITC	TOTAL EITC
2012	2,359	\$2,921,660	\$1,949	358	\$867,405	\$216,851	\$158,085	\$1,242,341
2013	2,073	\$2,623,510	\$1,973	504	\$723,995	\$180,999	\$136,654	\$1,041,648
2014	2,159	\$2,568,113	\$1,957	480	\$750,941	\$187,735	\$159,575	\$1,098,251
2015	2,543	\$2,971,904	\$1,944	543	\$885,795	\$221,449	\$188,231	\$1,295,475
2016	2,204	\$3,471,364	\$2,489	599	\$998,595	\$259,635	\$259,635	\$1,517,865
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>11,338</b>	<b>\$14,556,551</b>	<b>\$2,059 (average)</b>	<b>2,484</b>	<b>\$4,226,731</b>	<b>\$1,066,669</b>	<b>\$902,180</b>	<b>\$6,195,580</b>

### EITC Roundtable

On October 26, 2016, VITA partners from across the County participated in an EITC Roundtable hosted by Community Action, Montgomery County Councilmember Hans Riemer and the Maryland CASH Campaign. The session focused on how to increase the number of EITC-eligible taxpayers claiming this credit in Montgomery County and how to increase access to free tax preparation services. Participants discussed various ideas for expanding EITC outreach, including using technology, using common branding, and engaging the business community. Ideas for expanding free tax preparation services included incorporating multiple models of free tax preparation, increasing capacity at the beginning of the tax season when demand is high, and finding new skilled volunteers.



VITA staff honor volunteers from the 2016 tax season.



## The Takoma-East Silver Spring Community Action Center (TESS)

The Takoma-East Silver Spring Community Action Center (TESS) has been an integral part of the Long Branch community for nearly 50 years. The Center, which is a Neighborhood Opportunity Network (NON) Site, serves the County's low-income, mostly immigrant community with information and referrals and direct services. The bilingual staff (Spanish/English and Amharic/English) are committed to providing high-quality services utilizing a "no wrong door" approach. In FY17, there were **7,250** client visits at TESS, not including those served by TESS partners.

### FY17 TESS CENTER HIGHLIGHTS

- Provided **55** vision referrals and **44** referrals to the dental clinic
- The Montgomery County Bar Foundation Pro Bono program provided **375** individuals/families with free legal services
- Served **1,020** free lunches to children as part of the Summer Meals Program
- Assisted **50** regular TESS clients in receiving Manna Food Center services
- Served **105** seniors through the Senior Social Program
- Served **182** families through the Holiday Giving Program
- Served **43** children through the Judy Center's Literacy Play Groups
- Through partnership with Community Health and Empowerment through Education and Research (CHEER), provided health outreach to **444** clients
- Served **74** students through IMPACT Silver Spring's ESOL classes at the Center
- Through partnership with Mary's Center for Maternal and Child Care, provided services to **77** women
- Provided free tax preparation services through the CAA VITA program
- Worked with the Board of Elections to host a Voter Registration Day event in September
- Continued to support residents impacted by the 2016 Flower Branch Apartments fire



**Top Left:** Vicky Hall, from the TESS team, is honored by County Executive Leggett for her service to residents following the 2016 Flower Branch Apartments fire.

**Top Right:** Participants in the TESS Center's Senior Social attend a trip to Brookside Gardens.

**Bottom Left:** Maria Quiroga, Hanna Worku, and Yumayri Nororis help distribute lunches during the Summer Meals Program.

**Bottom Right:** Participants in the Long Branch Leadership Training Program, which the TESS Center co-sponsored with the National Hispanic Council on Aging and DHHS Aging and Disability Services.

The TESS Community Action Center  
8513 Piney Branch Road, Silver Spring, MD, 20901  
Phone: 240-773-8260 Fax: 301-565-5713



## Community Action's FY17 Nonprofit Partners

The Community Action Agency provides services to the low-income community through partnerships with many nonprofit organizations throughout the County. These organizations provide a wide range of services, including food and clothing assistance, legal services, youth programs, and community development.

- **Caribbean Help Center, Inc.**—Provided 1,038 people with services including emergency assistance, food distribution, and health care referrals. 79 clients were provided access to County social services or health care; 248 clients received translation services; 58 clients received immigration assistance; and 30 people were assisted with employment or access to unemployment benefits.
- **CASA** —Provides employment, training and supportive services to low-income residents with limited English proficiency at three locations. In FY17, supported 5,781-day labor placements, 44 unduplicated part-time job placements and 77 unduplicated full-time job placements; assisted 427 clients applying for citizenship through DACA. 500 clients obtained health insurance, 180 clients opened bank accounts, and 57 applied for ITINs.
- **Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of Washington, Inc.**—The Wheaton Neighborhood Opportunity Network site provides emergency services, outreach, and case management. In FY17, assisted over 19,000 callers and walk-ins. The Employment-Focused Family Support Specialist provided services to 65 residents. The Homelessness Prevention Program in Gaithersburg referred 813 clients to resources and the employment program served 1,146 residents.
- **Colesville Council of Community Congregations, Inc. (C-4 Clothes Closet)** – In exchange for free space, the agency operates a clothing closet providing clothing and household items to low-income residents.
- **Circle of Rights, Inc.**—Increases public awareness about stroke prevention and provides outreach to minority populations. In FY17, provided information to 133 residents.
- **Community Health & Empowerment Through Education and Research, Inc. (CHEER)** —Provided outreach to 2,121 residents of the Long Branch area, including 653 people who were referred to health and wellness resources. Working with families in four elementary schools, CHEER assisted in 19 events for 271 people.
- **Community Ministries of Rockville, Inc.**—Supports language outreach and citizenship classes. In FY17, provided English classes to 100 school age students and 127 adults. 21 participants in the citizenship class became citizens.
- **Conflict Resolution Center of Montgomery County, Inc. (CRCM)** – Provides a bilingual facilitator and a Community Liaison to work with Limited English Proficient residents, conducts volunteer trainings and outreach. Served 475 Spanish and French residents since the program started.
- **Crossroads Community Food Network, Inc.**—Provides food subsidies, nutrition education, access to provide through the Fresh Checks Program, and operates farmers' markets. In FY17, held workshops for the Healthy Nutrition Program in collaboration with Linkages to Learning at two schools.
- **Eastern Montgomery Emergency Assistance Network, Inc. (EMEAN)** – Provides utility, housing and prescription assistance to residents of East County. In FY17, served 159 residents.
- **Empowered Women International, Inc.** – Provides entrepreneurship and workforce training, along with support services to promote self-sufficiency for immigrants, refugees, and low-income women. In FY17, 15 County residents graduated from the program.
- **Family Services, Inc.**—Provided case management services to 242 people in Gaithersburg as part of a Neighborhood Opportunity Network site. Served 152 people in East County with referrals to area health care and social services.



**Left:** Residents purchase fresh produce at a Crossroads Community Food Network farmers market.

**Right:** Korean Community Service Center volunteers and staff participate in a community event.

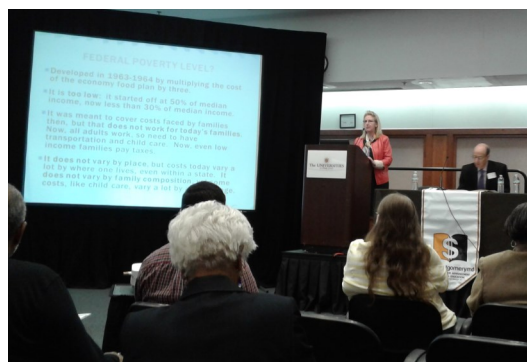
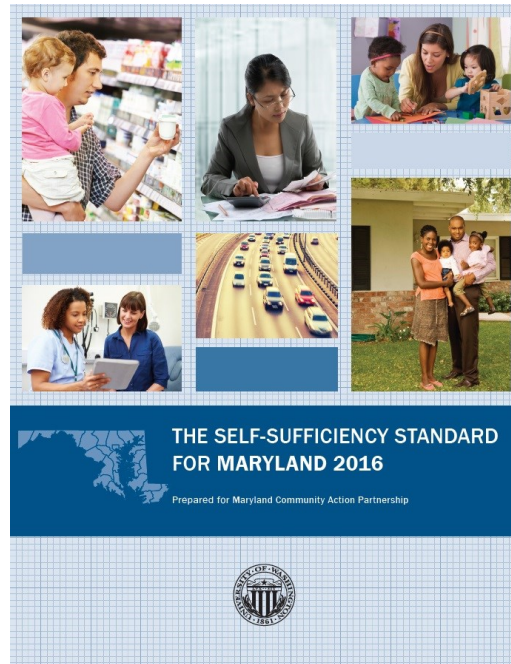
- **IMPACT Silver Spring, Inc.**—Provides community building and civic engagement and serves as a Neighborhood Opportunity Network site. In FY17, IMPACT Silver Spring hosted approximately 45 events for 1,867 residents, including classes, “Community Happenings” and the T3 initiative (Truth, Trust & Transformation).
- **Interfaith Works Clothing Closet**—Operates a clothing center, which distributes donated clothing and housewares to referred clients free of charge. In FY17, served 12,997 clients, with the support of 1,664 volunteers providing 20,420 volunteer hours.
- **Kids in Need Distributors, Inc. (KIND)**—Distributes food to schools so that low-income children receive a food package on Fridays for the weekend. In FY17, served 1,665 students in 25 schools (Elementary and Middle).
- **Korean Association of the State of Maryland Metropolitan Area, Inc.**—Provides social services, citizenship classes, and referrals. In FY17, provided services to 424 clients to help them access social, health, and immigration services.
- **Korean Community Service Center of Greater Washington, Inc.**—Provided 3,287 Korean-speaking residents with information and referrals, including 245 receiving case management, 665 receiving living cost reduction services, 11 receiving cash assistance. 207 people participated in workshops on behavioral health and Alzheimer’s education and screening.
- **Legal Aid Bureau, Inc.**—Helps low-income families access health insurance for their children through direct advocacy, outreach and education.
- **Manna Food Center, Inc.**—Distributes food to low-income residents through the Emergency Food Assistance Program, Smart Sacks Program, and Farm to Food Bank Program. In FY17, 9,569 households received 2 –3 boxes of food and 2,656 children received food sacks in 59 elementary schools. Collected over 105,305 pounds of fresh produce for low-income families from 4 farmers’ markets and 4 local markets.
- **Maryland Vietnamese Mutual Association, Inc.**—Provides outreach to hard-to-reach, low-income immigrant residents, assists with applications for safety net services, and provides opportunities for low-income residents to obtain food assistance through the harvesting of produce. Planned 10 gleaning events, which provided 62,000 pounds of produce to local churches, serving approximately 1,425 people.
- **Mary’s Center for Maternal and Child Care, Inc.**—Provides health education and social services for uninsured and under-insured residents, serving over 400 clients in FY17.
- **Mid Atlantic Gleaning Network, Inc.**—Increases emergency distribution of fresh fruit and vegetables for residents in need. In FY17, 12 volunteer groups serving 4,456 volunteer hours took part in gleaning activities and food distribution.
- **Montgomery County Maryland Bar Foundation Pro Bono Program**—Provides free legal services for low-income residents. In FY17, served 1,696 people through legal clinics at 5 sites and provided triage for 1,761 cases.
- **MoverMoms, Inc.**—Provides operating support for community engagement programs. In calendar year 2016, engaged over 600 volunteers who provided 270 volunteer hours mentoring in the County jail and 275 hours in emergency shelters, provided dinners at the NIH Children’s Inn, and planned food drives for Manna Food Center.
- **Spanish Speaking Community of Maryland, Inc.**—Provides consultations with case workers to address essential needs of low-income families and immigrants. Served 2,700 residents with free consultations.
- **The Nonprofit Village Center, Inc.**—Provides reduced rent office space, shared administrative services and interns, and training for small nonprofits. In FY17, served 25 organizations, 19 with leased space and 6 “virtual” tenants.
- **Women Who Care Ministries, Inc.**—Supports the Weekend Backpack Food Program in collaboration with MCPS. In FY17, over 2,215 children received food sacks on a weekly basis in 30 schools (Elementary and Middle).
- **World Organization for Resource Development & Education, Inc. (WORDE)**—Operated a crisis and resource center and provides case management, counseling, mentoring and support for low-income residents. In FY17, worked with 80 high school students from Northwood, Gaithersburg and Blair.
- **YMCA Benchmarks Program**—Provides an academic enrichment after school program. Served 30 students in grades 5 – 8 at Rock Creek Forest Elementary School.

### Making a Difference: Interfaith Works

*We are a family of four that has endured many days and nights trying to push through living without support to secure a home, a job, food, and transportation. Our family has come far with the help of Montgomery County and its programs. We have a beautiful apartment all because we stuck to it and continued to not give up on our children and ourselves. The shelter we came out of helped us get a great job, showed us how to budget the money that we have, which led us to transitional housing. We are still using our skills that we learned in the shelter to continue to branch off on our own. We are happy to know that we have a support system and tools to help us become independent. Thank you, Montgomery County. We hope you continue to help families who need the resources.*

## Self-Sufficiency Standard for Maryland 2016

In FY17, Community Action celebrated the release of the Self-Sufficiency Standard for Maryland 2016 report (SSS). The Montgomery County Community Action Agency, working with partner agencies through the Maryland Community Action Partnership and the MD Department of Housing and Community Development, led a collaborative effort to fund the 2016 SSS report, which was researched and developed by Dr. Diana Pearce and the staff at the Center for Women's Welfare at the University of Washington. The Self-Sufficiency Standard defines the amount of income necessary to meet the basic needs of families, differentiated by family type and geographic location. Following the release of the report, the Community Action Board and staff provided presentations to numerous groups about the purpose of the SSS and how it can be used in advocacy, grant writing, policy analysis, counseling, education, and in many other ways.



**Top Left:** Partners from MCAP celebrate the release of the SSS with author Dr. Diana Pearce.

**Top Right:** CAB Executive Committee Member Mary Bennett presents on the SSS at the annual partners meeting.

**Bottom Left:** CAA Executive Director Sharon Strauss presents on the SSS at the Financial Capability Symposium.

**Bottom Right:** CAB Chair Pamela Luckett presents on the SSS at the Montgomery County Women's Legislative Briefing.



## Community Action Month Celebration

On May 23, 2017, Community Action celebrated the work of dedicated volunteers and organizations throughout the County, along with the agency's own volunteers who support the VITA program, TESS Center, and serve on the Community Action Board. County Council Vice President Hans Riemer and CAB member Mike Subin from the County Executive's office were on hand to present a Joint Proclamation in honor of the Community Action Month. The evening also included a special presentation honoring the Community Action staff and contractors who went above and beyond following the 2016 Flower Branch Apartments fire to provide critical support to residents in need.



**Top Left:** TESS staff members and partners attend the Community Action Awards and Celebration.

**Top Right:** CAB Chair Pamela Luckett receives a Joint Proclamation from the County Council and County Executive in honor of Community Action month. She is joined by CAB member Mike Subin on behalf of the County Executive, CAA Executive Director Sharon Strauss, and Council Vice President Hans Riemer.

**Bottom Left:** Henry Dixon Award winners from Future Link pose with CAA Executive Director Sharon Strauss and CAB Chair Pamela Luckett.

**Bottom Right:** [left to right] Marcia Plater Award winner Soffie Ceesay, Troy Plater, Sharon Strauss, and Pamela Luckett.

## *Community Action: Helping People, Changing Lives!*



### **MONTGOMERY COUNTY COMMUNITY ACTION AGENCY** **Department of Health and Human Services Office of Community Affairs**

1401 Rockville Pike, 3rd Floor

Rockville, MD 20852

Main: 240-777-1697 TTY Users, Please Call MD Relay: 711

Sharon Strauss, Executive Director  
Marwan Abdelmoniem, Administrative Specialist, Head Start  
Abiola Abodunrin, VITA Contractor  
Birtucan Assres, Community Connector, TESS Center  
Aster Berhane, Community Services Aide, TESS Center  
Josue Canas, Office Services Coordinator, TESS Center  
Diana Day, Office Services Coordinator  
Melissa Ferguson, Program Specialist, Contracts  
Leah Goldfine, Program Manager, CAB Liaison  
Victoria Hall, Community Connector, TESS Center  
Jessica Huitz, Program Aide, Head Start  
Taunya Johnson, VITA Coordinator  
Maureen Larenas-Rivas, Program Specialist, TESS Center Manager  
Janet Lee, Head Start Consultant  
Bruno Marujo, Maryland Community Fellow, VITA Program  
Eduardo Mendes, VITA Contractor  
Charlene Muhammad, Program Manager, Head Start  
Aizat Oladapo, Program Manager, Contracts  
Adeyinka Taiwo, Volunteer Maryland Coordinator  
Tania Soriano, CAA Contractor  
Ilina Umanzor, Community Services Aide, TESS Center



### **The Promise of Community Action**

*Community Action changes people's lives, embodies the spirit of hope, improves communities, and makes America a better place to live. We care about the entire community, and we are dedicated to helping people help themselves and each other.*

