



COMMUNITY REVIEW OF THE YOUTH OPPORTUNITY CENTERS (YOC)

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
CHILDREN, YOUTH AND FAMILY SERVICES

MAY 2017





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This document is part of ongoing series of reports to inform management, frontline staff, community partners and the public about the Department of Health and Human Services' efforts to make data informed decisions.

The aim of this work is to identify needs and provide practical responses for frontline practitioners in support of that mission and to support long term strategic solutions which improve individual, family and community health and social outcomes, to deliver more equitable services which reduce disparities, and to be a responsible steward of the public resources.

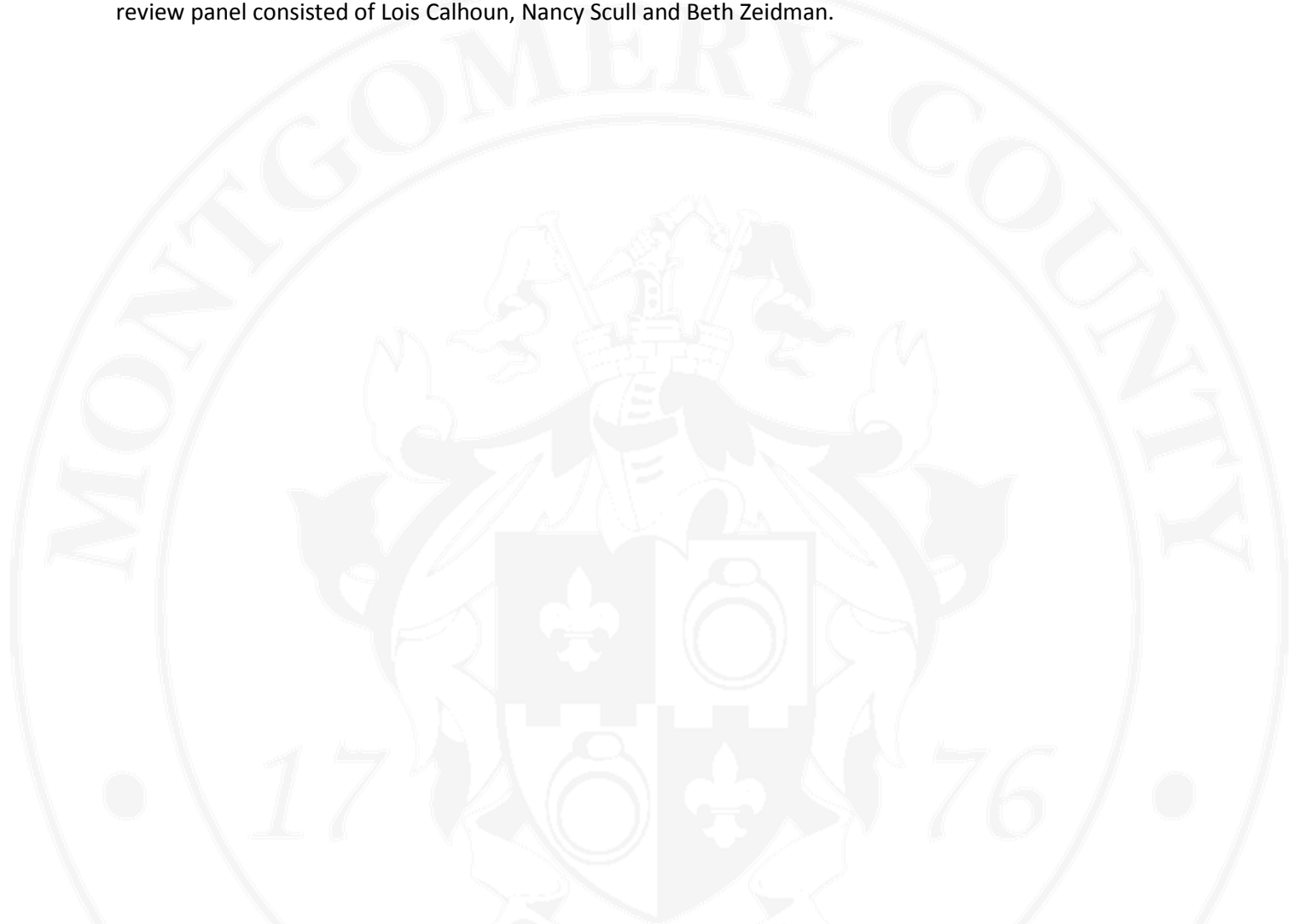
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) is among the largest agency in Montgomery County government and is responsible for public health and human services that help address the needs of the community's most vulnerable children, adults and seniors. DHHS has a staff of 1600 professionals, provides more than 120 programs and delivers services at more than 20 locations throughout Montgomery County.

DHHS provides services through several service areas: Aging and Disability Services (ADS); Behavioral Health and Crisis Services (BHCS); Children, Youth and Family Services (CYFS); Public Health Services (PHS) and Special Needs Housing (SNH). The Office of Community Affairs (OCA) provides direct services through several programs. In addition, DHHS administrative functions include budget administration, fiscal administration, contract management, facilities, grant acquisition, human resources, information systems and performance management.

The Department's core services protect the community's health, protect the health and safety of at-risk children and vulnerable adults and address basic human needs. Planning, Accountability and Customer Service (PACS) operated under the Office of the Director, to ensure efficient, effective and high quality delivery of services and to measure the goals of the organization and focus on results in line with the organization's values.

The Community Review was coordinated by Abigail Hoffman with support provided by Sarah Yaftali, under the direction of Matthew Nice, DHHS Planning, Accountability and Customer Service. Graphic design was provided by Sean Clark, Office of Public Information, Montgomery County, Maryland. The independent review panel consisted of Lois Calhoun, Nancy Scull and Beth Zeidman.



CONTENTS

EXPLANATORY NOTES	iii
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	iv
1. BACKGROUND	1
Independent Review Panelists and Process	1
2. WHAT WAS REVIEWED	2
Program Mission and Services	2
Target Population	3
Organizational Overview	4
3. RESULTS	5
I. Mission and Guiding Principles	5
II. Effective and Equitable Service Delivery	6
III. Accountability	7
IV. Capable and Engaged Workforce	8
V. Service Delivery Transformation	8
VI. Collaborative Partnerships	9
4. NEXT STEPS	10
ANNEX I: Community Review Assessment Tool	12
ANNEX II: Americans with Disabilities Act Checklist	23
ANNEX III: Reviewers	24
ANNEX IV: Organizational structures and services	25
ANNEX V: Interviewees and participants	26

EXPLANATORY NOTES

This report relies upon several acronyms listed below.

ACE	Adverse Childhood Experience
ADA	Americans with Disabilities Act
ADS	Aging and Disability Services
BHCS	Behavioral Health and Crisis Services
CQI	Customer Quality Improvement
CRAT	Community Review Assessment Tool
CRT	Community Review Team
CYFS	Children, Youth and Family Services
CYOC	Crossroads Youth Opportunity Center
DHHS	Department of Health and Human Services
eHR	Electronic Health Records system
eICM	Electronic Integrated Case Management System
ESOL	English for Speakers of Other Languages
ETO	Efforts to Outcomes system
GED	General Education Diploma
ICM	Intensive Case Management
ISP	Individual Service Plan
IT	Information Technology
ITM	Intensive Teaming Meeting
IWGYP	Interagency Working Group on Youth Programs
MCPD	Montgomery County Police Department
MTC	Maryland Treatment Centers
OCA	Office of Community Affairs
PACS	Planning, Accountability and Customer Service
PHS	Public Health Services
QSR	Quality Service Review
PYD	Positive Youth Development
SNH	Special Needs Housing
SCM	Stages of Change Model
UYOC	Upcounty Youth Opportunity Center
WIOA	Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act
YLC	Youth Leadership Council
YOC	Youth Opportunity Centers

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS), one of the largest government agencies in the county, is responsible for public health and human services that help address the needs of our community's most vulnerable children, adults and seniors. DHHS regularly evaluates service delivery and outcomes to identify gaps and equitable service solutions, which reduce disparities and improve individual, family and community health and social outcomes. Since 1999 the Community Review process has been a valuable means through which the Department receives feedback regarding the effectiveness of its programs.

The review of the Youth Opportunity Centers (YOC) program focused on its two sites: the Upcounty Youth Opportunities Center (UYOC), located in Gaithersburg, and Crossroads Youth Opportunity Center (CYOC), located in Langley Park. The County contracts with Identity, Inc. for services with contract monitoring by DHHS Children, Youth and Family Services staff. Field work took place 24, 25 and 27 April, 2017, and was conducted by Lois Calhoun, Nancy Scull and Beth Zeidman.

In FY2016, 432 unique youth aged 10-25 were served at the YOC. Youth served face especially challenging life situations, such as having dropped out of school, unemployment, lacking English-language skills and struggling with substance abuse and/or mental health issues. Some YOC clients are gang-involved and others have experienced trauma.

The reviewers found YOC use of evidence-based strategies to be a positive and stabilizing influence in the lives of the youth they serve and a strong source of referrals to needed services. A number of individuals who have gone through its programs now hold high level career positions at the YOC.

The YOC exceed expectations in several areas and these may be of value to other similar programs operating in the community. Several were highlighted by the review panel, including:

1. The effective use of the Efforts to Outcome (ETO) system as a flexible client data collection program that supports YOC work in achieving its goals. This system allows the program to monitor demographics, immediate needs for services, contacts, referrals for services, status of referrals and performance outputs and client outcomes. Client data are reviewed regularly by managers ensuring services are effective to meet goals.
2. The YOC evaluation methodology allows staff to obtain timely assessments of program effectiveness or challenges and make quick program adaptations. Evaluation instruments are pilot-tested for reliability, validity and appropriate literacy levels for the target populations. Customer satisfaction surveys are completed every six months and upon exit from the YOC, and provide valuable information for program development. Program outcome data are analyzed by an external evaluator, which demonstrates the strong commitment of the organization to measuring performance and demonstrating results. Formal reports are compiled and distributed monthly for staff to monitor progress and annually for each location.
3. Emphasis is placed on the utilization of evidenced-based programmatic strategies with clear supporting objectives and indicators that are based on client needs and an integrated service delivery approach. These approaches are effective in preventing gang involvement and in assisting youth to transition out of gangs. YOC involve clients in program design, services and community solutions, such as the Youth-Police Advisory Council. This is one way that YOC demonstrates respect for its clients and that respect empowers clients.
4. The evaluation instruments have been pilot-tested for reliability, validity and appropriate literacy levels for the target populations. This commitment to strong evaluation ensures Identity clients will be served well. The external evaluator conducts data analysis using statistical software and provides

senior staff with a summary, by cohort, of pertinent demographics and baseline responses regarding knowledge, attitudes and behaviors. The summary is assessed again at the end of each cohort.

5. YOC encouraged clients to increase their civic engagement and looks for opportunities for clients to advocate and provide a youth voice on important issues. In one such example, YOC youth in 2016 participated in a listening tour led by the Commission of Women regarding residents' concerns related to gender issues.
6. YOC effectively use electronic and social media with a very visible online presence. Social media postings on Facebook and Twitter are updated and maintained by Identity's Communication Department, and are effective in outreach and promoting services to customers, the community, schools, police and other service providers.

The review panel also identified opportunities for improvement with the following select observations and recommendations.

1. The YOC facilities do not fully comply with ADA requirements. For example, the Upcounty facility does not comply with ADA requirements for wheelchair accessibility and the Crossroads location's elevators are restrictive for someone using a wheelchair. Relocation, renovation or providing services in an alternative accessible location should be considered to improve access for those using assisted-mobility devices.
2. Identity's website would be improved if the days and hours of operation of YOC were clearly identifiable. This correction should also occur on printed information when reproduced.
3. Program-related materials and signage should be updated to reflect YOC services that are available for all youth, not just Latinos. This will reduce confusion and ensure that all youth and families know that services are available for all at risk youth.
4. Attention by DHHS staff with YOC management staff should be given to the possibility of the ETO system to link with DHHS eICM client referrals.
5. The program's performance measures included in the DHHS contract may benefit from review by contract monitors for increased clarity of service delivery.

The review panel identified several additional partners and resources that DHHS, Identity, Inc. and YOC staff may want to explore. The panel also suggests that advocacy for future program expansion which look to increase work space and improve facilities at both locations; assess client need for a Germantown location and/or additional van transports; and assess the cost-benefits of additional Workforce Development Professionals, GED staff and mental health and outreach staff.

Findings were presented by the Community Review Team to DHHS management and staff and the YOC provider staff. During discussions, YOC management indicated that action on several of the recommendations was already underway. DHHS Planning, Accountability and Customer Services (PACS) will monitor progress on the recommendations and report back to the Director and the Senior Leadership Team on progress in one year.

1. BACKGROUND

The Community Review Program is a valuable means through which the Montgomery County DHHS receives feedback and input regarding the effectiveness of department programs from a community member perspective. Trained panels independently assess how the programs are serving residents, examine the impact of programs on the community, and recommend possible improvements to services.

Guided by the Community Review Assessment Tool (CRAT) self-assessment, reviewers examine program delivery based on its alignment with DHHS' Mission and Guiding Principles;

- Effective and Equitable Service Delivery;
- Accountability; Capable and Engaged Workforce;
- Service Delivery Transformation; and
- Collaborative Partnerships (Annex I).

The program was also reviewed on ADA compliance (Annex II) and how it met objectives in line with the goals in the Department's two-year Strategic Plan Roadmap.¹



Figure 1. Identity's Administrative Office in Gaithersburg

The Youth Opportunity Centers (YOC) program has two sites: the Upcounty Youth Opportunities Center (UYOC), located in Gaithersburg, and Crossroads Youth Opportunity Center (CYOC), located in Langley Park, which are contracted by Identity, Inc. through a DHHS contract monitored by Children, Youth and Family Services.

Independent Review Panelists and Process

The Community Review is a process of program self-assessment, desk and subsequent field review performed by three to four knowledgeable, trained independent reviewers from the local community. The Community Review of YOC was performed by reviewers Lois Calhoun, Nancy Scull and Beth Zeidman (Annex III).



Figure 2. Panel members at the preliminary planning meeting and a training session

A preliminary planning meeting and training session commenced on April 20, 2017, with Luis Cardona, DHHS Positive Youth Director; Leslie Rosa-Reyes, DHHS Contract Manager; Carolyn Camacho, Identity Director of Youth Services; Deidra Squire, Crossroads Youth Opportunity Center (CYOC) Manager and

1

www.montgomerycountymd.gov/HHS/Resources/Files/

[Reports/DHHS%20STRATEGIC%20ROADMAP%20\(4\)%202016-2018.pdf](https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/HHS/Resources/Files/Reports/DHHS%20STRATEGIC%20ROADMAP%20(4)%202016-2018.pdf)

Fresia Guzman, Identity, Senior Manager Workforce Development for the YOC.



Figure 3. Reviewing YOC services and client demographics

Reviewers toured the two facilities, observed client services. Reviewers interviewed the program staff and managers about mission and general operations (Annex IV). Numerous program documents were provided to the panel, including the mission and vision statement, the screening instrument, the procedures manual and program brochures.



Figure 4. CYOC location

Following the field review, the panel meets with members of the YOC staff to provide initial feedback and discuss recommendations. A subsequent meeting by the panel with DHHS and provider management and staff is held to present the final report and its recommendations.

2. WHAT WAS REVIEWED

Program Mission and Services

The mission of the Youth Opportunity Centers (YOC) is to assist under-served and disconnected youth² and young adults in living hopeful and dignified lives, enabling them to succeed economically and socially and contribute to their communities.



Youth Opportunity Centers

Sirviendo a jóvenes de hasta 25 años
Preparación para GED en inglés y español
Clases de inglés
Acceso a Becas de Certificado Profesional
Preparación y entrenamiento en Empleo y Carrera
Educación financiera
Consejería de abuso de sustancias
Consejería de salud mental
Eliminación de tatuajes
Mentores y grupos de apoyo
Excursiones, deportes, recreación

Figure 5. Spanish information on a YOC Card that is distributed widely.

The centers provide a wide array of culturally-based, trauma informed intervention support services for high-risk youth, youth who seek to

² Defined as not having educational and work opportunities, two core experiences that facilitate the successful transition to adulthood.

exit gang life, youth engaged in the juvenile justice system, and violence prevention services. The program's goal is to prevent gang activity in the area and provide at-risk youth positive alternatives to gang life.

Services

The YOC youth often experience a number of barriers to them leading productive lives and contributing positively to their community. Many youth have not completed their secondary education, are unable to find or maintain employment and often lack of English-language skills that impede their job seeking success. YOC clients have been involved with gangs and some of the youth struggle with substance abuse and/or mental health issues. Many have experienced trauma.

Services are specifically designed with evidence-based principles and theoretical models of Positive Youth Development (PYD) and Stages of Change (SCM). These programs address the needs of youth and provide an intensive range of services and delivery strategies.

The YOC offer a wide range of programs and services to disconnected and high-risk youth who are provided skills and support needed to lead healthy and productive lives. The array of YOC services include outreach, comprehensive case management, referrals and academic enrichment such as ESOL classes, GED preparation and tutoring. Mentoring, support groups and counseling are available at the YOC. Substance abuse intervention and prevention counseling, workforce development, relocation services, tattoo removal and wrap around support are also offered.

In FY16, 432 unique clients served received the following services:

- 343 clients received case management services (472 referrals)
- 143 clients in curriculum and non-curriculum based group intervention programs

- 55 clients received individual counseling services
- 61 received group counseling services
- 95 clients received substance abuse treatment
- 117 clients received workforce development and job readiness services
- 135 clients received GED classes

Additionally, YOC worked with 339 inmates held at the Montgomery County Correctional Facility, in Clarksburg.

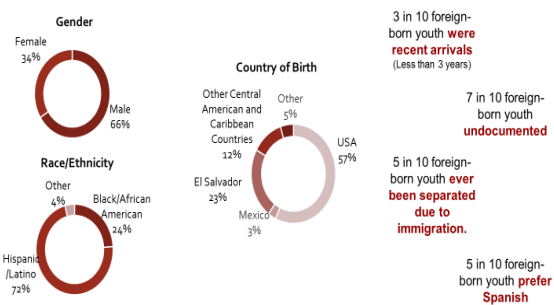


Figure 6. Demographics of 432 youth at intake during 2016

Target Population

The YOC serves all disconnected and at-risk youth ages 10 – 25 in high poverty areas of Montgomery County. However, there is a focus on Latino and Black/ African Americans aged 16 - 24.



Figure 7. Document review during field work

Organizational Overview

The CYOC began operations in 2006 and Identity partners with Pride Youth Services and Maryland Treatment Centers (MTC) to provide services there. UYOC opened in 2009 and there, Identity partners with frequently with Career Catchers and MTC to provide services.

Identity's Board of Directors assist the program with advocacy, education, workforce development and legal advice. The members have been instrumental in the continued growth and development of Identity.

Each YOC has 7 staff members and a substance abuse counselor is shared by the two locations. The organizational charts depicting staffing and individual center services can be found in Annex IV. YOC has a number of examples where clients later on became staff of YOC or other Identify, Inc. programs (see Raul's Story).

The Crossroads Youth Opportunity Center is located at 7676 New Hampshire Avenue NE, #411, Takoma Park. Upcounty Youth Opportunity Center is at 415 E. Diamond Avenue, Gaithersburg. The centers are opened Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. Both locations are accessible by various public transit options.

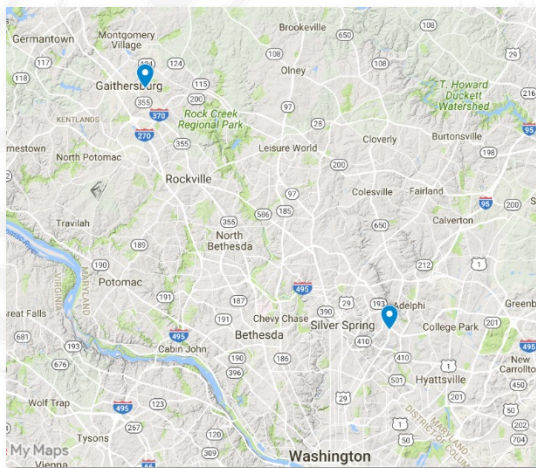


Figure 8. The CYOC and UYOC locations

Raul's Story. Raul (not his real name) had already left gang life behind him and had a job working in construction. But his tattoos were a visible reminder of that old life and a magnet for negative attention – not only from current gang members but from law enforcement. That's what first brought Raul to Identity services to remove gang tattoos. Once engaged at the Youth Opportunity Center, he was connected to counseling and community service. After counseling and tattoo removal were completed, Raul remained in touch with YOC staff. In his spare time, he started a "Bike Club" to keep kids away from the gang life. Over time, Identity's mental health therapist saw how Raul was making a difference in the lives of youth in the community and encouraged him to apply for a position with Identity. Raul became an outreach and engagement specialist at the Crossroads Youth Opportunity Center, working not only to reconnect youth to society, but as an example of the power of change and second chances.

Budget

The YOC annual operating budget is funded through a combination of grants from the Federal government, Montgomery County and Gaithersburg City grants. Identity also receives support from the Cafritz Foundation, Marriott, Mead and Meyer Foundations and a host of individual donors, which benefits YOC. The YOC also receives in-kind services and contracts with DHHS for both locations

Increases to the budget in FY17 through a new contract with WorkSource Montgomery has allowed YOC to increase their staffing for GED, workforce development and a manager position.



Figure 9. YOC participants completing their GED studies

The program continues to look for funding opportunities to provide more and better services for clients. For example, recently a proposal was submitted to DHHS outlining additional gang prevention and intervention programs and services for a proposed satellite of UYOC in Germantown.



Figure 10. Upcounty YOC location

3. RESULTS

The program self-assessment and subsequent review by the independent review panel are guided by the Community Review Assessment Tool (CRAT). The CRAT consists of six areas (standards) covering a program's: Mission and Guiding Principles; Effective and Equitable

Service Delivery; Accountability; Capable and Engaged Workforce; Service Delivery Transformation and Collaborative Partnerships. Each section has multiple questions assessed by the panel (Annex I).

Results are organized by findings, which exceed the panel's expectations and can be transferred to other programs. Findings, that warrant attention and recommendations are also listed.

The program was also reviewed using a checklist of Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) compliance, the results of which are presented in Annex II.

In some places recommendations across more than one section or tool may be merged into a single recommendation, where appropriate. Additionally, some recommendations may stem from reviewer's notes and/ or interviewees observations but which may not be directly reflected in the CRAT.

Panel recommendations are listed in ordered in the short-term (within 60 days), mid-term (within a year) and long-term (over a year).

I. Mission and Guiding Principles

The goal is to promote and ensure the health and safety of the residents of Montgomery County and to build individual and family strength and self-sufficiency.

Findings Exceeding Expectations

- The program and DHHS mission statement align and clearly articulates the purpose of YOC. Staff were involved in its development from the inception of the program and based it on assessment and examination of need in the community. There are clear goals, objectives and strategies to achieve their mission.
- The research and evidenced-based theoretical framework of PYD, SCM and strategies of academic, workforce and support services for their target

populations has clear supporting objectives, and indicators. The visual graphic of the YOC service delivery framework are excellent examples that other programs could use to illustrate complex service delivery models.

- Annual evaluation reports are comprehensive and available in print or on-line. The Annual Report “Putting People First” and Annual Evaluation Report are excellent examples of how an agency/program recognizes the importance of demonstrating results and utilizing that information for continuous improvement.
- Staff are aware of processes and procedures for measuring performance and results related to service outcomes, efficiencies and improvements. The Efforts to Outcomes (ETO) is the main repository for the data and reporting of results, and is consistently used for examining and evaluating improvements and efficiencies as well as staff and client feedback to formulate strategies for improvement.



Figure 11. Healthy snacks available for youth at YOC

Findings Transferable to Other Programs

- The ETO system and its use in formulating and tracking performance measures.
- The visual graphics of the PYD and SCM theoretical framework, Programmatic Strategy, Service Delivery Process,

Individual Service Strategy, and Service Delivery Framework are excellent examples of what the centers are doing and why.

II. Effective and Equitable Service Delivery

The goal is to align people and financial assets so that we are investing the necessary level of resources to ensure effective and equitable service delivery.

Findings Exceeding Expectations

- The YOC exceed expectations in providing effective and equitable services with wrap around services that include educational and employment goals. Services are monitored with the ETO data collection system regularly. This system tracks demographic, identified needs, red flags, referrals and outcomes. The ETO system is a useful data collection system.
- Customer satisfaction surveys are completed every six months and upon exit from the program. Survey results are used to improve programming.
- Print and multimedia communications materials are accessible, easy to understand and available in English and Spanish. More than half of the staff are bilingual and interpretive services are available if needed. Program information is accessible online and is available in English or Spanish.
- The program accommodates client transportation issues with access to bus tokens, taxi vouchers and vehicles assistance as needed. Both centers are located on bus routes and the center hours are from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. during weekdays. Two Identity vans are available for YOC use. Services are provided in a neat, clean, well-lighted and welcoming environment. Nutritious and healthy snacks are available on site.

- Services are delivered in a timely manner. Emergency needs are assessed at the time of intake and referral services are put in place. The program has no waiting and all clients that require services are helped either through the YOC or by referrals.

Findings Transferable to Other Programs

- The ETO data system utilized by YOC is an excellent system. The ETO system can be modified to obtain data to monitor the services that are received and obtained. It is something that other programs can use to help monitor, measure and track service outcomes.

Findings Needing Attention and Recommendations

Short-Term

- The website would be improved if the days and hours of the program hours of operation were readily available. This can be corrected quickly on the web site and on print information when reproduced again.

Mid-Term

- Some YOC program information and Identity's main office sign states services are provided for Latinos. It is recommended that this information be removed to invite services to all youths who may be involved in gang related and other at-risk activities. Note: The director is aware of this issue and is working with his Board of Directors to address.

Long-Term

- The Crossroads facility's space is somewhat restrictive and tight for someone with a wheelchair. The elevator may cause a problem for someone in a large wheel chair. The Upcounty facility does not comply with ADA requirements and is not wheelchair accessible. The

agency should ensure equitable access to services for all clients.

- The YOC are very flexible within their working hours to accommodate clients. However, future consideration should be given to client resources after hours and on weekends.

III. Accountability

The goal is the maintenance of reliable, accurate records and data for analysis so program effectiveness can be quantified through performance measures.

Findings Exceeding Expectations

- Strong emphasis on the utilization of research and evidenced-based theoretical frameworks designed to meet client needs. The PYD model with four components (competence, confidence, connection and character), and SCM with 5 areas (precontemplation, contemplation, preparation, action and maintenance) are the frameworks used.
- Program targets for outcome measures are set. Outputs and outcome measures are monitored. Evaluation methodology consists of collecting process and outcome data on all programs and extensive evaluation information is collected by way of baseline, follow-up and exit surveys across programs. Program data are disseminated monthly for staff to monitor program progress and formal reports are compiled and distributed annually for each center.

Findings Transferable to Other Programs

- The ETO system and its components for documentation, case management, client goals and plans and outputs and outcomes represent a sophisticated user-friendly system. Staff use the system widely throughout the agency to produce charts, reports and data to track and demonstrate results. Training for the

system is readily available through Identity's administrative office staff.

- The use of an external evaluator for data analysis and interpretation.

Finding Needing Attention

Mid-Term

- The program's performance measures included in the DHHS contract may benefit from review by contract monitors for increased clarity of service delivery.

IV. Capable and Engaged Workforce

The goal is to recruit, develop, and maintain a workforce that is engaged, accountable, responsible, respected, recognized, and prepared for changing roles within the department and representative of the community.

Findings Exceeding Expectations

- The centers have additional resources this fiscal year to hire much-needed personnel to adequately support each program location.
- YOC actively recruits and retains linguistically and ethnically diverse staff of eight males and fourteen females. Twelve of the staff members are Latino and eight are Black/ African American. One of the ways this is accomplished is by offering an employer matching retirement plan, insurance policies and generous paid leave. Career ladder opportunities are also encouraged and available within the organization.
- YOC invest considerable resources in staff development to ensure knowledge base and skills remain current. Culturally competent services are provided by the YOC staff diverse staff. The program has also hired former clients.

Findings Transferable to Other Programs

- YOC's many trainings for staff and their multiple services that together provide a holistic approach with their clients could be useful to other community programs

Finding Needing Attention

Short-Term

- YOC does encourage staff to participate in numerous trainings related to the field and staff keeps up-to-date with ETO changes. In addition to these resources, management should consider access to, the County's Center for Continuous Learning courses that are available for contract staff for additional training opportunities, as appropriate.

V. Service Delivery Transformation

The goal is for an integrated service delivery system supported by technology, which enables staff to share information and work effectively.

Findings Exceeding Expectations

- The YOC managers and staff effectively utilize a evidence-based approach for their integrated service delivery system, which has a clear scope of services. They develop an individualized plan and goals and provide a one-stop program for GED, ESOL, individual level interventions, healing circles, behavioral health programs, substance abuse and gang prevention, and workforce development programs.
- YOC uses various technologies to improve service delivery. For example, they have an outstanding customized and flexible database system to record work with each client, activity participation and progress made. Staff uses Google calendar to arrange team and client meetings and Google docs to share various reports with

each other. They also use Dropbox for final records and tracking and ADP for payroll.

- YOC effectively uses electronic and social media. They have a very visible online presence. Their webpage clearly describes YOC's vision, goals, programs and services effectively. YOC information is also located on Identity's Facebook and Twitter. These social media postings are updated and maintained by Identity's Communication Department. They are effective in outreach and promoting services to customers, the community, schools, police and other service providers.

Findings Transferable to Other Programs

- YOC's many trainings for staff and their multiple services that together provide a holistic approach with their clients could be useful to other community programs/providers.

Findings Needing Attention and Recommendations

Long-term

- Senior staff with County staff should ensure that the ETO will be able to connect in the future with the DHHS eICM system so programs can track client referrals.

VI. Collaborative Partnerships

The goal is to strengthen internal and external partnerships with other programs and agencies to offer a full range of coordinated programs and services focused on reducing redundancy, improving client outcomes and eliminating disparities.

Findings Exceeding Expectations

- YOC continually develops community partnerships to promote innovative problem-solving to further assist its clients. YOC partnerships respond to client and community needs. For example, clients

engage in discussions on how to prevent violence and to create solutions to community issues/challenges.

- YOC frequent involvement of clients in program design, services and community solutions is remarkable. This is one way that YOC demonstrates respect for its clients; that respect empowers clients. The Youth-Police Advisory Council is an example, where youth meet regularly with Police Chief Manger and law enforcement officers to build relationships and voice opinions and concerns of youth.
- YOC trainings and range of outreach efforts involving some County agencies and providers are extensive and continual. Examples are partnerships with potential nearby employers such as Paintmasters Auto Body and Collision Centers, Harris Teeter, Shapiro and Duncan, Asbury Methodist Village, Hess Construction and a newly established relationship with Apartment Turnovers. They also partner with public and nonprofit employers including the Montgomery County Department of Recreation, Gaithersburg Department of Recreation, Montgomery Village Foundation and Sunflower Bakery.
- The YOC employer partners provide apprenticeships, internships, and entry-level employment. The job partners also help by conducting mock job interviews and speaking with the youth about the opportunities and expectations in their industry. Some have also provided space for larger program event such as the YOC GED graduation ceremony at Asbury Methodist Village last year.

For Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act(WIOA) qualified clients, YOC has access to a broad range of employment related services and opportunities via a Memorandum of Agreement with Grants Associates / WorkSource Montgomery. Eligible clients can tap into this network of employers for

a range of paid internships and stipend training.

Findings transferable to other programs

- YOC extensive partnerships could be a model for other programs/ providers. Staff reach out frequently to continue good working relationships with current partners, and they also continually seek more resources and services to meet with to develop new partnerships.
- Meeting directly with the partners/ potential partners is an important model that is successful in building and nurturing many partnerships.

Findings Needing Attention and Recommendations

The reviewers identified the following additional resources, which could be helpful to the YOC to further its development and benchmarking:

- The Forum for Youth Investment mission is to help get young people ready for life. They believe that all young people can be ready by 21 for college, work and life and every community can give young people the supports they need. The core work of the Forum is helping leaders, organizations, partnerships and systems at the local, state and national levels to assess, improve and align their practices and policies. <http://forumfyi.org>
- Ready by 21 is a set of innovative strategies developed by the Forum for Youth Investment that helps communities improve the odds that all children and youth will be ready for college, work and life. www.readyby21.org
- The David P. Weikart Center for Youth Program Quality empowers education and human service leaders to adapt, implement, and scale best-in-class, research validated quality improvement systems to advance child and youth development. <http://cypq.org>
- youth.gov (formerly FindYouthInfo.gov) was created by the Interagency Working Group on Youth Programs (IWGYP), which is composed of representatives from 20 federal agencies that support programs and services focusing on youth. <http://youth.gov/youth-topics/positive-youth-development>
- The Interagency Working Group on Youth Programs (IWGYP) is composed of representatives from 20 federal agencies that support programs services focusing on youth. Information can be found at: <http://youth.gov/youth-topics/positive-youth-development>
- YOC can post its volunteer needs on the County Volunteer Center website to recruit volunteers for assistance. www.montgomeryserves.org
- Shepherd's Table located in Silver Spring provides free meals daily, clothing, showers and laundry, as well as outreach. Program's contact information is www.shepherdstable.org
- Montgomery County Cable TV could be approached to develop a short video for free on YOC services and clients to highlight the centers' work.
- The Bernie Scholarship Awards Program may be a source of scholarships for clients who live in subsidized rental housing in the County. www.berniescholarships.org

4. NEXT STEPS

The Community Review panel met with DHHS, Identity and YOC leadership and staff to review the report and its findings on 30 May 2017. During discussions, YOC management informed reviewers that action on several of the recommendations was already underway. For example, Identity, Inc. contacted the property owner to identify possibilities to make the locations more accessible to clients and staff using assisted mobility devices.

DHHS staff also offered a number of resources related to website design and training platforms which may be accessible for YOC staff.

PACS will monitor progress on the recommendations and report results to the DHHS Director and the Senior Leadership Team

at regular intervals with a one year update of the recommendation outcomes.

The report will be made available to the public on the internet site for DHHS.



Figure 12. Presentation of the Community Review Certificate during the closing meeting with the Youth Opportunity Center Staff, Identity, Inc. Management, the Review Team and PACS Community Review Coordinator

ANNEX I: Community Review Assessment Tool

I. Mission and Guiding Principles

Standards/ Strategies	Supporting Evidence
1. Program's mission statement clearly relates to the DHHS mission.	The Youth Opportunity Centers (YOC) create opportunities for underserved and disconnected youth to believe in themselves and realize their highest potential. Their target population is youth ages of 10 - 25 (primarily 16 – 24) who are not enrolled in school or working (disconnected from two core experiences that facilitate the successful transition to adulthood) and who may be gang-involved, ex-offenders, or at risk for gang involvement. The mission statement relates, aligns and supports the DHHS mission. The board, staff and clients were involved in its development.
2. Program has clear goals, objectives and strategies to accomplish its mission.	<p>Their primary goal is to support youth in their transition to adulthood by providing a range of services to help improve social and emotional learning, increase academic success and to be better prepared for work.</p> <p>All programs and services are based on the Positive Youth Development Model (Competence, Confidence, Connection, and Character) and Stages of Change Model (Precontemplation, Contemplation, Preparation, Action, Maintenance)</p> <p>Their Programmatic Strategy consists of 5 objectives and 12 Indicators.</p> <p>All staff are knowledgeable about goals, objectives and strategies to meet the mission. They all communicate the importance of YOC as relationship strength based and a place of plenty and love.</p>
3. Staff can articulate the program's mission, goals, services and target population.	Staff on all levels from Executive Director to Program Director, Quality Assurance and Workforce Managers, Crossroads and Upcounty YOC managers, Career Navigators, Workforce Development Specialist, Outreach and Engagement Specialists, GED Specialists, Mental Health Counselors, Substance Abuse Program Counselor, Program Assistants, and Contractors were all able to clearly articulate program mission, goals and services within their scope of work and responsibilities.
4. Program mission, goals, service, and contact information are accessible, accurate and consistent across sources such as, printed materials, information referral lines, website, and social media.	Mission and Vision and client expectations are posted at all YOC locations and in the administrative offices. Annual and evaluation reports are comprehensive and available in print or on-line. Brochures, leaflets, and program information cards are informative and available at all program locations and well distributed throughout the county. The website is attractive and informative and easy to navigate. There is a Facebook page with appropriate program information.
5. Program incorporates DHHS principles into policies, procedures, professional interactions and information technology (IT) systems.	All Identity programs including YOC utilizes their own data collection system entitled Efforts to Outcome (ETO) where attendance and case management is recorded within 48 hours. ETO has training and support from data manager, quality assurance manager and manuals and reports. There are a variety of materials available for staff to make referrals and transmit information to clients and their families.
6. Program has a system in place to identify efficiencies and improvements.	Program has established performance measures. Data results are reviewed monthly and quarterly. Changes and improvements to programs and practices occur frequently informed by ETO data tracking as well as staff and customer feedback and the Youth Leadership Council (YLC). Customer Quality Improvement (CQI) tool and techniques are also utilized. Staff are clearly aware of the service delivery framework and established performance measures. The Annual Report and Annual Evaluation Report are informative and utilized by staff in program design improvements and efficiencies.

II. Effective and Equitable Service Delivery

Standards/ Strategies	Supporting Evidence
<p>1. Staff have accurate information and appropriate tools and are empowered to provide the highest level of customer service.</p>	<p>YOC staff utilizes the Positive Youth Development Model (PYD) and the Stages of Change Model (SCM) to work with clients. The goal is to provide wrap around services to enable clients' education and employment goals, increase skills, master competencies and help them obtain credentials. The process begins at the front door. An intensive assessment is completed at intake that looks at legal status, education, health, substance abuse, mental health, homelessness and employment. Risks factors are red flagged. This information is input into the data system (ETO) for tracking and monitoring of intakes, referral source for services and outcomes.</p> <p>Staff managers meets weekly to review all intakes and collectively assess the needs of the clients and develop the Individual Service Plan (ISP).</p>
<p>2. Clients are screened for other needs and referrals are made for eligible services available outside the program.</p>	<p>A needs assessment is completed on all clients. The Adverse Childhood Experience (ACE) Questionnaire is completed to determine a history of trauma. The Intake assessment seeks out information related to several key elements such as trauma, substance abuse, housing status, the need for health services and determination of educational needs and/or employment goals. They evaluate involvement with gangs and identify if there is a desire to have tattoos removed. Educational and workforce development services as well as mental health and substance abuse counselor services are available if needed and are provided by community partners at the Up County and Crossroads facilities.</p> <p>Program does not have access to the DHHS eICM system. However, the Efforts to Outcome (ETO) system at YOC is excellent. The program tracks referrals to the program and to community services. The ETO system monitors status and outcomes and provides a wealth of data/information to the program and managers on clients' needs, services and staff performance in meeting the goals of the program.</p>
<p>3. The program informs and refers customers to appropriate resources in the community or other DHHS programs, as appropriate.</p>	<p>Staff records and monitors referrals with outcomes in the ETO system. The staff reviews the referral and checks to determine if the services were received, if client is on a waiting list or declines the services offered.</p> <p>The program works with a host of non-profit agencies and other DHHS programs to ensure needed services are provided to clients. DHHS provides substance abuse services. The program partners with Pride Youth Services and Career Catchers; The Street Outreach Network; Montgomery County Police Department Gang Unit, Montgomery College, The City of Gaithersburg Youth Opportunities Coalition, the Dept. of Recreation, Dept. of Juvenile Services and Healthy Teen Network to name a few.</p> <p>Culturally competent services are provided by a diverse staff of 8 males and 14 females. Twelve staff members are Hispanic, 8 African Americans, one Caucasian and one of two or more races. We met two former gang members that are staff members. We were impressed with their skills, professionalism and dedication to working with clients.</p>
<p>4. Program regularly solicits customer satisfaction information across all clients and uses information to improve program delivery.</p>	<p>Customer satisfaction surveys are completed at six months' intervals and upon exit from the program. In 2016, 99% of the clients reported an overall satisfaction with services at the Up County YOC. In fact, the program exceeded outcome in overall satisfaction with the program, staff's responsiveness, and level of customer services.</p> <p>Case Management Satisfaction Survey in 2016 indicated 98% of respondents were satisfied or very satisfied with services they received; 96% of respondents felt their needs were either met or fully met; and 98% felt that their case manager responded either quickly or very quickly to their needs. The surveys are available in English and Spanish.</p> <p>Focus groups are yearly and individual interviews take place.</p> <p>The Youth Leadership Council (YLC) members actively provides input regarding services. The YLC was instrumental in getting the center to institute the "Cohort System" where the program</p>

Standards/ Strategies	Supporting Evidence
	<p>integrated the GED program, work-readiness training and behavioral health services into a one day schedule. The YLC met 8 times during 2016.</p> <p>Information is shared with staff on weekly basis and during Administration week.</p>
5. Program delivers services respectful of diverse communities.	<p>Staff are diverse and trained in cultural competency. Several staff have been clients in the past. Services are provided in the customer's natural settings as well as in the center.</p> <p>Programs brochures and posters illustrate multiple cultures. However, the sign and information below the logo indicates the program is for Latino youths.</p>
6. Print and multimedia communication materials and forms are developed in easy to understand language, taking into consideration literacy level, cultural, and linguistic appropriateness and people with other forms of communication needs.	<p>Print and multimedia communications materials are accessible and easy to understand. Information is written at a level that is easy to understand for individuals with literacy deficits.</p> <p>Print materials are available in Spanish and English. The language line is available for interpretation for other languages. Survey data indicates that the majority of clients prefer to communicate in English.</p> <p>It is important to note that 12 of the 22 staff members are bilingual, speaking Spanish and one staff person speaks some French.</p>
7. Program is aware of and uses translation services to serve non-English speaking customers.	<p>Staff are bilingual in Spanish and some in French. Printed documents are available in English and Spanish. There is no charge for translation services. The Language line is available for those who require assistance.</p> <p>During the intake process all questions are read to clients in English and/or Spanish.</p>
8. Program staff are knowledgeable about and provides reasonable accommodations and accessible facilities for customers with disabilities.	<p>The Crossroads facility is handicapped accessible for clients. The elevator button is out of reach for someone in a wheelchair. The elevator is small and would be difficult for someone to maneuver in a wheelchair. Space is tight and may cause some issues in movement. Handicapped parking available.</p> <p>The YOC Upcounty facility does not comply with ADA requirements and is not handicapped accessible from the front steps. Access to GED classes are on the second floor with no elevator.</p> <p>It should be noted that this is the City of Gaithersburg building. Reportedly, they are aware of the problems. The facility is a central location for customers to attend. Fortunately, they have not had anyone with disabilities participate in the program.</p>
9. Staff are knowledgeable about and provides reasonable accommodations for customers with limited access to transportation (i.e., bus ticket, taxi voucher, etc.).	<p>YOC provides bus tokens and taxi vouchers to customers that require transportation assistance.</p> <p>Program also has access to Vans they drive to transport clients when necessary to community services that are difficult to reach by public transportation.</p> <p>Clients can be referred to Metro Access.</p>
10. Services are delivered in facilities that are accessible to clients.	<p>Services at the YOC are reasonable and accessible for clients. The centers are opened Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. Program has a weekly 4 p.m. Information Session for clients to visit each site to see how the center can help Weekend and extended evening hours may occur depending on the activities such as camping trips and all night basketball games.</p> <p>Each site is accessible by public transportation. Parking is available.</p>

Standards/ Strategies	Supporting Evidence
	Staff are accessible to clients by phone in emergency situations.
11. Services are delivered in facilities that are safe, comfortable and welcoming to clients.	<p>Each YOC program is neat, clean and well lighted. Clients are greeted with friendly and welcoming staff. The Mission Statement is posted in English and Spanish with rules for participation in the program. Spacing can be congested at Crossroads but staff and clients work with what is available.</p> <p>Nutritious and healthy refreshments and beverages are available on site. Restrooms are clean and accessible.</p>
12. Information on how to access or apply for services is available online for clients.	<p>Program information is accessible on line. Clear messages and the ability to refer for services is online. Information is available in Spanish. All information is up to date.</p> <p>However, days and hours of operation should be added to the site.</p> <p>It should be noted that the site promotes services directed to Latinos only.</p>
13. Program services are received in a timely manner.	<p>Program services are received in a timely manner. Intake information is reviewed with the team in a week and services are identified for the clients. High risk issues are red flagged. Emergency needs are accessed and referrals are put in place. Follow up of referrals are monitored to determine if obtained, on a wait list or declined.</p> <p>Reminders are made to clients to keep appointments. Outreach is done for those clients who are a no show.</p>
14. If the program has a waiting list for services, staff are working to eliminate the waiting list.	<p>There is no waiting list for services. All customers are seen on a timely basis.</p> <p>Referrals are handled immediately by staff.</p>
15. Program regularly reviews changing client outcomes and population needs data and incorporates findings into their practice. p	<p>The ETO systems tracks demographic which includes age, gender ethnicity/race; Socio-Economic Situation (health insurance status, living in precarious housing, no driver's license; Immigration and Acculturation status (foreign born, undocumented, time in the U.S.); Employment and School Situation (Unemployed, High School dropouts, High School or GED graduates); and Family Situation.</p> <p>The ETO tracks output measures through attendance, level of participation for various activities, referral information and referral status. A Red Flag Action Sheet allows staff to identify and act quickly on safety issues and emergency needs. Social and emotional learning, Academic and job readiness components are reviewed, Recreational activities, Case management services and mental health services are monitored.</p> <p>Follow-up and exit surveys are completed to determine performance measures and outcome of services.</p>

III. Accountability

Standards/ Strategies	Supporting Evidence
1. Program applies evidence-based practice to the design and delivery of services.	<p>All YOC programs are informed by research and evidenced based theoretical frameworks designed on client needs. Primarily the Positive Youth Development Model (PYD) with four components (competence, confidence, connection and character), and Stages of Change Models with 5 areas (precontemplation, contemplation, preparation, action and maintenance) Staff on all levels of the Identity - YOC organization stay current of latest research efforts and best practices.</p> <p>A research study was conducted on Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE) among clients. ACE measurement predicts which children will more likely struggle with a variety of physical, emotional and cognitive problems throughout childhood and adolescence. Their study found that the youth Identity-YOC serves are exposed to ACE's much higher than state or national averages.</p>

Standards/ Strategies	Supporting Evidence
2. Program sets monthly/annual targets for outcome measures.	Identity-YOC's reviews its results on a continuous basis. They do this by tracking and measuring a multitude of factors throughout the year. Monthly and annual targets are set for Academics, Case Management, Workforce development and Recreation. Some examples of targets and outcomes: 134 disconnected youth served at the YOCs; 76% connected to the labor market, and/or the educational system by enrolling in GED classes or re-enrolling in school; 18 youth obtained their GED diploma; 117 youth successfully completed workforce development, job readiness and soft skills.
3. Management routinely monitors outputs and meaningful outcomes data and uses measures to determine results.	Identity collects process and outcome data on all programs. Extensive evaluation information is collected by way of baseline, follow-up and exit surveys across programs. Output measures are tracked on an individual and group basis (tracking recruitment, attendance and level of participation, and social service referral information and referral status. Areas of output measures - social and emotional learning, academic and job readiness components, recreational activities, case management services, and mental health services. Outcome data is analyzed by external evaluator. Questions are grouped into several domains measuring various protective and risk factor. Statistical analysis is used to determine if changes encountered between baseline and exit are significantly different from each other. Process data such as client demographics and program outputs are entered daily in ETO Identity's data collection software system. Performance measures are also contained within the ETO. Data is used to determine that outcomes are being met
4. Program managers regularly disseminates the program's performance data with staff.	This occurs weekly, monthly and quarterly. The data collection system ETO creates a unique identifier for each participant allowing them to track all process data for clients on an individual and group basis (tracking recruitment, attendance and level of participation for various activities as well as social service referral information and referral status,) while protecting confidentiality. Information from intakes have a red flag sheet that allows staff to act quickly on safety issues and emergency needs. Quality assurance manager and data manager provide training and guidance in the use of ETO.
5. Program compares results/ trends with similar programs in other jurisdictions or appropriate benchmarks.	Staff participated in 5 Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) trainings offered for non-profits and workforce service providers by the workforce development board. Several staff have made presentations on a variety of topics (i.e. Trauma Informed Restorative Practices for Vulnerable Youth) at local, state and national associations. Identity YOC programs and services are unique and difficult to find comparable services
6. Are managers utilizing reporting tools and data?	All staff are responsible for tracking in ETO all contacts and services delivered to clients. Every Friday there is an Intensive Case Management (ICM) meeting. ETO is the repository of client data and programs and services output and performance measures. Staff have an understanding of the ETO and utilize the tools and data.
7. Program holds staff accountable to demonstrate respect, professionalism, timelines and fairness.	Position expectations and performance reviews are established for all levels of staff and include: Program and case management; personnel management; program spending; program evaluation; personnel management; client stakeholder relationships; facilitation; collaboration and teamwork; programmatic reporting and documentation; compliance and professionalism; outreach, engagement and group activities; and self-reflection and personal responsibility. Formal reviews are conducted annually with monthly feedback of performance progress.
8. Program has participated in the Quality Service Review (QSR) process.	Managers track and report monthly on YOC quality of Service Indicators for education, training and employment programs. QSI - Quality Service Improvement. The program has not participated in the DHHS QSR/ NA.
9. Program has a clearly written policy for handling complaints/disputes about the delivery of services that is available to clients.	There is a brief written procedure for handling complaints. Clients are informed verbally that the Director of Programs whom is bilingual (Carolyn Camacho) is ready and available to listen to any complaint or concern. Clients are informed that the Program Director and Management are always available to help resolve problems or concerns. All complaints or concerns are documented in writing with a date action was promised. All written documentation is given to the Executive Director and placed in employee file.

Standards/ Strategies	Supporting Evidence
10. A notice of privacy practices (NOPP) is visibly posted in public areas and is provided to clients.	The Bill of Rights and Responsibility and Notice of Privacy Rights and Practices is posted and reviewed by staff with clients at intake. Clients complete the Authorization for Release/Request for Information and the Notice of Privacy Rights. The NOPP is not available on line.
11. Staff always adhere to appropriate information security safeguards when sharing confidential documents.	Expectations for confidentiality are clearly identified in job descriptions for each staff member of Identity. Staff complete HIPPA and ETO data training and are cognizant of the steps they must take to secure documents with client identifiers. Appropriate releases of information are completed.
12. Client files are stored in a secure area and confidential information is not in plain view.	All staff are trained in proper handling of confidential client information. Hard copies of client files are kept in locked secure cabinets. Screensavers and passwords protect computers. The data manager provides training and support to staff to insure computerized client data is secure
13. Staff practices discretion and has safeguards in place when discussing sensitive client information.	Identity has a procedure in writing on safeguarding client information. Offices with closed doors are utilized when discussing sensitive client information only takes place in closed spaces.

IV. Capable and Engaged Workforce

Standards/ Strategies	Supporting Evidence
1. Program has sufficient staff and appropriate resources to support goals.	The YOC has sufficient staff and appropriate resources to support the goals of the program. In the past two months, staff for six new positions were hired to complement the program. In Upcounty a Senior Program Manager and Program Manager were hired along with two GED Specialist. A Workforce Development Specialist and Outreach and Engagement Specialist hired for Crossroads. Staff is diverse, 63.6% female and 36.4% male; 54% Hispanic and 36% African Americans. Staff is very resourceful, especially the Substance Abuse Counselor who demonstrated his creativity in developing many tools to use when working with the youths.
2. The program budget reflects and supports the program's mission and significant needs.	The YOCs budget supports the program's mission and significant needs. Increases to the budget this fiscal year permitting the hiring of new staff to alleviate extra duties that management was carrying and add additional GED specialists, workforce development staff and an Outreach Engagement Specialist. Management and leadership reviews the budget quarterly to ensure that funds are adequate and program needs are addressed and services are delivered in a timely fashion.
3. To ensure appropriate planning and sustainability, the program follows a process to communicate budget needs and alternate funding strategies, engaging the department and other entities as required.	The YOC receives in kind services and contracts with DHHS for both centers. In addition, they receive grant funds from the Federal government, Montgomery County and Gaithersburg City grants. Identity also receives support from the Cafritz Foundation, Marriott, Mead and Meyer Foundations and a host of individual donors, which benefits YOC. The Identity Board of Directors assists the program with members that have expertise in advocacy, Education, Workforce Development and legal advice. The members have been instrumental in the continued growth and development of Identity.

Standards/ Strategies	Supporting Evidence
4. Job descriptions are in place for position and reflect the individual's role in achieving the program's goals.	Job descriptions for the following positions are in place and each position represented the goals and missions of the program: Program Senior Manager, Program Assistant, GED Specialist, Workforce Development Specialist, Career Navigator/Case Manager, Outreach and Engagement Specialist, Mental Health Therapist and Correctional Facility Program Coordinator.
5. Staff responsibilities and activities are appropriately aligned with their position description.	Staff responsibilities and activities are appropriately aligned with their individual job descriptions. Staff are working to the full extent of their position descriptions.
6. Staff have the knowledge, skills, awareness and training required to formulate, implement, execute, and manage services to customers.	<p>Staff are required to meet educational requirements for various positions such as GED Specialist, Workforce Development Specialist, mental health specialist and Correctional Facility Program Coordinator. Along with experience, they participate in required YOC training which include Advancing Youth Development, Facilitation Skill-Building, Child Abuse and Neglect, Crisis Intervention, Motivational Interviewing and CPR/First Aid certification.</p> <p>In addition, Identity is in its second year of a two-year management development grant to develop a best practices talent development system for planning new strategic initiatives with Bridgespan Consulting Group.</p>
7. Performance plans and evaluations are conducted on a regular basis for staff (as per Performance Management Cycle).	Performance plans are completed on a yearly basis with a mid-year review before the final. Goals are related to the staff's job description and align with the performance plans.
8. Program management utilizes techniques to ensure staff is effectively working to meet goals.	<p>The YOC program is founded on the Positive Youth Development Model (PYD) and the Stages of Change Model (SCM). Management and staff utilizes the ETO system to analyze progress towards meeting the goals of the program. Teamwork is a major component of the program.</p> <p>Staff participates in required training and attend a multi-session facilitation group training for Identity and partner staff.</p>
9. Program provides opportunities for volunteers, interns and/or students.	<p>The program recruits behavioral health, case management and mental health interns from local universities to work with the program. In addition, some students volunteer for community hours and youths involved with workforce development and Outreach can earn a small stipend for assisting in the program.</p> <p>Volunteers from the business sector come to speak with clients re opportunities and serve as judges for the Shark Tank competition.</p>
10. Program ensures that volunteers, interns and/or students understand their role by providing job descriptions, training, and supervision.	Management and clinical staff provide training and supervision to interns that participate in the program from local universities. Working with interns and students is a performance standard for the mental health specialist and the Program Manager.
11. Program staff have received emergency preparedness guidance, training and have a plan in the event of an emergency.	<p>The YOC staff work with youths involved in gang activities. Staff are provided with a Personnel Policy Handbook at the time of hiring that they are required to read and sign indicating that they have read the handbook. Policies include Safety and Emergency Procedures, Critical Incident Policies and Procedures, Suicidal Ideations, Harm to Self and Others, Aggressive or Violent Incidents and Medical Emergencies.</p> <p>The clients are informed upon enrollment in the program of rules regarding no weapons and fighting. Violence prevention is most important and a safety plan is in place to ensure that different members of gangs are not in the same place at the same time.</p>

Standards/ Strategies	Supporting Evidence
3. Staff effectively uses appropriate technology to support work and achieve program goals.	<p>YOC's data system, Efforts to Outcomes (ETO) created by Social Solutions is an outstanding evidence-based system that tracks clients' activities and progress, services, staff and program outcomes. From the beginning, ETO was customized for YOC's, and revisions are made as needed to increase the usefulness of the data. YOC's Executive Director teaches staff that "If the data isn't there, it doesn't exist." Staff understand the value of recording every touch point with each client and every activity participation and progress. Staff are required to input client information into ETO within 2 business days of each contact or activity. ETO also allows staff to assess their work. YOC is also in the process of upgrading their network.</p> <p>All staff have or have access to tablets or laptops to use in the field, and all have an office computer. Some prefer not to use these devices when meeting with clients, because it may negatively affect the client-staff relationship. All staff have cell phones.</p> <p>Staff use Google calendar to arrange team and client meetings and Google docs to share various contact, activities and progress reports with each other (mental health reports are open only to the mental health counselor and his/her supervisor). They also use Dropbox for final records and tracking and ADP for payroll.</p> <p>Staff will be trained on DHHS new technology when access is provided.</p>
4. Program has an on-going training curriculum and accountability structure to ensure full utilization of the Enterprise Integrated Case Management (eICM), Electronic Health Records (eHR) and/or Electronic Content Management (eICM) systems.	<p>YOC has its own in-house extensive ongoing trainings including HIPAA, trauma informed care, Positive Youth Development Model and many other trainings. YOC has an accountability structure (ETO) that ensures consistent effective service delivery and an outside program evaluator. Managers monitor staff service delivery and accountability: All staff meet weekly together to discuss cases, services and client progress; managers meet twice a week with each staff, and staff have annual performance meetings/reports. Monthly reports about staff activities and client progress from YOC's ETO database are reviewed and discussed among staff. All staff get together at an annual retreat.</p> <p>YOC is aware of the County Government's eICM, eHR and eCM systems but outside access is not yet available. They are interested in being a pilot for these systems.</p>
5. Program staff effectively use eICM, eHR and/or eCM systems for service delivery and to monitor client and program outcomes.	<p>YOC doesn't have access to these County systems.</p> <p>YOC's ETO data system is used to assess service integration and program effectiveness: Staff enter attendance, case management efforts, Intakes and follow-ups. Managers analyze client risk factors, review service delivery and compare outputs versus targets with staff regarding each client.</p> <p>Staff have weekly all-staff ICM meetings. Satisfaction Surveys are conducted frequently with clients, as well as Focus Groups; they seek feedback from their Youth Advisory Board and consultants to remain flexible in their programs and services.</p>
6. Program staff are accessible by telephone and e-mail, and voicemails are responded within one business day.	<p>All YOC staff have business cards with phone, email and fax information, email and voicemail (with an outgoing message about when they return calls or when they are on leave and whom to contact in their absence). Staff are committed and hard-working, and they respond within one business day to all messages, which they track. Staff email addresses and photos are easily found on Identity's website under "Our Team."</p> <p>Staff follow Identity's Policy and Procedures, including maintaining written files on each client (kept in locked drawers) and recording all touch points and referrals in the ETO database.</p>
7. Program uses electronic and social media (webpage, Facebook, Twitter, etc.) to conduct outreach and promote services to customers.	<p>YOC is on Identity's webpage, which describes its vision, goals, programs and services effectively. YOC is also on Identity's Facebook and Twitter. These social media postings are updated and maintained by Identity's Communication Department. they are effective in outreach and promoting services to customers, the community, schools, police and other service providers.</p>

VI. Collaborative Partnerships

Standards/ Strategies	Supporting Evidence
<p>1. Program is continually developing and building community partnerships to promote innovative solutions to current and emergent challenges.</p>	<p>YOC continually reaches out to find and retain community partnerships. YOC partners with Screening and Assessment Services for Children and Adults and collaborates with Manna Food as part of a Germantown initiative to reduce inequities in social determinants of health and with University Manor Apartments to engage youth and young adults on site, and participate in a pilot to utilize and test Healthy Teen Network's "Generate My Healthy Future."</p> <p>Currently YOC is developing partnerships with businesses to let them know that they have some employment-ready clients whom YOC would like businesses to hire. YOC would have a job coach work follow-up to ensure that the clients are successful in the jobs. YOC partners with WIOA for WorkSource Montgomery (by grant) and has a contract with Career Catcher to prepare clients for employment.</p> <p>Partnerships include The Street Outreach Network (SON) to help prevent and de-escalate community conflict, the Police Department to work on safety planning and relocation interventions as well as joining the Latino Public Safety Advisory Group and the Youth-Police Advisory Councils, the Youth Police Unit and Montgomery County Correctional Facility. Collaboration with the Germantown Alliance and the City of Gaithersburg Beloved Community Initiative (Asbury residents' network) to build intergenerational relationships and supports for vulnerable children, youth and families. YOC is part of the Youth Opportunities Coalition to provide a unified approach to positive youth development by optimizing resources and communication among agencies in the Coalition, the Recreation and Juvenile Services Departments, Teen and Young Adult Health Connection and Healthy Teen Network for referrals, Maryland Multicultural Center, Noyes Center, AFFIRM for adolescent empowerment, Clarksburg Jail, Betty Ann Krahnke Center for female victims of domestic violence, the Crisis Center, National Center for Children and Families for 3 months' temporary housing, local libraries and Maryland Treatment Centers for a very innovative substance abuse counselor.</p> <p>Educational partners are MCAEL (grant funds) for GED and English language classes, 21st Century Schools (middle schools). YOC collaborates with Montgomery County Public Schools to engage gang-involved youth and youth at risk for gang involvement and youth at risk for dropping out of school or who have dropped out to bring them into YOC's programs and services. Montgomery College's (MC) Educational Opportunities Center regularly provided information sessions for clients, and clients went to MC's campus to explore career pathways and certifications in biotech. MC is a partner also for scholarships to enroll YOC clients in credit and non-credit courses that lead to certifications and degrees in different areas. YOC also partners with other universities and colleges to recruit interns for graduate-level social work students to work at YOC.</p>
<p>2. Staff regularly collaborate with the provider community in identifying potential solutions for efficiencies and improvements.</p>	<p>YOC's public and private partnerships respond to the needs of its clients, improve clients' education and employment outcomes and prevent violence in the community, and encourage clients to become civically engaged and equal partners in identifying solutions to community issues and challenges.</p> <p>YOC is a member of the Coalition of nonprofit Service Providers and the Down County Network; these groups have quarterly meetings to discuss challenges and brainstorm about solutions for their clients and program services and resources. YOC collaborates with local government agencies: City of Gaithersburg Department of Community Services, UpCounty Regional Services Center, Montgomery Village Foundation. YOC staff attend meetings with the Germantown Alliance to partner with providers and businesses, and YOC's ED is on the Board of Nonprofit Montgomery.</p> <p>Some of YOC's female students attended the Commission for Women's listening tour at a library and shared their thoughts on the needs of young women in the County. YOC participates in the Police Youth Department's initiative meetings and trainings, trauma-informed restorative practices training, WorkSource Montgomery trainings, Collaboration Council for Children, Youth and Families trainings.</p> <p>YOC staff have site visits with their Department of Health and Human Services' Contract Monitor, local government, local libraries, police to discuss collaborative efforts needed in Germantown and with the business sector through contacts with employers and organizations like the Germantown Alliance.</p>

Standards/ Strategies	Supporting Evidence
3. Program regularly solicits the broad input of clients and the community to support proactive planning and improve services.	YOC has an active Board of Directors and a Youth Advisory Board. Clients are actively involved with program design and revisions, during one-on-one client meetings with their Career Navigator (case manager) the client's suggestions are solicited, and client surveys are conducted. YOC has outreach interns, a Youth Leadership Council which meets monthly, client satisfaction surveys and focus groups with clients and with the community for more input. Clients become more involved as volunteers helping with various tasks at YOC--administrative, artistic, musical. YOC is planning with the UpCounty Regional Services Center Director to develop a community advisory board in Germantown composed of youth, parents and community stakeholders.



ANNEX II: Americans with Disabilities Act Checklist

This review notes general impressions and observations about ADA compliance. It is not a formal assessment for ADA compliance.

Accessible Parking/ Route of Travel	Yes/ No
Is there clearly marked accessible parking? ADA parking regulations require 1 accessible space per 25 spaces. The first space should be a van accessible space-8ft. parking space plus an 8ft. access aisle.	Yes
Is there an accessible path of travel between the parking space and the main entrance of the building? Look for curb cuts, ramps, etc. Follow the travel path and see if you encounter any problems.	No
If the main entrance is not accessible, is there a clearly marked alternative route to the building that is accessible? Again, follow this route and see if you encounter any problems.	No
Does the route appear to be wide enough for a wheelchair user (at least 36 inches)?	Yes
Is the front door wide enough (at least 32 inches wide) for a wheelchair to get through?	Yes
Can you open the door without too much trouble? If not is there an automatic door or doorbell to ring for assistance?	Yes
Accessible Interior Space	Yes/ No
Can you reach the main office by an accessible route?	Yes
Is the aisle at least 36 inches wide and clear of boxes and protruding items?	Yes
Are interior doors wide enough for wheelchair access (32 inches wide)?	Yes
Is there an accessible bathroom?	Yes
Does the door open easily or is there an automatic door?	Yes
Is there a water fountain that can be used by those using wheelchairs?	No
Are interviewing or counseling rooms accessible for someone in a wheelchair?	Yes
Program Accessibility	Yes/ No
Does the agency brochure inform people of how to request the information in an alternative format?	No
Do meeting notices include a statement about requesting sign language interpretation or other accommodations?	No
Are meetings held in accessible locations?	Yes
Does the agency permit service dogs to accompany clients? There are no licensing requirements or identifying equipment needed to prove that the dog is a service dog. The client may be asked if the dog is a service dog.	Yes
Does the agency have a lot of telephone contact with clients?	Yes
If so, does the agency have a TTY telephone? *Crisis Center only	No
Is staff trained on the use of the TTY? *Crisis only	No
Is agency staff trained to use Maryland Relay?	No
Will staff members assist people with disabilities in completing applications if necessary?	Yes
If the agency has a website, is it accessible to users who are blind or have visual impairments?	No

Reviewer comments:

The team observed three locations: Identity's Administrative House and two Youth Opportunity Centers (Upcounty in Gaithersburg and Crossroads in Langley Park). Identity's Administrative Building is an older home with steps and multi floors. There is a ramp but it only leads to one possible entrance that is not marked. Once in the building access is limited only to the first floor. The Crossroads YOC location has accessible parking and an elevator. The Upcounty YOC is also located in an older home with no ramps for access. The offices in both centers are very small making the use of a wheelchair while navigating space difficult. Identify and the YOC should make accessibility a higher priority as they look for future program expansion.

Identity-YOC does not have a TTY, however some staff are aware of the Maryland Relay Service and could use some additional training.

Program brochures, notices/flyers and website do not include a statement about access or accommodations (e.g., sign language requests).

ANNEX III: Reviewers

The Department of Health and Human Services extends appreciation to the following independent reviewers who volunteered their time for the community.



Lois Calhoun

Lois Calhoun, ACSW, LICSW is a Licensed Independent Clinical Social Worker who has more than 31 years of work experience in Mental Health. She retired in 2010 from the D.C. Department of Mental Health with a long career in various positions from an Outpatient Social Worker at St. Elizabeths Hospital to a Team Leader and Branch Chief for the Community Support Program at one of the largest community mental health centers in the city. She was a Manager in the Office of Accountability and during her last five years of employment developed the Forensic Services Program in the department. She served as an Adjunct Professor at Howard University, Graduate School of Social Work. In addition to some consulting work, Ms. Calhoun has been a community reviewer for more than five years and is a graduate of Temple University and the University of Pennsylvania.



Nancy Scull

Nancy Scull with a Masters in Education in Counseling and Guidance, has forty years of experience in family and child welfare as: program director and policy analyst; provider (foster care for children and youth); and successful advocate for policy and practice reform in the multiple issues of low-income families, child welfare, foster care and adoption. She has extensive knowledge of the complex issues involved in family and child welfare, especially through her lengthy employment in Montgomery County. Additionally, she has extensive quality assurance/ case review experience with an ability to understand perspectives of the range of players in family and child welfare including: birth, foster and adoptive parents; children and youth; and social workers and administrators.



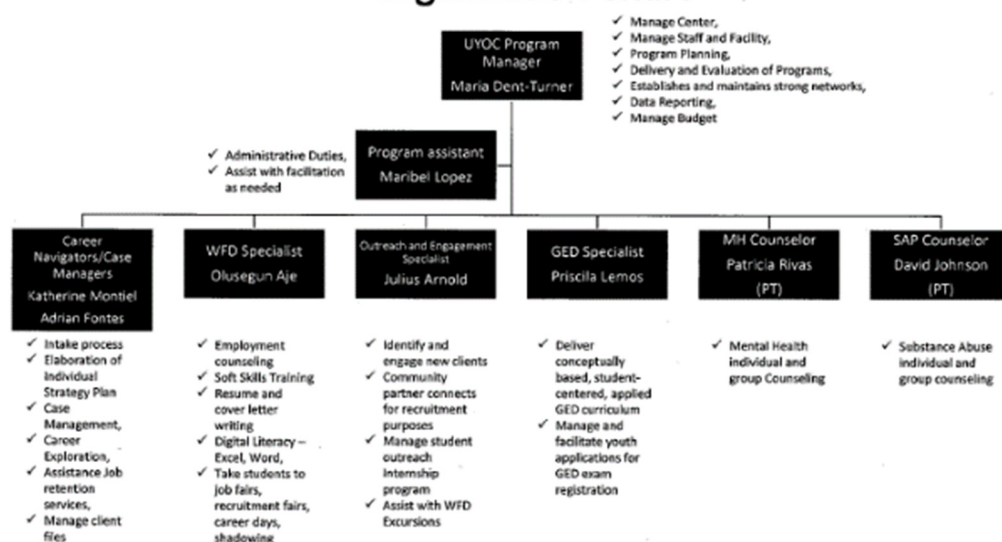
Beth Zeidman

Beth Zeidman is a Certified Therapeutic Recreation Specialist working with individuals of all ages and abilities and retired from Arlington County's Department of Parks and Recreation after 31 years of service where she held various supervisory and management positions as well as special assistant to the Director. She has a graduate degree from George Washington University and completed certificate programs in Organizational Development and Transformational Leadership at Georgetown University. Beth has served on National Boards as well as presented at numerous National, State and local conferences and has been an adjunct instructor at several Universities in the Metropolitan Washington Area. Most recently, a graduate of Senior Leadership Montgomery and the Legacy Leader Institute on Public Policy at the University of Maryland. She is also a founding member of the Community Research Advisory Board, part of the University of Maryland Center for Health Equity. She has been conducting Community Reviews for 7 years.

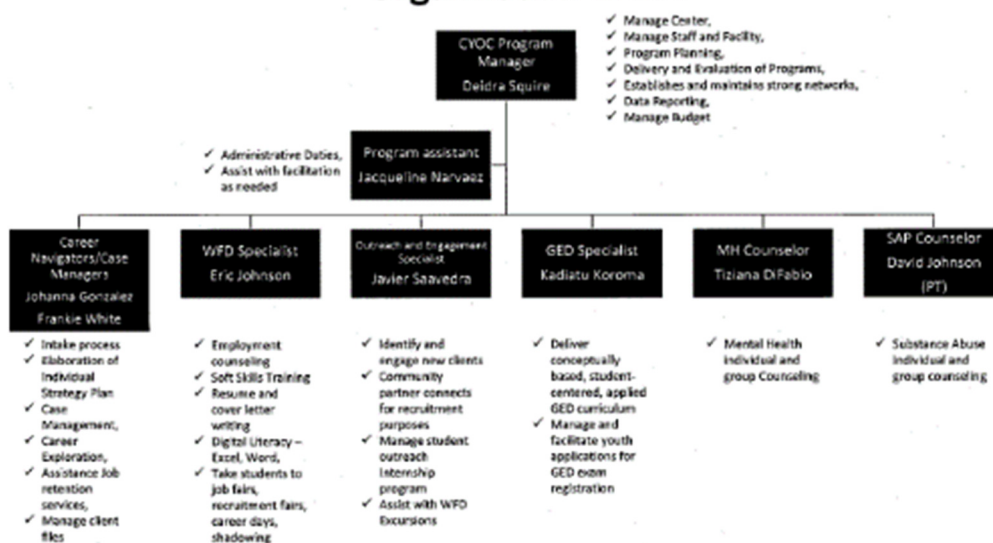
ANNEX IV: Organizational structures and services



Up-County Youth Opportunity Center Organization Chart



Crossroad Youth Opportunity Center Organization Chart



ANNEX V: Interviewees and participants

The independent review panel met with and interviewed the following staff and community partners, and wishes to extend appreciation for their participation in this Community Review. The list is not exhaustive, as additional program staff may have been unintentionally omitted from this list.

Name	Title	Organization
Diego Uriburu	Executive Director	Identity, Inc.
Carolyn Camacho	Director of Youth Programs	Identity, Inc.
Fresia Guzman	Senior Manager Workforce Dev -YOC	Identity, Inc.
Deidre Squire	Crossroads YOC Manager	Identity, Inc. YOC
Maria Dent-Turner	Upcounty YOC Manager	Identity, Inc. YOC
Carmen Estrada	Quality Assurance Manager	Identity, Inc.
Jose Rosario	Data Manager	Identity, Inc.
Chad Garnes	Sgt., Gang Unit	MCPD
Anne VanDercook	Director of Finance	Identity, Inc.
Michaela Aparicio	Manager of Human Resources	Identity, Inc.
Katherine Montiel	Navigator/Case Manager	Upcounty YOC
Adrian Fontes	Navigator/Case Manager	Upcounty YOC
Priscila Lemos	GED Specialist	Upcounty YOC
David Johnson	Substance Abuse Counselor	MD Treatment Center - Identity, Inc. YOC
Julius Arnold	Outreach and Engagement Specialist	Upcounty YOC
Frankie White	Navigator/Case Manager	Crossroads YOC
Johana Gonzalez	Navigator/Case Manager	Crossroads YOC
Javier Saavedra	Outreach and Engagement Specialist	Crossroads YOC
Kadiatu Koroma	GED Specialist	Crossroads YOC
Tiziana DiFabio	MH Specialist	Crossroads YOC
Ludley Howard	Executive Director	Pride Youth Services
Mariana McNeill	Executive Director	Career Catchers
	Clients	Both locations
Luis Cardona	CYFS Manager	DHHS
Leslie Rosa-Reyes	CYFS Contract Manager	DHHS



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