

Thank you for the opportunity to address the Howard County Council on this issue.

I urge you to support the University of Maryland Extension's request to include the **Howard County Watershed Stewards Academy (HoCoWSA)** in the County's FY 2018 operating budget. HoCoWSA provides valuable services to the Howard County community. The academy trains and educates local citizens in relevant stormwater and watershed issues. After being trained, these Master Watershed Stewards, upon request, assess neighborhoods and residential sites for stormwater management problems and potential solutions, while also guiding their neighbors and other citizens as they seek to initiate residential-scale best management practices that will reduce the volume of pollution that comes from these sites as stormwater runoff.

HoCoWSA is able to access private property within Howard County – property that is outside of the County's authority and is thus otherwise inaccessible . HoCoWSA is collaborative, acting as an effective bridge between the County and its citizens. With the increase in rain events and their resulting impacts to individual properties, the demand for help from homeowners across the county continues to increase, and is increasingly desired.

I graduated in 2016 from the Watershed Stewards Academy. I have become known on my street as someone who can help find solutions for stormwater runoff problems, and who is knowledgeable about appropriate programs that offer help with designing a variety of best management practices including installing rain barrels, conservation landscapes, and rain gardens.

People want to protect their own property from erosion and pollution and this program gives them nearby boots on the ground to support them in this effort. Please help us help the county and ourselves by supporting the University of Maryland Extension's request to include as a new program the Howard County Watershed Stewards Academy (HoCoWSA) into the County's FY 2018 operating budget.

Thank you for your attention on this matter.

Sheila Robinson



Testimony to Howard County Counsel May 2, 2017
By: Ann Heavner
Executive Director, Rebuilding Together Howard County

On behalf of the board of directors, advisory board, low income homeowner clients and thousand volunteers of Rebuilding Together Howard County, I am testifying in support of the county executives' inclusion of a \$50,000 Community Service Partnership grant for Rebuilding Together.

Organization's History:

Rebuilding Together Howard County is celebrating it's 25th year of providing low income homeowners with free house repairs. Since the organization's inception in 1992, the local affiliate is part of a nationwide movement to help those with low income, the elderly, disabled individuals, and veterans who were in need of free home repairs. During the last 25 years, the organization has repaired over 900 homes of low income homeowners with approximately 1,000 volunteers each year. Our repairs allow senior to age in place.

Mission and Goals:

Rebuilding Together Howard County's mission statement is, "Together we transform the lives of low-income homeowners by improving the safety and health of their homes and to revitalize communities." Bottom line, our goal is to provide a home that is warm, safe, and dry to low income homeowners who cannot afford to pay for needed home repairs.

Organizational Strengths:

Rebuilding Together is growing. In 2017 we successfully transitioned from a one day a year operation to a year round operation. In addition, we increased staff by hiring a project manager and an office manager. As Executive Director, my position was a part-time position and I now work full time. In addition to staff positions, we have a stellar Advisory Board consisting of Presidents and CEO's of large regional construction companies. To augment that talent, we have a 16 member working board of directors which meets monthly. The final important point to make regarding our organizational strength is our volunteers. We have an army of volunteers. This past Saturday, April 29th, that army repaired 25 houses and 2 non-profit facilities. New roofs, windows, bathrooms, plumbing, and other repairs were installed free of charge to low income homeowners. The average income of the families we help is \$30,000 a year.

Rebuilding Together® Howard County, Inc. is a 501(c)(3) Corporation, EIN 52-1748888

The nation's largest volunteer organization preserving and revitalizing low-income houses and communities



New in 2017/2018

Rebuilding Together is moving forward to implement two new initiatives.

First, we will begin a Safe and Healthy Housing Program. We will evaluate and quantify for each house we repair 25 different characteristics to include the roof, hot water heater, grab bars, smoke alarms, etc... The plan is to evaluate the home before and after repairs are made in order to track the impact of the repairs provided with the goal being the house will transition to a safe and healthy house.

Second, we are implementing a Community Revitalization Program. Instead of just repairing homes randomly through-out the county, we will focus on specific communities in need of revitalization. Towards that end, we are currently providing repairs to Ellicott City Flood victims.

In closing, Rebuilding Together Howard County will greatly appreciate the help and financial support provided by this Community Service Partnership Grant.

Rebuilding Together Howard County
8775 Centre Park Drive #519
Columbia, Md. 21045
410-381-3338

Rebuilding Together® Howard County, Inc. is a 501(c)(3) Corporation, EIN 52-1748888

The nation's largest volunteer organization preserving and revitalizing low-income houses and communities

Request Prepared By

Anthony Cordo, Executive Director

Anthony@HowardCountyTourism.com

410-313-1439

Howard County Tourism Council

8267 Main Street

Ellicott City, Maryland 21043

Howard County Tourism Council

FY2018 Funding Request

May 2, 2017

Honorable Council Members
3430 Court House Drive
Ellicott City, Maryland 21043

Dear Honorable Council Members,

The Howard County Tourism Council's team of destination marketing professionals and Board of Directors made up of tourism and hospitality industry leaders thank you for your support of our mission to enhance the tourism industry in Howard County.

The Howard County Tourism Council respectfully requests that \$1,057,080.00 be included in your proposed FY2018 budget for the Howard County Tourism Council.

The amount of \$1,057,080 is based on the County forecasted transient room tax and the amount to be distributed to Howard County Tourism Council according to state legislation (see Title 20. Taxes, Charges and Fees. Section 20.400).

In making this request on behalf of the 10,000+ employees working in Howard County's hotels, shops, restaurants, farms, museums, attractions, the arts, and parks we recognize how fortunate we are to live and work in a County with leaders who understand how a continued investment in tourism is part of the economic solution. We recently completed a strategic plan that focuses the organization's resources on measurable efforts that increase spending and attendance at Howard County tourism attractions. This plan will guide our efforts to most effectively market and sell Howard County as a fantastic place to visit, live and run a tourism business.

The tourism, travel and hospitality industry all across Maryland continues to be a bright spot in the economy. In Howard County, the effects of unseasonably wet weather in Spring (2016) and multiple disasters have had an impact on the tourism sector. Now more than ever the many small businesses in our community and the people they employ benefit from our marketing and sales efforts. Those efforts continue to grow in effectiveness as we aggressively pursue our group sales efforts and continue to transition almost completely to digital advertising.

During the first half of FY2017 our organization focused on promoting a series of actionable travel activities including Restaurant Weeks, agricultural tourism opportunities like farm-to-table, our growing population of breweries, and a campaign encouraging holiday travelers to use Howard County as their base when they're visiting Washington D.C. and Baltimore.

On July 31, the flash flood ravaged Old Ellicott City, including our offices and Welcome Center. We activated a plan to prepare for marketing the retailers and restaurants when the timing was appropriate. The hard work of the local business owners, the support of the County Council, the efforts in the Executive's office and Howard County Government, Howard County Economic Development Authority and Howard County Tourism have helped to put Old Ellicott City on the track towards complete restoration.

We quickly built EllicottCityHolidays.com as a landing page for the marketing that included information on the open businesses and on the upcoming events. Our campaign for Old Ellicott City targeted residents in Howard County, in the surrounding regions of Baltimore and Washington D.C. and to major leisure travel feeder markets in nearby states. The campaign, combined with the excitement for the return of a beloved area, directly attracted tens of thousands of web sessions and contributed in a large way to the busy weekends at the newly reopened shops and restaurants of Old Ellicott City.

Thanks to these initiatives and many others that were made possible through funding received under your leadership at Howard County Government we continue to generate regional and national publicity, including nearly fifty media placements so far in FY2017. Many of the stories featured the newly reopened Old Ellicott City as we dedicated resources to spreading the news, but we also had success in attracting travel writers who in turn labeled destinations within Howard County as some of the best in the nation on MSN.com, Brit+Co, RedBookMag.com and Cosmopolitan.com.

Our measurables are showing progress in marketing the community as a destination for spending customers. According to the latest statistics from the State of Maryland, Howard County Tourism's marketing and sales efforts to date for FY2017 equate to an economic impact of \$24,184,595.00. Website traffic is up 169.24% with the increase coming from our trackable marketing campaigns. And due to our sales efforts, new conferences and events like the Teen Masters Bowling Tournament, the National Prevention Science Coalition and PPES Educational Consultants are committing to hold their events in Howard County.

Tax revenue generated from hotel stays have continued to grow since a stable investment in tourism promotion was legislated in 2012. Increases over the past few years include 4.2% in 2014, 8% and 6.1% through FY2016. Since 2012 nearly \$23.5 million in tax revenue has been collected and invested not only in boosting the tourism economy, but also in the Economic Development Authority and the County's other general fund programs.

As our organization looks forward to FY2018, Howard County residents, local businesses and visitors alike will see benefits from significant initiatives intended to promote and enhance the attractions in Howard County. We thank you for your support and look forward to working with you in the future.

Respectfully,

Anthony Cordo, Executive Director
Howard County Tourism Council

Enclosures:

- FY2018 Budget Request
- About the Howard County Tourism Council
- Summary of Successes FY2016-17

FY2018 Budget Request

Our organization recently completed a three-year strategic plan that emphasizes measurable returns on investment. With funding support for our programs, we will measure growth in visitation, and improve the quality of life for residents by supporting the tourism business community, an industry worth hundreds of millions of dollars to Howard County.

With \$1,057,080.00 in funding we will focus on the following in FY2018:

Group visitors (sales)

- Work with partners in Howard County Recreation and Parks, hotels and other meeting venues to retain existing sports tournaments, conferences and meetings that provide economic benefit to the community.
- Aggressively sell the venues and amenities in Howard County to meeting planners that host events (weddings, meetings, etc.) that will fit into existing vacancies at hotels, meeting venues and sports complexes.
- Market and sell Howard County as an excellent destination for weddings and family reunions.

Leisure travelers (marketing)

- **More targeted, niche marketing focusing on ROI**
 - Focus on marketing niche opportunities for visiting Howard County like the breweries and distilleries and agritourism.
 - Complete shift to digital marketing.
 - Video marketing.
 - Social media and storytelling through quality content.
- **Old Ellicott City's return**, continuing to promote the new experience that's developing as the community, shops and restaurants rebuild.
- **Columbia's 50th**, and the Merriweather Post Pavilion birthday, focusing on the June and July birthday celebrations.
- **Events and destinations that make Howard County unique**, including our festivals at the Fairgrounds and the events and attractions in communities like Elkridge, Maple Lawn, Savage and Western Howard County.

Resident awareness

- Raise pride in Howard County and make residents ambassadors for their own communities.
- Work with relevant organizations to promote Columbia as the number one best place to live in America.

Media

- Pitch positive stories about Howard County to writers and other media.
- Gain more positive exposure for Howard County's tourism industry.

Tourism cultivation

- Support and represent hundreds of local hospitality businesses through advocacy and marketing initiatives.
- Provide educational opportunities in various relevant topics.
- Work with the Howard County Chamber of Commerce, the Howard County Economic Development Authority, the Maryland Hotel and Lodging Association, the Maryland Restaurant Association, the Maryland Tourism Coalition and the Maryland Retail Association to advocate on the state level for Howard County hospitality business needs.
- Work with various local organizations to support a more vibrant community.
- Provide sponsorships to eligible events and attractions to help cultivate new reasons to visit Howard County.

Howard County Welcome Center and other Visitor Services

- Beginning the new research and design phase for an eventual renovation of the Howard County Welcome Center to better reflect the county's attractions, culture and events.
- Continue to operate the Howard County Welcome Center during posted hours.
- In cooperation with the Ellicott City Partnership and the Howard County Government, use the Howard County Welcome Center as a base of operations for promoting the resurgence of Old Ellicott City through promotions and events like the annual tree-lighting.
- Research (and contingent on outcome, deploy) methods of providing visitor services like mobile welcome centers or information kiosks in key locations.

About the Howard County Tourism Council

The Howard County Tourism Council is a not-for-profit 501(c)(6) that in addition to membership dues, retail sales and guided tours is funded largely by allocations from the Howard County Government and the Maryland Department of Commerce marketing grant.

The Howard County Tourism Council is the official Destination Marketing Organization for Howard County, as per the Howard County Government and the Maryland Office of Tourism Development. The objectives of the Organization are:

- To Promote travel to, and tourism within, Howard County Maryland.
- To support the preservation and restoration of historical buildings and landmarks, festivals, museums, parks, leisure pursuits, tourists, and cultural, recreational and other activities in Howard County, Maryland.
- To foster and promote common business interests in tourism in Howard County, Maryland, as well as to support and assist in the improvement of business conditions in Howard County, Maryland, as they relate to the tourism trade.
- To compile tourism, travel and leisure pursuit data and statistics which can be utilized by political jurisdictions, governmental agencies, educational institutions, private business affected by the tourism trade, and the general public, in assessing the economic and social impact of tourism in Howard County, Maryland.

Summary of Successes FY2016-17

These successes and others are due in large part to the support from the Executive branch of the Howard County Government, the quality attractions, dining lodging professionals in Howard County and the hard work of the Howard County Tourism team.

New Website - Deployed a new site that better reflects Howard County. The new site, including the custom content features like the Howard County blog and landing page focusing on niche opportunities, has seen an increase in visitor sessions of 169.24% YTD.

Official Howard County Visitor and Resident Guide - Distributed 100% of our guides, many to potential visitors, to promote the County as a destination.

Maryland Tourism Coalition Awards - We were recognized in front of our peers for superlative work, receiving awards for Best Digital Marketing Campaign for our HoCoMon campaign and best Medium Sized Product for the Harvest Howard County magazine produced in partnership with EDA.

Ellicott City Holidays - In partnership with the Ellicott City Partnership we produced EllicottCityHolidays.com, along with a campaign to back the site. Tens of thousands of visitors used the site and many visited the newly-reopened businesses of Old Ellicott City as a result of the campaign.

HoCo Holidays Stay and Play Campaign - Launched an aggressive campaign targeting potential visitors in the feeder markets identified by the Maryland State Tourism. The campaign promotes Howard County as the most convenient, best option to stay while visiting the nearby large cities for the holidays.

Restaurant Weeks - Continued success with the restaurant weeks campaign during winter and summer led to sales at restaurants during the slowest times.

Thirty-fifth Anniversary Celebration - Celebrated the organization's thirty-fifth anniversary of promoting and selling Howard County at Historic Savage Mill with nearly two-hundred industry partners.

Streamlined Staffing - Redeployed existing staff, hired three professionals and streamlined the Welcome Center staffing while decreasing overall administrative budget.

Media Stories - Pitched stories to media, including the reopening of Old Ellicott City, and accrued more than 50 stories written about Howard County shops, restaurants, attractions and hotels in media as high-profile as the Washington Post, Brit+Co, RedbookMag.com and Cosmopolitan.com. Attended the Mid Atlantic Tourism Public Relations Alliance Annual Conference to promote Howard County and connect with travel writers.

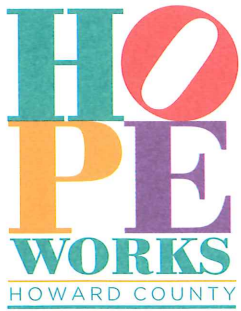
Welcome Center - Hosted events and welcomed 35,000 visitors from countries across the world. The Welcome Center continues to be an excellent point of contact for upselling visitors on spending more time and money in Howard County.

Sales - Worked with Howard County hotels to increase their selling power. Attended National Association of Sports Commissions Symposium, American Society of Association Executives Springtime Tradeshow, and other relevant tradeshows to connect with meeting planners and sports planners and begin creating relationships and bring their events to Howard County. Successes include booking events for the Teen Masters Bowling Tournament, the National Prevention Science Coalition (Penn State University Program) and PPES Educational Consultants.

Tourist Area and Corridor Signage - Worked with Maryland State Highways on the initial process of deploying new highway wayfinding signage around Howard County. Pitched fifty-nine destinations to be signed, on track to get more than half of that past the stringent admission requirements.

Product Development - Worked with many organizations and businesses to cultivate new or improved events and attractions in Howard County. Events and attractions impacted include Crossland Festival, Hops and Harvest, Ellicott City Main Street Music Festival at Merriweather, National High School Lacrosse Showcase, ManneqART, Movie Nights, Concerts at the Historical Society, Howard County Arts Council, Blossoms of Hope, and the Ellicott City Partnership.

Advocacy - Attended Maryland Tourism Day and brought a Howard County delegation of tourism professionals to meet with Howard County's state elected officials, attended the Restaurant Association of Maryland Taste of Maryland which provided tourism industry professionals in Howard County with the opportunity to meet with legislators on the state level.



Public Hearing – Operating Budget FY 18
Testimony from HopeWorks of Howard County

May 2, 2017

Dear County Council Members,

As you know HopeWorks of Howard County is our county's primary human service organization tasked with addressing sexual and intimate partner violence in our community. We work to make Howard County residents safer through our customized and comprehensive client services as well as our public education, wellness programming and prevention work. We have been providing services for those affected by intimate partner violence since 1978 and sexual violence since 2010. Last year we served more than 3,200 people in our county who requested our direct services and we reached an additional 3,000+ through our community engagement programs.

We are very proud of our accomplishments in this past year. During FY17 we have:

- Increased the number of therapeutic groups we offer;
- Served as one of two pilot sites for the County's new rapid rehousing program;
- Hired an Anti- trafficking Coordinator to improve our response to those who have been victims of human trafficking;
- Hosted our third Getting Ahead anti-poverty/self-sufficiency group; and
- Moved into the new Nonprofit Center.

I am also proud to say that we have been successful in leveraging the support of the County to improve the financial stability of this organization. In FY15, CSP funds made up 42% of HopeWorks' budget. This year it makes up only 36% of our budget and we expect that it will be an even smaller portion of our budget for FY18. But despite the fact that we are working hard to reduce our agency's dependence on County funds, we could not have accomplished these things without the partnership and the financial support of the County. Continued funding through CSP is critical to maintaining our core services.

We deeply appreciate the Council's past recognition of the value that HopeWorks brings to our community and we ask that you reaffirm this by supporting the proposed budget for the Department of Community Resources and Services' Community Services Partnership grants program. We ask that you approve the CSP budget that funds HopeWorks and thank you so much for considering this request.

Respectfully,

Jennifer Pollitt Hill, MSW
Executive Director

TESTIMONY FOR COUNTY COUNCIL
FY 2018 PUBLIC BUDGET HEARING
MAY 2, 2017

PRESENTED BY – BITA DAYHOFF
PRESIDENT
COMMUNITY ACTION COUNCIL OF HOWARD COUNTY, INC.

Good evening. My name is Bita Dayhoff, President of the Community Action of Howard County, the County's designated anti-poverty agency. CAC's mission is to diminish poverty, enable self-sufficiency and advocate for low income families.

I thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of County Executive Kittleman's FY 2018 operating budget.

This evening, I'd like to spend the couple of minutes that I have to thank you for your incredible support and leadership. For having your finger on the pulse of the needs of the Howard County families who work so hard and yet struggle to make ends meet.

Thank you. To each of you. I look across the dais and I can easily recite dozens of ways you have so painstakingly assured that our community stands tall as it relates to taking care of our most vulnerable citizens.

Thank you for the many ways you have supported our efforts to end hunger in Howard County and for taking a stance by helping purchase a permanent home for the Howard County Food Bank. Last year, we supported more than 27,000 people at the Food Bank. At our new space on Gerwig Lane, we are now providing a one stop shop opportunity whereby applicants can receive not only food assistance but file for energy, housing and Head Start.

Additionally, we are now open Wednesday evening until 8 pm and Saturdays until noon – giving working families an opportunity to shop after work hours.

I am also happy to report that we have signed a system wide MOU with the HCPSS which makes setting up pantries at the schools much easier. We now have pantries at the Bryant Woods and Longfellow Elementary school. Additionally, the new space also allows us to have enough food inventory to support having a monthly pop up pantry at Phelps Luck Elementary School.

Thank you for the ways you have supported affordable housing as well as programs that allow us to help families prevent eviction and homelessness.

Thank you for assuring that there are funds in the budget to help families keep their electricity on and have heat and air conditioning in their homes.

Thank you for supporting the Head Start program and assuring that 322 children receive full-day full-year high quality early childhood education and that their parents are supported through a 2 Generational approach that creates pathways to education and employment thus mitigating against multigenerational poverty.

Every day, we see families who are on the verge of losing their home, who have gone without food, who's electricity has been turned off or is about to be turned off. And every day, we are able to help them because of your support.

In the Fall of 2016, the United Way issued a Study of Financial Hardship called ALICE which stands for Asset Limited, Income

Constrained, Employed. Alice is the face of a person we all know, someone who is working hard every day, but simply doesn't make enough to make ends meet.

How many of us know individuals who get paid less than \$20 per hour? In reality, more than half of jobs in Maryland pay \$10 to \$15 per hour. Yet the average survival budget for a family of four in Howard County is about \$76,000. That translates to an hourly wage of \$36.

You need to make \$36 per hour, but you are making \$15 per hour. That's a pretty wide gap to fill. That's where the struggle comes in.

In Howard County, 22% of our residents face hardship as they try to meet the most basic necessities of daily life – like food, housing, energy, and early childhood education.

The challenges faced by this segment of our population are widespread and has significant impact on their families and the society as a whole. Its not just about them, its about the entire community.

In our role in educating the community about poverty and its widespread implications, we certainly rely on you as our leaders to help

set a public policy agenda that highly support public assistance programming that combat the struggles faced by ALICE families.

Without public assistance, these households would face even greater hardship and would fall deep into poverty.

Without a doubt, and time after time, you have each so vigorously demonstrated your support and commitment to helping strengthen human services programs in Howard County.

On behalf of our board and so many families who benefit from the services you enable us to provide. Thank you so much.

My name is Cathy Rice. I live at 4209 Pulitzer Circle, Ellicott City, 20142. I am a retired Professional Civil Engineer and volunteer Watershed Steward for Howard County. I am here to request funding for the Watershed Stewards Academy.

As a homeowner, the Watershed Stewards Academy was the only place I was able to learn the environmentally appropriate solutions that were practical and reasonable for me to implement on my property. Before that, I had a gully of eroding dirt sliding along the fence in my backyard and down into the stream.

The value of the WSA became most obvious to me when I considered it from the standpoint of my experience with storm water management at the State Highway Administration. I had a lead role in restructuring at SHA for the very purpose of meeting water quality goals. At one point, a friend called me to explain why SHA was looking at her neighborhood stream for a construction project?! That was when I knew that state and county agencies were going to need more connections to citizens than ever before. Water does not follow property or organizational boundaries! And, one size doesn't fit all!

The WSA model is the ideal way to partner with homeowners. The academy trains volunteers who will then go back and work in their neighborhood. As a student, I was introduced to every part of Howard County government that is involved in water quality. There are many opportunities to educate homeowners about what they can do to work together with the county. The Academy then trained us in techniques to work with property owners, assess properties and develop appropriate recommendations. The training ended with a capstone project where we applied what we learned.

My property is now set up to demonstrate 5 types of water management practices for homeowners. I can also demonstrate the direct connection from my lawn, through the county storm drain system and into the stream. I have reached a quarter of the homeowners in the watershed; who are now aware that we are collectively responsible for our water runoff into the stream. Six of them partnered with Howard County Recreation and Parks to improve the stream buffer on their properties. A few friends participated in the county CleanScapes program; one of which was used as a demonstration project to advertise the county program. Last week, a neighbor and I co-hosted a Stream-Friendly Lawn and Garden Open House and Conservation Project where we educated 40 adults and 20 young people and installed 15 species of native plants, shrubs and trees along a residential drainage ditch near the stream.

The Academy now has a core group of stewards who have made a difference; we support each other, we are mentoring new students and we are continuing to plant the seeds of education and action throughout the county. This network of volunteers has the potential to increase the efficiency of Howard County water quality programs. Please sustain the Watershed Stewards Academy by including funding in the county operating budget.

Funding is needed to meet the budget KPI listed on page 43 of the budget proposal to "increase awareness and participation of county residents to implement stormwater management in order to improve water quality."

Cathy Rice
5/2/2017



Good evening! Thank you for your time this evening. My name is Lori Lilly and I live at 10520 Old Frederick Rd, Woodstock. All of my past testimonies to the Council and Executive have been as an individual citizen. Today I am very pleased to testify as Executive Director of a new non-profit organization called Howard EcoWorks. The mission of HEW is to develop a workforce to undertake environmental improvement projects for a healthier county. HEW intends to provide a long-term local home for our flagship, the READY program, beginning July 1. In addition, we are also building workforce development programming at the Howard County Department of Corrections. We are thankful for the partnership that we have shared with Howard County over the years and are looking forward to growing our relationship in the future. I would like to share with you a few of our accomplishments from the past year.

In the 2016/2017 fiscal year, we hired 24 young adults for the summer READY program. We also employed 1 crew year round. Despite a decrease in funding last year, the crews were able to accomplish a significant amount of work. While gaining job skills, crews were able to construct projects that treated 2.8 acres of drainage in the County and which the County is accounting for under the MS4 permit. We contributed more than 500 hours to the Department of Recreation and Parks to manage forest conservation easement properties and more than 500 hours to the Department of Public Works to manage County stream restoration projects. We developed and implemented a debris management program for the Ellicott City stream channels in response to the 2011 flood and routinely conducted maintenance in 2015. We believe, as does the Dept of Public Works and Office of Emergency Management, that the July 2016 flood would have been worse if not for our regular maintenance efforts. We were able to respond after the 2016 flood, with a contribution of 730 hours to remove more than 31,000 lbs of bulk trash and debris between Rt 29 and Old Columbia Pike. The Crew Members that participated in that work wore a badge of pride to be one of the first on the ground in the clean-up effort. I've shared two pictures of our work with you in my testimony 1) one is of us hauling a huge trellis out of the stream that was in front of the Ellicott Mills culvert – this would've taken the County or property owner a crane to get out of the stream and 2) a picture of our crew after a long, hot day's work hauling stuff out of the stream in waders and helmets to get the best lemonade in the world from the neighborhood kids.

At the Howard County Dept of Corrections, we have been successfully managing a native plant nursery on-site for the past 1 ½ years. The plants we grow are used in our restoration work and help us to decrease the costs of our projects. We engage in-mates two times per week during the growing season and they assist with seeding, plant propagation and overall nursery maintenance. This past spring, we brought sustainable gardening education curriculum indoors of the prison and successfully graduated 9 in-mates from our Landscapes for Life class – a picture of the class is in your testimony. It is our hope that the certificates the in-mates received will help them with employment prospects in the landscape field, a multi-million dollar industry, upon their release. We hope to continue this low cost and high return investment for job skills development and reduced recidivism in the next fiscal year.

We are very excited to have moved into the Nonprofit Center this spring. Prior to the move, we operated out of various churches, our homes, coffee shops and even Wegmans. Being at the Nonprofit Center has already increased our efficiency and effectiveness significantly as well as allowed us more collaboration opportunities with other Howard County non-profits. We are grateful to the County for supporting the Nonprofit Center



and the Housing Commission and Association for Community Services for leading the efforts on the establishment of such a wonderful community resource.

This budget proposes another decrease in our funding for the next fiscal year. This is disappointing because we are becoming increasingly successful, demonstrating a high return on investment and are being asked for more and more direct service to the County on a regular basis, service we are happy and willing to provide. The rate of budget reduction at 50k/yr is not equitable with our ability to find and secure alternative sources of funding, esp. at this critical time when we are looking for long term sustainability. We are working on diversifying our funding through fee for service, grant and foundation sources of income, but it takes time to build up these other income streams. With the majority of our employees being Howard County residents, we hope that you will see that an investment in us, is an investment back into the local economy. We respectfully request that the Council work with the County Executive to stabilize our funding in the next and future budget cycles.

We are looking forward to another exciting and successful year of innovative programming that can only be found in Howard County and are counting on your support to help us achieve multiple objectives of job skills development, career-readiness, environmental restoration and community engagement. Thank you!



READY crew conducting post flood clean-up in Ellicott City.



Landscapes for Life graduates with certificates at Howard County Department of Corrections.

Mary Lasky
President, Board of Directors
Grassroots Crisis Intervention Center
6700 Freetown Road
Columbia, MD 21044

County Council Budget Hearing – May 2, 2017

Good evening. My name is Mary Lasky, and I am proud to serve as President of the Board of Directors of Grassroots Crisis Intervention Center.

I am here tonight to ask you to fully fund Grassroots FY18 budget request of \$1.7 million, which includes a 13% increase in funding over last year to reflect changing circumstances at Howard County's 24-hour crisis intervention center and shelter for the homeless.

As explained by Executive Director Ayesha Holmes, Grassroots is serving more families than in the past, we are responsible for the time-consuming single point of entry interviews, and we will soon expand services via the new Leola Dorsey Community Resource Center where the chronically homeless may take their first step to a more stable lifestyle. Our budget request, therefore, includes new funding for an additional cook and crisis counselor, as well as facilities management money for our share of the Dorsey Center.

Grassroots has a relatively small operating budget which includes a high fundraising contribution of half a million dollars this year. In other words, we are asking county government for \$1.7 million, and we will raise \$500,000 in private philanthropy – from generous residents and businesses in our community.

By the way, this private philanthropy includes donations from Howard County school children who participate in Change Matters, the student-driven community service and philanthropy initiative that will generate \$60,000 in nickels, dimes, quarters and dollar bills. **We are proud of Grassroots' role in not only raising money but in raising the next generation of philanthropists.**

These are difficult times for some of our neighbors. Grassroots was created to help those in crisis in our community. Over the years, it has become the provider of an increasing array of services the county wants provided for its vulnerable citizens. **This is possible only with the ongoing support of county government. I respectfully request that Grassroots FY18 budget be fully funded.** Thank you.

Testimony to the Howard County Council -May 2, 2017

Given by: Ayesha B. Holmes, Executive Director of Grassroots Crisis Intervention Center

Good evening to the Howard County Council. It is my honor to be here tonight representing Grassroots Crisis Intervention Center. In my four months as Executive Director, I have been amazed at the work that Grassroots does with the most vulnerable individuals in our community. Tonight, I'm here to ask for continued funding and support for the full budget request submitted by my predecessor Andrea Ingram on behalf of Grassroots. Grassroots has three important functions in the Howard County community.

First: The Crisis Services, including Crisis Hotline, Suicide Prevention Hotline, Single Point of Access for Housing Assessments and Mobile Crisis Services

Second: The 51 Bed Shelter, located at the Grassroots, Andrea Ingram Building, in Columbia

Third: Outreach and Community Engagement, soon to be located at the Leola Dorsey Community Resource Center in Elkridge

Each of these components of the organization work together to ensure there is a 24/7 safety net for the residents of Howard County. We are always open and always ready to help.

This year our budget reflects an increase in need throughout the community.

The face of Homelessness is not what I expected. I expected to meet many individuals, some with behavioral health needs and some who had hit a speed-bump on the road of life. What has surprised me in my tenure, is the number of intact families with children that suddenly find themselves to be homeless and in need of immediate assistance. Sometimes when that assistance isn't available readily, the individuals end up staying with us in our Emergency Overnight Space and Lobby until something affordable becomes available. During their time with us, we provide case management through our crisis services, which is time intensive; this is one of the reasons we are asking for another Crisis Counselor. Crisis counselors serve more than 3,000 individuals a year for various needs.

Year to date, we have served over 225 individuals in our emergency overnight space. This increase is one of the reasons we are also requesting extra assistance in the kitchen.

Finally, with the opening of the Leola Dorsey Community Resource Center, Grassroots will need an intake staff member to meet and assess guests who come to the center.

On behalf of the residents and staff of Grassroots, I ask that you consider our full request for funding and our role as a safe 24/7 space for the most vulnerable among us.

Thank you for your time and commitment to Howard County.



May 2, 2017

Jonathan Weinstein, Chair
Howard County Council
George Howard Building
3430 Court House Drive
Ellicott City, MD 21043

Good evening Chairman Weinstein, Vice Chairman Ball, and County Councilmembers:

My name is Richard Cole Jr and I am the Director of Emergency Services and Community Relations at Laurel Advocacy and Referral Services, Inc. (LARS). Each year, LARS assists upwards of 1,800 homeless and low-income individuals and families experiencing a crisis by providing both emergency and long-term services designed to promote self-sufficiency. LARS provides support services to residents of the Greater Laurel area, including residents in North Laurel. Our services include a food pantry, funds to prevent evictions, assistance with first month's rent and security deposits, permanent supportive housing, case management and resource referrals, and holiday and back to school programs. Homelessness does not consider jurisdictional boundaries, and although our office is physically located in Prince George's County, our proximity results in requests for service from a number of individuals and families that reside in Howard County.

We want to thank the Howard County Council and Executive for designating \$15,000 in Community Service Partnership (CSP) Program funding to our organization in Fiscal Year 2017. LARS is very appreciative that the proposed Fiscal Year 2018 County Operating Budget again includes \$15,000 in CSP funding for LARS, which will allow us to continue to provide emergency financial assistance to low-income and homeless residents of Howard County. We appreciate the opportunity to communicate with the County Council about the operating budget and the need to maintain adequate funding for the programs that serve those most in need in Laurel.

From 2014 to 2016, LARS disbursed \$46,250 in Howard County CSP funds to 324 Howard County households. During this time, LARS assisted 31 households with securing permanent housing, avoiding an eviction, and maintaining or restoring power to their homes. 293 households were provided food assistance to combat food insecurity, and 507 households received referrals to community support services.

We appreciate Howard County Executive Kittleman's support for the Fiscal Year 2018 funding level of \$15,000, and we respectfully request that the County Council continue to support LARS at this level as we serve the county's most vulnerable citizens during this time of budget cuts and economic instability. We look forward to continued partnerships with Howard County organizations and government to bring help and to bring hope to the people we serve.

Sincerely,

Richard Cole Jr LARS Director of Emergency Services and Community Relations rcole@laureladvocacy.org

**HOWARD COUNTY ARTS COUNCIL
Testimony submitted to Howard County Council
Regarding FY2018 Proposed Budget
May 2, 2017**

Good evening Chairman Weinstein and members of the County Council. I am Coleen West, Executive Director of the Howard County Arts Council located at 8510 High Ridge Road. On behalf of the Arts Council, I want to thank you for your past support. We appreciate all that you do on behalf of the arts and the citizens of Howard County.

The Arts Council was established in 1981 to fulfill the provisions of County Code # 12.804a. This year we are celebrating - 36 years of fostering the arts and serving the community. I am here tonight to ask you to support County Executive Allan Kittleman's proposed budget of \$832,000 – a 4% increase over last year's arts appropriation.

Seventy percent of the proposed funding will be used to support grant programs that provide operating and project support to county arts organizations, K-12 schools through Parent Teacher Associations, and Baltimore City arts and cultural organizations. These grants support 50-60 organizations that provide a broad range of arts and arts education programs for both children and adults. Attendance at arts events funded through these grant programs was 340,000 and volunteers for local arts groups receiving grants donated 91,840 hours – a value of \$2.1 million – clear indicators that the arts are important to the citizens of Howard County.¹

In addition to the intrinsic value of the arts; a strong arts sector improves our quality of life and is an economic asset that stimulates business activity, attracts tourism revenue, and retains a high quality work force. The U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis reports that the arts and culture sector made up 4.2 percent, or \$729.6 billion, of the nation's GDP—a larger share of the economy than construction and utilities. In addition, arts and culture generates 4.8 million jobs and U.S. exports of arts goods (e.g., movies, paintings, jewelry) resulted in a \$26.2 billion arts trade surplus.²

Local companies face a global marketplace where value is increasingly determined by technology, knowledge and ideas. A study published by the Conference Board (serving the Fortune 1000 U.S. companies), found 97% of employers say creativity and innovation skills are important in U.S. workplaces, while 85% of these employers say they can't find the creative, innovative applicants they seek.³

In an economy that is driven by creativity and innovation, we will need to attract the creative class – artists, entrepreneurs, and innovators. In order to attract - and retain them - we will not only need strong public education, safety and transportation systems, but we will have to have state-of-the-art entertainment, arts, and recreational amenities and unique live-work options that appeal to their active, 24-7 lifestyle

Howard County has positioned itself well to meet these expectations. We have a vision for a vibrant arts, retail and entertainment district in Downtown Columbia, ownership of Merriweather Post Pavilion has been turned over to the Downtown Arts and Culture Commission, the iconic Chrysalis amphitheatre opened with great fanfare just a few weeks ago, and Ellicott City was recently named one of the "Top 20 Leading Creative Class Cities" by Richard Florida.⁴ In addition, we have a growing state-of-the-art community college, the arts curriculum in our public schools continues to be one of the strongest in the nation, we have excellent recreational facilities and libraries, and we are home to 792 arts-related businesses that employ 2693 people in the County.⁵ The arts sector accounts for 3.9% of the total businesses in the County, 1.6% of the people they employ, and is made up of major tourist attractions, for-profit media and design businesses, and a vibrant network of non-profit arts groups.

Howard County is a special place that has developed a strong community for the arts.

To illustrate this point, a 2015 study by Webb Management Services⁶ found:

- Howard County has the second highest number of individual artists and creative industries per capita out of the seven Baltimore-Washington area counties.

- Howard County residents spend more per capita on arts and entertainment out of the seven metro counties.
- And, Howard County has the second highest level of arts participation per capita out of the seven metro counties.

The arts (both for- and non-profit) are an important part of the County's small business sector; the heART of the arts community are non-profit groups such as the Columbia Festival of the Arts, HoCoPoLitSo, Candlelight Concerts and others. These non-profits provide opportunities for engagement and participation, they incubate artistic ideas and enterprises, and they create distinctive experiences that attract tourists, businesses and residents alike.

It takes a special ecosystem to maintain a vibrant arts community on a local level – you need the talent and dedication of practicing artists, strong arts organizations, innovative businesses, enthusiastic audiences, financial support and arts-friendly policies from government, and contributions from businesses and individuals. In addition, you need affordable space to incubate, create, and produce the arts and you need appropriate space to present the work and engage the public.

The non-profits work year round to make the arts available to people of all ages, backgrounds and abilities. They do an incredible amount of work with very little resources. Even in good times, their budgets are extremely fragile. County funding provides them with a reliable source of unrestricted support that they use to underwrite their core activities and to leverage private dollars.

County investment in the arts serves the public interest by broadening public access to the arts and by fostering diverse forms of expression. The non-profit arts groups, in turn, give back to our community by enhancing our quality of life, attracting businesses and jobs, and generating revenue for the County. In FY15, not only did Howard County grantees provide us with exceptional programming, they used these funds to leverage

\$5 million in revenues – 50% from earned income and admissions, 25% Howard County, 9% individuals, 5% State and Federal, 4% corporations, 4% foundations, 3 % from the Columbia Association– and 177 FTE jobs.⁷

Statewide, there are 13,704 arts-related businesses that generate 47,852 jobs⁸, including 299 non-profit arts groups that generate 14,564 FTE jobs. The non-profit sector alone has a total annual impact of \$1.1 billion.⁹

The arts add tourism dollars to the local economy as well. Locally, 20-30% of our non-profit arts audiences are made up of people who reside outside of Howard County,¹⁰ these visitors come to our County and spend money at local restaurants and businesses. The Maryland State Department of Business and Economic Development reports that every \$1 of operating generates an additional \$3.94 in spending on goods and services.¹¹ Using this formula, the non-profit arts groups in Howard County, generated an extra \$19.7 million in secondary spending to our local economy in FY15 for a total economic impact of \$24.7 million (this does not include revenue from for-profit venues such as Merriweather Post Pavilion, Toby's Dinner Theatre, movie theaters, or design, marketing and printing companies, or others that do not receive direct funding from the Arts Council).

Seventy percent of the proposed county funding will go to support 4 grant programs that provide operating and project grants to 50-60 organizations and schools.

- 1) The Community Arts Development (CAD) program provides operating and project grants to local arts organizations as well as non-arts groups interested in presenting arts programs. In FY16, the Arts Council awarded \$330,267 (CAD: \$309,372, JRT: \$20,895,) to 19 Howard County organizations through this grant.
- 2) The Baltimore City Arts and Culture (BCAC) program awards grants to city organizations that have regional significance and provide considerable services

to Howard County residents. In FY16, we awarded \$156,212 to 10 city organizations.

- 3) The Outreach Howard program awards grants to City grantees to produce projects IN Howard County. In FY16, \$44,000 was awarded to 7 organizations.
- 4) The Artist-in-Education (AiE) program, a partnership with the County PTAs, provides grants to place visiting artists in school classrooms to enhance student experiences and skills and meet local and state goals for arts education. In FY16, we awarded \$36,000 to 23 schools.

The CAD, BCAC, and AiE programs must be matched at least 1-to-1 by the grant recipient. The goals of the grant programs are:

- To foster excellence, diversity and vitality in arts offerings for Howard County residents.
- To broaden opportunities for Howard County audiences, artists, and arts organizations.
- To increase the availability of arts activities in Howard County. And,
- To increase awareness of arts.

All grantees are required to submit final reports, which the Arts Council uses to evaluate grant programs, to track attendance and budget figures, and to hold grantees accountable to their request. These FY15 reports show that community interest and support, in terms of participation, is very strong – 340,000 attended arts events sponsored, in part, through County funds and 91,840 volunteer hours were donated. We also provided opportunities for 6,100 artists through these grant programs.

In addition to the grants program, the proposed budget provides funds to support the Arts Council's other principle program, the 27,000 square foot multi-purpose Howard County Center for the Arts in Ellicott City. At the Center, we sponsor year-round classes, art exhibits in our galleries, and performances in the community black box

theatre. We also provide low cost studios for 14 visual artists, office space for 3 resident arts groups, and meeting space for 8 volunteer run groups that participate in our Arts Advancement Program. In FY15, 35,950 people visited the Center and we provided opportunities for 4,101 artists and 3,656 students to showcase their work. Whether they take a class, view an exhibit, drop in a studio, or enjoy a performance in the black box theatre, the Center provides rewarding experiences in the arts for people of all ages and from all walks of life.

Funds we receive from the County also support county-wide initiatives, such as, our on-line arts calendar, ARTsites, a partnership with 12 sites throughout the County to place sculptures for one year, as well as free community-based arts activities for underserved audiences, such as our Head StART in ART program.

Head StART in ART is a model artist-in-residence program for preschoolers from low-income families that has been recognized by the National Endowment for the Arts and the Maryland State Arts Council as an exemplary early childhood arts program. This program introduces 100-120 children to practicing artists and provides them with experiences and training in the arts that would otherwise not take place. Each residency is designed to provide age-appropriate activities that complement Head Start's curriculum and reinforce core life and learning skills that are needed for future success. This program is free to participants. It received the John W. Holland Service Award from the Community Action Council in 2011. Cuts to the Arts Council budget would cause us to reduce or eliminate free public programs such as this and limit free public access to the arts.

Cuts would also adversely affect the groups that receive County funding through the Arts Council's grant programs. Local treasures, such as the Columbia Orchestra, the Columbia Festival of the Arts, and HoCoPoLitSo rely on these grants to meet their day-to-day operational needs. Unrestricted funds for general operations are rare, the Arts Council is one of the only sources of such support. As mentioned earlier, the operations of the non-profit arts groups, both large and small, are extremely fragile – any cuts to

the arts budget will have a negative impact on our local arts groups, our community, and the people we serve.

In addition to their economic impact, the arts impact our daily lives in other tangible ways. Numerous independent studies from the academic, arts, business, law enforcement, medical and technology fields confirm that the arts are an effective means to address a wide variety of issues and challenges in our community such as:

1) Workforce Development

Early encouragement and training in the arts help students develop core life and social skills that lead to future success, both academically and in the work place. To quote educator, Paul Lehman, "A lot of what is taught in schools suggests that there are correct and incorrect answers – as evidenced by the use of multiple choice and true/false questions. In the real world, questions are not posed that way." He goes on to say that the academic, business, and public sectors say today's graduates are not prepared to keep our workforce competitive in the new global economy. This is supported by the Conference Board study cited earlier. In order to be competitive and address real-life circumstances, employers need people who can do more than check off an answer from a prepared list of options or people who have only been taught what is tested - they need people who are able to make independent, complex judgments and decisions. The arts, by their very nature, teach people to seek multiple interpretations and solutions, weigh options and think critically. They also teach us how to be more tolerant and open.

In order to attract and maintain a creative workforce, greater emphasis on the arts education and practice is needed in our schools and communities.

2) Education

The contributions the arts make to academic success are well documented, I will take this opportunity to cite two important studies. First, a report from the College Board Profile of SAT and Achievement Test Takers, which has been

tracking tests for decades, shows that students who studied the arts or music for four or more years, on average, score 100 points better on their SAT scores than students with just one-half year of arts or music.¹² Second, is a study from UCLA that followed a sample of 25,000 American high school students over a ten-year period. The results of this study show that students who studied the arts had higher grades, scored better on standardized tests, had lower dropout rates, and were more active in community affairs than other students. In addition, it found that students from disadvantaged families who studied the arts improved their overall school performance more rapidly than other students.¹³

While studying the arts, students hone their perceptual, analytic and interpretive skills while developing creative thinking, communications and problem-solving abilities – providing them with the critical skills needed to succeed in school and in life.

The arts also provide a common ground for understanding. They facilitate intercultural understanding and provide a common lexicon for building relationships in an increasingly diverse and global society. With the growing number of non-English speaking students enrolling in our public schools, it is important to maintain a strong arts curriculum, one that is integrated with other subjects, in order to connect with non-English speakers and bridge the cultural gap.

3) Community Health and Wellness

The arts have a positive impact on community health and wellness. Nearly one-half of the nation's healthcare institutions provide arts programming for patients, families, and staff; 78 percent deliver these programs because of their healing benefits to patients—shorter hospital stays, better pain management, and less medication.¹⁴ Physicians and therapists use visual art, music, dance, and drama to treat patients with a variety of therapeutic needs. Here, the arts are used to strengthen speech patterns, self-image, and socialization skills; they help

patients overcome or reduce physical dysfunction; and music therapy, in particular, has been very successful in treating seniors with Alzheimer's Disease. Military service members and Veterans rank art therapies in the top 4 (out of 40) interventions and treatments.¹⁵ The arts not only help patients cope with loss, isolation, depression, and the effects of mental and physical illnesses, but help families cope as well.

The arts provide a means for seniors to remain active and productive in the community as participants, volunteers and audience members. Controlled research by the Center on Aging found that older Americans involved in the arts demonstrated better health, fewer doctor visits, and less medication usage – saving money and improving the quality of life of seniors.¹⁶

As Howard County's special needs and senior populations grow, more programs, such as the Arts Council's Fabulous Fifty+ Players musical theatre program for older adults and the No Boundaries musical theatre program for people with developmental disabilities, will be needed to meet their needs.

4) Youth At Risk

The arts help at-risk youth. Numerous studies have found that arts education programs can help reduce dropout rates - increasing the retention and engagement rates of students and raising educational attainment levels. Participation in arts programs decreases young people's involvement in delinquent behavior, increases academic outcomes for disadvantaged children, and improves students' attitudes about themselves and their future. Studies by the U.S. Department of Justice demonstrate increased pro-social behavior among adjudicated youth involved with arts programs.¹⁷ Similarly, an evaluation of Core Arts examined the effect of arts programs on adjudicated youth in Mississippi and found that participants in this program made notable improvement in cooperation, self-control, academic performance, interpersonal skills, attitude, and incidence of disruptive or risky behavior.¹⁸

As the number of youth-related incidents continues to rise, Howard County may want to explore options to use the arts as a preventative measure or as an alternative teaching method for troubled youth or those suffering from mental health issues.

While many of us value the intrinsic impact of the arts on our lives - as an advocate for the arts, the Arts Council knows it is important to show how the arts impact the wider community. As County leaders look for ways to improve our economy and maintain our quality of life, the arts can be – and should be - part of the solution for economic development, for community revitalization, for academic success, for life-long learning, for community health and wellness, and for our own personal growth.

In closing, the arts entertain, engage, and enlighten us in many different ways and on many different levels. They are a good investment with many great returns.

Thank you for giving me this opportunity to speak with you this evening.

¹ Source: Howard County Arts Council Attendance Report for FY15 Grantees, 2015.

² Source: U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis and National Endowment for the Arts, www.arts.gov/sites/default/files/NEAartsandconomy_April2017_FINAL.pdf, April 2017.

³ *Ready To Innovate*, Conference Board, 2008, cited on www.artsusa.org/information_services/toolkit by Americans for the Arts.

⁴ *America's Leading Creative Class Cities in 2015*, Richard Florida. *City Lab*, The Atlantic Monthly Group, April 20, 2015.

⁵ *Creative Industries: Business & Employment in the Arts*, Americans for the Arts and Dun & Bradstreet, 2015.

⁶ *Needs Assessment For Arts Facilities*, Howard County, MD, Webb Management Services, 2015, pg 20.

⁷ Source: Howard County Arts Council Revenue Sources for FY15 Grantees, 2015.

⁸ *Creative Industries 2015: The State Report*, Americans for the Arts and Dun & Bradstreet, 2015.

⁹ *Economic Impact of the Arts in Maryland*, Maryland Department of Business and Economic Development, 2012.

¹⁰ *ArtsVision: State of the Arts in Howard County 2003*, Howard County Arts Council and Vision Howard County, 2003, page 21.

¹¹ *Economic Impact of the Arts in Maryland*, Maryland Department of Business and Economic Development, 2011.

¹² *2012 College-Bound Seniors: Total Group Profile Report*, The College Board, 2012.

¹³ *A Study of Model Community Arts Programs*, Howard County Arts Council and the Horizon Foundation, 2002, pp 76-77.

¹⁴ *2009 State of the Field Report: Arts in Healthcare*, Society for the Arts in Healthcare, 2009.

¹⁵ Source: blog.americansforthearts.org/2017/02/14/top-10-reasons-to-support-the-arts-in-2017.

¹⁶ Source: Americans For the Arts, www.artsusa.org.

¹⁷ Source: Americans For The Arts, www.artsusa.org.

¹⁸ *A Study of Model Community Arts Programs*, Howard County Arts Council and the Horizon Foundation, 2002, pp 77-78.

**Importance of Howard County Arts Council's
"Re-Create Ellicott City Artist Relief Fund"**

Robin Holliday

I am honored to speak to you tonight on behalf of the Howard County Arts Council and tell you about the impact of their "Re-Create Ellicott City Artist Relief Fund". My name is Robin Holliday and I am the Owner/Curator of HorseSpirit Arts Gallery located on Main Street in Historic Ellicott City - where I represent myself and 47 other local Artists.

The night of the flood, 30 July 2016, I was in my art gallery trying to fight the flood waters by holding the door. The things I saw outside as I was holding that door, still keep me up at night. Flood water reached 12 to 15 feet at the bottom of Main Street and much of our town was destroyed. Two people died in the flood – which is beyond heartbreaking.

Three of the five Art Galleries destroyed on Main Street decided to permanently close their art business. This is a significant blow to Ellicott City's arts community.

I lost the first floor of my Gallery, resulting in \$82K of losses, \$55K of which was art. Based on my contract with the Artists I represented, I was responsible for covering their art losses in case of flood. I had purchased flood insurance; however, the Insurance company continues to deny payment for any of the art loss. I tell you this because my husband and I were looking at a staggering, unexpected debt. We began pursuing a small business loan as soon as possible to pay the Gallery's Artists. During this timeframe, Coleen West (Howard County Arts Council Executive Director) contacted me about the Relief Fund she was creating to help Ellicott City Artists recover from the flood & move forward. This brought me to tears.

Thirty of the Artist in my Gallery applied for the grant and Howard County Arts awarded them a total of \$27K. I am beyond grateful. And the Artists are also grateful – as it has allowed my Gallery to recover more quickly and continue to represent them. They are an incredibly

2 May 2017

talented group of Artists who give back to our community through their art. My Gallery reopened October 28, 2106 – just 3 months after the flood.

I would like to thank the Howard County Arts Council for creating, writing grants and securing money from the County and State for this relief fund. And to the individual fund donors, I thank you with all my heart. I cannot adequately express how much the Relief Funds have helped our Ellicott City art community, the local artists that I represent, as well as me personally. I am exceedingly grateful and humbled by your compassion, generosity, and belief in the importance of art in our community.

In closing, I would like to say that being able to reopen my gallery in Historic Ellicott City has incredible meaning to me. I saw the destruction first-hand, and now I am seeing Main Street coming back to life again. To me, the Arts provide hope, freedom of expression and new life in our community. I don't know the words to use to tell you how much I appreciate what Howard County Arts has done for us. I want you to know that your actions mattered a great deal. Thank you beyond words...because you have provided me and many local Artists in Ellicott City the hope and the opportunity to continue to create our art.

Thank you. Robin Holliday

Lisa Schuster, 7067 Melting Shadows Lane, Columbia, MD 21045
Testimony in Support of the Howard County Arts Council Proposed Budget
Before the Howard County Council
May 2, 2017

My name is Lisa Schuster; I am here as a representative of the Cradlerock Elementary School PTA where I serve as Treasurer. I am testifying in support of the Howard County Arts Council Proposed Budget, specifically the Artist-in-Education Grant program. I have 3 children at Cradlerock– grades fourth, first, and kindergarten as well as a niece in second grade there. Cradlerock Elementary is a Title 1 school with enrollment of nearly 500 students – of which over half qualify for free or reduced lunch.

I could go on and on speaking on how impactful arts programming is and that it is part of what makes Howard County Schools some of the top in the nation. But – I want to focus on how being a grant recipient has impacted our school and how our program would not have been possible without it. This year we received a grant through Artists-in-Education that funded nearly all the cost having a performing artist come to our school and for a program on Biodiversity. This program served as a continuation of current learning objectives. The students learned about the changing environment here in Maryland and across the world and how our actions have impacted the changes. The performer put on a wonderfully engaging and entertaining assembly filled with songs my children still sing.

We would have not had this opportunity if not for the grant. Our PTA works with a limited budget and even smaller volunteer pool. The majority of the money we bring in goes right back into that event, like our school play and community nights – leaving us little to fund cultural arts programming. As stretched thin as our budget is – our volunteers are stretched much thinner. We have four board members and about ten active PTA volunteers - who work to organize all our activities, programming, teacher and student support, and fundraising. This income from the grant would have been nearly impossible to generate through other fundraising sources as they all require many hours of volunteer work. Having grant opportunities available is the difference between our students having access to supplementary arts programming and not.

Continued funding of these grants means continued support of our students so that they benefit from these great programs and enrichment opportunities. I hope my children and their classmates can continue to enjoy the benefits from arts programming at our school. Thank you for allowing me to speak and I hope we have your support for the budget so can continue to offer cultural arts and other programming.

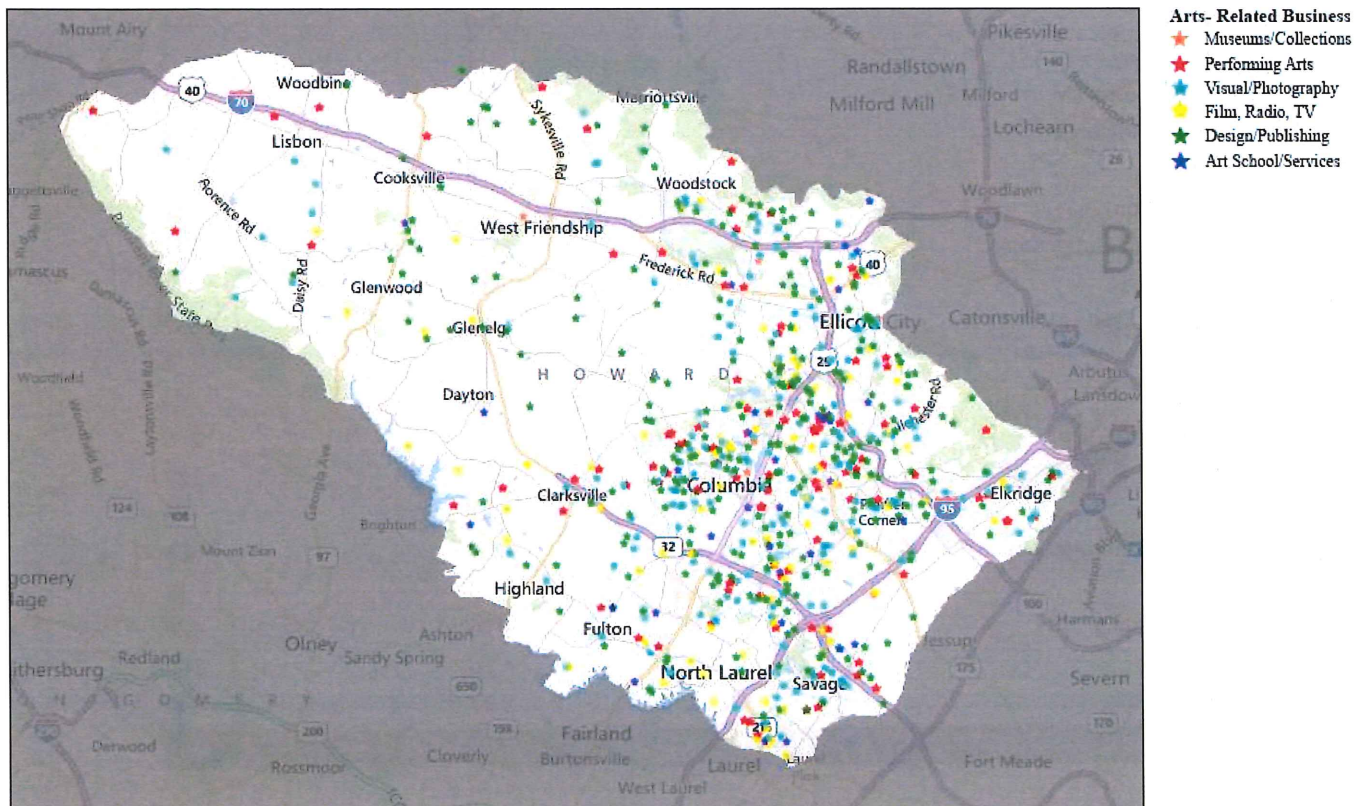
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Good evening. My name is Katherine Keefe and I'm the Executive Director for the Columbia Orchestra. I am here tonight to testify on behalf of the Howard County Arts Council. The Columbia Orchestra is a proud recipient of the Arts Council's Community Arts Development grant and Jim Rouse Theatre Subsidy. These grants account for 18% of the orchestra's annual operating budget. The Columbia Orchestra is a community orchestra with 85-100 volunteer members led by our nationally-recognized Music Director Jason Love. Thanks to the support of the Arts Council, the Orchestra is able to offer over 11,000 Howard County residents access to affordable, high-quality artistic and educational programs each year. The Arts Council's Jim Rouse Theatre Subsidy makes it possible for the Orchestra to perform a 5 concert subscription series and two popular Young People's Concerts at the Jim Rouse Theatre. The Arts Council not only provides the financial support necessary to perform in this venue, but also advocates on our behalf through its role on the JRT Governance Committee. The Jim Rouse Theatre, which seats 740 people, is the only performance space in Howard County that is large enough to hold the entire Orchestra and our growing audience. Since 2014, the Orchestra's subscription base has nearly tripled and concerts frequently sell out in advance. To meet audience demand, the Orchestra will expand its programming next year to include repeat matinees and an additional family concert. The Orchestra is proud to be part of Howard County's growing, vibrant artistic community. The Columbia Orchestra is also a resident organization of the Arts Council's home, the Howard County Center for the Arts. As a small nonprofit with only 4 part-time staff members, we benefit tremendously from affordable rent, shared administrative resources, and access to the knowledgeable Arts Council staff. As we enter our 40th season next year, we recognize the impact the Arts Council has had on our success. On behalf of the members, staff, and Board of Directors of the Columbia Orchestra, we thank the County Council for your past support of the Howard County Arts Council and ask for your continued support.

The Creative Industries in Howard County, MD

This *Creative Industries: Business & Employment in the Arts* report provides a research-based approach to understanding the scope and economic importance of the arts in **Howard County, MD**. The creative industries are composed of arts businesses that range from nonprofit museums, symphonies, and theaters to for-profit film, architecture, and design companies. Arts businesses and the creative people they employ stimulate innovation, strengthen America's competitiveness in the global marketplace, and play an important role in building and sustaining economic vibrancy.

792 Arts-Related Businesses Employ 2,693 People



Howard County, MD is home to 792 arts-related businesses that employ 2,693 people. The creative industries account for 3.9 percent of the total number of businesses located in Howard County, MD and 1.6 percent of the people they employ. The map above plots the creative industries, with each star representing a unique arts business establishment.

Nationally, 702,771 businesses are involved in the creation or distribution of the arts, and they employ 2.9 million people. This represents 3.9 percent of all U.S. businesses and 1.9 percent of all U.S. employees—demonstrating statistically that the arts are a formidable business presence and broadly distributed across our communities. The source for these data is Dun & Bradstreet, the most comprehensive and trusted source for business information in the United States. These data are current as of January 2015.

**The Creative Industries Represent
3.9 Percent of All Businesses and 1.6 Percent of All Employees in
Howard County, MD
(Data current as of January 2015)**

CATEGORY	BUSINESSES	EMPLOYEES
Arts Schools and Services	41	142
Arts Councils	3	13
Arts Schools and Instruction	38	129
Design and Publishing	299	1,017
Advertising	35	321
Architecture	53	254
Design	210	435
Publishing	1	7
Film, Radio and TV	104	361
Motion Pictures	91	338
Radio	8	5
Television	5	18
Museums and Collections	11	31
Museums	11	31
Performing Arts	110	557
Dance	1	1
Music	40	94
Performers (nec)	45	256
Services & Facilities	23	123
Theater	1	83
Visual Arts/Photography	227	585
Crafts	8	13
Photography	176	426
Services	16	100
Visual Arts	27	46
GRAND TOTAL	792	2,693

Research Notes:

- These Creative Industries data are based solely on active U.S. businesses that are registered with Dun & Bradstreet. Because not all businesses register, our analyses indicate an under-representation of arts businesses (particularly those that are nonprofit arts organizations and individual artists). The data in this report, therefore, should be considered conservative.
- To define the Creative Industries, Americans for the Arts selected 644 8-digit Standard Industrial Classification codes that represent for-profit and nonprofit arts-centric businesses (out of more than 18,500 codes representing all industries).
- Reports for all 435 U.S. Congressional Districts, the 50 states and the District of Columbia, the 7,500 state legislative districts, and all 3,143 U.S. counties—as well as a full suite of user tools and a comprehensive list of the industries included in this analysis—are available for download at www.AmericansForTheArts.org/CreativeIndustries.

Howard County Non-Profit Arts Organizations Economic Impact FY15



185,000 people attended arts events, classes and performances



20-30%
tourists



91,840 volunteer hours
value \$2.1 million



\$4.8 million
in revenues



177 FTE jobs



19 million in audience
spending

