

HOWARD COUNTY ARTS COUNCIL
Testimony submitted to Howard County Council
Regarding FY2018 Proposed Budget
May 1, 2018

Good evening Chairperson Sigaty 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 - 37 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 \$865,000 – a 4% increase over last year's arts appropriation.

Seventy percent of the proposed funding will be used to support 4 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 317,000 and volunteers for local arts groups receiving grants donated 95,525 hours – a value of \$2.2 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 \$763.6 billion, of the nation's GDP —a larger share of the economy than agriculture, transportation, or warehousing. In addition, arts and culture generates 4.9 million jobs and U.S. exports of arts goods (e.g., movies, paintings, jewelry) resulted in a \$20 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 a year 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 is one of the strongest in the nation, we have excellent recreational facilities and libraries, and we are home to 763 arts-related businesses that employ 3,511 people in the County.⁵ The arts sector accounts for 3.9% of the total businesses in the County, 1.7% 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.

Further, the National Center for Arts Research just released a study that measured arts vibrancy across the United States. Based on the 5 characteristics assessed, Howard County scored:

- higher than 91% of counties in the US for the number of Arts and Culture Organizations and Individual Artists in our community;

- higher than 96% of counties for the amount of contributions raised and program revenue earned;
- higher than 94% of counties in terms of local, state and federal government support for the arts;
- higher than 99% of counties in terms of its socio-economic status
- and higher than 82% of counties for leisure characteristics like restaurants and hotels.⁶

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 Services⁷ found:

- Howard County residents spend more per capita on arts and entertainment out of the seven Baltimore-Washington metro counties.
- Howard County has the second highest number of individual artists and creative industries per capita 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 AND 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 FY17, not only did Howard County grantees provide us with exceptional programming, they used these funds to leverage \$3.8 million in revenues – 44% from earned income and admissions, 22% Howard County, 13% individuals, 9% State and Federal, 6% corporations, 3% foundations, 3 % from the Columbia Association– and 140 FTE jobs.⁸

Statewide, there are 13,185 arts-related businesses that generate 52,723 jobs⁹, including 304 non-profit arts groups that generate 16,624FTE jobs. The non-profit sector alone has a total annual impact of \$1.3 billion.¹⁰

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,¹¹ these visitors come to our County and spend money at local restaurants and businesses. The Maryland State Department of Commerce reports that every \$1 of operating generates an additional \$3.94 in spending on goods and services.¹² Using this formula, the non-profit arts groups in Howard County, generated an extra \$15 million in secondary spending to our local economy in FY17 for a total economic impact of \$18.8 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 FY18, the Arts Council awarded \$351,051 (CAD: \$327,116, JRT: \$18,935; OD: \$5,000) to 22 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 FY18, we awarded \$162,350 to 11 city organizations.
- 3) The Outreach Howard program awards grants to City grantees to produce projects IN Howard County. In FY18, \$43,868,000 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 FY18, we awarded \$31,325 to 15 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 FY17 reports show that community interest and support, in terms of participation, is very strong – 317,000 attended arts events sponsored, in part, through County funds and 95,525 volunteer hours were donated. We also provided opportunities for 5,000 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 6 volunteer run groups that participate in our Arts Advancement Program. In FY17, 35,660 people visited the Center and we provided opportunities for 3342 artists and 1,938 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 in public spaces 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 the economic impact mentioned earlier, 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 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.¹³ 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.¹⁴

While studying the arts, students hone their perceptual, analytic and interpretive skills while developing creative thinking, communication 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.¹⁵ 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.¹⁶ 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.¹⁷

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. In addition, infrastructure and specialized training and professional arts service providers are needed to integrate the arts into community health and wellness service delivery systems.

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.¹⁸ 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.¹⁹

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 and workforce 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 FY17 Grantees, 2017.

² Source: U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis and National Endowment for the Arts, <http://mcs.smu.edu/artsresearch2014/articles/blog-white-papers/how-arts-vibrant-are-americas-cities-heres-every-county-ranked>, March 2018.

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, 2017.

⁶ *Interactive: Arts Vibrancy Across the US*, National Center for Arts Research, Southern Methodist University, 2017. <https://sites.smu.edu/meadows/heatmap/index.html>

⁷ *Needs Assessment For Arts Facilities*, Howard County, MD, Webb Management Services, 2015, pg 20.

⁸ Source: Howard County Arts Council Revenue Sources for FY17 Grantees, 2017.

⁹ *Creative Industries 2017: The State Report*, Americans for the Arts and Dun & Bradstreet, 2017.

¹⁰ *Economic Impact of the Arts in Maryland*, Maryland Department of Business and Economic Development, 2016.

¹¹ *ArtsVision: State of the Arts in Howard County 2003*, Howard County Arts Council and Vision Howard County, 2003, page 21.

¹² *Economic Impact of the Arts in Maryland*, Maryland Department of Business and Economic Development, 2011.

¹³ *2012 College-Bound Seniors: Total Group Profile Report*, The College Board, 2012.

¹⁴ *A Study of Model Community Arts Programs*, Howard County Arts Council and the Horizon Foundation, 2002, pp 76-77.

¹⁵ *2009 State of the Field Report: Arts in Healthcare*, Society for the Arts in Healthcare, 2009.

¹⁶ Source: blog.americansforthearts.org/2017/02/14/top-10-reasons-to-support-the-arts-in-2017.

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

¹⁸ Source: Americans For The Arts, www.artsusa.org.

¹⁹ *A Study of Model Community Arts Programs*, Howard County Arts Council and the Horizon Foundation, 2002, pp 77-78.

**Eunice Braimoh – Student at Howard High
Testimony for Howard County Arts Council**

I come from a family that believes STEM is the sturdy path to survival in society. As immigrants to America, I understand why my father would rather have me be a doctor, or a lawyer, or an engineer. I do not blame him—there is a certain instability regarding careers in the arts. While I am fully aware of the risk, I believe with wholehearted tenacity—or maybe just plain old stubbornness—that our society can't continue without art, without poetry, without fiction.

This scholarship not only alleviates the financial burden caused by college tuition, but also serves as a testament to me and to other artists that Howard County is a community that believes in art and self-expression. This scholarship testifies that there is a community that believes in conversation, that there is a community that does *not* believe in the “starving artist” trope, but rather believes that art and the STEM fields hold equal ground, and should be likewise compensated.

As a writer, the moments of self-doubt are infinite. Even when applying for this scholarship, there were several times I considered backing out, of scrapping everything away. Receiving the scholarship from the Howard County Arts Council was them whispering, *We believe in your art. Speak your truth.*

After receiving the scholarship, I was invited to share my writing at the Blackbird Poetry Festival, where I met other artists that have eagerly told me about more creative opportunities, thereby reminding me that the arts community in Howard County is a family that wishes to elevate voices in all its diverse forms. Art is provocative. It is sensual. And it is essential in order to rupture the polarized echo chambers in society. I am grateful to the arts council for providing me with the opportunity to share my voice, and I am excited to watch the generations of voices they will uplift in the future. Thank you.

I am pleased to submit my testimony on behalf of Howard County Arts Council. I would first like to thank everyone in this room for taking to time to listen to my testimony and the Arts Council for allowing me to speak.

Head Start has built a long lasting relationship with the Arts Council and all of the artists that have been in our classrooms have had a positive powerful impact on our 3 – 5 year old students. When you enter our school and see the mural or you're in the classroom and you see the children engaged in an art project. The arts have assisted in fueling the imaginations of our young people and are an essential part of our children's learning. Artist who have come from the Arts Council have supported in ways they could never imagine. It is what they bring to the classroom that has assisted us with attendance, academic success and our assessment scores. They are exposing our students and involving them in music, dance, drama, visual arts, and media arts. This exposure has contributed to the success of our students. This is especially true for students of color, low-income students, and English as second language students.

I urge you to support funding for Howard County Arts Council. This sound investment pays huge dividends and stimulates significant academic growth and cultural vitality.

Thank you for the honor of testifying before this committee today. Please feel free to contact me if you have questions regarding this testimony or if I can be of assistance to you.

Don Corbin

Education Coordinator

Howard County Head Start

443-736-0606

Testimony IN SUPPORT OF the
Howard County Arts Council's FY19 Proposed Budget
Before the Howard County Council
May 1, 2018

Good evening. My name is Sarah Richardson Fahrendorf and I have had the honor of serving this year as the PTA Cultural Arts Liaison between my children's school, Hammond Elementary, and the Howard County Arts Council (HCAC). I live in North Laurel at 10723 Twin Overlook Place.

For the first time in many years, our PTA applied for and received a grant from the Howard County Arts Council for \$1,489.00. Our PTA was so excited by the idea of bringing in local mosaic artist Ali Mirsky and beautifying our school, that we voted for a \$2,000.00 supplement to our art budget for this project, which ultimately topped off at \$5,505.00. At present, the mosaic is 95% complete, pending the installation of a mosaicked plaque that will commemorate the work and recognize the Arts Council. There is also a bit of cleaning up to do, to remove stray bits of grout and adhesive; our mosaic of the Chesapeake Bay takes up 125 square feet, so there's some extra grout to clean off. We don't mind!

There are so many special things that have happened because of this project, because of this grant, and because of the Howard County Council's support of the arts. I'd like to advocate for your continued support of the arts and for your approval of the HCAC's proposed budget.

This grant from the HCAC opened up a beautiful window for community building. This grant was a tremendous catalyst – I think we don't even know all the special and beautiful ideas we have set in motion. Here are a few remarks from some of our students in the 3rd to 5th grade classes: "I will remember the artist most because she was nice and helpful." "I remember the blue ocean made out of glass and I was glad nobody in my class got hurt by the glass." "That kindergarten- fifth grade did it together and that we worked with a famous artist!" "Seeing the amazing glass form into a project that i never knew students and adults together can

make.' I will remember seeing my work on display" "That we saw the artist's painting" "how beautiful it was when we finished" "Making the clay pieces for the mosaic and I saw my sea shell clay piece" "Meeting Ms Ali and helping her create the best mosaic in the world."

Our students' testimony says it best, but please know that this project impacted our entire school and more. When there is a project of this magnitude, it opens people's eyes to each other and to what is possible. A vote for the arts is a vote for enlightened imaginations. Thank you.

May 24, 2017

HCCA

Dear HCCA Grant Selection Committee,

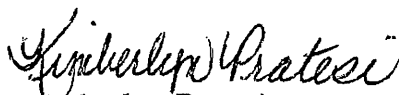
Thank you for the opportunity for our school to apply for a grant that would enable us to enrich our instructional program. As principal of Hammond Elementary School, I am excited about the potential of having mosaic artist, Ali Mirsky; serve as an artist in residence at Hammond during the 2017-2018 school year.

The planning, design and construction of a mosaic for the school building will engage all our students in collaboratively completing a project that the school community will treasure and enjoy. The process will provide students with a range of talents, interests, and diverse backgrounds in contributing creatively to a process that offers cross-curricular connections in reading, writing, and mathematics. Our students will be supported not only by the Art Team but by classroom teachers and paraeducators/ Although the Art Department will specifically work with Ms. Mirsky, the teachers will share information with our instructional grade level teams so that teachers can infuse the work of the project within classroom instruction as students read, write, and perform math related to the work.

The outcome of this project will hold long-term meaning and value for our community, as it will be placed in a location where all can see for years to come. Having been in schools where similar experiences occurred in the past, I can testify that students will return after leaving elementary school to admire the work completed many years prior.

Our staff looks forward to our students having the opportunity to learn from and work with Ms. Mirsky and the many parent volunteers who will support this project. This grant proposal is respectfully submitted, and I appreciate the work of our PTA as well as the commitment of HCAC in considering this request.

Sincerely,



Kimberlyn Pratesi
Principal

2018 Mosaic Project at Hammond Elementary School

As an art teacher at Hammond Elementary, my experience with the 2018 Mosaic project funded by The HES PTA and the HCAC was a very positive one. Working with mosaic Artist Ali Mirsky was a joy. She was extremely organized, professional and flexible. Ali's expertise was evident from our first meeting. She has strong leadership skills but was mindful of working with PTA members, teachers, administrators and students. Ali is an outstanding artist in her own right and offered a variety of possible designs for the school mosaic which were beautiful. She welcomed ideas from many people and worked tirelessly to adapt the initial design to ongoing suggestions.

Ali's communication with the Art Department was excellent. She was clear in her expectations, respectful in her requests and practical in her approach to getting tasks done. The Mosaic required many hours of preparation outside of the school setting and Ali and her team were always prepared, well organized and reliable.

The students were excited to work on the Mosaic project and showed great enthusiasm in the variety of tasks they performed. HES students had the opportunity to create clay tesserae for the Mosaic, paint the tesserae, make clay oysters, paint the oysters, paint clay fish, work with glass and mirror and even participate in the grouting process. This was a unique experience that enriched their art curriculum and provided them with the opportunity to work cooperatively with other students, contribute to a large installation and work with a professional artist and her team.

It was wonderful to see the smiles of students as they worked on the Mosaic and witnessed the process of the final assembly. The finished Mosaic is absolutely stunning and has transformed the school hallway where it is located. Both teachers and parents have commented that the final product exceeded their expectations in terms of size, beauty and complexity.

Heidi White, Art Teacher Hammond Elementary

**Hammond Elementary School
Mosaic BUDGET**

HES PTA	HCAC grant	HES		Mosaic Artist fee: (Rate is \$80/hour)		
	\$1,200.00			\$1,200.00	3 teaching days (5 hours per day; 15 hours total)	
\$640.00				\$640.00	Set up and preparation of materials	
\$11.00	\$289.00			\$300.00	Design	
\$500.00				\$500.00	Layout/install	
\$150.00				\$150.00	Travel (HCAC cannot cover)	
				\$2,790.00	MOSAIC ARTIST FEE SUBTOTAL	
				\$2,640.00	MOSAIC ARTIST FEE (minus travel)	
				Clay Tesserae and Component Production		
		IN KIND	IN KIND	Instruction Time by HES Art Teachers (32 hours)		
		IN KIND	IN KIND	Kiln Firing Expenses (10 days)		
		IN KIND	IN KIND	Planning Time by HES Art Teachers		
				Materials:		
\$80.00				\$80.00	Substrate (30 sq feet)	
\$85.00				\$85.00	Adhesives/grouts	
\$35.00				\$35.00	Tools	
\$300.00				\$300.00	Glass	
\$35.00				\$35.00	Misc items (gloves, masks,tape)	
\$12.00				\$12.00	Hardware	
\$150.00				\$150.00	Glaze	
\$120.00		\$120.00		\$120.00	Clay	
\$8.00		\$8.00		\$8.00	Supplement to Kiln Firing Expenses (6 Cones for firing)	
\$2.00				\$2.00	Plaque (attribution to Mosaic Artist, HES PTA, HCAC)	
				\$827.00	MATERIALS SUBTOTAL	
\$2,128.00	\$1,489.00	\$128.00		\$3,617.00	Total	





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ETHIOPIA
SKATE

GRADES 5-4th-3rd
The Chesapeake Mission
Alaska





PATAPSCO HERITAGE GREENWAY, INC.

P. O. Box 96, Ellicott City, Maryland 21041 | info@patapsco.org

May 1, 2018

Chairperson Sigaty and Members of the Howard County Council:

The Patapsco Heritage Greenway, Inc. asks your support for the County Executive's FY19 proposed \$50,000 funding for our organization. It is what we requested and will be used to match our request for a \$100,000 Management from the Maryland Heritage Areas Authority.

We have accomplished a lot since May 2017. Our organization joined with all other Heritage Areas to increase the funding cap for Maryland Heritage Areas from \$3 million up to \$6 million annually. This increase was included in the State's FY19 budget and will be used to support both capital and non-capital State Heritage grants to be awarded in all 13 Heritage Areas.

Howard County received over \$45,000 in Heritage Area grants effective July 1, 2017. Grants were awarded to the Ellicott City Historic District, Howard County Department of Rec and Parks, and Patapsco Heritage Greenway.

Our organization also provided the mini grants to the Howard County Conservancy \$2,000 and Columbia Families in Nature \$2,500.

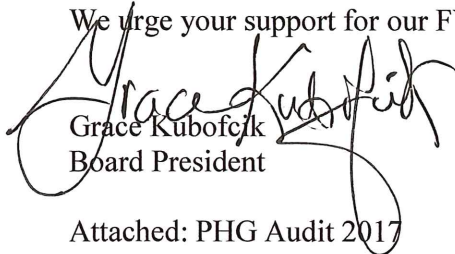
In March, our Board ranked and forwarded to the State 7 MHAA Project Grant Requests received for July 2018. Our hope is that all of these will be approved by the State.

Administratively, the Patapsco Heritage Greenway selected a new Executive Director, Lindsey Baker who started mid January. We are delighted to have her. She brings a wealth of expertise and enthusiasm. This fall we completed the audit and have a copy for your review. We are pleased with the report and lack of findings.

A new initiative is paSNAPsco, a photo contest and exhibit to depict the diverse beauty of the Patapsco Valley. The contest is open to amateur and professional photographers. We seek images that creatively feature historic structures, the Patapsco River and its environment, Main Street moments and recreational and cultural activities. This initiative has a private sponsor and winners will be announced in September. Credit for photos will be given in our Patapsco Heritage Area 2019 pa"SNAP'Sco calendar.

The Oella and Ellicott City Community garden is 10 years old this year. The garden honors the historic mill community and started from the proceeds of a Maryland House and Garden Pilgrimage tour. John Slater, the president of the Patapsco Heritage Greenway designed the site. Over 25 volunteer gardeners organized by our Board members Paul Farragut and Lisa Wingate provide the work between May and October. Howard County Recreation and Parks and Baltimore County Public Works provide assistance. Residents and visitors enjoy this space overlooking the river and the bridge that connects our Heritage Area Counties.

We urge your support for our FY 19 \$50,000 funding.


Grace Kubofcik
Board President

Attached: PHG Audit 2017

PATAPSCO HERITAGE GREENWAY, Inc. is a 501(c)(3) organization working to preserve, protect, interpret, & restore the environment, history, and culture of the Patapsco Valley Heritage Area.

FRIENDS OF THE PATAPSCO VALLEY
AND HERITAGE GREENWAY, INC.

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

JUNE 30, 2017

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INDEPENDENT AUDITORS' REPORT



To The Board of Directors
Friends of the Patapsco Valley and Heritage Greenway, Inc.
Ellicott City, Maryland

We have audited the accompanying financial statements of Friends of the Patapsco Valley and Heritage Greenway, Inc. (a nonprofit organization), which comprise the statement of financial position as of June 30, 2017, and the related statements of activities, functional expenses, and cash flows for the year then ended, and the related notes to the financial statements.

Management's Responsibility for the Financial Statements

Management is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of these financial statements in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America; this includes the design, implementation, and maintenance of internal control relevant to the preparation and fair presentation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

Auditors' Responsibility

Our responsibility is to express an opinion on these financial statements based on our audit. We conducted our audit in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America. Those standards require that we plan and perform the audit to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements are free from material misstatement.

An audit involves performing procedures to obtain audit evidence about the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements. The procedures selected depend on the auditors' judgment, including the assessment of the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error. In making those risk assessments, the auditor considers internal control relevant to the entity's preparation and fair presentation of the financial statements in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the entity's internal control. Accordingly, we express no such opinion. An audit also includes evaluating the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of significant accounting estimates made by management, as well as evaluating the overall presentation of the financial statements.

We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our audit opinion.

Opinion

In our opinion, the financial statements referred to above present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of Friends of the Patapsco Valley and Heritage Greenway, Inc. as of June 30, 2017, and the changes in its net assets and its cash flows for the year then ended in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America.

KAHN, BERMAN, SOLOMON, TAIBEL & MOGOL, P.A.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads 'Kahn, Berman, Solomon, Taibel & Mogol, P.A.'.

Timonium, Maryland
November 15, 2017

Kahn, Berman, Solomon, Taibel & Mogol, P.A.
9515 Deereco Road • Suite 801 • Timonium, MD 21093-2108
Telephone 410-308-0300 • Facsimile 410-308-0303 • email: info@kbstm.com

FRIENDS OF THE PATAPSCO VALLEY AND HERITAGE GREENWAY, INC.
STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION
JUNE 30, 2017

ASSETS

CURRENT ASSETS	
Cash and cash equivalents	\$ 79,035
Grants receivable	65,000
Accounts receivable	2,265
Prepaid expenses	<u>9,985</u>
Total current assets	<u>156,285</u>
 OTHER ASSETS	
Property and equipment	2,293
Deposits	<u>1,250</u>
Total other assets	<u>3,543</u>
 TOTAL ASSETS	 <u><u>\$ 159,828</u></u>

LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS

CURRENT LIABILITIES	
Accounts payable and accrued expenses	\$ 20,864
Deferred revenue	<u>8,435</u>
Total current liabilities/ total liabilities	<u>29,299</u>
 NET ASSETS	
Unrestricted	
Undesignated	110,135
Board designated	10,394
Temporarily restricted	<u>10,000</u>
Total net assets	<u>130,529</u>
 TOTAL LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS	 <u><u>\$ 159,828</u></u>

See accompanying notes and independent auditors' report.

FRIENDS OF THE PATAPSCO VALLEY AND HERITAGE GREENWAY, INC.
STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES
FOR THE YEAR ENDED JUNE 30, 2017

	Unrestricted	Temporarily Restricted	Total
SUPPORT AND REVENUE			
Grants	\$ 233,763	\$ -	\$ 233,763
Contributions	22,840	10,000	32,840
NET ASSETS RELEASED FROM RESTRICTION			
Satisfaction of program restrictions	10,000	(10,000)	-
TOTAL SUPPORT AND REVENUE	266,603	-	266,603
EXPENSES			
Program services	209,094	-	209,094
Administration	40,095	-	40,095
Fundraising	2,979	-	2,979
TOTAL EXPENSES	252,168	-	252,168
CHANGE IN NET ASSETS	14,435	-	14,435
NET ASSETS			
BEGINNING OF YEAR	106,094	10,000	116,094
END OF YEAR	\$ 120,529	\$ 10,000	\$ 130,529

See accompanying notes and independent auditors' report.

FRIENDS OF THE PATAPSCO VALLEY AND HERITAGE GREENWAY, INC.
STATEMENT OF FUNCTIONAL EXPENSES
FOR THE YEAR ENDED JUNE 30, 2017

	Program Services	Supporting Services		Total
		Administration	Fundraising	
Salaries	\$ 109,018	\$ 19,584	\$ 1,958	\$ 130,560
Payroll taxes	9,280	1,667	167	11,114
Fringe benefits	4,175	750	75	5,000
Total salaries and related expenditures	122,473	22,001	2,200	146,674
Accounting	-	10,299	-	10,299
Advertising & marketing	3,064	550	55	3,669
Contractual services	23,681	-	-	23,681
Environmental program supplies	3,344	-	-	3,344
Events	277	-	-	277
Software fees	1,662	299	30	1,991
Insurance	3,741	672	67	4,480
Miscellaneous expenses	281	51	5	337
Mini-grants & donations	10,925	-	-	10,925
Office supplies & expenses	6,047	1,086	109	7,242
Printing & publications	10,094	1,813	181	12,088
Rents & utilities	12,595	1,365	136	14,096
Staff development & travel	3,822	686	69	4,577
Telephone & website	2,181	392	39	2,612
Workshops & training	4,907	881	88	5,876
Total other expenses	86,621	18,094	779	105,494
Total functional expenses	\$ 209,094	\$ 40,095	\$ 2,979	\$ 252,168

See accompanying notes and independent auditors' report.

FRIENDS OF THE PATAPSCO VALLEY AND HERITAGE GREENWAY, INC.
STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED JUNE 30, 2017

CASH FLOWS FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES	\$ 14,435
Change in net assets	
Adjustments to reconcile change in net assets to net cash provided (used) by operating activities:	
(Increase) decrease in operating assets:	
Grants receivable	(38,949)
Accounts receivable	(2,265)
Prepaid expenses	(3,013)
Deposits	(1,250)
Increase (decrease) in operating liabilities:	
Accounts payable and accrued expenses	(11,062)
Deferred revenue	<u>8,435</u>
Net cash provided (used) by operating activities	<u>(33,669)</u>
 CASH FLOWS FROM INVESTING ACTIVITIES	
Purchase of property and equipment	<u>(2,293)</u>
Net cash provided (used) by investing activities	<u>(2,293)</u>
 CASH FLOWS FROM FINANCING ACTIVITIES	
Net cash provided (used) by financing activities	<u>-</u>
 NET INCREASE (DECREASE) IN CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS	(35,962)
CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS, beginning of year	<u>114,997</u>
CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS, end of year	<u><u>\$ 79,035</u></u>

See accompanying notes and independent auditors' report.

FRIENDS OF THE PATAPSCO VALLEY AND HERITAGE GREENWAY, INC.
NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
JUNE 30, 2017

NOTE 1 – SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES

Organization and nature of activities

Friends of the Patapsco Valley and Heritage Greenway, Inc. DBA Patapsco Heritage Greenway (the Organization) is a 501(c)(3) non-profit, community-based organization incorporated in Maryland in 1993. The Organization's mission is to preserve, protect, interpret and restore the environment, history and culture of Maryland's Patapsco River Valley. The Organization's goals are to preserve the Patapsco Valley Heritage Area by enhancing trails, offering tours, educating the public, hosting/supporting events, and various other activities.

Basis of presentation and net assets

The accompanying financial statements have been prepared on the accrual basis of accounting in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America (GAAP). The Organization reports information regarding its financial position and activities according to three classes of net assets: unrestricted net assets, temporarily restricted net assets and permanently restricted net assets. Board designated net assets represent amounts established by the Board of Directors which are unrestricted funds set aside for future needs of the Organization.

Use of estimates

The preparation of financial statements in conformity with GAAP requires management to make estimates and assumptions that affect certain reported amounts and disclosures. Accordingly, actual results could differ from those estimates.

Cash and cash equivalents

The Organization considers all money market funds and highly liquid investments with an original maturity of three months or less to be cash equivalents.

Accounts and grants receivable, and allowance for uncollectible accounts

Accounts and grants receivable are recorded at net realizable value if expected to be collected within one year, and at net present value if expected to be collected in future years. An allowance for uncollectible accounts is estimated based on historical collection trends, type of grant, the age of the outstanding receivables and existing economic conditions. If events or changes in circumstances indicate that specific receivable balances may be impaired, further consideration is given to the collectability of those balances and the allowance is adjusted accordingly. As of June 30, 2017, management considered all accounts and grants receivables to be fully collectible within one year.

Property and equipment

Property and equipment consists of office equipment and is recorded at cost if purchased or at fair value if donated. The Organization capitalizes property and equipment acquisitions over \$1,000 with an expected life of more than one year. Depreciation is calculated on a straight-line basis, over the estimated useful life of the property (5 years). There was no depreciation expense during the year ended June 30, 2017, and no accumulated depreciation at June 30, 2017, as the assets were placed in service at year end.

FRIENDS OF THE PATAPSCO VALLEY AND HERITAGE GREENWAY, INC.
NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
JUNE 30, 2017

NOTE 1 – SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES (CONTINUED)

Grant revenue

A substantial portion of the Organization's revenue is from grant agreements. As such, revenue is recognized when the Organization incurs expenses in compliance with the specific grant or contract requirements. All monies received in advance are recorded as deferred revenue.

Contribution revenue

All contributions are considered to be available for unrestricted use unless restricted by the donor. Amounts received that are designated for future periods or restricted by the donor for specific purposes are reported as temporarily restricted or permanently restricted support that increases those net asset classes. When a temporary restriction expires, temporarily restricted net assets are reclassified to unrestricted net assets and reported in the statement of activities as net assets released from restriction. Donor-restricted contributions whose restrictions are met in the same reporting period are reported as increases in unrestricted net assets.

Donated facilities, goods, and services

The Organization may receive facilities, goods, and services without payment or compensation. Significant donated assets are recorded at fair value on the date of donation. When the value of services meets recognition criteria, it is reflected in the accompanying financial statements. The criteria for recognition require that services rendered (a) create or enhance a nonfinancial asset or (b) require specialized skills, are provided by individuals possessing those skills, and would typically need to be purchased if not provided by donation. See Note 5 regarding donated facilities, good, and services.

Advertising and marketing

The Organization expenses advertising and marketing costs as incurred.

Income taxes

The Organization is exempt from payment of taxes on income other than net unrelated business income under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. No provisions for income taxes are required for the year ended June 30, 2017, as the Organization had no significant unrelated business income.

Functional allocation of expenses

The costs of providing the various programs and other activities have been summarized on a functional basis in the statement of activities. Accordingly, certain costs have been allocated among the programs and supporting services benefited.

NOTE 2 – CONCENTRATION OF CREDIT RISK

The Organization is substantially funded by various state and local government agencies that accounted for approximately 82% of the Organization's total revenue for the year ended June 30, 2017.

See independent auditors' report.

FRIENDS OF THE PATAPSCO VALLEY AND HERITAGE GREENWAY, INC.
NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
JUNE 30, 2017

NOTE 3 – BOARD DESIGNATED UNRESTRICTED NET ASSETS

Board designated unrestricted net assets consisted of the following at June 30, 2017:

Thomas Viaduct projects & celebrations	\$ 3,908
To support scout projects	<u>6,486</u>
Total	<u>\$ 10,394</u>

NOTE 4 – TEMPORARILY RESTRICTED NET ASSETS

As of June 30, 2017, the Organization had temporarily restricted net assets of \$10,000 restricted for use in the stream watch program during the year ending June 30, 2018.

NOTE 5 – DONATED FACILITIES, GOODS, AND SERVICES

A substantial number of volunteers have donated significant amounts of their time for the Organization's programs. No amounts have been reflected in the financial statements for these services since they do not meet the criteria for recognition.

For the year ended June 30, 2017, the Organization received donated storage facilities from Howard County Recreation and Parks to hold environmental tools and supplies. The use of the storage facilities was valued at \$5,000; the related amounts of revenue and expense are reflected in the statement of activities and the statement of functional expenses.

NOTE 6 – OPERATING LEASE COMMITMENTS

The Organization currently leases office facilities pursuant to a one-year lease agreement commencing February 1, 2017 and ending January 30, 2018. The lease requires monthly rental payments of \$1,250. For the year ending June 30, 2017, rent expense was \$6,250. The future minimum lease commitment under the lease is \$8,750 for the year ending of June 30, 2018.

NOTE 7 – SUBSEQUENT EVENTS

Management has evaluated its June 30, 2017 financial statements for subsequent events through November 15, 2017 the date the financial statements were available to be issued. Management is not aware of any subsequent events which would require recognition or disclosure in the financial statements.

See independent auditors' report.

Thank You County Council members for your time and consideration. Hello, my name is Meredith Hochman, I am a Howard County resident and the Volunteer and Outreach Coordinator for FIRN. I have been with FIRN for a little less than 1 year. During that time I have been amazed by the work our staff does everyday to meet the growing needs of Howard County's foreign-born community.

I am often asked what FIRN does for the community. We provide the community, whether foreign-born or not a sense of well-being. We make sure that no child or family in our community are too scared or unsure to access the services they need. We make sure your neighbor who just arrived in the U.S. understands how to register their kids for school, what documents they need to get food assistance and how they can apply for a job. We help them become self-sufficient and begin to see themselves as a vital part of Howard County. I think we can all agree that no one benefits when there are people in our community who feel left out or unwanted, when we have families who are hungry or who cant effectively advocate for their kids at school or at the doctor because they don't speak English. FIRN works to meet those needs, which helps strengthen our community.

I would be leaving out a large part of what we do at FIRN if I didn't talk a little bit about our immigration services. As many of you know of the approximately 1200 non-profits FIRN is the only non-profit in Howard County who provides immigration services. For many of the close to 60,000 foreign-born Howard County residents our staff of 4 immigration counselors and attorneys are the only place they can turn to get help during some of the most challenging times of their life. Describing what this service means to the community isn't easy, so I am going to tell you Maria's story in her own words. Maria's story is a reminder that we never know exactly what our community members are struggling to get through and why they need and deserve the support of agencies such as FIRN.

Maria's sister is described in a news article as follows, "a hardworking immigrant who dreamed of building a prosperous life," "cheerful, fun loving wife and doting mother of a 7 year old son, she belonged to several church groups." Tragically, on an ordinary day in October of 2002 Maria's sister was shot in the head and killed by the DC sniper while waiting for a bus to get to work.

Maria was forced to cope with her sister's death and simultaneously took on the responsibility of raising her 7 year old nephew alongside her own family. She has been an unsung hero for years and words could never suffice to describe what she and her family has been through.

Now, over 15 years after her sister's tragic death, Maria's immigration status and her ability to remain in the US is in jeopardy. The decision to eliminate Temporary Protected Status, made earlier this year, has direct implications for Maria. Yet again, life has taken a traumatic turn. Maria came to FIRN seeking help and FIRN is committed to working tirelessly to secure her an opportunity to remain in the US.

Maria, and many others, need experienced legal counsel to navigate the confusing, complicated waters of immigration. When a private immigration attorney is not within an individual's means, it is organizations like FIRN that step in to make sure they are not alone. We ask that you help us continue to make sure that legal help is available to everyone.



TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF THE HOWARD COUNTY FISCAL YEAR 2019
EXECUTIVE PROPOSED OPERATING BUDGET

May 1, 2018

County Council Chair Mary Kay Sigaty
Howard County Council
George Howard Building
3430 Court House Drive
Ellicott City, MD 21043

Good evening Chair Sigaty, Vice Chair Ball, and County Councilmembers:

My name is Stephanie Guzmán and I am the Director of Client Services at Laurel Advocacy and Referral Services, Inc. (LARS). I am here tonight to thank you for your commitment of \$15,000 in Community Service Partnership (CSP) funding to LARS in the proposed Fiscal Year 2019 County Operating Budget. Your support over the last several years plays a critical role in supporting the programs and services we provide to Laurel residents of Howard County who are facing a crisis.

Currently, almost one in ten Laurel residents live below the poverty line¹, and many who live above it are barely breaking even. Families live paycheck-to-paycheck and are often one unexpected expense or emergency away from eviction or homelessness. This experience is mirrored among the families we serve. 60% of the families LARS assists earn less than \$2,000 a month in gross income. Over half rent their homes and one-fifth are currently experiencing homelessness². When you consider that the average monthly amount our clients pay for rent is \$1,200³, or 60% of their income, it is no surprise that residents struggle to attain and maintain housing after an unexpected expense or emergency.

For households facing unexpected challenges, LARS provides a critical safety net through an array of emergency assistance services including food, financial assistance, case management, resource referral, as well as permanent housing and self-sufficiency programs. Chief among our

¹ U.S. Census Bureau, 2012-2016 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates.

² Laurel Advocacy and Referral Services, Inc., Client Demographics Report, January 2018-April 2018.

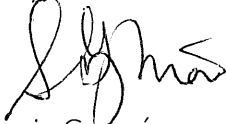
³ Laurel Advocacy and Referral Services, Inc., Client Financial Assistance Report, January 2018-April 2018.

emergency assistance services is LARS's financial assistance program which provides residents with short-term rental assistance to help them stay in or move into their homes.

Unexpected emergencies do not consider jurisdictional boundaries. Although our office is physically located in Prince George's County, LARS assists a number of Howard County Laurel residents and people experiencing homelessness. CSP funding has played a vital role in LARS' ability to assist these individuals and families. In Fiscal Year 2017⁴, LARS processed over 200 requests for assistance from Howard County-connected households. In total, CSP funds enabled LARS to assist 142 families with food assistance and 128 households with referrals to community support services. Nine households were financially assisted with securing permanent housing, avoiding an eviction, or maintaining or restoring power to their homes. An additional five households were financially assisted using other LARS funding sources.

We appreciate the County's support of \$15,000 as proposed in the Fiscal Year 2019 County Operating Budget. We respectfully request that the County Council continue supporting LARS at this level so that we can continue assisting our neighbors with building a more stable life for themselves and their loved ones.

Sincerely,



Stephanie Guzmán

Director of Client Services

sguzman@laureladvocacy.org

⁴ Laurel Advocacy and Referral Services, Inc., Fiscal Year 2017 CSP Financial Assistance Report, 2017.

Bruce A. Eberle
6586 Guilford Road
Clarksville, MD 21029
631-807-2350
bruce_eberle@msn.com

I am a member of Trout Unlimited, a nationwide coldwater conservation organization. Maryland's native fresh water fish is the Trout. The Trout needs cold, clean and clear water to survive. Recently I and six other residents assisted the Maryland Department of Natural Resources to stock trout in the Patuxent River. Both the Lower and Middle branches of the Patuxent River in Howard County provided recreational fishing opportunities for kids and county residents who have a fishing license. I was elected to serve on Trout Unlimited's nationwide committee named Embrace a Stream. The duty of the EAS Committee is to review grant applications from over 250 Chapters from 35 states and provided funds and technical assistance for stream rehabilitation or restoration depending on stream condition. I have been involved in the work of rehabilitating habitat and have collected and studied the "bugs" in our streams to help determine what makes a healthy stream. After more than twenty years working to understand and improve sections of streams and habitat for fish and bugs it finally dawned on me that working at the watershed level to improve the health of our streams and water quality would have a more lasting effect.

I applied for admittance into the second class of the Howard County Watershed Academy. The Academy gave me a glimpse of issues at the watershed level. The scope to the issues facing us and the next generation are significant. The Howard County Watershed Academy gave me the skills, resources, contacts, support, targets and encouragement to work with county residents and employees to deal with those issues.

Academy graduates are trained and encouraged to take positive steps and to encourage others to do likewise. I have a number of rain barrels of different colors and shapes at my home as example for neighbors. I have assisted county residents in obtaining and setting up rain barrels on their property. My next door neighbor followed my example and created a rain garden in his front yard. Stenciling a message "Drains to the Patuxent River" on community storm drain caused a number of residents to realize that the nearby waterway actually had a name, and resulted in some repair of damaged drains. School children have been so concerned about spilled paint that might go down the drain that I often assign another student to hold a rag to augment the drop cloth under the drain being painted.

The Watershed Academy in Anne Arundel County is administered by five full time staff funded by the County. The H2O program in Montgomery County is also funded by the County.

I believe Howard County should step up and take a responsible position to fund the Watershed Academy staff to allow the Academy's continued operation. I request that the Howard County Watershed Academy be included in this budget and in future Howard County budgets.

Howard County Budget Testimony 3/8/2018 in support of Fiscal Year 2019

Title of Testimony: Support of budget for the Howard County Watershed Stewards Academy (part of University of Maryland Extension request to include this program)

My name is Alan Pflugrad.

I live at 7454 First League Columbia Maryland 21046.

As a volunteer Howard County Master Watershed Steward since 2013, I have supported the outreach, education and implementation of practices that improve our watersheds.

For example, in partnership with the Maryland DNR and the Columbia Association, my volunteer colleagues and I have conducted stream surveys throughout Howard County and briefed the results to the neighborhoods adjacent to those streams.

Do you know the quality of our county's streams?

Well I have that data on many streams collected over a five year period, and for those in urban areas, the quality is "very poor". The data also indicates that the commensurate implementation of best practices may be improving the quality of some of the streams (from "very poor" to "poor").

Watershed steward volunteers would not be able to perform tasks like these without some professional staff for training and coordination.

Thus for just a little bit of money (i. e. a relatively small ~~grant~~ increase to the University of Maryland Extension Office), the county gets over a thousand hours of effective volunteer time that are making a difference in our watershed quality.

I close with a couple rhetorical questions?

- Should you wade in our streams after a thunderstorm?
- Can our public county offices resolve our watershed problems by themselves?
- Is the federal funding and support for clean water under assault?

Please enable our local volunteers to be trained and deployed effectively.

Thank you.

Hayley Hamilton, Master Watershed Steward, Howard County
9477 Cameldriver Court
Columbia, MD 21045
(209) 642-2806
hayley.m.swearingen@gmail.com

08 March 2018

Allan H. Kittleman
County Executive, Howard County
3430 Court House Drive
Ellicott City, MD 21043

Mr. Kittleman and administration members,

I am a California native brought to Maryland by the U.S. Navy in 2015. I learned about the HoCo Watershed Stewards Academy while researching the harmful effects of eutrophication in Centennial Lake and the Chesapeake Bay for a college paper I was writing. I have a degree in Cybersecurity and have no formal education in the environmental sciences field, but I have a deep love for the environment and so I joined Class Five of the WSA in September 2016. For the next six months, my classmates and I were taught how we could educate our community and make a difference in the local environment and since then, I have personally performed several HSAs, implemented two BMPs in the Lakeside/Dockside community at Lake Elkhorn, and educated my Girl Scout troop of Daisies and Brownies (grades 2 & 3) on how they can help protect the streams and lakes in Howard County. In November 2017, I purchased a home in the Oakland Mills Village and will be installing BMPs on my property in the Spring, which I can use to reach out to my neighbors and spread the word in the village. These activities are only a fraction of the storm water management education and implementation initiatives performed by Master Watershed Stewards.

In my last year and half with the WSA, I have personally witnessed the dedication that the Program Coordinator, Terry Matthews, has to this organization, the success of its graduates, and the positive change affected in the community. I understand that the council must determine the criticality of the positions funded by the FY 2019 budget, but I am here to voice my opinion that the WSA would not be the organization that it is today without the direction and leadership provided by the Program Coordinator position held by Terry. From advertising the Academy, recruiting members, coordinating each educational opportunity, facilitating community relationships, mentoring the stewards with an abundance of knowledge, and participating in every single WSA community event, the reach of his service to Howard County, the WSA, and the local environment is unmatched. I hope that you consider the critical nature of this position and the effect that it has had in the last several years and its impact on the continued environmental advocacy in Howard County.

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Hayley Hamilton, Master Watershed Steward

COUNTY COUNCIL: Budget Public Hearing, May 1, 2018

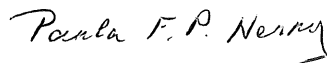
My name is Paula Henry and I live in Ellicott City. I work as a wildlife biologist for the Department of the Interior, but tonight I am here, not as a federal researcher, but as a citizen of Howard County, to add my support for funding the Watershed Steward Academy (WSA).

I had not heard of the WSA until last fall when I saw an announcement for the class at the Miller Library. I signed up because I know first-hand how unique and productive the Chesapeake Bay is from 6 years of research conducted on the eastern and western shores and the islands in between. Tonight, I present 3 reasons for why I believe it is critical to fund the WSA, and ultimately why the WSA saves money for the County in the long run.

1. The 12 week course is well worth the time and support. Lectures are presented by experts in the field of stormwater management and they cover local, state, and federal regulations, the science behind wastewater, and strategies for getting the Community involved. The WSA's focus is on how to ensure that water is filtered of excess nutrients and contaminants before it reaches the Bay. Ultimately, the message is how we can all contribute to the health of our watershed.
2. Everyone knows that if you want to get something done quickly and effectively, bring community groups together, explain how the issues can affect them and impact their kids in the future. There is no more powerful force than volunteers engaged on a mission. In this regard, the WSA is pretty clever: teach and train a few of us each year, and make it our mandate to show our neighbors by example and to spread the word at community events, schools, even at the County landfill. We talk about how rain gardens and conservation landscaping can help minimize flooding after a storm, and how these practices can be financially rewarding both short term through tax benefits, and long term by increasing property values. When WSA teaches kids how to sketch storm drains, they and their families learn to appreciate where the drains lead to, and how much water lost.
3. Finally, our efforts are working. In 1998, after 15 years of different strategies put forth by Maryland, Virginia, Washington DC and Pennsylvania to clean up the Chesapeake, the first State of the Bay report assessed its health a failing grade, 27/100. Granted it has taken over 35 years, but this past March, the National Academy of Sciences published a report presenting how nutrients such as nitrogen and phosphorus are finally low enough to see a resurgent of the Bay's aquatic grasses. These are so critical to bringing back our native fishes, oysters, blue crabs, as well as a wealth of wildlife in terms of waterfowl and seabirds, and of course our State reptile, the Diamondback terrapin.

Although there are many other reasons for supporting the Watershed Steward Academy, my belief is that it is money well spent because of the caliber of the organization and the courses offered, the opportunity to recruit knowledgeable and free volunteers to help the County meet its goals, and finally because managing the watershed for nutrients, works. The Bay is getting cleaner - now is not the time to sit back and rest on our laurels.

Thank you for your attention.



Paula F. P. Henry, Ph.D.
2835 Rogers Avenue
Ellicott City, Maryland

Jonathan S. Lefcheck, Robert J. Orth, William C. Dennison, David J. Wilcox, Rebecca R. Murphy, Jennifer Keisman, Cassie Gurbisz, Michael Hannam, J. Brooke Landry, Kenneth A. Moore, Christopher J. Patrick, Jeremy Testa, Donald E. Weller, Richard A. Batiuk
Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences Mar 2018, 201715798; DOI:10.1073/pnas.1715798115

Korean Community Service Center of Greater Washington (KCSC)

Speaker: Phillip C. Cho, Chairman of the BOD, KCSC

Good Afternoon, Chairman Sigaty and Council members. I am Phillip Cho, Chairman of Korean Community Service Center's Board of Directors and a proud Marylander for the last 40 years. On behalf of the staff, volunteers, and friends of KCSC, I would like to express my deepest appreciation for Howard County's support for Korean community.

KCSC has been serving the communities around Washington Metropolitan Area for last 45 years. KCSC's mission is to assist and empower Asian Americans and new immigrants to become well-adjusted and fully contributing members of the United States through social services, education, advocacy, and development of resources. KCSC's primary goal is to serve as a bridge between Asian community residents and mainstream society in order to build communication and mutual understanding. During the last fiscal year, KCSC served nearly 16,000 cases including residents from Howard County. Our professional bilingual staff work very hard to provide clients with high quality and culturally competent services. At the same time, their goal is to help clients understand US society and culture so they can quickly and smoothly adapt to life in the United States.

According to a recent report from Pew Research Center, Asians are the fastest-growing minority group in the United States. Howard County is home to 57,393 Asian residents. In particular, the number of Korean immigrants living in Howard County has more than doubled over the last 15 years, with the most recent data showing a population of 13,626 Koreansⁱ, a 110% increase over the Census 2000 population of 6,487. Because a growing number of KCSC's clients have moved to Howard County, we made the decision to open a new office in Ellicott City this past year. In fact, Koreans make up just over 7% of Ellicott City residents, one of the most densely Korean-populated towns in the entire stateⁱⁱ.

KCSC strives to be a "one-stop" shopping for all community members. We have a wide range of services including: social services, immigration legal services, and comprehensive services for victims of domestic violence, elder abuse, and financial exploitation. KCSC also offers many classes and workshops, teaching everything from English, computer skills, and citizenship classes, job interview preparation classes to workshops on healthy marriages and relationships or parenting. We even have line dancing for seniors! Our health promotion program includes two annual Health Fairs, a weekly community health clinic, and psychiatric services. KCSC also helps clients to access health care by enrolling those who are eligible in Medicaid and Medicare, Medicare Part D and other Affordable Care Act health insurance providers. In addition to serving the Korean community, KCSC has expanded many of our services to Chinese and Vietnamese residents and other underserved ethnic and mainstream populations.

Howard County's Community Service Partnership Operating Funds will allow KCSC to provide comprehensive social services to low-to-moderate income, limited English proficient individuals and families, promoting self-sufficiency and helping them become contributing community members. In order for the clients to access appropriate services, 28 full-time bi-lingual staff

members assist them every step of the process from gathering required information, to filing applications, referring them to additional resources, and resolving any outstanding matters. Of course our clients come to KCSC to access services that help to improve their day-to-day lives but, more importantly, they crave emotional support and cultural and linguistic understanding. When they know that they are not alone and that we are here to provide adequate support in a culturally acceptable way, clients open up and make a change for a better future.

One of KCSC's most impactful programs is our Safety Net program. I'd like to share a story of one of our recent Safety Net clients:

Last year, Mr. M's business started to fail. After struggling financially for many months, he found he could no longer afford to pay the rent. The family started to receive eviction notices and Mr. M was terrified that his family would have to move out of their home. Just as he was starting to lose hope, he learned of KCSC's Safety Net Project and he came to our office to apply for emergency relief. Luckily, we were able to provide him with financial support, funded entirely through individual donors and congregations. He received three months' of rental assistance, grocery coupons, and transportation support so he could get to job interviews. The social service staff comforted them in their time of need and provided them guidance, encouragement, and practical support. They continued to work closely with him and his wife to help them get back on their feet as quickly as possible. Mr. M. told us how much he and his family appreciated KCSC's support. Mr. M. was also very grateful to the local donors and funders who made the Safety Net project possible.

We are proud of the positive impact we have on every client we serve. Working toward a better and healthier community is an on-going process. And we surely could not be successful without the support of Howard County's councilmembers. Again, thank you so much for your commitment and support to KCSC and the Korean community.

ⁱ 2015 American Community Survey.

ⁱⁱ CNN Money, Nov. 12, 2015

Date: 1 May 2018

Subject: County Council Approval of County Hospital Funding

My name is Stu Kohn and I am the President of the Howard County Citizens Association, HCCA. I reside at 8709 Yellow Bird Court Laurel, MD. 20723.

The Health of our County is in your hands and we ask you to simply assist by providing your constituents a potential healthier environment for the betterment of all. Please see this request is your top priority. It would go a long ways to ensure our quality of life is the prime concern of the County and the necessary action will be taken. We simply need to be fully prepared for our future and this future is now!

We the HCCA, appreciate that County Executive, Kittleman had the hospitality to provide our only hospital with some appropriate funding. As you know, HCCA for many years has been a major advocate regarding Quality of Life issues. When the President of the Hospital, Steve Snelgrove states. "The hospital is not the right size for the community we serve. And despite operating at capacity, we are planning to care for a senior population that will double in a decade, while also keeping pace with the county's population growth. It should be abundantly clear by now that Howard County's health care environment needs have outpaced the hospital's resources and without action now, our quality of life will be eroded. Many residents ask whether Howard County General Hospital has the capacity to accommodate expected growth and an aging population. The frank answer is we do not." The combination of this quote with the daunting 2016 statistics found on their website is enough to not hesitate to approve the County Executive's recommendation. Just to highlight these statistics the Hospital provided services to approximately 220,000 people or 69% of the County Population and Evaluated and treated 78,072 patients in the Emergency Rooms or 25% of the County Population. We simply cannot afford to continue to develop without any real strategic planning. Certainly the Health and Safety of your constituents need to come first.

In conclusion, we request all Council Members perform the necessary surgery to prevent the patient, us, from bleeding to death. With your scalpels, in this case, your pen it would undoubtedly be the right thing to do for the future. This funding as read from the report will support the Hospital's capital project by agreeing to provide \$5 million over the next five years, starting with \$500,000 this year. The money will be used to build a two-story addition that will add 30 inpatient beds, an inpatient psychiatry unit and a short-stay observation unit. For the third year, the county will provide \$312,500 for emergency room improvements, which will total \$1.25 million after next year's fourth and final installment.

You have heard this before from us. The Hospital should be part of APFO as we have been stating for years as it is part of our infrastructure as are Roads and Schools. However, for now the most important item is for you to pass this major funding request. It would do a world of good for us all with the goal to reach a healthier environment.

Stu Kohn
HCCA, President

Testimony to the Howard County Council –May 1, 2018

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

Before I begin my remarks about Grassroots, I want to express my thanks to the County Council for your unwavering support of human services organizations and the people we strive to serve.

Working with Howard County's most vulnerable individuals and families can be daunting, but every day something happens that reminds us why we do what we do. We work through the struggles and celebrate successes when people regain their independence and focus. You make it possible for us to provide support during difficult times. Thank you for that.

A recent success story involves a multi-generational family that had been disrupted and separated from each other through homelessness for a full decade, some living in cars, others couch surfing, moving from shelter to shelter. Some members came to Grassroots, then others were brought to the shelter, where they all lived while the working adults saved money. With the help of counselors and hard work on their part, the reunited family is now together in their own apartment for the first time in 10 years.

Over its 49-year history, Grassroots has evolved from a volunteer-run hotline tasked to help students with drug problems to a 24-7 crisis intervention center serving individuals and families experiencing a personal, situational, mental health or housing crisis.

We are the single point of entry for the Coordinated System of Homeless Services. In a given month, Grassroots crisis staff completes **over 100 homeless assessments**.

The **Emergency Shelter served 280 people last year, including 86 children**. Few of our residents are employed when they enter the shelter, many have a mental health problems, serious medical condition or an addiction problem. Their stay is centered on addressing these issues, and 65% have a positive resolution upon discharge, including finding housing.

During the brutal winter this year, the **Cold Weather Shelter** partnership between Grassroots and the faith community provided safe and warm quarters in churches and synagogues for up to 25 individuals and families each night. On the very worst nights, we sheltered up to 25 additional people at the Freetown Road location, turning our counseling rooms and hallways into bedrooms on Code Blue nights.

The Day Resource Center, at the new Leola Dorsey Community Resource Center, is serving an average of 90 people per day. We expect to serve well over **1,000 NEW** individuals by June 30, when our fiscal year ends.

Through a partnership with Howard County Community College, we are able to offer Pre-GED classes on Tuesdays and Thursdays, and the Office of Workforce Development meets with individuals to get them job ready. These exciting partnerships are just the beginning of what we hope to do in the future.

In addition to the services for the homeless community, Grassroots' call center handled **37,591 crisis calls**, an increase of **43%** over a three-year period. These calls came from all age and income groups and range from referrals to suicide prevention counseling.

There were **2,486 face-to-face contacts**.

The Mobile Crisis Team, which responds to emergency requests from the community, made **943 responses last year, 165 to Howard County Public Schools**, a 26% increase over the previous year.

The most significant challenge facing Grassroots is keeping up with the demand for services, which increases daily. Most recently we entered into a partnership with the Howard County Health Department to help address opiate epidemic. Grassroots offers on site screenings for individuals ready for treatment. We also keep in touch with people until a bed is available and help them get to and return from treatment. The cycle of addiction is a challenging one, we hope that by providing a caring place to start, the process of detox and eventually long term sobriety, we can help people achieve their personal goals.

Grassroots has a history of responding to need in the county by partnering with county government and other local agencies when asked to do so. This is only possible if funding matches the expansion in services that are requested.

For FY19 we seek funding to be able to add staff at the Day Resource Center in response to increased need there, and to add a second finance person to assist with accounting as recommended by auditors.

Once again, I thank the Council for the opportunity to present and for your support of Grassroots and the people we serve.



Testimony to Howard County Counsel May 1, 2018
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 \$60,000 Community Service Partnership grant for Rebuilding Together and a One Time Grant of \$2,000.

Organization's History:

Rebuilding Together Howard County is celebrating its 26th year of providing low income homeowners with free home repairs. Since the organization's inception in 1992, our local affiliate has provided assistance to families with small children, the elderly, disabled individuals, and veterans in need. During the last 26 years, the organization has repaired over 950 homes of low income homeowners with approximately 1,000 volunteers each year. Our repairs allow seniors to age in place.

Mission and Goals:

Rebuilding Together Howard County's mission statement is: Repairing homes. Revitalizing Communities. Rebuilding Lives.

Organizational Strengths:

Rebuilding Together is growing. We now offer four types of services. The first type of service is **Year Round Home Repairs**. This past Saturday, April 28th, hundreds of Rebuilding Together volunteers repaired 29 houses including 1 non-profit facility. New roofs, windows, bathrooms, plumbing, floors and other repairs were installed free of charge for low income homeowners. The average income of the families we help is \$30,000 a year. One home was repaired via a Sears Heroes At Home Grant for a Navy veteran and his family. This home had multiple holes in the floor, a leaking roof, and a collapsing ceiling. Rebuilding Together installed a new roof, built a new floor and fixed the ceiling. The family was very grateful.

The second type of service offered is **Urgent Repairs**. Within the last year, the Howard County Department of Community Resources and Services decided to no longer provide urgent repairs to low income homeowners. Instead, those clients in need are now referred to Rebuilding Together. Recently, we provided plumbing repairs to an elderly couple without water, a new roof to a homeowner who had a tree fall on their house, 6 Heating and Air Conditioning systems, a new hot water heater to replace a

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



malfunctioning one, repaired two different sets of frozen pipes during the winter and corrected a sewer backup problem to name a few.

The third type of service provided is **Community Revitalization**. This is where we focus our repairs in one community and this past year that community was Ellicott City. The terrible flood left several low income homeowners with homes that were not safe, warm or dry. Rebuilding Together joined the One Ellicott City Recovery Project board and went to work. We repaired 9 flood victim homes (3 this past Saturday). Attached are before and after photos of a kitchen we repaired as well as a home that was in need of new siding, windows and roof.

The fourth type of service is **Handyman Services**. Sometimes homeowners need a small repair that does not warrant sending a team of volunteers to fix. So, Rebuilding Together has a group of 15 volunteers who address these issues. For example, a roof vent fell off an elderly woman's house and she was worried squirrels would get into her attic, so we sent a volunteer over to reinstall the roof vent. Another example is the installation of a new garbage disposal to replace one that would not work. While our volunteers are in the home, they sometimes see other repairs that are needed and add them to the list.

New in 2018

In order to quantify and track the impact of our services, Rebuilding Together began a Safe and Healthy Housing Program. We evaluate each house we repair based on 25 different characteristics to include the roof, hot water heater, grab bars, smoke alarms, etc... This process is similar to a home inspection when you buy a house. 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 to transition the structure to a safe and healthy house.

In closing, Rebuilding Together Howard County greatly appreciates 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

Exterior flood victim home after new siding, roof and windows.

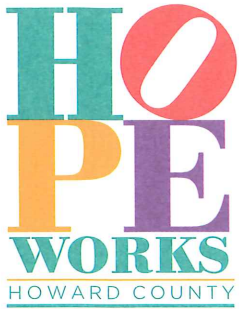


Before



Kitchen of house EC-15 Before and After





Public Hearing – Operating Budget FY 19
Testimony from HopeWorks of Howard County

May 1, 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. This past fiscal year we served 3,897 people in our county who requested our direct services and we reached an additional 3,409 through our community engagement programs.

We are very proud of our accomplishments in this past year. During FY18, we have:

- Improved our response to those who have been victims of human trafficking;
- Opened our third transitional housing site; and
- Conducted extensive staff training centered on organizational equity and inclusion.

We still have some exciting projects planned before the fiscal year is over and would like to invite you attend our Telling this Truth Theatrical Event on June 21st. This is our latest collaboration with the Howard County Arts Council to utilize the arts as a path to justice and healing.

After three years of level funding requests, we did ask the County for increased support and are very pleased with what is proposed in the operating budget. We plan to use this increase to:

- Continue our anti-trafficking coordinator position that was originally funded with one-time startup funds that will expired in FY19;
- Support the increased costs of maintaining a third transitional housing site; and
- Provide some salary adjustments and cost of living increases to our staff who work tremendously hard for pay that is well below market value.

We are very proud of what we offer to the community and we cannot provided these services without the continued partnership and the financial support of the County. Thank you to the Council for being part of this collaboration and your ongoing affirmation of the importance of our work.

We ask that you approve the Community Services Partnership grants program budget including the fund levels allocated to HopeWorks. Thank you so much for considering this request.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Jennifer Pollitt Hill".

Jennifer Pollitt Hill, MSW
Executive Director

Telling ^{STORIES} Truth

Theatrical Event

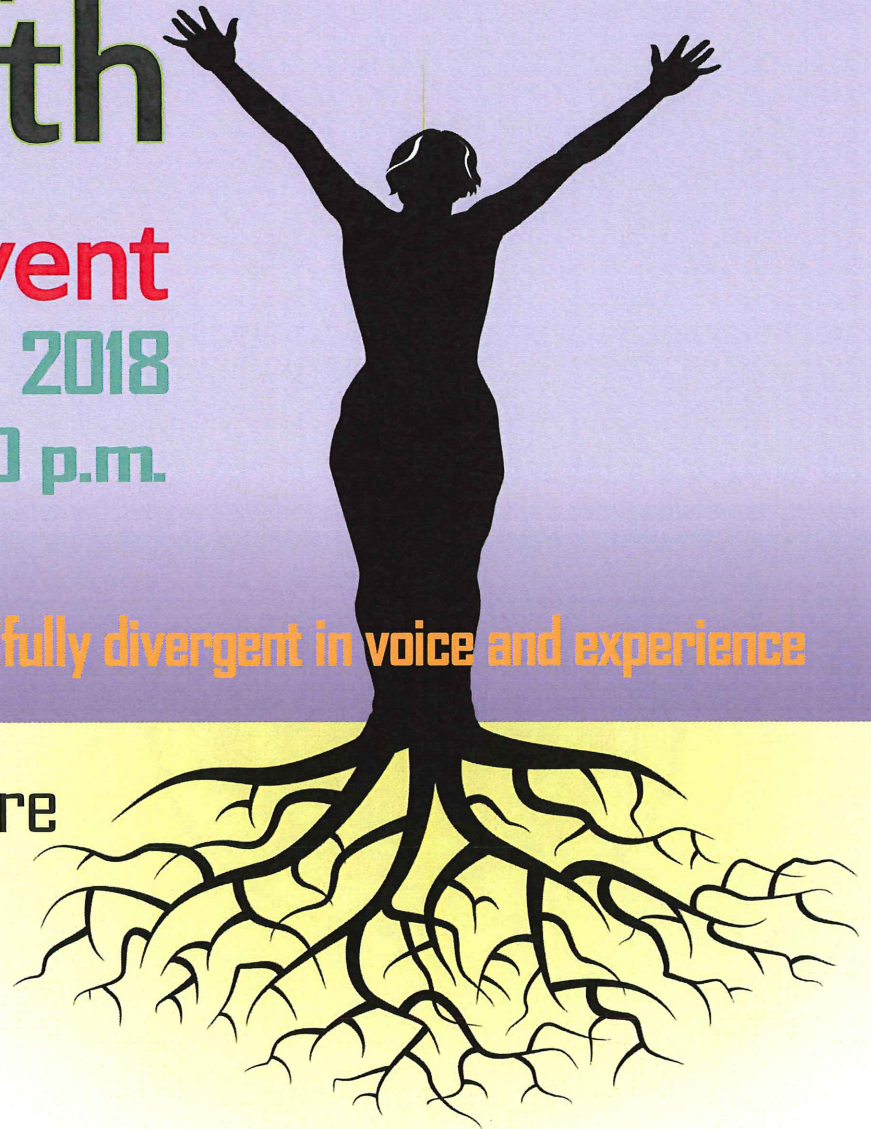
Thursday, June 21, 2018

7:00 p.m.

beautifully divergent in voice and experience

Slayton House Theatre

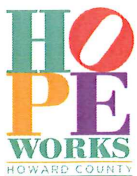
10400 Cross Fox Lane
Columbia, MD 21044



To Reserve Tickets: wearehopeworks.org/events

a free event but donations are kindly accepted

Call 410.997.0304 for information



Vanita Leatherwood creator/producer

Judy Templeton director

the soulful journeys of our lives...linked in triumph

a HopeWorks production, made possible by the Howard County Arts Council through a grant from Howard County Government

wearehopeworks.org

Sayers, Margery

From: Barbara Soscia <bsoscia@mcrchoward.org>
Sent: Wednesday, May 02, 2018 10:39 AM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: Mediation and Conflict Resolution Center, Inc. testimony
Attachments: testimony county council.docx

Howard County Council Members:

Please see our attached letter which we submit in lieu of in-person testimony at the May 1st budget hearing. We ask that you review this written testimony while considering our funding request for FY2019. Thank you.

Respectfully submitted,
Barbara Soscia
Executive Director
MCRC, Inc.
443-514-7694



Mediation and Conflict Resolution Center, Inc.
9770 Patuxent Woods Drive, Suite 306
Columbia, MD 21046
info@mcrchoward.org · 443-518-7694

May 2, 2018

Howard County Council
3430 Court House Drive
Ellicott City, MD 21043

RE: Written testimony – FY 19 Operating Budget

Good morning Dr. Ball, Mr. Fox, Ms. Sigaty, Ms. Terrasa and Mr. Weinstein:

Due to prior scheduling, I was unable to be present with you last night to provide testimony in support of funding for the Mediation and Conflict Resolution Center, Inc. (MCRC, Inc). I wish to submit this letter to you in place of in-person testimony.

Because some of you are familiar with MCRC in our previous structure, as part of Howard Community College, I will begin with a quick recap of how we have come to this point where we are seeking CSP funding. In the fall of 2016 MCRC under HCC was informed that funding and support of the program would cease through the college budget on June 30, 2017. In an effort to continue the services provided by MCRC, dedicated Center volunteers approached County Executive Kittleman to secure funding to form and launch an independent nonprofit corporation. In March 2017 MCRC, Inc. became a legal entity. Through guidance and assistance of the County Executive, MCRC, Inc. was able to locate office space within the Howard County Nonprofit Collaborative and most importantly to first-year success, County Executive Kittleman allocated \$125,000 of his budget to fund MCRC, Inc. for FY2018. Now entering its second year, MCRC, Inc., like other nonprofits in the county, is seeking funding through a Community Services Partnership grant to continue its vital community work and build the organization.

In the first 9 months of FY2018, MCRC, Inc. has reached over 700 people through our services and outreach! We expanded our community mediation program which provides a neutral space for people to come together to resolve their disputes without the need to rely on an overburdened court system. We continued to support youth through our restorative justice programs that stress accountability for wrongs done without criminality, thus stemming the school-to-prison pipeline. Our school circles teams continued to give voice to youth and encourage diversity and inclusion.

Some of the goals we have for the next year are:

- MCRC will continue to expand its reach of services throughout the county;

- MCRC will launch an outreach strategy designed to bring conflict management and conflict resolution awareness to all areas of the county and deliver our services in communities where conflict occurs;
- MCRC will provide multiple opportunities to staff and volunteers for advanced skills development;
- MCRC will, in conjunction with HCPSS, develop and deliver peer mediation training to students and staff advisors in the county's high schools;
- MCRC will pilot a new mediation and conflict management education program to people early in their substance use recovery process, thus reducing a major contributor to relapse for the addict/alcoholic;
- MCRC will expand the number and diversity of our Board of Directors; and finally
- MCRC will launch a fee-for-service structure charging a small fee for mediation services to those who can afford to pay, while continuing to provide these services at no cost to low income earners

This last goal highlights our awareness and willingness to put in place programs and procedures that will lead this organization towards self-sufficiency. Also, towards that goal, MCRC has developed fee structures with our partners to support the programs we offer to them. Customized workshops to businesses and groups are provided at an affordable fee. And, we will also be seeking grant funding to offset the cost of developing its new recovery program. All that said, our goals for the coming year cannot be realized without operating funds that keep our doors open, our phones ringing, fair wages for our tireless staff and the many other costs of keeping a small nonprofit doing what it does best – serving the public! Please fund our continuing efforts to support civility, peace and understanding in Howard County.

I welcome the opportunity to come before you to address any questions you may have pertaining to our services or our request for funding. Thank you for all you do collectively and individually to keep Howard County among the best counties in the nation and thank you for your support.

Respectfully submitted,
Barbara Soscia
Executive Director
MCRC, Inc.