

October 16, 2023

Good Evening,

My name is Carol Miller. I have lived in Howard County for 30 years and both of my children graduated from Howard County High Schools. I worked for Goddard Space Flight Center as resources manager for 10 years before becoming a stay-at-home Mom. I homeschooled my children through the end of Elementary because they were ahead when the “Leave No Child Behind” program came into effect which left them unchallenged. During this time, I used countless resources available in Howard county. (Library, Park and Rec programs, Association of Museum)

When they returned to public Middle School, I became a Howard County substitute teacher. During that time, I witnessed poverty, food insecurity, and homelessness that I was completely unaware of in my “Middle Class” neighborhood. I was always disturbed by the inability as a teacher to personally provide support. (One time, I was reprimanded for giving a child milk money.) I do know that backpacks, Thanksgiving meals, and other programs exist. But I also know there are families who do not meet the income requirement for permanent meals or services. And that there are counselors that put meals in children’s backpacks for the weekend.

When my children left for college, I initiated a second career, nursing, because as a volunteer at Children’s Hospital, I witnessed a child choking and was unable to help. I started with Basic Life Support, then an associates in nursing. Then, I was challenged with an out-of-town aging parent and realized I needed to know if my mother was receiving the best care, and services available to her. So, I continued on to complete my bachelor’s in nursing while caring for my Mom and newborn granddaughter during COVID isolation.

As a result of past and more recent experiences, my interests have revolved around Aging at Home, and Food Insecurity which I researched in my Community Health course at Stevenson. I feel that regardless of how much money a family makes, rich children can have food insecurity and Senior citizens can be alone and unable care for themselves.

I am amazed at the services that are available in Howard County and beyond, but concerned about how many do not know they exist. I remember taking part in so many opportunities that I want to afford to others. When my children were younger, I often felt guilty participating in free community events when those who could benefit more were not there. (Food, books, school supplies). I took them more for exposure and socialization, but as they grew up, the lines between the haves and have nots grew thicker.

I have just returned to the workforce outside the home. But this board is my chance to give back to the families in my community. I want to help facilitate opportunities and change.

Thank you for this opportunity!

Carol Miller, MPA, BSN, RN