

PS COMMITTEE #4
July 23, 2012

MEMORANDUM

July 19, 2012

TO: Public Safety Committee

FROM: Susan J. Farag, Legislative Analyst *SJF*

SUBJECT: Update - Family Justice Center

Today, the Public Safety (PS) Committee will receive an update on the Family Justice Center. Those expected to attend include:

Darren Popkin, County Sheriff
John McCarthy, State's Attorney
Russ Hamill, Assistant Chief, Police Department
Raymond Crowel, Chief, Behavioral Health and Crisis Services
Hannah Sassoon, Sheriff's Office

Background

Montgomery County's Family Justice Center co-locates several government agencies to provide legal and social services to families who experience domestic violence. The FJC is also supported by many local community organizations that provide assistance to victims of domestic violence. Today the Committee will be updated on current activities at the FJC by various agency stakeholders.

During operating budget discussions last April, the Sheriff's Office provided a brief update on several programs and initiatives within the FJC:

(1) Internship Program with the University of Maryland

The Sheriff's Office has worked with the University of Maryland to place interns and volunteers at the Family Justice Center. The intern provides 120 hours at the Center to receive three credit hours. This has been beneficial to both the FJC and the intern, who receives direct experience in criminal justice, family studies, and other related fields of study.

(2) Forensic Interview Rooms

The Sheriff's Office had been working to create forensic interview rooms at the FJC with grant funding from the FJC Foundation. These rooms will permit police to conduct interviews at the FJC with video and audio equipment. Both the primary victim and children exposed can be interviewed at the FJC. These interviews are critical to the successful prosecution of criminal cases. The Sheriff's Office has ordered the needed equipment and it is due to be installed shortly.

(3) Therapist Provided by House of Ruth

The House of Ruth Maryland is currently providing a therapist at the FJC for 12 hours a week. This time is used to oversee therapy groups and to see clients individually. The therapist is bilingual (English/Spanish), and supplements the work of the APP therapeutic staff.

(4) New Conference Center

With grant funding from Verizon, the FJC has modified a conference room into a training center. It is equipped with wide-screen monitors and presentation equipment, and has off-site meeting capability.

New Programs

Teen Dating Peace Orders

In February 2012, the State Department of Juvenile Services, the Sheriff's Office, State's Attorney's Office, and the Montgomery County Public Schools entered into an MOU to support the Domestic Violence Coordinating Council's effort to facilitate access to Peace Orders for teen victims of domestic violence when the perpetrator is a minor. The MOU establishes protocols that will direct the exchange of information among the agencies in order to address teen dating violence and reduce the risk of violence for Montgomery County youth.

Discussion Issues

- 1) What is the status of member agency activity on the Teen Dating Peace Order MOU?
- 2) Are there any identifiable gaps in service or resources that would improve overall service delivery at the FJC?
- 3) What are the FJC's goals moving forward? What resources are necessary to meet those goals?

<u>This packet includes the following:</u>	<u>©#</u>
FJC Brochure	1-2
February 2012 MOU – Teen Peace Orders	3-5
FJC Newsletter, Fall 2011	6-13
FJC Newsletter, Winter 2012	14-19
FJC Newsletter, Summer 2012	20-25



Community Partners

- Montgomery County Sheriff's Office
- Montgomery County State's Attorney's Office
- Montgomery County Department of Health and Human Services
 - Abused Persons Program
 - Child Welfare Services
 - Emergency Services
- Montgomery County Department of Police
- Montgomery County Department of Correction and Rehabilitation
- Montgomery County Office of Community Partnerships
- House of Ruth, Maryland
- Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of Washington, Inc. Immigration Legal Services
- STTAR Center – Counseling
- Maryland Department of Child Support Enforcement
- Safe Start Services for children exposed to domestic violence
- Interfaith Community Against Domestic Violence
- Child Advocacy Center – Treehouse (off-site)
- Montgomery County Family Justice Center Foundation, Inc. – Non-Profit and Supporting Partner
www.mcfjcfoundation.org

Frequently Asked Questions

Do I need an appointment?

No. You can walk in for services.

Where can I park?

There is a free parking garage in the building on the Jefferson Street side. There is also street parking. The center is also within walking distance from Rockville Metro Station.

Can I bring my children with me?

Yes. We have a specially designed play room and kitchen facilities for children.

May I bring a friend for support?

Yes. However, when you speak to one of the professional staff, your friend may be asked to wait in the reception area.

Will it cost me anything for legal services?

No. There are no fees for any services at the Montgomery County Family Justice Center.

Can I get Protective Order Services at the Family Justice Center?

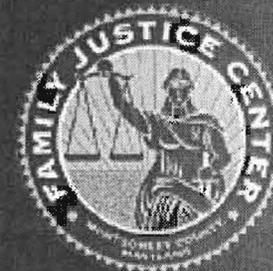
Staff can assist you with filing your petition for protection.

Can I return for additional services?

Yes. We encourage you to take advantage of all appropriate services.

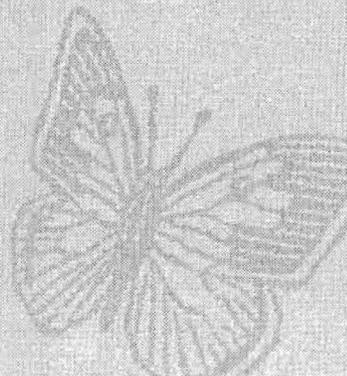


A community partnership providing help for hurting families

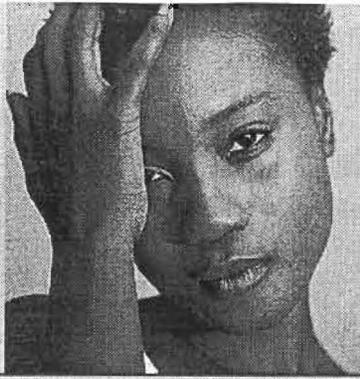


Montgomery County
FAMILY JUSTICE CENTER
600 Jefferson Street
Rockville, Maryland 20852
240-773-0444
www.montgomerycountymd.gov/FJC

Crisis Line 24 Hour Assistance
240-777-4000



About Us



The Montgomery County Family Justice Center is a comprehensive one stop center for victims of family violence and their children. The center co-locates multiple agencies to provide coordinated advocacy, law enforcement, civil legal services and social services for wrap-around support for families. Your safety is our first priority. Our goal is to help you in a specially designed facility where you and your children can feel safe and comfortable.

Who Is Eligible?

Anyone who is experiencing or has experienced domestic violence is eligible to receive services. Children are welcome to use the child friendly environment while the parent is receiving services.

Available Services

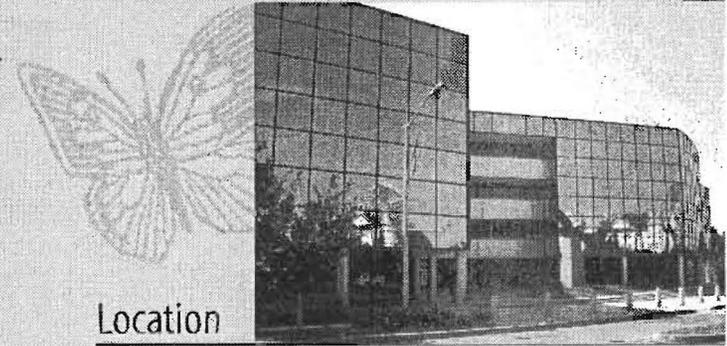
- Safety Planning – staff at the Center will work with you on an individualized, comprehensive safety plan.
- Legal Advocacy – advocates can assist you in filing for a protective order or with criminal charges.
- Legal Representation for Civil Protective Orders – the House of Ruth has a staff of civil attorneys to represent you at a Protective Order hearing at no charge.

- Counseling for you and your children – you can meet with a counselor and make arrangements for further individual or group counseling services.
- Criminal Investigation – you can meet with a detective or prosecutor about possible criminal charges or to discuss a pending case.
- Immigration Consultation under Federal Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) – an attorney can meet with you in a confidential setting to explain the VAWA provisions to protect battered immigrant women.
- Emergency Protective Orders – an advocate can assist you with filing your petition for protection at the Center.
- Shelter Placement – staff can assist you and your children in accessing a confidential shelter as part of your safety plan.
- Referral To Safe Havens for pets – if your pet needs shelter, you can receive information on how the Humane Society can help.
- Snacks and play room for your children to relax.
- Child Advocacy Center (off site) – you can be referred to the Treehouse Child Advocacy Center for services for your children who have been hurt or witnessed domestic violence.
- Chaplaincy program - Chaplains will be available for spiritual support and guidance.



Fees

There are no fees for services at the Family Justice Center.



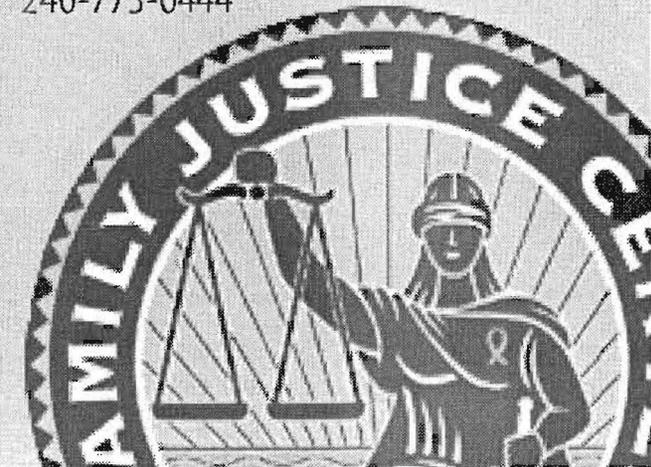
Location

The Family Justice Center is located at 600 Jefferson Street, Suite 500, Rockville, Maryland (on Route 355, the intersection of Rockville Pike and Jefferson Street). The Family Justice Center is accessible by public transportation, the Rockville Metro Station, and is near the Rockville District and Circuit courts.

Hours

The Family Justice Center is open
Monday – Friday 8:30 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.

240-773-0444



Memorandum of Understanding

This Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) is entered into this 16th day of February, 2012, between Maryland Department of Juvenile Services; the Montgomery County Sheriff's Office; the Montgomery County State's Attorney's Office; and Montgomery County Public Schools.

Background

In a national survey conducted by Teenage Research Unlimited and Liz Claiborne in 2008, 72% of teens aged 11-14 reported they were in a dating relationship. In 2009 the same researchers along with the Family Violence Prevention Fund reported that one in three teens in the US report they have experienced threats of physical or sexual violence in their dating relationships. Abusive relationships can have an effect on adolescent development, and teens who experience dating violence may endure long-term negative behavioral and health consequences. Adolescents in controlling or violent relationships may carry these dangerous and unhealthy patterns into future relationships. Teen dating violence (TDV) has been recognized as a serious public health issue by the Center for Disease Control. Consequently, many states have begun to pass new legislation in an effort to address TDV, create educational programs on healthy relationships and expand related services.

Youth in violent relationships are often unable to access victim services including health care without parental consent. Many states, including Maryland, do not provide the same legal protections or services for teen victims of dating violence that adult victims receive. Teens also face additional challenges if they attend the same school as their abusive partner. Schools and victim service organizations encounter complex situations when they are faced with providing a safe learning environment for dating abuse victims while upholding the abusers rights to attend the same school. Juvenile services, law enforcement agencies and schools also do not have protocols in place for communicating and responding to TDV incidents.

Intent

This Memorandum of Understanding supports the Domestic Violence Coordinating Council's effort of creating uniform arrangements for the exchange of information between signatory agencies and facilitating access to Peace Orders for teen victims when the perpetrator is a minor. It establishes the protocols that will direct the exchange of information between the agencies on matters of mutual interest and responsibility, in order to address teen dating violence in the community and reduce the risk of violence to the youth in Montgomery County. The role of each agency is outlined below.

Roles and Responsibilities

Maryland Department of Juvenile Services (DJS)

- DJS staff will make a referral to the Family Justice Center (FJC) via telephone when a teen presents with a teen dating violence issue.
- DJS staff will file the peace order application that involves an allegation of teen dating violence as a petition with the court immediately at the victim's request. DJS staff will accept completed petitions electronically from the same partnering agencies.
- DJS staff will provide a copy of the petition to the SAO staff, if filed with the court.
- DJS staff will notify SAO staff of any violations of peace orders when the underlying order is based upon teen dating violence.

Montgomery County Sheriff's Office (MCSO)

- MCSO staff will collect peace orders and petitions involving teen dating violence from the Juvenile Division, Circuit Court for Montgomery County.
- MCSO staff will maintain copies of all TDV peace orders involving a minor respondent.
- MCSO victim assistance staff will, upon a teen presenting for services at the FJC, evaluate the teen victim's service needs, make appropriate referrals for service, create a safety plan with teen that includes personal notification of any court orders to the school, assist petitioners with completion of the peace order and contact the Department of Juvenile Services to coordinate a meeting between the teen and the DJS intake worker.

Montgomery County State's Attorney's Office (SAO)

- SAO staff will review all peace orders alleging teen dating violence and evaluate for possible criminal charges.
- SAO staff will coordinate with the Montgomery County Police Department Family Crimes Division to obtain timely notification of Peace Order violations in teen dating violence cases.
- Upon authorization from DJS, SAO will determine whether the filing of a juvenile petition is appropriate.

Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS)

- A MCPS designee will review peace orders involving teen dating violence and provide notification to the appropriate designee at the petitioner's and/ or respondent's schools.
- A MCPS designee will apprise students and parents, if appropriate of community resources regarding teen dating violence.
- MCPS administrator or designee may assist students with the Peace Order application and submission to DJS via electronic scan of the petition when appropriate.
- The MCPS designee at each school will initiate coordination of the school's response, if any to the teen dating violence incident.

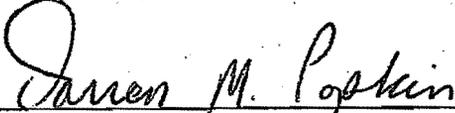
Term of Agreement

The term of this MOU is one (1) year commencing on February 16, 2012. The MOU will automatically renew for consecutive one (1) year terms starting on February 16, of each succeeding year. Any party may terminate its participation in this MOU by providing written notice to all other parties not less than thirty (30) days prior to the effective date of such termination.

Approval

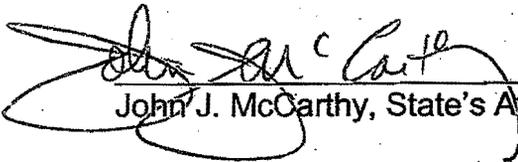
We have read and agreed to this Memorandum of Understanding.

Montgomery County Sheriff's Office



Darren M. Popkin, Sheriff 2/23/12
Date

Montgomery County State's Attorney's Office



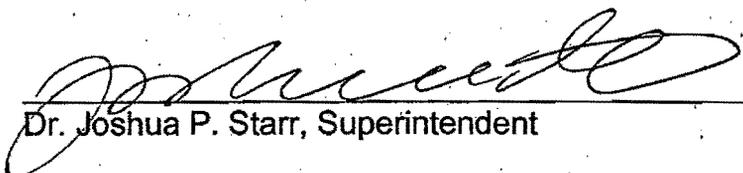
John J. McCarthy, State's Attorney 2/27/12
Date

Montgomery County Department of Juvenile Services



Frank Duncan, Assistant Regional Director for Metro Region 2.1.12
Date

Montgomery County Public Schools



Dr. Joshua P. Starr, Superintendent 3.15.2012
Date



Montgomery County Family Justice Center

VOLUME 2, ISSUE 4

FALL 2011

SPECIAL POINT OF INTEREST:

MCFJC FOUNDATION BENEFIT

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

Angels Among Us 2

DOJ Grant 2

Women Who Care Ministries 3

International Visitors 3

It's Everybody's Business 4

CUT IT OUT 5

MCFJC Foundation Benefit Photos 6

A Special Thank You 7

Fighting Domestic Violence 8

Busy Bees 8

Contributors:

Cynthia Mogel
Resa Levy
Hannah Sassoon

Benefit Photographer
Bruce Sherman

From the Desk of Sheriff Darren M. Popkin

Four years ago, planning for the Montgomery County Family Justice Center began in earnest. At that time, we had only our concept of what the Center *should* be: an innovative, comprehensive model for the mid-Atlantic region. We had very few models to work from, and none of these few were local. Our essential task was to forge a path from concept to execution.

In forging that path, we have made strong allies from our partnerships with local non-profits. We have established a strong, vibrant community involvement. We have instituted innovative projects using the latest technologies. And we have made the path easier for our neighboring jurisdictions and states, by being the model we lacked for the establishment of a Family Justice Center.

We are most fortunate in Montgomery County to have a cadre of non-profits to join us at the FJC. Career Catchers has been able to assist clients seeking economic self-sufficiency; House of Ruth Maryland has provided critical legal support; Women Who Care Ministries has provided nourishing food; Catholic Charities has assist-

ed clients seeking immigration protections under federal laws. The Universities of Maryland Shady Grove and College Park have partnered to locate interns at the FJC, thereby expanding our ability to assist clients while giving these students an oppor-



The Montgomery County Family Justice Center is centrally located in the heart of Rockville, Maryland.

tunity to have direct experience working in the justice system.

While we have long recognized that no single agency can end the scourge of domestic violence, we have more recently recognized that we also need the support of the entire community to change attitudes. Domestic violence is no longer considered a private matter; it affects our children, friends, co-workers, neighbors. Just as our MCFJC Foundation Board members speak out, we have volunteers and in-

terns adding their collective voices to bring about change.

Neighboring Maryland jurisdictions and states such as North Carolina, Virginia and New Jersey have toured the facility and consulted with Montgomery County staff prior to embarking on establishing a FJC. We are among a handful of Centers using technologies such as video conferencing and audio-video equipment for forensic interviews of victims and children.

Two years ago, we attended conferences to learn about innovative practices at Justice Centers elsewhere in the United States. This April 2012 we will be paying it forward, by presenting a workshop at the National Family Justice Conference on our video-conferencing project with the courts.

None of this would have been possible without the men and women of the Montgomery County Sheriff's Office. My gratitude to them is matched only by the unparalleled depth of their commitment to the safety of Montgomery County residents.

Sincerely,
Sheriff Darren M. Popkin

There are Angels Among Us

On October 2nd, attendees at the 2nd Annual MCFJC Benefit had the opportunity to hear the incredible story of Ana Valdez, a courageous 25 year-old survivor of domestic violence. We believe it is a story worth retelling.

My abuse began in 2004 by my boyfriend Carlos. Like many in my situation, at first it was hard for me to ask for help. I feared financial loss, the Court system, losing my job, and upsetting my children. Of course, allowing them to continue to see domestic violence in their own home upset them more than words can say. Finally in 2006, I got the courage to put a stop to this situation and got a protection order. Carlos violated it three times. He wouldn't stop chasing me. He was

arrested in January 2008 and subsequently released.

Shortly afterward, I came home to my Takoma Park apartment and found him waiting for me. He grabbed an 18-pound crucifix off my wall and brutally beat me in front of our two young daughters before a neighbor called the police. When Officer Angela Donovan began knocking at the door, Carlos held a knife to my throat and ordered me to send the officer away. Seeing me in imminent danger, one of my daughters opened the door. Officer Donovan rushed in and shot Carlos twice as he tried to cut my throat. I myself was hit by a third shot when, falling to the floor, Carlos shoved me into the line of fire.

Thankfully, in October 2009, he was sentenced to life imprisonment.

The Family Justice Center had opened its doors earlier that year and was instrumental in helping me and my daughters Ivana—now age 7 and Glendy age 6—get the therapy we needed to move forward with our lives. Now I have the strength to reach out and help others and have been giving many speeches. In June I started “**Angels Against Domestic Violence Community Center.**” My dream is to help other victims of Domestic Violence by being a bridge to their independence through support, prevention education, training and classes, and referral to the Family Justice Center, **(Continued page 8)**



Ana Valdez with daughters, Ivana and Glendy at the Angels Against Domestic Violence Community Center.



Ana with Governor Martin O'Malley at the 2nd Annual MCFJC Benefit

USDOJ Grant for Montgomery County

Good News! Montgomery County recently received renewal of funding for our coordinated community response to domestic violence. With a 24 month Arrest grant of \$998,955 from the Office on Violence Against Women, US Department of Justice, we will be able to continue to provide staff in the Sheriff's Office, the State's Attorney's Office, and the Departments of Health and Human Services, Police and Correction and Rehabilitation. Seven part-time and full-time County employees are funded through this grant to serve victims directly and to keep offenders accountable. It has enabled us to partner with 2 non profits – House of Ruth Maryland and Catholic Charities Immi-

gration Legal Services.

The grant will be used to provide much needed FJC services to help victims of domestic violence and their families live safe, violence-free lives, to help the Center staff remove barriers for victims seeking safety, reduce the stress of proceeding through the court system, break the intergenerational cycle of violence in families, and provide services to address the needs of children exposed to domestic violence. Since 2009, Montgomery County and the Family Justice Center have received nearly \$2 million in Arrest grants.

We are extremely grateful to our congressional delegation for their supportive efforts on our behalf. In announcing the grant award Senator Mikulski said, “We **(Continued Page 8)**

FJC Update:
Since the Grand Opening 3200 domestic violence clients representing 100 different countries of origin have received services at the FJC.

Women Who Care Ministries: Partnering with the FJC Since DAY ONE!

Twenty-five hundred juice boxes and two thousand granola bars - that's just a small representation of food items donated to the FJC from Women Who Care Ministries (WWCM) since the FJC Grand Opening in April 2009. WWCM's was founded over ten years ago by Executive Director Judith Clark and is an organization with a mission to help hurting people transition into a brighter day. While WWCM has many programs to assist County residents who are trying to establish themselves after a difficult time in their lives, Judith states that their Kids Backpack Food Program and Helping Others Eat food pantry provide basic sustenance to

the County's neediest and are their signature programs.

Judith said she learned about the FJC shortly before the grand opening and recognized an opportunity to help victims of domestic violence and their children by providing an abundance of nonperishable and nutritional food items from their pantry. Clients who come to the FJC do so with their children and often don't think about, or have the chance to pack, anything to eat. The snacks nicely displayed in a basket on the table and the refrigerator stocked with juice and water in the family area adds to the welcoming environment clients and their children experi-

ence at the FJC.

The FJC staff is extremely grateful to Judith Clark and WWCM for their ongoing commitment to assist the citizens of Montgomery County and look forward to a longstanding partnership.



Two volunteers from Women Who Care Ministries delivering food items from the pantry to the FJC.

FJC Hosts International Leader from Sister City, Morazán, El Salvador

In August, 2011 several FJC staff members had the distinct pleasure of welcoming Miguel Ventura, Governor of Morazán, El Salvador, his wife, Evelyn Ventura and Evelyn Gonzalez to the FJC. Their visit to Montgomery County and the FJC followed a trip to El Salvador made by a Montgomery County delegation led by County Executive Isiah Leggett in July, 2011 as part of the Sister Cities International program. Sister Cities International is a nonprofit citizen diplomacy network that creates and strengthens partnerships between U.S. and international communities. It strives to build global cooperation at the municipal level, promote cultural understanding and stimulate economic development. Morazán, located in the northeastern part of El Salvador, was selected as the County's first Sister City partnership because El Salvador is the

number one country of origin of Montgomery County's immigrant population.

During his visit to the FJC, Governor Ventura discussed his strategic plan to improve conditions and create opportunities for the citizens of the Department of Morazán, the poorest Salvadoran state with 174,000 people, an illiteracy rate of 30 percent and an extreme poverty rate of 36 percent. He and his wife described vividly the unfathomable conditions in which the Morazán citizens live. They expressed particular concern for the plight of women that reside in their state and explained that they experience extraordinarily high levels of domestic violence, and have little to no education, employment skills and resources. Due to the tremendous rates of partner abuse, women often bear the burden as the sole provider for their fami-



Sister City to Montgomery County, Morazán, El Salvador is highlighted in red.

lies.

Collaborative efforts between government, nonprofit coalitions and women's organizations are aiming to make a difference for the women of Morazán. Both the Governor and Mrs. Ventura recognize that more needs to be done. Their visit and tour of the FJC allowed them to see firsthand how law enforcement and victim service agencies working together at one location can provide comprehensive services that benefit victims of domestic violence.

MONTGOMERY COUNTY
FAMILY JUSTICE CENTER





Family Justice Center Foundation News

FJC FOUNDATION BOARD MEMBERS

- Resa Levy
Executive Director
- Thomas M. DeGonia II
President
- Donna Rismiller
Vice President &
Secretary
- Dorothy Fait
Treasurer
- Marilyn Bagel
- David Belkin
- Judith Clark
- David P. Cohen
- Catherine Leggett
- Maria Ryan
- Lewis Selis

FJC FOUNDATION ADVISORY BOARD MEMBERS

- The Honorable Sharon Grosfeld
- The Honorable Constance A. Morella
- Rabbi David Rose
- The Honorable Ida G. Ruben
- The Honorable Duchy Trachtenberg

From the Desk of the Executive Director MCFJC Foundation Welcomes New Board Members



Resa Levy
MCFJC Foundation
Executive Director

The MCFJC Foundation is pleased to announce that Judith Clark, Founder and Executive Director of Women Who Care Ministries and Maria Ryan, Vice President, Bank of America, Rockville, have recently been elected to the Board of The Montgomery County Family Justice Center Founda-

tion.

Judith is a long-time community activist with expertise in outreach and building grass roots support. Under Judith's leadership, Women Who Care Ministries has been providing nutritious snacks to the Pantry at the FJC since the first week the Center opened. These items are provided to the families who come to the Center for what may be a very long day, eliminating the need for them to leave in order to get something to eat for themselves or their children. Judith has served, and will continue to serve, on the MCFJC Foundation's Commu-

nity Initiative Committee. Her incredible commitment to her work, the community-at-large and to the MCFJC Foundation earned Judith her place as this year's recipient of the Foundation's Marilyn J. Praisner Award.

Multi-lingual Maria Ryan's history of engaging individuals from all walks of life - recruiting, training and managing sales teams, as well as the marketing and branding of both products and companies, are just some of the reasons that earned Maria the Latina Leader of the Year Award for Maryland 2003, as well as subsequent top team awards in the banking industry. She is an outstanding leader, and has a passion for the rights of others, founding the Professional Women's Pride networking group.

It is a pleasure to have both Judith and Maria join current MCFJC Foundation Board Members Tom DeGonia, Donna Rismiller, Dorothy Fait, Marilyn Bagel, David Belkin, David Cohen, Catherine Leggett and Lewis Selis.

Resa Levy,
Executive Director

The MCFJC Foundation Launches our "It's Everybody's Business!" Campaign

What do Verizon, Liz Claiborne, Clairol, TJ Maxx, and so many, many other businesses have in common? They all recognize that domestic abuse is not only a scourge on society, but it also costs the business community millions of dollars a year in workday absences and worker productivity.

Now in its second year, The MCFJC Foundation Business Initiative continues to partner with both the local and national business community in an effort to help raise awareness and

funds for the MCFJC Foundation's support of the MCFJC. Having a healthy workforce is good business for everyone - In fact, **It's Everybody's Business!**

Whether you are a large business or a small company, *we need and want your help.* To find out more about how you or someone you know can partner with the MCFJC Foundation in this important initiative, please email us at mcfjcfoundation@yahoo.com. After all, **It's Everybody's Business!**

MCFJC Foundation Hosts 2nd Annual Benefit

Event Ushers in Domestic Violence Awareness Month

Governor O'Malley and Judge Katie O'Malley joined Event Chair Catherine Leggett, and more than 250 additional guests who attended the MCFJC Foundation's highly successful 2nd Annual Benefit to help raise awareness and funds for the Montgomery County Family Justice Center. The event, held each year on the 1st Sunday in October, helps usher in Domestic Violence Awareness Month, and brings together corporate, foundation and individual supporters from throughout the Washington Metropolitan area. Event highlights included recognition of our honorees: First Lady of Maryland, Judge Katie O'Malley with the Foundation's Forerunner Award; Judge Marielsa Bernard, Inspiring Leader Award; GEICO Philan-

thropic Foundation, Corporate Legacy Award; Judith Clark, Marilyn J. Praisner Award. Each was honored for their work in the field of domestic violence and for their support for the MCFJC and the MCFJC Foundation.

Inspired by the success of the 1st Annual Benefit, this year's Event Committee, led for the second year in a row by MCFJC Foundation Board Member and First Lady of Montgomery County, Catherine Leggett, worked for close to a year to create what all agreed was an inspiring, fun-filled, and informative event. Outstanding committee members included Lori Askinazi, Marilyn Bagel, Susan Heltemes, Wilma Holmes, Reesa Levy, Lisa Mandel-Trupp, Donna McKinney, Cindy Mogel, Jo

Ann Ricchiuti, Hannah Sassoon and Karla Smith.

Their combined efforts, along with those of the MCFJC Foundation Board, secured sensational items for both the Silent and Live Auctions including vacation packages, jewelry, artworks, numerous fashionable accessories, and more. A special appeal led by a professional auctioneer raised additional funds specifically for psychological services for adult victims of domestic violence, as well as additional support for the Safe Start Program for children.

Mark your calendars for our 3rd Annual Benefit - to be held the first Sunday in October 2012! See you then!

MCFJC Foundation Prepares to Launch Montgomery County's Local Initiative of the National Project **CUT IT OUT**



**Salons Against
Domestic Abuse**

As part of its Community Initiative, the MCFJC Foundation is planning to launch its local participation in the national initiative of the Salons Against Domestic Abuse, entitled *CUT IT OUT*.

CUT IT OUT builds awareness of domestic abuse through awareness materials to be displayed in salons as well as helping salon professionals to recognize warning signs and safely refer clients to resources.

CUT IT OUT was initially created for the State of Alabama by the Women's Fund of Greater Birmingham. It was then taken to the na-

tional level by the Salons Against Domestic Abuse, a partnership between Clairol Professional, the National Cosmetology Association, and Southern Living at Home.

For additional information about how you or your personal salon professional can learn more, please email mcfjcfoundation@yahoo.com and note your interest in learning more about *CUT IT OUT!*

The Montgomery County Family Justice Center Foundation 2nd Annual Benefit October 2, 2011

Joe Stewart, GEICO Vice President pictured with Catherine Leggett, Michael Mancoske and Tom Degonia accept the Corporate Legacy Award.



Judge Patricia Howard accepting the Inspiring Leader Award from MCFJ Foundation President Tom Degonia.



1st Lady of Maryland, Judge Kate O'Halley



Governor Martin O'Malley and County Executive He Leggett with Judith Clark, founder of Women Who Care Maryland and recipient of the Marilyn J. Praeger Award.



Manny and the Honorable Adoreen Mandel



Judges Laurie Scrivener, John Debeaus, III and Ann Sandt.



Police Chief Thomas Hinger, Tro Detm Richter, honoree and Sheriff Garry Popkin



Councilmember Craig Rice and County Executive Leah Leggett



The Honorable Rocky Hachtelberg



1st Lady of Maryland, Judge Kate O'Halley and Montgomery County State's Attorney, John McCarthy



Maryland Attorney General Doug Gansler

11

Special Thanks to the Following New and Continuing MCFJC Foundation Sponsors

*Thank you to our wonderful supporters!
It is through your gifts that we are able to provide the social, legal,
psychological and protective services necessary to rebuild the lives of the
women, children and families who have survived domestic and
relationship abuse.*

Leadership Circle

Verizon

Community Builder

The William J. Shaw Family
Foundation, Inc.

GEICO Philanthropic Foundation

Community Partner

Kaiser Foundation Health Plan of the
Mid Atlantic States

Community Advocate– Gold

Brownstein, Hyatt, Farber & Schreck with
David Cohen and Karla Smith

Catherine and Ike Leggett

Rismiller Law Group, LLC Donna Rismiller

Sanford and Doris Slavin Foundation
Jeffrey Slavin, President

Stein Sperling Bennett DeJong Driscoll &
Greenfeig PC

Community Advocate– Silver

Adventist Health Care

Allegre Chiropractic

Comcast – Montgomery & Frederick
Counties/Beltway Region

Alicia Doherty

Fait, Wise & DiLima LLP

Georgetown Paper Stock of Rockville

Resa Levy and Sam Walinsky

Mid-Atlantic Federal Credit Union

Bert Smith & Company

NOVA Research

Carol Trawick

In-Kind Sponsors

Comcast – Montgomery & Frederick
Counties/Beltway Region

Marilyn Bagel

Women Who Care Ministries

Benefit Honorariums

Marilyn and Tom Bagel

Dr. Dana Beyer

Laura Chase and Dan Barnett

Cathy Chiriaco

Margaret Engel and Bruce Adams

Wilma Holmes

Hon. Ben Kramer

Hon. Adrienne Mandel

Donna McKinney

Sheriff Darren Popkin

Kelly Price

*We wish to sincerely thank all of those who supported our
Silent and Live Auctions,
as well as our Special Appeal.*

To make a secure donation on line go to www.mcfjcfoundation.org

Fighting Domestic Violence

The Montgomery County Council on November 1st emphasized the



County's efforts to address domestic violence by saluting the efforts of the County's Family Justice Center, which opened in Rockville in 2009. Resa Levy, Executive Director of the Family Justice Center Foundation, was among those who spoke about the many avenues the County pursues to help victims of domestic violence.

Also at the ceremonies, left to right, were: County Sheriff Darren M. Popkin; Council President Valerie Ervin; Councilmember Phil Andrews; Hannah Sassoon, Chair of the Domestic Violence Coordinating Council; and David Belkin, a member of the Family Justice Center Foundation's Board of Directors.

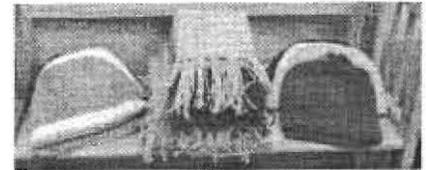
The "Busy Bees" Continue Their Support of the FJC

For the second consecutive year the "Busy Bees" at The Gardens of Traville, a senior residence in Rockville have been knitting away for the clients at the FJC. The group of several women has produced boxes of colorful and warm hats, mittens and scarves, donations that are an especially welcomed sight for our clients as they prepare their children for the

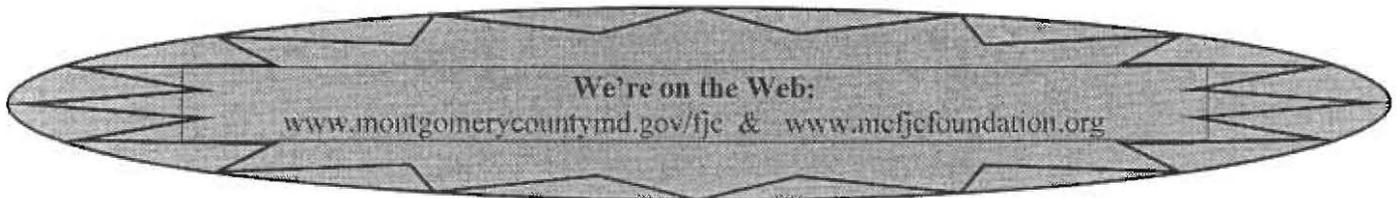
winter of 2011.

The group calls themselves "Busy Bees" because they live in Building "B." Some of the women are new to knitting and some, such as Cynthia Farringer, have knitted for years. Ms. Farringer organized the knitting circle to take the emphasis off of the aches and pains of the residents and onto helping the larger community. It is truly a

"win-win" situation and we are grateful to them for their wonderful gifts.



Hats and a scarves donated by the "Busy Bees" are displayed at the intake area of the FJC for clients to select.



Angels Continued: which has all the services they need to help them begin new lives.

Thank you for supporting this amazing organization. Because of you, victims like my children and me can get the life-saving help we need.

DOJ Continued: can't just combat domestic violence. We have to end it. This funding will protect women, families and our communities, and help rebuild lives. No woman in this country should live in fear for her life or that of her kids. That's why I strongly support legislation and grant programs that help protect women

and their families from continued violence and abuse."



Montgomery County Family Justice Center

VOLUME 3, ISSUE 1

WINTER 2012

SPECIAL POINT OF INTEREST:

Firearms Investigative Task Force

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

Teen Dating Conference 2

Bar Association Delivers Holiday Gifts 2

One-Stop Shop 3

Warmth and Comfort at the FJC 3

Verizon Supports Teen Conference 4

3rd Annual MCFJC Foundation Benefit 5

The Giving Tree 5

A Special Thank You 6

101 Puppies, Bears and More 6

Contributors:

Deputy Steve Austin
Tom DeGonia
Bethany Holliday
Resa Levy
Cynthia Mogel
Hannah Sassoon
Parisa Tabrizi

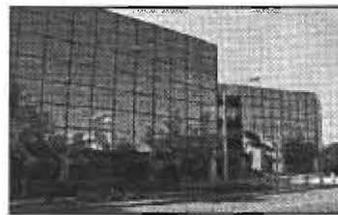
From the Desk of State's Attorney John McCarthy

As State's Attorney for Montgomery County I review a lot of numbers. However, there is no number that I am more proud of than the number zero. The number zero is the number of domestic related homicides experienced in this county the entire calendar year of 2010. I knew that if we aggressively addressed the issue of domestic violence we would substantially reduce the number of homicide victims in our county. As a long time prosecutor, I became painfully aware of the fact that all too often if you are a woman living in this county and you were the victim of a homicide, it occurred during the course of a domestic violence incident.

However, our job is not done and the task we have challenged ourselves with remains. The Family Justice Center (FJC) is now finishing up its third year of operation. Each day, each month, each year, through the investment of both public and private partners, we strive to develop additional innovative ways to protect children and victims of domestic violence. I am

particularly grateful to the Verizon Corporation for a \$40,000 grant that will allow us to install forensic interviewing equipment at the FJC.

An additional innovative program created by the State's Attorney's Office and



The Montgomery County Family Justice Center is centrally located in the heart of Rockville, Maryland.

Sheriff's Office under the leadership of Karla Smith, is our Healthy Teen Dating Program. This program has already provided us with the opportunity to speak to over 2,000 young people in our community about the do's and don'ts of healthy dating relationships, particularly emphasizing the dangers of physical and verbal abuse in young dating. We hope that programs like this, where we teach young adult's proper respect for themselves and each other in their personal relationships will, in the long

run, reduce domestic violence in our community.

On a final note, I was present again at this year's Annual FJC benefit. It was inspiring to see our public, private and financial supporters during an evening dedicated towards celebrating the success of our community's investment in the FJC. As State's Attorney for Montgomery County, the FJC may be our county's finest example of how public and private partnerships can together help us build a safer and more caring community.

As State's Attorney for Montgomery County, please accept my personal thanks for your continued support of the vital work done each day at the FJC. But, as the events of March 13th remind us, with the tragic murder of a domestic violence victim in Kensington, our work continues and our dream of providing personal safety to every domestic violence victim has not yet been achieved.

John McCarthy
Montgomery County
State's Attorney



Deputy III Steve Austin, Firearms Task Force Investigator

Firearms Investigation Task Force

During the DC area sniper investigation, the Montgomery County Police received over 20,000 tips from concerned citizens about individuals who were in possession of guns illegally and were suspected of involvement in the shootings. These reports convinced law enforcement that there was a need to investigate firearms violations full time; thus, the Firearms Investigation Unit was created. Since the Units inception in 2003, in partnership with the Montgomery County Police,

Deputies and MCPD Officers have been investigating illegal firearms possession and facilitating gun turn-ins for Domestic Violence cases where respondents are ordered to surrender firearms on Temporary and Final Protection Orders.

Since the opening of the Montgomery County Family Justice Center, the Firearms Investigation Unit has truly benefited from the cooperation among multiple domestic violence agencies. In the Spring of 2011, a petitioner from a Final

Protection Order contacted one of the Sheriff's Office's victim assistants and stated she discovered that the respondent in the protection order had boldly posted multiple pictures of himself holding guns on his Facebook page. Needless to say, this concerned the petitioner due to the lengthy history of abuse. Independently, the Firearms Investigation Unit received a call from Parole & Probation stating they had discovered Facebook photos of the same respondent, who (Continued to page 6)



Respect: Give it! Get it! Get Involved!

Teens, parents and youth service providers mark your calendars for Saturday, March 24, 2012 and plan to attend the **3rd Annual Choose Respect Montgomery Teen Dating Conference!** The Domestic Violence Coordinating Council, numerous community partners and Verizon Wireless are sponsoring this special event in an effort to raise awareness about teen dating abuse and ultimately

to prevent it. The Center for Disease Control recognizes teen dating abuse as a serious public health problem. According to their data, homicide was the second leading cause of death, behind unintentional injury, in young women age 15-24. Yet most teens say it will never happen to them. Furthermore, eighty-one percent of parents surveyed believe teen

dating violence is not an issue or admit they don't know if it's an issue. Awareness of teen dating abuse is important; recognizing the early warning signs is critical and learning how to intervene when you see it, could save a life. This half day conference will take place at the Takoma Park Campus of Montgomery College in the (Continued to page 6)



The display of holiday gifts and toys donated by the Bar Association of Montgomery County.

Bar Association Delivers Holiday Gifts

The Bar Association of Montgomery County once again came through this holiday season to make the season brighter by donating over 250 unwrapped gifts along with almost one thousand dollars in gift card and monetary donations for FJC clients and their children. The Community Outreach Committee of the Bar Association coordinated the Toy and

Gift drive and delivery just in time to make sure every child walking out the doors of FJC not only carries a gift, but a joyous smile during the holiday season. Donations included beautifully designed gift bags containing toiletries and cosmetics, Barbie dolls, stuffed animals, toy cars and play sets, sports equipment, and of course Lego and puzzle sets for the older children. The gift cards, mostly from grocery stores, are used by clients to

purchase necessities among other goods in this difficult time of their lives. The holidays can be extremely challenging for the families we assist at the FJC. Going through family violence can make it difficult for the children and their families to celebrate. However our staff at FJC with the generous help and donations of community organizations such as the (Continued to page 6)

One-Stop Shop

The mission of the Montgomery County Family Justice Center is to promote safety, well-being, and healing for victims of family violence. The phenomenon that drives the Family Justice Center movement is the idea of a "one-stop shop" where victims of domestic violence and their families can receive services within one location, rather than having to go from place to place experiencing barriers in the process. What does a "one-stop shop" truly mean, though? And what are the benefits to service providers of this collaborative approach?

There have been several cases in which this concept has allowed victims, their children, and the system to work more efficiently, maximizing victim safety and offender accountability. Here are but three examples:

One client came into the FJC seeking protection from her husband who had become deeply involved in religion and was pressing his newfound beliefs on his wife and children. His behavior became physically abusive to the client and her children. Additionally, the client reported national security concerns. By responding to the FJC, she and her children were able to receive a plethora of services and contact was made with many different agencies. The client was assisted with filing for Protective Orders for herself and her children. She was able to

receive assistance from the Sheriff's Office, the Abused Persons Program, and House of Ruth Legal and Counseling Programs. Immediate notifications were made to interested national security agencies as well. The client also enrolled her children in the Safe Start program. She received ongoing services.

On another day a client came to the FJC with her children accompanied by her own father. She was referred here by a case worker because she and her children were being abused. Upon meeting with an Intake Specialist, alarming information was revealed regarding severe abuse of her and the children that she had not disclosed to anyone before. The State's Attorney's Office stepped in quickly and contacted a specialized unit of the Police Department who sent a Detective to the FJC for immediate action. The client was also provided with a phone that she could use through Verizon's Hopeline project before leaving with the Detective. The coordination with the Police resulted in the husband being arrested that same night. The following day the client came back to the FJC to obtain a Temporary Protective Order against her husband. The client was also connected with the House of Ruth for legal assistance and with the APP for counseling.

Another client that benefited from the multidisciplinary presence at the FJC was a client who came in with her attorney following a Protective Order hearing. She reported for the first time there had been a serious assault previously. Immediate action was taken and the client revealed details to an on-site Detective who in turn called in a specialized unit of the Police Department to the FJC. The abuser was quickly apprehended. The client was given a phone for her safety because the abuser had broken hers. She was also assisted by the Sheriff's Office Victim Assistant who worked with her and a counselor with the Abused Persons Program. At a later date she was able to receive assistance from Catholic Charities at the FJC.

In conclusion, a "one-stop shop" is a place where victims of domestic violence can go to be wrapped in a net of services, safety, and comfort that provides them with a sense that they are being cared for on many fronts. This also allows for the investigative work of police and prosecutors to take place in the moments after a domestic violence crime has been committed, when their immediate involvement is so critical in holding abusers accountable and keeping victims safe.



Case Coordinators Diana Roche and Bethany Holliday collaborate on a FJC case.

FJC
Update:
Since the
Grand Opening
3400
domestic
violence clients
representing
100 different
countries of
origin have
received services
at the FJC.

Warmth and Comfort Abound at the FJC

Thoughts of community and caring clearly inspired Rachel Wims, when she, as a young 6th grader initiated a blanket drive to benefit those in need. The drive turned out to be a success! Now as Youth Ambassador President of the Victims' Rights Foundation (VRF), she and her fellow Ambassadors conduct the drive annually. Currently in its 5th

year, the youth collected over 500 blankets between November 1, 2011 and January 24, 2012.

The Family Justice Center was very fortunate to be presented with a number of those blankets for distribution to clients and their children who come to the FJC for services. The FJC staff is extremely appreciative of Rachel and all the ambassa-

dors for their ongoing commitment to this initiative. The blankets will be another opportunity for us to extend warmth and comfort to FJC clients.



Pictured L to R: Sheriff Darren M. Popkin, Youth Ambassadors with Rachel Wims, Delegate Aruna Miller MD District 14 and VRF Founder, Greg Wims.

116



Family Justice Center Foundation News

FJC FOUNDATION BOARD MEMBERS

- Resa Levy
Executive Director
- Thomas M. DeGonia II
President
- Dorothy Falt
Treasurer
- Marilyn Bagel
- David Belkin
- Judith Clark
- David P. Cohen
- Catherine Leggett
- Maria Ryan
- Lewis Sells

FJC FOUNDATION ADVISORY BOARD MEMBERS

- The Honorable Sharon Grosfeld
- The Honorable Constance A. Morella
- Rabbi David Rose
- The Honorable Ida G. Ruben
- The Honorable Duchy Trachtenberg

From the Desk of the Executive Director Resa Levy



Resa Levy
MCFJC Foundation
Executive Director

I find it almost impossible to believe that in just a couple of months, on May 18, 2012, we will mark the Third Anniversary of the MCFJC. From the day the doors first opened, until today, the growth of the MCFJC and the growth of our MCFJC Foundation, has been nothing short of amazing.

Our Foundation is successful because of you – our donors and supporters. So, a great big thank you is well in order. Thank you for your time, your effort, your support, your critical thinking, and your true spirit of community partnership in helping to end the scourge of domestic violence and relationship abuse.

Thank you for being involved - and also for *staying* involved. Your on-going support has made it possible for

our Board Member and Event Chair, Catherine Leggett, and her Planning Committee to already be well underway in planning for our 3rd Annual Benefit, to be held at the Hyatt Regency Bethesda, on Sunday evening, October 14, 2012.

My special appreciation is extended to our retiring Vice President and Secretary, Donna Rismiller for her tireless effort and support she gave to the MCFJC Foundation. On behalf of the entire MCFJC Foundation Board, I cannot thank her enough for her contributions of time, talent and expertise.

Check out our website www.mcfjcfoundation.org to read more or email the foundation at mcfjcfoundation@yahoo.com if you'd like to speak with someone from the foundation.

Thank you again for your support!
Resa Levy

Verizon Wireless Supports 3rd Annual Teen Dating Conference

At a special event for senior Verizon Wireless leadership, The MCFJC foundation received a check in the amount of \$8800 for its support of Montgomery County's Teen Conference: Choose Respect. The Conference is a day-long interactive program with breakout sessions in both Spanish and English, as well as programmatic features that include informative, educational and entertaining portions that will engage and enlighten parents, teens and youth service providers. The goal of the event is to take a serious look at how best to be aware of and also curtail and end teen dating and relationship abuse. We appreciate Verizon's wonder-

ful support. It will assist us with outreach to both parents and teens to help promote the framework for establishing healthy dating relationships.



Pictured from L to R: Hannah Sassoon, MCFJC Director; Nancy Clark, North East Area President; Resa Levy, MCFJC Foundation Executive Director; Montgomery County, Maryland Sheriff Garren Popkin, Howard Waterman, North East Area Executive Director Corporate Communications; and Mike Maiorana, Washington Baltimore Virginia Region President

For more information about Choose Respect Montgomery's Third Annual Teen Dating Conference go to: <http://bit.ly/o8j01>



From the Desk of MCFJC Foundation President, Tom DeGonia



Thomas DeGonia
MCFJC
Foundation

"It's Everybody's Business" is this year's MCFJC Foundation's theme for its outreach effort to the business community. Businesses such as Verizon, Geico, Kaiser, Adventist Health, Liz Claiborne and many others, know and understand the tremendous impact that domestic

violence and relationship abuse has on the business community. Millions of employee hours are lost each year due to absenteeism and loss of productivity because of domestic violence.

As President of the Foundation, I am out-

reaching to Board Members Lewis Selis, Maria Ryan and David Belkin for their leadership on our "It's Everybody's Business" campaign. As David Belkin notes, "Businesses are a part of our community and we believe that the MCFJC can increase the overall health of the community by reaching out to businesses to inform them about our work."

There are many ways in which a business may participate in this endeavor, through cash contributions as well as in-kind donations. While financial support is the mainstay of our being able to provide electronic equipment otherwise not provided, or offer the ability to provide for additional counseling for children, or help with emergency life-saving services, there are other ways to participate.

For instance, bookstores might consider donating books to our children's library or a toy store may donate children's games or toys. A salon in the community could offer a make-over. Currently, Panera Bread provides weekly donations and local merchants have provided items for both our live and silent benefit auctions.

If you're interested in helping with this effort or if you have any ideas or even a business you think would like to be a part of our "It's Everybody's Business" campaign, please email us at mcfjcfoundation@yahoo.org. We thank you for your support.

Sincerely,
Tom DeGonia,
MCFJC Foundation President

WOW!

MCFJC FOUNDATION'S 3rd ANNUAL BENEFIT!

OCTOBER 14, 2012 And you are cordially invited

Great news! The Planning Committee of the 3rd Annual MCFJC Foundation Benefit for the MCFJC, under the leadership of Chair Catherine Leggett, has selected October 14, 2012 at the Hyatt Regency Bethesda as the date and venue for our 3rd Annual Event.

The event will be held in the ballroom and will feature some new and exciting program additions. So please mark your calendars and start to tell your friends and colleagues.

In addition to the change of venue this year, we will be adding a special pre-event meet and greet and photo op on the concourse level. This will be a great time for our honorees, sponsors, Board and Advisory Board members, and other special guests to get together – we hope you'll become a sponsor and join us!

And you won't want to miss out on our extraordinary silent and live auctions where fabulous jewelry, trips and gifts await your bid.

So please plan on joining our Chair, Catherine Leggett, and her Benefit Planning Committee of Lori Askinazi, Marilyn Bagel, Leslie Berger, Judy Clark, Wilma Holmes, Resa Levy, Lisa Mandel-Trupp, Donna McKinney, Cynthia Mogel, Suzanne Popkin, Jo Ann Ricchiuti, Hannah Sassoon and Karla Smith on October 14, 2012 for a fabulous 3rd Annual Benefit for the MCFJC.

Your support truly makes a difference in someone's life!

MCFJC Foundation Giving Tree

Our sponsors and supporters are the roots of the MCFJC Foundation that have allowed us to support the life changing and life saving work of the MCFJC. It is through their generosity that we have been able to provide furnishings, works of original art, help fund existing programs and projects, provide cutting edge electronic equipment and support new ideas as they develop.

With that in mind, and with a special gift from a wonderful donor, Alicia Doherty, the MCFJC Foundation commis-

sioned Arts on the Block, an outstanding not-for-profit youth organization teaching real world career and life skills to youth through art, to create a special piece of art to honor our donors and supporters.

The outcome of this joint community effort is a fabulous MCFJC Foundation mosaic "Giving Tree," pictured here at the entranceway of the MCFJC. Names of donors will be inscribed on brass plaques and affixed to the various branches and leaves of the piece. Gifts of \$1,000 and above will be recognized.



Sheriff's Office Domestic Violence Section Captain Rodney Brown and Lt. Robert Bonanno stand with Jo Ann Ricchiuti before The Giving Tree

MONTGOMERY COUNTY
FAMILY JUSTICE CENTER

18

Special Thanks to the Following New and Continuing MCFJC Foundation Sponsors

*Thank you to our wonderful supporters!
It is through your gifts that we are able to provide the social, legal,
psychological and protective services necessary to rebuild the lives of the women, children and
families who have survived domestic and relationship abuse.*

Meg Baker
Bar Association of Montgomery County
Cynthia Farringer & "The Busy Bs"
Eta Pi Zeta Chapter of the Zeta Phi Beta Sorority
Korean Women's Chamber

Panera Bread
The William Cross Foundation
Town of Chevy Chase Residents
Verizon Wireless
Victims' Rights Foundation
Westat, Inc. - Human Services Group

101 Puppies, Bears and More!

For the second year in a row, the Social Action Committee of the Eta Pi Zeta Chapter of the Zeta Phi Beta Sorority, centered their end-of-year project around the MCFJC and presented 101 stuffed bears, puppies and bunnies to the Center for distribution to the children who come to the FJC.

In order raise funds to purchase these warm and "huggable" giveaways, members of the Chapter created and distributed a beautiful flyer with information that the Cold Stone Creamery in Silver Spring would donate a percentage of sales to the sorority for this very special project.



MCFJC Foundation Executive Director, Resa Levy and members of the Eta Pi Zeta Chapter of the Zeta Phi Beta Sorority

Task Force Cont: was on probation from a previous drug conviction, holding and showing off guns. Based on the information received from the victim assistant and Parole & Probation, the Firearms Investigation Unit immediately obtained subpoenas from the State's Attorney's Office at the Family Justice Center. Through investigation, search warrants were executed at the respondent's home where multiple firearms and drugs were recovered. Thanks to the cooperative enforcement efforts of the Montgomery County Police and the Sheriff's Office, this potentially dangerous situation ended with an arrest. The defendant in this case received 12 months in jail. This example is just one of the many ways the Family Justice Center and the Firearms Investigation Unit are working together to remove firearms from potentially deadly domestic violence situations.

In an average year, the Sheriff's Office seizes over 200 guns from Domestic Violence orders, calls, and arrests. For every gun seized, follow-up investigation is conducted as well. The Firearms Investigation Unit traces the gun to make sure it is from the proper owner, charges people who are

illegally in possession of guns, and compares bullet ballistics to determine if the firearm has been used in any crimes nationally.

Data from the U.S. Department of Justice, show that a victim of domestic violence is 7 times more likely to be the victim of a homicide if the abuser has access to firearm. Due to this potential danger, the Firearms Investigation Unit will continue to focus on work to keep petitioners and victims safe by removing firearms from domestic abusers.

Bar Association Cont: Bar Association make these difficult times a little easier. The ongoing support and charitable donations of the community really reminds us that so many people still make it a priority to take care of those going through major transitions in their lives. The continuing generosity of our donors is highly appreciated by FJC staff, and the infinite smiles of our clients during the holiday season prove that no matter how big or small the gifts, each one has made a difference in our clients' lives.

Choose Respect Cont: Cultural Arts Center from 10:00 am to 1:30 pm. There will be workshops for teens in grades 6-12, and for parents and youth service providers on topics related to teen dating violence. Workshops this year will also include a special focus on how to get actively involved to stop teen dating violence and not be just a bystander.

Toby Knapp, DJ from Hot 99.5 will join us as a special guest to kick-off the event. The opening act will feature the Holloway Youth Project, formerly known as City at Peace DC. At the conclusion of the conference winners of the 3rd Annual **Choose Respect Public Service Announcement Contest** will be recognized. For more information about the contest and the conference go to: <http://bit.ly/o8j01>. To register for the conference online go to www.chooserespectmontgomery.eventbrite.com or in Spanish register at www.eligeelrespetomontgomery.eventbrite.com or call 240 777-9366. For access to all conference updates and Choose Respect Montgomery events, like us on Facebook at Choose Respect Montgomery.





Montgomery County Family Justice Center

VOLUME 3, ISSUE 2

SPECIAL POINT OF INTEREST:

MCFJC SHARES INNOVATIVE PRACTICE AT INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

- Teen Dating Conference & PSA Contest 2
- UMD Internship Program 2
- APP Volunteers 3
- Governor's Award 3
- BLH Technologies, INC 4
- Honoring Their Dedication 5
- Green Turtle 5
- A Special Thank You 6

Contributors:

Tom DeGania
 Bethany Holliday
 Vivian Levi
 Resa Levy
 Zubna Medrano
 Cynthia Mogel
 Jo Ann Ricchiuti
 Hannah Sassoon

From the Desk of County Executive, Isiah Leggett

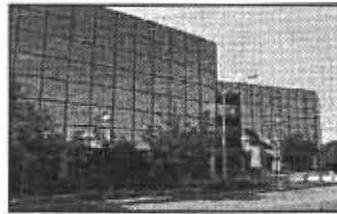
Two years ago, I was pleased to acknowledge your significant contributions to the community, especially to victims of domestic violence. Once again, I express my extreme gratitude for the services that you provide to some of our most vulnerable citizens seeking support and safe haven to free themselves from partner violence and abuse. I am also comforted by your *Safe Start Kids* program which offers support to child witnesses and victims of domestic abuse. The FJC served more than 3,700 victims -- an extraordinary number.

One of my top priorities when I took office was to raise the awareness of teen dating violence. To that end, I was gratified that you held your 3rd "Choose Respect" conference. It is imperative that we send the message that teen dating violence demonstrates the "distress and ambivalence a victim of teen-dating-abuse experiences, as well as the effectiveness of an unrelenting peer who is there to help the victim navigate her way out of a relationship."

I would like to congratulate Circuit Court Judge Louise Scrivener, Sheriff Darren Popkin, Hannah Sassoon, and Jo Ann Ricchiuti for having been chosen to lead a workshop at the recent "Coming Together to Change the World" conference conducted by the Family Justice Center Alliance. Their selection is testimony to the accomplishments of

the FJC in such a short period of time. I offer kudos to them and the entire staff at FJC. Clearly, the rest of the country has come to recognize the extraordinary work that is being performed at the Montgomery County FJC.

Of particular interest is your video conference pilot program for



The Montgomery County Family Justice Center is centrally located in the heart of Rockville, Maryland.

video teleconferencing. I have been concerned about the requirement for victims seeking ex-parte orders having to present their case in a courtroom immediately after the event which brought them to the FJC. For those unfamiliar with courtrooms, this can be a traumatic experience. The victim has already been traumatized and this stress simply adds to their fears. I am impressed by the fact that this makes the courts more accessible and increases victim safety, while simultaneously providing the victim with much-needed services.

In April 2010, I noted the tremendous amount of public/private collaboration between the FJC and

its private partners. It is in that spirit that I wish to express my gratitude to Verizon. Not only did they co-sponsor the "Choose Respect" conference, but their contributions provided the funding to implement video conferencing. I would like to again recognize the significant contributions made by GEICO Philanthropic and Kaiser Permanente. Without our private sector partners, it is unlikely that we could have made such great strides!

Finally I would like to recognize the work of Tom DeGania, President of the FJC Foundation, and Resa Levy, Executive Director. Without the FJC Foundation's key role of providing funding, the FJC would have a difficult time providing all of its services. Congratulations also go to this year's Foundation awardees: Sen. Barbara Mikulski receiving the MCFJC Foundation's Forerunner Award; Laura Chase, Deputy State's Attorney being named the FJC's Inspiring Leader; and, Dorothy Lennig, Esq., for her Founders Award. These three represent the best of the best. The Foundation has done well in recognizing their efforts.

On behalf of my wife, Catherine, and myself, I would like to express our most sincere thanks for all the superb work that you do.

Sincerely,
 Isiah Leggett
 County Executive



The Montgomery County delegation presenting on video conferencing from L to R: Jo Ann Ricchiuti, Hannah Sassoon and Judge Louise Scrivener.

Seizing the opportunity to visit N'awlins, Bourbon Street and the great Mississippi River as the tall ships arrived, Sheriff Popkin, Judge Louise Scrivener, Jo Ann Ricchiuti and Hannah Sassoon accepted an invitation from the Family Justice Center Alliance to present a workshop on the Montgomery County FJC video conferencing pilot project at its annual conference. Held April 16-19, the conference brought together communities with existing Justice Centers as well as those seeking to establish Centers. This year's conference was attended by nearly 500

people from the U.S. and around the world. The workshop "Innovative Court Practices at Family Justice Centers" included a panel discussion led by Judge Scrivener and featured a mock ex-parte protective order hearing, filmed from the judge's bench.

The goal of a video link between Justice Centers and the courts is to increase victim safety and to make the courts more accessible to victims. Additional benefits are to allow petitioners an opportunity to access other services if there is a wait time for a hearing and to permit the children

to play in a child friendly, safe environment – a benefit to the court as well as to the children.

Attendees were particularly interested in the process for collaborating with the judiciary, identifying community partners, technology, funding (!) and the challenges Montgomery County encountered in implementing the pilot project. It was a packed room which generated a lot of excitement and questions from the attendees. The Maryland judiciary and Montgomery County have good reason to be proud of this innovative practice.



Above: Council members Hans Riemer, Nancy Floreen and Phil Andrews with conference participants. Right: Holloway Youth Project actors portray realistic scene of teen dating abuse.

"Getting involved to help a friend can make a difference," and "You can talk to a trusted adult when you witness dating violence," were two responses from a twelve year-old girl and thirteen year-old boy respectively as they reflected on what they had learned at the 3rd Annual Choose Respect Montgomery Teen Dating Conference. The conference, sponsored by the Domestic Violence Coordinating Council (DVCC), Verizon

Wireless and the Takoma Park Campus of Montgomery College and numerous Montgomery County agencies and groups, is organized to promote respect in dating relationships and raise the community's awareness about the prevalence of teen dating violence. Additionally, since everyone has a role to play in creating a safe, violence free community, this year's conference also included a special focus on how to intervene to stop

teen dating violence and not be just a bystander.

Organizers were very pleased that more than 160 teens, parents, educators, youth service providers and public officials took the time from their weekend schedules to attend the half day conference. The conference opened with an energetic welcoming from our emcee, Hot 99.5 DJ Toby Knapp, followed by a (Continued to page 6)

A Week on the Mississippi

Choose Respect Montgomery

Teen Dating Conference and Public Service Announcement Contest

UMD Internship Program

Internships throughout college tend to be one of the best ways to prepare students for "the real world." As an undergraduate Family Science major, I was not particularly thrilled to learn that in order to graduate I needed to complete a 120 hour internship and attend a weekly class. However, now coming up on my one year graduation anniversary and being a part of 'the real world' I could not be any-

more grateful for that internship requirement. It proved to be a great tool that helped prepare me to be successful in my field of study after graduation. The workshops scheduled throughout the semester are all closely related to the major and the kind of positions a student within the Family Science major could obtain. The workshops ranged from how to be a successful interviewee during a job interview to how to avoid burn out and healthy ways to release

stress. For me, the connection between the UMD internship program and my internship site became something much more than just a 3-credit course requirement. I will never forget my first month as an intern at the Family Justice Center and how working first hand with clients allowed me to better understand and appreciate the concepts covered in the internship workshops. For once, what I was learning in a classroom was (Continued to page 6)

21

Volunteers Provide Invaluable Support and Service to Victims

The volunteer program has been an integral part of the Abused Persons Program (APP) since its inception. When I joined the agency 11 years ago, I found an established and dedicated group. Over the years many volunteers came and went but one thing continues to stay the same, their support and dedication to the victims and the agency. Established in 1977 the agency quickly realized that in order to carry out its mission it needed the support of the community. Volunteers were recruited and assigned many tasks among which were to transport victims back and forth to court, accompany clients into the courtroom and later on when the Administrative judge offered an office at the courthouse they staffed the District Court office throughout the week. Clients who come to the courthouse tend to be nervous, scared and unsure about the legal system. The volunteers help them navigate the process, provide emotional support when they speak to the judges, advocate with court personnel on their behalf. When clients

call the agency for the first time, that first contact is of special significance. When victims hear a companionate and supportive voice, they gain courage to take the next step towards safety.



Contributing writer and APP Staff Vivian Levi (center) with APP Volunteers Judy Whiton and Linda Summers

Today the agency enjoys the support of 25 volunteers. Their tasks have further diversified. Some continue to help at the court and others now help staff our intake line. One volunteer, Sylvia, comes faithfully twice a week to help with filing, data entry and statistics. Volunteer interns provide clinical services such as intake assessments, group and individual counseling.

Some volunteers have been with us for over 20 years and others continue to give endless support and generosity to the clients and the staff. This

year alone volunteers have donated 2,845 hours to the agency. This translates to \$42,675 and is an equivalent of a full time staff person. In so many words these numbers demonstrate the invaluable help they give to us and to victims.

APP recruits its new volunteers every year. Intensive trainings are scheduled in the Fall and Spring followed by shadowing in court and at the office.

I recently read a Middle Eastern Legend that I find representative of this small and dedicated group. The legend is as follows:

A spindly little sparrow is lying on his back in the middle of the road. A horseman comes by, dismounts and asks the sparrow what he's doing lying upside down like that. "I heard the heavens are going to fall today," said the sparrow. "Oh," said the horseman, "and I suppose your spindly little legs can hold up the heavens." "One does what one can," said the sparrow. "One does what one can!"



APP Volunteers L to R: Sandy Blank, Marnie Craven and Jean Clarren

FJC
Update:
Since the
Grand Opening
3700 domestic
violence clients
representing
100 different
countries of
origin have
received
services at
the FJC.

In Recognition of Exceptional Dedication and Service to Victims The Governor's Victim Assistant Award 2012

On Friday, May 4, 2012 the Governor's Office of Crime Control and Prevention recognized the outstanding work of Detective Paula Hamill in the Montgomery County Police Department's Major Crimes Division. Her teamwork and collaboration with the Family Justice Center, along with her hard work on a daily basis demonstrate how she is a stellar example of an officer who goes above and beyond what is routinely required throughout her law enforcement career.

The Family Justice Center has at least one police officer from the Montgomery County Police Department assigned to the center to investigate domestic violence assaults. However,

sometimes there are cases that include several different criminal offenses which might require the investigative work of a detective from a different division. Detective Hamill works for the Major Crimes Division which is also often referred to as the Homicide/Sex Division. There have been many times that the Family Justice Center has called upon this division for their expertise and investigative skills when a case requires it. In keeping with the "one-stop shop" tradition of the Family Justice Center, detectives are willing to come to the Family Justice Center to meet with clients and to take statements. Detective Hamill has responded to the Family Justice Center on many occasions to meet with clients no matter what time of day.

One late afternoon a client came to the FJC with her children accompanied by her own father. She was referred here by a case worker because she and her children were being abused. Upon meeting with FJC staff, alarming information was revealed regarding severe sexual and physical abuse of the client and ongoing physical abuse of the children that she had not disclosed to anyone before. The State's Attorney's Office stepped in quickly and contacted Detective Hamill. She paid no mind to the fact that it was late in the afternoon on a Friday and dropped what she was doing to respond directly (Continued to page 6)





Family Justice Center Foundation News

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From the Desk of the Executive Director Resa Levy



Resa Levy
MCFJC Foundation
Executive Director

Family Justice Centers ... An International Movement

As I was recently reminded when I attended the 12th Annual International Family Justice Center Conference "Coming Together to Change the World" held in New Orleans this past April, the Family Justice Center concept, considered "best practices" in the handling of domestic violence cases, is now an international movement with more than 70 such centers world-wide. Centers are established throughout the U.S., as well as in England, Canada, Mexico, Jordan and Sweden.

Additionally, there is also a European Movement that includes the establishment of six pilot programs in as many countries. While not all FJC's are the same, all have the core concept of a co-location of multi-disciplinary services thereby providing a one-stop shop approach to the handling of cases of domestic violence.

The Conference focused on leadership, guiding principles and promising practices in the rapidly evolving national and international movement. Workshops

included practical hands-on training and education. Representatives from law enforcement, prosecutors, attorneys, judges, counselors, policy makers, crisis workers, victims, elected officials, and others interested in the Family Justice Center movement were in attendance.

We should all feel a sense of pride in knowing that our Montgomery County Family Justice Center is considered one of the finest centers in existence. In just three short years since our MCFJC was created, representatives from our FJC went from being attendees at the conference to being asked to lead one of the most dynamic and interesting workshops, "Innovative Court Practices in Family Justice Centers." Congratulations for their outstanding presentation go to Sheriff Darren Popkin, Executive Director Hannah Sassoon, Jo Ann Ricchuti and Judge Louise Scrivener – our home team professionals!

Our Center's accomplishments are also due in part to the outstanding support of the numerous and generous individuals, family foundations, corporations and businesses large and small. We couldn't have done it without you!

Thank you for a great first three years.

Resa Levy

Books and Stuffed Animals Galore

The MCFJC aims to create a comfortable and positive memory for every child who comes to the FJC. A take-away item in the form of a cuddly stuffed animal or a good book to read is always a part of the experience for each and every child. Thanks to a recent donation of new books and stuffed animals from BLH Technologies, Inc., children who come to the FJC will have quite the selection from which to choose.

Employees from BLH organized the donation drive specifically to benefit the MCFJC. Several BLH staff including President and CEO Benjamin Harris delivered multiple boxes to the FJC on June 1st, which is recog-

nized around the world as International Children's Day.

The MCFJC Foundation wishes to thank BLH for their thoughtfulness. Their gifts will definitely put a smile on the faces of many young children.

Pictured L to R: BLH President and CEO, Benjamin L. Harris with BLH staff Lu Gao and Alicia Doherty deliver boxes of new books and stuffed animals to the FJC.



From the Desk of MCFJC Foundation President, Tom DeGonia



Thomas DeGonia
MCFJC
Foundation
President

On Sunday, October 14, 2012, The MCFJC Foundation will host its 3rd Annual Benefit at the Hyatt Regency Bethesda. The Benefit Event Committee, chaired by First Lady of Montgomery County, fellow Foundation Board Member, Catherine Leggett, is actively engaged in creating another fantastic evening of excellence and excitement - and you won't want to miss it!

Our Foundation is enormously grateful to all our donors and supporters. At our annual benefit each year we recognize those few who, through their hard work and support, have distinguished themselves for special recognition.

The MCFJC Foundation's Forerunner Award given to "An individual who has been instru-

mental in combating domestic violence and working for the protection of its survivors." This year's honoree is the outstanding Senator Barbara Mikulski. To read more about the Senator's lifelong commitment to ending the scourge of domestic violence, please see our website at www.mcfjcfoundation.org.

Our Inspiring Leader Award is given to "An individual whose inspiring leadership has helped reduce the scourge of domestic violence and furthered the ideals of the Family Justice Center in keeping families safe, giving them hope, and a new start. The Benefit Committee has made a wonderful choice this year in their selection of Deputy State's Attorney Laura Chase, Esq. Read more on our website!

Our Founders Award recognizes "An individual who has shown active commitment to furthering the mission of the Family Justice

Center and has adopted the issue of its mission to raise awareness of domestic violence and encourages colleagues to reach out in volunteer efforts." Dorothy Lennig, Esq., Director of Legal Services House of Ruth Maryland, is this year's very worthy recipient. Read more on our website!

The Corporate Legacy Award honoree is "A business leader who has engaged in philanthropic contributions and support to the FJC and has adopted the issue of its mission to raise awareness of domestic violence and encourages its colleagues to reach out in volunteer efforts." Kaiser Permanente - Mid Atlantic States continues to support our efforts and to respond to the needs of the FJC in a generous and on-going manner. Read more on our website!

Looking forward to seeing you on October 14, 2012!

Tom DeGonia

In Honor of Their Extraordinary Dedication

We had a Party! On May 2, 2012, The Montgomery County Family Justice Center Foundation, in an effort to formally recognize the extraordinary contributions of several of our key donors and supporters, as well as in celebration of our third birthday, hosted a formal dedication and birthday celebration at The Family Justice Center, 600 Jefferson Plaza, Rockville.

The evening began in the Lobby Area with remarks from Montgomery County Executive Ike Leggett (pictured on right) who included in his comments congratulations to both the FJC and the FJC



Foundation for its important and excellent work. The program portion of the evening was then followed by recognition of the many elected officials in attendance, the staff and volunteers of the FJC who give so much of themselves to their work, comments from Foundation Executive Director Resa Levy and Foundation President Tom DeGonia, and short remarks by each of the primary honorees, Verizon, GEICO Philanthropic, and Kaiser Permanente as to why they consider the support of the FJC such a worthwhile cause.

After enjoying hors d'oeuvres and networking with old friends as well as meeting new ones, the group adjourned to the newly dedicated GEICO Philanthropic Foundation Reception Area on the fifth floor, where Sheriff Popkin briefed the attendees on various aspects of the Center's activities, point-



More than 60 public officials, donors, staff and community members gathered for the celebration.

ing out, among other things, the newly created Arts on the Block mosaic which was commissioned for the FJC by a generous donor and now hangs in the Reception Area.

The wonderful evening continued with the formal dedication of the Kaiser Permanente Tuscan Interview Room, eventually concluding in the Verizon Conference Room where the group enjoyed both birthday cake and conversation about the work of the FJC and the FJC Foundation.

Going Green for the Day

Patrons who came in to the Greene Turtle in Olney, MD for lunch or dinner on May 8, 2012 were a part of a greater cause— combating domestic violence in our community. The Greene Turtle partnered

with the MCFJC Foundation to coordinate FJC Day, where ten percent of all the meals purchased were donated in support the activities and operation of the FJC.



Deputies from the Domestic Violence Unit of the Montgomery County Sheriff's Office share lunch at the Greene Turtle in Olney, MD in support of FJC Day.

MONTGOMERY COUNTY
FAMILY JUSTICE CENTER

24

Special Thanks to the Following New and Continuing MCFJC Foundation Sponsors

*Thank you to our wonderful supporters!
It is through your gifts that we are able to provide the social, legal,
psychological and protective services necessary to rebuild the lives of the women,
children and families who have survived domestic and relationship abuse.*

Adventist HealthCare
Alchemy Salon of Silver Spring
BLH Technologies, Inc.
Cafritz Foundation

Kindley Assisted Living
Rona E. Kramer
Mid-Atlantic Federal Credit Union
Montgomery County Community Grant

Choose Respect Conference: presentation of the Teen Dating Violence Proclamation by DVCC Chair Councilmember Phil Andrews and Councilmember Nancy Floreen. Sheriff Darren Popkin also recognized the DVCC for its enduring commitment to promote healthy dating practices among our youth and to raise awareness about the dangers of teen dating violence. Attendees were then entertained by Holloway Youth Project, a performing arts youth development organization that tackles teen issues through creative acting performance. Their piece corresponded with the overall conference theme and intensely demonstrated the distress and ambivalence a victim of teen dating abuse experiences, as well as the effectiveness of an unrelenting peer who was there to help the victim navigate her way out of the relationship.

Following the workshop segment of the conference, the participants joined Vicki Boston, Director of Retail Stores for Maryland and DC for Verizon Wireless and Donna Rismiller, Chair of the DVCC's Education and Outreach Committee for the highly anticipated recognition of the participants and winners of the 3rd **Annual Choose Respect Public Service Announcement Contest**. The contest challenged teens in grades 7-12 to create a brief PSA on the topic of teen dating violence. PSA submissions had to portray an element of teen dating abuse relevant to middle and high schoolers. Taking home the top prize of \$1000.00 from Verizon Wireless were Roberto Clemente Middle School students Mirabella Roberts, Julian Avenilla, Jean-Young Kim and Daniel Arze, for their



1st Place winners of the Choose Respect PSA Contest receiving their awards.

production of It's Never Fine. Their first place entry utilized a form of electronic communication to very skillfully depict the ambivalence a young person in an abusive dating relationship experiences as she considers disclosing the abuse to a friend. The students' media production teacher, Mr. James Dempsey, encouraged all his 8th grade students to participate in the contest.

Congratulations are extended to Cesar Martinez and Cara Dekelbaum, 2nd place winners representing Sherwood High School and Valencia Fu, 3rd place winner from Roberto Clemente Middle School. To view the wonderful productions from these talented students got to <http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/fjctmp1.asp?url=/content/fjc/news.asp>

The DVCC wishes to thank Verizon Wireless and Montgomery College Takoma Park Campus for their sponsorship of the Choose Respect Montgomery Conference. A special thank you is also extended to our community partners for their ongoing involvement and support of the event.



UMD Internship: actually relevant to life outside of school and it felt great to have that connection with my major outside of the UMD campus. The internship program really put things into perspective for me as to the wonderful skills the Family Science major provided, how I could apply them and actually help someone in more ways than I could have ever imagined. The combination of classes offered in the Family Science major and the hands on experience obtained as a result of the internship program affirmed that I had made the right decision in my choice of study. Enrolling in the Internship Program in my last year of study proved to be a great transition from the world of a full-time student to the world of a full-time employee and I could not be anymore grateful for the wonderful experiences shared in the internship program and at the Montgomery County Family Justice Center.

GOCCP Award 2012: to the Family Justice Center. Detective Hamill transported the client to headquarters for a thorough interview and arranged for an Emergency Room exam. After meeting with the client extensively, she obtained a warrant for the Defendant's arrest and she personally arrested him that same night. She was instrumental in working with the State's Attorney's Office and maintaining contact with the client as necessary.

This anecdote is demonstrative of Detective Hamill's dedication, mindfulness, and meticulousness in conducting her work. She is aware of the dynamics of domestic violence and approaches victims with empathy and understanding in order to ensure that they are not re-traumatized. Congratulations Detective Hamill!

25