



Montgomery County, MD
Department of Health and
Human Services
Office of Community Affairs
montgomerycountymd.gov

Montgomery County DHHS
Community Action Agency
1401 Rockville Pike, 3rd Floor
Rockville, MD 20852
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Main: 240-777-1697
MD RELAY: 711



Montgomery County, Maryland

Community Action Board

Annual Report

2015-2016



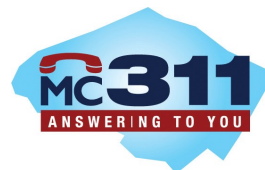


Our Mission:

To reduce poverty and increase self-sufficiency among County residents through services, partnerships, and advocacy.

Revised by the Community Action Board effective October 27, 2015

Alternative formats of the Community Action Board Annual Report 2015-2016 are available upon request. To make a request, please call 240-777-1697. TTY users, please call MD Relay (711).



mc311.com

Call 311 or 240-777-0311

**Montgomery County Maryland
COMMUNITY ACTION BOARD
2015-2016**

Chairperson: Matthew J. Green, Jr.

Vice Chair: Pamela Luckett

Alejandro Becerra, Human Rights Commission

Mary Bennett, Stepping Stones Shelter

Natasha Carter, Armand Center

Stacy Coletta, Department of Transportation

Lisa Conlon, Board of Education

Jackie Dennard, People's Community Baptist Church

Mohamed Doumbia, Representative of the Head Start Policy Council and the Low-Income Community, Rockville

Tekele (Marie) Ghonda Gha, Representative of the Low-Income Community, MidCounty

Matthew J. Green, Jr., Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity

Gail Gunod-Green, Housing Opportunities Commission

Chandra Harris-Jackson, County Executive's Designee

Laura Irwin, Spanish Catholic Center, Catholic Charities

Nadine Jackman, Representative of the Head Start Policy Council and the Low-Income Community, Gaithersburg

Agnes Leshner, Montgomery's Kids

Pamela Luckett, County Council Designee

Michael Lukpetris, Representative of the Low-Income Community, Gaithersburg

Stephen Reese, Primary Care Coalition

Laurie-Anne Sayles, Representative of the Low-Income Community, Gaithersburg

Michael Subin, County Executive's Designee

Juliette Traore, Representative of the Low-Income Community, Rockville

The Community Action Board (CAB) serves in an advisory capacity to the County Executive and County Council, and as an advocate on behalf of the poor and working poor of the County. Members are appointed by the County Executive and confirmed by the County Council.

The Board has four areas of responsibility, as defined in its enabling legislation:

- *Assessing the needs and problems of low-income people in the County;*
- *Recommending programs to meet the needs and solve the problems;*
- *Reviewing the Community Action Agencies' staff implementation of those programs; and*
- *Maintaining County policy and service delivery from the point of view of low-income residents.*

The Montgomery County Community Action Board is the governing body for the Montgomery County Head Start Program and the Community Action Agency. An annual report on the Head Start program is required by Public Law 110-134 "Improving Head Start for School Readiness Act of 2007" reauthorizing the Head Start program, Sec. 644 (a)(2) [42 U.S.C. 9839].

The Community Action Board meets on the fourth Tuesday each month at 7 pm, except in July, August and December. Meetings are held at the Executive Office Building, 101 Monroe Street, 2nd Floor Conference Room, Rockville. The Executive Committee meets on the second Tuesday of each month at 4 pm at 1401 Rockville Pike, Room 3308, Rockville.

Montgomery County will provide sign language interpreters and other special accommodations for Board meetings and programs upon request. Requests for accommodations must be made at least three business days in advance. Please call 240-777-1697 to make a request. TTY users, please call MD Relay (711).

*Inquiries may also be made through the County Executive's office:
240-777-2528 or CountyExecutiveBoard@montgomerycountymd.gov*

THE HISTORY OF COMMUNITY ACTION

On August 20, 1964, President Lyndon Baines Johnson signed into law, Senate Bill 2642, better known as the Economic Opportunity Act of 1964, declaring “unconditional war on poverty.” Title II of that law, provided for urban and rural communities to mobilize their resources to combat poverty through Community Action Programs. The most important provision of the Economic Opportunity Act was the requirement that Community Action Programs be developed, conducted, and administered with the maximum participation of area residents.

The following year, Community Action Agencies (CAA) were established, and Head Start programs opened around the country to provide comprehensive services—including health care, social services, and early education—to low-income preschool children. Since then, the Montgomery County CAA and its Board, have been charged with the responsibility of recommending programs to improve the lives of the County’s poor, the development of leaders within low-income communities, and the development of systems to increase their self-sufficiency, self-esteem and gain more control over their own lives. Today, the national Community Action Partnership network remains the largest single provider of Head Start programs.

The Community Action Board (CAB) serves as the governing body for the Montgomery County Community Action Agency and its Head Start program, and thus, has oversight responsibilities for its federally supported services. CAB shares program governance with the Head Start Policy Council and works closely with Montgomery County Public Schools, the delegate agency providing services under the auspices of the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS). As the federally designated grantee, Community Action Agency collaborates with DHHS Early Childhood, School Health Services, and myriad partner organizations.

Together, this strong partnership assures that some of Montgomery’s most economically fragile children, including those with disabilities, are receiving the education, health, nutrition, and social services they need to succeed in school. Parents are involved in all aspects of the Head Start Program, with representatives serving on the Head Start Policy Council as well as the Community Action Board.

Originally, a number of the County's antipoverty services were delivered directly by Community Action Agency (CAA) employees. As the county's population grew, and as the Community Action Board, advocates and county officials identified unmet needs, nonprofit community providers became important partners in addressing the needs of low-income residents, with the support of volunteers and a blended funding stream that includes, but is not wholly reliant upon, Montgomery County and other public funding. In addition to those direct services delivered by the Agency's TESS staff and its VITA partnership, DHHS has assigned its antipoverty contracts to CAA to monitor expenditures and strengthen services through technical support.



President Lyndon Johnson signs the War on Poverty Bill in the White House Rose Garden during a ceremony in 1964. The legislation led to the establishment of several programs, including Community Action Agencies.

Enabling Legislation: Article IV. Community Action Agency, Sec. 27-40.

Statement of policy: “It is the public policy of the County to promote programs to create an awareness of poverty; promote coordination among private and public agencies concerned with poverty; promote better use of existing resources and develop leadership among poor citizens to solve community problems; and develop broad community strategies to attack the basic causes of poverty.”
(1976 L.M.C., ch. 1, § 1; 1977 L.M.C., ch. 28, § 10; 1977 L.M.C., ch. 30, § 15; 1997 L.M.C., ch. 25, §1.)

In Sec. 27-41 (a), it is further stated that “There is a Community Action Agency within the Executive branch of the County government. The Agency creates and maintains community action programs to encourage the use of public and private resources to enable low-income people to become self-sufficient; to reduce poverty in the County; to involve the low-income population in developing and carrying out anti-poverty programs in the County; and to make government more responsive to the needs of low-income people.”

The Montgomery County Community Action Board : FY 2016 Year in Review

The Board had a busy and productive year. In addition to hosting poverty forums at the TESS Center, the Board continued its advocacy efforts for issues including expansion of the EITC, increasing the County minimum wage, improving access to affordable high-quality child care, and expanding food and nutrition programs. The following is an overview of the Board's work in FY 16.

Advocacy: Food and Nutrition

- May – MD Hunger Solutions sign-on letter to Gov. Hogan regarding HB 445/ SB 758, which would raise the minimum SNAP benefit for seniors
- May – Letter to Governor Hogan regarding HB 445/ SB 758
- June – Letter of support to County Council regarding Bill 19-16, Food Insecurity Strategic Plan
- June – Food Research and Action Center (FRAC) sign-on letter opposing School Meals Block Grant Proposal
- June – FRAC sign-on letter opposing School Meal Block Grant Provision Included in the Improving Child Nutrition and Education Act of 2016
- August – CAB Chair Pamela Luckett testified before County Council regarding special appropriation for strategic plan to end food insecurity

Advocacy: Housing

- February – Letter to the House Environment and Transportation Committee regarding The HOME Act

Advocacy: EITC/VITA

- December—Letter to Montgomery County Congressional Delegation regarding proposed omnibus and Tax Extension Bill
- January – CAB Member Laurie-Anne Sayles spoke on Capitol Hill at the National EITC Awareness Day
- January – CAB Vice Chair Pamela Luckett spoke about the EITC on a panel at the Women's Legislative Briefing
- February – Sign-on letter supporting the expansion of the MD EITC to younger workers without dependents and increase in EITC refundability.
- March – CFED sign-on letter advocating ongoing VITA funding
- March – Written testimony to the MD House Ways and Means Committee regarding SB840 – Income Tax Rates—supported increases to and expansion of the EITC and opposed increased tax cuts for the wealthiest Marylanders
- April – Letter of support regarding Bill 9-16, Working Families Income Supplement

Advocacy: Early Childhood Issues

- February – Letter to the MD House Environment and Transportation Committee regarding HB681 – Vehicle Laws- School Vehicles – Definition.
- March – Written testimony to the MD Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee regarding HB681
- March – CAB Chair Matthew J. Green, Jr. asked County Executive Ike Leggett about his plans to expand access to child care during the annual meeting with B/C/C leadership
- May – MD Family Network sign-on letter regarding HB 668/ SB 584 – Preschool Expansion Grants
- May – Letter to County Council requesting full funding for the Working Parents Assistance Program

Advocacy: Workforce/Education

- March – Letter of support for Montgomery College's renewal application for its Educational Opportunity Center
- June – CAB Member Laurie-Anne Sayles testified before the County Council regarding raising County minimum wage to \$15/hour

CAB Priorities

- October – CAB Member Stephen Reese testified on behalf of CAB at the County Council HHS Committee Annual Worksession for B/C/Cs
- October – CAB Member Mohamed Doumbia testified on behalf of CAB at the DHHS Community Budget Forum
- November— CAB Vice Chair Pamela Luckett testified on behalf of CAB at the Joint Delegation Hearing
- December—Letter to County Council regarding Office of Legislative Oversight report about Two-Generation Approaches to Poverty
- January— CAB Member Mohamed Doumbia testified on behalf of CAB at the Board of Education budget hearing
- February – Letter to Governor Hogan regarding MCAP request for funding in the FY17 budget
- April – CAB Chair Matthew J. Green, Jr. testified at Council Budget Hearing regarding the CE's proposed FY17 budget
- April – Letter to the Council HHS Committee requesting that the VITA contractor position be converted to a County employee position

Conferences and Trainings

- February – Ron Jennings and staff attended the Community Development Network/MCAP Legislative Breakfast; met with Delegate Luedtke
- April – CAFE Montgomery Financial Capability Conference
- May – Maryland Community Action Partnership (MCAP) Conference
- June – Head Start Regional Conference
- September – Introductory training on Head Start, which included a brief history and the key roles of the Board
- September – Advocacy training for B/C/C's



Left: CAB Vice Chair Pamela Luckett discusses the EITC during a presentation at the Women's Legislative Briefing.

Right: CAB Chair Matthew J. Green, Jr. received the Volunteer of the Year award at the MCAP Conference.

CAB Hosts Poverty Forums at Takoma-East Silver Spring (TESS) Center



Raise Your Voice!



¡Dé Su Opinión!



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To complement the Agency's needs assessment process and In an effort to learn more about the needs of clients directly served by the Community Action Agency through its Takoma-East Silver Spring (TESS) Center, the Board hosted three forums at the Center in September—October 2015. The forums targeted key populations served by the TESS Center: seniors, Limited English Proficient residents, and low-income parents and caretakers. Participants at these sessions highlighted some key issues facing the County's low-income immigrant community, including the lack of affordable housing in the County, the lack of available jobs offering benefits and a living wage, the need for expanded legal services, and difficulty accessing resources due to language barriers. Participants had numerous recommendations, including opening more services to residents with Limited English Proficiency, adjusting the income guidelines for housing and childcare voucher programs so that those who are above the poverty line but still struggling may qualify, and expanding the County's free health services to ensure all residents have access to it. Information gathered at these forums has been included in the Board's advocacy efforts and used to highlight the needs of the TESS Center and its clients.



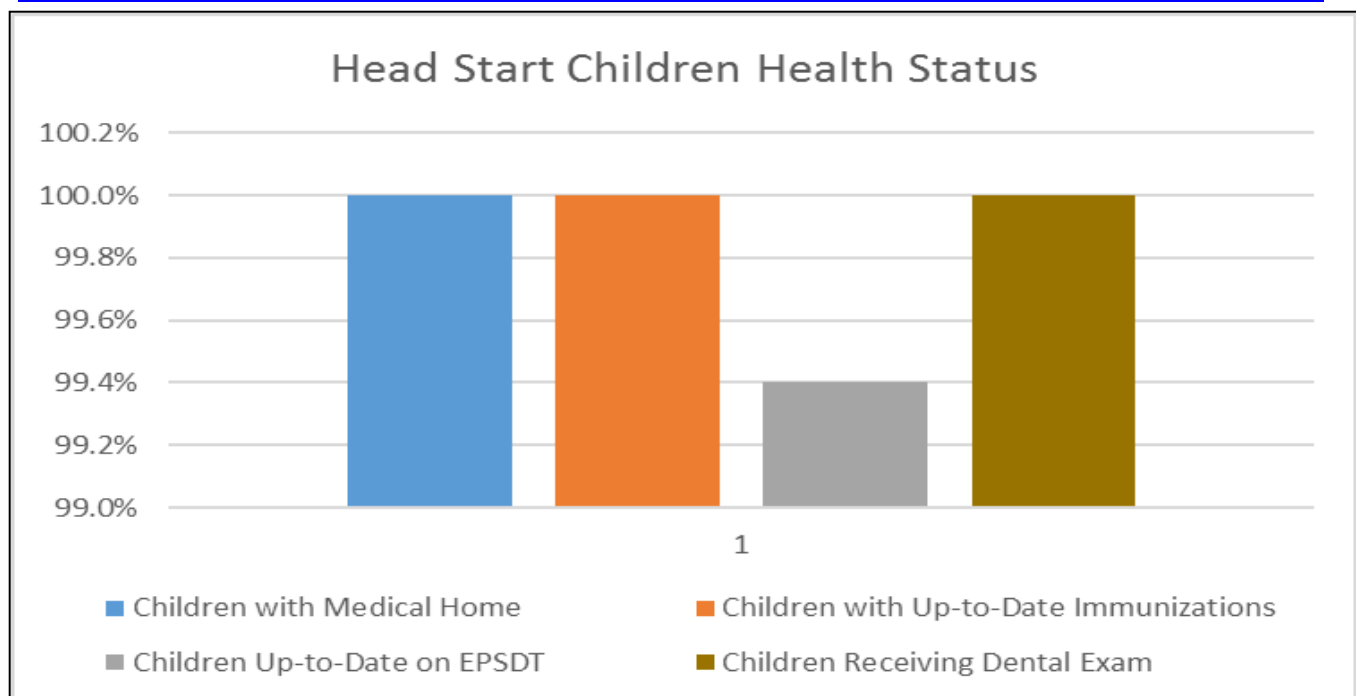
Scenes from the Community Action Board's three focus groups at the TESS Center in September and October 2015.

Head Start in Montgomery County is a federally funded comprehensive program to prepare young children, ages 3-5, for success in school. Services are provided for low-income children and their families, including developmentally appropriate pre-school education, health, dental, mental health, nutrition and social services, services to children with disabilities, and a parent and family engagement program. During school year 2015-2016, 694 young children were served in 34 classes at 29 schools. Demand for the program dramatically exceeds the enrollment capacity.

Family Engagement with Montgomery County's Head Start

Services Received by Head Start Families SY15-16	
Emergency/ crisis intervention (immediate needs for food, clothing or shelter)	94%
Housing assistance (subsidies, utilities, repairs)	8%
Mental health services	9%
ESL	27%
Adult education (including GED)	9%
Job training	14%
Substance abuse	0%
Child abuse and neglect	0%
Domestic violence	1%
Child support assistance	0%
Health education	1%
Assistance to families of incarcerated individuals	1%
Parenting education	94%
Marriage education	1%
Families that received at least one service	94%

Percentage of Enrolled Children That Received Health and Dental Services in SY15-16



*EPSDT—Early and Periodic Screening, Diagnostic and Treatment

Head Start Enrollment

Head Start in Montgomery County is a school based program, following the annual calendar of Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS), with a federally funded enrollment of 648.

Head Start Enrollment	Total # Served SY 12-13	Total # Served SY 13-14	Total # Served SY 14-15	Total # Served SY 15-16
September	646	628	629	646
October	648	628	630	648
November	647	628	622	648
December	648	628	643	648
January	648	628	648	648
February	646	628	647	647
March	646	628	646	645
April	643	628	646	643
May	640	628	638	638
June	638	621	637	638
Attendance Rate	n/a	94.01%	91.63%	91.47%
Avg. Enrollment	645	627.3	638.7	644.9

*Based on enrollment reported to the Office of Head Start the 5th day of each month.

**Numbers for SY 13-14 reflect budget cuts due to federal sequestration.

Enrollment figures over the past several years reflect a positive family attitude toward participating in the Head Start program. Teaching teams and family service workers collaborate with parents by providing support and problem-solving strategies to

Trends*

- Montgomery County served 86 three-year-old children over the course of the year, in three classes which served 15 three year olds each and in several mixed age classes. It is estimated that over 1,000 three-year-old children are Head Start eligible based on census data; applications are expressly limited because of the few Head Start seats actually available for three-year-old children.
- Montgomery County served 608 four-year-olds and 40 three-year-olds during the course of the school year.
- Over 300 four-year-old children, with established eligibility for Head Start, were unable to be served by Head Start; and were placed in MCPS PreK classrooms in compliance with state law. 2,780 four-year-old children whose eligibility is based on Free and Reduced Meals (FARMS) were served by PreK.
- Conservatively **only 40%** of the Head Start eligible children are served in our County by Head Start; the gap is even greater for three-year-olds.

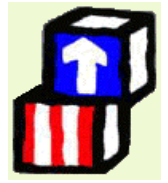
*Source: data from MCPS regarding registration and enrollment rates for School Year 15-16, and PIR report from August 2016.



Mohamed Doumbia, Head Start Parents Policy Council representative on the Community Action Board and member of the Community Action Board Executive Committee, testifies before the Board of Education regarding the need for expanded PreK in the County.

Ready for Kindergarten

At the start of the 2015-2016 school year, MCPS Head Start teachers administered the Early Learning Assessment (ELA), the pre-school version of the Maryland State Department of Education's Kindergarten Readiness Assessment (KRA). ELA also aligns with the Head Start Early Learning Framework and supports teachers in developing individualized lesson plans for children. Both the ELA and KRA use age-appropriate performance tasks that measure specific skills and observations of children's work and play to determine what each entering kindergartener knows and is able to do in four specific domains: Language & Literacy, Mathematics, Physical Well-Being & Motor Development, and Social Foundations. The ELA measures the skills and behaviors that children learned prior to entering kindergarten. In Montgomery County, 49% of children from low-income households are ready for kindergarten, compared with 60% of children from mid- to high-income households. 35% of children who previously attended Head Start exhibited the foundational skills and behaviors that enable a child to fully participate in the kindergarten curriculum, that is *demonstrating readiness* consistently. An additional 41% were *approaching readiness*, that is, showed some of the foundational skills and behaviors that are needed to participate in the kindergarten curriculum. Only 17% showed *emerging readiness*, in which children displayed minimal foundational skills and behaviors needed to meet kindergarten expectations successfully.



Will your child be 4 years old by September 1?

You may be eligible for **FREE** Pre-Kindergarten or Head Start programs in MCPS for low-income families.

For information, call 301-230-0676 or MC311 montgomeryschoolsmd.org Search "Head Start"

Walk-In Registration 9am - 4pm Weekdays 4910 Macon Road Rockville

Accepting Applications!
¡Aceptando Solicitudes!
Acceptation de Demandes de Service!
Chúng tôi đang nhận đơn
ማመልከቻ አንቀበለን!
現正接受申請
신청서 접수중

New Recruitment Sign for Head Start and PreK: The Head Start Parents Policy Council provided input on the design of a new recruitment sign, which was used in Ride On bus shelters, on MC311 digital monitors and on digital monitors in Montgomery County Public Libraries. Members of the Policy Council recommendations included the phrase "Accepting Applications" in seven languages to address the needs of some of the County's residents with Limited English Proficiency.

Financial Audit: Montgomery County has an annual Independent Auditor's Report on Internal Control, Financial Reporting and on Compliance and Other Matters, based on an Audit of Financial Statements Performed in Accordance with the *OMB Uniform Administrative Requirement 2 CFR Chapter I, Chapter II, Part 200 et al.* A copy of the Audit for the year ending June 30, 2015, is not yet completed, and when available will be found at the County's website: <http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/Finance/financial.html> The most current Montgomery County, MD Report on Expenditures of Federal Awards for Fiscal Year 2014 was performed for the County Council and County Executive by CliftonLarsonAllen LLP, Certified Public Accountants and Consultants.

FY16 COMPARISON OF HEAD START FEDERAL BUDGET AND EXPENDITURES & FY17 PROPOSED HEAD START FEDERAL BUDGET

CATEGORY	FY16 BUDGET	FY16 EXPENDITURES	FY17 BUDGET
Personnel/Fringe Benefits	\$4,151,046	\$4,110,306	\$4,376,720
Travel	\$10,500	\$24,306	\$12,500
Supplies and Equipment	\$41,774	\$34,878	\$45,356
Contractual	\$409,836	\$427,793	\$256,455
Training*/Technical Assistance/ Other	\$54,664	\$70,537	\$59,780
Subtotal Federal	\$4,667,820	\$4,667,820	\$4,750,811
Non Federal Share	\$1,333,063	\$1,823,393	\$1,187,703
Total	\$6,000,883	\$6,491,213	\$5,938,514

*Included in variety of categories and not added into the subtotal federal award.

In the chart above, the FY16 *budget* and FY 17 *award* columns reflect the federal grant Notice of Award in which all MCPS funds are granted as a "pass-through" for the subrecipient/*delegate* agency and are reflected as part of the contractual line-item. The *expenditures* column reveals **all** Head Start FY16 expenditures by line-item for MCPS, the delegate, CAA, the grantee, and DHHS' School Health.

Personnel for Head Start includes DHHS staffing, that is, community health nurses, school health room aides, dental hygienist, nurse administrator, community services aide, Head Start program manager, program aide, and administrative specialist. **Travel** includes costs associated with reimbursing staff for travel to Head Start sites to provide health and dental services, and for staff and parents to attend trainings and national, regional, and state conferences.

Contractual services include all delegate costs including the Audit Requirements of the OMB Uniform Guidance Subpart F, personnel costs (e.g., teachers, paraeducators, speech pathologists, psychologists, social workers, social service assistants) and training and technical assistance for delegate staff. Contractual health costs include specialty dental treatment providers, not available through insurance or dental clinics, and Mobile Medical Care, Inc. to provide contractual Head Start Nurses. Under Community Action Agency (CAA), contractual services includes funding for Community-Based Head Start child care center site at Montgomery College and for training for the Parents Policy Council and Community Action Board on shared governance and methods to achieve board goals within a government structure.

Other funding within MCPS covers a variety of expenses including training & staff development, child liability insurance, parent services such as training, parent/child mathematics and literacy activities, bus transportation for classes to attend field trips, reimbursement of mileage for home visits and parent meetings for teachers, paraeducators, special needs teacher, and social service assistants. **Other** funding for CAA provides assistance with costs for family related activities, and supplies necessary to conduct various meetings. These funds provide a range of administrative supports to the Montgomery County, MD, Head Start Program such as local travel costs for contract and grant monitoring. Other funding for School Health includes costs associated with continuing education and performance standard training for Head Start School Health Room nurses, technicians and hygienists and providing educational training experiences and materials for parents, students and non-professional staff.

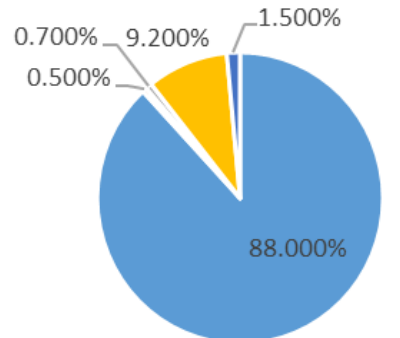
Head Start Budget Basics:

School Year 2015-16 = Fiscal Year 2016

Montgomery County Head Start Funding Sources FY16

Source	Amount
Federal	\$4,667,820
MSDE State Supplemental	\$1,333,063
TOTAL	\$6,000,883

FY16 Head Start Federal Budget Expenditures

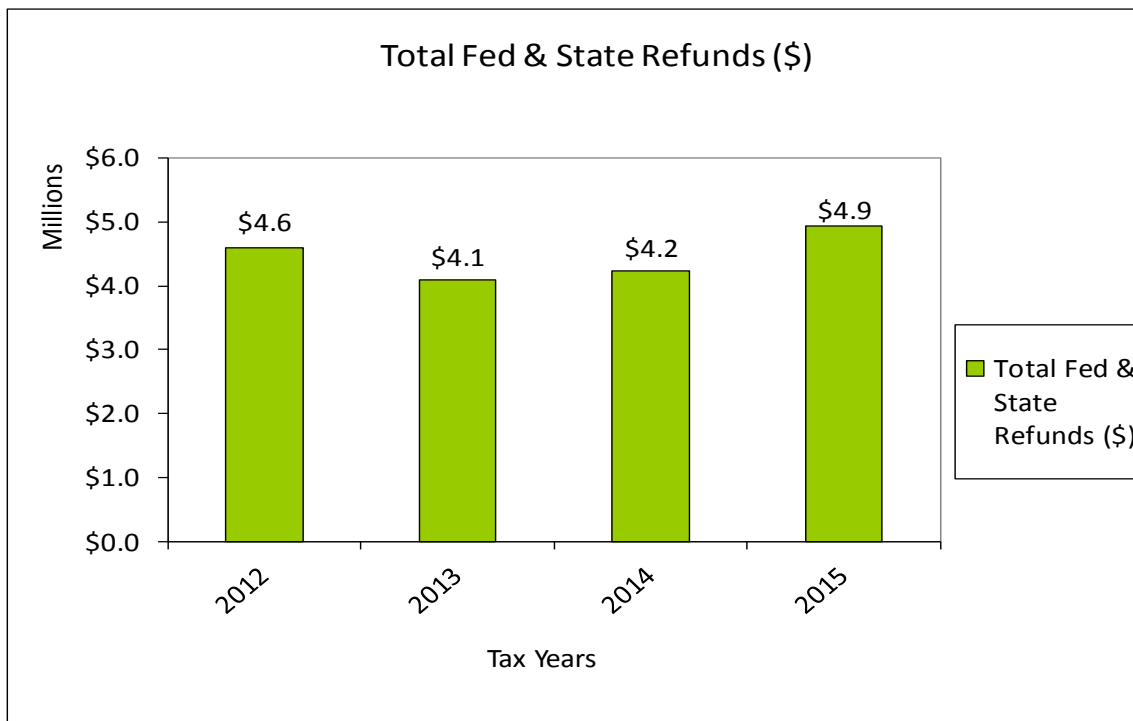


- Personnel/Fringe Benefits
- Contractual
- Travel
- Training/Technical Assistance/Other
- Supplies and Equipment

VITA and Financial Education Partnership

The Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) Program provides free tax preparation services, financial education, and Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) outreach to low to moderate income residents at several sites throughout Montgomery County. VITA relies on the critical support of over 100 volunteers throughout the year. In FY16, volunteers serving as Food Resource Navigators provided information and pre-screening for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) to VITA clients. The VITA program strives to meet the needs of special populations, including Limited English Proficient residents, seniors, disabled residents, small business owners, and family child care providers.

The VITA Program's Impact: The EITC in Montgomery County



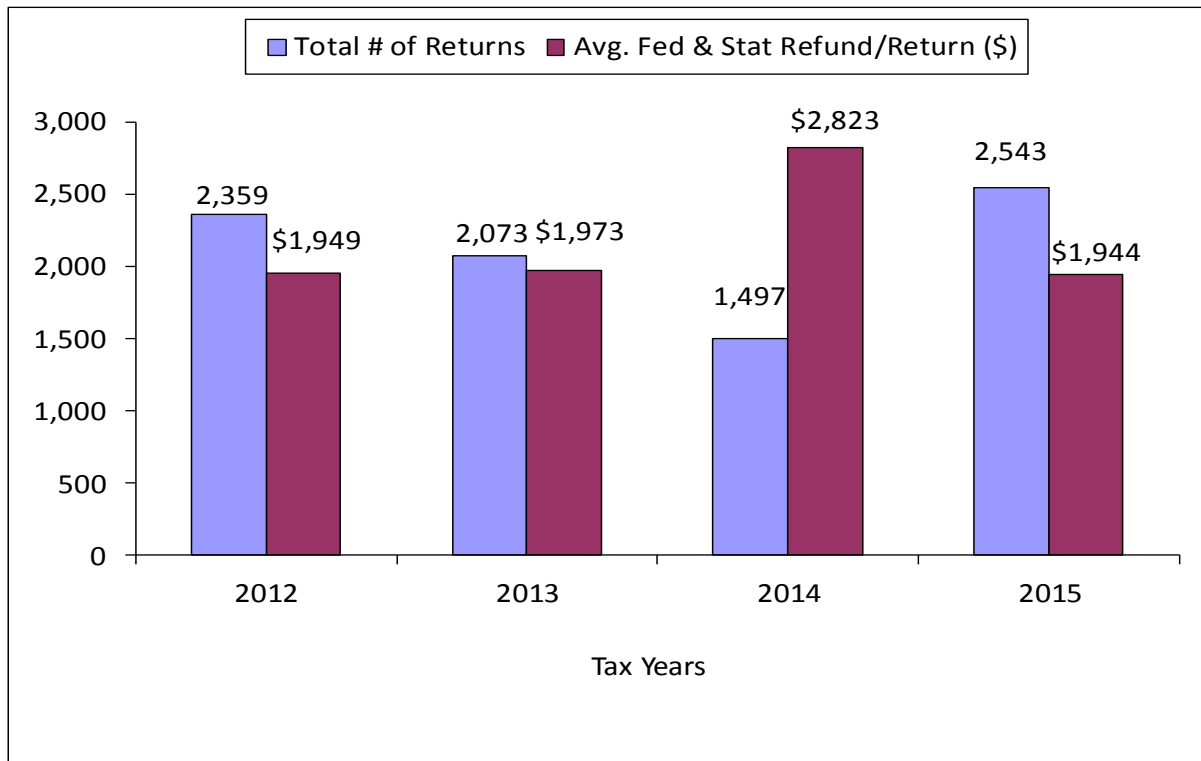
LEFT: VITA volunteers from the University of Maryland pose with staff during a volunteer celebration in May.

RIGHT: A Food Resource Navigator provides information about food and nutrition programs at a VITA event.

Tax Year 2015 Results

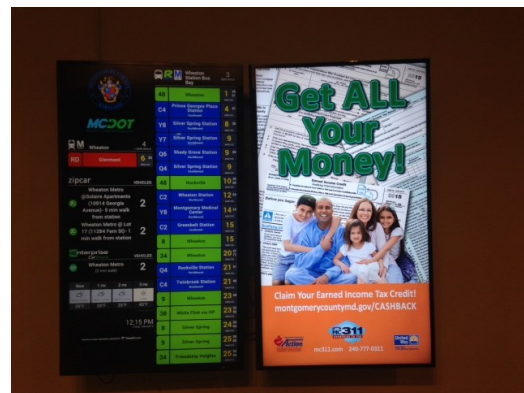
During Tax Year 2015, VITA returned nearly \$5 million in state and federal refunds to 2,543 households. VITA taxpayers owed nearly \$1 million to the state and federal governments.

YEAR	# RETURNS	TOTAL FED & STATE REFUND (\$)	AVERAGE FED & STATE REFUND	EITC RETURNS	FEDERAL EITC	STATE EITC	COUNTY EITC	TOTAL EITC
2011	1,868	\$2,912,130	\$1,559	278	\$732,235	\$183,059	\$126,127	\$1,041,421
2012	2,359	\$2,921,660	\$1,239	358	\$867,405	\$216,851	\$158,085	\$1,242,341
2013	2,073	\$2,623,510	\$1,266	504	\$723,995	\$180,999	\$136,654	\$1,041,648
2014	2,159	\$2,568,113	\$1,189	480	\$750,941	\$187,735	\$159,575	\$1,098,251
2015	2,543	\$2,971,904	\$1,169	527	\$885,795	\$221,449	\$188,231	\$1,295,475
TOTAL	11,002	\$13,997,317	\$1,284	2,147	\$3,960,371	\$990,093	\$768,672	\$5,719,136



Community Action Launches EITC Outreach Campaign: ***Get ALL Your Money!***

In FY16, Community Action launched a new outreach campaign to inform low-income County residents about Earned Income Tax Credits. The outreach campaign incorporated the slogan “Get ALL Your Money!” and included a press release, RideOn bus advertisements, digital signs on MC311 monitors in County buildings and library monitors, and scrolling messages on the County’s website. The campaign also featured a new website called CASHBACK. The website presents information about free tax preparation programs; various types of tax credits, including the EITC and Child Tax Credit; outreach flyers in multiple languages; what to do if one encounters problems filing his/her taxes; financial education resources; and other resources for low-income residents. The EITC Outreach Campaign was the recipient of a National Association of Counties (NACo) Award in 2016.



Top Left and Right: “Get ALL Your Money!” signs on RideOn buses.

Bottom Left and Right: “Get ALL Your Money!” digital signs on MC311 monitors in two County buildings.

The Takoma-East Silver Spring (TESS) Center

The Community Action Agency's Takoma-East Silver Spring (TESS) Center has been a trusted institution in the Long Branch community for over 40 years. The Center, which is a Neighborhood Opportunity Network (NON) Site, serves the County's low-income, mostly immigrant community with information and referrals and direct services. The bi-lingual staff (Spanish/English and Amharic/English) are committed to providing high-quality services utilizing a "no wrong door" approach. In FY16, **7,982** clients were served by the TESS Center.

TESS CENTER HIGHLIGHTS IN FY16

- Provided **42** vision referrals and **64** referrals to the dental clinic
- The Montgomery County Bar Foundation Pro Bono program provided **446** individuals/families with free legal services
- Served **1,603** free lunches to children as part of the Summer Meals Program
- Provided **229** referrals to the Manna Food Center
- Served **176** seniors through the Senior Social Program
- Served **188** families through the Holiday Giving Program
- Served **150** children through the Judy Center's Literacy Play Groups
- Through partnership with Community Health and Empowerment through Education and Research (CHEER), provided health outreach to **740** clients
- Served **81** students through IMPACT Silver Spring's ESOL classes at the Center
- Through partnership with Mary's Center for Maternal and Child Care, provided support to **40** women through the Women's Support Group



Left: Participants in the TESS Center's Senior Social participate in a crafts project.

Right: Students in the IMPACT Silver Spring ESOL class hosted by the TESS Center.

TESS Center Serves Victims of Tragic Long Branch Fire

In August 2016, a large explosion and resulting fire occurred at the Flower Branch Apartments, taking the lives of 7 people and leaving over 120 people homeless. The complex is just blocks away from the TESS Center and many of its residents are regular TESS clients. Following the fire, the TESS Center was immediately converted to an emergency response center, providing critical services to those impacted by the fire. The Center served 43 clients in just the first day following the fire. In the days and weeks that followed, the Center remained a central hub for services to the victims. The Center's established relationships with other DHHS offices; local, state, and federal government agencies; and non-profit partners in the community allowed the Center to immediately and effectively respond to the crisis situation. Community Action and its TESS staff and partners organized three large-scale financial education programs for the fire victims with the Coalition for the Advancement of Financial Education (CAFE) Montgomery, including one with the Maryland Comptroller's Office. The TESS Center remains committed to addressing the ongoing needs of those impacted by the fire, including the addition of on-site behavioral health services.

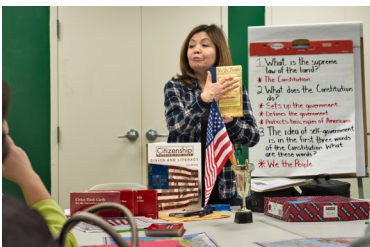
The TESS Center
8513 Piney Branch Road, Silver Spring, MD, 20901
Phone: 240-773-8260 Fax: 301-565-5713

A Salute to Community Partners

The Montgomery County Department of Health & Human Services Community Action Agency provides services to the low-income community through partnerships with many non-profit organizations throughout the County. These organizations provide a wide range of services, including food and clothing assistance, legal services, youth programs, and community development.

Community Action Agency's Partners, FY16:

- **Caribbean Help Center**—Provides emergency assistance, food distribution, and health care referrals. Served 1,145 clients with referrals and assistance obtaining social services, accessing Medicare/Social Security, applying to the INS, interpretation and/or transportation, finding a job, obtaining unemployment benefits, and completing paperwork. 156 people received holiday food packages.
- **CASA de Maryland**—Provides employment, training and supportive services to low-income residents with limited English proficiency at three locations. Supported 6,690 day labor placements, 47 unduplicated part-time job placements and 68 unduplicated full time job placements. Assisted 352 clients in applying for citizenship through DACA. 150 clients obtained health insurance, 141 clients opened bank account, 191 applied for ITINs, and 177 received information and referrals.
- **Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of Washington, Inc.**—At the Wheaton neighborhood Opportunity Network site, provides emergency services, outreach, and case management. Assisted 8,094 callers and walk-ins, referred 411 to Manna Food Center, provided 2,500 families with food from the Choice Pantry, and served 869 people with clothing.
- **Circle of Rights, Inc.**—Increases public awareness about stroke prevention and provides outreach to minority populations. Presented 6 workshops to 773 people.
- **Community Health & Empowerment Through Education and Research (CHEER)** —Provides health and community engagement for residents. Held 22 presentations for approximately 252 participants and conducted Health and Wellness outreach to over 700 people.
- **Community Ministries of Rockville**—Supports language outreach and citizenship classes. Enrolled 100 children and 200 adults in English language classes and 12 children and 17 adults in citizenship classes.
- **Crossroads Community Food Network**—Provides food subsidies, nutrition education, and operates markets for low-income residents. Held 6 workshops for the Healthy Nutrition Program in schools for 200 students. Provided 1,931 families with access to produce through the Fresh Checks Program.
- **Family Services, Inc.**—Provides case management services and serves as a Neighborhood Opportunity Network site. 193 clients accessed services, receiving assistance with social services, applications and referrals.
- **IMPACT Silver Spring** —Provides community building, civic participation programs, and services through the Neighborhood Opportunity Network initiative. Contacted 7,100 residents and informed them of services and resources. 72 residents participated in English classes, 20 participated in Entrepreneur classes, and 10 participated in a book group. Hosted 11 Network Nights with 304 participants. Planned program for International Women's Day and the IMPACT NOW! program, which focused on community-building.
- **Interfaith Works Clothing Closet**—Operates a clothing center, which distributes donated clothing and house wares to referred clients free of charge. Served 12,558 clients, working with 1,635 volunteers providing 20,542 volunteer hours.
- **International Rescue Committee**—Provides immigration and safety net services to newly-settled refugees in the County. Placed 239 residents in jobs and assisted 399 residents through the Immigration Team. Resettled 36 refugees in Montgomery County and initiated services for 232 walk-in asylees residing in the County.



A volunteer from Community Ministries of Rockville teaches students in a citizenship class.

- **Kids in Need Distributers (KIND)** - Distributes food to schools so that low-income children receive a package of food on Fridays for the weekend. Served 1,100 children in 23 schools.
- **Korean Association of the State of Maryland Metropolitan Area Inc.**—Provides social services, including citizenship classes, and referrals. Provided translation for 170 clients to assist in accessing social services, health services, and immigration services.
- **Korean Community Service Center of Greater Washington Inc.**—Provides outreach, referrals, and social services to low-income residents. 326 clients received case management, income assistance, and financial classes; 200 received health care services; and 2,035 received referrals.
- **Manna Food Center**—Distributes food to low-income residents. Also support the Emergency Food Assistance Program, Smart Sacks Program, and Farm to Food Program. 10,546 unduplicated households received 2 –3 boxes of food. Provided 11,311 snacks in 46 elementary schools. Worked with 4 farmers markets and 4 local markets to collect 89,832 pounds of fresh produce for low-income families.
- **Mid-Atlantic Gleaning Network**—Provides emergency food relief for low-income individuals by involving them in the harvest of fresh fruit and vegetables. Planned 10 gleaning events, which provided 62,000 pounds of produce to local churches, serving approximately 1,425 people.
- **Montgomery County Maryland Bar Foundation**—Provides pro bono legal services for low-income residents. Served 825 people through legal advice clinics at 5 sites throughout the County. Created a directory of Legal Immigration Service Providers. Provided triage for 1,756 cases.
- **MoverMoms**—Provides operating support for community engagement programs. Volunteers made 48 visits to the County jail through the Montgomery Works One-Stop Program and 69 visits to emergency shelters. Provided 5 dinners at the NIH Children's Inn, held 4 food drives for Manna Food Center, volunteered with MCPS to support work with new immigrant children on 7 occasions, and provided Christmas breakfast to over 700 residents.
- **Spanish Catholic Center**—In Gaithersburg, provides employment and training services. 194 residents received employment counseling and 744 received 1,146 employment referrals. 415 people participated in a job readiness class and 102 were successful in gaining employment. 28 clients received one-on-one assistance with applications to public benefits and 66 residents participated in integrated health prevention workshops and other medical referrals.
- **The Nonprofit Village Center**—Provides reduced rent office space, shared administrative services and interns, and training for small nonprofits. Served 25 organizations, 19 with leased space and 6 “virtual” tenants.
- **A Wider Circle**—Developed an anti-poverty pilot program. Identified a neighborhood in East County for the Neighborhood Support Program.
- **Women Who Care Ministries, Inc.**—Supports the Weekend Backpack Food Program in collaboration with MCPS. 2,215 children received food sacks on a weekly basis in 38 schools. 83,952 sacks were distributed.
- **World Organization for Resource Development & Education (WORDE)** — Operates crisis and resource center and provide services for low income residents. Provided appointments to 66 teenagers and 243 adults for case management, counseling, mentoring and support. Held 18 sessions using the leadership development curriculum.
- **The YMCA- Benchmarks Program**—Provides an academic enrichment after school program. Served 30 middle school students at Rock Creek Forest Elementary School.

Making a Difference: Catholic Charities McCarrick Center NON Site in Wheaton

A single mother of two came into the McCarrick Center. She is a breast cancer survivor and her cancer came back in December 2015. She has been working hard to make ends meet for the family, but has had a difficult time balancing all of the household expenses. Her son is 11 years old and her 18-year-old daughter is a full-time student at Montgomery College. Staff were able to refer her to DHHS for rental assistance, and provide her with food from the Choice Food Pantry. The client was also approved for assistance through the *In the Name of the Mother Fund* to cover the cost of 8 weeks of summer camp for her son; gift cards to help with gas for transportation and household expenses; as well as specialty products for female cancer patients. The client was relieved to receive community support as she focuses on finishing her last couple months of treatment.

Community Action Month Celebration

On May 24, 2016 the Community Action Agency held its annual Community Action Month Celebration and Volunteer Recognition Program at the Silver Spring Civic Center. Board members, elected officials, DHHS leaders, and CAA staff and partners helped celebrate the extraordinary work of Community Action's volunteers. The event honored dedicated volunteers and local organizations with the Marcia Plater, Henry L. Dixon, Jr., and Gerald Roper, Sr. Community Action Service Awards. Outgoing Board members, along with volunteers from the TESS Center and VITA Program, were also honored at this event.



Top Left: Chuck Short, Special Assistant to the County Executive, presents a Proclamation from County Executive Ike Leggett to CAB Chair Matthew J. Green, Jr. in honor of Community Action Month.

Top Right: Betty Lam, Chief of the Department of Health and Human Services Office of Community Affairs, highlights the work of Community Action in addressing the needs of low-income residents.

Bottom Left: Helen Heinrich (left) and Cindy Spoon (right), TESS volunteers, participate in the Community Action Awards.

Bottom Right: Virginia Richter (left) and Marika Brown (right), VITA volunteers, celebrate with Community Action at the Awards Celebration.

Community Action: Helping People, Changing Lives!



MONTGOMERY COUNTY COMMUNITY ACTION AGENCY **Department of Health and Human Services Office of Community Affairs**

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Abiola Abodunrin, VITA Contractor
Birtucan Assres, Community Connector, TESS Center
Josue Canas, Office Services Coordinator, TESS Center
Diana Day, Office Services Coordinator
Patsy Evans, Head Start Consultant (Former Head Start Program Manager)
Melissa Ferguson, Program Specialist, Contracts
Leah Goldfine, Program Manager, CAB Liaison
Victoria Hall, Community Connector, TESS Center
Gladys Hernandez, Community Services Aide, TESS Center
Jessica Huitz, Program Aide, Head Start
Taunya Johnson-Oates, VITA Coordinator
Maureen Larenas-Rivas, Program Specialist, TESS Center Manager
Janet Lee, Head Start Consultant
Bruno Marujo, Maryland Community Fellow, VITA Program
Eduardo Mendes, Maryland Community Fellow, VITA Program
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Tania Soriano, CAA Contractor
Nimat Traore, Volunteer Maryland Coordinator
Iliana Umanzor, Community Services Aide, TESS Center



The Promise of Community Action

Community Action changes people's lives, embodies the spirit of hope, improves communities, and makes America a better place to live. We care about the entire community, and we are dedicated to helping people help themselves and each other.

