

# Partnering for Progress

The Impact of the National Harbor Community Outreach Grant Fund



# About

## *The National Harbor Community Outreach Grant Fund*



In July 2007, an agreement between The Peterson Companies, Prince George's County Government, and The Community Foundation for the National Capital Region (through its local affiliate, The Community Foundation for Prince George's County) established the National Harbor Community Outreach Grant Fund (The National Harbor Fund). The purpose of the fund is to provide grant monies to community, civic, religious, educational, and recreational organizations serving the residents of Prince George's County, Maryland. The National Harbor Fund is administered by The Community Foundation, a tax-exempt, nonprofit organization dedicated to building community capital. The Foundation serves the

community by promoting local philanthropy, funding local projects, and connecting the generosity of private donors with the changing needs of the residents of Prince George's County.

## *The Community Foundation for the National Capital Region*

Since its founding nearly four decades ago, The Community Foundation for the National Capital Region has helped its neighbors in need by promoting and supporting effective giving and finding innovative solutions to the region's most challenging problems. The Community Foundation operates throughout Washington DC, Maryland, and Northern Virginia, with two local affiliates under its umbrella – The Community Foundation for Prince George's County and The Community Foundation for Montgomery County. Through its affiliates, The Community Foundation can fulfill its mission by raising local philanthropic capital to address the unique needs of each area in the region. The Community Foundation is overseen by a group of trustees representing our region's business, education, legal, nonprofit and public service sectors. Our trustees ensure we stay true to our core values to help our donors make an impact and are effective stewards of the funds entrusted to us. Additionally, the work of each affiliate is guided by an advisory board of local leaders who are knowledgeable about the community and have deep relationships within their respective areas.

A "community of givers," The Community Foundation is made up of individuals, families, corporations and organizations who have established more than 700 charitable giving funds with assets totaling more than \$326 million. In FY2013, the Foundation and its donors awarded \$90 million in grants to nonprofit organizations in the Greater Washington region and beyond, with an emphasis on helping the region's residents achieve economic security through education, workforce development, and safety net services—all in service of creating a more stable, healthy, and vibrant community for all.

[www.thecommunityfoundation.org](http://www.thecommunityfoundation.org)

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# *Introduction*

“The National Harbor Fund has positioned our community to provide **greater & wider opportunities for even more children & families** in Prince George’s County.”

DESIREE GRIFFIN-MOORE, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, THE COMMUNITY FOUNDATION FOR PRINCE GEORGE’S COUNTY

Behind every great commercial development is a vision of a community transformed.

The National Harbor in Prince George’s County, developed by Peterson Companies, emerged from that bold vision. It also posed a set of challenges to the community in Prince George’s County: What can a multimillion-dollar community investment accomplish? What can such an investment yield for our county and its residents, above and beyond the economic benefits of a new destination to shop and dine along the Potomac River? And how can a company working in partnership with the community best serve the many nonprofits, children and families affected by the project? Could our community be transformed and what partners are needed to help ensure success?

These were the challenges raised when the Peterson Companies announced its landmark community investment

along with plans to develop a 300-acre waterfront complex complete with a national resort and convention center. The community investment designated \$350,000 to be distributed annually over 10 years, a total of \$3.5 million for the County to allocate to nonprofit organizations serving the residents in communities surrounding the harbor and throughout Prince George’s County.

Community leaders recognized the value of engaging socially responsible companies to achieve immediate impact, as well as for impacts to be felt for generations in Prince George’s County and the Greater Washington region.

Such a vision of community transformation is only possible through effective collaboration—public officials and other local leaders partnering to ensure that community benefits are mutually shared and grant monies are distributed in an efficient, fair, and transparent manner.

The first three years of this community investment were marked by a rocky start and management that fell far short of original expectations; however, in 2007, The Community Foundation for Prince George's County came forward as a new partner, and the National Harbor Community Outreach Grant Fund was established.

Public trust in The Community Foundation for Prince George's County was grounded in its deep community relationships and identity as an affiliate of The Community Foundation for the National Capital Region, a major regional leader with a longstanding reputation in philanthropic stewardship and support for community solutions at both the local and regional level. For 40 years, The Community Foundation for the National Capital Region has effectively managed funds established by individuals, families, organizations, and corporations like the Peterson Companies.

The purpose of this publication, prepared by The Community Foundation, is to demonstrate what the partnership behind the National Harbor Fund has meant for people living in the nine Councilmanic districts that make up Prince George's County. The information provided here and the four stories that follow serve as a "snapshot of impact" for anyone interested in coordinated solutions to our county's most pressing issues—specifically how The Community Foundation and its partners are helping to increase economic security in the areas of education, workforce development, and safety net services.

## *The National Harbor Fund Mission*

Today, equity, access, and opportunity are not ensured for all residents in Prince George's County and throughout the Washington metropolitan area. The Community Foundation wants children and families to have a clear life path toward

achieving economic security, which is only achievable through quality education, job opportunities, and housing and food security. Thus our primary areas of focus—education, workforce development, and the safety net—are founded on securing those three economic keystones for families.

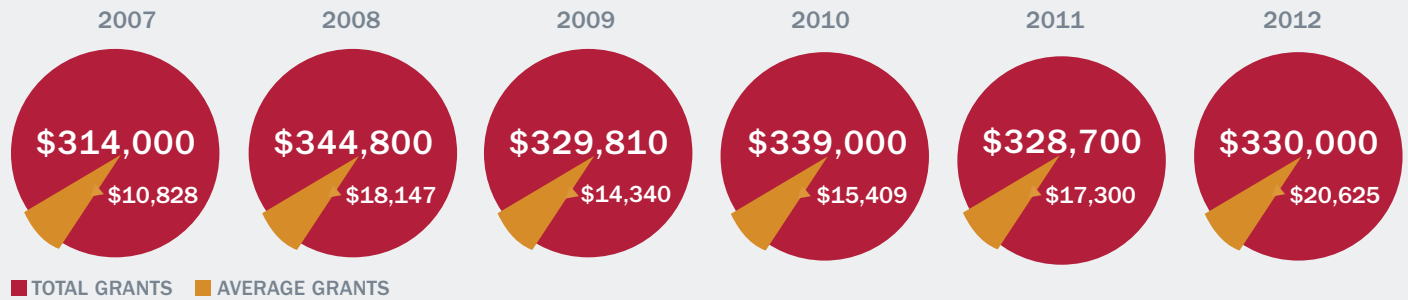
The Community Foundation leads a coordinated, results-oriented strategy for the metropolitan Washington region, including Prince George's County, Maryland, Washington, D.C., Northern Virginia, and Montgomery County, Maryland, to achieve its primary goals. The National Harbor Community Outreach Grant Fund is one component of a multipronged strategy that is local and regional in focus, with our sights set on every family in the region achieving economic security.

The stories that follow detail the hard work and creative strategies supported by the National Harbor Fund, with education, workforce development, and safety net services as key priorities. The organizations featured here as well as dozens of other National Harbor Fund grantees are helping to close the gaps between those with economic security and those without. Here you will read about how...

- In Edmonston and other Port Towns, youth are spending summers supplementing their school curriculum with urban gardening and healthy eating programs that are bolstering the local safety net.
- In Langley Park and Riverdale, Latino and African-American youth are getting crucial mentoring and job skills training.
- At a Fort Washington multigenerational hub, both youth and senior citizens are being exposed to rich programs advancing education and healthy living.
- College-bound students in Suitland, Fairmount Heights, and Capitol Heights are receiving structured support to prepare for life after high school.

The Community Foundation wants children and **families to have a clear life path toward achieving economic security,** which is only achievable through quality education, job opportunities, and housing and food security.

## Breakdown of National Harbor Grant Awards (2007-2012)



## Number of Grants Awarded By Year



## Total Grants by Program Area (2007-2012)



## There's No Formula for Impact

There is no one formula for achieving impact as evidenced by the four organizations featured in this report. We recognize that nonprofits have different approaches and capacity levels, and in observing accomplishments over the past several years, we have seen different kinds of impact, all with their own value.

For example, the National Harbor Fund has supported efforts achieving *broad* impact, like that achieved by the National Children's Museum. This grantee has used funding to help reach 78,000 children who have participated in physical activities, practiced bicycle safety, and attended literacy training events.

The National Harbor Fund has also supported programs seeking *deep* impact on a small group of individuals, as with the life skills training that the Seabrook-based Family Health and Education Institute provided to low-income youths. By giving full attention and care to five youth, this program has delivered intensive training in communications skills, family finance, parenting, domestic violence prevention, and career enhancement.



For those organizations with greater capacity, the National Harbor Fund also supported a comprehensive approach. That support has produced broad and deep impact, like the kind that CASA de Maryland has delivered to immigrant families. As a result of National Harbor funding, the organization has provided 40 at-risk youth with vocational training, ESOL classes for another 68 youth, and nutrition and HIV health education for 250 individuals from its location in Hyattsville.

There is yet another important dimension to the impact of the National Harbor Fund, and that's the growth and maturity of our county's relatively young nonprofit sector. Looking back on six years in which a Grants Committee has reviewed nearly 600 grant applications, "nonprofits have grasped a better understanding, technically, of how to apply for grants," says Desiree Griffin-Moore, Executive Director of The Community Foundation for Prince George's County. "There's a formal process that includes certain expectations and standards. Being exposed to that process has helped nonprofits apply that knowledge to other funding opportunities."



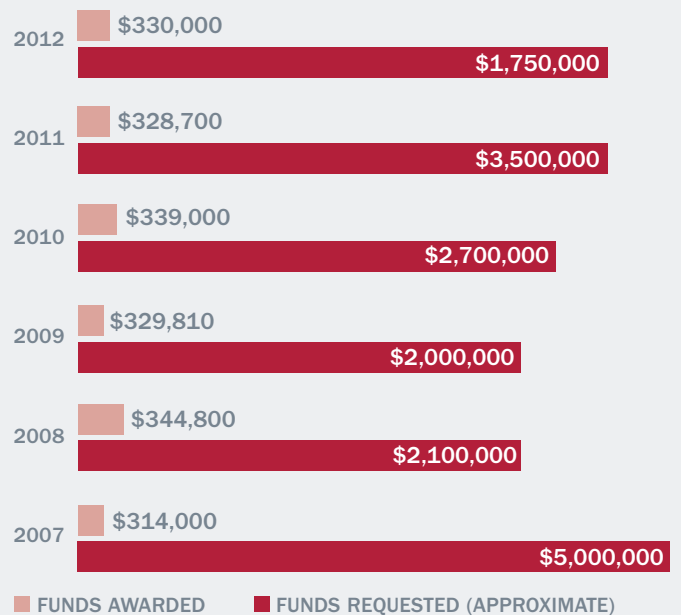
## The Work Continues

The Community Foundation is proud of the work of the National Harbor Fund's nonprofit partners, yet we recognize how economic security still remains out of reach for many Prince George's County residents. Statistics reveal how in terms of education, income, and unemployment, serious challenges still remain in our communities. Consider the following:

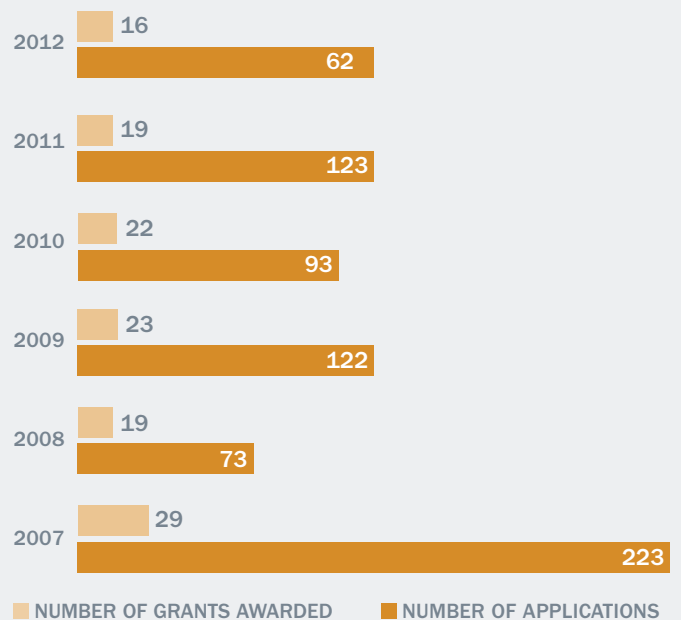
- In 2012, Prince George's County had a 73 percent high school graduation rate, 11 points lower than the state average and 5 points lower than the national average.<sup>1</sup>
- Of the 22 counties in the Greater Washington region, Prince George's County had the second-highest poverty rate at 7.5 percent.<sup>2</sup>
- Prince George's County has "lost more jobs than any of the surrounding counties and significantly more jobs than the state average" during the recent financial downturn.<sup>3</sup>

The National Harbor Fund knows these challenges all too well as evidenced by the tremendous amount of requests received each year.

## Funds Awarded vs. Funds Requested



## Grants Awarded vs. Total Applications



1 "Class of 2012, Graduation Rate: 4-Year Adjusted Cohort," Maryland Report Card, 2012. Retrieved from mdreportcard.org; America's Promise Alliance, Building a Grad Nation, February 2013.

2 U.S. Census. Brookings analysis of American Community Survey.

3 Maryland & Budget Tax Policy Institute, "Prince George's County: A Vulnerable Middle Class," 2011. Retrieved from <http://www.marylandpolicy.org>.

“Funds created to provide funding over a certain period of time, **help foster sustainability for nonprofits, in turn building stronger communities.**”

WILLIAM (BILL) SHIPP, CHAIR, THE COMMUNITY FOUNDATION FOR PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY ADVISORY BOARD

However, it is possible to reverse these trends by continuing to build up a nonprofit sector through long-term community investments. The National Harbor Fund has marked a big step forward. “For six years, we’ve maintained a successful partnership with Peterson Companies and Prince George’s County Government,” says Griffin-Moore. “We’re positioning our community to provide greater and wider opportunities for even more children and families in Prince George’s County.”

When local enterprises invest, they benefit by significantly contributing to the community and securing that vital double-bottom line benefit. When public officials encourage investment, they can ensure that investments bear fruit within their jurisdictions. And of course, by seeking support to expand their capacity, nonprofits can anticipate a greater impact for the community residents they serve. As a result of more collaborations and investments, significant returns are realized to all major partners in Prince George’s County. “We’ve seen the fund directly impact the area of National Harbor and groups operating county-wide,” says William (Bill) Shipp, Advisory Board Chair of The Community Foundation of Prince George’s County. “Funds created to provide funding over a period of time, help foster sustainability for nonprofits, in turn building stronger communities.”

And for the community of Prince George’s County, there is the contagious spirit of community service that we all inspire by facing social and economic challenges head on. As you read the following stories, imagine the many ways that the spirit of service can catch on. Picture more and more community leaders and nonprofit organizations stepping forward, collaborating to fight on behalf of County residents striving for economic security.



## *Managing Corporate Investments*

The fund management track record of The Community Foundation includes its work with the LEARN Foundation, established in 1996 through an agreement between former County Executive of Prince George’s County Wayne K. Curry and Jack Kent Cooke, former owner of the Washington Redskins. The LEARN Foundation (which stands for the Landover Educational Athletic Recreational Non-Profit) provides scholarships and supports education programs for Prince George’s County youth residing in communities most affected by the Redskins’ FedEx Field.



## Our Focus on Fairness: A Short Primer on Grant Transparency

As manager of the National Harbor Community Outreach Grant Fund, The Community Foundation aims to maintain the highest standards in fairness and transparency. Securing the community's trust and confidence rests on faithfully executing the vision of the Peterson Companies and other partners. It also means clearly communicating the purpose of the fund and its processes to community organizations. The following primer details the major steps of The Community Foundation's grantmaking process, beginning with our initial announcement.

### FIRST, WE PUBLISH GRANT OPPORTUNITIES.

We announce our request for National Harbor Community Outreach Grant Fund proposals publicly via our website. In addition, we notify grantseeking organizations that have requested to receive emails from us about our website announcement. To ensure the full participation of all interested organizations—regardless of capacity or size—we offer a grantseekers workshop that, regardless of whether National Harbor funding is awarded, provides practical knowledge about the guidelines and application process that may apply to other funding requests.

### THEN, OUR TEAM CONDUCTS A THOROUGH REVIEW TO DECIDE ON THE ALLOCATION OF FUNDS.

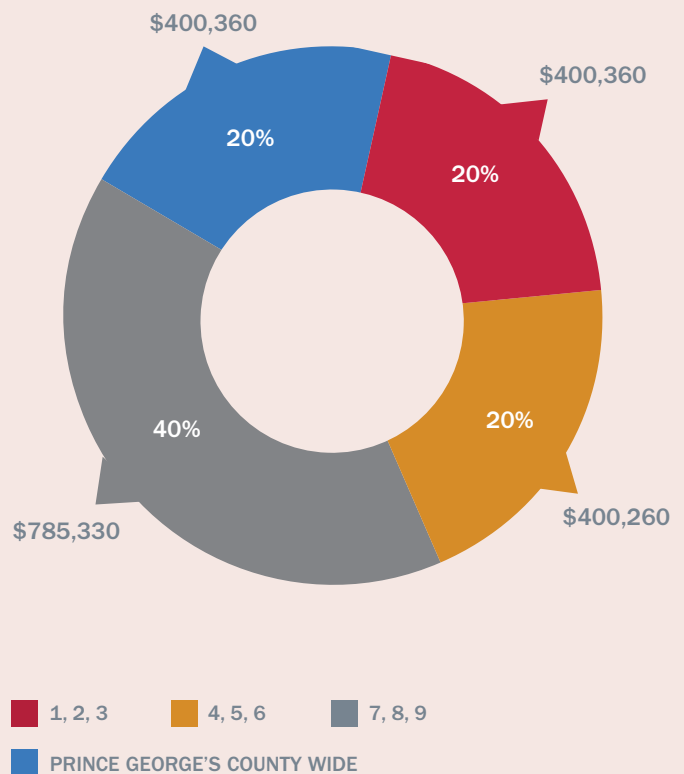
The National Harbor Fund Grants Committee, made up of experienced volunteers and deeply engaged community members representing the voice and aspirations of the people, evaluates the grant applications and makes funding recommendations. Those recommendations are ultimately approved by our Advisory Board and Board of Trustees. Both the Grants Committee and the Advisory Board represent the diversity of Prince George's County in terms of geography, race, ethnicity, gender, and class.

After grants are made, we make a public announcement about who will receive the funds and what amounts they will receive. The distribution of these funds consistently follows a formula dictated by the National Harbor Fund agreement: 40 percent to entities having projects in and providing services to the residents of the 7th, 8th, and 9th Councilmanic Districts; 20 percent to entities having projects in and providing services to the residents of the 4th, 5th, and 6th Districts; and 20 percent of the funds to entities having projects in and providing services to residents of the 1st, 2nd, and 3rd Districts. The remaining 20 percent is distributed to entities providing services broadly throughout Prince George's County.

### FINALLY, WE PROVIDE REPORTS TO OUR FUNDER AND COUNTY GOVERNMENT.

These reports are presented to the County Executive, Prince George's County Council, and Peterson Companies and cover our fiscal and grantmaking activities.

### National Harbor Funds Distributed by Councilmanic Districts (2007-2012)





# *Placing Roots in the Ground: ECO City Farms*

Say your community had more fast-food venues than grocery stores, and you felt the devastation from the related health impacts—Type 2 diabetes, asthma, and obesity—were unacceptable. What would you do to encourage wellness and a healthier lifestyle?

Margaret Morgan-Hubbard, a longtime environmentalist who grew up in Prince George’s County, answered this challenge several years ago by founding ECO City Farms, an educational, not-for-profit enterprise in Prince George’s County that has come to serve as a model for sustainable local farming and a partner in The Community Foundation’s efforts to establish a more responsive and effective local safety net.

The plan for ECO City Farms, a grantee of the National Harbor Community Outreach Grant Fund, was to engage underserved youth in the Port Towns area in the creation of a better food system, one that would not only improve their nutrition and health but also introduce them to new vocations and help the community restore and preserve farmland.

Morgan-Hubbard first took note of the fact that the Port Towns area has for a long time included a high percentage of low-income, auto-less households with limited access to stores that sell healthy foods. She knew that, in many cases, residents lived in high-density suburban communities where it can be quite hard to get to a grocery store on foot, even if one is available.

ECO City Farms quickly took root thanks to Morgan-Hubbard and other community advocates, and to funding from several entities, including the National Harbor Fund.

The National Harbor Fund is a conduit for investing in high-quality community programs through The Community Foundation, whose many activities include funding and supporting social innovators like Morgan-Hubbard in their development and management of local nonprofits.

To advance its work, ECO City Farms has worked in conjunction with another National Harbor Fund grantee, End Time Harvest Ministries, which runs the Port Towns Youth Council, a youth-led program focused on wellness, advocacy, and youth employment.

“We worked with the Port Towns Youth Council because they are partners of ours in the Port Towns Community Health Partnership,” said Morgan-Hubbard, ECO City Farms’ executive director. “We wanted to increase our potential impact by linking our programs and reinforcing and buttressing the youth experiences and learning year-round.”

She added, “We take youth from the Port Towns Youth Council’s summer employment program and involve them in activities with Seed To Seed, a program we started to inspire healthy eating, deter obesity, and promote wellness.”

Serving alongside Morgan-Hubbard on the ECO City Farms board of directors is David Harrington, a former Maryland state senator, former Prince George’s County councilman, current president of the Prince George’s Chamber of Commerce and long-time supporter of The Community Foundation.

Harrington values the connections that The Community Foundation has made through the National Harbor Fund.

# “The most precious thing we have in life is time, so where we invest our time says something about our passion and where we want to see change.”

DAVID HARRINGTON, PRESIDENT AND CEO, PRINCE GEORGE'S CHAMBER OF COMMERCE



“[The grant fund] helps to bring various sectors together—government, community, business, nonprofits—to address important issues like health and wellness. Nonprofits, such as ECO City Farms, are essential towards helping residents understand the value of urban farming and producing food locally,” Harrington said.

He noted The Community Foundation’s role in fostering nonprofit effectiveness. “There are hundreds of communities in Prince George’s County,” he said. “Without the Foundation, we would never have been able to shore up key nonprofit organizations that can serve as important safety-net anchors throughout the county.”

A longtime resident of Prince George’s County, Harrington said his involvement with ECO City Farms reflects his personal priorities. “The most precious thing we have in life is time, so where we invest our time says something about our passion and where we want to see change,” he explained. “I invest time in ECO [City Farms] because, when I looked at the quality of food that low-income people have had to settle for, I realized we needed healthier food options. We don’t have to rely on mass-produced foods.”

A firm believer in sustainable agriculture, ECO City Farms operates a one-acre flagship farm in Edmonston, one of the four port towns on the Anacostia River. The farm is a solar- and geo-powered site that includes four custom greenhouses, called hoop houses. Instructors show youth how to grow vegetables, raise ducks and chickens for eggs, and keep bees.

Through ECO City Farms, the aspiring urban farmers learn how to grow healthy food, cultivate nutrient-rich soil, solve problems, work effectively in teams, and adopt a healthy lifestyle. Over three recent summers, different groups of youth have worked at the Edmonston farm, usually for six weeks at a time.

Kristen Spoales da Cruz, a middle school teacher and Bladensburg farm instructor, helped make the farm work “experiential and fun” but also tied it to what the youths learn in school. “She made curriculum connections to enhance learning and knowledge retention,” Morgan-Hubbard said.

“These kids are all from low-income working-class neighborhoods,” Morgan-Hubbard added in explaining the value of the summer farm experience. “Evidence shows that if young people don’t get learning reinforced, they forget what they’ve learned, and that the biggest loss of academic achievement has to do with how they spend their summers. If you don’t engage kids in learning and reinforce learning, they don’t retain knowledge.”

For students, the educational value of ECO City Farms is clear. But impact does not stop there, because students are not just beneficiaries; they are also active participants in expanding the local safety net, helping families increase nutrition awareness and access to healthy foods.





# *Sponsoring Success: Maryland Multicultural Youth Centers*

Children growing up in low-income, underserved communities often face stubborn obstacles. They may not have access to job training, face pressure from peers to join gangs, or lack adult supervision at home. But with the right supports and intervention, like those offered at Maryland Multicultural Youth Centers (MMYC), success is in reach.

The goal at a youth-oriented nonprofit should be to help those in need “successfully transition to adulthood,” according to Luisa Montero-Diaz, the managing director of MMYC, which was spawned by the D.C.-based Latin America Youth Center and receives support through the National Harbor Community Outreach Grant Fund for its Prince George’s County-based program. The center promotes healthy behaviors and, in general, empowers Latino and African-American youth through programs that address their social, academic, and career needs.

These needs are often fundamental, but they can be difficult to meet without community initiatives that attack youth problems at the grassroots level, like the MMYC programs in Langley Park and Riverdale. These programs play a valuable part in expanding educational opportunities for low-income youth and ultimately increasing their access to the local workforce—two key priorities of The Community Foundation that are being addressed in collaboration with our nonprofit partners.

Both MMYC centers offer out-of-school and in-school education programs as well as counseling, workforce training programs, GED preparation, job placement, and a gang-prevention initiative.

“The National Harbor funding helps us strengthen and expand the impact we have on young people’s lives,” said Montero-Diaz, who has been with MMYC since 2005.

Since 2008, MMYC has joined other LAYC centers in operating the innovative *Promotor* Pathway program, which connects each disconnected youth with a *promotor*—Spanish for “sponsor”—who serves as a mentor, advocate, and case management worker.

“The adult *promotor* may work intensely with the young person from four to six years to make sure he or she is doing well with all aspects of their life. The program helps those who would fall through cracks if they didn’t have help,” Montero-Diaz said.

In a nutshell, *Promotores* help transform the lives of at-risk youth by helping them to enroll in post-secondary education and obtain the skills necessary to achieve economic security. They will also check on the youth’s home situation, help with school work, and address instances of drug abuse or mental health issues.

The National Harbor Fund grants were used specifically to help clients aged 16–21 pursue paths to higher education and careers. Montero-Diaz says that each year, MMYC has been able to provide paid internships for 50 to 60 youths from low-income, high-need families.

She added, “The paid internships send a message to young people—‘If you do your part, we will help you find jobs.’”

The internships include two weeks of orientation during which job readiness skills are honed. Then MMYC monitors youth on-the-job to make sure the employer is satisfied with the intern's performance and is providing genuine learning opportunities.

National Harbor funding also helps cover certification training, transportation and food expenses that youth incur while in work training programs. "The grants have a great impact because they take our programs an extra step toward meeting youths' needs," says Montero-Diaz.

In advocating for her clients, Montero-Diaz often reaches out to local government agencies for support. Her success is directly tied to working with local leaders and public officials who all share a common goal of improving outcomes for children and youth. One such ally is Betty Hager-Francis, Prince George's County's deputy chief administrative officer responsible for health, human services, and education.

In October 2012, Montero-Diaz worked with Hager-Francis, who is also on the advisory board of The Community Foundation, on an initiative designed to promote quality schools, safe neighborhoods, a thriving economy, and quality healthcare in Langley Park. The initiative was spearheaded by the Transforming Neighborhoods Initiative, created by County

Executive Rushern Baker to improve the quality of life in Langley Park and five other Prince George's County communities.

"MMYC has been a very pro-active member of the Transforming Neighborhoods Initiative," Hager-Francis explained, "They've established a focus group of young people to help us determine issues we should address, advise us on strategies for preventing young people from joining gangs, and provide very capable AmeriCorps volunteers to assist with our community initiative."

Montero-Diaz and Hager-Francis know that one of the keys to helping underserved communities is to aggressively pursue, and then to put to best use, grant money for innovative workforce programs like *Promotor* Pathway.

Hager-Francis pointed out that the National Harbor Fund grants are "having a tremendous impact with respect to the community's ability to provide essential services in the areas of education, workforce development, and safety net for our most vulnerable populations." We wholeheartedly agree with Hager-Francis, and through programs like *Promotor* Pathway, we can expect more low-income youth in Prince George's County to advance through high school and emerge both college- and career-ready.



“The National Harbor funding helps us  
**strengthen and expand  
the impact we have on  
young people’s lives.”**

LUISA MONTERO-DIAZ, MANAGING DIRECTOR. MARYLAND MULTICULTURAL YOUTH CENTERS



# *A Community Anchor in Fort Washington: YMCA Potomac Overlook*

From personal experience, Manuel “Manny” Geraldo could tell you that an effective community foundation funds the organizations that are most closely linked to a community, and that among those who know the Prince George’s communities in Districts 7, 8, and 9, there are few organizations more responsive to community needs than the YMCA (Y) Potomac Overlook in Fort Washington.

“The Y is an anchor in the community,” said Geraldo, a lawyer and longtime advocate for underserved communities throughout Prince George’s County. His expansive community knowledge provides an important vantage point in helping the Y and other nonprofits shape their programs, ensuring they are meaningful and relevant. “It’s not just a gym, but a facility that is multifunctional and multigenerational, providing a variety of community services and serving as a critical geographic base for community activities.”

The Y Potomac Overlook is one of 17 Y branches located throughout Washington, D.C., suburban Maryland, and Northern Virginia, with the YMCA of Metropolitan Washington serving as its corporate office. As a National Harbor Community Outreach Grant Fund grantee, the Y Potomac Overlook serves as a key partner supporting The Community Foundation’s strategy of providing essential safety net services to all community members, regardless of their age or income level.



Like Geraldo, Fitzroy Smith can attest to the Y Potomac Overlook’s role as an anchor institution. Smith, who sits on the board of directors of the YMCA of Metropolitan Washington in D.C., said that to serve the residents of Fort Washington and surrounding communities, this branch searches continually for ways to bridge gaps between the well-served and underserved, pursuing youth development, healthy living, and social responsibility as its three main focus areas.

The primary vehicle for bridging those gaps is the multifaceted programming that the Y Potomac Overlook offers. One such program is Caring for Community. This program, Smith noted, “enables men, women and children to take part in life-changing programs they otherwise couldn’t afford.” Programs such as

A fully supported YMCA means its programs can better fulfill the organizational goal of **“giving neighbors all the resources they need for physical, mental, social and spiritual enrichment.”**

FITZROY SMITH, MEMBER OF BOARD OF DIRECTORS, YMCA METROPOLITAN WASHINGTON

pre-school, summer camp, child care programs, and membership and program fees are supported through the National Harbor Fund. All of these programs are based on the premise that access to an array of programs and services addressing the “whole needs” of individuals and families help to ensure the community’s overall wellbeing.

In keeping with the YMCA tradition, many activities at the Potomac Overlook branch foster physical and emotional wellness. They include art and dance programs, camping trips, walking and running clubs, and fitness classes for whole families.

The Y Potomac Overlook also serves the community at both ends of life’s spectrum. For the very young, A YMCA’s Healthy Kids Day® takes place across the region in April and features free community events that emphasize active play and educational activities. At the events, children learn about healthy living and are reminded to continue exercising and learning during summer vacation.

The preschool and school-age programs even include an annual “Thingamajig Convention.” Kids compete for prizes by crafting inventions made from recycled materials. Workshops at the event help kids learn about nutrition, aeronautics, green energy, and other fields.

Child safety and freedom from sexual abuse is another priority for the Y Potomac Overlook, and to that end, Smith reports that in 2013, over 3,000 Prince George’s County residents will



learn to identify, prevent, and appropriately respond to child sexual abuse upon completing the groundbreaking Darkness to Light abuse prevention training.

At the other end of the spectrum, the elderly in Fort Washington and surrounding communities greatly benefit from the Y’s offerings. Retirees participate in the Zesty Trailblazers program, also supported by the National Harbor Fund, which provides opportunities to develop new friendships and relationships, and engage in cultural activities that stimulate the mind, body, and spirit.

Because of Zesty Trailblazers and the many other programs, the Y Potomac Overlook is, in Smith’s words, “the community’s go-to center for low- to moderate-income residents” seeking quality child care and healthy living. A fully supported Y means its programs can better fulfill the organizational goal of “giving neighbors all the resources they need for physical, mental, social and spiritual enrichment.” It also means The Community Foundation can rely on another key partner to realize its mission that all Prince George’s County residents have access to essential programs and services.





# *A Web of Support for College-Bound Youth: Hillside Work-Scholarship Connection*

Ask Dr. Charlene Dukes about the success of Hillside Work-Scholarship Connection (HW-SC), and she'll probably mention the program's unique "360-degree web of support" that helps youth excel in high school and beyond.

Dukes, who is President of Prince George's Community College and a member of HW-SC's advisory board, lists a constellation of supports the organization provides to students: "youth advocate mentoring, family engagement, year-round enrichment programs, college scholarships, a youth employment training academy, on-the-job mentoring, and post-secondary support."

The HW-SC approach is holistic, founded on providing at-risk youth with an array of wrap-around services. The program has had tremendous impact since it was introduced in Prince George's County in 2008. "Growth has been phenomenal," says Karene Brodie, the organization's executive director. Eighty-three percent of the program's students graduated or were promoted in the 2010-2011 school year. And in Prince George's County, where over 2,600 high school students may drop out in a given year, it's clear why such a resource is so vital, and why it would receive support from the National Harbor Community Outreach Grant Fund.

HW-SC is an affiliate of the Hillside Family of Agencies, a family and children's services organization. The HW-SC mission is to help at-risk urban youth keep up with their studies, graduate high school, and acquire post-graduation career skills. The program in Prince George's County draws funding from diverse sources, including the National Harbor Fund.

**83%** of the program's students graduated or were promoted in the 2010-2011 school year.

Originally based in upstate New York, HW-SC branched out to Prince George's County after local government officials, business leaders, and community leaders identified the program model as a smart investment in the County's youth. By awarding a grant to HW-SC, The Community Foundation identified yet another partner able to effectively help low-income youth prepare for post-secondary opportunities and family-sustaining careers.



The Prince George's HW-SC program started with 30 students and has grown to now serving more than 200 students in Drew Freeman and G. James Gholson middle schools and Suitland, Fairmont Heights and Central high schools.

Whether students voluntarily sign up for HW-SC or they are referred by an adult, the assistance they receive aids their transformation into accomplished scholars and dependable future employees. Enrollment can occur as early as middle school and can continue up to two years after high school graduation.

A cornerstone of the program is the Youth Advocate, a mentor who is always on call to help a young person develop good work habits and become productive. Advocates develop individual plans for students and work in tandem with their parents, guardians, and teachers.

A grant from the National Harbor Fund has helped fund the program's Youth Employment Training Academy. According to Brodie, students who meet HW-SC "Triple A's" standards—positive attitude, good attendance and strong academics—are eligible for the 25-hour training course.

"The training provides students with the opportunity to participate in job search and application readiness, mock interviews, and skill building in such areas as computer, customer service, communication, teamwork, and basic transferrable skills," Brodie said.

"Once the training is complete, students may earn part-time employment with local businesses," she added. "Employment exposes HW-SC students to career experiences and enables



them to develop marketable job skills as well as earn money toward college tuition." And of course, when those students, equipped with postsecondary credentials, decide to settle permanently in Prince George's County, the local economy enjoys all the benefits associated with a qualified workforce.

The program continues to have strong and loyal supporters in high places, including United States Congresswoman Donna Edwards (D-Dist. 4), a resident of Fort Washington. "[The students] turn themselves into academic success stories," Edwards told the *Washington Post* in 2010. Her statement still holds true three years later.

When students equipped with postsecondary credentials decide to settle permanently in Prince George's County, the **local economy enjoys all the benefits associated with a qualified workforce.**

# Opportunities *for* Investment

The Community Foundation would like to acknowledge the Peterson Companies for their generous support and commitment to the residents of Prince George's County, Maryland. Now that we've shared a few stories illustrating how that support and commitment have benefited local residents, it's time to think about how we as a county can sustain and even expand our impact.

This county is at its best when each of us—individuals, organizations, institutions, and corporations—work collectively to ensure equity, access, and opportunity for all. With The Community Foundation as a major ally and partner, there are many ways to help advance this important work and make Prince George's County not only a great place to live and work, but a model of effective corporate involvement for the region.

Considering the long road ahead, the work of ensuring economic security for children and families in Prince George's County has just begun. But our community has made that first big step, investing in and advocating for quality education, job opportunities, and safety net services. Through more effective partnerships and smart, compassionate investments, we can continue to advance effective solutions, expand our impact, and ultimately fulfill the vision of a community transformed.

## *How You Can Help*

### **1) PRESERVE THE NATIONAL HARBOR COMMUNITY OUTREACH GRANT FUND.**

In the preceding pages, you have learned about many significant wins for children and families in Prince George's County, and the pivotal role that the National Harbor Fund has played as a source of consistent financial support, with The Community Foundation as fund manager. To continue achieving those wins, we urge all businesses located at National Harbor to help preserve this funding vehicle by making an annual contribution. With that support, the National Harbor Fund can maintain its strong track record for improving the lives of residents in communities surrounding the National Harbor and advancing economic security in Prince George's County.

### **2) ESTABLISH YOUR OWN COMMUNITY BENEFIT FUND SIMILAR TO THE NATIONAL HARBOR FUND AT THE COMMUNITY FOUNDATION.**

Many businesses already know the returns that strategic social investments in targeted communities can yield for themselves and the general public. We invite all corporate entities doing business in the County to support The Community Foundation and work with us to demonstrate, first-hand, the power that strategic investments in the community can yield to solve real issues and problems and contribute to the corporate bottom line.

### **3) CONTRIBUTE TO THE COMMUNITY FOUNDATION'S COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP FUND.**

Never has there been such an overwhelming need for our community of givers—individuals, families, and organizations—to come together to increase economic security for all residents of Prince George's County. Please consider making a donation to our Community Leadership Fund, which allows us to identify and tackle our community's most pressing issues, from education to workforce development to preserving the safety net for those who need it most.

# National Harbor Fund Grantee Organizations

Accokeek Foundation  
ACE Mentor Program of the Greater Washington Metro Area\*  
African American Male Achievers Network/Kappa Alpha  
Psi Fraternity  
Alexandria Seaport Foundation  
Alice Ferguson Foundation  
All Shades of Pink  
Arts for the Aging  
Big Brothers Big Sisters of the National Capital Area\*  
Black Authors Foundation  
Body Moves, LLC c/o Soul In Motion  
Camp Fire Patuxent Area Council\*  
CASA de Maryland  
Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of Washington\*  
Centro de Apoyo Familiar  
Christmas in April Prince George's  
City Gate  
College Summit-National Capital Region\*  
Community Crisis Services  
Community Legal Services  
Community Ministry of Prince George's County  
Community Services Agency of Washington\*  
Community Support Systems  
Computer Spot Career Development  
Covenant House\*  
Crossroads Community Food Network  
Cultural Academy for Excellence  
DanceMakers  
Daughter for the Day  
Deamonte Driver Dental Project  
District Heights Boys and Girls Club of Prince George's County  
Donald Taylor Aeronautical Academy  
ECO City Farms  
End Time Harvest Ministries  
Engaged University  
Family Crisis Center of Prince George's County  
Family Health and Education Institute  
First Generation College Bound  
The Foundation for the Advancement of Music & Education  
From Rags To Riches  
Functional Fitness 4 Kids  
GapBuster  
Greenbelt Association for the Visual Arts

Hillside Work-Scholarship Connection  
Housing Initiative Partnership  
International Life Sciences Institute  
Kappa Epsilon Lambda Education Foundation  
Katie Able Foundation  
Latin American Youth Center/Maryland Multicultural  
Youth Centers  
Laurel Boys and Girls Club  
Liberty's Promise  
Lincolnia Education Foundation  
Literacy Council of Prince George's County  
Little Foot Daycare  
Living Classrooms  
Maryland Community Connection  
Maryland Council on Economic Education  
MarylandCAN  
Mentoring to Manhood  
Metropolitan Saturday Academy  
Minority Access  
National Children's Museum  
Nick's Place  
Patriots Technology Training Center  
Port Towns Community Development Corporation  
Prince George's Arts and Humanities Council  
Prince George's Child Resource Center  
Prince George's Tennis & Education Foundation  
Prince George's Volunteer Center  
Reaching Objectives through Joint Actions  
SHABACH! Ministries  
Songs with Meaning  
St. Ann's Center for Children, Youth and Families  
Student Conservation Association  
Take Charge Juvenile Diversion Program  
The Training Source  
Top Banana Home Delivered Groceries\*  
Trails for Youth.Org  
United Communities Against Poverty  
University System of Maryland Foundation  
Walker Mill Community Development Corporation  
World Arts Focus dba Joe's Movement Emporium  
YMCA of Metropolitan Washington/YMCA Potomac Overlook  
The Zora Neale Hurston/Richard Wright Foundation

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