

Maryland Agricultural Education and Rural Development Assistance Fund

Fiscal Year 2014 Annual Report



Photo credit: Edwin Remsburg

Prepared by the Rural Maryland Council
June 2014

The Maryland Agricultural Education and Rural Development Assistance Fund (MAERDAF) is funded through the State of Maryland's Annual Operating Budget. MAERDAF provides small grants to nonprofit organizations and community colleges located in the State's rural areas. In Fiscal Year 2014, MAERDAF received \$167,000 in appropriations and awarded 9 grants to rural-serving organizations.

Overview: Nonprofit organizations and community colleges in our State's rural regions often lack access to the public and private sector philanthropic opportunities they need to obtain important programmatic and special project funding. Moreover, local governments, especially those in economically distressed rural regions, do not have the financial wherewithal to fully address these important developmental needs; consequently, a serious resource deficit exists where the need has often been the greatest.

The Maryland Agricultural Education and Rural Development Assistance Fund (MAERDAF) was established in 2000 to offer financial assistance to rural nonprofit organizations that promote statewide and regional planning, economic and community development, and agricultural and forestry education. In addition, MAERDAF offers grants to community colleges that support small and agricultural businesses with enhanced training and technical assistance.

Funding for MAERDAF grants comes from a General Fund appropriation through the Governor and General Assembly, as well as Special Funds from horse racing revenues, which typically fluctuate from year to year. For FY 2014, the total grant pool was \$189,402.14. (See details below.)

Grantees are selected by a six-member interagency Grant Review Board whose members are appointed by the Maryland Department of Agriculture, Maryland Department of Business and Economic Development, Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development, Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, Maryland Department of Natural Resources, and the Rural Maryland Council. The decisions of the Grant Review Board are binding.

2014 MAERDAF Grant Review Board:

- *Ann Walsh, State Office of Rural Health, Department of Health and Mental Hygiene*
- *Mindie Burgoyne, Upper Shore Senior Business Development Representative, Department of Business and Economic Development*
- *Dona Sorce, Program Manager, Department of Housing and Community Development*
- *Emily Wilson, Director of Land Acquisition and Planning, Department of Natural Resources*
- *Karen Fedor, Senior Agricultural Marketing Specialist, Department of Agriculture*
- *Sharan Marshall, Director, Southern Maryland Regional Library Association*

MAERDAF Coordinator:

- *Charlotte Davis, Executive Director, Rural Maryland Council*

Between FY 2001 and FY 2014, the MAERDAF program has awarded \$2,815,866 in grants to 57 rural-serving nonprofit organizations. The Rural Maryland Council was pleased to receive \$167,000 in a General Fund Appropriation for MAERDAF in Fiscal Year 2014. At the end of Fiscal Year 2013, the RMC received \$22,402.14 in returned funds from FY 2013 projects. This funding was made available for consideration during Fiscal Year 2014. Three grant projects that were initially only partially funded were able to receive full funding in Fiscal Year 2014.

The average MAERDAF grant over the life of the program has been \$16,842. In FY 2014, the average grant amount was \$20,898. During FY 2014, the MAERDAF Grants Review Board received 30 grant applications requesting \$577,888.94 in funding. The Board selected nine rural-serving nonprofit organizations to receive \$188,079 in available funding.

FY 2014 MAERDAF GRANTEES				
Applicant	Category	Area Served	Amount Requested	Amount Approved
Energetics Technology Center	Econ Dev	Southern MD	\$25,000	\$25,000
Evergreen Heritage Center Foundation	Ag/Forestry	Western MD	\$21,705	\$21,705
LEAD Maryland	Ag/Forestry	Statewide	\$25,000	\$25,000
Maintaining Active Citizens	Health	Eastern Shore	\$24,729	\$24,729
Maryland Association of Soil Conservation Districts	Ag/Forestry	Statewide	\$14,268	\$14,268
Salisbury University – Small Business and Technology Development Center	Econ Dev	Eastern Shore	\$17,327	\$17,327
Southern Maryland Agricultural Development Commission	Ag/Forestry	Southern Maryland	\$15,650	\$15,650
Upper Shore Regional Council	Ag/Forestry	Eastern Shore	\$24,900	\$24,900
Western Maryland Regional Library	Comm. Dev	Western MD	\$19,500	\$19,500
TOTAL			\$188,079	\$188,079

The MAERDAF Program has helped many rural-serving organizations establish or continue programs and projects that have had a significant and positive impact on Rural Maryland. In addition, the modest state investment in the MAERDAF program has helped the nonprofit sector leverage a substantial amount of private and federal financial support. The MAERDAF Board is required to give preference to organizations that leverage non-state matching funds. Moreover, MAERDAF has helped many of these nonprofit service providers develop institutional capacity, improve grant-writing skills, and enhance the internal development of volunteer boards and staff.

FY 2014 MAERDAF Grantees By Region				
	# Grantees	Amount Requested	Total Awarded	% of grant funds awarded
Eastern Shore	3	\$66,956	\$66,956	36%
Southern Maryland	2	\$40,650	\$40,650	22%
Western Maryland	2	\$41,205	\$41,205	22%
Statewide	2	\$39,268	\$39,268	20%
Total	9	\$188,079	\$188,079	100%

FY 2014 MAERDAF Grantees by Category				
	# Grantees	Amount Requested	Total Awarded	% of grant funds awarded
Agricultural and forestry	5	\$ 101,523	\$101,523	54%
Community Development	1	\$19,500	\$19,500	10%
Health and Economic Development	3	\$67,056	\$67,056	36%
Total	9	\$188,079	\$188,079	100%

FY 2014 – MAERDAF Grantees Scopes of Work

Energetics Technology Center – Award Amount: \$25,000 (Amount Requested: \$25,000)

Summary: Energetics Technology Center is a nonprofit organization dedicated to helping entrepreneurs and technology oriented businesses in Southern Maryland start and grow successful, sustainable companies that compete in the global marketplace.

Grant funds were to be used to determine the feasibility of and develop a plan for an agricultural based technology transfer assistance program. The requested funds will be used to document high potential agricultural technologies and cultivars from the USDA’s Agriculture Research Office of Technology Transfer for use, licensing, and commercialization by entrepreneurs and small ag-related businesses in Southern Maryland’s tri-county region.



Rotocraft technology being studied for unmanned aerial agriculture

Evergreen Heritage Center Foundation, Inc. – Award Amount: \$21,705 (Amount Requested: \$21,705)

Summary: The Evergreen Heritage Center Foundation is dedicated to utilizing experiential learning to provide rural Maryland’s young people with the knowledge and practical experience to sustain themselves and the environment, and to compete in today’s economy.

Grant funds were used to provide experiential learning in sustainable agriculture and forestry to students and increase their environmental literacy. The Foundation was able to purchase a portable small-scale sawmill that can be moved to create lumber on the site of a logging or tree removal operation. Portable sawmills became popular in the U.S. in the 1970’s with increased interest in small woodlots and self-sufficiency. In 1982, Wood-Mizer company created the band-saw mill, which uses a band blade instead of a circular blade. This reduces the amount of waste sawdust and increases the usable lumber from each log.



Small-scale sawmills allow the user to create lumber on-site, eliminating transportation costs and allowing the use of local products. It also enables creation of custom products, such as uniquely sized lumber. Portable sawmills are a great addition to low-impact logging and forest management plans.

LEAD Maryland Foundation, Inc. – Award Amount: \$25,000 (Amount Requested: \$25,000)

Summary: LEAD Maryland Foundation, Inc. is a non-profit organization dedicated to identifying and developing leadership for agriculture, natural resources, and rural communities.

Grant funds allow LEAD Maryland Foundation to continue work with the current class of Fellows. The Fellows are enrolled into a two-year program to increase their assurance, skills, and knowledge for mobilizing people to address the above-mentioned examples of change, and other relevant issues. The grant funds will be used for Seminars 4, 5 and 6.

Maintaining Active Citizens, Inc.(MAC) – Award Amount: \$24,729 (Amount Requested: \$24,729)

Summary: MAC, Inc. is a nonprofit organization dedicated to offering older persons lives of independence, dignity, and choice. MAC, Inc. is committed to preserving the quality of life for seniors in the community.

Grant funds will be used to offer a program entitled “Living Well with Chronic Disease and Chronic Pain,” a health promotion program to improve quality of life for the seniors residing in the rural Lower and Mid Eastern Shore region. Specifically, the grantee will construct a community garden to provide physical therapy for patients as well as instruction on the preparation of healthy foods.

**Maryland Association of Soil Conservation Districts – Award Amount: \$14,268
(Amount Requested: \$14,268)**

Summary: The mission of the Maryland Association of Soil Conservation Districts is to promote practical and effective soil, water, and related natural resources programs to all citizens through individual conservation districts on a voluntary basis through leadership, education, cooperation, and local direction.

This proposal seeks operational funding for the Maryland Envirothon Program to be held on June 18 and 19, 2014. The Envirothon is a series of environmental competitions in which teams of high school students move beyond the classroom in order to solve real-life environmental problems in a natural setting.

**Salisbury University – Small Business and Technology Development Center –
Award Amount: \$17,327 (Amount Requested: \$17,327)**

Summary: The Small Business and Technology Development Center helps our state’s small businesses succeed by providing high quality, confidential consulting, cost effective training, and valuable business resources. Located in Salisbury University on the Eastern Shore, the center promotes a culture of entrepreneurship in our state.

Grant funds are to be used for the Lower Eastern Shore Commercial Fishermen and For-hire Boat Operators Training program. This program will offer targeted business training to working watermen and fishermen to improve their business operations and help them prepare for future disasters such as Hurricane Sandy. The Small Business and Technology Development Center conducted the first of two planned Watermen’s business training seminars at the Commercial Watermen’s Expo in Ocean City, Maryland on January 18, 2014.

**Southern Maryland Agriculture Development Commission – Award Amount: \$17,400
(Amount Requested: \$17,400)**

Summary: The Southern Maryland Agricultural Development Commission promotes diverse, market-driven agricultural enterprises which, coupled with agricultural land preservation, will preserve Southern Maryland’s environmental resources and rural character while keeping the region’s farmland productive and the agricultural economy vibrant.

Grant funds will be used to encourage farmers markets to accept SNAP benefits and utilize a wireless EBT system. They will also to provide administrative support, stipends for onsite management, and outreach and support for incentive dollars.

Upper Shore Regional Council – Award Amount: \$24,900 (Amount Requested: \$24,900)

Summary: The Upper Shore Regional Council fosters regional planning and development for Cecil, Kent, and Queen Anne’s counties.

Grant funds will enable the Upper Shore Regional Council to produce a smart phone application of the Upper Shore Harvest Directory which markets and promotes agricultural producers in the region. They will also be used to provide social media and marketing training for agriculture producers.

Western Maryland Regional Library – Award Amount: \$19,500 (Amount Requested: \$19,500)

Summary: The Western Maryland Regional Library provides services to the public libraries in Garrett, Allegany and Washington Counties. These include training for library staff, web design, online subscriptions (magazine and encyclopedia databases), books and DVDs.

The Western Maryland Regional Library proposed a digitalization project of historical documents from Washington and Allegany Counties. The grant included funds for the purchase of an overhead scanner. Scanned documents will be made available through the Western Maryland Historical Library’s website at www.whilbr.org.

Returned Funds from FY 2013

Three Fiscal Year 2013 MAERDAF grants returned unused funding to the Rural Maryland Council. A total of \$22,402.14 was made available to Fiscal Year 2014 grant applicants.

Allegany College of Maryland – Amount Returned: \$5,476.89 (Award Amount: \$16,812)
Grant funds were to be used to facilitate communications between the college and high schools throughout rural Maryland that may not be aware of the college’s Forest Technology Program or careers in the profession.

Lower Eastern Shore Heritage Council – Amount Returned: \$6,241.77 (Award Amount: \$18,610)
Grant funds were to be used to strengthen public knowledge and economic development through heritage development. The grant funds were also to be used to develop a marketing program, offer a regional workshop, and enable a more comprehensive presence at events.

Southern Maryland Agriculture Development Commission – Amount Returned: \$10,683.48 (Award Amount: \$17,400)
Grant funds were to be used to encourage farmers’ markets to accept SNAP benefits and utilize a wireless EBT system. They were also to provide administrative support, stipends for onsite management, outreach and support for incentive dollars. The Commission explained that unused funds were due to less farmers’ market signing up for the program than anticipated.

Leveraging

Priority is given to applicants that have secured matching funds from non-state sources; however, matching funds are not required. Federal funds are considered matching funds. Listed below are the matches listed by grantee.

FY 2014 Grantee	Amount of MAERDAF Grant	Amount of Matching Funds
Energetics Technology Center	\$ 25,000.00	\$ 13,864.00
Evergreen Heritage Foundation	\$ 21,705.00	\$ 23,357.00
LEAD Maryland	\$ 25,000.00	\$ 179,000.00
MAC, Inc.	\$ 24,729.00	\$ 12,100.00
Maryland Association of Soil Conservation Districts	\$ 14,268.00	\$ 26,885.00
Salisbury University - Small Business and Technology Development Center	\$ 17,327.00	\$ 0.00
Southern Maryland Agricultural Development Commission of the Tri-County Council for Southern Maryland	\$ 15,650.00	\$ 46,619.00
Upper Shore Regional Council	\$ 24,900.00	\$ 12,500.00
Western Maryland Regional Library	\$ 19,500.00	\$ 0.00
TOTAL	\$ 188,079.00	\$ 314,325.00

On or before June 30 of each year, in accordance with §2-1246 of the State Government Article, the RMC submits a written report to both the Governor and the General Assembly. The report includes:

1. the number of grants made during the fiscal year;
2. the names of the recipients of the grants;
3. the specific purpose of each grant awarded

Project dates for MAERDAF Grant recipients run August 1, 2013 through June 30, 2014. All grantees submitted interim reports on or before February 17, 2014. The Grant Agreement as approved does not require a final report until July 15, 2014. Additional grant documentation is available upon request.

The RMC makes its best effort to provide a complete and accurate report.

MAERDAF is administered by the Rural Maryland Council, an independent state agency and federally designated State Rural Development Council under the USDA's National Rural Development Partnership. Its mission is to bring together federal, state, county and municipal government officials as well as representatives of the for-profit and nonprofit sectors to identify challenges unique to rural communities and to craft public policy, programmatic or regulatory solutions. As a collaborative partnership, the RMC operates under the guidance of a 40-member Executive Board, in a nonpartisan and nondiscriminatory manner.

For more information, visit the RMC's website at: www.rural.maryland.gov

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All MAERDAF Grantees -- FY 2001 to FY 2014

Grantee Organization	FY 2001	FY 2002	FY 2003	FY 2004	FY 2005	FY 2007	FY2008	FY 2009	FY 2010	FY 2011	FY 2013	FY 2014	Total
Allegany College					\$15,000						\$16,812		\$31,812
Arc Northern Chesapeake Region								\$5,700					\$5,700
Carroll Community College (AATC)	\$15,875	\$7,220											\$23,095
Cecil Community College					\$14,950								\$14,950
Center for Children						\$13,100			\$14,700				\$27,800
Chesapeake Bay Region Technical Center of Excellence			\$15,000										\$15,000
Chesapeake College								\$5,000					\$5,000
Chesapeake Fields Insitute	\$15,000	\$50,000	\$25,000	\$10,000		\$11,300							\$111,300
Chester Bridge Foundation, Inc.					\$7,000	\$8,750							\$15,750
College of Southern MD			\$25,000	\$10,000	\$10,000			\$5,875					\$50,875
College of Southern MD								(\$2,962)					(\$2,962)
Community Foundation of the Eastern Shore								\$14,500					\$14,500
Delmarva Advisory Council	\$20,000												\$20,000
Delmarva Education Foundation						\$15,000	\$12,869	\$22,252					\$50,121
Eastern Shore Entrepreneurship Center						\$9,800			\$17,962	\$10,000	\$14,098		\$51,860
Energetics Technology Center												\$25,000	\$25,000
Evergreen Heritage Center Foundation										\$16,200	\$18,749	\$21,705	\$56,654
Friend of the Grape							\$20,000						\$20,000
Future Harvest, Inc.	\$20,000	\$18,500	\$20,000	\$5,000			\$2,330						\$65,830
Garrett Community College (AAATC)	\$20,000	\$22,000	\$20,000	\$10,000	\$9,500								\$81,500
Girl Scouts of the Chesapeake Bay						\$10,000	\$5,000						\$15,000
Habitat for Humanity Choptank										\$13,000			\$13,000
Habitat for Humanity of Talbot County						\$32,000	\$21,500	\$30,000	\$12,000				\$95,500
Harry R. Hughes Center for Agro-Ecology										\$3,000			\$3,000
LEAD Maryland	\$23,500	\$30,000	\$29,180	\$14,000	\$14,000	\$35,000	\$32,000	\$30,000	\$12,000	\$8,000	\$25,000	\$25,000	\$277,680
Lower Eastern Shore Heritage Council											\$18,610		\$18,610
Lower Shore Broadband Cooperative						\$12,958	\$20,000						\$32,958
Lower Shore Child Care Resource Ctr						\$9,362							\$9,362
Maintaining Active Citizens, Inc.(MAC, Inc.)							\$13,105	\$25,000	\$26,000	\$3,200	\$25,000	\$24,729	\$117,034
MD Agricultural Education Fund	\$20,000	\$28,400	\$28,000	\$5,000	\$5,000	\$32,660							\$119,060
MD Association of Soil Conservation Districts (Environthon)	\$20,000	\$17,200	\$6,500	\$10,000	\$7,900	\$10,495	\$9,800	\$19,000	\$7,000			\$14,268	\$122,163
MD Capital Enterprises						\$19,000	\$21,625			\$15,000	\$12,556		\$68,181
MD Center for Community Development (Rural Training)	\$20,000	\$20,000											\$40,000
MD Dairy Shrine									\$1,750				\$1,750
MD Eastern Shore Resource Conservation & Development Council	\$6,000												\$6,000
MD FFA Foundation, Inc.						\$6,500	\$8,000						\$14,500
MD Forests Association	\$20,000	\$20,000					\$5,000	\$5,000	\$1,500	\$3,500			\$55,000
MD Organic Food & Farming Assn	\$16,625												\$16,625
MD Rural Development Corporation	\$50,000	\$47,500	\$47,000	\$10,400	\$13,208	\$25,000	\$22,510	\$22,550		\$8,200			\$246,368
MD Rural Health Association	\$40,000	\$40,000	\$35,000	\$10,000	\$4,000	\$5,000		\$4,173	\$18,000	\$8,000	\$10,000		\$174,173
MD Rural Water Association	\$21,000												\$21,000
Medbank of MD						\$15,000							\$15,000
Microenterprise Council of MD			\$30,000	\$10,000	\$29,600	\$5,000	\$12,000	\$12,500					\$99,100
Mid-Shore Regional Council				\$10,000		\$24,000	\$24,000	\$24,000	\$19,000	\$13,215	\$18,731		\$132,946
Mountain Laurel Medical Center							\$44,000						\$44,000
Rural Maryland Foundation										\$4,600			\$4,600
Salisbury University - Small Business and Technology Development Center												\$17,327	\$17,327
Salisbury Univeristy - BEACON		\$24,320											\$24,320
Southern MD Agricultural Development Commission											\$17,400	\$15,650	\$33,050
Southern MD Resource Conservation and Development Council	\$6,000	\$21,000	\$15,000										\$42,000

All MAERDAF Grantees -- FY 2001 to FY 2014

Grantee Organization	FY 2001	FY 2002	FY 2003	FY 2004	FY 2005	FY 2007	FY2008	FY 2009	FY 2010	FY 2011	FY 2013	FY 2014	Total
Tri-County Council for Southern MD			\$30,000							\$3,685			\$33,685
Tri-County Council of Western MD	\$7,000				\$500	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$25,000		\$7,500			\$60,000
Tri-State Community Health Center			\$30,000	\$17,792									\$47,792
UMES - Rural Development Center (Distressed Community Econ Dev)			\$50,000		\$12,000								\$62,000
Upper Shore Regional Council				\$10,000	\$5,000	\$10,000	\$5,000	\$13,600	\$15,000	\$12,900	\$19,000	\$24,900	\$115,400
Western MD Regional Library												\$19,500	\$19,500
Western MD Resource Conservation and Development Council	\$6,000												\$6,000
Total Grants	\$347,000	\$346,140	\$405,680	\$132,192	\$147,658	\$319,925	\$288,739	\$261,188	\$144,912	\$130,000	\$195,956	\$188,079	\$2,907,469
Average Grant Amount	\$19,278	\$26,626	\$27,045	\$10,169	\$10,547	\$15,235	\$16,041	\$15,364	\$13,174	\$8,667	\$17,814	\$20,898	\$16,738