



RURAL MARYLAND COUNCIL FISCAL YEAR 2022 ANNUAL REPORT



Cover photos courtesy of the following grantees - Maryland Agricultural Education Foundation, Chesapeake Housing Mission, Inc., Preservation Maryland, Evergreen Heritage Center, STEAM Onward, LEAD Maryland Foundation, Adkins Arboretum, Allegany County Human Resources Development Commission, Inc., People for Change, and the Fair Hill Foundation.

To Our Fellow Marylanders

As an independent state agency, the Rural Maryland Council must report each year to the Governor and the Maryland General Assembly on its activities and grant expenditures. We are pleased to share with you the Rural Maryland Council's Fiscal Year 2022 Annual Report. The State's Fiscal Year began on July 1, 2021 and ended on June 30, 2022. This report documents the grant expenditures as well as the activities of the Council during this time.

Thanks to the support of Governor Hogan and the Maryland General Assembly, the Rural Maryland Council received historic funding of the Rural Maryland Prosperity Investment Fund in the amount of \$6,150,000 in the Fiscal Year 2022 State's Operating Budget along with the Maryland Agricultural Education and Rural Development Assistance Fund which received an additional \$118,485. These programs are investing in our state's rural communities, creating economic opportunities and improving the quality of life. A full list of grant awards is included within this report.

In Fiscal Year 2022, the Council awarded a total of 59 grants with a total of \$6,150,000 distributed. Under the Rural Maryland Prosperity Investment Fund, the Council distributed 5 grants to the Regional Councils in the amount of \$2,000,000, 17 Health Care grants in the amount of \$966,449, 5 Entrepreneurship grants in the amount of \$647,763 and 6 Infrastructure grants in the amount of \$1,125,000. The Council awarded \$910,788 to 30 grants under the Maryland Agricultural Education and Rural Development Assistance Fund.

The Council received \$500,000 for general operating expenses, the majority of which was spent on staff salaries (\$396,893.56).

Looking Ahead

The return of the Health Committee. Under Committee Chair Sara Seitz, the Committee will examine Non-Emergency Medical Transportation. The Health Committee will convene three roundtables in Fiscal Year 2023 to identify challenges in providing transportation to doctor's appointments and pharmacy visits.

Broadband Symposium - Planned for Spring of 2023, the Symposium will focus on the difficulties of connecting rural Marylanders to high speed internet, and finding the most efficient ways of addressing the connectivity issues that face rural Maryland.

Looking to expand research - The RMC, in partnership with the Rural Maryland Foundation, will be looking to develop a rural thinktank to come up with best possible solutions to address the issues facing rural Maryland. Part of this process will include more in depth research into the current issues facing rural Maryland and the best possible solution in addressing them.

Relaunch Rural Housing Committee - As rural Marylanders struggle to find housing that is affordable yet adequate for themselves or their families, the RMC will relaunch the Rural Housing Committee to help address the affordability and accessibility issues of housing in rural areas.

As a collaborative partnership, the RMC operates in a nonpartisan and nondiscriminatory manner. Policy-makers and managers from stakeholder agencies and organizations at all levels of government and the private sector are valued participants. Where practical, the decision-making undertaken by the RMC is made by reaching consensus.

Real change only happens when an organization makes a strategic decision to go directly to the source to discover the real issues and works with the people who really understand what's going on to solve problems. Consider being part of this important work and become an RMC member today by visiting our website rural.maryland.gov. RMC meetings and events are open to anyone who is interested in improving rural communities.

Sincerely,



John Hartline
RMC Chair



Charlotte Davis
Executive Director



RMC Executive Director Charlotte Davis poses with the Governor Elect Wes Moore for a selfie during the 2022 Tawes Crab and Clam Bake in Crisfield, Maryland.

Executive Board Members

RMC Officers

- Chair - **John Hartline**, Executive Director of Tri County Council for Southern Maryland
- RMC Second Vice-Chair- **Chris Benzing**, Executive Director of the Maryland Rural Development Corporation
- First Vice-Chair - **Greg Padgham**, Executive Director of Tri-County Council for the Lower Eastern Shore of Maryland Executive

Executive Committee

- Joint Planning and Development Committee - **Mike Thielke**, Executive Director of Eastern Shore Entrepreneurship Center
- RMC Legislative Committee - **Lindsay Thompson** - Thompson Ag Consulting
- RMC Agriculture Committee - **Matthew Tefteau**, Government Affairs Manager of Choptank of Electric Cooperative
- RMPF Chair - **Susan O'Neill**, Executive Director of Upper Shore Regional Council
- Representing Rural Maryland Foundation- **Daniel Rider**, Maryland Forest Program Director of Maryland Department of Natural Resources
- Immediate Past Chair - **Scott Warner**, Executive Director of Mid-Shore Regional Council
- University of Maryland Eastern Shore - **Dr. Heidi Anderson**, President of University of Maryland Eastern Shore

RMC Executive Board

- Representing District 1 (Garrett, Allegany and Washington Counties) - **Leslie Hart**, Washington County Economic Development
- Representing District 2 (Frederick, Carroll and Harford Counties) - **Elizabeth Chung**, Asian American Center of Frederick
- Representing District 3 (Charles, Calvert, and St. Mary's Counties) - **Chris Kaselemis**, -St. Mary's County Office Department of Economic Development
- Representing District 4 (Cecil, Kent and Queen Anne's Counties) - **Darius Johnson**, Kent Attainable Housing
- Representing District 5 (Caroline, Dorchester, and Talbot Counties) **Debbie Bowden**, Caroline County Economic Development
- Representing District 6 (Wicomico, Worchester and Somerset Counties) - **Matt Holloway**, Quantico Creek Sod Farm and Baywater Farm
- Representing For Profit Organizations - **Renee Sheehy**, Delmarva Power
- Representing State At-Large - **Bill Valentine**, Retired Allegany County Commissioner

Representing Maryland House of Delegates

- **The Honorable Mike McKay** - Delegate
- **The Honorable Sheree Sample-Hughes** - Delegate
- **The Honorable Brian Crosby** - Delegate

Representing Maryland Senate

- **The Honorable George Edwards** - Senator
- **The Honorable Douglas Peters** - Senator
- **The Honorable Katie Fry Hester** - Senator

- Representing the Maryland Association of Counties **Jack Wilson**, Board of Commissioners, Queen Anne's County and **Wilbur Levensgood**, Board of Commissioners, Caroline County
- Representing the Governor's Office - **Ryan Snow**, Office of Intergovernmental Affairs
- Representing Maryland Department of Commerce **Elizabeth Carven**, Regional Growth, and Retention
- Representing Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development - **Cindy Stone**, Department of Housing and Community Development
- Representing University of Maryland Extension - **James Hanson**, University of Maryland Extension
- Representing Western Maryland Resource Conservation and Development Council - **Craig Hartsock**, Western Maryland Resource Conservation and Development Council
- Representing Maryland Association of Community Action Agencies - **Santo Grande**, Maryland Association of Community Action Agencies
- Representing Delmarva Chicken Association - **Holly Porter**, Delmarva Chicken Association
- Representing Special Appointment - **Steve McHenry**, Maryland Agricultural & Resource-Based Industry Development Corporation (MARBIDCO)
- Representing Maryland Department of Agriculture- **Cassie Shirk**, Maryland Department of Agriculture
- Representing Maryland Department of Natural Resources - **Bunky Luffman**, Maryland Department of Natural Resources
- Representing Tri-County Council for Western Maryland- **Leanne Mazer**, Tri-County Council for Western Maryland
- Representing Maryland Forest Association - **Beth Hill**, Maryland Forests Association
- Representing Maryland Association of Public Library Administration - **John Venditta**, Maryland Association of Public Library Administration
- Representing the Maryland Municipal League - **John Kinnaird**, Mayor, Town of Thurmont and **Jamie Windon**, Commissioner, Talbot County

RMC Staff

- Executive Director - **Charlotte Davis**
- Program Administrator - **Megan D'Arcy**
- Program Coordinator - **Dakota Matthews**
- Administrative Assistant - **Amanda Clevenger**

Serving Rural Communities

In 1994, the Rural Maryland Council was initiated by the Governor as the Maryland Rural Development Council (Executive Order 01.01.1994.14) and then codified by statute in 1995 as the FORVUM for Rural Maryland. In July 2003 the FORVM restructured as the Rural Maryland Council.

Our **MISSION** is to bring together citizens, community-based organizations, federal, state, county and municipal government officials as well as representatives of the for-profit and nonprofit sectors to collectively address the needs of rural Maryland. The RMC is an independent state agency located within the Maryland Department of Agriculture. We provide a venue for members of agriculture and natural resource-based industries, health care facilities, educational institutions, businesses, economic and community development organizations, nonprofit entities and government agencies to cross traditional boundaries, share information and address in a holistic way the special needs and opportunities in rural Maryland.

Our **VISION** is a future where all of Rural Maryland is prosperous with thriving resources, vibrant economies and healthy connected communities.

Our Goals

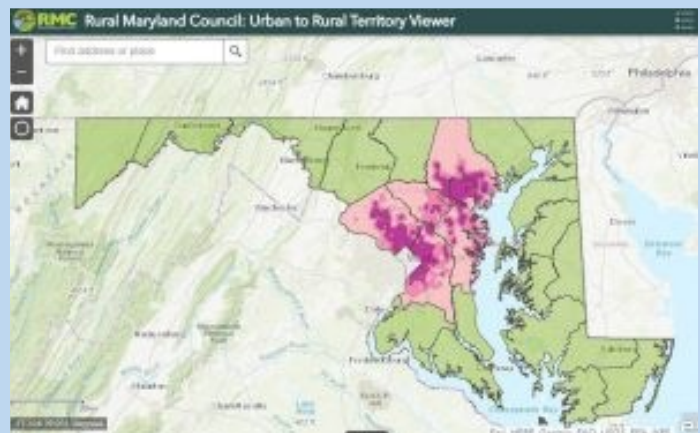
- ◆ Encourage healthy, connected communities throughout Rural Maryland through the convening of stakeholders, education, public relations and advocacy.
- ◆ Support the development and growth of vibrant economies in rural Maryland and foster stewardship of Maryland's natural resources
- ◆ Maximize RMC outreach, resources and mission through financial and organizational development

What is Rural? Rural jurisdictions share common characteristics that set them apart from their suburban and urban counterparts, such as geographic isolation, lack of transportation, and lack of access to and availability of health care. The state definition of rural is articulated in the Annotated Code of Maryland and includes 18 of the 24 jurisdictions in Maryland. Each is represented on the Rural Maryland Council.

Territory Map The RMC territory map provides data layers that can be used to view the rural, semirural, suburban, and urban areas in Maryland. In the future, there is hopes of integrating the RMC grants into the interactive map, allowing viewers to see the effectiveness of the RMC grants across the state.

Service Territory

State Statute designates the following counties as rural: Allegany, Calvert, Caroline, Carroll, Cecil, Charles, Dorchester, Frederick, Garrett, Harford, Kent, Queen Anne's, Somerset, St. Mary's, Talbot, Washington, Wicomico, and Worcester Service Territory Serving Rural Communities.



Impacting Rural Communities

The Regional Economic Studies Institute (RESI) of Towson University was tasked with estimating the economic and fiscal impact that the Rural Maryland Council's (RMC) grants have had on Maryland's economy. The RESI study found that from 2018 to 2021, the programs awarded more than \$15.7 million to 297 projects that resulted in over \$64 million in matching funds for a total funding amount of more than \$87.3 million. This resulted in an overall economic impact of more than \$124 million.

Addressing Rural Issues

The Rural Maryland Council annually conducts a rural issues survey to help the Council identify the concerns and challenges faced in Rural Maryland. The information collected helps recognize trends and target certain planning priorities for the coming year. The electronic survey was released in June 2021 to RMC members and stakeholders in the quarterly online newsletter, RMC website, and through email marketing. Survey responders were asked to select their top rural issue in the following categories, Agriculture, Infrastructure, Economic Development, Community Development, and Healthcare. In total, there were 153 total responses to the 2021 rural issues survey.

Top Picks of each Category

- Economic Development - 58% of respondents choose "Maintaining existing businesses and recruiting new employers with good paying jobs."
- Infrastructure - 44% of respondents choose "Encouraging providers to install last mile broadband."
- Community Development - 44% of respondents choose "Addressing issues related to the aging rural population and senior citizens."
- Health Care - 43% of respondents choose "Making health care more accessible and affordable."
- Agriculture - 40% of respondents choose "Preserve and conserve farm and forest land."

Response Geographics Survey Results Came from across all four regions of the state. The East had the most with 67 responses, followed by Central (25), West (20), and South (18). 22 of Maryland's 23 counties had responders. The only county that had no responses was Cecil County. The counties with the most responses were Talbot (19) and Caroline (14).

RMC Awards Dinner

The 2021 RMC Annual Board Meeting and Awards Dinner was held on December 1, 2021. Five awards were presented for the 2021 Rural Impact Award Ceremony:

Rural Community Development Award was awarded to the **Town of Rising Sun** in recognition for their dedication and creativity to improve the quality of life for their community.

Rural Volunteer Award was awarded to **Elizabeth Anne Glotfelty** and **the Honorable Craig Mathies, Sr.** for their leadership, dedication, and noteworthy volunteer achievement beyond the call of one's professional duties to help improve their community. Mrs. Glotfelty passed away in September 2021 leaving behind a legacy of charitable works that will benefit the community for decades.

Rural Economic Development Award was awarded to the **Frederick Innovative Technology Center, Inc. (FITCI)** for their leadership, dedication, and noteworthy achievement to help improve economic development opportunities in rural communities.

Rural Champion Award was received by **Senator George Edwards** and **Senator Guy Guzzone** for their outstanding leadership and public service in advocating for policy solutions to greatly benefit rural communities.

Rural Advocacy



2021 Rural Summit

The 2021 Rural Summit "Redefining Resilience and Recovery" was held on Wednesday, December 1, and Thursday, December 2, 2021, at the DoubleTree Hilton Hotel in Annapolis, Maryland. This two-day conference featured numerous noteworthy national and statewide guest speakers. They included Xochitl Torres Small, USDA Under Secretary for Rural Development (pictured); Maryland Governor Larry Hogan; Maryland Comptroller Peter Franchot; and Whitney Kimball Coe, director of National Programs at the Center for Rural Strategies, who championed the message of strength and leadership in rural communities.

With COVID-19 measures in place, attendees were more than ready to resume face-to-face engagement safely and rural Marylanders feel they have what it takes not only to fully recover from the pandemic but also to lead the state's recovery efforts. The summit included 16 breakout sessions covering a variety of topics related to agriculture, aquaculture, forestry, community development, economic development, and health care, as well two plenary sessions — one on broadband and a legislative review which featured a panel of state legislators. Video recordings and PowerPoint Presentations from the Summit are available to view on the RMC website— rural.maryland.gov.

Staff from the Asian American Center based in Frederick, Maryland enjoying the conference.



2022 Legislative Session

The Maryland General Assembly adjourned Sine Die on April 11, 2022, after final passage of the Fiscal Year 2023 operating budget and bills concerning paid family leave, cannabis legalization, environmental protections, state parks, and tax relief for retirees. The Rural Maryland Council and their associated grant programs - the Rural Maryland Prosperity Investment Fund and the Maryland Agricultural Education Rural Development Assistance Fund, received historic funding of \$9,001,144 in Fiscal Year 2023. We thank Governor Larry Hogan, Senate President Bill Ferguson and House Speaker Adrienne Jones for their support.

RMC Funding Priorities

- ⇒ RMC will receive \$9 million for the Rural Maryland Prosperity Investment Fund and RMC operations.
- ⇒ The Maryland Agricultural Education and Rural Development Assistance Fund will receive \$118,485.
- ⇒ \$10 million each for the five Regional Councils through the Rural Maryland Economic Development Fund.
- ⇒ \$20.0 million for the Western Maryland Economic Future Investment Board and Senator George C. Edwards Fund.
- ⇒ Maryland Agricultural Land Preservation Program will receive a total of \$72 million.
- ⇒ \$ 3.7 million for Maryland Agricultural and Resource-Based Industry Development Corporation (MARBIDCO).
- ⇒ Program Open Space will receive \$89.3 million for State side and \$167 million for Local side.
- ⇒ Rural Legacy Program funded at \$26.4 million.

Rural Maryland Economic Development Fund

Maryland's five regional councils were funded at \$10 million each through the Rural Maryland Economic Development Fund. The \$50 million in funding will allow the regional councils to fund projects for infrastructure, transportation, and broadband to support the attraction, retention, or expansion of businesses, and infrastructure related to industry sector development. Funding will also be spent for workforce development and attraction of talent, and projects that stimulate entrepreneurship and innovation. Additionally, planning and feasibility studies, and certain capital and operational expenses may be funded as well. This funding will allow Maryland's five Regional Council's to provide the necessary resources that rural communities need to recover from the economic downturn caused by the pandemic.

Historic RMC Funding

The RMC received \$9 million in funding for FY2023. This funding will be highly beneficial to those who live, work, and visit the many great rural areas of our state. This funding will mostly go towards the RMPIF and MAERDAF grant programs. Requests for the grant programs have grown each year, resulting in many quality projects being turned down. The additional funding will allow more projects to help improve the lives of rural Marylanders. The projects will provide innovative programming that creates jobs, educational opportunities, and enhances the quality of life in our rural communities. For many nonprofit organizations and stakeholders, RMPIF provides the critical support needed to fuel healthy, and resilient rural communities.

Adopted Legislation

- ◆ Providing more funding and resources for hazard mitigation SB814/HB1312: Sponsors: Senator Hester, Delegate Watson
- ◆ Increasing the annual revenues cap for cottage food businesses. (HB178: Sponsor: Delegate Chang)
- ◆ Providing more opportunities for small universities to qualify for matching funds for private donations through the E-Nnovation Fund. (SB473/HB730: Sponsors: Senator Edwards, Delegate Buckel)
- ◆ Encouraging apprenticeship opportunities by extending the Apprenticeship and Training Council. (SB205: Sponsor Senator McCray)
- ◆ Connecting local farmers with programs that provide nutritious foods to schools and those in need. (SB121/HB147: Sponsors: Senator Hester, Delegate Charkoudian)
- ◆ Expanding dental services to low income adults. (SB150/HB6: Sponsors: Senator Augustine, Delegate Cullison)
- ◆ Increasing the share of Highway User Revenue funds to local governments to maintain roads. (SB105/HB1187: Sponsors: Senator Augustine, Delegate Cullison)
- ◆ Increasing the minimum monthly benefit for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP). (SB957/HB456: Sponsors: Delegate Valentino-Smith, Senator Waldstreicher)

Legislative Highlights

3

EVENTS HELD

Virtual Legislative Lunch, 1/28
Virtual Rural Maryland Day, 2/10
Maryland Day Lunch, Lawyers Mall, 3/25

10

LEGISLATIVE MEETINGS

The Legislative Committee met this session to discuss bills, testimonies, and other legislative matters

84

POSITION STATEMENTS

Position statements submitted to the legislators in support of bills

254

BILLS MONITORED

Total bills monitored throughout the legislative session

Great Maryland Outdoors Act

SB541 (Senator Elfreth) and HB383 (Delegate Luedtke)

The Great Maryland Outdoors Act will make much needed investments to Maryland's state parks and replace and accelerate the current repayment schedule for the previous diversions of funds from Program Open Space. This Act will benefit Maryland's agricultural and land preservation programs by obtaining more resources for preservation, provide more staffing to address the crumbling facilities and overuse of state parks, and benefit Maryland's rural economies by attracting more visitors to state parks located in rural communities. Funds include \$10 million for Next Generation Farmland Acquisition Program, \$16.6 million for MALPF and \$5.4 million for the Rural Legacy Program in Fiscal Year 2024. Additionally, the State Lakes Protection and Restoration Fund was extended to 2025, and the Mel Noland Woodland Incentives and Fellowship Fund increased from \$50,000 to \$1 million.



Senator George Edwards



Delegate Maggie McIntosh
(Pictures from the MGA Website)



Delegate Wendell Beitzel

Thank you to Senator Edwards, Delegate Beitzel, and Delegate McIntosh for their many years of service and dedication to Rural Maryland!

Legislative Outreach

Rural Maryland Day was celebrated virtually this year on February 10, 2022. The event provided an opportunity for over 100 rural advocates to meet with key legislators to discuss both the strengths and challenges experienced living in rural Maryland. The event conclude with a virtual presentation from Governor Larry Hogan. declaring February 10th as Rural Maryland Day.

Maryland Day was celebrated on March 25, 2022, the RMC held a Grab and Go Lunch for the Legislators at Lawyers mall in downtown Annapolis. The event was sponsored by the Maryland Broadband Cooperative, MARBIDCO, Southern Maryland Agriculture Development Commission, MidAtlantic Farm Credit, Maryland Department of Agriculture, and the Maryland Heritage Areas Coalition. The lunches consisted of locally grown foods and were provided by Caroline County's Chesapeake Culinary Arts Center.



Photo: Legislators and participants enjoy 2022 Rural Maryland on Lawyers Mall, Annapolis, MD



Photo: RMC Executive Director Charlotte Davis and MARBIDCO Executive Director Steve McHenry with Delegate Edith Patterson during the 2022 Maryland Day Celebration at Lawyer's Mall.

Connecting Rural Maryland

In September, we hosted our **Fall Quarterly Executive Board meeting** virtually on Friday, September 24, 2021. Secretary Kelly Schulz from the Maryland Department of Commerce was our guest speaker.

Under the Council's bylaws, the last meeting of the calendar year will serve as the organization's Annual Meeting. In Fiscal Year 2022, the **Annual Meeting** held on December 1, 2021 at the DoubleTree Hilton Hotel in Annapolis. During this event, the organization elected the 2021-2022 Officers and Board members as well as recognized rural honorees during the Rural Impact Awards ceremony.

Our **Winter Quarterly Executive Board meeting** and Legislative Luncheon was held on Friday, January 28, 2022, from 12 p - 2 pm virtually. RMC Committee updates and events for the new year were shared. Delegate Eric Luedtke was our featured guest speaker and shared an update on employment and broadband availability in Maryland. Ms. Jinhee Kim, University of Maryland Extension was also a guest speaker and talked to attendees about the University of Maryland's Farm stress program

Spring Quarterly Executive Board meeting on Friday, April 8, 2022, was held as a zoom teleconference. Highlights of the meeting included guest speakers who shared an update on their organization's projects that received funding through our Rural Maryland Prosperity Investment Fund (RMPIF) grant. Speakers included Mr. Sean Dennis, President, United States Bomb Technician Association, Mr. David Jones, Vice President of Advancement and Community Relations, Allegany College of Maryland, and Mr. Nick Redding, Executive Director, Preservation Maryland. Ms. Allie Gruber, Research Associate, Regional Economic Studies Institute of Towson University also provided an update to the meeting attendees on the Economic Impact Analysis report on the RMC's grant programs.



Governor Larry Hogan joined RMC by recording for Rural Maryland Day, held virtually on February 10, 2022.

Additional RMC events

Economic Update with Richmond Fed's President Tom Barkin

On June 1, 2022, the RMC hosted a virtual Economic Update with the Federal Reserve Bank of Richmond President, Tom Barkin. Topics discussed were the state's current rural economic outlook and a discussion of issues that rural communities face.



Federal Reserve Bank of Richmond President, Tom Barkin presents to RMC stakeholders.

Rural Health Committee

The RMC reconvened the rural health committee for the first time since 2016. The Committee is charged with the following: Identify priorities for the Committee and the Council in the area of health; invite presentations from speakers of interest to committee members where appropriate; reach a consensus on priorities and propose solutions and include an analysis of alternatives to current and proposed health care solutions; and develop advocacy in the form of strategies, position papers, legislation and testimony both oral and written in partnership with the RMC Legislative Committee. As a part of its work plan, the Committee will host a series of roundtables for 2023.

Transfer of Wealth

The Rural Maryland Foundation continues to support efforts to retain wealth in rural communities. As a continuation of this work, the Foundation has studied the transfer of wealth phenomenon and developed a statewide rural philanthropy strategy. The Foundation convened its Transfer of Wealth workgroup during FY2022 and will continue its efforts to engage with the Maryland Philanthropy Network.



Transfer of Wealth workgroup gather at the 2021 Rural Summit.

RMC Sponsored Events

- Agriculture Law Education Initiative Conference
- Buy Local Challenge Event
- Delfest
- Delmarva Chicken Association BBQ
- Drink Maryland Event
- Forever Maryland Conference
- Evergreen Heritage Center Foundation
- Lower Shore Land Trust Pollinator Garden Tour
- Maryland Agriculture Education Foundation - Oyster Reef workshop
- Maryland Commodity Conference Class Event
- MPT, Maryland Farm and Harvest
- National Folk Festival



RMC Executive Board Member Bill Valentine and RMC Program Administrator Megan D'Arcy enjoyed Delfest in Allegany County over the Memorial Day weekend.

Rural Outreach

After almost two years of having to limit travel due to the pandemic, the Rural Maryland Council was able to travel across the state to attend multiple events to educate Marylanders and state officials on rural issues and benefits. The RMC was also able to take this opportunity to view some of the projects funded by the RMC grant programs.

Tawes Clam Bake

The 44th Annual J. Millard Tawes Crab and Clam Bake, postponed last year due to the COVID-19 Pandemic, was held on Wednesday, October 13, 2021. This event is usually held in July and is described as an all-you-can-eat seafood affair featuring lots of local residents, policymakers and politicians. The annual celebration is named in honor of Crisfield native, J. Millard Tawes, the 54th Governor of the State of Maryland. This year, we were proud sponsors of the event along with the Somerset County Economic Development Commission, Tri-County Council for the Lower Eastern Shore, and the Maryland Broadband Cooperative.

In the Streets Festival

RMC staff attended the In the Streets event in Frederick Maryland on September 11, 2021. This event attracts over 75,000 participants to downtown Frederick to visit the many attractions of the historic downtown and the vendors that are set up for the event. Task Force on the Economic Future of Maryland.

Community Development Week—Williamsport Main

Street (Sept 29) RMC staff attended a tour of Williamsport's main street. Williamsport recently participated in the Main Street program, a program administered by the Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development to strengthen the economic potential of Maryland's traditional main streets and neighborhoods.

Tech at the Gap—RMC staff attended the Tech at the Gap conference on October 14th.

Autumn Glory—RMC staff attended the Autumn Glory Festival in Oakland Maryland. The Autumn Glory Festival is a five day event filled with a range of events, celebrations, and vendors.

Maryland Municipal League Conference - RMC staff attended MML on June 13 and 14, 2022.



Executive Director Charlotte Davis, Senator Ben Cardin, and Program Administrator Megan D'Arcy pose for a picture at the MACo in Ocean City, Maryland.

Rural Maryland Foundation

Founded in 2001, the Foundation was created with a threefold purpose: to support the efforts of citizens and government to meet the economic and social needs of rural Maryland, to support the efforts of the Rural Maryland Council, and to serve as Maryland's Rural Development Council if the Rural Maryland Council should cease to function in that role.

Board of Directors

Dan Rider, President

Kurt Fuchs, Vice President

Mike Thielke, Treasurer

Charlotte Davis, Secretary

Kevin Brooks

Andrew Cassilly

Josh Hastings

Steve McHenry

Rick Pollitt

Scott Warner

Duane Yoder

John Hartline

Roseanna Vogt

Contact Information

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Message From the President

Our primary mission is to support the Rural Maryland Council. We do this by effectively utilizing our structure as a private non-profit to raise and steward funds not available to the Council. It is important that we are not only a valuable administrative asset to the RMC, but also a valuable resource to rural Maryland. To enhance the effectiveness of the Foundation, the Board of Trustees went on a board retreat, where they began drafting a developmental plan. It was soon realized that a strategic plan would be more fitting for the future goals of the Foundation and this was completed in November 2021. The Goals of the Plan are the following:

- Goal 1: Develop a Rural Issues Think Tank
- Goal 2: Develop an "Innovation Fund" that provides financial support to those with new ideas for enhancing life in Rural Maryland
- Goal 3: Support the efforts of the Rural Maryland Council
- Goal 4: Prepare the Foundation to become the certified Maryland Rural Development Council in the event the RMC should cease to function in that role.

With your help, the Rural Maryland Foundation assisted the LEAD Maryland Foundation Fellowship Program with sponsoring a tuition scholarship. The LEAD program develops new leaders for rural Maryland through training and skills development over a two-year period with intensive multi-day seminars across Maryland.

The Biennial Rural Summit was held December 1st and December 2nd. This year's theme was "Redefining Resilience and Recovery". The Summit was a success, with more than 200 attendees. Some of the highlights consisted of 16 breakout sessions, the awards and RMC annual board meeting dinner, a legislative panel, and several speakers, including Governor Larry Hogan, USDA Under Secretary for Rural Development Xochitl Torres Small, Maryland Comptroller Peter Franchot, and the Summit's keynote speaker Whitney Kimball Coe.

-Dan Rider

RMF Board President

RMPIF Overview

The Rural Maryland Prosperity Investment Fund (RMPIF) was authorized by the Maryland General Assembly in 2006. In 2016, RMPIF received funding for the first time in the amount of \$2 million and was funded in Fiscal Year 2022 at \$6 million. The RMPIF program is funded through the State of Maryland's Annual Operating Budget. In FY2022, the Grant Review Board awarded 28 grants totaling \$4,739,212.

The goal of RMPIF is to help raise the overall standard of living in rural areas to a level that meets or exceeds statewide benchmark averages by 2030, while preserving the best aspects of a pastoral heritage and rural way of life. Resources provided to RMPIF are designed to facilitate significant targeted investments in important economic and community development programs and promote regional and intergovernmental cooperation. These investments also enable local and regional public and nonprofit organizations to leverage additional non-state financial and human resources to facilitate the realization of sustainable rural development objectives.

RMPIF supports the Rural Maryland Council's operations and activities at \$500,000, the states' five rural Regional Councils at \$2,000,000 (\$400,000/Council), as well as grant projects awards that focus on rural entrepreneurship development, rural health care organizations, and regional infrastructure projects. Additionally RMPIF supports the Maryland Agricultural Education and Rural Development Assistance Fund (MAERDAF). MAERDAF provides capacity building grant funds to rural nonprofit service providers and community colleges. The Grant Review Board approved an additional allocation of \$292,303 from RMPIF to MAERDAF for a total of \$910,788 in MAERDAF grant awards.

Grant Review Board

The Rural Maryland Council serves as the administrative agency in receiving the applications and disbursing the funds. Grant award determinations are made by the independent MAERDAF Grant Review Board set by law and consisting of the Secretaries (or their designee) of the Departments of Agriculture, Commerce, Health, Housing and Community Development and Natural Resources as well as the Chair (or the designee) of the Rural Maryland Council. Decisions by the MAERDAF Grant Review Board are final and binding.

Grant Review Board Members

- **Mindie Burgoyne**, Senior Regional Business Development Representative, Commerce
- **Karen Fedor**, Senior Agricultural Marketing Specialist, Maryland Department of Agriculture
- **Dan Rider**, Forest Stewardship & Utilization Program Manager, Maryland Department of Natural Resource Forest Service
- **Sara Seitz**, Director, State Office of Rural Health, Maryland Department of Health
- **Dona Sorce**, Project Manager, Division of Neighborhood Revitalization, Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development
- **Helen Wernecke**, Rural Maryland Chair Designee
- MAERDAF Coordinator, **Charlotte Davis**, Executive Director, Rural Maryland Council

RMPIF FY2022 Awards At-A-Glance

Grant Expenditures	FY22 Budget	FY22 Actual	Number of Grants
Regional Councils	\$ 2,000,000.00	\$ 2,000,000.00	5
Infrastructure	\$ 1,000,000.00	\$ 1,125,000.00	6
Entrepreneurship	\$ 1,000,000.00	\$ 647,763.00	5
Health Care	\$ 1,000,000.00	\$ 966,449.00	12
MAERDAF	\$ 500,000.00	\$ 792,788.00	27
MAERDAF Line item	\$ 118,485.00	\$ 118,000.00	3
TOTAL Grant Expenditures	\$ 5,618,485.00	\$ 5,597,500.00	58

RMPIF Region Served	
Eastern Shore (Nine County Region-Cecil, Kent, Queen Anne's, Talbot, Caroline, Dorchester, Wicomico, Worcester, Somerset)	12 Awards
Southern (Three County Region-Charles, Calvert, St. Mary's)	5 Awards
Western (Five County Region-Garrett, Allegany, Washington, Frederick, Carroll)	6 Awards
Northern (Harford County)	3 Awards
Statewide	1 Award
Total:	28

Entrepreneurship - 5 Grants Awarded Totaling \$647,763

Frederick Innovative Technology Center, Inc.

Amount Awarded - \$160,000

Project Name - FITCI AgTech Lab

Focus Area - Entrepreneurship

Project Summary - Frederick Innovative Technology Center Inc (FITCI) is a business incubator/accelerator created to encourage technical innovation & advance the development of commercially viable businesses in Frederick, Maryland. The FITCI Agricultural Technology (AgTech) Lab project is being constructed and outfitted as an AgTech lab space in FITCI's new Biotechnology Center, located at 321 Ballenger Center Drive in Frederick. This project will allow FITCI and its partners to facilitate local agribusiness entrepreneurs' access to necessary and new technologies, enable scientific collaboration, promote advancement of regenerative and cellular agriculture, create jobs and economic growth, and support struggling agriculture and related businesses in post-pandemic economic recovery. The RMPIF grant award, along with matching funds, are being expended for a) the construction of 1,250 square foot shared AgTech lab space located in the new and b) equipment for the AgTech lab to include 8 - 6' Cambridge Series Table with Epoxy Top & Strut Overhead Shelving and 2 NuAire LabGuard NU-540 Class II Type A2 Biosafety Cabinets. *This project has faced significant delays which impacted the timeline. Due to delays, tenant fit out is scheduled to start at the end of January 2023 with the move-in date taken place in June 2023.*

Harford Community College

Amount Awarded - \$142,763

Project Name - Harford Community College Innovation Center

Focus Area - Entrepreneurship

Project Summary - Harford Community College Innovation Center (HCCIC) is a resource program focused on fulfilling the needs of under-served rural communities, meeting the needs of regional employers, and supporting the advancement of an entrepreneurial mindset throughout the Susquehanna region. HCCIC is a part of an umbrella program called Harford's Leading Edge, powered by Ratcliffe Foundation whose mission educates and trains a new cadre of highly-skilled workers via pathways for adult learners and high school students, upskills the current workforce for career advancement, and supports entrepreneurs in launching new and accelerating existing businesses. Located within the Boys and Girls Clubs of Harford and Cecil Counties at Edgewood, the facility provides an opportunity to introduce youth to innovation and high-demand careers, while providing greater accessibility to residents along the Route 40 corridor. Phase two of this project seeks expansion of the HCCIC and Harford's Leading-Edge Training Center with design and build out of woodshop lab space and a training space specific for warehousing and manufacturing trades programming. The RMPIF award, along with matching funds, was expended to design and build out the woodshop lab space located in pole barn structure adjacent to the Boys and Girls Club.

People for Change Coalition

Amount Awarded - \$70,000

Project Name - Summer Career Enrichment Program

Focus Area - Entrepreneurship

Project Summary - The People for Change Coalition (PFC Coalition) is a membership organization representing over 300 nonprofit and minority businesses in Prince George's County, Southern Maryland, and throughout the state of Maryland. Incorporated in November 2011, their mission is to develop the nonprofit and minority business sector by providing assessment, support and expansion services. The Summer Career Enrichment Program (SCEP) is an 8-week pilot program for 100 middle school students in partnership with the Dorchester Career and Technology Center and North Dorchester Middle School for the summer of 2021. Students will be enrolled in 4 different tracks: Youth Cyber Security Program, Successful Teens and Nonprofit Database Design, and Mighty Youth TV Production, and Making the Right Moves Chess Immersion. Through the program students were exposed to careers and entrepreneurship tracks in cyber, database design, and media arts. The RMPIF grant award, along with matching funds, were expended to support a) the salary and wages for the project management; b) weekly travel costs to Dorchester County for workshops and trainings; c) supplies - thumb drives, software, instructional notebooks, and chess supplies; d) consultant services for the Instructors and Assistants; e) marketing and graphic design of program materials; and f) printing costs for 100 student certificates.

The Greater Cumberland Committee**Amount Awarded - \$175,000****Project Name - Forest Products Brand Development****Focus Area: Entrepreneurship**

Project Summary - The Greater Cumberland Committee (TGCC) is a nonprofit that seeks to educate regional business leaders, professionals and consumers on matters related to sustainable economic development in the northern Appalachian, Tri-state region. TGCC is focused on projects of regional relevance in the areas of transportation infrastructure, education and workforce development, energy and natural resources and next generation leadership. The Forest Products Brand Development project will create a certified branding program to promote Maryland wood products as a preferred option for local commercial, institutional, and retail buyers. The branding program will be designed specifically to meet the goals of corporate Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) investment objectives. By focusing on certifying ESG outcomes for such companies, the branding program will open Western Maryland forest product businesses to \$3 trillion in corporate investments. The RMPIF grant award, along with matching funds, were expended to support a) consultant services; b) two 2-day conferences/charrettes; c) logic model development; d) IMPLAN data; e) meeting supplies; f) website development and publications; g) grant administrative costs.

University of Maryland Eastern Shore-Department of Agriculture, Food and Resource Sciences**Amount Awarded - \$100,000****Project Name - Student Education and Training in Hemp, Production, Processing and Value-Added Product Development****Focus Area - Entrepreneurship**

Project Summary - The University of Maryland Eastern Shore (UMES) industrial hemp program was established in 2019. The program has faculty with expertise in hemp genetics and breeding, plant protection, extraction and value-added product development. Faculty currently provide extensive training to students from rural areas in hemp cultivation and post-harvest handling procedures including drying, curing, and trimming of flowers for their conversion into value added products. The goal of the project is to build capacity and develop educational resources to provide student training in hemp production, processing, extraction, and value-added products. The equipment purchased through the project will enable UMES to provide students with hands-on learning experience that can prepare them for the emerging workforce. The project is expected to be sustainable and provide an impetus for stimulating entrepreneurship, generating a skilled workforce, and enhancing the economies of rural Maryland communities. The RMPIF grant award, along with matching funds, was expended to support a) the salaries, wages, and fringe benefits for a project coordinator; an Associate Professor for coordination and supervision of the project; and a field technician; b) extraction equipment to include a rotary evaporator, an ultra-low temperature freezer, a liquid CO2 extractor; two Buchner funnels; a flower shredder; and a vacuum pump.

Infrastructure - 6 Grants Awards Totaling \$1,125,000**End Hunger in Calvert County****Amount Awarded - \$250,000****Project Name - End Hunger Warehouse Food Distribution Program****Focus Area - Infrastructure**

Project Summary - The End Hunger in Calvert County Warehouse provides mission-critical food distribution services for low-income families living throughout rural Southern Maryland. The completion of the warehouse facility is essential to fulfilling End Hunger's role as the regional food hub providing food, infrastructure, technical support, and best practices to 72 rural feeding organizations. Over 25,000 individuals rely on the services provided by End Hunger and our partners to meet their daily need for food. The RMPIF grant award, along with matching funds, were expended to complete the fire suppression sprinkler system and required water storage tank installed at the End Hunger in Calvert County Warehouse located at 6201 Solomons Island Road, Huntingtown, MD 20639.

Fair Hill Foundation**Amount Awarded - \$50,000****Project Name - Completing Infrastructure for the Inaugural Maryland 5 Star at Fair Hill****Focus Area - Infrastructure**

Project Summary - The Fair Hill Foundation raises funds to assist the State of Maryland in protecting, preserving and enhancing all facets of the Fair Hill Natural Resources Management Area (FHNRM); advancing national and international sports competitions through the development of competition facilities protective of the unique environmental conditions at FHNRM; and supporting resource conservation and environmental projects at FHNRM through funding and providing technical assistance. The RMPIF grant award, along with matching funds, was expended to help complete construction of the Maryland 5 Star cross country course - the 6,280-meter course that included 45 jumping efforts in the form of fences, water hazards, ditches and mounds. Work included lineal aeration, adding topsoil and sod, applying fertilizer and grassy weed pre-emergent herbicide, mowing, hand raking, filling, patching, seeding, and watering the course.

It Takes a Village to Help Our Children, Inc.**Amount Awarded - \$200,000****Project Name - Village Youth Center Building Project****Focus Area – Infrastructure**

Project Summary - It Takes a Village to Help Our Children, Inc. is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization that has been serving the Crisfield community for more than 15 years providing quality out of school programming for 'at risk' youth. The Village Youth Center Building Project will provide an adequate facility to serve the youth and their families the organization supports. The Center will provide a place for student academic enrichment, STEAM activities, and recreation. Most importantly, the Center will provide a place of belonging where students can discover their gifts and talents and find their place in this world. The new 8,496 square foot building will replace the former Whittington Primary School which was irreparably damaged by hurricane Sandy and will contain a large multi-purpose room essential for youth recreation, 4 classrooms, a small kitchen area, 2 administrative offices, student bathrooms, a lobby and a mechanical room. The RMPIF grant award, along with matching funds, are to be expended for construction costs for the facility located at 6 Asbury Avenue in Crisfield, Maryland. *The Grantee was approved a one year extension because they have not been able to start construction due to the rising cost of materials. The project is to be completed by June 30, 2023.*

Maryland Rural Development Corporation**Amount Awarded - \$25,000****Project Name - Small Town Infrastructure****Focus Area - Infrastructure**

Project Summary - For over 25 years, Maryland Rural Development Corporation (MRDC) has identified and evaluated economically feasible, innovative regional solutions to infrastructure issues for historically impoverished rural communities in areas that have had difficulty installing traditional wastewater treatment systems, water systems, and storm water abatement. MRDC provides water-related technical assistance, including such services as feasibility studies, preliminary design assistance and supervision, oversight of projects, or training for the development of an application for financial assistance. The Corporation currently has 24 projects in 14 towns, and will be expanding to more towns in the coming year. In the past, MRDC has worked with the Rural Community Assistance Project (RCAP) to use (USDA) funding with towns, but RCAP is discontinuing this work. MRDC worked with USDA directly, but only after a three-month gap between the two programs. Since these projects cannot come to a standstill, MRDC utilized the RMPIF grant award, along with matching funds, to support the salary and wages for a Western Maryland Lead and a Eastern Shore Technical Service Provider to support the projects during the gap time.

Town of Rising Sun**Amount Awarded - \$300,000****Project Name - Water Line Replacement/Broadband Enhancement****Focus Area - Infrastructure**

Project Summary - The Town of Rising Sun's *Waterline Replacement/Broadband Enhancement* project will eliminate various water quality issues, provide clean drinking water to underserved areas, significantly improve community fire protection, extend broadband services, generate economic development through the creation of a Technology Corridor with high paying skilled jobs, and facilitate a cleaner environment for the Chesapeake Bay and surrounding watersheds (continued on next page)

(Town of Rising Sun continued) The project will entail the following: 1) the replacement of an undersized dead-end water line for a larger line to be connected to the primary water distribution line, creating a looped system for enhanced fire flow protection; 2) the existing Maryland Fiber B-Top (Broadband) line will be extended through the water line trench to a Technology Corridor that is in the concept stage. The RMPiF grant award, along with matching funds, will be expended to support the a) water line work; b) erosion and sediment control; c) dry utilities; and d) project engineering, contingency, inspections, and administration. *The Grantee has informed RMC that the project has been delayed due to rising construction costs and a delay in the permitting process. A projected timeline is under discussion and will be presented to RMC for review.*

United States Bomb Technician Association

Amount Awarded - \$300,000

Project Name - Maryland Technology Center

Focus Area - Infrastructure

Project Summary - The Town of Indian Head, the United States Bomb Technician Association (USBTA), and Charles County's Military Alliance Council (MAC), have partnered in order to complete the renovation of a vacant building located at 4450 Indian Head Highway-- across the street from the College of Southern (CSM) Maryland's Velocity Center and less than a mile outside of the Naval Support Facility Indian Head's front gate. The building will become the Maryland Technology Center (MTC) and is located in an Opportunity Zone, a Historically Underutilized Building Zone as well as a Sustainable Community. This project is Phase II of the Town of Indian Head Revitalization Plan and is recognized as one of Charles County's Top 5 Priorities in their Charles County Five-Year Strategic Economic Development Plan to attract technology- based firms and organizations to Indian Head. The project involved renovating a 12,600 sq. ft. of a 29,292 sq. ft. vacant building. Besides office space that will allow the USBTA to relocate its headquarters to Maryland, the newly renovated space will provide state-of-the-art, computer assisted training rooms for up to 60 students, a wet lab & metal shop and an auto shop in accordance with the attached diagram. The RMPiF grant award, along with matching funds, were expended to support the construction of the Maryland Technology Center that will include a) installation of lighting and controls; b) furnishing and installation of flooring; c) installation of a complete security system; and, d) plumbing.

Health Care - 12 Grant Awards Totaling \$966,449

Allegany County Human Resources Development Commission, Inc.

Amount Awarded - \$60,000

Project Name - Mobility Management Program

Focus Area - Health Care

Project Summary - The Allegany County Human Resources Development Commission, Inc. (HRDC) is a Community Action Agency and Area Agency on Aging. Their mission is to eliminate social and economic barriers to promote individual and community stability through services, advocacy and collaboration. The Mobility Management program operating under Allegany County HRDC Aging Department focuses on filling the transportation gap for Allegany County. From Monday through Sunday HRDC vehicles are fully operational between 7am-10pm. The Mobility Management program improves the quality of life for seniors, low-income and disabled individuals in the community by providing wheelchair, van and cab transports to and from the hospital, mental and physical health agencies. Mobility Management also collaborates with several health care agencies in the county to ensure all at risk clients are being served. Partnering agencies include UPMC Western Maryland Hospital, Allegany County Health Department, B.A.C.H.S, Progressive Physical Therapy, Rehab 1st, and Committed to Change. The RMPiF award, along with matching funds, were expended to support a) the salary, wages and fringe benefits of the Mobility Program Manager; b) client transportation services; c) vehicle maintenance and repairs; and, d) grant management administrative costs. This program serviced 670 clients resulting in 1,270 medical transportation rides.

Channel Marker, Inc**Amount Awarded - \$125,000****Project Name - Channel Marker - Psychiatric Crisis Beds****Focus Area - Health Care**

Project Summary - Channel Marker provides and coordinates mental and physical health support services to individuals challenged by severe and persistent mental illness and provides residential homes to clients with more severe mental illness in Caroline, Dorchester, and Talbot Counties. Crisis Bed stabilization programs serve individuals suffering from a urgent behavioral health crisis who require facility based crisis services in a safe, structured setting. The programs provide continuous 24 hour supports for individuals who do not require intensive clinical treatment in an inpatient psychiatric setting and would benefit from a short-term structured stabilization setting. Maryland's Behavioral Health Administration determined the need to double bed capacity from 8 to 16 and awarded Channel Marker the ability to host these beds in order to better serve the Eastern Shore Community. The RMPIF grant award, along with matching funds, was expended to support the renovation project at the Channel Marker Wellness Center located at 8885 Glebe Park Drive, Easton, Maryland that will add a new Psychiatric Crisis Bed program to serve clients from the Eastern Shore.

Corsica River Mental Health Services, Inc.**Amount Awarded - \$7,500****Project Name - Care Connections****Focus Area - Health Care**

Project Summary - Corsica River Mental Health Services, Inc. (CRMHS) is a non-profit licensed as an Outpatient Behavioral Health Care Program under COMAR 10.63. CRMHS's mission is to provide caring, effective, and highly accessible psychiatric treatment and therapy to all mid-shore residents. The Care Connections (CC) project expands access to health care services, and other community resources that address social determinants of health, reduce health inequities and provide technology supported interventions to address chronic behavioral health conditions for a population that repeatedly uses emergency department (ED) and inpatient (IP) resources. The approach is a very "warm handoff" from select health care health providers to CRMHS programs to promote engagement and reduce their need for ED and IP admissions. Enrollees receive a notification and welcome message from the GoMo Health Concierge Program communication platform, and have immediate access to one-way, on demand support messaging 24/7. CRMHS staff receive notification of the new enrollment and reach out within 48 hours. Person-centered service plans focus on linking participants to needed community resources. The goal is for participants to access community resources, avoiding higher cost ED and IP services. The RMPIF grant award, along with matching funds, were expended to the purchase the GoMo Health Technology platform.

For All Seasons, Inc.**Amount Awarded - \$72,225****Project Name - Trauma Certification for Mental Health Clinicians and Rape Center Staff****Focus Area - Health Care**

Project Summary - For All Seasons, Inc.'s mission is to provide therapy, advocacy, education, and psychiatric care in a safe environment that nurtures wellness. It is the largest licensed behavioral health and rape crisis center serving Maryland's Mid-Shore without regard to one's ability to pay and offers psychiatry, clinical mental health and rape crisis services. This project supported the trauma certification of 30 For All Seasons Masters level clinicians to work with anyone who has experienced trauma, regardless of their age. It brought evidence-based professional training to their behavioral health workforce that enables them to comfortably and competently treat children and adults with a wide range of problems, symptoms and challenges resulting from trauma. The RMPIF award, along with matching funds, were expended to support a) 15 employees to be certified at the Ferentz Institute for trauma-certified training, and b) 15 employees to be certified at the TraumaPlay Institute for TraumaPlay certification.

Fort Ritchie Community Center, Inc.**Amount Awarded - \$25,000****Project Name - Rural Health Initiative****Focus Area - Health Care**

Project Summary - Fort Ritchie Center's mission is to create and provide healthy lifestyle and leisure activities, foster community traditions, and promote cultural development through the arts, education, sports, technology, and natural resources to enhance

(Fort Ritchie Community Center, Inc. continued) the quality of life for the residents and users of Fort Ritchie and surrounding communities. The Rural Health Initiative pilot program is a collaborative effort led by the Fort Ritchie Community Center to improve the quality of life for rural residents residing in Frederick and Washington Counties. The initiative combined prevention programs with health screenings that target chronic diseases associated with rural residents in Maryland and across the country. The three main components of the program are Health and Fitness, Nutrition, and Community Involvement. This initiative incorporated social activities along with informational sessions aimed at improving the quality of life for rural residents. The RMPIF grant award, along with matching funds, were expended to pay the salary and wages of the Rural Health Initiative Coordinator and two part-time positions to assist in the successful implementation of the initiative, equipment for the project, travel costs, and marketing.

Garrett County Memorial Hospital DBA Garrett Regional Medical Center

Amount Awarded - \$143,000

Project Name - Integrative Opioid MAT Program

Focus Area - Health Care

Project Summary - The Integrative Opioid MAT Program provided Suboxone Medication-Assisted Treatment for opioid use disorder that will included follow up and enforcement of mandatory counseling, support for challenges in daily living, and access to ancillary services such as acupuncture, reflexology, and massage therapy. The program required that patients sign a contract outlining the terms of participation and participated in creation of a Patient Care Plan, which will outline their goals for treatment and in daily living. Patients were encouraged to access community services to address stressors in their lives and to use ancillary services to help manage stress and, in some cases, help relieve physical pain. The RMPIF grant award, along with matching funds, were expended to support the a) salary and wages for the Psychiatric Nurse Practitioner; and b) ancillary services for alternative pain management.

Health Partners Inc.

Amount Awarded - \$129,300

Project Name - Expanding Access to Dental Care in Southern Maryland

Focus Area - Health Care

Project Summary - Health Partners, Inc. is dedicated to serving the community with quality healthcare, a commitment to excellence in patient services and providing compassionate care for those most in need. The Expanding Access to Dental Care project in Southern Maryland added 16 hours per week of Dental providers and supported staff allowing Health Partners to offer an additional 32 visits per week-over 1,400 annually. The addition of staff and providers increased access and reduced the wait for appointments accommodating new and returning patients while reducing the number of dental-related visits in the emergency department. The RMPIF grant award, along with matching funds, were expended to support the a) salary and wages of dental care professionals and associated staff; b) dental supplies; c) utilities associated with internet and phone services, as well as IT maintenance/repair fees; d) electronic health record software; and, e) grant management administrative costs.

Maintaining Active Citizens, Inc.

Amount Awarded - \$50,000

Project Name - Living Well: Managing Depression

Focus Area – Health Care

Project Summary - Maintaining Active Citizens, Inc. (MAC) mission is helping older adults live with dignity and thrive in their homes and community. The *Living Well: Managing Depression* project will expand the Maryland Living Well Center of Excellence (LWCE) - MAC INC PEARLS depression management program to serve an additional 100 older adults living in rural Wicomico, Worcester and Somerset counties. PEARLS (Program to Encourage Active and Rewarding Lives) is a structured, evidence-based, primarily home-based program that provides older adults with tools and strategies to reduce symptoms of depression. The program offered participants one-on-one sessions with trained PEARLS Counselors to address this under-recognized and often untreated condition that can negatively impact quality of life. The project also provided screening for social isolation, which can contribute to depression and adversely affect overall health. In response to COVID-19, LWCE developed capacity to offer virtual counseling sessions, which will be continued as needed to reduce barriers and allow more rural older adults to safely and comfortably participate in PEARLS. The RMPIF grant award, along with matching funds, were expended to support 80 participant fees for the PEARLS program, which include one-on-one sessions, screenings, and, virtual counseling sessions.

TidalHealth**Amount Awarded - \$125,000****Project Name - EXHALE Asthma Control Program****Focus Area - Health Care**

Project Summary - The EXHALE Asthma Control program improves the health of homes and families by connecting at-risk households with home repair resources, health education, support for the social determinants of health, and other services. A Community Health Worker (CWH) conducts a comprehensive home and health assessment to determine what is needed to create a healthy, safe, energy-efficient home. Following the assessment, the CWH links families to integrated interventions for housing rehabilitation, energy efficiency, fall/injury prevention, and asthma or other respiratory condition trigger control. The goal of the EXHALE program is to improve chronic disease management and connect participants to social services that will improve their overall quality of life, not just their respiratory condition. The RMPIF grant award, along with matching funds, will be expended to support a) the salaries, wages and fringe benefits for 1 CHW; b) travels cost for the CHW; c) a laptop and cell phone for the CHW; d) materials and supplies for repairs to ten homes; e) educational materials about asthma and other obstructive lung diseases; f) grant management administrative costs.

Tri-County Council for Southern Maryland**Amount Awarded - \$35,000****Project Name - Wheels to Wellness****Focus Area - Health Care**

Project Summary - The Tri-County Council for Southern Maryland manages the Wheels to Wellness program. This program has provided travel assistance to patients for non-emergency medical appointments living in Calvert and St. Mary's counties since 2018. The RMPIF grant award, along with matching funds, were expended to support the a) salary, wages, and fringe benefits for the Project Manager and b) for ride mileage to transport patients.

University of Maryland Shore Regional Health at Chestertown**Amount Awarded - \$125,000****Project Name - UM Chestertown Mobile Wellness Team****Focus Area – Health Care**

Project Summary - The University of Maryland Chestertown Mobile Wellness Team program will enable patients to improve health access in their own communities or in their own homes, cutting down on the need for patients lacking transportation to travel for medical care in Kent and northern Queen Anne's Counties. University of Maryland Shore Mobile Wellness Teams will be located at firehouses, places of worship, and other community locations; as well as providing home visits. The program provided the equipment, staff, and infrastructure to support this important community initiative. The RMPIF grant award, along with matching funds, were expended to support the a) Salary, wages and fringe benefits for the Registered Nurse Coordinator; b) Materials and supplies that include printed educational materials, wellness aids, and general supplies.

Women Supporting Women, Inc.**Amount Awarded - \$16,924****Project Name - Forward Focus Therapy Program****Focus Area - Health Care**

Project Summary - Women Supporting Women's (WSW) Forward Focus Therapy Program will provide for mental health services for 15 women and/or men diagnosed with breast cancer suffering from anxieties of their diagnosis and stress of being immune compromised during the Covid-19 pandemic. The program will permit WSW's Mentoring Coordinator to evaluate current and future survivors' mental health status to see if a referral is needed for professional mental health sessions. The sessions are being offered through tele-health or by phone and paid for from funding through the RMPIF Grant. If additional sessions are needed, survivors have the option to continue services at the health care facilities which will have the capability to accept Medicare, Medicaid or private insurances. The RMPIF grant award, along with matching funds, is being expended to support a) the salary and wages for the Mentoring Coordinator and b) therapy sessions for 15 survivors. *To date the program provided 7 out of 15 survivors therapy services. Remaining funds will be used to offer these 7 survivors continued therapy services. This project has been extended to June 2023.*

Regional Councils - 5 Grant Awards Totaling \$2,000,000

Mid-Shore Regional Council

Amount Awarded - \$400,000

The Mid-Shore Regional Council (MSRC), a cooperative regional planning and development agency that serves Caroline, Dorchester, and Talbot Counties, utilized the RMPIF award to implement the following eight collaborative projects:

- 1) Regional Geographic Information Systems Cooperative (ESRGC) - Further developed an online repository and visualization tool that functions as a comprehensive data source for demographic, economic, geographic, environmental and social data pertaining to the DelMarVa Peninsula. The DelMarVa Index received guidance from the existing advisory committee, comprised of economic development professionals in each County to determine those datasets that are of the highest priority. This project subsumes the three previous dashboard projects (Healthcare, Education, Economic), rolling their results into this larger tool.
- 2) Shore Gourmet/Chesapeake Culinary Center - support the partnership between Shore Gourmet and Chesapeake Culinary Center to increase rural and economic development on the Mid-Shore by working with farmers, entrepreneurs, and institutions by developing value added products, collaborating with UMES to develop and research profitable niche crops with farmer to consumer, and brand and promote products made in the region.
- 3) DelMarVa Index - Continue working with the Tri-County Council for the Lower Eastern Shore of Maryland and the Eastern Shore Regional Geographic Information Systems Cooperative (ESRGC) to further develop an online repository and visualization tool that will function as a comprehensive data source for demographic, economic, geographic, environmental and social data, pertaining to the DelMarVa Peninsula (or if datasets for the 3 states are not consistently available, the focus will be on the 9 counties of Maryland's Eastern Shore). The DelMarVa Index will receive guidance from the existing advisory committee, comprised of economic development professionals in each County to determine those datasets that are of the highest priority. This project subsumes the three previous dashboard projects (Healthcare, Education, Economic), rolling their results into this larger tool.
- 4) Circuit Rider - Supported a Circuit Rider position that was available to travel to jurisdictions throughout the Mid-Shore and provided specialized solutions to data analysis needs utilizing the Geographic Information Systems (GIS) platform.
- 5) Online Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) - Partnered with the Eastern Shore Regional GIS Cooperative to modernize the CEDS process in order to make it more accessible, engaging, and visually appealing. Phase One of this project included the creation of static and interactive data displays to enhance the CEDS document. Phase Two focused on creating an online StoryMap to include a narrative component and updated visual component to the CEDS documentation. Phase Three allowed for the refinement of interactive graphs, charts, and StoryMap, the updating of narratives, and development of a Hub site for the CEDS.
- 6) Housing Study - Responding to the successful data collection effort of housing challenges within the City of Cambridge in the summers of 2017 and 2018, this project will again partner with ESRGC to collect housing data for the City of Cambridge. Revisiting this study in Cambridge will allow decision-makers to see trends and to make decisions about priority remediation, potential solutions, and neighborhood comparisons of disrepair. In addition, ESRGC will collect data in the following jurisdictions: Cordova, Wye Mills, Queen Anne, Federalsburg, Templeville, Marydel, Trappe, Bellevue, and Jonestown.
- 7) Annie's Project - Supported the University of Maryland Extension in providing Annie's Project to the Mid-Shore region (Caroline, Dorchester and Talbot Counties). Annie's Project is a farm management workshop for women interested in agriculture. Other activities also include a farm tour and recordkeeping/bookkeeping workshop that will be hands on.
- 8) The Youth Cyber Security Program - Supported the partnership between the People For Change Coalition and the Dorchester Career and Technology Center by engaging students over the summer in hands-on activities and exercises in the cyber fields. Through the program, students learned about problem solving, critical thinking, and how to use some of the latest tools and techniques employed by professionals in this field. Exposure to career paths in cybersecurity was a component of the program as well.

Tri-County Council for the Lower Eastern Shore of Maryland
Amount Awarded - \$400,000

The Tri-County Council for the Lower Eastern Shore of Maryland (TCCLESMD), a cooperative regional planning and development agency that serves Somerset, Wicomico, and Worcester Counties, will utilize the RMPIF award to implement the following eight collaborative projects:

- 1) Worcester STATT Internship Program (WSTATT-IP) - WSTATT-IP is a work-based learning experience that provided high school students and recent graduates from Worcester County an opportunity to explore Skill Trades, Agriculture, Technology, and Mathematics (STEM) or Tourism related careers via paid internships and includes a middle school portion, known as Summer Academy, that provided instruction based on selected pathways, career exploration, and soft skills, which prepared students for their potential selection of courses of study at the Technical High School. WSTATT-IP is co-sponsored by Worcester County and the TCCLESMD.
- 2) Somerset Career and Technology Enrichment Program - This program was designed to give 8th through 12th grade students in Somerset County an opportunity to explore or enhance career opportunities offered at the Technical High School. By providing the enrichment opportunities students had an opportunity to experience the related skills and knowledge associated with a field of study to make an educated career choice. Students participated in the SKILLS USA program in order to develop their leadership skills, program related knowledge and skills, while preparing to compete in local, regional, state and national competitions as well as, participated in in the Drone and VEX Robotics programs encouraged students to challenge their skills and knowledge while developing critical thinking skills.
- 3) Lower Shore Workforce Alliance - This Alliance is a division of the TCCLESMD and provided policy and oversight for the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) funds and programs. WIOA services were primarily delivered at the Lower Shore American Job Center located in Salisbury, Maryland.
- 4) Project Opportunity - Project Opportunity is a free entrepreneurship training program for veterans, active duty and reserve personnel, and military spouse as well as veteran small business owners with classes throughout Maryland. The field of entrepreneurship is and continues to be a viable option for many of these veterans.
- 5) Eastern Shore Entrepreneurship Center (ESEC) - ESEC is a nonprofit organization created in 2004 to help advance an entrepreneurship ecosystem on Maryland's Eastern Shore. ESEC provided in-depth services to entrepreneurs throughout the TCCLESMD service area, that included: Counseling on the feasibility of starting a business; Assistance in refining a business concept & developing a business plan; Education in established management principles & practices; Counseling in product development & marketing; Counseling in identifying & accessing capital & credit sources; Access to business support networks; and, ongoing & continued technical assistance to program graduates, including linkages to other small business services.
- 6) *M4Reactor STEM Maker Space* - This Maker Space provided Science, Technology, Environment, and Mathematics (STEM) oriented education and training to youth and adults that included but was not limited to providing a mobile "makerspace" to introduce STEM Careers to K-12 during the school period; provided hands-on educational activities in STEM technologies during after school/summer periods; and, provided training to appropriate use as well as skill training on STEM technologies to adults.
- 7) Eastern Shore Regional GIS Cooperative (ESRGC) is a outreach unit of Salisbury University that focuses on developing data-driven decision making tools. ESRGC 1) Supported and further developed the DelMarVa Index website to include more functionality and updated resources; 2) Expanded access to GIS technology to underserved areas of the Lower Eastern Shore; 3) Collected housing quality data for multiple jurisdictions in the Lower Shore Region; and 4) Expanded regional awareness, exchange GIS-related information and regional strategy.
- 8) Regional Branding and Marketing: The Council continued its economic development partnerships to grow market awareness of the Lower Eastern Shore of Maryland (LESMD) through regional marketing and branding by supporting the Regional Communications Developer position. This position focused on the Regional Branding and Marketing Plan and included a in-house development, design, layout and editing (pre-press) of full color regional glossy brochures, highway billboards and other marketing materials, including branded/logo items, booth materials for conferences such as MACo, Rural Maryland Summit and others. The position also continued in-house development and maintenance of new Regional Economic Development website LESMD.net, as well as further development related to integrating the DelMarVa Index and custom-built statistical mini-dashboards into LESMD.net.

Tri-County Council for Southern Maryland
Amount Awarded - \$400,000

The Tri-County Council for Southern Maryland (TCCSMD), a cooperative regional planning and development agency serving Calvert, Charles, and St. Mary's counties, will utilize the RMPF award to implement the following collaborative projects:

Workforce Programs

1) Skillup® Southern Maryland - Skillup® Southern Maryland was designed to help the Southern Maryland Region build a workforce ecosystem that supports positive economic development. Job seekers can explore career pathways, view local job postings, register for free online learning, and receive workforce services. Employers can search for qualified candidates, post jobs, and receive in-depth consulting to address hiring and training needs.

2) 11th Annual Regional Hiring Event - Southern Maryland's unemployment rate as of March 2021 was 5.17%, approximately 9,500 residents, and the number of underemployed residents is anecdotally known to be significant. Southern Maryland is challenged as a region to deploy solutions that lead to the economic self-sufficiency of these individuals and their families. TCCSMD held a regional hiring event for all the residents of Southern Maryland and any local business with job opportunities. The event has increased in size and popularity each year, individuals have been hired on the spot, and many others scheduled for second interviews.

3) Virtual File Room - Implemented a secure virtual file room in order to enhance workforce service delivery, record keeping, and file storage. The new and innovative way of storing files reduced overhead expenses by eliminating the need to purchase costly files, paper, ink, toner, and file cabinets associated with storing participant hard files. In addition to reducing costs, the virtual file room allowed for remote monitoring which aligned with the direction of the Maryland Department of Labor.

Southern Maryland Heritage Area Consortium

4) Internship - Destination Southern Maryland has had considerable growth in breadth of programs, product development, and regional impact. Additionally, the legislation has been introduced into the United States Congress to designate Southern Maryland as a National Heritage Area. All of this growth has required an analysis of capacity, and a dedicated internship was provided to a college student with qualifications within the field at a part-time basis, 20 to 25 hours per week.

5) Regional Marketing and Promotion - Enhanced regional marketing and promotion for the visitor and residential experience in rural Calvert, Charles, and St. Mary's counties. Marketing efforts focused on 'Destination Southern Maryland', the 'Piscataway Cultural Center', and the 'Southern Maryland National Heritage Area' initiatives. Regional Marketing supported the region in building its current capacity, as well as towards the national designation, with anticipation of a separate funding stream by FY2023.

Southern Maryland Agricultural Development Commission (SMADC)

6) Maryland Market Money Program - In, FY2021, SMADC partnered with the Maryland Agricultural & Resource-Based Industry Development Corporation (MARBIDCO) to take over the Maryland Market Money (MMM) Program. This program works with farmers markets in Southern Maryland and across the state to provide funds - via a combination of county, state, grant, and fundraising money - to provide low income Women, Infants, Children (WIC) & Senior customers with additional money to match their federal benefits, and to bring in additional income for the farmers. Award funds supported this program and covered the cost travel, paperwork, program duties, and supplies related to MMM.

7) Southern Maryland Meats Refrigerated Livestock Trailer & Truck - After years of hard work and effort by many within the Southern Maryland agricultural community, Southern Maryland finally has a USDA certified slaughterhouse. The Westham Butcher Shop (formerly known as Hertzler's) is an Amish owned and operated facility in St. Mary's County that received full USDA certification on May 4th. The facility is a major win for the area, but it came with a caveat, as it currently does not have a cut-and-wrap service to break the carcasses down into choice cuts and package them under individual farm labels; at the time, the slaughterhouse could only produce USDA certified and stamped half & quarter carcasses (*continued on next page*).

(TCCSMD continued) The Regional Agricultural Center (RAC) being built by SMADC/St. Mary's County is intended to take those quarters and break them down into primal cuts and do cut and wrap, however now the RAC is a year behind in schedule due to Covid complications, this means there is a big gap in the production chain. To fill the gap, SMADC has been working with a local butcher shop in Calvert County to become USDA certified and to take the quarter carcasses from the Westham slaughterhouse to the butcher shop in Calvert via a refrigerated truck equipped with rails to hang the quarters from and slid them in and out. Award funds paid for a refrigerated truck and trailer that not only delivered the quarters to the Calvert butcher shop for cut & wrap, but it will also delivered quarters wholesale to several grocery stores in the region as well.

Transportation

8) FY22 Vanpool Incentive Program (VIP) - TCCSMD partners with other organizations to improve the quality of life throughout the region by reducing air pollution and traffic congestion. As an added benefit, Commuter Passengers in the Tri-County region were eligible to participate in a New VIP that started in September 2021. The Vanpool Incentive Program was designed to encourage the start-up of new vanpools in the Tri-County Region (either originating or terminating in the Southern Maryland Region, Calvert, Charles and St Mary's) by funding a limited number of unoccupied seats. As the vanpool reaches peak ridership, the subsidy will be reduced.

9) Wheels to Wellness (W2W) - Since 2018, W2W has transported patients for their non-emergency medical appointments. To date, the program has travelled more than 20,000 miles in Calvert and St Mary's counties. TCCSMD scaled up from the previous levels of rides of 500 to 3,000 miles per month in two counties to 4,000 to 5,000 miles per month across by expanding the program to include Charles County; developed best practices that include evidence-based measures; and made final recommendations for implementation.

Broadband

10) Broadband Planning - Though demand for faster, more reliable broadband service has grown, most rural areas still lack coverage and reliable service. Quality broadband is critical for telework, tele-education and allows for a more flexible workplace. However, Southern Maryland, like most rural areas, provides only inconsistent and slow service levels. TCCSMD will used award funds to continue planning with its Broadband, Regional Infrastructure Advisory Committee (RIAC) and the Bicycle Infrastructure Advisory Committee (BIAC) and identified rural areas that were served or unserved by adequate broadband communication. This planning allowed leaders to define targeted broadband upgrades and find the better solutions.

Administration, Marketing, and Communications

11) Public Relations & Outreach - TCCSMD continued to contract with Platinum PR to guide the Council in their Public Relations endeavors. Platinum PR has been a great help by assisting TCCSMD to educate citizens on its many programs included in their weekly newsletter. TCCSMD will continue to expand their social media platform in FY2022 to increase their "reach" and "followers" to provide information of the many programs in Southern Maryland.

Tri-County Council for Western Maryland

Amount Award - \$400,000

The Tri-County Council for Western Maryland, Inc (TCCWMD) operates as a regional planning and economic development agency and focuses on improving economic conditions in the rural areas of the State of Maryland, in particular the Western Region, comprised of Allegany, Garrett, and Washington Counties. TCCWMD has several key initiatives and partnerships and will utilize the RMPF award to implement the following projects:

1) Summit Financing Solutions: Expanded and improved Summit Financing Solutions, a Community Development Corporation, by increasing the capital available for lending. TCCWMD enhanced the program by placing dollars into capital, and using the existing management plan for lending, which had the opportunity to directly impact the business community and grow its lending capacity not only during the period of the grant but into the future. As these loans are repaid over time, future reuse of these funds will be consistent with the mission of TCCWMD and/or Summit Development Corporation.

(TCCWMD continued)

- 2) Technical Assistance for Professional Services: TCCWMD provided technical assistance for professional services to small businesses in their region. Services included but are not limited to financial/accounting services, website development and enhancement, and specialized trainings. Companies were eligible for up to \$7,500 of professional services. Funds are paid directly to the service provider upon completion of the project and satisfaction of the client.
- 3) Professional Development Training: TCCWMD staff were trained on Abila MIP software, Portfol and Sageworks - programs used in various aspects of lending including underwriting, loan tracking, and accounting.
- 4) TCCWMD New Headquarters: TCCWMD purchased a historic building located at 11 S. Lee Street in Cumberland, MD to serve has its new headquarters. RMPIF funding will be utilized towards renovations and updating of the building.
- 5) Administration: TCCWMD utilized the grant award to provide for the administration of the grant; salaries and fringe benefits for staff in support of economic development activities related to the Council and Summit Development Corporation; local travel to visit clients, software and office equipment; marketing materials and supplies; staff attendance at training courses.

Upper Shore Regional Council

Award Amount: \$400,000

The Upper Shore Regional Council (USRC) is a cooperative regional planning and development agency serving Cecil, Queen Anne's, and Kent counties. As USRC continues in period of organizational growth, it continues to support the acceleration of existing initiatives in the counties that are aligned with the regional priorities of the Council while utilizing resources for issues that have a regional focus and impact. Emphasis continues to be on strengthening the agriculture economy, assisting with workforce development, strengthening and developing small businesses, addressing transportation concerns as well as enhancing public/private partnerships. In Fiscal Year 2022, the USRC concentrated on increasing business development and retention in the region by investigating a model solidifying regional technical assistance for small businesses while creating long term funding opportunities.

In FY22, the Upper Shore Regional Council focused on the following projects:

Business Development, Retention, and Expansion within the Upper Shore Region

- 1) Aided 10 agricultural businesses per county for a total of 30 for the region utilizing the Upper Shore Micro Ag-Grant program.
- 2) Implemented Phase 3 Oyster Rotational Harvest Pilot program in Spring 2022. Work entailed included meeting with Kent County and Queen Anne's County commercial oyster committees, and DNR and other potential partners to discuss regional project and decided on the location for second planting of oyster spat, rotational model and leasing within a sanctuary.
- 3) Upper Shore Agricultural Equity Incentive Matching Fund by a. Provided a Fund presentation and/or information sessions to farm bureau meetings; Economic Development professions; and Chambers of Commerce in region served.

Address the Workforce Needs of the Upper Shore region

- 4) Met individually with all pertinent partners (school systems, economic development, workforce network, and chamber of commerce)
- 5) Provided at least 1 forum to bring all parties together to discuss and explore a trade liaison and workforce training program.
- 6) Increased marketing of program.
- 7) Created a "working group" comprised of representatives from the private sector and public sector to advise the Technical Career Liaison.
- 8) Provided 10 grants per county for tools/equipment to students.
- 9) Trained 15 participants in the Susquehanna Workforce training program
- 10) Supported the Cecil County Public Library Mobile Tech Lab to visit 4 communities.
- 11) Supported 10 Cecil County School of Technology students visits to 5 agriculture businesses.

Marketing

- 12) Continued updating the Harvest Directory website.

(USRC continued)

Marketing

- 13) Provided continual updates and improvements to the USRC website.
- 14) Updated existing and create additional marketing pieces for the USRC.
- 15) Promoted partner activities through social media and website.
- 16) Created an End of Year report for FY 2022.

Regional Planning

- 17) Coordinated meetings for the new Kent County transportation manager and transportation managers from Cecil County and Queen Anne's County.
- 18) Assisted the Kent Local Management Board (LMB) with upgrading the website dedicated to transportation.
- 19) Assisted the Kent LMB with radio and print advertising of transportation option in Kent County.
- 20) Assisted Kent LMB with creating a strategic plan for transportation.
- 21) Attended and support Maryland Upper Shore Transit meetings.
- 22) Updated USRC's and Cecil County's DataStory.
- 23) Supported GIS Circuit Rider program to complete at least one project per County in region served.



Channel Marker -
Psychiatric Crisis
Bed program,
Eastern Shore.



The Greater Cumberland Committee - Forest Products
Brand Development ESG Charette, Western Maryland



End Hunger in
Calvert County -
construction of
warehouse facility
for regional food
hub distribution,
Southern
Maryland.



University of Maryland Shore Regional Health at Chestertown -
Mobile Wellness Team Project, Eastern Shore.

Returned Grant Award Funds

FY2020 RMC award funds were returned to RMC in the amount of \$5,542.51 from Garrett Regional Medical Center on April 21, 2022 for their Patient Ambassador Program, which was discontinued due to COVID-19

MAERDAF Overview

The Maryland Agriculture Education and Rural Development Assistance Fund (MAERDAF) grant funding provides capacity-building funds to rural nonprofit service providers. The cap for this grant program in Fiscal Year 2022 was \$40,000 and while a match is not required, it is highly preferred. The MAERDAF program is funded through the State of Maryland's Annual Operating Budget. In Fiscal Year 2022, the MAERDAF budget received \$118,485 (PCA 39101) in its line-item appropriations and \$500,000 from RMPIF (PCA 38101), totaling \$618,485. Due to the high demand in MAERDAF grant applications, the Grant Review Board approved an additional allocation of \$292,303 from RMPIF for a total of \$910,788 in MAERDAF grant awards.

MAERDAF History

MAERDAF was established in 2000 with the purpose to increase the overall capacity of rural-serving nonprofit organizations and community colleges to meet a multitude of rural development challenges and to help them establish new public/private partnerships for leveraging non-state sources of funding. This grant has the following four focus areas: Agriculture & Forestry, Community & Economic Development, Rural Broadband, Energy, and Youth engagement.

The Rural Maryland Council serves as the administrative agency in receiving the applications and disbursing the funds. Grant award determinations are made by the independent MAERDAF Grant Review Board set by law and consisting of the Secretaries (or their designee) of the Departments of Agriculture, Commerce, Health, Housing and Community Development and Natural Resources as well as the Chair (or the designee) of the Rural Maryland Council. Decisions by the MAERDAF Grant Review Board are final and binding.

MAERDAF Fiscal Year 2022 Awards At-A-Glance

MAERDAF Regions Served	
Eastern Shore (Nine County Region-Cecil, Kent, Queen Anne's, Talbot, Caroline, Dorchester, Wicomico, Worcester, Somerset)	12 Awards
Southern (Three County Region-Charles, Calvert, St. Mary's)	1 Award
Western (Five County Region-Garrett, Allegany, Washington, Frederick, Carroll)	8 Awards
Statewide (Eighteen County Region)	9 Awards
Total:	30 Awards

MAERDAF	Amount	# of Grants
Ag & Forestry	\$133,140	6
Energy	\$62,000	2
Youth Engagement	\$107,015	3
Community & Economic	\$608,633	19
Total:	\$910,788	30

Chesapeake Bay Maritime Museum - Shipwright Apprentice Program, Talbot County.



Agriculture & Forestry - 6 Grant Award Projects Totaling \$133,140

Allegany College of Maryland

Amount Awarded: \$40,000

Project Name: Growing Workforce Roots in Rural Western Maryland: Enhancing Forestry Education at Allegany College of Maryland

Focus Area: Agriculture & Forestry

Project Summary - Allegany College of Maryland serves Western Maryland and the surrounding region to deliver a diverse and relevant education centered around student success in a supportive and engaging community. The College offers a *Society of American Foresters* (SAF) accredited forestry program (the only SAF-accredited Forest Technology Program in the state of Maryland) that teaches students the latest techniques and utilizes industry standard equipment for felling operations. The MAERDAF grant award, along with matching funds, were expended to purchase a log loader. A log loader lifts-and-swings logs from side-to-side, in a progression that moves logs or whole trees from the stump to a roadside landing. The addition of this technology will significantly enhance the existing technical training opportunities for forestry applications at ACM and will greatly benefit rural western Maryland.

Chesapeake Culinary Center

Amount Awarded - \$13,000

Project Name - Eat the Invader: extracting blue catfish to feed the hungry/ institutions

Focus Area - Agriculture & Forestry

Project Summary - The Chesapeake Culinary Center's mission is to create healthy economically stable families; address poverty through food, education and economic development; to give community members the tools to be self-sustaining and successful; provide building opportunities for their community's children to eat healthier so they are ready to learn; and, to create opportunities for job skills and economic development to address poverty on the eastern shore through job creation and value add for farmers. Working with partners, the Center designed a plan of action to help extract the invasive blue catfish from the Chesapeake Bay while identifying the marketing plan to create consumer demand. The blue catfish is considered an invasive species because they negatively affect the Bay ecosystem by eating so many native species. The MAERDAF grant award, along with matching funds, were expended to pay for consultant services to create the plan of action, conduct a survey, and related project materials.

LEAD Maryland Foundation, Inc.

Amount Awarded - \$30,000

Project Name - Gaining Leadership for Maryland's Agriculture, Natural Resources, and Rural Communities

Focus Area - Agriculture & Forestry

Project Summary - LEAD Maryland Foundation, Inc. is dedicated to identifying and developing leadership to serve agriculture, natural resources, and rural communities in Maryland. The new LEAD Maryland Class XII Fellows (2022-23) will participate in a series of seminars beginning in January 2022. The MAERDAF grant award, along with matching funds, were expended to pay for three LEAD Class XII seminars held in Frederick County, Southern Maryland, and Dorchester County. Seminar costs include lodging and meals per Fellow, transportation, training, and teaching supplies.

Maryland Agricultural Education Foundation

Amount Awarded - \$10,390

Project Name - Infusing Agriculture in the Middle School Classroom

Focus Area - Agriculture & Forestry

Project Summary - The Maryland Agricultural Education Foundation, Inc. (MAEF) promotes the understanding and importance of agriculture in our daily lives and is striving to address this situation by making teachers more literate in agriculture. Infusing *Agriculture into the Middle School Classroom* program debuted in a modified format in 2021 due to the pandemic. This innovative course allows in-depth online study, chat room and an in-person workshop/farm experience to increase depth of knowledge by allowing teachers hands-on activities and interactive farm tours. The goal is to have teachers develop a comfort level with agriculture concepts in order to integrate lessons learned into basic curriculum requirements in all subject areas. The MAERDAF award, along with matching funds, were expended to rebuild the course for post-pandemic semesters going forward into the academic years 2021-2022 by paying for a) the salaries and wages for Foundation Staff; b) travel; c) the Goucher College course fee; and d) rental for an in-person session.

Steam Onward Inc**Amount Awarded - \$13,450****Project Name - MORE THAN FARMING****Focus Area - Agriculture & Forestry**

Project Summary - STEAM Onward's mission is to increase the number of minority and under-served youth pursuing higher education in STEM related fields such as science, technology, engineering, and mathematics. The MAERDAF award, along with matching funds, were utilized to produce and distribute statewide, a pre-collegiate documentary video series called "More Than Farming" (MTF). The MTF video series features farms and natural resources sites in rural Maryland that utilize 21st century precision technology and tools being utilized in agriculture, aquaculture, and natural resources. The grant award was expended to include contractual services for the a) the Project Director; b) the Videographer and equipment; c) the Video Editor; d) Interviewers; e) food for video shooting events; and, f) promotion materials, and web related services.

Western Maryland Resource Conservation and Development Council**Amount Awarded - \$26,300****Project Name - Western Maryland Food Resiliency Project****Focus Area – Community & Economic Development**

Project Summary - The Western Maryland Food Council (WMFC) serves Garrett, Allegany and Washington counties. The Council assists organizations with planning and implementing food system projects by bringing organizations together to discuss and plan projects. The Council is made up of 14 individuals with a variety of backgrounds from the three counties. The WMFC has identified four main needs in the region: 1) communication between farmers & restaurants, 2) greater information about community gardens, 3) a better understanding of agricultural education in the region, and 4) an understanding of the needs of food pantries & more coordination of the local food system. The MAERDAF grant award, along with matching funds, were expended to hire a full-time individual for 6 months to complete the following items: a) a Farmer to Restaurant Forum; b) a directory of community gardens and resources; c) a directory of agricultural education resources; and, d) conduct a survey of food pantries.

Community & Economic Development - 19 Grant Award Projects Totaling \$608,633**Bay Community Support Services, Inc.****Amount Awarded - \$27,200****Project Name - Construction & Renovation of Group Homes for the Disabled in Two Rural Counties****Focus Area - Community & Economic Development**

Project Summary - Bay Community Support Services provides personalized services to adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities living in Southern and Central Maryland. The MAERDAF grant award was used to aid in the home repairs of three residential group homes located in Charles and St. Mary's counties. These houses are full-time homes to 13 individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities, seven (7) of whom are wheelchair-bound, and a work location for 30 employees. One of the three homes is a full-care residential home, meaning every resident is wheelchair-bound and has numerous preexisting health concerns. Repairs completed included a total roof replacement, window replacement of two homes (34 windows total), and reconstruction and plumbing in two homes due to water and mold remediation from water damage in the bathroom.

Beach to Bay Heritage Area**Amount Awarded - \$40,000****Project Name - African American Heritage in the Beach to Bay Heritage Area****Focus Area - Community & Economic Development**

Project Summary - The Beach to Bay Heritage Area's mission is to preserve, protect, and promote the historical, cultural, and natural heritage of Maryland's Somerset, Wicomico, and Worcester Counties. This project focused on creating and adding to existing African American Heritage assets on the lower eastern shore including the addition of interpretive signs, a self-guided driving tour brochure and a mural depicting Reverend Charles Albert Tindley, known as the father of gospel music in Crisfield, Maryland. The MAERDAF grant award, along with matching funds, were expended to purchase a) 4 interpretive sign designs and their fabrication; b) the creation of 25 aluminum QR Code signs; c) the muralist; and, d) project publications, marketing, and technology related to website update and social media content.

Catoctin Furnace Historical Society, Inc.**Amount Awarded - \$40,000****Project Name - Heritage at Work: Blacksmithing Returns to Catoctin Furnace****Focus Area - Community & Economic Development**

Project Summary - The Catoctin Furnace Historical Society, Inc. works to study, commemorate, and preserve the unique and rich history of this late 18th through 19th-century industrial village through the preservation of architecture, art and artistry, cultural traditions, cultural landscape, lifeways, and foodways of the diverse workers. This project will aid in the reconstruction of the historic village smithy in Catoctin Furnace where blacksmithing began with African American ironworkers and blacksmiths in 1776. The completed shop will add blacksmithing to their successful 9-year-old leadership-focused "Heritage at Work" which will enhance students' technical abilities & practical skills including good hand-to-eye coordination, problem-solving skills, math skills for measuring, making precise cuts and calculations, creative and design skills, and interpersonal skills. The MAERDAF grant award, along with matching funds, were expended to construct a 20'x14' heavy timber framed blacksmith shop, which included milling, joinery, excavation, foundation, construction of the hearth/chimney, siding and trim, framing, and assembly.

Chesapeake Bay Maritime Museum**Amount Awarded - \$34,535****Project Name - CBMM Shipwright Apprentice Program****Focus Area – Community & Economic Development**

Project Summary - The Chesapeake Bay Maritime Museum (CBMM) is dedicated to preserving and exploring the history, environment, and culture of the entire Chesapeake Bay region, and making this resource available to all. CBMM has been operating a successful Shipwright Apprentice Program for more than twenty years, graduating more than fifty apprentices. In 2018, CBMM began offering a formal four-year apprentice certification, developed in line with U.S. Department of Labor Employment and Training Administration standards, and registered with the Maryland Apprenticeship and Training Program, a division of Maryland Department of Labor, Licensing and Regulation's Workforce Development and Adult Learning. CBMM's four-year Shipwright Apprentice Program covers 8,000 hours of real work experiences, including instruction and training on joinery techniques, ship layout, ship repair, and construction, as well as leadership and management skill development. The MAERDAF grant award, along with matching funds, were expended to support the stipends for four apprentices and the salary and wages for the lead Shipwright Educator.

Chesapeake Housing Mission Inc.**Amount Awarded - \$30,000****Project Name - Healthy Homes Initiative****Focus Area – Community & Economic Development**

Project Summary - Chesapeake Housing Mission Inc.'s mission is to provide critical home repair services through Christian Mission to low-income families living in the Chesapeake Region as well as provide transformational life experiences to those we serve, volunteers offering their service, and entire communities. Their Healthy Home Initiative provides critical housing repair services to low-income persons living on the Lower Shore. These repairs help make clients' homes warmer, safer, drier, and healthier, decreasing the risk of falls, emergency room visits and hospitalizations. The MAERDAF grant award, along with matching funds, were expended to pay for home repairs to twenty homes and covered the cost for project materials and supplies that included lumber, hardware, drywall, flooring, roofing materials and other supplies needed for home repair job/ramp builds.

Community Mediation Maryland**Amount Awarded - \$40,000****Project Name - Community Mediation Corps - Rural Mediation Centers Only****Focus Area – Community & Economic Development**

Project Summary - Community Mediation Maryland's (CMM) mission it to advance collaborative conflict resolution in Maryland through educating the public, providing training and quality assurance, conducting research, and creatively applying mediation to social challenges. This project focused on placing seven full-time AmeriCorps members in community mediation centers in

(*Community Mediation Maryland continued*) in rural counties throughout Maryland. Rural Maryland mediation centers tend to be smaller with less opportunity for growth and placement of a full-time member to serve can significantly increase the number of services provided benefiting the community they serve. The MAERDAF grant award, along with matching funds, were expended to support seven Americorps member stipends to serve 1 year in rural area mediation centers across the State.

Evergreen Heritage Center Foundation

Amount Awarded - \$25,000

Project Name - The Evergreen Farm and its Appalachian Coal Camp

Focus Area - Community & Economic Development

Project Summary - The Evergreen Heritage Center - a 130 acre Farm for education, conservation, and preservation - serving Garrett and Allegany Counties, established an Appalachian Coal Camp experience with the MAERDAF grant award funds. The project is part of an effort to rebuild the Evergreen Coal Camp and tell the story of the symbiotic relationship between farming and mining in Appalachian Maryland. This experience enables students and visitors to travel back 100 years to the Evergreen farm, when living off the land meant not only farming but using abundant natural resources including forest, streams, wildlife, and minerals, specifically coal. The MAERDAF award, along with matching funds, were expended to fund the contractual services of two staff - a Senior Tradesman and a Tradesman to complete the construction and associated lighting and electrical for the blacksmith shop, the boarding house, and the mine opening as well as display and signage development.

For All Seasons, Inc.

Amount Awarded - \$38,682

Project Name - Building Capacity for Increased Telehealth in Maryland's Rural Mid-Shore

Focus Area – Community & Economic Development

Project Summary - For All Seasons, Inc.'s mission is to provide therapy, advocacy, education, and psychiatric care in a safe environment that nurtures wellness. It is the largest licensed behavioral health and rape crisis center serving Maryland's Mid-Shore without regard to one's ability to pay and offers psychiatry, clinical mental health and rape crisis services. The *Building Capacity for Increased Telehealth in Maryland's Rural Mid-Shore* project invested in new laptops with internal cameras and iPhones for For All Seasons' staff to be able to provide mental health and rape crisis services to residents of the Mid-Shore through telehealth. The MAERDAF award, along with matching funds, were expended to support the purchase of a) eighteen (18) 15" laptops and the labor installation and set-up associated costs and b) five (5) mobile phones and accessories for telehealth purposes.

Forever Maryland

Amount Awarded - \$28,600

Project Name - Forever Maryland's Building Better Boards for Maryland's Local Land Trusts: Training & Toolkit

Focus Area – Community & Economic Development

Project Summary - Forever Maryland was founded to promote and enhance land conservation statewide through education, advocacy, and outreach. *Forever Maryland's - Building Better Boards for Maryland's Local Land Trusts: Training & Toolkit* will improve the standards and practices of leadership training for the 32 land trusts across the state. Through universal adoption of a standardized training, Forever Maryland aims to provide tools to build local land conservation leadership, to expand the diversity of conservation leaders, and increase governance best management practices ultimately improving Maryland's environmental future. The MAERDAF grant award, along with matching funds, were expended to a) support the salary, wages, and travel of staff dedicated to the project, b) purchase materials, supplies and, printing of the board training toolkit; c) video production; d) postage; and, e) consultant services for curriculum development.

Garrett College Foundation
Amount Awarded - \$40,000
Project Name - Career Technology Training Center Infrastructure Upgrades
Focus Area – Community & Economic Development

Project Summary - Garrett College, a two-year accredited community college in Western Maryland, provides an accessible, quality and comprehensive educational experience in a supportive environment to a diverse student population in both traditional and non-traditional settings. The *Career Technology Training Center Infrastructure Upgrades* project included renovating existing facilities to expand the College's Workforce Development training program. The MAERDAF grant award, along with matching funds, were expended to fund the a) wall construction, insulation, steel, lighting, doors, and three Reznor type propane heaters for the Diesel Mechanic program; and, b) wall construction, new doors and associated hardware for the culinary laboratory and the Maker Space classroom.

Habitat for Humanity Choptank, Inc.
Amount Awarded - \$29,202
Project Name - Seniors Living Safely
Focus Area - Community & Economic Development

Project Summary - Habitat for Humanity Choptank, is a nonprofit organization that focuses on building homes, communities, and hope. The MAERDAF grant funding was utilized help build the capacity to empower local families through shelter by leveraging funding to host two AmeriCorps positions. The AmeriCorps members provided outreach to older adults, connecting them to critical health and safety repair resources so they may remain in their homes. Outreach included installing smoke detectors, carbon monoxide monitors, and grab bars to alleviate the most critical hazards. The MAERDAF grant award, along with matching funds, were expended to support the a) the stipend for 2 AmericCorp members and b) equipment for safety repairs that included 10 grab bars, 10-6 packs of smoke detectors, and 2-6 packs of carbon monoxide monitors.

Habitat For Humanity of Wicomico County, Inc.
Amount Awarded - \$40,000
Project Name - Habitat Housing Plus
Focus Area - Community & Economic Development

Project Summary - Habitat for Humanity of Wicomico County brings people together to build homes, communities and hope on the Lower Eastern Shore. Their *Habitat Housing Plus* program encompasses their core housing programs and expands their services to reach low-income renters and homeowners with emergency COVID relief, access to home repairs related to TidalHealth's EXHALE initiative, as well as long-term access to financial literacy and other state/federal programs related to housing stability. The MAERDAF grant award, along with matching funds, was utilized to help build the organization's capacity in order to help run the Habitat Housing Plus program by supporting three AmeriCorps members and five Habicorps reentry member wages.

Heart of the Civil War Heritage Area, Inc.
Amount Awarded - \$20,000
Project Name - Heart of the Civil War Heritage Area 5-year Plan
Focus Area - Community & Economic Development

Project Summary - The Heart of the Civil War Heritage Area (HCWHA) mission is to promote the stewardship of the historic, cultural and natural Civil War resources in Carroll, Frederick and Washington counties; encourage superior visitor experiences; and stimulate tourism, economic prosperity and educational development, thereby improving the quality of life of our community for the benefit of both residents and visitors. HCWHA hired a consultant to prepare the "HCWHA Strategic Action Plan" to cover a five-year period starting July 2022 and continuing through June 2027. The plan creates a new road map for the heritage area to stimulate the heritage tourism economies in its serving area through a variety of services to nonprofits, government entities and other partners. The final document includes (1) An Executive Summary, (2) a narrative report describing all project activities and findings (with appendices, including a logic model to clarify the path to achieve organizational development/sustainability goals) and (3) a five-year action plan matrix with program and organizational/development goals, due dates, responsible parties, and metrics (outputs, outcomes, and indicators of impact). The MAERDAF award, along with matching funds, were expended to pay for a consultant to prepare the "HCWHA Strategic Action Plan."

Maryland Rural Development Corporation
Amount Awarded - \$40,000
Project Name - Whole Family Innovations
Focus Area: Community & Economic Development

Project Summary - Maryland Rural Development Corporation (MRDC) provides services in response to the needs of rural, low-income households and communities throughout Maryland. For the past five years, MRDC has been operating wraparound services for adult education classes run by the local community colleges and their Head Start locations. The *Whole Family Innovations* project continued these efforts with the addition of offering social service support with the goal to attract more families, increase two-generation impact, and help more people lift themselves out of poverty. Additionally, MRDC expanded to Kent County and established in-person contact in their Edgewater and Aberdeen locations. The MAERDAF grant award, along with matching funds, were expended to support the salaries and wages for two teachers, a social worker, and childcare services.

Mid-Atlantic Gigabit Innovation Collaboratory
Amount Awarded - \$15,414
Project Name – CyberJobs
Focus Area – Community & Economic Development

Project Summary - The Mid-Atlantic Gigabit Innovation Collaboratory's (MAGIC) mission is to build a tech ecosystem that creates and nurtures talent, entrepreneurship, and tech businesses, elevating the Westminster Gigabit Community to lead the Mid-Atlantic region. MAGIC extended its Cyber Jobs program, initially funded in 2020 by a USDA Rural Business Development Grant, in order to expose rural students to cybersecurity workforce development and career opportunities to 8 rural counties throughout Maryland. The MAERDAF grant award, along with matching funds, will be expended to pay for the a) hourly rate of the Program Director; b) host location for two competitions; and, c) food for volunteers/students for a Hackathon. *The Grantee was approved a 9-month extension as the in-person events had to be canceled due to COVID-19 variants and subsequent low registration. The project is set to be completed by March 31, 2023.*

Mid-Shore Pro Bono, Inc.
Amount Awarded - \$21,000
Project Name - Student Internship and Experiential Learning Program
Focus Area - Community & Economic Development

Project Summary - Mid-Shore Pro Bono (MSPB) is a nonprofit organization that connects low income people with legal representation in need of civil legal services. MSPB is uniquely positioned to expose students who are interested in the practice of law, social work, and public interest work hands on experience that will introduce them to working with rural, underserved, populations lacking the same resources as urban areas through their *Internship and Experiential Learning Program*. This program provided undergraduate and law school students with exceptional opportunities in the areas of public interest law, non-profit management, community service and basic work experience. The MAERDAF grant award, along with matching funds, were expended to support a) the stipends of four paid interns; b) printing costs for program flyers and application documents; c) program advertisements; d) an interactive website upgrade; e) the creation of a promotional video; and f) general project office supplies.

The Greater Cumberland Committee
Amount Awarded - \$40,000
Project Name - I-68 Regional Alliance Workforce Housing Initiative
Focus Area - Community & Economic Development

Project Summary - The Greater Cumberland Committee (TGCC) is a nonprofit that seeks to educate regional business leaders, professionals and consumers on matters related to sustainable economic development in the northern Appalachian, tri-state region. TGCC is focused on projects of regional relevance in the areas of transportation infrastructure, education and workforce development, energy and natural resources and next generation leadership. Industry, academic, government, non-profit and economic development leaders from each of the five counties in the 3 states (Maryland, West Virginia and Pennsylvania) that comprise the I-68 Region identify the lack of adequate housing for professional workers as a significant obstacle to the attraction

(The Greater Cumberland Committee continued) and retention of workers needed to grow and sustain the economic development of the area. With no reliable data compiled on a regional basis to support the wide-spread perception that adequate housing for the targeted segment - "middle market" or "professional" workforce does not currently exist. The MAERDAF grant award, along with matching funds, were expended to engage a consultant to complete a housing study that 1. Defined and determined whether the perceived housing shortage for the targeted workforce segment exists and 2. If the existence of inadequate housing for this segment is verified by data and delivered a set of specific recommendations and action steps to ameliorate the shortage quickly.

Western Maryland Resource Conservation and Development Council

Amount Awarded - \$40,000

Project Name - Maryland Forest Products Industry Risk Analysis

Focus Area - Agriculture & Forestry

Project Summary - The Western Maryland Resource Conservation and Development Council's (WMRC&D) mission is to build and sustain resource conservation programs which raise the quality of social, economic, and environmental development in our region. The Council was incorporated in 1993 to represent Garrett, Allegany, Washington, Frederick, and Carroll counties. The Maryland Forest Products Risk Analysis project identified Maryland's timber as a reliable input for sustainably and responsibly sourced forest products for domestic and export markets. The Risk Analysis is the foundational document supporting the subsequent development of two additional efforts: a branding campaign differentiating Maryland forest products, and the basis for third-party reporting of Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) metrics. The project highlighted Maryland's forests as a valuable resource which continues to support new resource-based jobs and a vibrant rural economy. The MAERDAF grant award, along with matching funds, were expended to hire a consultant to develop the Maryland Forest Products Risk Analysis and administrative related expenses.

Western Maryland Resource Conservation and Development Council

Amount Awarded - \$19,000

Project Name - Development of Added Value Revenue Streams Through Hemp Waste By-Product Processing

Focus Area - Community & Economic Development

Project Summary - The Mountain Maryland Hemp Alliance consists of 10 hemp operations in the Western Maryland area. A consistent problem that these farms face is a buildup of CBD (cannabinoids) stalk waste and a lack of outlets to make money from it. Many different products can be produced from this "waste", but processing capacity has not yet been developed for small scale operations like those in western Maryland. The MAERDAF grant award, along with matching funds, were expended to purchase post harvesting equipment in support of this project. Equipment included a XL575 DR Chipper Shredder, a Model 198 gas powered Hammer Mill, and a 9" 2-Roller 15 Horse Power Electric Start Diesel Pellet Mill; a trailer to transport the Mill; travel costs to pick up the equipment and moving it from farm to farm; and salary and wages for the project manager to administer the grant funds.

Energy - 2 Grant Award Projects Totaling \$62,000

Adkins Arboretum, Ltd.

Amount Awarded - \$40,000

Project Name - For the Love of Trees and a Sustainable Future

Focus Area - Energy

Project Summary - Adkins Arboretum is a 400-acre native garden and preserve located in Caroline County whose mission is to provide exceptional experiences in nature to promote environmental stewardship to the public. The Arboretum strives to foster sustainability in - human, natural, and financial resources as a model for environmental stewardship. The MAERDAF grant funds were used to install a cutting-edge high-efficiency heating and cooling system in the Arboretum Visitor's Center. The Center welcomes visitors and provides a meeting space, a reception area, gift shop, bathrooms, and the staff offices.

Forest Glen Commonwealth, Inc.

Amount Awarded - \$22,000

Project Name - Capacity Building - Improve Energy Efficiency for Rural Small Businesses and Farms

Focus Area - Energy

Project Summary - Forest Glen Commonwealth, Inc. is working in collaboration with the Maryland Clean Energy Center and Maryland Agriculture and Resource Based-Industry Development Corporation in order to develop a capacity building project to improve energy efficiency investment opportunities for rural businesses and farms, including small businesses that may be eligible for U.S. Department of Agriculture Rural Energy for America Program Grant and Loan Funds. The goal of this project is to improve rural business profitability and support energy efficiency improvements through Capacity Building. The MAERDAF grant award, along with matching funds, were expended to support a) consultant services; b) energy audit subcontract services; c) financial/legal administration; d) communications to include both a series of webinars and publications; e) and travel.

Youth Engagement - 3 Grant Award Projects Totaling \$107,015

Maryland Association for Environmental and Outdoor Education

Amount Awarded - \$30,000

Project Name - Empowering Young People for Forestry and Natural Resources Careers in Rural Maryland

Focus Area - Youth Engagement

Project Summary - Maryland Association for Environmental and Outdoor Education (MAEOE) promotes environmental awareness by serving teachers, natural resource managers, nature center staff and environmental program managers with training, conferences, publications, programs and other resources. MAEOE and Forestry partners in Eastern and Western Maryland will work together to develop and deliver "Green Jobs: Exploring Forest and Natural Resource Careers." The program will provide educators with the background and resources to foster student understanding of and appreciation for the local environment including forested lands by using Project Learning Tree activities and the 2021 Forest Literacy Framework - a nationally recognized environmental education curriculum proven to increase students' knowledge, reasoning, academic skills, and forest literacy. The project will provide opportunities for youth to meet professionals working in Green jobs and to learn about local forested lands and the role that they can have in forestry today and in the future. The MAERDAF award, along with matching funds, were expended to support a) the salary, wages and fringe benefits for two MAEOE staff members; b) teacher stipends; c) travel costs students, teachers, and staff to related events; d) conference scholarships for 20 teachers and 5 students; and, e) program supplies.

Preservation Maryland

Amount Awarded - \$37,015

Project Name - Restoring the Past & Building Tomorrow's Leaders

Focus Area - Youth Engagement

Project Summary - Preservation Maryland is dedicated to preserving Maryland's historic buildings, neighborhoods, landscapes, and archaeological sites through outreach, funding, and advocacy. The *Restoring the Past & Building Tomorrow's Leaders* program focuses on the care, rehabilitation and upkeep of historic cemeteries; especially cemeteries associated with communities of color. The program has four distinct impacts 1) engage young adults across the state in learning, leading and supporting cemetery cleaning & conservation; 2) invest primarily in cemeteries associated with communities of color to protect these resources; 3) through preservation and awareness, develop a network of historic cemeteries that will attract heritage tourists; and, 4) develop a pathway for young adults interested in a career in historic trades. The MAERDAF grant award, along with matching funds, will be expended to support the a) salary, wages, and fringe benefits for an AmeriCorps Vista position; b) travel costs; c) materials and supplies (spray bottles, brushes, sponges, plastic scrappers, cleaning agent D2, graffiti removal, additional cleaners as needed and, Personal Protective Equipment; d) publications; e) administrative costs to manage the grant. *The Grantee was approved a 6-month extension due the delay to fulfill the Cemetery Preservation Workshop Coordinator by a qualified candidate until April. The project will be completed by June 30, 2023.*

The Parents' Place of Maryland

Amount Awarded - \$40,000

Project Name - Empowering Parents & Youth with Hidden Disabilities

Focus Area - Youth Engagement

Project Summary - The Parents' Place of Maryland's mission is to empower families as advocates and partners in improving education and health outcomes for children with disabilities and special healthcare needs with a commitment to diversity and equity. The purpose of the *Empowering Parents and Youth with Hidden Disabilities* project is to facilitate a four-day training series for families that empower them to gain disability pride as well as self-advocacy and transition planning skills so that youth may develop self-directed transition portfolios for usage in their Individualized Education Programs (IEP). This training includes but is not limited to topics such as: the laws related to the Rehab Act of 1973 Section 504, Individuals with Disabilities Education Act and the Americans with Disabilities Act, disability pride and disability awareness; creating a vision; the role of the family in the transition process; and, developing an individualized transition plan within the IEP. The MAERDAF grant award, along with matching funds, were expended to support the cost of up to 15 families to go through a four day training that included the the salary of the contracted Parent Educator/Trainer and purchased the supplies and materials related to the daily usage for project activities and training.



Heart of the Civil War Heritage Area, Inc. - Strategic Planning Listening Session, Carrol, Frederick, Washington Counties.



Allegany College of Maryland - Enhancing Forestry Education Program



Habitat for Humanity Choptank, Inc. - Seniors Living Safely, Talbot County.



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

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