

Serving Latino Youth and their Families

# Investing in Our Nation's Future



ANNUAL REPORT 2014-2015

# About Identity

## MISSION

Identity's mission is to provide opportunities for Latino youth to believe in themselves and realize their full potential. We aim to facilitate the successful transition of Latino youth into adulthood by providing skills, guidance, positive role models, and a strong sense of community. We accomplish this by reaching out to the youth and their families, one at a time, and working with our partners to overcome obstacles to their success.

## WHAT WE DO

Identity works to improve the lives of Latino youth and families in Montgomery County through a variety of programs tailored to their unique situations. Latinos are the most vulnerable population in the county and Latino youth face grave barriers to success in their studies, work and life. Identity provides the means to overcome these barriers. We create opportunities to ensure that youth are well educated and equipped with the necessary skills to build effective connections within their communities and become productive and contributing members of society.

## OUR VALUES

We believe that:

- Young people come first
- Every child has great potential
- Youth deserve more than one chance
- Society is enriched by cultural diversity
- To serve others is a privilege that requires excellence

## Greetings from the Executive Director

Dear friends and supporters,

Identity's success continues to rely on a very simple formula: hiring passionate and committed staff, listening to and including the voice of our clients in everything we do, and undergoing strong process and outcome evaluations. We are very proud of the work our staff has done in the provision of positive youth development after-school programs, workforce development, trauma-informed interventions, behavioral health services, and GED preparation. I would also like to take this opportunity to highlight the 21st Century Community Learning Center Program for middle school youth. Soon after Identity's strategic plan was adopted, with a new focus on education, Identity competed for and was awarded two highly competitive 21st Century grants. That we were awarded these grants highlights the extensive needs of the county's Latino youth, as well as Identity's capacity to deliver these high-quality programs and services.



Advocacy took center stage this past year as Identity and its partners worked to follow up on the recommendations of the Connecting Youth to Opportunities report, which was published in partnership with the Community Foundation. The aim of these recommendations is to re-connect disconnected youth to opportunities, as well as to prevent other Latino youth from becoming disconnected.

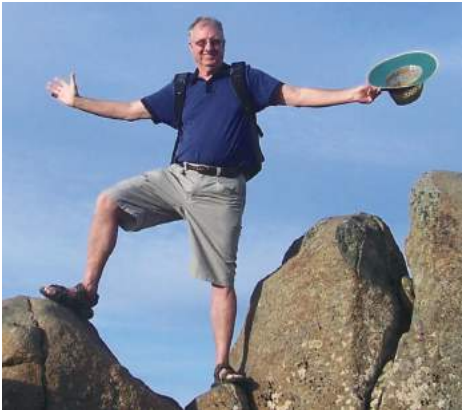
As a testament to Identity's commitment to the academic achievement of Latino students, the organization was one of 150 nationwide that were recognized by the White House as part of the 25th anniversary of its Initiative on Education Excellence for Hispanics. This system will follow youth from middle school through high school graduation and will provide intensive math instruction, STEM and other enrichment activities, as well as a strong parent engagement component to ensure participants' successful high school graduation and college access.

Much has been accomplished in the last year, but we could not have done anything at all without the support of our funders, partners, and staff. Thank you all very much for supporting our youth.

Sincerely,

Diego Uriburu  
Executive Director





## Message from the Board Chair

Greetings to the Identity Community!

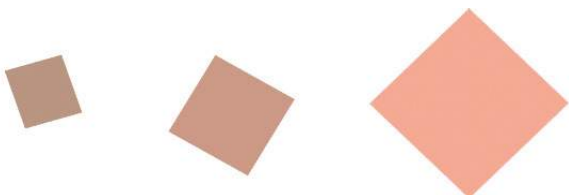
2015 has been a great year for Identity. This Annual Report highlights our many successes and accomplishments in words and pictures. Our programs continue to grow and serve more young people every year. We are also engaging parents and the Latino community as a whole in building a foundation for a better future for Latino youth.

The Identity Board is growing also in terms of involvement and scope. Our new members – Aggie Alvez, Yonis Benitez, Shirley Brandman, Marta Brito Pérez and Sally Rudney – bring new perspectives and important expertise as we continue to move forward. One of our challenges is to reach greater numbers of youth, and the Board is working closely with Identity’s leadership and staff to identify new programs and expand existing programs to meet this challenge. This includes helping to find funding to make them happen.

We appreciate your support and look forward to an exciting new year.

Sincerely,

John Rumble  
Board Chair



*Photo Credits: Jose Andrade (p. 4 – bottom); Anthony Cano (front cover, 2, 4 – top, 5 – top left, 6 – top, 7 – bottom right, 8 – bottom, 9 – top, back cover); Eduardo Garduño (5 – bottom); CJ Rock (9 – bottom); Angel Varela (7); Efrain Viana (7 – bottom right).*

# Our Leadership



## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

John Rumble, Chair

Charles Hess, Vice Chair

Gabriel Romero, Secretary

Maribel Torres-Piñero, Treasurer

Aggie Alvez

Yonis Benitez

Shirley Brandman

Marta Brito Pérez

Stewart Edelstein

Michael Knapp

Sally Rudney

Teresa Wright

## SENIOR MANAGEMENT TEAM

Diego Uriburu,  
Executive Director

Leny Bautista,  
Director of Operations

Anne VanDercook,  
Controller

Candace Kattar,  
Senior Program Director

Carolyn Camacho,  
Director of High School Programs

Tomas Alejo,  
Director of  
Youth Opportunity Centers

Helena Muñoz-Baras,  
Director of Development  
and Special Projects

## SENIOR ADVISORS

John Savage

Gabrielle Vetter-Taaffe

# School-Based

## 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Centers

Identity was thrilled to win two competitive state funding grants to implement 21st Century Community Learning Center programs at three of our longtime partner schools: Forest Oak, Montgomery Village and Neelsville. These programs bring academic, STEM, and enrichment activities to Latino students that have been struggling with math, in addition to providing them with exciting career and college exploration opportunities. The programs have comprehensive parent support and engagement components. Montgomery College, Strathmore, Montgomery County Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, and the County's Environmental Protection Agency partnered to provide year-round services. The success of our first year is demonstrated in our attainment of all performance measures, including math achievement, social/life skills improvement, and increased parent engagement in their children's schools and academics.



**21<sup>st</sup> Century students** apply their math skills in a STEM experiment to create weight-bearing structures from newspaper and other materials.

**Statistically significant improvement in math grades was achieved in our pilot year!**



**Gaithersburg High School Wellness Center facilitated a summer bridge program for rising 9<sup>th</sup> graders in our 21<sup>st</sup> Century program, to facilitate their smooth transition to high school.** Youth Development Specialist Vanessa Carlo (*second from left*) observes a bird of prey with students during a visit from Adventures with Raptors.

## The Wellness Centers

At Gaithersburg, Northwood, and Watkins Mill High Schools, in a safe and supportive space within each school facility, the Wellness Centers provide a broad array of programs and services focused on supporting the physical, social, emotional, and mental well-being of the students. All Centers offer students a continuum of engagement opportunities that they can access throughout their high school years, including curriculum-based programs, mental health counseling, on-site health screenings, and case management services.

Our programs promote social and emotional health through a series of planned activities designed to strengthen self-esteem, build skills for collaboration and teamwork, and enhance positive connections with school and family. Enrichment activities take students on retreats, outdoor adventures and field trips. Our programs also offer students internships, college and career exploration, and opportunities for leadership and community service.



# Programs



Identity staff, Maria Jose Lizarzaburu (*second from left*) and Flor Alfaro (*far right*) celebrate end-of-the-year successes with program youth and their families.

## After-school & Summer Programs

Identity offers after-school and summer programming at middle and high schools in Montgomery County. These programs support the social and emotional needs of Latino youth. **Through our Latino Youth Wellness Program and other programs, 354 youth were served.**



Identity completed its five-year research-based teen pregnancy prevention program, culminating with the **publication of our Be Yourself/Sé tú mismo curriculum.**

### At the three Wellness Centers:

- 1,223 students and their families were served.
- Students earned 1,090 Student Service Learning (SSL) hours coordinated by the Centers.
- 785 referrals were made for social services.
- 1,373 hours of individual counseling were provided.

**Statistically significant improvements were achieved at all three Wellness Centers in the areas of participants' school connectedness, academic outlook, future expectations and conflict resolution skills.**



Northwood High School Wellness Center students and families in May 2015, after the last session of the Family Reunification Program.

# Programs for Disengaged Youth

## Youth Opportunity Centers

This year, 340 youth newly enrolled in our two Youth Opportunity Centers (YOCs). The YOCs reach out to young people facing especially challenging situations. Many have dropped out of school and do not have jobs. Lack of English-language skills may impede their job seeking success. Some have been involved with gangs. Some struggle with substance abuse or mental health issues. Many have experienced trauma. The YOC represents a positive and stabilizing influence in their lives and a source of referrals to needed services. We offer bilingual, culturally-responsive education support (GED classes), workforce readiness training, and support groups. Our healing circles offer help and community to those who were traumatized. Young people have an opportunity to forge positive and trusting relationships with caring adults. Our goal is to give these young people the skills to advance their education; make healthy, positive choices; join the workforce; and become contributing members of their communities.



Students taking an in-class practice test for their GED. This year, **49 youth enrolled in GED classes at the YOCs.**

**61 youth acquired employment through the Youth Opportunity Centers' workforce development efforts.**

## Re-Entry and Rehabilitation Support Program

This program is conducted at the Montgomery County Correctional Facility (MCCF) and supports young inmates with a broad range of services, including workshops on behavior modification, conflict resolution, anger management, and problem solving. These activities engage inmates in interactive skill-building exercises and provide them with the tools and resources necessary to re-enter society upon release. The programs also provide case management services to inmates' family members who are residing in the County.



**Maria del Mar Borrero (center), Identity's Correctional Facility Coordinator,** received a Department of Correction and Rehabilitation (DOCR) Excellence Award in recognition of the contributions she has made to the work of MCCF, presented by County Executive Isiah Leggett (*right*) and Director of DOCR Robert Green (*left*).



# Case Management, Mental Health and HIV Prevention

## Case Management Services

Our bilingual Case Managers meet one-on-one with clients from all programs to assess family needs and develop action plans. Case management services are available to participants in all of Identity's programs and to their families. We serve walk-ins, as well. We connect in-need youth and their parents to sources of food and clothing, emergency housing, health/mental health services, and legal assistance. When needed, the Case Manager accompanies clients to act as translator, assists with applications, and ensures that services are obtained promptly.

**1,646 unduplicated clients received case management services** linking them with food, clothing, furniture and other needed social supports.

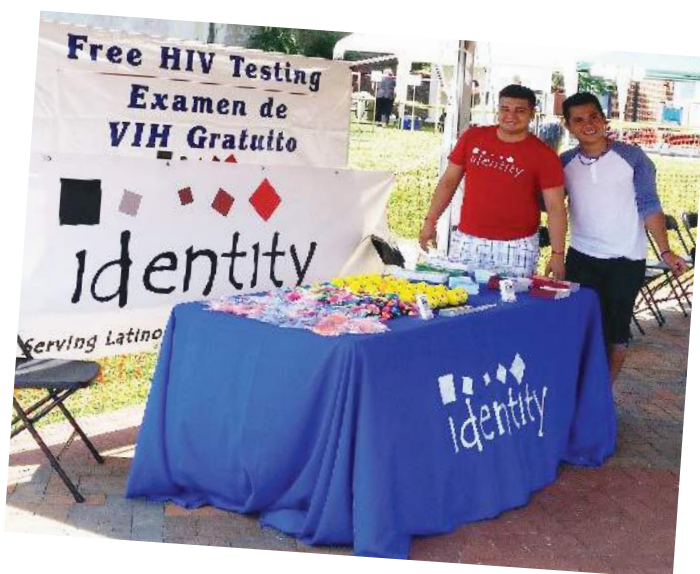
## Mental Health Counseling

All Identity programs are complemented with free, bilingual mental health services. Graduate-level mental health interns from local universities provide additional support while obtaining first-hand experience working with clients. In addition, Identity has a full-time mental health therapist working from the Gaithersburg offices, who is available to serve uninsured or underinsured City of Gaithersburg clients as well as clients from Identity programs. Individual, group, couples', and family counseling are offered in Spanish and English. The program also provides internship opportunities for bilingual Bachelor's- and Master's-level students interested in serving the Latino community.

**410 unduplicated clients were provided with individual and family mental health counseling services** by Identity's on-site therapists and our Wellness Center therapists.

## HIV Prevention

June 2015 marked the end of Identity's ten-year CDC-funded HIV prevention and testing program. With the CDC focus shifting away from prevention, Identity made the strategic decision to no longer compete for this funding. Staff members Angel Varela and Ever Garay (*pictured: left*) were at the helm of this program, which provided free, bilingual HIV testing and behavior modification workshops. As of this report, through this program, fourteen gay Latino men obtained a grant of asylum, five of them now have their lawful permanent residency, and nine are awaiting the completion of their one-year in order to file applications for permanent residency. Five additional gay Latino men were linked with attorneys and have submitted asylum cases. A grant of asylum allows these men to remain in the U.S., work lawfully, and remain free from the persecution they faced in their home countries because of their sexual orientation or HIV status.



During the final 5-year grant period, **almost 5,000 people were tested and staff identified 56 new HIV positive cases.**

# Soccer Program

## Mentoring through Recreation



**Identity's Seneca Valley High School (*above*) and Gaithersburg High School (*below*) soccer teams won the MSI league championship for their divisions this spring.**

Identity's county-wide soccer program is a result of the County Executive's support for youth development services in Montgomery County. This program is growing each year. Youth learn leadership development, goal setting, and teamwork while building their soccer skills. The program seeks to involve youth in recreational opportunities available within the county and support their participation in ongoing competitive and noncompetitive sports. **One hundred and two youth were enrolled in county and/or local leagues as a result of their participation in the program.**



**261 young people participated in the Soccer Program in FY15.**

**64% of participants were foreign-born, of which almost half were recent arrivals (one year or less in the U.S.).**





# Parent Engagement and Advocacy

Identity incorporates parent engagement and advocacy into its many programs.



**Wellness Center Parent Outreach Workers conducted 262 Family Assessments with students' families to link them with needed services. Over 60% of parents were immigrants.**

**Latino Youth Wellness staff conducted 122 family assessments and provided families with almost 400 referrals for social services.**



Monthly, Spanish-language parent sessions provide opportunities to increase engagement with children's schools and support students' academic success.

To follow up on the recommendations of the Connecting Youth to Opportunities needs assessment, published in partnership with the Community Foundation, Identity has prioritized advocacy around the issues of re-connecting disconnected youth to opportunities and the prevention of other Latino youth from becoming disconnected.



Identity organized Latino parents and youth to provide testimony on community needs before the Montgomery County Board of Education at their January 15, 2015 meeting.

**Identity spearheaded the creation of the Montgomery County Latino Advocacy Coalition (MCLAC), and worked very closely with school officials and the Board of Education to begin to strengthen career and technical education, as well as diversity and cultural competency within Montgomery County Public Schools.** In partnership with Montgomery Moving Forward (MMF) and other local groups, Identity collaborated with the County government to consolidate Montgomery County's workforce development system into a single entity that includes career readiness and apprenticeship components.

# REPORT OF GIVING FISCAL YEAR 2015

The following represents the generosity and commitment of a broad spectrum of donors who provided significant assistance to Identity, either through funding, materials, or services. We extend our deepest gratitude to each donor for the lives you have touched with your support. Listings include gifts and grants made during fiscal year 2015 (July 2014 – June 2015). We have attempted to provide an accurate listing of all donors. If there is an error in our listing, please accept our sincere apologies, and contact us at 301 963-5900 Ext. 16 in order to correct our records.

## GOVERNMENT: FEDERAL, STATE, AND LOCAL AGENCIES

City of Gaithersburg  
 Montgomery County Council  
 Montgomery County Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation  
 Montgomery County Department of Health and Human Services  
 Montgomery County Public Schools  
 Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene  
 Maryland State Department of Education: Youth Development Branch  
 US Department of Health and Human Services
 

- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
- Office of Adolescent Health

## FOUNDATIONS, FUNDS AND NON-GOVERNMENT ORGANIZATIONS

The Morris and Gwendolyn Cafritz Foundation  
 Clark-Winchcole Foundation  
 Comcast Foundation  
 The Community Foundation for the National Capital Region
 

- The Community Leadership Fund – Sharing Montgomery

 Holy Cross Health  
 The Hope Gleicher & Andrew Burness Fund  
 The Hispanic Chamber of Commerce of Montgomery County  
 Rose & Harold Kramer Fund  
 Leveling the Playing Field  
 The Richard E. & Nancy P. Marriott Foundation  
 Mead Family Foundation  
 Eugene & Agnes E. Meyer Foundation  
 Montgomery College  
 Sally Rudney and Scott Hoekman Family Fund  
 St. Luke's Episcopal Church, Trinity Parish of Bethesda, MD  
 The Christian Mixer & Linna Barnes Charitable Fund  
 The Harry & Jeanette Weinberg Foundation  
 Cliff & Deborah White Family Foundation

## CORPORATIONS

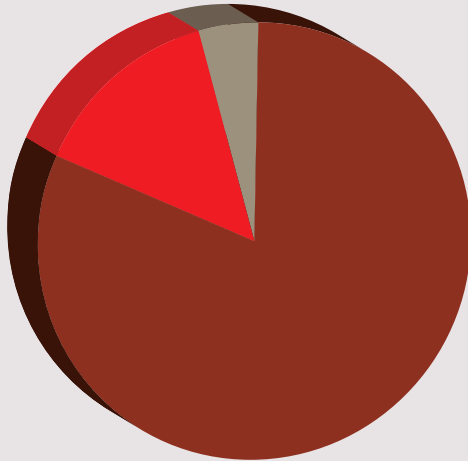
Community Science  
 Hess Construction + Engineering Services  
 Herron Printing & Graphics  
 Maggio + Kattar  
 R & R Data Services

## INDIVIDUALS

Bruce Adams  
 Charles O. & Quillie Alexander  
 William Arnold & Elizabeth P. Wheaton  
 Michael Balzotti  
 Fernanda Bianchi  
 Shelley Bond  
 Shirley Brandman  
 G. Robert Bravo  
 Peter Bross  
 Olga F. Casillas  
 Laura Casillas  
 Keri L. Christenfeld  
 Claudia Comins & Bob Friedman  
 Mary Jean Davidge  
 Everett M. & Kisha N. Davis  
 Stewart Edelstein  
 Norma J. & Steven J. Fenves  
 Anne Marie Foerster Luu  
 Gordon M. Forbes & Janet G. Forbes  
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 Therese B. Gibson  
 Elaine M. Gilby & Charles Pavitt  
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 Charles Hess  
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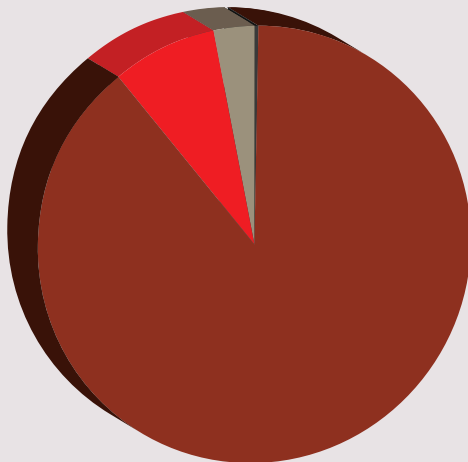
Anna Maria Izquierdo-Porrera & Roopak Manchanda  
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 Candace Kattar  
 Michael Knapp & Cassie Redmond Knapp  
 Shaiy E. Knowles  
 Carol A. Lewis  
 Isiah Leggett  
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 Jana Sharp  
 Charles Short  
 Kraemer Sims  
 Susan E. Smith  
 Hector Torres  
 Diego Uriburu  
 Gregory B. Votaw  
 Marta Woodward  
 Carol L. Wolchok  
 Teresa & Richard Wright  
 Ruth E. Zambrana  
 & Anonymous Donors

# Expenses and Revenues



## Expenses by Category

■ PROGRAMS	\$4,219,014.00	81.65%
■ MANAGEMENT AND GENERAL	\$724,332	14.02%
■ FUNDRAISING	\$224,134.00	4.34%
	<b>\$5,167,480.00</b>	



## Revenue by Type of Funding

■ GRANTS AND CONTRACTS	\$4,835,335.00	89.10%
■ CONTRIBUTIONS AND OTHER FUNDRAISING	\$423,059.00	7.80%
■ IN-KIND CONTRIBUTIONS	\$158,499.00	2.92%
■ OTHER	\$9,953.00	0.18%
	<b>\$5,426,846.00</b>	



**Main Office**

414 East Diamond Avenue  
Gaithersburg, MD 20877  
(301) 963-5900

**The Wellness Centers**

Northwood High School  
919 University Boulevard  
Silver Spring, MD 20901  
(301) 649-8550

**Youth Opportunity Centers**

**Up-County**

415 East Diamond Avenue  
Gaithersburg, MD 20877  
(301) 591-1790

**Gaithersburg High School**

101 Education Boulevard  
Gaithersburg, MD 20877  
(301) 284-4690

**Crossroads**

7676 New Hampshire Avenue  
Suite 411  
Takoma Park, MD 20912  
(240) 670-8122

**Watkins Mill High School**

10301 Apple Ridge Road  
Gaithersburg, MD 20879  
(240) 406-1545



Serving Latino Youth and their Families  
[www.identity-youth.org](http://www.identity-youth.org)



No. 9642



No. 55422