Identity
Serving Latino Youth and their Families

Investing in Our Nation’s Future

ANNUAL REPORT 2014–2015
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
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

Message from the 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).
21st 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.

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.
Investing in Our Nation’s Future

Programs

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.
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.

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.
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.
Serving Latino Youth and their Families

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.

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

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.

**Latino Youth Wellness**

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

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

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 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.

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.
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

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The Community Foundation for the National Capital Region
  • The Community Leadership Fund – Sharing Montgomery
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The Hope Gleicher & Andrew Burness Fund
The Hispanic Chamber of Commerce of Montgomery County
Rose & Harold Kramer Fund
Leveling the Playing Field
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Eugene & Agnes E. Meyer Foundation
Montgomery College
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The Harry & Jeanette Weinberg Foundation
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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%)

Total Expenses: $5,167,480.00

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%)

Total Revenue: $5,426,846.00
Main Office
414 East Diamond Avenue
Gaithersburg, MD 20877
(301) 963-5900

Youth Opportunity Centers
Up-County
415 East Diamond Avenue
Gaithersburg, MD 20877
(301) 591-1790

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

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

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

Watkins Mill High School
10301 Apple Ridge Road
Gaithersburg, MD 20879
(240) 406-1545

Serving Latino Youth and their Families
www.identity-youth.org