



Serving Latino youth & their families



Annual Report

FY2016–2017



Where We Served

After school. In the community. On the playing fields.

We strive to make Identity as accessible as possible. Our programs take place in a diverse array of locations and settings to enable us to break down barriers and meet youth where they are at the time. All share the same quality-driven hallmarks. Our programs are:

- Research Based
- Holistic
- Rigorously Evaluated
- Culturally Competent
- Trauma Informed
- Behavioral Multipliers

They include and take place at:

High School Wellness Centers

- Gaithersburg High School
- Watkins Mill High School
- Wheaton High School

Youth Opportunity Centers

- Crossroads Youth Opportunity Center
- Up-County Youth Opportunity Center

Out-of-School-Time Programs

- Stedwick Elementary School
- Captain James E. Daly Elementary School
- Forest Oak Middle School
- Montgomery Village Middle School
- Neelsville Middle School
- Redland Middle School
- Seneca Valley High School

Support and Reentry Program

- Montgomery County Correctional Facility



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* Completed term December 2016



Leadership team

- Diego Uriburu, Co-Founder, Executive Director
- Carolyn Camacho, Director of Youth Centers
- Hope Gleicher, Chief Strategy Officer
- Candace Kattar, Co-Founder, Senior Program Director
- Amy Thrasher, Senior Manager, Development and Communications

Dear friends and supporters,

This year, against a backdrop of heated rhetoric and uncertainty, the young people and families we have the privilege of serving were tested in new and unexpected ways. And yet, they persevered and not only succeeded, but inspired.

More and more Identity youth reported improvements in their social and emotional well-being, increases in academic achievement and gains in work readiness and employment. In short, they pushed beyond obstacles related to trauma, poverty, language isolation and fear.

In an unusually challenging climate, Identity youth, staff and Board members were bolstered by an outpouring of encouragement from new and old friends. A group of neighbors organized a book drive for children in our reading program. Another group made sure summer enrichment programs were well-stocked with sunscreen, bug spray and healthy snacks. Strangers attached heartfelt notes of solidarity to spontaneous donations. Visionary philanthropists invested in a new reading program for struggling 3rd and 4th graders while others funded dialogues where older youth from communities of color come together with local police officers to speak openly and build trust. Elected officials, law enforcement and school leaders came out to reassure families that their children are needed, wanted and safe in our schools.

Behind all of these acts of kindness and generosity was a simple yet powerful message to our youth: your community values you and wants you to reach your highest potential.

Identity's Board and staff believe that in order to preserve the values that make it possible for all

youth to thrive in Montgomery County, we must help strengthen and amplify the voice of the Latino community. This call to action reaffirms Identity's dual commitments to systemic changes that address disparities in educational and employment opportunities for Latino and other at-risk youth as well as to the expansion and improvement of Positive Youth Development programs after school, in the community and on the playing fields.

Make no mistake. This work is challenging. Today, Montgomery County is home to over 192,000 Latino residents or 35% of the state's Latino population (more than any other jurisdiction in Maryland). Latinos are the fastest growing demographic in our public schools, already exceeding 30% of the student population, and the least likely to succeed. Latino students here have the lowest kindergarten readiness rates and the highest dropout rates. At the same time, Identity and other groups are being forced to reduce or close down successful afterschool programs as the federal government threatens to cut funding. Without a sustained investment in proven programs we will see fewer young people clearing hurdles that get in the way of maturity and successful adulthood.

As we approach our 20th anniversary (September 2018!), we will invite you to join us in celebrating the achievements of the tens of thousands of Identity youth, raising awareness of the state of Latino youth and lifting up all of the voices necessary to bring about real equity. In the meantime, read ahead and see what our youth accomplished in the last year. Their progress and your unwavering support cannot be separated.

SINCERELY,



Diego Uriburu,
Executive Director



Marta Brito Pérez,
Board Chair

Identity in 2016-17

After school. In the community. On the playing fields. We help youth, and the families who love them, improve social and emotional learning skills, achieve academic success and prepare for work.

In the past decade, Montgomery County has become home to tens of thousands of Latino families. Latino youth now account for 30 percent of the student population in the county's public schools. Many of these youth face tremendous challenges, but we see them as the bedrock of our community's future. Our mission is to create opportunities for these youth to realize their highest potential, which helps us all create a stronger Montgomery county.

Here are some of our recent accomplishments:

REACH: 2,546 clients plus their families were served directly.

CONNECTING TO WORK AND EDUCATION: 134 youth participated in workforce development programs. 89 disconnected youth reconnected to the educational system, either enrolling in GED classes or re-enrolling in school.

SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT: Our clients reported their levels of self-confidence, school connectedness and risky behaviors moving to the positive. 64% of youth who reported being depressed at intake, reported improvement in outlook at the end of the program. 68% of youth who reported high levels of delinquent behaviors decreased these behaviors by the end of the program.

ACADEMIC SUCCESS: 100% of rising 9th graders from our summer algebra support program successfully passed Algebra I in 9th grade with a grade of C or higher. 74% passed with a B or higher. Mastery of this 9th grade milestone has been shown to improve overall math achievement going forward. The critical thinking skills mastered make high school and college success more likely.

YOUTH/POLICE RELATIONS: With the goal of providing a safe, structured way for youth and officers to speak openly and build trust, our High School Wellness Centers began to facilitate multi-part dialogue circles between youth and police.

Latinos in Montgomery County

Identity specializes in providing social/emotional, academic and workforce development supports that increase factors leading to young Latinos realizing their full potential as successful adults, including increasing their family's ability to advocate for and support their education. At our five youth centers, we support ALL youth.

Latino youth are the fastest growing demographic in Montgomery County. Between 2000 and 2014 Montgomery County's Latino population increased by 92%, the most dramatic growth of any minority group, and in many ways, they are the most vulnerable group as well. For instance, only 28% of Latino children demonstrate kindergarten readiness, and the Latino high school graduation rate is the lowest of any group in the county at 79.6%.

56% of the youth we serve are immigrants. Some of the immigrant youth have spent years separated from loved ones, eventually reuniting as teenagers or young adults. In some cases, these youth fled their homelands due to civil wars, violence, political instability or economic crisis.

Socio-Economics

3 in 10

youth lacked health insurance.

6 in 10

students received Free and Reduce Meals (FARMS).

2 in 10

youth lived in a precarious housing situation (rented a room, lived in a shelter, or lived in a group home).

Family Cohesion

30%

of youth under 18 years of age, lived in a single parent home; 18% lived in a restructured family (with stepparents); and 4% lived without either parent.

5 in 10

Latino youth had been separated from one or both of their parents because of immigration issues at some time in their lives.

9

was the average number of years of separation from a parent because of immigration issues.

5

was the average number of people living in each household.

NEW PROGRAM FOR YOUNGER CHILDREN: Identity created and tested a new out-of-school-time curriculum in reading for struggling elementary students. After only 4 months, the students showed an 88% improvement in their standardized literary assessment. 62% of these children ended the school year reading at or above grade level. We are encouraged by these preliminary indications that earlier intervention will lead to even better academic outcomes when paired with social and emotional skill building. A key part of the success of the program is our signature wraparound support of the youth and their families with case management and behavioral health services when needed.

NEW PROGRAMS FOR OLDER YOUTH: Identity managed the new Wellness Center at Wheaton High School in its first full school year, serving 312 diverse students with our partners Pride Youth Services, Creative Ways Therapy and Artivate.

RESTORATIVE PRACTICES: We continue to expand trauma-informed restorative practices for older youth that create opportunities for repairing and building relationships through dialogue. We also began a pilot program to incorporate mindfulness practices during lunchtime detention at the Wheaton High School Wellness Center, giving young people the opportunity to learn coping strategies for better focus, concentration, and stress management.

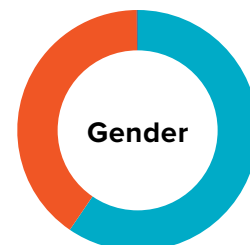
RECREATION: 270 boys and girls participated in the Identity Soccer/Mentoring Program, exercising not just their athletic skills, but their social and emotional skills as well. By teaching teamwork and sportsmanship on the field, Identity was able to improve the ability of youth to deal with frustration and conflict in a positive manner, and participants reported improved conflict resolution skills, self-esteem and positive expectations for the future. 22 youth gained the confidence to try out for their school teams. 17 of them successfully won spots on those teams.

GIVING BACK: 196 youth in our Wellness Center programs volunteered in the community, earning 1,139 Student Service Learning (SSL) hours. 30 youth volunteered in Identity's main offices, and another 15 youth volunteered as middle school math tutors and after-school program helpers.

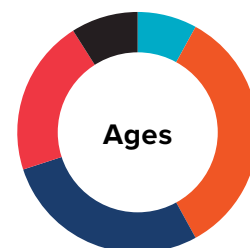


Who We Served

In FY17 Identity worked closely with over 3,000 youth and their families.



Male	60%
Female	40%
Transgender	<1%



5-13	8%
14-16	34%
17-18	28%
19-25	21%
Over 25	9%



Latino	75%
African-American/African Origin	16%
Other	9%



Social and Emotional Learning

All Identity programs are grounded in the **Positive Youth Development model** and work to increase protective factors such as self-esteem, conflict resolution skills and self-efficacy levels.

Years of research have shown that strengthening these factors reduces young people's potential for engaging in negative behaviors. This approach builds on each young person's core abilities and works to increase their self-management, social awareness, relationship skills and responsible decision-making.

Our curriculum-based programs aim to build upon youth's innate strengths, and provide them with the social and emotional support to grow into healthy, successful adults.

Curriculum-Based Programs

The social and emotional curricula aim to enhance protective factors and decrease risk factors by addressing mental health, reproductive health, substance abuse, nutrition, physical activity and parent-child relationships. Social and emotional learning has long term effects. For example, a recent international meta-study published in the journal *Child Development* found social-emotional learning participants outperformed their peers academically, continuing to show positive benefits for years. Identity provides curricula tailored to developmental age to students in elementary, middle and high school.

Wellness Centers

Identity is the lead agency at three of the County's high school Wellness Centers in partnership with the Department of Health and Human Services and Montgomery County Public Schools.

In FY17, 1307 diverse youth joined Wellness Center groups for social/emotional skill building, recreation and community service, as well as individual supports such as mentoring, tutoring and behavioral health counseling.

Recreation

Recreation is often the first door a young person opens when exploring Identity programs. Our bilingual Positive Youth Development Soccer/Mentoring Program not only provides access to team sports without fees, it also teaches at-risk Latino youth leadership, conflict resolution and social integration skills. This program is often the only option for our players to be involved with competitive sports. We reach youth who don't qualify for school sports teams due to poor grades or who are struggling to adjust to a new home, culture and language, and are therefore especially vulnerable to disconnection. Year round practices and competitions are made possible in partnership with Montgomery County's Department of Recreation, Department of Health and Human Services and the Street Outreach Network.

Youth also have opportunities to participate in basketball, swimming, hiking, bowling and other healthy recreational activities.

Prevention and Intervention for Disconnected Youth

Since 2006, Identity has been the lead agency in Montgomery County in the effort to engage disconnected youth by providing a safe-space within the Youth Opportunity Centers. The ultimate goal of the Centers' programs and services are to reconnect youth with the educational system or the workforce, with a strong emphasis on building their social and emotional skills and improving behavioral health when needed. In addition, Identity works with the Montgomery County Police Department and the Department of Health and Human Services to provide safety planning and relocation for high-risk youth.

3,062

is the number of hours of social and emotional health curricula Identity conducted in FY17.

71%

of youth who initially reported lacking positive expectations for their futures, reported an increase in their self-confidence to accomplish their life goals and/or their ability to deal with problems that they may face in the future.

Champs!

The Identity-Gaithersburg High School team won the spring Soccer4Change championship in June 2017.

71%

of YOC clients who were neither working nor in school when they enrolled, became employed and/or were reconnected to the educational system, enrolling in GED classes or re-enrolling in school.

LIDICE



When I was three years old, my mother had to leave me with my grandparents in Honduras to work in the United States. My heart's desire was to be back in her arms, and at 16, I joined her in Montgomery County. But the fantasy ended right there. I felt like I didn't fit in with my new family, a new step-father and two new siblings. I grieved for my grandparents and lashed out at my mother's rules.

Identity's mental health therapist, Patricia, showed us how to understand each other's pain. She taught us to listen to each other, accept each other and work together to move forward.

Identity helped me to believe in myself and connect better in school. I was able to accelerate out of ESOL, complete two AP classes and graduate a whole year early. There's no stopping me now!

They believed in me and taught me to believe in myself.

Our new partnership with WorkSource Montgomery has greatly increased our ability to serve disconnected youth with complicated barriers in their journey to obtain a GED, workforce skills, and meaningful employment. Substance abuse prevention and intervention counseling, mental health counseling, case management and basic ESOL classes are available to every client. With our multicultural partners, Pride Youth Services, CareerCatchers and Maryland Treatment Centers, the YOC staff is showing young adults of all backgrounds the way to reach their own highest potential.

This year the YOCs were reviewed by the Community Review Panel of the Montgomery County Department of Health and Human Services, who found the program exceeded expectations in impact, evaluation, civic engagement and our integrated service delivery approach among others.

77%

of clients showed improved self-esteem, and demonstrated a greater ability to resolve conflicts without resorting to violence while involved with the YOCs.

Support and Reentry Services

Identity believes that every youth deserves a second chance. Given this, we work with inmates at the Montgomery County Correctional Facility. They participate in a range of bilingual programs including pre-placement orientation; individual case management; workshops on fatherhood, financial literacy and healing; and re-entry dialogue circles. Many of these young people transition to our Youth Opportunity Center programs for continued support upon re-entry to the community.

270

inmates were served at the Montgomery County Correctional Facility.



Academic Support

Identity offers engaging, culturally competent academic support to students who have interrupted education or who fall behind. From elementary school reading, to middle school math, summer bridge to high school algebra and GED classes, all students also receive our signature wraparound services including case management and behavioral counseling.

Elementary Schools

In March, Identity launched a pilot program to improve reading skills for struggling Latino 3rd graders at Captain James E. Daly Elementary School and 3rd and 4th graders at Stedwick Elementary school, in the belief that earlier intervention will lead to even better academic outcomes when paired with social and emotional skill building. As part of the effort, their parents and families are supported with comprehensive case management and monthly parent workshops on topics such as child development and how to improve their child's educational gains through involvement in the school.

Of 63 academically struggling elementary students who received a 13 week reading support program, **62%** ended the school year at or above grade level in reading, and **88%** of the 3rd and 4th grade students demonstrated statistically significant reading improvement in standardized tests.

Middle Schools

Two of Identity's very successful 21st Century Community Learning Center programs at longtime partner schools ended this year: Montgomery Village Middle School and Neelsville Middle School. We are hoping the federal government continues this successful initiative that showed a tremendous return on investment in academic, STEM and enrichment activities to academically vulnerable Latino middle school students coupled with comprehensive support, education and case management for their parents. This program will continue through 2018 at Forest Oak Middle School.

89%

of 75 academically struggling youth from our middle school 21st Century Community Learning Center Program passed their 8th grade math class with a grade C or higher.

Parents of these youth report their levels of engagement with their child's education and school increased throughout the three-year program, with 100% of parents indicating sustained or improved levels of engagement by year three.

Wellness Centers

The Wellness Centers collaborate with school and health partners offering a comprehensive approach to improve student learning and academic achievement as part of the Positive Youth Development model. Wellness Center programming works to strengthen school connectedness and other protective factors that have been shown to lead to better academic outcomes.

69%

At baseline, 31% of youth reported having a negative perception of their school environment. At exit,

of these youth reported improvement toward a positive perception of their school environment.

Youth Opportunity Centers

Identity offers English and Spanish GED classes at our two Youth Opportunity Centers. Our GED program specializes in providing disconnected youth up to age 25 with an alternative pathway to a high school diploma. This year, we increased our investment and capacity in this program by increasing the number of GED classes we offer at each location. Our one-stop model is showing great promise for Montgomery County's disconnected youth from all backgrounds.

143

clients took GED classes at the Youth Opportunity Centers in FY17.

9

young people obtained their GED diploma, and another 28 are on their way, having passed at least one of the four GED tests.



Workforce Development

71%

of 126 disconnected youth were reconnected to the labor market, becoming employed and/or reconnecting to the educational system by enrolling in GED classes or re-enrolling in school.

Identity has a growing record of providing youth with help transitioning to higher education and the world of work.

This year, we continued to invest in capacity, providing an exclusive workforce development specialist in each of the two Youth Opportunity Centers. We also have additional resources from WorkSource Montgomery to provide specialized training and employment services to eligible youth.

Our workforce development programming includes rigorous curriculum-based job-readiness training; career navigation support; paid and unpaid work experience; mentoring and coaching; financial and computer literacy training; GED prep; academic enrichment; and tutoring. We pair our workforce development with wraparound services including case management, trauma-informed restorative practices and mental health and substance abuse counseling.

We strive to help youth experience steady employment, grow professionally and move toward self-sufficiency.

69

youth received individual employment counseling.

30

Youth Opportunity Center clients got a job.

A photograph of a woman with dark hair, smiling warmly as she applies green face paint to a young boy's face. The boy is looking down. The woman's hand is visible, holding a sponge. The background is slightly blurred, showing what appears to be a colorful display. The image is framed by a large red triangle on the left and bottom.

Wraparound Services

The whole person — the whole family. From our soccer coaches to our parent outreach workers, frontline Identity staff are all involved in identifying the wraparound services each youth and their family members may need to launch into successful adulthood. This holistic approach has proven itself time and again to be crucial in helping vulnerable or disconnected youth by strengthening the capacity of their home support systems.

Case Management

We connect youth and their families to food, clothing, housing, emergency assistance, health care, legal assistance and public benefits.

860

clients received 2,273 referrals for social services.

Parent Engagement— A Family Centered Approach

For parents and guardians of the youth enrolled in Identity's in-school programs, we offer education and engagement workshops to provide a roadmap to deeper involvement in their child's school and education. Workshop topics include increasing parents' understanding of grade-level proficiency standards, online homework systems, report cards and teacher conferences.



Bilingual parent outreach workers also hold regular parent sessions and serve as the parents' point of contact and school advocate. Building parents' ability to engage with the school and their child's education has been shown to directly impact the youths' success in school and in life.

Mental Health

Trauma-informed mental health services are available to all program participants. Identity's bilingual mental health counselors see clients at the Youth Opportunity Centers and we provide mental health care with our partners at the High School Wellness Centers. Unfortunately, there were more clients than we had the funding to serve with 65 clients on the waiting list for mental health services at the end of FY17.

Substance Abuse Prevention and Intervention

Identity provides substance abuse counseling in addition to the prevention and intervention skill building that is woven into our curricula across programs. We run group counseling as well as individual sessions.

118

is the number of hours of parent education and engagement programming Identity conducted.

100%

of the parents involved in our elementary program found engagement workshops "very useful" or "useful" for understanding important physical and mental health issues affecting their children.

98%

of the parents involved in our Latino Youth Wellness program reported feeling better equipped to find school services for their children, and advocating for services their children need.

363

is the number of individual clients treated by Identity mental health counselors.

61%

of youth who reported using drugs or alcohol at intake reported a decrease in their drug or alcohol use after participating in Identity programs.

Advocacy and Research

The goal of Identity's advocacy work is for Latino youth to have access to sufficient resources, supports and opportunities to succeed educationally, emotionally and occupationally.

As a leader and in coalition, we advocate for systemic changes to policies and practices to bring equity to our community and to remove barriers that increase the likelihood of a successful transition to adulthood for in-school and out-of-school youth.

This year, as in past years, we mobilized quickly when events demanded a response or created an opportunity to make progress.

When the results of the presidential election unleashed anxiety and fear among our youth and their families, we organized three sessions for more than 350 parents with immigration experts who shared what was known and where to get additional information and assistance. Members of the County Council, law enforcement and the Superintendent of Montgomery County Public Schools vowed to protect, educate and value all children as their own.

Recognizing that there is strength in unity, we reached out to new partners in the African American community. Their children are also suffering the devastating consequences of insufficient resources, supports and opportunities.

Identity continued to co-lead the Montgomery County Latino Advocacy Coalition (MCLAC), a group of community leaders and organizations that promotes inclusive education practices that support the achievement of Latino youth and the wellbeing of community members. In FY17 MCLAC pushed for bold reforms in language access for parents, ESOL programming that enables students to move quickly into mainstream English classes, and Career and Technical Education for older Latino students who are not on track to graduate because of limited or interrupted formal education.

Identity amplified the voices of the Latino community for equity in the county's public safety, health, education and workforce development systems by presenting results of our independent research:

- We delivered testimony to the Board of Education regarding its proposed budget and to the County Council on trends in teen pregnancy.
- We shared the results of a survey of 128 newly arrived children who came to the county after fleeing violence in their home countries. Most of these youth believe that community-based organizations can protect them from gangs with more recreational activities and academic and career support options.
- We participated in Montgomery Moving Forward, which is monitoring the progress of WorkSource Montgomery to ensure that the evolving workforce development system meets the needs of disconnected youth.

Identity was established following the mass immigration of refugees fleeing violence in Central America. Nineteen years later, the exponential growth of the Latino community and its untapped potential underscores what is at stake today. Working one young person at a time is simply not enough.

In FY17, Identity was recognized for its work with the Latino community: Telemundo honored Identity at the 5th Annual Montgomery County Hispanic Heritage Month Gala and the Montgomery County Executive's Hispanic Gala honored our Executive Director, Diego Uriburu, with the **Advocate of the Year Award** presented by Executive Ike Leggett. In recognition of our intensive family case management and parent engagement work, the Maryland Out of School Time Network honored Identity with its **Family Leadership 2016 Hero Award**. Identity was also honored by the Nonprofit Village with the **2017 Making a Difference Award** for our evidence-based programming and strong collaborations with other nonprofits, which magnify our impact on low-income Latino youth and their families.

With deep gratitude, we thank our funders and donors

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Department of Corrections
Montgomery County
Department of Health and
Human Services
Montgomery County
Department of Recreation
Montgomery County Office
of the Executive
Montgomery County Public
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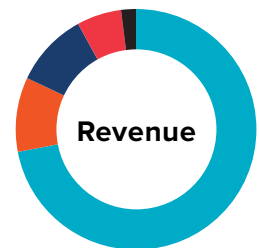
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	\$4,143,315.00	72%
Federal Grants		
	\$580,677.00	10%
Foundation Grants		
	\$554,674.00	10%
In-Kind Donations		
	\$344,772.00	6%
Individual Contributions		
	\$103,946.00	2%
Other Revenue		
	\$11,229.00	<1%
Total		\$5,738,613.00



Support of Youth and Families		
	\$4,625,017.00	81%
Management and General		
	\$785,370.00	14%
Fundraising		
	\$277,094.00	5%
Total		\$5,687,481.00



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