



20 Years of Serving Latino Youth and Families

Annual Report



FY2017–2018

Where We Served

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. All programs are supported by case management, recreation, parent engagement and education, and mental health and substance abuse counseling.

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

- Clopper Mill Elementary School
- Capt. James E. Daly Elementary School
- Stedwick Elementary School
- Forest Oak Middle School
- Gaithersburg Middle School
- Redland Middle School
- Shady Grove Middle School
- Blair High School
- Seneca Valley High School

Correctional Facility Reentry Program

- Montgomery County Correctional Facility

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* Completed term February 2018

** Deceased June 2018

Staff Leadership

- Diego Uriburu, Co-Founder, Executive Director
- Candace Kattar, Co-Founder, Senior Program Director
- Hope Gleicher, Chief Strategy Officer
- Tatiana Murillo, Director of Finance
- Carolyn Camacho, Program Director
- Fresia Guzman, Program Director
- Amy Thrasher, Senior Manager, Development and Communications



Dear friends and supporters,

Together we have reached a milestone. Identity is **20 years** old! We welcome this moment to take stock as we embrace the challenges ahead.

In 1998, Identity was born in and of the community. Identity conducted the first ever needs assessment of Latino youth in Montgomery County, beginning a tradition of grounding our work in the needs and aspirations of the community as articulated in their own words. Our very name, “Identity” is rooted in the belief that all people want to be seen as their best selves. Today, as twenty years ago, we start by getting to know each young person’s hopes and dreams. We build upon their core strengths: love of family, an eagerness to succeed, and an impressive resilience to forge ahead. We provide a safe haven for them to confide their struggles and get the encouragement and meaningful assistance needed to nurture their natural assets.

From the very beginning, we understood that investing in the success of individual Latino youth and their families is an investment in the future of Montgomery County. Our mission—to create opportunities for Latino youth to reach their highest potential—has not wavered. In our focus on social and emotional learning, academic support, job-readiness, and workforce development, Identity continues to improve lives while effectively integrating this fast growing community into the fabric of our county. Our founding vision of creating a just and equitable society that nurtures all youth and that is enriched by their contributions remains our north star. The urgency to get it right has only increased.

Over the last twenty years, the community we serve has grown to include a multicultural mix

of youth and their families who face common challenges of systemic inequities. In our service to them, we continue to be guided by our founding core values: young people come first, every child has potential and all youth deserve more than one chance. And importantly, we continue to hold ourselves accountable and to measure the impact of our efforts through rigorous annual evaluation because we know that serving others is a privilege and requires excellence.

But today, our community and Identity is at a crossroads. On the one hand, evidence-based direct services remain the mainstay of our work. On the other hand, there is an urgent need to cultivate the Latino community’s own effectiveness in combatting injustices and dispelling stereotypes that harm Latinos and other minorities. To this end, we have launched a new advocacy training effort to help parents find their own voice in the public arena — to define their own “identity” in order champion real equity.

So we close with a thank you for the unwavering support that has allowed Identity to grow and thrive and thus has enabled tens of thousands of youth to grow and thrive. We are moved by the outpouring of support for Identity youth and the belief that they are a cornerstone of Montgomery County’s future.

It is our fervent birthday wish that you will continue to stand with us as we set the course for our future. No one can afford to stay on the sidelines.

In the meantime, read ahead and see what our young people accomplished in the last year.

SINCERELY,



Diego Uriburu,
Executive Director



Shirley Brandman,
Board Chair

Identity in 2017-18



For **20 years**, Identity has championed Latino youth and their families in the halls of government, in schools, and in the community. **20 years** ago, this vibrant population was less visible— but no longer. Latino youth now make up over 32% of the student population in the county’s public schools, a generation whose success or failure will shape the future of the county itself. Many of these and the other at-risk youth we work with face tremendous challenges, but we see them, and know them, as an enriching and positive force in Montgomery County. Identity’s mission is to create opportunities for these youth to realize their highest potential.

At our five youth centers, we serve all at-risk youth and their families.

Here are some of our recent accomplishments:

ELEMENTARY READING PROGRAM: This past year, Identity added a third elementary school, Clopper Mill, to our out-of-school-time social, emotional and reading support program. The students made big strides with 45% reaching or surpassing their on-grade reading level and 52% making gains towards this goal, while also building self-control, persistence and social competence.

MIDDLE SCHOOL MATH: Every single student - 100% - in our 21st Century Community Learning Center at Forest Oak Middle School passed Algebra with a C or better, 46% achieving A's, 35% B's, and 19% C's.

WELLNESS CENTERS: Following a competitive bid process, Identity is honored to continue managing the Wellness Centers at Gaithersburg and Watkins Mill High Schools. With these new contracts, we have a new partner, the 480 Club, which has special expertise working with African American students.

PROGRAMS for OLDER YOUTH: Identity doubled the number of Spanish GED prep classes and Basic English Literacy classes, which are now offered at both Youth Opportunity Center locations. We increased GED tutoring hours, especially in math, often the last and toughest hurdle for graduation. 135 clients participated in GED classes. 48 clients passed at least one test. 19 earned their high school diploma.

THANKSGIVING, WINTER BREAK, SPRING BREAK AND SUMMER: Identity expanded free, enriching options for youth during these risky times of year. We co-hosted “Holiday Hoops” during fall and winter breaks, ran an “Alternative Spring Break” for 200 youth from eight different schools, and ran seven summer camp programs that combined fun and academic enrichment for 313 students.

COMMUNITY TRUST: Identity helped students and their families cope with and respond to their heightened state of anxiety and fear over changing immigration policy by organizing 13 large-scale immigration-related information sessions over 13 months with immigration lawyers, members of the Montgomery County Police Department and local, state and federal government officials for close to 1000 parents and older youth.

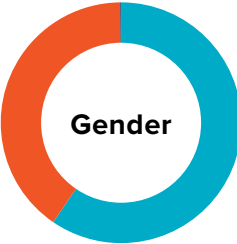
2,648 youth served



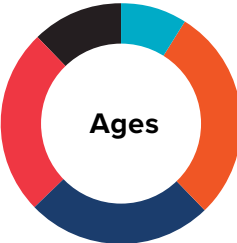


Who We Served

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



Male	60%
Female	40%
Transgender	<1%



13 and under	9%
14-16	29%
17-18	25%
19-25	25%
Over 25	12%



US (with Latino heritage)	27%
US (without Latino heritage)	18%
El Salvador	30%
Other Central American and Caribbean Countries	14%
South American Countries	4%
Other	7%



Latino	77%
African-American/African Origin	17%
Other	6%

Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACES):

85%
of youth had at least one ACE.

28%
of youth had 3 or more ACES.

Socio-Economics

3 in 10
youth lacked health insurance.

6 in 10
students received Free and Reduced Price Meals.

1 in 10
youth lived in a precarious housing situation (rented a room, lived in a shelter, or lived in a group home).

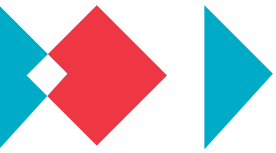
Family Cohesion:

31%
of youth under 18 years of age lived in a single parent home. 15% lived in a restructured family (with step-parents). 10% lived without either parent.

4 in 10
Latino youth had been separated from one or both parents because of immigration issues at some time in their lives.

7
is the average number of years of separation from their parents because of immigration issues.

5
is the average number of people living in each household.



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 and anger management skills and self-efficacy levels. Years of research have shown that strengthening these factors reduces young people's potential for engaging in risky and negative behaviors, and continues to show positive benefits for years, including outperforming their peers academically (Child Development, meta-analysis 2017). The approach builds on each young person's core abilities and works to increase their self-management, self-awareness, social awareness, healthy relationship skills and responsible decision-making. Recognizing the prevalence of disproportionate trauma among our client population, we bring a trauma-informed approach to all of our programs.



Out-Of-School-Time Curricula

Our curriculum-based programs build upon youths' innate strengths, and provide them with the social and emotional support to grow into healthy, successful adults. We tailor the curriculum to the appropriate developmental age for students in elementary, middle and high school. The programs address parent-child relationships, goal-setting, mental health, nutrition and physical activity, and for older youth, reproductive health and substance abuse prevention.

74%

of the elementary students assessed by their teachers with low levels of persistence at intake improved this skill by program's end.

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 to create an integrated center on campus for social and emotional supports as well as access to medical care. In FY18, 1306 diverse youth joined Wellness Center groups for social and emotional skill building, recreation and community service, as well as individual supports such as mentoring and mental health counseling. We utilize trauma-informed restorative practices to create opportunities for repairing and building relationships through dialogue, and we continue to facilitate multi-session dialogue circles between youth and police to foster understanding and empathy.

72%

of Wellness Center youth who reported poor expectations for a positive future believed in a more positive future for themselves after involvement in our programs.

Youth Opportunity Centers

Since 2006, Identity has been the county's lead agency to engage disconnected youth. The YOC programs emphasize building social and emotional skills to better prepare older youth to reconnect to the educational system or the workforce. This is coupled with intensive case management and behavioral therapy, when needed. In addition, Identity works with the Montgomery County Police Department and Health and Human Services to arrange safety planning and relocation for high-risk youth. 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.

55%

of YOC youth who reported facing challenges with conflict resolution or anger management reported increased skills after involvement in our programs.

Support and Reentry Services

We work with inmates at the Montgomery County Correctional Facility. They participate in bilingual programs including Book Club, Healing Circles, Choice for Change, Healing Arts and Financial Literacy. Identity offers pre-placement orientation, individual case management, translation and reentry coordination. Many of these young people transition to our Youth Opportunity Center programs for continued support upon reentry to the community.

355

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 are falling behind grade level. From elementary school reading, to middle school algebra, GED, ESOL and basic certification classes, all students also receive our signature wraparound services including case management and behavioral counseling.

Elementary Schools

Identity ran its second year of a pilot program to improve reading skills of struggling readers at Captain James E. Daly, Stedwick and Clopper Mill Elementary Schools. This early intervention leads 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.

Beginning on average nearly one year behind in reading,

45%

were on or above grade level by the end of the school year.

Middle Schools

Identity's very successful 21st Century Community Learning Center Program focusing on STEM and enrichment activities at Forest Oak Middle School ended this year, with the student cohort matriculating to Gaithersburg High School.

100%

of regularly participating students achieved a final report card grade of C or higher in math.

79%

of students that began the program with poor social/life skills reported an improvement in those skills at exit.





Wellness Centers

The Wellness Centers collaborate with school and health partners offering a comprehensive approach to improve student learning and academic achievement. Wellness Center programming strengthens school connectedness and other protective factors that have been shown to lead to better academic outcomes. Individual tutoring is offered as well.

78%

of Wellness Center youth who reported a negative perception of the school environment at intake, reported a positive perception of school at exit.

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 adding ESOL instructors and more tutoring hours. We also offer basic certifications in Word and Excel. Our one-stop model is showing great promise for Montgomery County's disconnected youth from all backgrounds.

135

clients took GED classes at the Youth Opportunity Centers in FY18.

19

young people earned their high school diploma, and another 48 are on their way, having passed at least one of the four GED tests.

GLADYS



Gladys moved with her mother to Montgomery County after dropping out of high school in Connecticut. She knew her future depended on continuing her education and she was trying to learn on her own. But she was anxious and depressed – still demoralized by past bullying and past failures because of a learning disability. On top of all of this, she was facing these complicated challenges while living in a large group shelter.

Gladys came to Identity's Upcounty Youth Opportunity Center for a second chance. GED classes drew her, but because of Identity's holistic approach, staff quickly realized she also needed mental health support and connected her with Identity's therapist. As part of a GED cohort, Gladys participated in group work to build social and emotional as well as academic and job-readiness skills.

Gladys has blossomed. She says earning her diploma was just the beginning. Because of Identity's Workforce Development Program, she completed two internships, Food Management Training, and is now learning the baking trade in an accelerated 6-month training program at a local bakery. Gladys says Identity helped her realize her strengths and talents and gave her the tools and support to face her challenges.

Gladys recently moved to more permanent housing, a small group apartment – and for the first time she has her very own bedroom. Gladys is beginning to see and believe in a future she never thought possible. All she needed was the right supports and a second chance.



Workforce Development

We strive to help youth experience steady employment, grow professionally and move toward self-sufficiency. Identity has a growing record of providing youth with help transitioning to higher education and the world of work.

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 and individual tutoring; basic certifications in OSHA and CPR; ESOL and other communication skill building. We pair our workforce development with wraparound services including comprehensive case management, trauma-informed restorative practices and mental health and substance abuse counseling.

50

Youth Opportunity Center clients got a job.

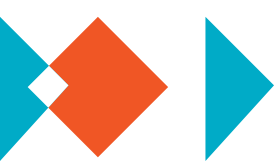
152

youth enrolled in job readiness programs.

143

youth received individual job counseling.





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 youth 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, low-cost internet and public benefits.

861

clients received 2,604 referrals for social services.

Mental Health

Trauma-informed mental health services are available to all program participants. Identity recognizes the prevalence of trauma among our client population, and we routinely assess our clients' adverse childhood experiences. We provide ongoing training to staff to increase their understanding of the signs and symptoms of trauma, and their ability to create a safe environment for clients and avoid re-traumatization.

385

individual clients were treated by Identity mental health counselors.

Parent Engagement – A Family Centered Approach

For parents and guardians of the youth enrolled in Identity's school-based programs, we offer education and engagement workshops as 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, teacher conferences and child and adolescent development.

189

hours of Identity parent education and engagement programming

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

Substance Abuse Prevention and Intervention

Identity offers 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.

64%

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

Recreation

Recreation is often the door a young person first opens when exploring Identity programs. Our bilingual Positive Youth Development Soccer plus 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 may be the only option for our high school players to be involved with competitive sports, as many don't qualify for school teams due to poor grades or are struggling to adjust to a new home, culture and language, and are therefore especially vulnerable to disconnection. All Identity programs offer additional recreational options, such as basketball, swimming, hiking, bowling, yoga and other healthy recreational activities.

67%

of youth in Identity's soccer program who initially reported lacking positive expectations for their future, 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 their futures.



JOSUE



Josue didn't expect his life to be much different from his parents'. With only a few years of education, his parents worked multiple jobs to keep food on the table and a roof over the family's head. Things got even tougher in 7th grade when his Dad was deported back to El Salvador and his Mom had to take on even more work to support Josue and his brothers.

When Josue was a freshman in high school, still in ESOL classes, his passion and joy in life was playing soccer. That year he met Coach Efrain, and joined Identity's Soccer plus Mentoring Program. On this team he finally felt he belonged. Because many of the parents were busy working, the Identity coaches drove players to and from games. Those long drives were a good time to just talk. Josue says, "That's when I really got to trust Coach Efrain."

Then tragedy struck: Josue's Dad was killed in El Salvador. But, Josue's Identity soccer family was there to wrap their arms more tightly around him. Josue says that throughout high school Coach Efrain pushed him to excel not just in sports but also academically. Josue made the school's varsity soccer team, tested out of ESOL, and by junior year was taking IB English, an honors track. With that combination of achievements, Josue says, "I began to believe I could go to college. I can do better than my Dad and my Mom."

Today Josue has soccer scholarship offers from two colleges. And, he sees a future of giving back. "I want to do social work. I want to help other kids whenever they need something, because if it wasn't for Coach Efrain and Identity I probably wouldn't be playing soccer right now and I certainly wouldn't be starting college. If Efrain could make a change in me, I can make a change in somebody else."

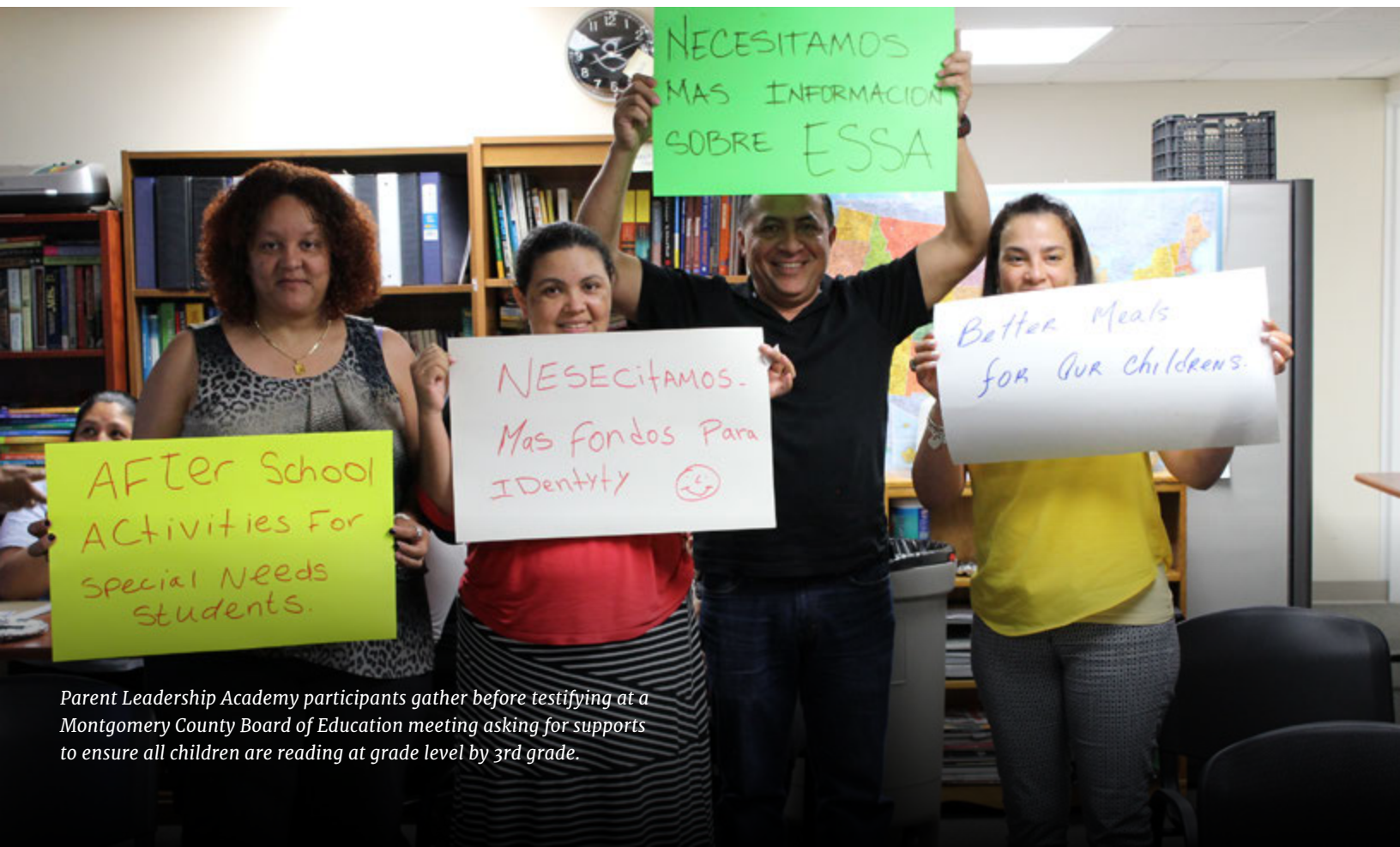


Community Empowerment

Identity advocates for equitable and sufficient resources, supports and opportunities for Latino youth to succeed in school, at work and in community life.

In the **20 years** since Identity was founded, Montgomery County's Latino population grew the most dramatically of any minority group, but Latino children continue to fall through the cracks, especially at school.

Today, too many Latino children are not reaching their potential. In fact, they are falling further behind. They are missing reading and math milestones needed to progress in school, and have the lowest graduation rates of any demographic group in our award-winning public school system. Almost half of MCPS' dropouts have been in ESOL.



Parent Leadership Academy participants gather before testifying at a Montgomery County Board of Education meeting asking for supports to ensure all children are reading at grade level by 3rd grade.

Identity programs prove that it does not have to be this way.

Identity youth are bucking the trend—building social and emotional skills linked to academic and job success, reading at or above grade level, achieving a 100% pass rate in Algebra, earning their GED.

But helping one child at a time, one school at a time is simply not enough. So, in FY18, we continued to work to bring about systemic changes that would interrupt patterns of underachievement, lost hope and disconnection.

For one, we strengthened our community engagement, policy and advocacy efforts by launching Academia de Liderazgo/Parent Leadership Academy, an ambitious project to train and help parents find and use their voice to advocate for equity in education. In FY18, we trained the first cohort of 21 parents. Together they are building a culture of civic engagement and activism.

As a leader, with the Latino community and in coalition with allies in government, education, social sector and business, Identity continued to advocate for innovations and reforms that will benefit all children, including Latino children, such as:

- Expanding workforce development opportunities for disconnected youth and youth with the greatest barriers to gainful employment
- Deploying the most effective staff to the highest need schools
- Expanding the number of dual language schools
- Piloting a longer school year
- Expanding culturally competent career and technical education
- Ensuring access to timely remediation supports, including summer school
- Expanding access to high quality, affordable early care and education



Thank you

to each and every funder and donor on behalf of the youth and families whose lives you have touched. This list includes all donations in memory of Identity Board Member, Nancy G. Fax, a passionate and visionary friend of Identity youth and families.



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Maryland State Department of Education
Montgomery County Council
Montgomery County 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 Schools

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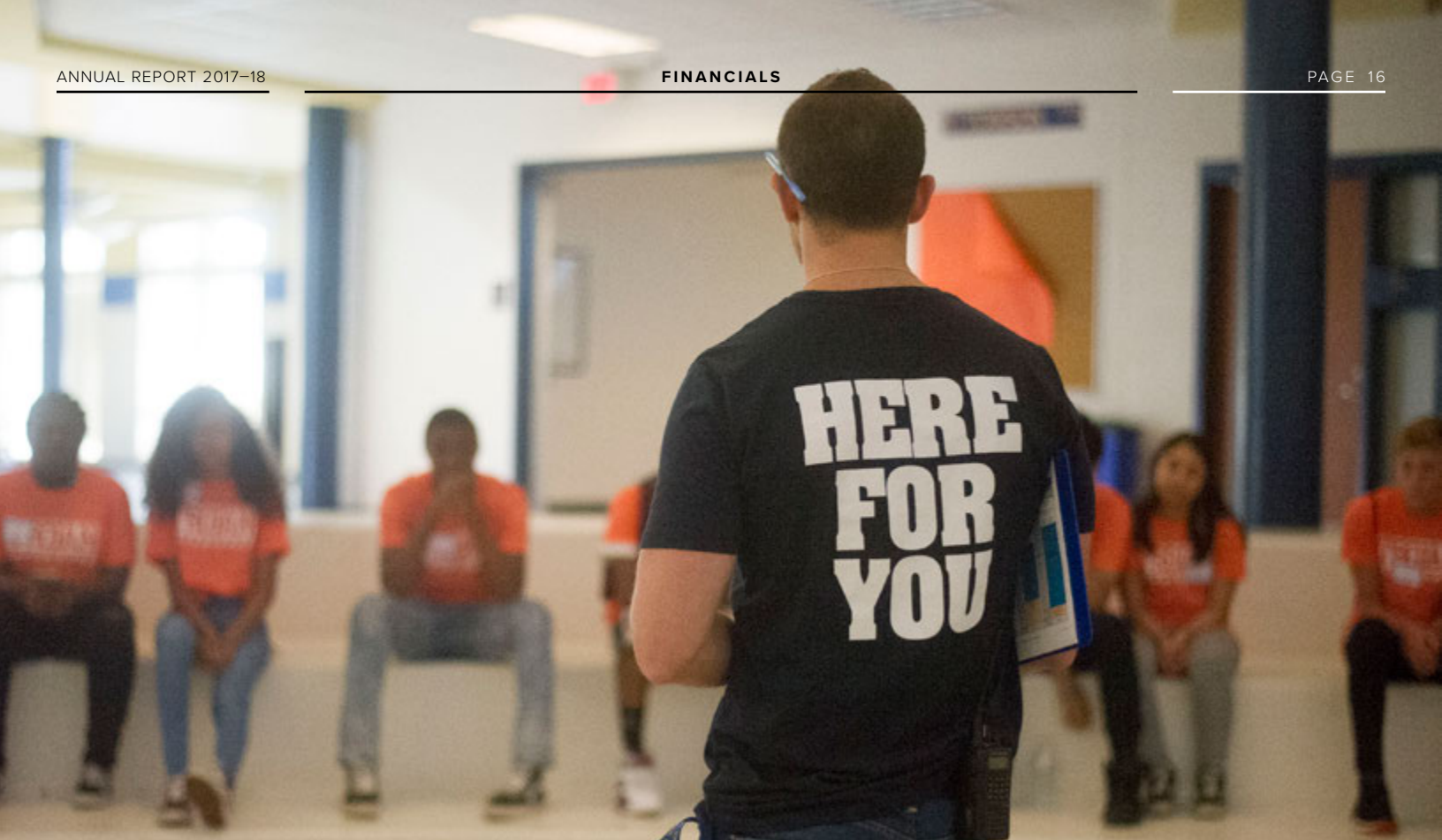
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Eleanor Maria Young
Bonnie and Stuart Youngentob
Judith and Leo Zickler
Alan and Lisa Zuckerman



Financials



Local Government Grants and Contracts		
	\$4,288,497.00	73%
Federal Grants and Contracts		
	\$379,055.00	6%
Foundation Grants*		
	\$882,564.00	15%
In-Kind Donations		
	\$192,410.00	3%
Individual Contributions		
	\$117,296.00	2%
Other Revenue		
	\$35,510.00	1%
\$5,895,332.00		



Support of Youth and Families		
	\$4,619,461.00	80%
Management and General		
	\$856,774.00	15%
Fundraising		
	\$296,955.00	5%
\$5,773,190.00		

**(includes individual and family contributions made through donor advised funds)*





The Mosaic: Celebrating 20 Years of Dreams and Aspirations

Hope. Connection. Growing and Thriving. These are the themes that students from the Wheaton High School Wellness Center wanted to express when they designed this mural representing Identity's 20 year impact on their community. Under the guidance of Artivate's Carien Quiroga, the students conceived and built the mural. Quiroga saw this process as a mirror of the immigrant experience, saying the very nature of mosaic-making is reconstructing and creating new imagery out of broken shards of glass and may serve as a reminder of the immigrant experience of rebuilding lives in a new country while holding on to the pieces of their own cultural heritage. This project was made possible through Identity's partnership with KnightTime, MCPS's 21st Century Community Learning Center at Wheaton High School.