

RURAL
MARYLAND
COUNCIL
FY2017

ANNUAL REPORT



A yearly report on the Rural Maryland Council, an independent state agency located within the Maryland Department of Agriculture

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Maryland Department of Agriculture Secretary Joe Bartenfelder, Maryland Comptroller Peter Franchot, Maryland Department of Commerce Secretary Mike Gill, RMC First Vice Chair, The Honorable Jamie Windon, Lyon Distilling and RMC Executive Board member and Chair, Josh Hastings, and Charlotte Davis, RMC Executive Director toasting Maryland’s rural businesses

TO OUR FELLOW MARYLANDERS

We are pleased to share with you our Fiscal Year 2017 Annual Report.

This year we welcomed a new Board Chair, Josh Hastings. Josh currently serves as Policy Manager with the Eastern Shore Land Conservancy where he monitors land use policies at the local, state, and federal government levels. A proud native of the Eastern Shore, Josh grew up on a poultry farm and Maryland's first certified organic farm. Before joining ESLC, Josh served as the Legislative Assistant to the Chair of the Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee, in the Maryland State Senate. He holds two Bachelor's degrees from Salisbury University (Business Marketing, Political Science) and is finishing a Master's degree in Public Policy from the University of Maryland Baltimore County.

Josh is a 2016 Institute for Policy Studies- New Economy Fellow, is a LEAD Maryland (Class VIII) alumnus, and is serving a three-year term on the State's Rural Legacy Advisory Board. He is the current Chairman of the Partners for Open Space coalition, and is the Board Vice Chair of the Lower Shore Land Trust.

This year we also said goodbye to past Chair Doris Mason. Doris has moved on to other opportunities, but we thank her for her service to the Rural Maryland Council (RMC)! We appreciated her efforts in supporting our goals and in particular for her work on the Strategic Plan.

We kicked off the year with the adoption of the 2017-2020 Strategic Plan, which includes an updated vision

and goals. RMC leadership met and developed the plan during spring 2016 with the Executive Board adopting the plan in September 2016. The RMC co-hosted, with partner Grow & Fortify, the Grow Maryland Summit at the Chesapeake Bay Beach Club to promote value-added agriculture. In spring 2017, the RMC co-hosted with USDA Rural Development a Regional Forum on Rural Broadband in Annapolis.

We celebrated the passage of the Connecting Rural Maryland Act of 2017 and the inclusion of funds for the Next Generation Farmland Acquisition Program with the Maryland Agricultural and Resource-Based Industries Corporation (MARBIDCO). The Council will also receive almost \$4 million in funding for its grant programs.

The Rural Maryland Foundation undertook a study of the intergenerational transfer of wealth in Rural Maryland.

LOOKING AHEAD

For the future, the RMC will take an active leadership role with the Task Force on Rural Broadband, Internet, Wireless and Cellular Service. A report is due at the end of calendar year 2017. The Council will also host the Rural Summit on December 1, 2017. The Rural Maryland Foundation will continue Phase Two of the Transfer of Wealth project.

As always, everyone is welcome to join us at our meetings and gatherings. Thanks for all that you do to help us meet our vision of a future where all of Rural Maryland is prosperous with thriving resources, vibrant economies, and healthy, connected communities!

To our continued success;



Josh Hastings
Chair



Charlotte Davis
Executive Director

Cover photo: Facebook/Western Maryland Scenic Railroad

WHO WE ARE



RMC Chair Josh Hastings, RMC Executive Director Charlotte Davis, Governor Larry Hogan, Alma Plummer, US Department of Commerce Economic Development Administration and RMC Immediate Past Chair, Scott Warner at the Tawes Crab and Clam Bake in Crisfield, MD

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

Our vision for the RMC is where we see a future where all of Rural Maryland is prosperous with thriving resources, vibrant economies, and healthy, connected communities.

Our goals are to:

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

RMC Officers

Chair, Representing District 5 – Caroline, Dorchester and Talbot Counties:

Mr. Josh Hastings, Policy Manager, Eastern Shore Land Conservancy

First Vice Chair, Representing Maryland Department of Agriculture:

Mr. Matthew Tefteau, Manager of Government Relations, Maryland Department of Agriculture

Second Vice Chair, Representing District 6 (Wicomico, Worcester and Somerset Counties) & RMC

Representative on Governor's Intergovernmental Commission on Agriculture:

Mr. Erroll Mattox, Farm Management Specialist, University of Maryland Extension

Immediate Past Chair, Chair (January – December 2016), Representing Upper Shore Regional Council:

Ms. Doris Mason, Executive Director, Upper Shore Regional Council

RMC EXECUTIVE BOARD

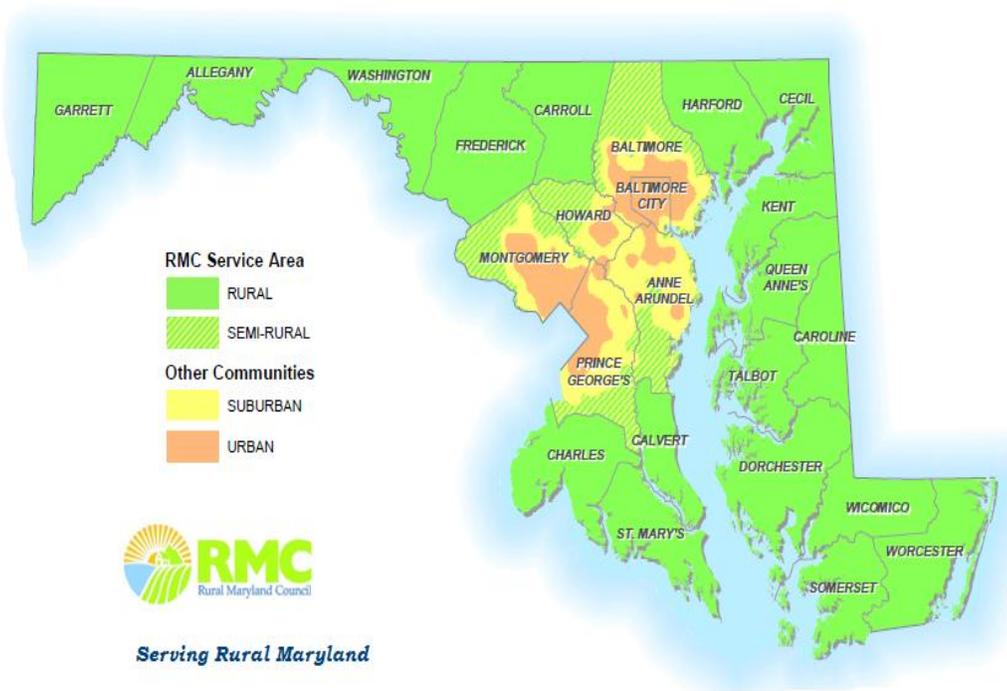
<p>Rodney Glotfelty, District 1 – Garrett, Allegany and Washington Counties and Health Care Committee Co- Chair</p> <p>Angela Spencer, District 2 – Carroll, Frederick and Hartford Counties</p> <p>Chris Kaselemis, District 3 – Charles, Calvert and St. Mary’s Counties</p> <p>Loretta Lodge, District 4 – Cecil, Kent and Queen Anne’s Counties</p> <p>R. Kevin Brooks, District 7 – Anne Arundel, Baltimore, Howard and Montgomery Counties</p> <p>Daniel Rider, Representing Rural Maryland Foundation</p>	<p>George Vogelsang, Representing For-Profit Organizations</p> <p>Vanessa Finney, Representing State At-Large</p> <p>Jeannie Haddaway-Ricco, Representing Governor’s Office</p> <p>Steve Pennington, Representing Maryland Department of Commerce</p> <p>John Kinnaird (Town of Thurmont), Representing Maryland Municipal League</p> <p>Jamie Windon (Town of St. Michaels), Representing Maryland Municipal League</p> <p>Kathy Beisner, Representing USDA Rural Development</p>	<p>Donald VanHassent, Representing Maryland Department of Natural Resources</p> <p>Temi Oshiyoye, Representing Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene</p> <p>Dr. Thomas Porter, Representing University of Maryland Extension</p> <p>Craig Hartsock, Representing Western Maryland Resource Conservation and Development</p> <p>The Honorable Wilbur Levengood (Caroline County), Representing Maryland Association of Counties</p>	<p>The Honorable Richard Rothschild (Carroll County), Representing Maryland Association of Counties</p> <p>Sharan Marshall, Representing Maryland Association of Public Library Administrators</p> <p>Santo Grande, Representing Maryland Association of Community Action Agencies</p> <p>Emily Snyder, Representing Maryland Farm Bureau</p> <p>Lara Wilson, Representing Maryland Rural Health Association and Health Care Committee Co- Chair</p> <p>Scott Warner, Representing MidShore Regional Council and Rural Maryland Prosperity Investment Fund (RMPIF)</p>	<p>Michael Pennington, Tri-County Council for the Lower Eastern Shore of Maryland and Nominating Committee Chair</p> <p>Steve McHenry, Representing Special Appointment</p> <p>Lindsay Thompson, Representing Special Appointment</p> <p>Mike Thielke, Representing Nonprofits and RMC/RMF Joint Planning Committee Chair</p> <p>Cindy Stone, Representing Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development</p> <p>John Hartline, Representing Tri- County Council for Southern Maryland</p>	<p>The Honorable Sheree Sample-Hughes, Representing Maryland House of Delegates</p> <p>The Honorable Michael W. McKay, Representing Maryland House of Delegates</p> <p>The Honorable Edith Patterson, Representing Maryland House of Delegates</p> <p>The Honorable Mary Ann Lisanti, Representing Maryland House of Delegates</p> <p>The Honorable Thomas M. Middleton, Representing Maryland Senate</p> <p>The Honorable George C. Edwards, Representing Maryland Senate</p> <p>The Honorable James N. Mathias, Jr., Representing Maryland Senate</p>
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SERVING RURAL COMMUNITIES

Rural jurisdictions share common characteristics that set them apart from their suburban and urban counterparts, such as geographic isolation, lack of transportation, and lack of access to and availability of health care. The State definition of rural is articulated in the Annotated Code of Maryland, §2-207, and includes 18 of the 24 jurisdictions in Maryland. Each is represented by the Rural Maryland Council.

The following counties constitute rural Maryland:

- ALLEGANY
- CALVERT
- CAROLINE
- CARROLL
- CECIL
- CHARLES
- DORCHESTER
- FREDERICK
- GARRETT
- HARFORD
- KENT
- QUEEN ANNE'S
- SOMERSET
- ST. MARY'S
- TALBOT
- WASHINGTON
- WICOMICO
- WORCESTER



RMC STAFF

Charlotte Davis, Executive Director
Meredith Donaho, Program Administrator
Amanda Clevenger, Administrative Assistant

SERVING RURAL COMMUNITIES

2017-2020 Strategic Plan

RMC leadership met during the spring 2016 to develop a strategic plan. A new vision and goals for the organization were formulated. The plan includes objectives as well as suggested metrics and action items. The 2017-2020 Strategic Plan is available to view on the RMC's website at the following link: <http://rural.maryland.gov/publications-2/>

Objectives:

- Attract and retain best and brightest in Rural Maryland (including youth)
- Support the increase in the number of rural households with internet access
- Facilitate planning to establish Center(s) for telemedicine services in underserved rural areas
- Economic outlook for Rural Maryland improves
- Increase employment opportunities
- Enhance and support entrepreneurship opportunities (new starts and growth)
- Protect and enhance agricultural and resource-based opportunities in Rural Maryland
- Initiate/support/influence legislation impacting natural resource-based industries and natural resource stewardship using RMC-provided expertise
- Convene stakeholders to address challenges and/or opportunities related to Maryland's natural resources and/or natural resource-based industries
- Achieve adequate resources to support RMC programs (staff and financial) including RMPIF and MAERDAF for each fiscal year
- Increase funding for Rural Maryland Prosperity Investment Fund (RMPIF)
- Increase the participation and engagement of all RMC Committee members
- Participate as a leader in the National Committee for Rural Councils

Key Action Items:

- 1) Convene a roundtable discussion the "Last Mile" issue
- 2) Continue regional coalitions of community development organizations
- 3) Each Committee will develop actions for the last strategies (above)
- 4) Partner with an organization to create Center for Telemedicine
- 5) Survey providers and resident re: internet access
- 6) Collect data from MD Department of Education re: school kids and rural broadband access
- 7) Host Business Competitions – Youth & Adult
- 8) Determine most appropriate data for baseline on Economic Outlook
- 9) Advocate for Rural Investment Tax Credit
- 10) Convene Entrepreneurial event
- 11) Explore Forum for TMDL
- 12) Identify/secure date for focused Summit
- 13) Identify/secure date for biennial statewide Summit
- 14) Identify partners, sponsors, co-sponsors for Summit
- 15) Evaluate & recommend how to energize Committee structure of RMC
- 16) Convene Agriculture and Natural Resource Committee
- 17) Advocate on Capitol Hill
- 18) Develop rural engagement program
- 19) Board Retreat to assess progress and program evaluation
- 20) Executive Director serves in a leadership role in national organization
- 21) Host Partners for Rural America national conference

SERVING RURAL COMMUNITIES

Rural Impact Awards

Each year, the RMC makes an effort to recognize some of the great work of our fellow Rural Marylanders. Presented at the Annual Meeting held on November 28, 2017 the Council recognized Tom McLoughlin as Outstanding Community Involvement for his efforts in leading the RMC Health Committee. Thank you for all of your hard work in leading the committee and producing the Committee report! Outgoing Chair Doris Mason was also recognized for her service to the Rural Maryland Council.

Given in recognition for outstanding leadership and public service, the Rural Champion Award was presented to Maryland Department of Budget and Management Secretary David Brinkley. As a State legislator, former Senator Brinkley supported agricultural legislation. In his current position as Secretary, the Department has been supportive of State funding for the RMC and its grants programs.

Outgoing RMC Chair Doris Mason presents the 2016 Rural Champion Award to Maryland Department of Budget and Management Secretary David Brinkley



Grow Maryland Summit

Held on Thursday, December 1, 2016 at Chesapeake Bay Beach Club on Kent Island, Grow Maryland's Value-Added Agriculture Summit brought together an estimated 150 attendees for this first year event. Attendees met Maryland's robust and diverse value-added agriculture industry, which includes everything from apples, ales, agritourism and angus. Panel of experts provided an overview of the value-added landscape, including updates on some of the latest industry studies. In the afternoon, breakouts included tracks on innovation, law & liability, trends, and tourism, as well as starting small, and scaling up.

Attendees included value-added agriculture producers and small food businesses, state and county agency representatives (Planning & Zoning, Fire & Life Safety, Health, Economic Development Offices, Tourism, Commerce, Environment, Natural Resources, and Agriculture), state and county elected officials, food and agriculture organizations, media and bloggers, and food policy organizations.



*Dale Hawks with USDA National Agricultural Statistical Service speaks at the Grow Maryland Summit
Photo Credit: Janice Booth*

SERVING RURAL COMMUNITIES

Rural Health Care

In meeting RMC Goal # 1 of the Strategic Plan, the Rural Maryland Council convened its Health Care Committee and issued a report of the Committee's work in December 1, 2016. The RMC Health Care Committee has been active over the years focusing on health care issues such as work force shortages, rural access to prescription medications, scope of practice regulations and the feasibility of developing a statewide telehealth consortium. Currently, the Committee has focused its attention on mental health, particularly on adolescent depression and mood disorders as well as its access through the application of telemedicine.

Three short-term objectives were identified:

- Encourage all Primary Care physicians to include evaluations for adolescent depression in their Private office visits.
- Review and revise roles of School Nurse and Counselor to assist in detecting signs of depression for possible medical attention.
- Develop support for certification programs in mental health to further enhance the Advanced Degree Providers' qualifications and to assist in offsetting the recognized physician shortage in addressing and treating or referring adolescents suffering from depression.

The Committee is fully aware of the importance of health access and population health in improving the quality of life, and which is reflected in the Council's Mission Statement. Therefore, based on its deliberations to date, the presentations received and the actions initiated, the Committee recommends RMC's continued advocacy for a stronger integration of the mental health component with primary care in both the clinical and educational environments. It believes that its three short term objectives offer promising clinical and educational complements that can alleviate to some degree the current workforce shortages as well as better assist in the identification of potential behavioral disorders among the adolescents that may suggest further evaluation and early intervention. As a financial incentive to encourage those efforts, the Committee further recommends that RMC reserve a specified share of the Rural Maryland Prosperity Investment funds, recently authorized by the State Legislature, for health related projects that incorporate these short term objectives in their grant proposal requests, as well as the application of Telehealth principles in achieving their projected outcomes.

The Council also approved funding for an update to the Maryland Rural Health Plan. The Maryland Rural Health Association (MRHA) was awarded a small, limited contract from the State Office of Rural Health (SORH), and Maryland Department of Health (MDH) to assist in the creation of an updated state-wide Rural Health Plan for Maryland. With the requested funds from RMC, MRHA proposes to complete a more robust and comprehensive Rural Health Plan that can meet the needs of multiple rural stakeholders and lay the groundwork for a multiyear work plan for MRHA, SOHR and RMC that benefits rural Marylanders. The new Rural Health Plan will assess the needs and serve all of the 18 rural counties in Maryland and its growing population - of over 1.6 million.

Entrepreneurship

The RMC supports the development of entrepreneurship to encourage economic growth in rural communities. The RMC supports the F3 Farm Tech program with the Eastern Shore Entrepreneurship Center. The F³ Tech Accelerator program is Maryland's first program focused on viewing the State's traditional industries of agriculture and seafood through the lens of innovation and technology. Through the coordinated networking of serial entrepreneurs, mentors, coaches, industry and subject matter experts, along with investors, F³ Tech aims to position Maryland as a leader in the sectors of agritech, aquatech, and envirotech. Offerings include a specially-designed Proof-of-Concept process for startups and a more aggressive, traditional multi-month accelerator program.

ADVOCATING ON BEHALF OF RURAL MARYLAND

The 2017 Maryland General Assembly Legislative Session was a strong year for rural communities. Highlights for the RMC included the inclusion of revenue for the Rural Maryland Prosperity Investment Fund and the Next Generation Farmland Acquisition Program in the State's Fiscal Year 2018 Operating Budget, and the creation of a task force to study rural internet, broadband, wireless and cellular service. We thank Governor Larry Hogan and the Maryland Legislature for their support of the Rural Maryland Council and the Maryland Agricultural Education and Rural Development Assistance Fund. Other Session highlights include the passage of tax credits to encourage manufacturing, expansion of the Bay Restoration Fund to help rural municipalities, and the inclusion of budget funds for jurisdictions struggling with declining school enrollments.

The Council remained active participants during the 2017 Legislative Session. During this time, we worked to advance our legislative priorities and increase our visibility with legislators. Activities included hosting a welcome breakfast for rural legislators, organizing Rural Maryland Day in Annapolis, testifying before standing committees, working with the Rural Caucus and local delegations, as well as submitting written testimony. The Legislative Committee met on a biweekly basis to discuss and track legislation.



RMC Executive Director Charlotte Davis and RMC Chair Josh Hastings receive a proclamation of February 9, 2017 as Rural Maryland Day from Governor Larry Hogan.

Connecting Rural Maryland Act of 2017



Connecting Rural Maryland Act of 2017 Bill Signing on May 25, 2017

On May 25, 2017, Governor Larry Hogan signed into law Senate Bill 717/ House Bill 1169 – Connecting Rural Maryland Act of 2017. The legislation established the Task Force on Rural Internet, Broadband, Wireless, and Cellular Service. The 22-member task force, which included four members of the Senate and four members of the House of Delegates, was assigned to study and make recommendations regarding how Western Maryland counties; Southern Maryland counties; Eastern Shore counties; and Frederick, Carroll, and Harford counties can work together to obtain federal assistance to improve internet, broadband, wireless, and cellular services and accessibility in the affected counties. By November 30, 2017, the task force was assigned to report its findings and recommendations to the Governor and the General Assembly. Rural Maryland Council Executive Director, Charlotte Davis, was named as the Chair of the task force.

ADVOCATING ON BEHALF OF RURAL MARYLAND

The RMC cohosted two regional forums in Fiscal Year 2017. The first focused on regional rural lending on the Eastern Shore; the second on rural broadband.

On May 4, 2017, the Council partnered with the Federal Reserve Bank of Richmond, Federal Home Loan Bank of Atlanta, the Office of the Comptroller of the Currency (OCC), Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (FDIC), US Small Business Administration (SBA), USDA Rural Development and the Maryland Economic Development Association in sponsoring “Financing Rural Small Buisness: Tools of the Trade” forum. Involved in the forum were be community bankers, community development experts, community development financial institutions (CDFIs) and community development partners to promote credit enhancement and direct subordinate loan opportunities to assist businesses and community development projects. The program was held at Chesapeake College in Wye Mills, Maryland.



RMC Board Chair, Josh Hastings, speaking at the May 2017 Regional Rural Broadband Forum

Regional Broadband Forum with USDA Rural Development

On May 24, 2017, Rural Maryland Council partnered with the United States Department of Agriculture Rural Development to host the 2017 Regional Rural Broadband Forum. This event was attended by many regional broadband stakeholders. Speakers included: Robert R. Puckett, President New York State Telecommunications Association, Inc.; Keith B. Adams, Assistant Administrator, USDA Rural Development; and, Mike Romano, National Telecommunications Cooperative Association (NTCA).



Guest Speaker, Rick Gordon, USDA Rural Development, discussing “Making Your Community Attractive” at the 2017 Regional Rural Broadband Forum

ADVOCATING ON BEHALF OF RURAL MARYLAND

RMC Fiscal Year 2018 Budget Priorities achieved:

- RMC will receive an additional \$1,500,000 (total \$3,500,000) in funding for the Rural Maryland Prosperity Investment Fund for a total of \$3,667,000
- Additionally, the Maryland Agricultural Education and Rural Development Assistance Fund (MAERDAF) receives \$167,000
- The five Regional Councils are funded at \$200,000 each
- The Maryland Agricultural and Resource-Based Industry Development Corporation (MARBIDCO) is level funded at \$2,875,000
- The Next Generation Farmland Acquisition Program receives \$2.5 million in Fiscal Year 2018 with an additional commitment for \$2.5 million in Fiscal Year 2019

Viable Agriculture, Aquaculture, Forestry & Rural Communities: RMC supported proposals that promote viable agriculture, forestry and rural communities. Supporting our agriculture economy, legislation was adopted that recognizes the importance of our watermen and creates a new “Maryland’s Best Seafood” branding for locally produced products. Also passed was Senate Bill 317 (Ch. 149) which establishes the More Jobs for Marylanders Program. The law allows a new manufacturing business that locates within a qualified distressed county a 10-year income tax credit based on the number of jobs created, a State property tax credit, a sales and use tax refund for certain purchases, and an exemption from paying corporate filing fees.

To provide an incentive to counties to preserve State forests, parks and wildlife management areas, the legislature passed SB 273 which creates the State Forest, State Park, and Wildlife Management Area Revenue Equity Program. The program will

make an annual payment based on the amount of public lands and is estimated to provide the affected counties (Allegany, Garrett, and Somerset) approximately \$1.7 million annually beginning in fiscal 2019.

Several other important measures will impact rural communities. Supported by the Council, the General Assembly adopted SB 957/HB 1168 – Counties and Municipalities – Land Bank Authorities. This law will allow two or more local governments to enter into an intergovernmental cooperation agreement to create a single land bank to act on behalf of the local governments. House Bill 1350 will require the Public Service Commission when taking final action on an application for a certificate of public convenience and necessity for a generating station to consider the consistency of the application with the comprehensive plan and zoning of each county or municipality where the generating station is proposed to be located. Also passed was SB343/ HB 384 – Bay Restoration Fund – Eligible Costs – Expansion which will give municipalities more flexibility and opportunities to upgrade aging wastewater systems. We advocated for funding for important land preservation programs, including funding for the Next Generation Farmland Acquisition Program. Under SB 257/HB 267 –



Senator Adelaide Eckardt speaking at the RMC 2017 Legislative Luncheon in Annapolis

ADVOCATING ON BEHALF OF RURAL MARYLAND

Program Open Space – Authorized Transfer to the Maryland Heritage Areas Authority Financing Fund – Increase, funding directed to our state’s heritage areas, an important tourism driver, could potentially increase by raising the current cap of \$3 million in transfer tax funding to \$6 million.

Further, the budget committees approved funding for:

- Program Open Space – Stateside: \$31,476,663
- Program Open Space – Local: \$37,213,279
- Community Parks and Playgrounds: \$2,500,000
- Rural Legacy Program: \$18,913,725
- Maryland Agricultural Land Preservation Program: \$28,923,775



Farm in Wolfsville, Frederick County, MD

Rural Economic Development: Both the House and Senate passed legislation (SB 840) proposing a reduction of State individual income taxes and expansion of the Earned Income Tax Credit. A conference committee was appointed to reconcile the differences between the two houses, but unfortunately no agreement was reached by Sine Die. As passed by the Senate, SB 840 decreased State income taxes by reducing over five tax years State income tax rates imposed on higher income taxpayers; expanding the State earned income tax credit that can be claimed by individuals without qualifying children by increasing its value and extending eligibility to individuals who do not currently qualify under federal law; and increasing over four tax years the personal exemption amount that can be claimed by taxpayers with federal adjusted gross income of \$100,000 or less, or \$150,000 or less if married filing jointly.

Rural Health: The Governor and the Legislature continue their efforts to tackle the opioid crisis. Budget funds were included based on recommendations of the Governor’s Heroin and Opioid Emergency Task Force. New funding appropriated this session included \$1.5 million to fund residential treatment services for court-ordered individuals, \$500,000 for the Opioid Operational Command Center, \$1.9 million for the Prescription Drug Monitoring Program and \$10 million for additional programming to combat the heroin and opioid epidemic, in response to the Governor’s declaration of a State of Emergency on March 1, 2017.

Transportation: To protect local roadway infrastructure, the State shares various transportation revenues, commonly referred to as Highway User Revenues (HUR), with local governments and municipalities. In Fiscal Year 2018, \$140.8 million (7.7% of HUR) is distributed to Baltimore City; \$27.4 million (1.5%) is distributed to counties; and \$7.3 million (0.4%) is distributed to municipalities, for a total of \$175.5 million. The Council supported efforts to restore the HUR formula to provide 30% to local jurisdictions.

Other passed legislation included a ban of fracking in Western Maryland, five days of required paid sick leave for employees for businesses with 15 or more employees, and ethics reform measures.

MARYLAND AGRICULTURAL EDUCATION AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE FUND (MAERDAF)



*Frederick Career and Technology Center (CTC)
Student with Bee Smoker, Photo Courtesy of
Frederick CTC*

The Maryland Agricultural Education and Rural Development Assistance Fund (MAERDAF) was established in 2000 to offer financial assistance to rural nonprofit organizations that promote statewide and regional planning, economic and community development, and agricultural and forestry education. In addition, MAERDAF offers grants to community colleges that support small and agricultural businesses with enhanced training and technical assistance.

During FY 2017, the MAERDAF Grants Review Board received 95 grant applications requesting a total of \$2,026,212.28 in funding. The Board selected 42 rural-serving nonprofit organizations to receive \$555,917.00 in available funding. The recipients were:

Allegany College of Maryland– Award Amount: \$7,185

MAERDAF funding provided matching funds for a Volunteer Maryland Coordinator member position to assist with the founding efforts of a two-county Volunteer Center that will serve citizens in Allegany & Garrett Counties. The Volunteer Maryland Coordinator has built a volunteer website platform that will be used to train organizations on how to support their missions in their communities.

In addition, the Volunteer Maryland Coordinator has collected 118 pounds of food for the Western Maryland Food Bank, which has been distributed to 20-25 families. The Volunteer Maryland Coordinator member has also organized and recruited 20 community volunteers to clean-up a local city park (five acres) that included an abandoned cemetery.

Allegany Health Right– Award Amount: \$9,580

MAERDAF funding has supported the Dental Access Program serving Allegany and Garrett Counties. The Dental Access Program provides urgent dental treatment for adults in the target population, delivers oral health education through presentations and appointments, and provides follow up with project participants via meetings, phone and email.

106 individuals have agreed to participate in one on one oral health improvement follow-ups with a Community Health Worker. The Community Health Worker has also conducted ten community presentations, reaching 191 vulnerable adults and their caregivers. The Community Health Worker also participated in larger outreach events, such as a Senior Fair. In a four month time, 1,955 people were reached out to through these larger events. Allegany Health Right provided urgent dental care to over 162 low income adults in 236 dental visits for a total of \$100,237 worth of services.

MARYLAND AGRICULTURAL EDUCATION AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE FUND (MAERDAF)

Asian American Center of Frederick– Award Amount: \$13,297.04

MAERDAF funding partially supported the coordination of the Community Health Worker (CHW) program and Retired and Senior Volunteer (RSVP) program, as part of the Minority Outreach and Technical Assistance program to address health disparities. Funding supported the development of an integrated service and outreach model to improve access to preventive care for Frederick and neighboring county residents by the newly developed CHW program, a coordinated plan for using Community Health Workers in partnership with Frederick Memorial Hospital, Frederick County Health Department and other providers, and delivery of three Health Disparity slideshow programs to ethnic minority business/community non-health leadership groups.

The October 2016 Health Fair collected 172 Health Disparity surveys and provided direct health services to 811 attendees. The first official Community Health Worker cohort has been developed, with participants having accomplished 160 hours of training.

Bay Area Center for Independent Living– Award Amount: \$6,227

MAERDAF funding supported the Vocational Training Program to allow students with disabilities to gain employment skills in Dorchester, Somerset, Wicomico and Worcester Counties. The funding provided for the purchase of four touch screen computers for the vocational demonstration lab.



Hoop House and Flower Sale, Photo Courtesy of Chesapeake College Foundation

Chesapeake College Foundation– Award Amount: \$8,526.20

MAERDAF funding supported the establishment of a high tunnel operation on campus for use as a hands-on teaching tool in the agriculture degree program. Funds developed a high tunnel management student internship program for implementation summer 2017, and developed a strategy with specific activities and a timeline for collaboration with high schools for implementation fall 2017. 15 students received hands-on learning, and 90% of participating students responded positively to a survey of their experience with the high tunnel and its connection to their coursework.

Chesterwye Center, Inc. and Benedictine School– Award Amount: \$15,807

MAERDAF funding provided training to direct support professionals to meet the Centers for Medicaid and Medicare Services (CMS) Community Rule that requires that people with intellectual/developmental disabilities must live in community settings and work or volunteer in community businesses. Chesterwye and Benedictine contracted with the National Alliance of Direct Support Professionals (NADSP) to conduct two days of training with the Direct Support Professionals (DSP). There were 50 DSPs and 20 supervisors who participated in and completed the NADSP training.

MARYLAND AGRICULTURAL EDUCATION AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE FUND (MAERDAF)

Compass Hospice Regional– Award Amount: \$16,286.00

MAERDAF Funding supported the existing Hope & Healing Centers in Queen Anne's, Kent and Caroline Counties. Specifically, MAERDAF funds were used to support Camp New Dawn, an annual camp for children and families, and to provide grief support services not covered by insurance. To date, a total of 26 elementary school children, 49 middle school and 32 high school students participated in grief support services. A total of 19 adults participated in grief support services.

Cove Point Natural Heritage Trust– Award Amount: \$22,513

MAERDAF provided a portion of a living and travel stipend for a Volunteer Maryland Coordinator for training. Funding was used to hire a part-time teacher to develop long-term regional support partnerships to ensure program longevity, present education trainings for Southern Maryland teachers and conduct student service learning. The Volunteer Maryland Coordinator has assisted with recruiting 20 students to plant native plants to increase visibility and attractiveness of trail map signs.

In addition, eight Girl Scouts and four Scout Leaders have been recruited to assist with marking trails. The first Maryland Master Naturalist program in St. Mary's County has been established and consulted with Calvert County's American Chestnut Land Trust on Master Naturalist program for best practices and lessons learned. 20 volunteer candidates from Calvert and St. Mary's have been accepted into the Master Naturalist training program. 10 experts from Central and Southern Maryland region have been recruited to present Master Naturalist.

Crossroads Community, Inc. – Award Amount: \$3,682.70

MAERDAF funding helped to establish "natural supports" in the community for individuals managing mental illness. Funds supported a Volunteer Maryland Coordinator placement and associated expenses to recruit community volunteers and cultivate partnerships. To date, the Volunteer Maryland Coordinator has recruited four individuals to volunteer for Crossroads Community as Companions to consumers or in an administrative capacity.

Delmarva Community Services, Inc. – Award Amount: \$14,370

MAERDAF funding increased access to the local community for DCS individuals and developed new partnerships and opportunities for job skills training. In addition, funding increased the number of Horticultural Training Center clients with community-centered goals. Funds supported the purchase of a vehicle for the Horticulture Training Center, capable of carrying 12 passengers and handling a large volume of sales products.

Individuals in the program have learned how to care for plants, how to volunteer in the community in horticulture and agriculture-related activities, and how to sell products that they have worked hard on. For the third year in a row, the Horticulture Training Center sold handmade, fresh Fraser Fir wreaths during the holiday season. Sales for the wreaths were the highest ever with a total of \$3,000.00 sold, an increase of \$800.00 from the previous year.

Eastern Shore Area Health Education Center– Award Amount: \$21,555

MAERDAF funding has trained a cohort of 15 Community Health Workers (CHWs) to meet demands of current health care deficit on the Eastern Shore. Assistance in job placement was provided for all trained CHWs upon training completion.

MARYLAND AGRICULTURAL EDUCATION AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE FUND (MAERDAF)



*Evergreen Barn Project, Photo Courtesy of
Evergreen Heritage Center*

Evergreen Heritage Center Foundation – Award Amount: \$11,304.40

The purpose of the Evergreen Barn Project is to repair and renovate the Evergreen Barn, originally built in the late 1700s and now part of Federal Hill/Evergreen which is listed on both the Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties and the National Register. Repairs and renovations resulted in the preservation and repurposing of an historic Maryland structure that will serve as both a farm museum and venue for education and events while exemplifying the story of sustainable agriculture and forestry.

Beginning in the fall 2016 (and continuing throughout the school year), visiting early childhood, middle, high school, and college students learned about the Barn and the Barn Project. 612 students learned how the Barn supported farming at the Evergreen Heritage Center, its role on the farm, and the farm's soil and water resources. 104 college students and other

adults gained knowledge focused on the Project itself including the design, use of heritage technology, and the Barn's role in the history of the farm.

Farming 4 Hunger– Award Amount: \$14,370

MAERDAF funding prepared incarcerated men in Pre-Release for living in the outside world by developing skills, including agricultural education. Funding assisted inmates and supported the development of business relationships for employment opportunities in Southern Maryland. The program has been successful in recruiting three guest mentors to discuss financial literacy, banking, math and English remediation skills to eight inmates currently serving on the Farm in individual and group sessions. In 2016, Farming 4 Hunger exceeded their goal of recruiting 5,000 volunteers and visitors by recruiting 16,000 volunteers, and held a successful Taste of the Farm event to promote awareness in the community.

For All Seasons, Inc.– Award Amount: \$21,788.75

MAERDAF funding supported the costs to become accredited by the Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities (CARF). Accreditation allows For All Seasons, Inc. to build institutional capacity to serve citizens of the five Mid-Shore counties with the highest quality of services.

Frederick CTC/FFA Alumni– Award Amount: \$14,370

MAERDAF funding supported the entrepreneurial agriculture program for Career and Technology Education students and promoted community-based agricultural enterprises in Frederick, Carroll and Washington Counties. Three nucs have been purchased for the spring, in addition to hive supplies. In addition, items were also purchased to help the honeybees survive the winter.

MARYLAND AGRICULTURAL EDUCATION AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE FUND (MAERDAF)

Garrett County Community Action Committee, Inc.– Award Amount: \$19,160.00

MAERDAF funding was used to build the capacity to create greater family economic security in Allegany and Garrett Counties by enabling career coaching services and career ladder opportunities. This included attainment of a families'

identified Career Advance Pathway Plan goal(s) reflective in creating greater economic security and wealth building, families pursuing education/career advancement, parents completing certifications, families increasing stability and economic security, and families completing the Crisis to Thrive (C2T) Family Wellness Composite.

Harry R. Hughes Center for Agro-Ecology at the University of Maryland– Award Amount: \$8,143

MAERDAF funding increased the understanding of the poultry industry in Maryland by providing a platform for learning new technologies and solutions, creating a dialogue among diverse stakeholders and determining areas that need additional education and research among planners of the Eastern Shore's nine counties. Funding supported a Poultry 101 Symposium and Planners' Meeting in May 2017, which was attended by 125 participants.

Heart of the Civil War Heritage Area– Award Amount: \$12,794.09

MAERDAF funding created a historical geocache trail to inspire geocache enthusiasts to learn about Civil War history, as well as encourage economic development by encouraging eating, drinking, shopping and lodging along the trail in Carroll, Washington, and Frederick Counties.

200 geocoins were claimed within one month of the trail month. 25 teams completed the geotrail between November 2016 to January 2017. Of the 180 participants who completed the trail, 54% were Marylanders, 79% live outside of the boundaries of the Heritage Areas, 89% reported purchasing a snack/meal, 71% reported purchasing gas, and 8% reported spending a night in a hotel in a Heritage Area.

Historic St. Mary's City Foundation– Award Amount: \$14,370.00

MAERDAF funding supported the construction of a wooden, timber-frame pavilion with flexible enclosures (sliding wooden slides) to provide covered space for the comfort and convenience of museum visitors.

LEAD Maryland Foundation– Award Amount: \$19,160

MAERDAF funding increased the overall capacity of the LEAD Maryland training program, to build the capacity of rural Maryland. Funds were implemented for four in-state multi-day seminars and to purchase the necessary equipment for Class IX Seminar 9 and Class X Fellows Seminars 1-3.

Lifestyles of Maryland Foundation– Award Amount: \$9,368.28

MAERDAF funding improved the mobility of the targeted population in accessing employment opportunities and increased the capability to provide more efficient transportation services. Funding supported the purchase of web-based transportation dispatch software, set-up fees, and training to enable more effective transportation services for Southern Maryland citizens. 433 unduplicated individuals received door-to-door transportation services through Southern Maryland RIDES.

Lower Shore Land Trust– Award Amount: \$9,262.90

MAERDAF funding supported the production of materials necessary to promote the new location of the Lower Shore Land Trust and create an environment to present programs, thus building capacity to conduct outreach. Funding supported the purchase of business cards, organizational brochures, and conference room equipment including a computer work station, table and chairs. Lower Shore Land Trust hosted five First Friday events to date with 50 attendees and 20 new names were added to the mailing distribution list.

MARYLAND AGRICULTURAL EDUCATION AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE FUND (MAERDAF)

Maintaining Active Citizens, Inc. (MAC, Inc.)– Award Amount: \$5,786.32

MAERDAF funding supported The Life After Breast Cancer program that serves women in rural communities on the Eastern Shore of Maryland, primarily Wicomico, Somerset and Worcester Counties. The project addresses the significant health issue of breast and gynecological cancer survivorship and particularly the correlation between weight gain and cancer recurrence of women in these communities who are underserved, underinsured and often financially vulnerable. To date, six breast cancer survivors were successfully recruited into the weight loss program.

Maryland Association of Soil Conservation Districts – Award Amount: \$4,790.00

MAERDAF funding provided support for the purchase of equipment for the Maryland Envirothon Program, including the purchase of an off road utility vehicle and trailer to be used at the Maryland Envirothon competition.

Maryland Business Incubation Association– Award Amount: \$11,496

MAERDAF funding facilitated greater attendance by rural entrepreneurs, especially those who are underserved, at Maryland TEDCO's Entrepreneur Expo, an annual statewide conference highlighting entrepreneurs and new startup businesses. 58 participants from rural Maryland communities attended the TEDCO Entrepreneur Expo in November 2016.

The breakout session presented on rural entrepreneurship was successfully executed, and several attendees commented on its value to panel members post-session.

Maryland Farmers Market Association– Award Amount: \$16,932.65

MAERDAF funding supported Maryland's farmers markets by increasing the capacity of rural market farmers to effectively market directly to consumers through farmers markets thereby increasing their profits and the markets' capacity to provide sustainable community benefit. Funding provided 40 hours of technical assistance to market managers, hosted two in-person trainings to 45 attendees, and developed a *Guide to Selling at Maryland Farmers' Markets* publication.

Maryland Forest Association– Award Amount: \$5,460.60

MAERDAF funding increased awareness of value-added products and services opportunities associated with forest products. The Maryland Forests Association also increased knowledge of forestry organizations that exist in the State and that serve as resources to private landowners and forestry professionals; enhance Maryland's forestry community; improved communication and awareness of forestry-related resource organizations; and, strengthened and forged relationships between Maryland Forest Association and other rural and natural resources-based organizations.

Funding supported three educational workshops during the fall 2016 in Allegany, Baltimore, and Wicomico Counties to offer maximized opportunity for individuals from across the State to attend, as well as to address region-specific issues. A total of 120 attendees, including 14 forestry students, attended the three workshops.

Maryland Forestry Foundation– Award Amount: \$18,297.80

MAERDAF funding supported the expansion of the Natural Resources Career Camp by creating a fellowship to be made available to a college student currently enrolled in a natural resource career field. The NRCC Fellow will work with Forestry Boards, high schools, forestry operators, the Maryland Department of Natural Resources and other partner organizations to promote the NRCC and encourage enrollment. To date, the Fellow has attended seven Forestry Board meetings around the State of Maryland, presenting a wide range of promotional ideas specific to each county, and has documented each county's recruitment process and challenges.

MARYLAND AGRICULTURAL EDUCATION AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE FUND (MAERDAF)

MedStar St. Mary's Hospital— Award Amount: \$23,950

MAERDAF funding expanded education, outreach, and basic health screenings across Southern Maryland. Funding supported the purchase and customization of a mobile resource vehicle and equipment for outreach events. To date, MedStar St. Mary's Hospital has reached 2,200 residents in Charles and St. Mary's Counties at 30 various community events and programs. 198 patients have received follow-up calls and referrals for services based on outcomes of screenings and assessments.

Preservation Maryland— Award Amount: \$19,160

MAERDAF funding helped rural homeowners of historic properties in the nine counties of the Eastern Shore become aware of the tax credit program for historic preservation and help them access resources to preserve their houses.

Preservation Maryland conducted four in-person educational workshops for owners of historic properties, two in-person workshops for preservation commission members and preservation professionals, and two educational webinars for property owners. Preservation Maryland successfully contacted a total of 8,465 individuals as a part of the workshops and outreach. Approximately 157 participants attended in-person workshops in Federalsburg, Easton, Cambridge and Chestertown.

Queen Anne's County/Allegany County Public Library System— Award Amount: \$4, 138.56

MAERDAF provided support for the Allegany and Queen Anne's County libraries Guys Read program for 4th and 5th grade boys, specifically the purchase of books for 5th grade boys in the coming school year. By the end of the school year, Queen Anne's County volunteers made 58 visits to the school and Allegany County volunteers made 16 visits.

SHORE UP!— Award Amount: \$15,628.62

MAERDAF funding supported the Out-of-School Youth (OSY) Services Program, which is intended to ensure youth ages 16-24 have the education they need to succeed on the job, while providing them with specific occupational skills training, work experiences, and supportive services so that they may become and remain gainfully employed, especially in professions in high demand. Funds created a computer work lab for students, including the purchase of computers, educational software and computer lab furniture.

Southern Maryland Resource Conservation and Development Board, Inc.— Award Amount: \$22,034

MAERDAF funding supported the 2017 National Conservation Foundation Envirothon Competition at Mount St. Mary's University in Frederick County. Funding provided for the rental facilities for the Competition participants. 385 students and teachers from across the United States and Canada participated in the Competition.

Spring Dell Center, Inc. — Award Amount: \$14,370

MAERDAF funding provided support for wheelchair-bound individuals in St. Mary's, Charles, and Calvert Counties to increase the number of non-ambulatory individuals receiving education, employment and skills training in the community. Funding was used to purchase a used wheel-chair lift vehicle. 18 individuals were supported, and three new partnerships were developed.

MARYLAND AGRICULTURAL EDUCATION AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE FUND (MAERDAF)

Tri-County Council Foundation, Inc. – Award Amount: \$7,185.00

MAERDAF funding supported Project Opportunity, a program which provides entrepreneurship classes to veterans seeking employment in the Southern Maryland region. Funding provided consultant services, materials and supplies for the Project Opportunity entrepreneurship training classes for veterans. In November 2016, eight veterans completed the entrepreneurship course and graduated. In June 2017, eight veterans completed the course and graduated.

Tri-County Council of Southern Maryland – Award Amount: \$13,507.80

MAERDAF funding supported the Mobile Career Center (MCC), a resource for providing employment and training services in the rural and remote areas in Southern Maryland where transportation is difficult or non-existent for individuals to attend “brick and mortar” career centers. Support included replacing a cracked windshield, updating the vehicle’s wrapping exterior, and purchasing monitors, routers and printers for information technology (IT) upgrades.

True Oyster Restoration Initiative, Inc. – Award Amount: \$20,686.09

MAERDAF funding supported the creation of an agri-tourism oyster trail to capture markets from tourism to showcase the industry in Southern Maryland. Funding supported the development of marketing materials, and an inaugural oyster trail ceremony.

Tuckahoe Habitat for Humanity, Inc. – Award Amount: \$13,412.00

MAERDAF funding supported the Tuckahoe ReStore, as well as to encourage volunteering, donations and employment to serve the residents of Queen Anne’s and Caroline Counties. Funds purchased a used box truck, marketing materials, installation of a HVAC system, and lighted signage and security system.

Ward Museum of Wildfowl Art – Award Amount: \$14,370

MAERDAF funding supported outfitting of the new John A Luetkemeyer Sr. and Thomas F. Mullan Jr. Legacy Center as a state-of-the-art learning space to meet the growing demand for educational programs. Funding was used to purchase a visual display and audio equipment.

Western Maryland Resource Conservation and Development, Inc. – Award Amount: \$19,160

MAERDAF funding provided building and equipment needs to further expand educational and operational activities at Frostburg Grows. Funding supported the purchase of a compact tractor with front-end loader, and construction of a 24’ x 40’ multi-purpose building site on Frostburg Grows.

Women Supporting Women – Award Amount: \$7,033.83

MAERDAF funding was utilized to support the "Cooking for the New Me!" classes in spring 2017 to serve and support survivors of breast cancer and their families on the Lower Eastern Shore. Women Supporting Women held a healthy lifestyle program in the spring of 2017 to serve and support survivors of breast cancer and their families on the Lower Eastern Shore. Women Supporting Women held a healthy lifestyle program in the spring of 2017 designed to help change the way survivors approach healthy food selection and preparation. This objective was met through a series of four cooking classes using simple recipes with produce purchased from organic, local farmers’ markets. In total, 17 women attended the classes, surpassing the goal of 15.

Wor-Wic Community College – Award Amount: \$5,397.37

MAERDAF funds developed and implemented a Certified Nurse Assistant (CNA) course for individuals who are non-native English speakers following the Maryland Integrated Basic Education and Skills Training (MI-BEST) model.

RURAL MARYLAND PROSPERITY INVESTMENT FUND (RMPIF)



Ribbon Cutting Ceremony, Photo Courtesy of Eastern Shore Entrepreneurship Center

For the first time since its authorization in 2006, the Rural Maryland Prosperity Investment Fund received \$2 million in funding for targeted investment to promote economic prosperity in Maryland's traditionally disadvantaged and underserved rural communities. By sustaining efforts to promote rural regional cooperation, facilitating entrepreneurial activities and supporting key community colleges and nonprofit providers, the quality of life in rural Maryland can be advanced over the next several years.

The Rural Maryland Prosperity Investment Fund supports the Rural Maryland Council's activities and the Maryland Agricultural Education and Rural Development Assistance Fund (MAERDAF) which provides capacity-building funds to rural nonprofit service providers. It also supports the states' five regional councils, regional infrastructure projects, rural

entrepreneurship development, rural community development, and rural health care organizations.

The Rural Maryland Council (RMC) was pleased to receive \$2,167,000 in a General Fund Appropriation for RMPIF in Fiscal Year 2017. In FY 2017, the average grant amount was \$46,305.62. During FY 2017, a total of 43 applications were submitted with a total of \$3,279,377.47 requested. A total of 23 grants totaling \$1,389,166.00 were distributed to 23 organizations. Grants were focused to four areas: entrepreneurship, health care, infrastructure and regional councils.

RMPIF Entrepreneurship— Scopes of Work

Cecil County Government, Office of Economic Development— Award Amount: \$68,522.00

RMPIF funding hired a personnel and furnishings necessary to start the operations to develop and create a business incubation program in Cecil County, which will serve Harford, Kent and Cecil entrepreneurs.

Eastern Shore Entrepreneurship Center— Award Amount: \$66,808.00

RMPIF funding helped to make entrepreneurs and manufacturers more competitive and sustainable through the introduction of digital designs, virtual rendering, and rapid prototyping on Maryland's Eastern Shore. Funds were expended to support renovation of spaces for prototyping lab facilities, purchase of materials and supplies, and hiring of a Director of Digital Fabrication for Revolution Labs. Eleven new jobs related to digital fabrication on the Eastern Shore were created, \$135,000.00 of angel funds were invested in three start-ups, two new start-up companies were initiated, four new products were developed, and 60 people attended two Digital Design in Solid Works events.

Eastern Shore Innovation Center, Dorchester County— Award Amount: \$77,531

RMPIF funding provided financial assistance to construct a wet lab as a resource for businesses in the Eastern Shore. The facility greatly expanded the capability of the Eastern Shore Innovation Center to support the regional development of businesses in the biomedical technology world, as well as growth of a technically educated workforce. Examples of this have included a PhD Pharmacy student who has joined the co-working space to develop three lines of businesses which require a wet lab for product testing and developing a productivity tool in the laboratory research field, as well as a new procedure and consulting services to ensure the consistency of beverage production.

RURAL MARYLAND PROSPERITY INVESTMENT FUND (RMPIF)

Frederick Innovation Technology Center– Award Amount: \$77,528

RMPIF funding addressed the immediate physical needs of the FITCI facility along with the development of community outreach and marketing. This goal was accomplished by creating a shared biotech lab to accommodate new, promising, and emerging businesses, and revitalizing the facility.

Funds were used to Hire a BIOSafety Lab Technician and replace Autoclave, Centrifuge, PCR (Polymerase Chain Reaction) machine, and Ice machine with upgraded equipment.

Frostburg State University– Award Amount: \$6,500

RMPIF funds were used to conduct a feasibility study to determine the effectiveness of the University of Kansas Red Tire (Redefine Your Retirement) program and to determine how successful it is and if it can be replicated in Western Maryland. The study evaluated how many businesses would qualify for and what is needed for succession and exit planning in Western Maryland over the next five years, as well as to determine how many graduates would be interested in buying and operating an existing family business.

Maryland Rural Development Corporation– Award Amount: \$18,000

RMPIF funding allowed the Maryland Rural Development Corporation to expand the Circuit Rider Program by hiring an experienced circuit rider with the technical knowledge and connections to begin and develop an economic development program. The Circuit Rider Program has addressed the issues of poverty and town management in rural towns on the Mid-Shore and Western Maryland. This program was expanded to include business development assistance to the Eastern Shore towns of Barclay, Betterton, and Goldsboro.

Salisbury Area Chamber of Commerce Foundation/ Young Entrepreneurs Academy– Award Amount: \$10,000

RMPIF funds were expended to hire a Program Manager responsible for the management and coordination of the Young Entrepreneurs Academy (YEA!) Program and to hire instructors skilled in entrepreneurship and business consulting to teach fundamental skills needed to launch an enterprise. The program served young entrepreneurs in Wicomico, Worcester, Somerset, and Dorchester Counties. To date, a total of 23 students have participated in the program.

RMPIF Health Care– Scopes of Work

Affiliated Sante Group– Award Amount: \$41,784

RMPIF funding assisted with the expansion of the Eastern Shore Operations Call Center, a 24/7 crisis response service, including recruiting, hiring and training of an Operations Center Phone Counselor, increased number of out-going follow-up calls with clients and appropriate persons/organizations, increased number of incoming calls with clients who are in crisis, and increased client satisfaction surveys completed by the Operations Center.

This increased staffing assisted in the program's ability to provide intensive follow-up calls during evening hours when clients are typically home. Affiliated Sante achieved an increase of 81% over Fiscal Year 2016 in outgoing phone calls; calls from Fiscal Year 2016 to Fiscal Year 2017 increased by 95.5%, and 1,008 cases were closed.

Calvert Memorial Hospital– Award Amount: \$61,661

RMPIF funding supported the expansion of the Calvert CARES (Collaborative Activation of Resources and Empowerment Services) program to other regions of Southern Maryland. Calvert CARES is a discharge care clinic program that helps Calvert Memorial Hospital reduce re-admissions following a visit to the Emergency Department or an inpatient/outpatient/observation stay. 43 individuals were linked with a Primary Care Physician, and a partnership with the Community Life Center of Southern Calvert County was established.

RURAL MARYLAND PROSPERITY INVESTMENT FUND (RMPIF)

Delmarva Community Services, Inc.– Award Amount: \$58,263

RMPIF funding provided a handicap accessible vehicle to provide transportation for individuals who live in remote areas of the Eastern Shore (Kent, Talbot and Dorchester Counties) to better access healthcare and achieve a more normal lifestyle. Between July and December 2016, 400 door to door transportation services were provided for veterans. Between July and December 2016, 1,073 transportation trips were provided to individuals with mobility management issues to access vital health care appointments.

Eastern Shore & Western Shore Area Health Education Centers– Award Amount: \$51,282

RMPIF funds were used to rent and maintain two additional units in Dorchester and Frederick Counties to be utilized to house medical/pharmacy students, and residents and other health profession students, during their community-based clinical training as part of their formal educational programs. 15 students were placed within the housing unit for Fiscal Year 2017.

Garrett Regional Medical Center– Award Amount: \$25,404

RMPIF funds were used to support the operation of a Stop Smoking Program aimed for pregnant women, their families, and parents of children in the Garrett County Head Start program. Four parents were enrolled in the program.

SHORE UP!– Award Amount: \$14,454

RMPIF funding supported the Shady Pines Adult Medical Day Care, serving Somerset, Wicomico and Worcester Counties, and allowed the program to accept clients who have previously been denied service due to limited mobility and increased need of care.

West Cecil Health Center, Inc.– Award Amount: \$43,805

RMPIF funds assisted with the capital costs to outfit a new health access point in Elkton to address the need for additional primary care in the community. RMPIF funds were expended to purchase equipment for administrators, providers and exam rooms to furnish the new site in Elkton, Maryland, including exam tables, provider and patient chairs, office desks, and chairs.

Worcester County Health Department/Lower Eastern Shore Suicide Prevention Coalition– Award Amount: \$28,284

RMPIF funding increased and expanded suicide prevention measures among rural youth, ages 10-25, in Somerset, Wicomico, and Worcester Counties. RMPIF funds were expended to provide support for the Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training (ASIST), a five day training event. Ten individuals participated in the ASIST training in May 2017, and 28 were trained in June 2017

RMPIF Infrastructure– Scopes of Work

Town of Denton– Award Amount: \$48,000

RMPIF funds were used to connect the Town Hall currently located at 4 North Second Street, the Denton Police Department at 100 North Third Street, the Crouse Park Visitor and Heritage Center and the Public Works Facility at 504 Choptank to a new fiber network. The grant also was used to tie the phone system and servers between the Public Works Facility and the Town Hall.

Town of Myersville– Award Amount: \$59,000

RMPIF funding assisted in the construction of the Myersville Library. Specifically, the funds were used to ensure internet access to library users by supporting the installation of fiber optic cables for library patrons. RMPIF funds were expended to provide subcontracts for construction to provide for the installation of the fiber optic cables from the Myersville Elementary School to the Myersville Library to successfully provide internet services to the library.

RURAL MARYLAND PROSPERITY INVESTMENT FUND (RMPIF)



Photo Courtesy of Town of Preston

Town of Preston– Award Amount: \$76,675

RMPIF funding addressed the need to have the Town of Preston's Waste Water Treatment Plant upgraded to be brought into compliance with basic Maryland Department of the Environment requirements, as well as to provide the highest quality effluent possible based on the limits of technology. RMPIF funds were expended to provide for consultation services for final engineering and design of the waste water treatment plant to meet Enhanced Nutrient Removal (ENR) standards.

RMPIF Regional Councils– Scopes of Work

Mid-Shore Regional Council– Award Amount: \$111,133

RMPIF funds were used to initiate five projects including: 1). Eastern Shore Entrepreneurship Center (ESEC): ESEC will work with the Tri-County Council for the Lower Eastern Shore of Maryland (TCCLES) to financially assist the operations of ESEC in its delivery of technical and financial assistance to the startup and entrepreneur ecosystem; 2). Shore Gourmet/Chesapeake Culinary: to support the hiring of a Development and Education Director; 3). Agricultural GIS Extension: Work with TCCLES and Eastern Shore Regional GIS Cooperative (ESRGC) to create a Geographic Information System for family farms to develop mapping and spatial analysis projects; 4). Health Data Dashboard: Work with TCCLES and the ESRGC to create a tool that various parties working to support the health industry can have easily accessible data; and, 5). Education Data Dashboard: Work with ESRGC to create a tool to aid various parties to more easily examine, track, compare educational investment within their own and across jurisdictions.

56 entrepreneurs were mentored and coached during interim period, five start-ups developed business model canvases, and three start-ups participated in improved pitches and investor deck programs as part of the ESEC project. The Shore Gourmet Denton market officially opened for business on October 13, 2016. The Agricultural GIS Extension was presented to 30 attendees at the Small Farms Conference. Mock-ups of the Health Data and Education Dashboards have been developed.

Tri-County Council for the Lower Eastern Shore– Award Amount: \$111,133

RMPIF funding was used to support six projects, including: 1). Agriculture Dashboard: Support local farmers with mapping and data analysis, and build support capacity for local farmers by partnering with regional extension services; 2). Health Data Dashboard: Build a functioning, robust health data dashboard; 3). Eastern Shore Entrepreneurial Center: Plan, organize and execute a number of events and activities that elevate skills and understanding for startup entrepreneurs; 4). Project Opportunity: Develop marketing materials and upgrade website; 5). Free Rides for Veterans: Increase Veteran ridership of Shore Transit; and, 6). Summer Youth Employment: Supplement existing regional summer youth employment programs.

The Tri-County Council for the Lower Eastern Shore successfully provided an increase in 1,600 free transportation rides for veterans. In addition, the Council provided a stipend placement for 20 youth in Somerset, Wicomico, and Worcester Counties for youth employment.

RURAL MARYLAND PROSPERITY INVESTMENT FUND (RMPIF)

Tri-County Council for Southern Maryland– Award Amount: \$111,133

RMPIF funding was used to support four projects including, 1). Project Open Doors: Provides self-employment training, one-on-one counseling and business planning support to eligible participants; 2). 6th Annual Nine Innings of Networking Regional Hiring Event: A job fair for relieving conditions of unemployment and underemployment; 3). Southern Maryland JobSource Website: Provides a workforce service platform for jobseekers in Southern Maryland; and, 4). Healthcare Transportation Design Thinking Project: Guides community stakeholders through the Design Thinking process to develop and test innovative solutions aimed at improving access to healthcare while overcoming provider coordination barriers and leveraging existing transportation resources.

The Tri-County Council for Southern Maryland hosted a successful “Catch of the Day” Regional Hiring Event in June 2017. 72 businesses and 1,100 individuals participated in the event. Project Open Doors enrolled 10 individuals, eight completed the program and launched a new business.

Tri-County Council for Western Maryland– Award Amount: \$111,133

RMPIF funding were used in conjunction with funding from the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development/Appalachian Regional Commission’s Appalachian Economic Development Initiative to enhance the operation of the Tri-County Council of Western Maryland loan fund program, Summit Financing Solutions, to better serve the needs of the business and entrepreneurial community, and provide technical assistance for companies to acquire professional services that will enhance their business and their opportunity for securing required financing.

To date, the Tri-County Council of Western Maryland has received 32 inquiries for loans, and nine loan applications. As of the time of the interim report, two loans were approved and four remained in process.

Upper Shore Regional Council– Award Amount: \$111,133

RMPIF funding was used to support 1). The Eastern Shore Harvest Directory: a six-county business marketing and support project; 2). Expand the METS Guild youth project: a youth workforce development training project specializing in three training areas, GIS, Web Design and Development, and Virtualization/Gaming, in partnership with Washington College; and, 3). Further developing and expanding the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) to include planning and strategizing for a business incubator with regional access.

RURAL MARYLAND FOUNDATION

The Rural Maryland Foundation has partnered with the Center for Rural Entrepreneurship to conduct a Transfer of Wealth Study (TOW) for Rural Maryland. America's communities are struggling to find the financial resources necessary to support community and economic development. Traditional sources, such as government funding, is stagnant or declining. In this environment, possibly the single largest underdeveloped resource is community-based philanthropy fueled by capturing some portion of the TOW opportunity.

TOW is an estimate of American household wealth from which charitable giving could be realized. The draft analysis and research yields a conservative estimate of TOW, discounting wealth that is unlikely to be available for charitable giving.

A final report is estimated to be complete by fall 2018 with the project moving into the next phase which will include developing strategies for promoting local charitable giving, as well as encouraging local investing.

The Foundation also continued hosting screenings of the movie Farmland. A viewing was held on October 20, 2016 in the Town of Thurmont. Plans are underway for the production of a follow-up video to *Rural Aspirations*, production of the video is set to begin in spring 2018.

The Foundation has been instrumental in supporting the RMC's goals and projects. For example, when the RMC identified a lack of credit for young and beginner farmers, the RMC, with Foundation support, helped create the Maryland Agricultural and Resourced-Based Industry Development Corporation, also known as MARBIDCO.

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The Rural Maryland Foundation is a 501(c)(3) organization formed in 2001 to support the work of the Rural Maryland Council. All contributions to the Foundation are tax deductible and may be sent to: Rural Maryland Foundation, Post Office Box 1544, Annapolis, Maryland 21404. More information on the Foundation can be found at: ruralmdfoundation.org.



October 2016 Farmland Screening in Thurmont, Frederick County, MD

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Dusk in Stevensville, Kent County, MD

