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Press Release

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Rural Maryland Council Announces Fiscal Year 2022 Grant Recipients

The Rural Maryland Prosperity Investment Fund (RMPIF) supports Rural Maryland Council’s activities including the Maryland Agricultural Education and Rural Development Assistance Fund (MAERDAF), and the State’s five Regional Councils. RMPIF is designed to facilitate significant targeted investments in important economic and community development programs and promote regional and intergovernmental cooperation. MAERDAF provides capacity building grants to rural serving nonprofit organizations and community colleges that promote statewide and regional planning, health care, economic and community development, and agricultural and forestry education.

Total Requested:	141 Applications	\$11,180,214
Total Awarded:	59 Grants	\$6,150,000

Rural Maryland Prosperity Investment Fund: 29 Grants = \$5,239,212

Rural Maryland Council: 1 Grant = Disbursement: \$500,000

Awardee	Total Award
Rural Maryland Council	\$500,000

Founded in 1994, the Rural Maryland Council (RMC) serves as the state’s federally designated rural development council and functions as a voice for Rural Maryland - advocating, educating, and helping rural communities and businesses across the state to flourish and to gain equity to its suburban and urban counterparts. The Council administers the RMPIF and MAERDAF grant programs. Additionally, the Council conducts research activities to understand rural challenges and outreach to engage rural residents in developing solutions to these challenges and convenes groups to identify solutions through consensus and coalition building.

RMC operates under the direction of a 40-member Executive Board in a nonpartisan and nondiscriminatory manner. The Council’s vision is a future where all of Rural Maryland is prosperous with thriving resources, vibrant economies, and healthy, connected communities. The organizational goals are to:

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

Regional Councils: 5 Grants = Disbursement: \$2,000,000

One-third of RMPIF supports the State’s five regional councils:

Awardee	Total Award
Tri-County Council for Western Maryland	\$400,000
Tri-County Council for Southern Maryland	\$400,000
Upper Shore Regional Council	\$400,000
Mid-Shore Regional Council	\$400,000
Tri-County Council for the Lower Eastern Shore	\$400,000

Regional Council activities funded through RMPIF, include:

- Equity lending
- Transportation software and systems
- Regional agricultural development and education
- Economic and small business development activities
- Rural economic research

Examples of projects funded include the following:

- The **Tri-County Council for Western Maryland** has developed a successful lending program for small businesses and entrepreneurs in their region, named *Summit Financing Solutions*. This program uses Federal, State, and local dollars to operate a number of loan funds that allow the Council to provide gap-financing and direct lending.
- The **Tri-County Council for Southern Maryland** directs the Skillup® Southern Maryland, which is a program designed to help their region build a workforce ecosystem that supports positive economic development. Through this program and wraparound Federal supportive services, job seekers can explore career pathways, view local job postings, register for free online learning, and receive workforce services. Employers can search for qualified candidates, post jobs, and receive in-depth consulting to address hiring and training needs.
- The **Upper Shore Regional Council** will continue to support the Upper Shore Career Technical Liaison position and program for Kent and Queen Anne’s County. As well as provide micro grants that allows teachers and mentors to assist high school seniors graduating from qualifying technical programs in their region to purchase the necessary tools and equipment to begin at their career.
- The **Mid-Shore Regional Council** will fund the People for Change Coalition, Inc. to implement a summer career enrichment program for middle school students in partnership with the Dorchester Career and Technology Center. The Youth Cyber Security Program is designed to lead to career paths in computer science, engineering, and project management.
- The **Tri-County Council for the Lower Eastern Shore** will co-sponsor the Worcester County Skilled Trades, Agriculture, Technology and Tourism Internship Program (WSTAT-IP). This is a work-based learning experience that provides high school students and recent graduates from Worcester County paid internships that focus in the STATT sectors.

The RMPIF grant program has three focus areas-**Health Care, Entrepreneurship, and Infrastructure**. In FY2022, this program received 56 applications totaling \$6,231,452 in requests. Of these requests, 23 grants totaling \$2,739,212 were awarded.

RMPIF Health Care: 12 Grants = \$966,449

Awardee	Total Award
Allegany County Human Resources Development Commission	\$60,000
Channel Marker, Inc	\$125,000
Corsica River Mental Health Services, Inc.	\$7,500
For All Seasons, Inc.	\$72,225
Fort Ritchie Community Center, Inc.	\$25,000
Garrett County Memorial Hospital DBA Garrett Regional Medical Center	\$143,000
Health Partners Inc.	\$129,300
Maintaining Active Citizens, Inc.	\$50,000
TidalHealth	\$125,000
Tri-County Council for Southern Maryland	\$87,500
University of Maryland Shore Regional Health at Chestertown	\$125,000
Women Supporting Women, Inc.	\$16,924

RMPIF Entrepreneurship: 5 Grants = \$647,763

Awardee	Total Award
Frederick Innovative Technology Center, Inc.	\$160,000
Maryland Small Business Development Center, Northern Region at Harford Community College	\$142,763
People for Change Coalition	\$70,000
The Greater Cumberland Committee	\$175,000
University of Maryland Eastern Shore-Department of Agriculture, Food and Resource Sciences	\$100,000

RMPIF Infrastructure: 6 Grants = \$1,125,000

Awardee	Total Award
End Hunger in Calvert County	\$250,000
Fair Hill Foundation	\$50,000
It Takes a Village to Help Our Children, Inc.	\$200,000
Maryland Rural Development Corporation	\$25,000
Town of Rising Sun	\$300,000
United States Bomb Technician Association	\$300,000

Maryland Agricultural Education and Rural Development Assistance Fund: 30 Grants = \$910,788

The MAERDAF grant program has five focus areas-**Agricultural and Forestry Education, Community and Economic Development, Rural Broadband, Energy, and Youth Engagement**. In FY2022, this program received 79 applications totaling \$2,448,763 in requests. Of these requests, 30 grants totaling \$910,788 were awarded.

MAERDAF Agricultural and Forestry Education: 6 Grants = \$133,140

Awardee	Total Award
Allegany College of Maryland	\$40,000
Chesapeake Culinary Center	\$13,000
LEAD Maryland Foundation, Inc.	\$30,000
Maryland Agricultural Education Foundation	\$10,390
Steam Onward, Inc.	\$13,450
Western Maryland Resource Conservation and Development Council	\$26,300

MAERDAF Community and Economic Development: 19 Grants = \$608,633

Awardee	Total Award
Bay Community Support Services, Inc.	\$27,200
Beach to Bay Heritage Area	\$40,000
Catoctin Furnace Historical Society, Inc	\$40,000
Chesapeake Bay Maritime Museum	\$34,535
Chesapeake Housing Mission Inc.	\$30,000
Community Mediation Maryland	\$40,000
Evergreen Heritage Center Foundation	\$25,000
For All Seasons, Inc.	\$38,682
Forever Maryland Foundation	\$28,600
Garrett College	\$40,000
Habitat for Humanity Choptank, Inc.	\$29,202
Habitat For Humanity of Wicomico County, Inc.	\$40,000
Heart of the Civil War Heritage Area, Inc.	\$20,000
Maryland Rural Development Corporation	\$40,000
Mid-Atlantic Gigabit Innovation Collaboratory	\$15,414
Mid-Shore Pro Bono, Inc.	\$21,000
The Greater Cumberland Committee	\$40,000
Western Maryland Resource Conservation and Development Council	\$40,000
Western Maryland Resource Conservation and Development Council	\$19,000

MAERDAF Energy: 2 Grants = \$62,000

Awardee	Total Award
Adkins Arboretum	\$40,000
Forest Glen Commonwealth, Inc.	\$22,000

MAERDAF Youth Engagement: 3 Grants = \$107,015

Awardee	Total Award
Maryland Association for Environmental and Outdoor Education	\$30,000
Preservation Maryland	\$37,015
The Parents' Place of Maryland	\$40,000

For More Information, visit the RMC website: www.rural.maryland.gov