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Press Release

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Rural Maryland Council Announces Fiscal Year 2025 Grant Recipients

“The Rural Maryland Council is immensely grateful to the Moore Administration and the Maryland General Assembly for this crucial funding that supports vital opportunities for rural communities across the State.”

-Susan O'Neill, Board Chair

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

The Rural Maryland Council was allocated level funding at over \$9,000,000 in the Fiscal Year 2025 budget. The Council experienced a \$2.25 million budget reduction to their competitive grant programming this past July, which made grant decisions extremely difficult.

Total Requested	204 Applications	\$19,834,402
Total Awarded	65	\$6,129,837

Regional Councils: 5 Grants = \$3,000,000

Per Statute, one-third of the RMPIF fund is distributed to the State’s five rural regional planning and development councils:

Awardee	Total Award
Mid-Shore Regional Council	\$600,000
Tri-County Council for the Lower Eastern Shore	\$600,000
Tri-County Council for Southern Maryland	\$600,000
Tri-County Council for Western Maryland	\$600,000
Upper Shore Regional Council	\$600,000

Regional Council activities funded through RMPIF, include:

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

Rural Maryland Prosperity Investment Fund: 34 Grants = \$2,367,451

The RMPIF grant program has three focus areas- **Entrepreneurship, Infrastructure, and Rural Health**. RMPIF Entrepreneurship includes Workforce Development, Cooperative Development and Agricultural Development. In FY2025, this program received 88 applications totaling \$13,460,262 in requests. Of these requests, 34 grants totaling \$2,367,451 were awarded.

RMPIF Entrepreneurship (includes Workforce Development, Cooperative Development, and Agricultural Development): 11 Grants = \$817,542

Awardee	Total Award
Chesapeake Flower Exchange	\$55,432
Allegany College of Maryland	\$250,000
Asian American Center of Frederick	\$27,580
Cecil College	\$66,261
Frostburg State University - Office of Regional Development & Engagement	\$119,625
Maryland Rural Water Association	\$63,000
Shore Legal Access	\$89,344
Stella's Girls Inc	\$30,000
The Benedictine School for Exceptional Children Foundation Incorporated	\$37,300
The Patuxent Partnership	\$29,000
Vehicles for Change, Inc.	\$50,000

RMPIF Infrastructure: 6 Grants = \$739,621

Awardee	Total Award
Easton Day Care Center, Inc dba Critchlow Adkins Children's Centers	\$300,000
Kent County Commissioners	\$100,000
Meritus Healthcare Foundation	\$199,596
St. Mary's Nursing Center	\$80,000
Town of Williamsport	\$42,525
Washington County Department of Business Development	\$17,500

RMPIF Rural Health: 17 Grants = \$810,288

Awardee	Total Award
Bay Community Support Services, Inc.	\$50,000
Caring Carroll Inc	\$45,000
Channel Marker, Inc	\$50,000
Chesapeake Housing Mission Inc.	\$22,500
Coalition for a Healthier Frederick County	\$74,202
Family & Children's Services of Central Maryland DBA Springboard Community Services	\$50,000
For All Seasons, Inc.	\$45,000
Fort Ritchie Community Center, Inc.	\$34,000
Friends Aware, Inc.	\$30,000
Habitat For Humanity of Wicomico County, Inc.	\$131,795
Hospice of Chesapeake	\$75,000
Ivy and Pearls of Southern Maryland Community Charities, Incorporated	\$8,500

Partners In Care Maryland, Inc.	\$37,500
Salisbury Fire Department SWIFT	\$13,791
The Jude House	\$28,000
University of Maryland School of Medicine	\$75,000
Westminster Rescue Mission	\$40,000

Maryland Agricultural Education and Rural Development Assistance Fund: 26 Grants = \$762,386

The MAERDAF grant program has five focus areas-**Agricultural and Forestry Education, Community and Economic Development, Energy, Rural Broadband, and Youth Engagement and Leadership Development**. In FY2025, this program received 111 applications totaling \$3,374,140 in requests. Of these requests, 26 grants totaling \$762,386 were awarded.

MAERDAF Agricultural and Forestry Education: 6 Grants = \$169,400

Awardee	Total Award
Appalachian Farm and Food Alliance	\$24,900
Evergreen Heritage Center Foundation	\$22,500
Forever Maryland	\$13,000
LEAD Maryland Foundation, Inc.	\$35,000
Maryland Nursery, Landscape, and Greenhouse Association, Inc.	\$39,000
The Greater Cumberland Committee	\$35,000

MAERDAF Community Development: 11 Grants = \$381,600

Awardee	Total Award
Chesapeake Culinary Center	\$45,000
Community Mediation Maryland	\$35,000
Frostburg Fire Department No. 1, Inc.	\$45,000
Habitat for Humanity Choptank, Inc.	\$45,000
Habitat for Humanity Susquehanna	\$45,000
Interfaith Housing Alliance	\$25,000
MidShore Meals til Monday	\$38,100
Rebuilding Together Kent County	\$45,000
Salisbury Neighborhood Housing Services	\$45,000
The United Covenant Union	\$3,500
Washington County Historical Society, Inc.	\$10,000

MAERDAF Economic Development: 4 Grants = \$106,191

Awardee	Total Award
Beach to Bay Heritage Area	\$22,911
Building African American Minds, Inc	\$44,000
Germantown School Community Heritage Center	\$27,280
Heart of the Civil War Heritage Area, Inc.	\$12,000

MAERDAF Energy: 0 Grants = \$0.00

MAERDAF Youth Engagement & Leadership Development: 5 Grants = \$105,195

Awardee	Total Award
Alpha Genesis Community Development Corporation	\$21,000
Chesapeake Audubon Society-Pickering Creek Audubon Center	\$17,700
Harford County 4-H Clubs, Inc	\$34,995
The Child and Family Foundation (1 Year to Empowerment)	\$6,500
Western Maryland Area Health Education Center (dba AHEC West)	\$25,000

Rural Maryland Council: Operating Budget - \$750,000

Organization	Funds Utilized
Rural Maryland Council	\$750,000

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 Rural Maryland Prosperity Investment Fund (RMPIF) and the Maryland Agricultural Education and Rural Development Assistance Fund (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.