



# Montgomery County Family Justice Center

VOLUME 2, ISSUE 2

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## SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

**FJC EXPANDS  
WITH NEW  
ONSITE  
PARTNERS**

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## From the Desk of Director Arthur Wallenstein, DOCR

It is an honor as well as a critical obligation to step forward and offer comments on the public policy issue of domestic violence. The Corrections perspective is often neglected around the country, for it is assumed that once a perpetrator is arrested and/or incarcerated the process is over. Nothing could be further from the truth. In such one dimensional systems danger resides close at hand. The issue of domestic violence involves every element and every organizational structure within the criminal justice, health and human services, abused persons, victims' advocacy and services, public safety, and neighborhood organizational systems. If any element or organizational structure is not operating, the potential for reoffending, victim trauma, court proceedings failure or other serious error is acutely possible. Time and time again we have learned the importance of methodical attention to detail in every single element of engaging and confronting the insidious problems and dangers of domestic violence in our community.

A single missed accountability phone check on an offender, an unchecked missed appointment by a victim in a community support plan, failing to load contact information in VINE, a missed court

appearance or any other system component can create havoc, violence and even loss of life. How sobering it is for us to remember the potential impacts of failing to engage a single element of our accountability program in the field of domestic violence.



The Montgomery County Family Justice Center is centrally located in the heart of Rockville, Maryland.

DOCR through its Pre-Trial Supervision Unit monitors over 170 accused/pretrial domestic violence defendants in the community. These individuals are free on bail, but close attention to their behavior to the degree possible in any community supervision system is an essential but often unknown and unheralded element in the domestic violence system. Skilled and veteran domestic violence focused Pre-Trial Case Managers take a no nonsense approach to persons in this category. DOCR considers those domestic violence defendants approved by the Courts for pre-trial release to be the single most dangerous group under our supervision given the

nature of domestic violence offending. Weeks of perfect community behavior can be shattered in a micro second and every element of the system needs to come together through all of our communication links to provide safety for the specific victim and all related family members.

The Family Justice Center (FJC) is now providing not simply a physical point of service delivery, but a conceptual and organizational continuum bringing all elements of the domestic violence process in close proximity to other elements. Since the day the Family Justice Center opened for business, our attention to the issues of domestic violence has been infinitely more sensitive and focused toward proactive service delivery – not simply responding to events that have already taken place. FJC is now an icon for proactive engagement of cases in progress, situations that can lead to domestic violence and program planning and advocacy to dramatically diminish this often quiet and hidden disease that is a part of our community. The domestic violence system can never rest and the FJC continues to bring us together with great collaboration, skills and determination.

Arthur Wallenstein  
Director



Probation Agents Boyd, Rudden and Crow at the FJC.



Pre-Trial Services Case-worker Ben Stevenson and Corporal Mike Chuckerel collaborate on an offender's case.

*As we Celebrate our 2nd Anniversary, the Montgomery County Family Justice Center has provided lifesaving services to 2700 domestic violence clients and their children.*

## New Partnerships Target Offender Accountability

We welcomed both the Montgomery County Department of Correction and Rehabilitation (DOCR) and the Maryland Division of Parole and Probation (P&P) as new on site partners at the Family Justice Center this year. Although both departments have long been working with the FJC agencies, the partnership was cemented by providing DOCR and P&P their very own space at the Center. The agents come over on a weekly basis to get access to files from the prosecutors, meet with the legal assistants, and review the evidence such as pho-

tos to get a fuller picture of the incident. Oftentimes the information on the four corners of a document will not give the full dimension of the crime, so this collaboration is vital. The agents frequently work concurrently with the State's Attorney's Office (SAO) to file for violations of release conditions, giving judges more complete information on which to base a decision.

This on-site working relationship allows monitoring from arrest through disposition and has increased communication between PTSU, the SAO and P&P.

Sharon Trexler, Chief of Pre-Trial Services, praised the closer working relationship. "The Pre-Trial Services Division has benefited greatly from the collaboration and unfailing support which we have received from the Family Justice Center. We have been able to have defendants who pose an imminent danger to partners and family members quickly served with warrants charging them with violation of bond conditions. We truly appreciate our valuable partnership with the Family Justice Center."

## First Book Montgomery Donates a Collection of Books for Young Adults to the FJC

The MCFJC aims to create a comfortable and positive memory for every child who comes to the FJC. A take-away item in the form of a cuddly stuffed animal or a good book to read is always a part of the experience for each and every child. Thanks to a recent donation of new books from First Book Montgomery County, teens that come to the FJC will have the opportunity to choose from a great collection of books like Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets, The Hobbit and Sisterhood of the Traveling Pants.

First Book of Montgomery County is part of an international nonprofit organization. Since 2001 the Montgomery County Chapter has brought the magic of books to thousands of children in our community. First Book's mission is to provide new books to children in need, addressing one of the most important factors affecting literacy— access to books.



Tanya Lee, Chair of First Book Montgomery County delivers a collection of young adult books to the FJC.

First Book depends on community involvement to generate public awareness and funding exclusively for books. It then reaches out to community programs serving children with the greatest needs and supports these programs through book grants and donations.

The FJC is pleased to partner with First Book and assist with putting new books in the hands of children who need them the most.

## Choose Respect Conference Raises Awareness Among Teens and Parents

“I am worth respect!” That was a survey response from a 16 year-old female who attended the 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Choose Respect Montgomery Teen Dating Conference. The conference, sponsored by the Domestic Violence Coordinating Council (DVCC), the Takoma Park Campus of Montgomery College and numerous County agencies and organizations, is held to promote respect in dating relationships and raise the community’s awareness about the prevalence of teen dating violence. Approximately 160 teens, parents and youth workers attended the one day conference and participated in workshops throughout the day on topics related to healthy and unhealthy dating behaviors and misuse of technology in dating rela-

tionships.

The event commenced with welcoming messages from the Honorable Marielsa Bernard and Donna Rismiller, a member of the Domestic Violence Coordinating Council, followed by a presentation of a Teen Dating Violence Proclamation to the DVCC by Councilmember Phil Andrews. Attendees were then entertained by City at Peace DC, a performing arts youth development organization that tackles teen issues through creative acting performances.

Inspirational speakers, Bill Mitchell from the Kristin Mitchell Foundation and Ana Valdez, effectively conveyed through their personal stories the devastating impact that teen dating violence has had in their lives. Bill Mitchell,

showed a touching video of his daughter Kristin and spoke of his daughter’s abusive relationship that ended in her murder, just after her college graduation. Ana Valdez shared her poem “Angels” which depicts her later teen years in a severely abusive relationship with the father of her children that could have ended in her death. Her poem credits several individuals or “Angels” who were there at just the right time to prevent that fatal outcome.

Following afternoon workshops, the conference ended with the appearance of Hot 99.5 DJ Toby Knapp who wrapped up the day by handing out raffle prizes and reinforcing the message that teens have the power to “Choose Respect” in their relationships.

## Save the Date!

### Montgomery County Elder Abuse Awareness Day, Wednesday June 15, 2011

The Montgomery County Elder/Vulnerable Adult Abuse Task Force is partnering with Asbury Methodist Village in Gaithersburg for the first annual “World Elder Abuse Awareness Day” on June 15, 2011. The event is planned to coincide with others commemorating “World Elder Abuse Awareness Day” to raise awareness of the increasing, yet rarely-reported, problem of elder abuse, neglect, and exploitation. This is the 6<sup>th</sup> year this day has been globally dedicated as World Elder Abuse Awareness Day. A proclamation dedicating “Montgomery County Elder Abuse Awareness Day” will be presented by Councilmember Phil Andrews.

Elder abuse is growing at a rapid rate. In 2005, Montgomery County reported one confirmed case of abuse. By 2010, the number of confirmed cases had risen to 17. To illustrate the alarming under-reporting of elder abuse, the National Association of Adult Protective Services (NAPSA) cites a recent New York State study

that found that for every one case of abuse reported to a protective agency such as adult protective services, law enforcement, prosecutors’ offices, victim services agencies, domestic violence programs, and aging services providers, approximately 44 cases went unreported. The disparity for neglect cases was even more dramatic—approximately 57 unreported cases for every one that reaches a protective agency.

The Task Force is composed of the following County organizations, all of whom have responsibility for protecting the elderly: the Montgomery County Police/Family Crimes Division, the Ombudsman Program, Adult Protective Services in DHHS, Licensure and Regulatory Services, and the Office of the State’s Attorney.

The Montgomery County event will be part educational/outreach, part street fair, and part tribute to abuse victims. It will open with a registration for the “Walk for Awareness,” a ceremonial, 10-minute walk to call atten-

tion to the problem of elder abuse and to those who have been victims of abuse. The day will include refreshments; educational booths and exhibits; and demonstrations by various County services, such as the Police Field Command Bus and a K-9 unit. Representatives of organizations will also be on hand for consultation about the various ways they can assist elders.

In attendance will be members of the County Council, the Chief of Police, the Director of DHHS, the State’s Attorney, and the County Sheriff among others.

**WHEN:** Wednesday June 15, 2011 from 1:30 PM -4:00 PM

**WHERE:** Asbury Methodist Village, Rosborough Cultural Arts & Wellness Center, 409 Russell Avenue, Gaithersburg MD 20877.

MONTGOMERY COUNTY  
FAMILY JUSTICE CENTER



# Family Justice Center Foundation News

## FJC FOUNDATION BOARD MEMBERS

- Resa Levy  
President
- Donna Rismiller  
Vice President &  
Secretary
- Dorothy Fait  
Treasurer
- Marilyn Bagel
- David Belkin
- David P. Cohen
- Thomas M. DeGonia II
- Catherine Leggett
- Lewis Selis

## FJC FOUNDATION ADVISORY BOARD MEMBERS

- The Honorable  
Sharon Grosfeld
- The Honorable  
Constance A. Morella
- Rabbi David Rose
- The Honorable  
Ida G. Ruben

## Foundation President's Welcome



*Resa Levy  
FJC Foundation  
President*

In just a few short days, the MCFJC and the MCFJC Foundation will celebrate their Second Anniversary. During these past two years, several things have occurred - our three initiatives the Lawyer's Initiative, Community Initiative and Business Initiative - have each been fully integrated into our program of activities by the Foundation Board, Advisory Board and Committee Members. We held our First Annual Benefit. Moreover our board member and second year event Chair, Catherine Leggett and her committee, are well along in the planning stages of our Second Annual Benefit.

We have launched our new Lifeline Campaign which is our annual giving campaign to help support the work of the MCFJC. We have continued to support others within our County who are working hard to help raise awareness about healthy relationships for our teens, providing printed materials for first responders, speaking at various community groups and organizations to help raise awareness about the MCFJC, and working to engage the business community in our work.

We are successful because of your help and support and we hope we can continue to count on you in the year ahead. It truly does "Take a Village," and you folks, are our village.

Resa Levy  
MCFJC Foundation

## Serious Business

DV is serious business and the Business Initiative Committee of the MCFJC Foundation is taking seriously its outreach to the business community-at-large.

At the end of last month, board member and co-chair of the Initiative, David Belkin and Resa Levy, through the support and effort of committee member Michael Richardson, Vice President of Community Relations, Mid-Atlantic Federal Credit Union, made a presentation about the MCFJC Foundation and the work of the MCFJC, to more than thirty members of the area asso-

ciation of Human Resource directors and leaders at their monthly breakfast meeting.

That presentation has garnered interest in participation by several local and regional area companies, retail businesses and district area managers who want to find ways to participate as well as distribute materials about the MCFJC.

More business activity is planned. Please check our website for additional information at

[www.mcfjcfoundation.org](http://www.mcfjcfoundation.org).

## The Gift of Warmth



Angela Ballard-Landers, Community Relations Coordinator at WSSC delivers winter items to the FJC.

Sadly every winter as the temperature drops, families arrive at the FJC without sufficient warm clothing for the season. This year, employees from the Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission had a "Gift of Warmth" drive to collect dona-

tions of brand-new gloves, mittens, scarves, hats and socks for children and adults. The children are especially delighted to be able to pick out something new for themselves. One young boy picked a hat for himself and another for his new teddy bear.

### Mark Your Calendars!

#### MCFJC Foundation 2nd Annual Benefit-Sunday, October 2, 2011

Amazing silent and live auction items have already been donated and you could be a lucky winner!

A quick-paced, fun and poignant evening is already being planned for you. So get ready, set and plan on going to the Hilton Rockville for an exciting event coming your way on Sunday, October 2, 2011.

Under the capable leadership of board member and Event Chair, Catherine Leggett, the MCFJC Foundation's 2nd Annual Benefit, "Keeping them Safe, Giving them Hope....And a New Start,"

promises to be an incredible event.

Do you have season tickets to a local sporting event? A condo at the beach or mountains? If you'd like to help support the women, children and families who benefit from the work of the MCFJC, we would welcome your tax deductible participation. To find out more, as well as how to become a sponsor, check out our website at [www.mcfjcfoundation.org](http://www.mcfjcfoundation.org) or email [mcfjcfoundation@yahoo.com](mailto:mcfjcfoundation@yahoo.com) or contact Resa Levy at 301-509-6832.

*MCFJC Foundation*

*Annual Honorees*

*have just been*

*selected. Check our*

*website in the next*

*couple of weeks to*

*see who the*

*fabulous winners*

*are this year!*

## Lions and Tigers and Bears, Oh My

There is no greater pleasure than putting a smile on a young child's face or providing comfort to a child in need. The Eta Pi Zeta chapter of Zeta Phi Beta Sorority did that many times over with their generous donation of stuffed animals through the Build a Bear Workshop Program. The young Archonettes and Amicettes who participated in the workshop created 55 lions and tigers and bears for distribution as gifts to the children at the FJC. The participants were Alexis Lovett, Audrey Mathas, Brandi Howard, Chantel Lenhardt, Joycelyn Akamune, Kendra Howard, Korah Schuppius, Lael Boone, Rachael Sutherland, Rachel How-

ard, Selah Schuppius, and Uriahana Amos.

Through their gifts these talented young women demonstrated the goals and the ideals of their sorority. Zeta Phi Beta Sorority Incorporated, founded on the campus of Howard University on January 16, 1920, is a community-conscious, action-oriented, historically Black Greek lettered organization. The sorority's principles are scholarship, service, sisterly love and finer womanhood. The Eta Pi Zeta chapter was founded November 11, 1973 and has been serving Montgomery County for over 30 years. Their mission is to empower and assist the Montgom-



From L to R: Jessica Jones (Zeta), Kemah Gbolokai (Zeta), Thomas DeGonia MCFJC Foundation Member, Joycelyn Akamune (Youth Member), Audrey Mathas (Youth Member), Uriahana Amos (Youth Member), Quajalyn Amos (Zeta).

ery County community through involvement in community service. The Family Justice Center welcomes this partnership.

# Our Special Thanks to the Following New and Continuing MCFJC Foundation Sponsors

**Thank you to our Wonderful Donors!**

*It is through your gifts that we are able to provide the social, legal, psychological, and protective services necessary to rebuild the lives of the women, children and families who have survived domestic and relationship abuse.*

**Community Partner**

**Community Advocate – Gold**

**Community Advocate – Silver**  
National Association of Women Judges

**Community Friend**

Adventist HealthCare  
Anonymous Donor

**Community Supporter**

Montgomery County Maryland Chapter of  
Jack & Jill of America, Inc.

Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc.,  
Theta Omega Omega Chapter

Montgomery County Commission for Women

Potomac Valley Alumnae Chapter of

Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc.

Silver Spring Chapter of Links, Inc.

We're on the Web:

[www.montgomerycountymd.gov/fjc](http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/fjc) & [www.mcfjcfoundation.org](http://www.mcfjcfoundation.org)

## “Lifeline Campaign” – Every Gift Matters!

Our “Lifeline Campaign” is the MCFJC Foundation’s on-going giving opportunity to help fund the lifeline of services provided by the MCFJC to the women, children and families who come to the FJC seeking aid and support.

Every gift - no matter how large or small – can truly make a difference. A small gift, leveraged together with other gifts, can help to save a life!

Please send your gift of \$10, \$25, \$50 or more to: MCFJC Foundation, PO Box 10692, Rockville, MD 20849. Or donate online at [www.mcfjcfoundation.org](http://www.mcfjcfoundation.org).

***You may just help save a life!***

### LIFELINE CAMPAIGN

Your gift helps provide a lifeline....

Without the MCFJC’s “one-stop-shop” lifeline of services, domestic violence victims would have to visit as many as 20 separate agencies. Your gift to the MCFJC Foundation truly is a lifeline!

Please print and tear out this form and send it with your gift to: The MCFJC Foundation  
PO Box 10692, Rockville, MD 20849 or go online  
to make your secure donation at  
[www.mcfjcfoundation.org](http://www.mcfjcfoundation.org). Thank you!

***Yes! I’m happy to help give a “Lifeline.” Please find my gift enclosed.***

\_\_\_\$25    \_\_\_\$50    \_\_\_\$75    \_\_\_\$100    \_\_\_\$250    \_\_\_Other

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_ Cell (opt) \_\_\_\_\_