



Montgomery County Family Justice Center

VOLUME 9, ISSUE 1

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

Meet the new FJC Spring Interns!	2
Holidays Donations	3
Teen Dating Violence Initiative	4
From the Desk of MCFJC Foundation Executive Director, Resa Levy	5
From the Desk of MCFJC Foundation President, Tom DeGonia	6
Safe Start	6
Allstate Purple Purse Challenge	7
DVS Legal Services	7
Thank you to Our Sponsors	8
8th Annual Benefit	9
Courage Lions	9
Dine at Chipotle!	9

Contributors

Sheriff Darren Popkin
Cheryl Kravitz
Resa Levy
Kristy Smith Warren

Editors

Smita Varia

From the Desk of Sheriff Darren Popkin



Every year, I watch our community come together in support of our Family Justice Center (FJC), and this support comes in so many forms. Whether it's donating brand new toys and stuffed animals, bringing in essentials like umbrellas and winter coats, hand-knitting hats, scarves, and mittens for children, or donating money for grocery store gift cards, the residents of Montgomery County care for their neighbors, and will help in whatever ways they can to ease the suffering of those experiencing violence in their homes. It is this community support that makes Montgomery County such an incredible place to live, and on behalf of everyone at the FJC, we are humbled by your kindness and generosity.

As we approach the FJC's ninth anniversary, and nearly 10,000 victims served, we are reminded that much work remains to be done. The 2017 fiscal year saw a 10% increase in Protective Order filings over the previous year. Research tells us that 1 in 4 women and 1 in 7 men have been victims of severe physical violence by an intimate partner in their lifetime, so in a County of more than 1,000,000 people, it is critically important that we have adequate resources to respond to these incidents as they arise. In addition to responding, we must

also utilize prevention efforts to break the cycle of violence for good.

In the coming year, we will continue to encourage our teenagers to be respectful and engage in healthy relationship behaviors. The 9th Annual Choose Respect Conference will be held on Sunday, April 15, 2018 from 12:00pm – 4:30pm at Richard Montgomery High School. Students, parents, youth service providers and educators



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

will participate in separate, interactive, age-appropriate workshops to discuss important issues related to domestic violence such as the warning signs of abuse, the effects of dating violence, and what to do if you or someone you know is being abused by a dating partner. I would encourage any and all of you to attend this important event, which will include free food, raffle prizes, and much more. The Choose Respect Initiative also offers free, in-person, interactive presentations on dating violence throughout the year that fit into a standard class period. Any inquiries and/or presentation requests can be directed to DVCC Program Manager Smita Varia at

Smita.Varia@montgomerycountymd.gov. This critical prevention initiative is managed by the Montgomery County Domestic Violence Coordinating Council (DVCC) and funded by Verizon through its partnership with the Montgomery County Family Justice Center Foundation.

New to Montgomery County's safety net for victims of domestic violence is the Safe Passage Center (SPC). Conveniently located in Rockville, the SPC provides supervised visitation and monitored exchange services for Montgomery County families. Too often, we see child exchanges end in conflict, harassment, and even violence, so the SPC is a welcome and exciting addition to the wide array of support available in our County to keep families safe.

To all of those who worked tirelessly nine years ago to make the FJC a reality, to those who continue to provide their ongoing support, and to those FJC staff who work day after day to keep our community safe, you have my sincerest gratitude. Wishing a joyous, healthy, and above all, a safe 2018 to all.

--
Darren M. Popkin
Sheriff



Meet the FJC Spring Interns!



Valeria Erazo joins the FJC during the Spring semester as a Client Services Intern. She is majoring in Psychology at the University of Maryland Baltimore County-Shady Grove. She is a compassionate person who likes to help others. Through her psychology background, she will serve as support for those who need it. She decided to join the FJC to assist those who may not know about the great services available to them. After graduation, she hopes to continue to help victims of domestic violence and advocate for them.



Natalie Parker joins the FJC during the Spring semester as a Client Services Intern. She is currently a student at the University of Maryland Baltimore County and is studying Psychology and Spanish. Her goal is to work with the FBI after Graduate School and hopes that this internship will give her a foundational understanding of violence and crime in the community. She also hopes this internship will help her practice her conversation and listening skills as well as give her a chance to practice her Spanish in the real world.



Meaghan Kirby joins the FJC during the Spring semester as a Legal Services Intern. Meaghan is a senior at American University, majoring in Literature with minors in Spanish and Political Science. She wanted to work at the FJC to learn more about helping individuals and families through the variety of programs that the FJC offers. She is interested in learning how to educate the community about family law and domestic violence. She hopes to eventually pursue a degree in law and continue giving back to the community.



Beatrice Boateng joins the FJC during the Spring semester as the Domestic Violence Coordinating Council Intern. She is currently studying Health Administration Public Policy specializing in Public Health and minoring in Sociology at the University of Maryland Baltimore County. Beatrice joined the FJC with the aim of educating people about domestic violence and making people more aware of resources available to curb this menace in our society. Additionally, she hopes to acquaint herself with the techniques and procedures of identifying and assisting victims of domestic violence. Beatrice is interested in pursuing a master's degree in Public Health.

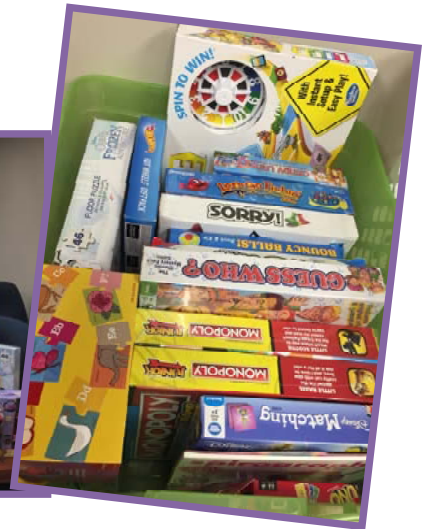
**If you are interested in becoming a volunteer or intern
at the FJC, send an email to
mcfjcvip.montgomerycountymd.gov@outlook.com
for more information**

Holiday Donations

Throughout the year, the Family Justice Center receives many donations for the families we serve. We would like to thank the following for their donations during the holiday season:



Aiden Kacedon
Akhmedova Ballet Academy
American Sewing Guild, Maryland Chapter, Rockville Morning Pinups
Malouf and Associates
Montgomery College, Office of Human Resources
Montgomery County Bar Association, New Practitioners Section
Town of Chevy Chase
Verizon



Domestic Violence Coordinating Council's Choose Respect Montgomery Initiative

The Domestic Violence Coordinating Council's mission is to reduce the incidence of domestic violence and create a safe community for families to live free of abuse. One of the initiatives to achieve this mission is Choose Respect Montgomery. Choose Respect Montgomery includes four programs: an annual conference for teens, their parents, educators, and youth service providers; a public service announcement video contest for teens; Expect Respect—the healthy teen dating curriculum presented in the County's middle and high schools and Coaching Boys Into Men, which utilizes the unique role of coaches in the lives of young male athletes to teach them to be respectful both on and off the field.

The Choose Respect Conference:

The Choose Respect Committee is already working hard on the 2018 Choose Respect Conference. The conference will be held on Sunday, April 15th from 12 pm to 4:30 pm at Richard Montgomery High School. The conference is for 6th—12th graders, their parents, educators and youth serving providers. There will be a resource fair with community organizations represented, an opening session, workshops, raffle prizes and food. The students who attend will receive Student Service Learning Hours. Registration will open in March 2018.

Save the Date!
Choose Respect
Sunday, April 15th
12 pm to 4:30 pm
Richard Montgomery HS

The PSA Contest:

Students are asked to create a 60 second video PSA addressing emotional, verbal, financial, or technological abuse. The first place prize is \$1,000, with 2nd and 3rd prize getting \$750 and \$500 respectively. The winners of the annual PSA contest will also be announced at the conference.



The contest is now open! Please tell any teens you know to enter today! The rules and submission form are at www.montgomerycountymd.gov/fjc/chooserespect.html.

Expect Respect:

The Expect Respect Presentations, approved by Montgomery County Public Schools, are 45 minute in class presentations for 8th—12th grade students. Through interactive discussion, videos and activities, students learn about dating violence, warning signs, and how to help a friend. They also hear about the resources available to get help. This semester, the facilitators have already reached over 1,800 students!

Coaching Boys Into Men:

The Domestic Violence Coordinating Council is working with Montgomery County Public Schools to implement Futures Without Violence's program Coaching Boys Into Men (CBIM). CBIM is a free toolkit that utilizes the unique and important role that coaches play in the lives of young men. These comprehensive tools assist coaches in planning important discussions with athletes about respect for women and girls, and that violence doesn't equal strength. Through CBIM, male athletes learn skills to avoid violence and abuse in their relationships. The football teams at Springbrook High School, Montgomery Blair High School, Richard Montgomery High School and Northwest High School are implementing the program, in addition to Magruder High School's Weight Room classes. If you are interested in bringing CBIM to your school, please email Smita Varia at smita.varia@montgomerycountymd.gov.

Montgomery County
Family Justice
Center Foundation



Sustaining Domestic Violence Survival
Funding Services | Creating Partnerships

**FJC FOUNDATION
BOARD MEMBERS**

- Thomas M. DeGonia II
President
- Dorothy Fait
Treasurer
- Marilyn Bagel
- David Belkin
- Judith Clark
- Joel Cundick
- Casey W. Florance
- Ari Ghosal
- Cheryl Kravitz
- Catherine Leggett
- Melanie Ortel
- Amy Shaw Palumbo
- Jo Ann Ricchiuti
- Lewis Selis

**FJC FOUNDATION
ADVISORY BOARD
MEMBERS**

- The Honorable
Constance A. Morella
- The Honorable
Ida G. Ruben
- The Honorable
Duchy Trachtenberg
- Maura Lynch
- Hannah Sassoon

STAFF

- Resa Levy
Executive Director
- Kristy Smith Warren
Program Manager

Family Justice Center Foundation News

From the Desk of Executive Director, Resa Levy



Resa Levy
MCFJC Foundation
Executive Director

Dear Friends,

A New Year brings a renewed energy to the work of the MCFJC Foundation. As we begin the year, we are proud to continue to play a role in helping to raise awareness, educate our youth, and support survivors of domestic violence.

Our work on behalf of the Family Justice Center is more important than ever during the current climate of increased attention and discussion about how women and all people should be treated. Supporting our youth programs, Stop the Bully – Montgomery, Choose Respect Montgomery and Club P.R.O.V.I.D.E. are critical to engaging, informing and educating our youth. We continue to collaborate with our partners and sponsors while also seeking new

partnerships to further build our programs.

Much of our success is because of the unwavering commitment from our partners. In this issue of the newsletter, we hope you will enjoy reading about many of our supporters, our hugely successful partnership with the Allstate Foundation and the Purple Purse campaign, and our successful 8th Annual Benefit.

Your time, talent and financial commitment is integral to ensuring the Foundation's continued presence in the community. Your support allows us to further enhance the outstanding efforts of the Montgomery County Family Justice Center.

Together, we can continue to save lives.

—

Resa Levy
Executive Director
MCFJC Foundation

**MONTGOMERY COUNTY
FAMILY JUSTICE CENTER**

From the Desk of MCFJC Foundation President, Tom DeGonia II



Thomas DeGonia
MCFJC
Foundation
President

Now that 2017 has come to a close, I want take the opportunity to thank all of our generous and caring donors and supporters who helped us support domestic violence survivors by funding important services and creating partnerships throughout our community. With your support, the Foundation was able to provide programs that reached thousands of women, children and families this past year.

The survivors who chose to share their stories in 2017 has been deeply moving. As more conversations about the impact of domestic abuse surface, it becomes clear that our efforts are critical and there is still more to accomplish. The road to the safety, survival

and sustainable life free from abuse still remains a challenge for many.

That is why our work is so important. Our youth programming is central in helping to break the cycle of domestic violence. Thousands of middle and high school students have participated in MCFJC Foundation's programs; Stop the Bully-Montgomery, the Choose Respect Montgomery Conference and attended the Expect Respect Presentations focusing on teen dating violence.

Knowing that 99% of abuse victims return to their abuser for financial reasons, the Foundation has developed and will soon introduce a new Financial Literacy project, designed to educate and inform women and girls about how financial literacy can help sustain a healthy life.

2017 brought the beginning of some stunning cultural changes. This year, we will be working with the business community to address the impact of domestic violence on the workplace.

We hope that you will continue to support our critical life-saving efforts. You have made a difference. Thank you in advance for your support.

With every best wish for a happy, healthy and safe New Year for you and your dear ones,

Tom

Tom DeGonia, President
MCFJC Foundation

To learn more, please see our website at www.mcfjcfoundation.org.

Safe Start... Breaking the Cycle of Violence

The MCFJC Foundation continues its critical partnership with Montgomery County's Safe Start program. This multi-faceted partnership provided through Chesapeake Counseling continues to provide enhanced psychological services for children who have witnessed domestic violence at home.

The generosity of the Montgomery County Recreation Department in partnership with the Foundation's "Send a Kid to Camp" project enabled Chesapeake Counseling to select twenty-one children from Safe Start to attend the County's Summer Day Camp program. More children are expected to participate in 2018.

Chesapeake Counseling therapists also work with the staff from the Montgomery County Sheriff's Office and the Office of the State's Attorney to present Expect Respect— a dating violence program under the Domestic Violence Coordinating Council— to middle and high school students. In 2017, Expect Respect was presented to over 2,300 students. This interactive school program addresses healthy and unhealthy relationships, different types of violence and provides community resources.



The Allstate Purple Purse® Challenge



Margaret Mead once said “Never underestimate the power of a few committed people to change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has.” Thanks to the commitment of our team at the Montgomery County Family Justice Center Foundation, we raised almost \$6,000 for domestic violence awareness programs. This amount will be partially matched by the Allstate Foundation. The MCFJC Foundation was one of more than 220 nonprofit organizations urging the public to support survivors of domestic violence and raising awareness around financial abuse during The Allstate Foundation Purple Purse® Challenge, which took place in October.

On an average day in 2016, 12,000 requests from domestic violence and financial abuse survivors for services such as childcare and rent went unmet across the country. In Montgomery County, the Family Justice Center has served over 9,000 people since 2009.

In 99 percent of domestic violence cases, victims will experience financial abuse. Financial abuse is when an abuser denies their partner access to money and financial resources to live their life. It is another way for the abuser to control their partner, and leaves them with no financial means to leave an abusive relationship. Without resources of their own, victims are often unable to care for themselves and their families, find employment and housing, or save for the future.

As part of the challenge, we received a purple purse from the Allstate Foundation designed by tennis champion and Purple Purse ambassador, Serena Williams. The Board of Directors decided to present the purse to the team member who raised the most money. Congratulations to Cheryl Kravitz (pictured with Executive Director Resa Levy), who engaged the newest team members and raised the most money.

Helping to support the survivor through their legal challenges

Survivors of abuse often report that financial abuse has been one of the types of abuse they have suffered. Therefore, while the abuser may have access to funds, the survivor does not, which leaves many survivors without an option to leave an abusive relationship because they have no way of supporting themselves or their children. Given the fragility of the survivor at this critical time, legal representation may make the difference between the survivor wishing to leave the relationship or staying.

The MCFJC Foundation, aware of the critical nature of providing legal assistance, raises funds to help support its partnership with DVS Legal Services. DVS Legal Services is then able to provide critical pro bono and lo bono legal services to survivors. Since the inception of the Foundation’s Legal Initiative, and the establishment of our “Clearinghouse” approach to engaging legal partners, 1,569 protective order cases have been monitored.

Since September 2016, DVS Legal Services has provided an attorney for 139 protective order cases, prepared an additional 9 cases where an attorney was not available in the quick turn-around time needed, and assisted other attorneys in another 3 cases. Additionally, we are excited that there is a new referral partner for the Clearinghouse from the Jewish Coalition Against Domestic Abuse. DVS has provided legal assistance in approximately 323 cases - either with direct representation, referrals to other attorneys or pro bono organizations or general/specific legal advice.

If you wish to help support survivors through their legal challenges, either through a donation or to provide legal services, please contact Resa Levy, Executive Director, MCFJC Foundation, at 301-509-6832 or resalevy@gmail.com.

We Wish to Thank Our Wonderful Sponsors

LEADERSHIP CIRCLE

Montgomery County
Verizon

COMMUNITY BUILDER – GOLD

William E. Cross Family Foundation

COMMUNITY BUILDER –SILVER

William J. Shaw Family Foundation
The Friends and Family of Katrina Weir

COMMUNITY PARTNER

Enterprise Holdings Foundation
GEICO Philanthropic Foundation

COMMUNITY ADVOCATE- GOLD

Ethridge, Quinn, Kemp, McAuliffe, Rowan and
Hartinger Law Group
Fait and DiLima

Fitzgerald Auto Malls

Catherine and Ike Leggett

Marianne and Aris Mardirosian Charitable
Family Foundation

Platinum CFO

PEPCO an Exelon Company

Rismiller Law Group LLC

Santos and Postal

Stein Sperling Bennett De Jong Driscoll PC

COMMUNITY ADVOCATE – SILVER

Aa'ila Foundation

Alicia Doherty

Georgetown Paper Stock

Hunton & Williams LLP

Montgomery County Sheriff's Office

Sanford and Doris Slavin Foundation

Trawick Foundation

Victims' Rights Foundation

Women's Bar Association of Montgomery County

FRIENDS OF THE FOUNDATION

Jo Benson Fogel

Hon. Duchy Trachtenberg

IN-KIND DONATIONS

Marilyn Bagel, Writer

Panera Breads

Women Who Care Ministries

8th Annual Benefit Sold Out Again!

By all accounts, the MCFJC Foundation's 8th Annual Benefit for the Montgomery County Family Justice Center was a huge success! Under the leadership of Chairwoman Catherine Leggett, friends, family, colleagues, supporters and sponsors, all gathered together to recognize Honorees John McCarthy, Tom DeGonia, Debbie Feinstein, Greg Wims and Bar-T and the Richardson family for their respective leadership in working to end domestic violence in our community.

Our extraordinary thanks go out to the MCFJC Foundation Board of Directors, our stellar Benefit Committee, and the multitude of volunteers, including teen Club P.R.O.V.I.D.E. and the Bar-T family of supporters, who helped before and during the event.

We want you! If you would like to join the Benefit Committee for the 9th Annual Benefit Committee we would love for you to join this outstanding team of dedicated committee members. Please contact Kristy Warren at klwsmith@gmail.com or the foundation at mcfjcfoundation.org@gmail.com.

SAVE THE DATE: MCFJC Foundation's 9th Annual Benefit - Sunday evening, October 21, 2018

We would like to send a special thanks to the Montgomery County Chapter of the Women's Bar Association of Maryland for hosting their Fall Charity get together to benefit the MCFJC Foundation. Dozens of attorneys donated funds that allow the MCFJC Foundation to purchase Courage Lions for the Safe Start therapy program. Safe Start is a program for children who have been exposed to violence in their families. Duffy, the Courage Lion, is a cuddly therapeutic animal used to enhance communication, while reducing anxiety and fear.



Support the MCFJC Foundation by eating out at Chipotle!

SCHOOL SPIRIT TASTES GREAT



Make dinner a selfless act by joining us for a fundraiser to support the Montgomery County Family Justice Center Foundation. Come to in to the **Chipotle at 7101 Democracy Blvd Spc FC16 in Bethesda on Monday, January 29th between 4:00 pm and 8:00 pm.** Tell the cashier you're supporting the cause to make sure that 50% of the proceeds will be donated to the Montgomery County Family Justice Center Foundation.



Online orders will not be included in the fundraiser total. To ensure your purchase is counted in the fundraiser, be sure to order and pay in-restaurant. Gift card purchases during fundraisers do not count towards total donated sales, but purchases made with an existing gift card will count.