



# Montgomery County Family Justice Center

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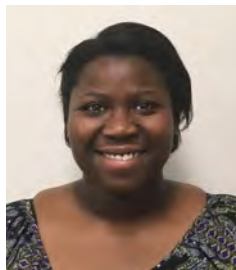
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### Editor

Smita Varia

## From the Desk of Brandy Cannon, Esq., Managing Attorney, House of Ruth Maryland



For over 40 years, House of Ruth Maryland (HRM) has fought to end violence against women, men, and

their children by confronting the attitudes, behaviors and systems that perpetuate it, and by providing victims with the services necessary to rebuild their lives safely and free of fear. Over the years HRM has become one of the nation's most comprehensive domestic violence organizations. HRM offers shelter and emergency housing services, counseling services, abuser intervention outreach and training and legal services, including criminal court accompaniments. In Montgomery County HRM offers both legal and counseling services.

As manager, I oversee our legal practice in Montgomery County. In Montgomery County, HRM has two Protective Order Advocacy and Representation Project (POARP) offices, located in the Silver Spring District Courthouse and the Rockville Circuit Courthouse. Since 2009, HRM has worked with the Montgomery County Family Justice Center (FJC) to achieve the FJC's mission to promote the safety, well-being, and healing for victims of family violence.

The partnership between the FJC and HRM's POARP staff has allowed thousands of victims of intimate partner violence to receive the necessary services in a safe, confidential, and supportive space. HRM POARP staff provide free legal representation to victims of intimate partner violence seeking civil protective orders and legal advocacy services at the FJC. In addition to protective order representation, some clients also receive representation in their family



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

law cases through HRM. Each victim that HRM POARP staff works with receives assistance creating a safety plan to make sure the victim and their children are safely escaping violence. Many of the victims HRM POARP represents are referrals from the FJC.

The FJC is equipped with technology, including, on-site video conferencing for Temporary Protective Order hearings, allowing clients added security when they decide to file for protection from their abusers. Victims are given the opportunity to meet free of charge with lawyers and advocates who will assist them in completing Petitions for Protective Orders.

One such client was "Naomi." She went to the FJC because her husband of fifteen (15) years was abusing her for most of their marriage, even while she was pregnant with each of their four children. Naomi was able to come to the FJC and speak with a HRM attorney who advised her about protective orders and helped her complete a Petition for a Protective Order. She was able to use the FJC video technology to obtain a Temporary Protective Order. HRM represented Naomi in her Final Protective Order hearing where she was granted an order for one year.

Like many victims, she had tried several times before to leave her abusive husband, but because of the support she received from HRM and the FJC, she was finally able to safely move on with her life. HRM is currently representing Naomi in her family law case, and continues to support her in her healing process.

Sadly, the healing process for clients does not start and end with court. In addition to legal services, HRM has free counseling services available on-site at the FJC. POARP attorneys often refer clients to other partner organizations for collateral legal issues. HRM is privileged to be one of the FJC on-site partners working to end intimate partner violence.

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**Brandy Cannon, Esq.  
Managing Attorney,  
House of Ruth Maryland-  
Montgomery County POARP**

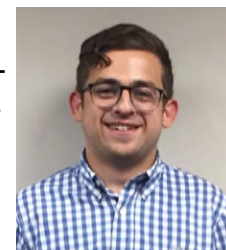
## Meet the FJC Summer Interns!

**Bria Wade** joins the FJC during the Summer as a Client Services intern. She is from New Jersey and a rising senior at Georgetown University. She is majoring in African American Studies and minoring in Education, Inquiry and Justice. She was drawn to the work of the FJC because of its holistic approach to providing support to not only survivors, but also their family members who are impacted. This intersects with her passion of facilitating community healing spaces for marginalized groups. She plans to attend law school after graduation in order to become an agent in fixing America's education and criminal justice systems.



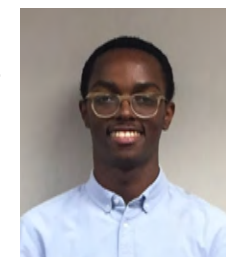
**Ashley Dumais** joins the FJC during the Summer semester as a Client Services Intern. She is currently in a BA/MSW program at Boston College, majoring in Applied Psychology and Human Development with a minor in Medical Humanities and a Children, Youth, and Families concentration. The safety, well-being, and healing of families affected by domestic violence is something she feels strongly about. Through the FJC internship, Ashley hopes to apply her knowledge of social work and gain a better understanding of the processes involved in helping victims of family violence, so she can continue advocating for them in the future.

**Brent Fischbein** joins the FJC as Summer Client Services Intern. He is a senior majoring in Criminal Justice at Indiana University Bloomington. He decided to join the FJC to learn the skills to assist people who are victims of domestic violence. With his Criminal Justice background, he aspires to help people within his community, specifically those affected by domestic violence and the current opioid crisis.



**Natalie Gobrial** joins the FJC this summer as a Client Services intern. She is currently a student at the University of Maryland, College Park and is pursuing a degree in psychology. She has a passion for helping others, which led her to find interest in the FJC due to their overall goal and purpose of advancing the well being of others. She joins the FJC this summer in hopes to learn more about how to support those affected by domestic violence and aid them in order to obtain the services they need. When she graduates, she hopes to pursue a career that promotes the safety, well-being, and healing of others.

**Devin Williams** joins FJC during the summer as a Legal Services Intern. Devin is a rising senior at the University of Maryland College Park majoring in economics with a minor in Law and Society. He wanted to work at FJC to learn about how he can help domestic violence victims and the wide variety of programs that FJC offers. Devin plans on pursuing a law degree after his undergraduate career and hopes this internship will help him discover more ways to give back to members of the community.



**Joanna Wolfram** joins the FJC during the summer as a Legal Services Intern. She is currently a senior at the University of Maryland, majoring in Government and Politics with a concentration in International Relations and a minor in Arabic. Joanna is currently writing her thesis on crimes against humanity and international courts. Because of this, she wants to work at FJC to better understand the plights faced by families in her own community and the legal avenues in place to help those in need find safety and justice. Joanna hopes to attend law school in the future.

**If you are interested in becoming a volunteer or intern at the FJC, send an email to [mcfcvip@gmail.com](mailto:mcfcvip@gmail.com) for more information**

# Choose Respect Montgomery

On Sunday, April 15th, nearly 500 students, parents, public officials, educators, youth service providers, and volunteers attended the 9th Annual Choose Respect Montgomery Conference. Held at Richard Montgomery High School, teens and adults alike walked the pre-conference red carpet and posted selfies with friends and honored guests using #respectyourselfie2018. They were able to learn about different youth serving organizations at the Resource Fair, while listening to live music by School of Rock, Silver Spring. iHeartRadio's Toby Knapp (97.1 WASH FM) served as the emcee for the opening session. The opening plenary included a powerful testimonial from a dating violence survivor and a student advocate. The opening session also unveiled the winners of this year's Public Service Announcement (PSA) Video Contest. Out of 138 entries from 21 schools and 2 organizations, "Text Me Back, K?," submitted by a group from Wootton High School took first place. Congratulations! The other winners include the students from Tryka Film Coalition (2nd Place), Sherwood High School (3rd Place), Richard Montgomery High School (Honorable Mention and Fan Favorite), and the Girl Scouts (Honorable Mention). The conference was able to offer two different workshop choices for students in High School - It's Not Love® by the Jewish Coalition Against Domestic Abuse, and ByStander Intervention by TurnAround, Inc. There were also workshops for students in middle school, Parents, and Providers. The Choose Respect Conference Planning Committee would like to thank all planning members, committee chairs, partners, staff, and volunteers who made this event possible. We hope you will join us in 2019 for another great event!

Choose Respect is an initiative of the Montgomery County Domestic Violence Coordinating Council. It is made possible with funding from the Montgomery County Family Justice Center Foundation through a generous grant from Verizon, and is co-sponsored by Montgomery County Public Schools. Other sponsors include iHeartRadio, JCADA, School of Rock, and Zoomph.





## Sexual Assault Awareness Month

Every 98 seconds, a person in the United States is the victim of a sexual assault. In honor of Sexual Assault Awareness Month, the Montgomery County Sexual Assault Response Team (SART) hosted "An Evening to Listen & Learn" on April 10th at the Universities at Shady Grove in Rockville. The powerful evening included a testimonial from a sexual assault survivor as well as a vigil to honor all victims of sexual violence. SART is a multi-disciplinary team dedicated to making Montgomery County a place where victims can receive immediate comprehensive services, coordinated outreach, and assistance following a sexual assault or rape.



## Domestic Violence Related Bills

Here are some of the domestic violence bills that were passed during this year's legislative session:

### HB 388/SB 170 - Criminal Procedure - Violation of Conditions of Release

This bill makes violation of a pretrial no contact order a crime. By making violation of release conditions a separate crime, it enables law enforcement to arrest a defendant for violating his/her conditions of release, including to stay away from the victim.

### HB 1303/SB 491 – Family Law – Domestic Violence – Permanent Protective Orders

This bill expands the current permanent protective order statute to include any crime, not just one of the enumerated crimes, and applies even if the crime was not the act of abuse that led to the issuance of the protective order.

### HB 30/328/SB 121 – Family Law – Domestic Violence – Definition of Abuse

This bill was amended to expand the way abuse is defined in a protective order statute to include revenge porn.

### HB 102 – Family Violence – Seizure of Lethal Weapons – Lethal Violence Protective Order ("Red Flag Bill")

This bill creates a mechanism to allow a petitioner to file for a lethal violence protective order if s/he believes the respondent poses an immediate and present danger of causing personal injury or injury to others due to the accessibility of a firearm. If granted the lethal violence protective order would require the respondent to surrender his/her firearms.

## Thank you!

The Family Justice Center would like to thank the following groups and people for the stuffed animals, toys, books, toiletries, water, and supplies we are able to give the survivors and their families when they receive services at the center:



American Sewing Guild, MD Chapter, Rockville Morning Pin-Ups  
Group Bar-T  
Hungerford's Tavern Chapter - DAR  
MoCo Moms Demand Action for Gun Sense in America  
Two Men and a Truck



Montgomery County  
**Family Justice  
Center Foundation**



Sustaining Domestic Violence Survival  
Funding Services | Creating Partnerships

# Family Justice Center Foundation News

## 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
- Lewis Selis

## FJC FOUNDATION ADVISORY BOARD MEMBERS

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

## STAFF

- Resa Levy  
Executive Director
- Kristy Smith Warren  
Program Manager

## From the Desk of Executive Director, Resa Levy



**Resa Levy**  
MCFJC Foundation  
Executive Director

**“Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it's the only thing that ever has.”**  
Margaret Meade

Dear Friends,

Our theme for this year's 9th Annual Benefit is “This is a different time. Rise up!” Speaking out about relationship abuse through the #metoo movement and holding people accountable for their actions, has finally come into the social consciousness of the entire country.

Because when we speak out together, the abused have a louder voice. Let's continue to speak out against the violence!

The Foundation's programs and initiatives support the critical, life-saving work of the Family Justice Center. Our donors and partners help turn wishes into action, funding our youth programs such as the Choose Respect Montgomery annual healthy teen dating conference and the Expect Respect healthy teen dating curriculum. In addition, our Financial Literacy program

introduces fundamental financial concepts about how financial circumstances impact life decisions.

Our Business and Community Initiative partners provide funds for many different programs. Through this initiative, we are able to provide emergency transportation for families fleeing domestic violence and offer a six-week summer day camp through the Send-A-Kid to camp initiative. We also raise funds for emergency care kits filled with health care essentials for survivors and families, and provide non-perishable foods for clients who come to the FJC for services.

We hope you will join us for our 9th Annual Benefit, “This is a different time. Rise Up!” Sunday evening, October 21st, from 5:00-8:30 pm at the Hilton Hotel, 1750 Rockville Pike in Rockville as we recognize our outstanding Montgomery County Family Justice Center Foundation's 2018 Honorees detailed in another article in this newsletter and at [www.mcfjcfoundation.org](http://www.mcfjcfoundation.org).

Please feel free to contact me at [resalevy@gmail.com](mailto:resalevy@gmail.com) or 301-509-6832 for further information.

Resa

## From the Desk of MCFJC Foundation President, Tom DeGonia II



Thomas DeGonia  
MCFJC  
Foundation  
President

Dear Friends,

10,000 clients have come through the doors of the Family Justice Center since it opened nine years ago, in May 2009.

They receive help with their immediate safety, and then continued to come for on-going assistance and support necessary for them to live secure and sustainable lives free from violence.

Businesses and community partners have supported, encouraged and sustained the work of the Foundation in its efforts to further strengthen the work of the Family Justice Center. At our Benefit each year we recognize just a few of those whose efforts have gone above and beyond.

At the MCFJC Foundation's 9th Annual Benefit, we will recognize the following outstanding honorees:

The Marilyn J Praisner Founders Award is given to those who have supported the establishment and/or the implementation of the FJC and the FJC Foundation either through their actions or verbal support. This year's Founders Award honorees are the Honorable Isiah and

Catherine Leggett, each for their individual and joint support in not only establishing the Center, but for their years of personal commitment to its success.

The Forerunner Award honoree this year goes to one of the earliest architects of legislation surrounding domestic violence. She saw the need to create a nationwide effort to address the issue of domestic violence, and who until this day is active in the movement through her work as a college professor and member of the Foundation's Advisory Board, the Ambassador Connie Morella.

The Foundation's Board Member, Marilyn Bagel, is the recipient of the MCFJC Foundation's 9th Annual Benefit's Inspiring Leader Award. Marilyn is a founding Board member of the MCFJC Foundation, has brought her creativity, style and critical thinking to the work of the Foundation, led and inspired us all, and helped craft our message.

Our Community Partnership Award is a marvelous example of how we can all work together to outreach to the next generation and create change. The Universities of Shady Grove, under the guidance of Dr. Stewart Edelstein is one of the recipients

this year. The other award goes to Margo Hopkins, a teacher at Winston Churchill High School and three students: Shayna Gutridge, Brookie Rosenbauer from Winston Churchill High School, and Jessica Kaplan, a student from Walter Johnson. They worked together to create our outstanding youth group program called Club P.R.O.V.I.D.E., a club who raises awareness with the teens in our community.

The 9th Annual Benefit will be on October 21st from 5:00-8:30 pm at the Hilton Hotel, in Rockville, Maryland. To learn more about how you can support our honorees and the work of the Foundation, please visit the Foundation's website at [www.mcfjcfoundation.org](http://www.mcfjcfoundation.org) or contact our Executive Director at [resalevy@gmail.com](mailto:resalevy@gmail.com) or 301-509-6832.

See you on October 21st at the Foundation's 9th Annual Benefit. Congratulations to all!

Tom

Tom DeGonia, President  
MCFJC Foundation

## Community Initiative - Speakers Bureau

MCFJC Foundation Board President Tom DeGonia, and Board Members David Belkin and Melanie Ortel are speaking around the county to raise awareness on domestic violence in the community and how it not only takes place in the home, but can be brought into the workplace.

Millions of dollars are spent each year because of the lost productivity due to domestic violence. Yet, many companies do not have a policy in place that addresses domestic violence and their employees.

If you are interested in having a speaker from the Montgomery County Family Justice Foundation come to your business, please contact Resa Levy at [resalevy@gmail.com](mailto:resalevy@gmail.com).

## Financial Literacy

Board members Dodie Fait and Joel Cundick are outreaching to various communities with a program that teaches various aspects of financial literacy. According to the National Coalition Against Domestic Violence, "Up to 99% of domestic violence victims experience economic abuse during an abusive relationship, and finances are often cited as the biggest barrier to leaving an abusive relationship." The Foundation created this program hoping that greater understanding about financial issues can influence important life decisions.

The program is multi-faceted and reaches both teens and older vulnerable populations. Each program addresses budgets, gross and net income, the difference between needing something and wanting something and having a credit card. By arming survivors with the knowledge about finances and money, the hope is that they will be empowered to leave the violent relationship and sustain their lives independently.



MCFJC Foundation Board Member Joel Cundick teaches the importance of financial literacy to Churchill High School students.



Make sure you stay updated with all of the Foundation's Initiatives and News by visiting the Family Justice Center Foundation Website and on Twitter and Facebook!





# Save the Date for the

## MONTGOMERY COUNTY FAMILY JUSTICE CENTER FOUNDATION'S 9TH ANNUAL BENEFIT



Sunday, October 21st, 2018  
5:00-8:30 PM at the Rockville Hilton  
"This is a Different Time. Rise up!"  
Atrium Cocktail Hour  
Silent Auction and The Purple Shoppe  
5:00pm – 6:30pm

Awards Program & Dinner in the Ballroom  
6:30pm – 8:30pm

### HONOREES

INSPIRING LEADER AWARD - MARILYN BAGEL  
FOUNDER'S AWARD- HONORABLE ISIAH AND CATHERINE LEGGETT  
FORERUNNER AWARD- HON. CONNIE MORELLA  
COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP AWARD - UNIVERSITIES OF SHADY GROVE &  
WALTER JOHNSON & WINSTON CHURCHILL CLUBS P.R.O.V.I.D.E

For more information about the Benefit or to congratulate the honorees go to our website  
[www.mcfjcfoundation.org](http://www.mcfjcfoundation.org)

Helping more than 10,000 victims of domestic violence become survivors since 2009