
Strategic Planning Meeting
Monday, September 9, 2024
AGENDA

5:00 PM	Dinner – <i>everyone is encouraged to eat during the introductory presentations</i>
5:10 PM	Meeting opens (Varun Dhawan)
5:15 PM	Welcome remarks (Chelsea Andrews)
5:20 PM	Icebreaker (DaVida Rowley-Blackman)
5:30 PM	Report on HOC Academy programs (Stephanie Moore)
5:35 PM	Summary of proposed programs/target populations (DaVida Rowley-Blackman)
5:40 PM	Latest research on cradle-to-career programming (Niambi Powell)
5:55 PM	Explanation of discussion session (John Vass) <i>Discussion will focus more on process.</i>

6:00 PM	Discussion (50 minutes in total)
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Today's Discussion: The questions under each strategic phase are meant to facilitate a robust discussion. Please offer a variety of suggestions on how to complete each strategic phase in a way that elevates our programmatic approach from a 2-generation model to a cradle-to-career model in alignment with HOC's equity core value and industry best practices.

1. Research & Customer Engagement Phase (Years: 2024-2025)

Does the latest industry research support our proposed model? How can we validate HOC customer needs/wants? How can we use HOC customer feedback to guide our program design?

Program Design Phase (Years: 2025-2026)

How do we design programs that meet customers' expectations while staying within program guidelines from funders? Where and how do we implement the programs? How do we ensure that the design facilitates the expected impact?

2. Fundraising Phase (Years: 2025-2027)

How much money will we need for the programs? How do we identify the funding sources that fit best for our programs? What is the best way to engage with foundations, sponsors, and individual donors? What are the discretionary funding priorities?

3. Implementation (Years: 2026-2029)

What plans are needed to begin implementation? Do we seek contractors and/or use HOC staff to implement? How can we best coordinate the implementation of new programs with our current programs? What priorities do we establish?

Impact and Evaluation (Years: 2027-2029)

What outcomes measurements can we reasonably expect given the resources, capacity, and structure of HOC/P? What tools do we use to measure impact? What key performance indicators (KPI) are realistic? Which KPI are beyond our capacity?

4. HOCP Organizational Goals

How can we ensure potential supporters/investors know about our work? How do we expand our funding streams? What is our capacity for outreach? Who would be interested in HOC and HOCP? How do we improve the HOCP Board? How can board members become more engaged in programming? Making decisions – does our current practice work?

6:50 PM *Discussion on next steps – writing, draft reviews, approval process*

7:00 PM Adjourn

Introduction

In response to the devastating spread of Coronavirus (COVID-19) globally and the subsequent federal, state, and local government Stay at Home Orders, RSD suspended in-person programs in March of 2020 (FY20). RSD staff quickly pivoted by offering virtual after school and summer programs in FY21.

Virtual summer programs included a 4-week STEM Enrichment and recreational program facilitated by external Service Providers. Approximately 12 elementary-aged youth participated primarily from the TCP-HUB. Programs for mature adult communities did not resume virtually in FY21 due to virtual accessibility challenges. However, staff continued to operate food programs and deliver essential items door to door. HOCP awarded RSD \$20,000 while under the COVID-19 state of emergency to provide emergency food and essential items to our customers. RSD contracted with Emmanuel Brinklow Church for snack packs and Coastal Sunbelt for fresh produce boxes that were delivered to communities impacted by the food and water shortages across the County and distance learning. Adult Education and workforce development programs continued to include the Tuition Assistance and Small Business Development opportunities.

Further, virtual programs continued in FY22 with expanded offerings for an afterschool program for elementary-aged youth to include Math, Reading, and STEM enrichment. Approximately 25 youth participated primarily from the Towne Center Place HUB. Virtual Summer STEM enrichment continued as well serving approximately 78 youth.

Summary of HOCA Programs/Partnerships/Data Post COVID-19 State of Emergency

- In July of 2022 (FY23), HOC re-opened residential community spaces for organized programs and services. Virtual programs did continue while RSD leadership devised a plan for re-engaging our communities that included Community Pop-Up Events at Arcola Towers, Bauer Park Apartments, Paddington Square Apartments, Magruder’s Discovery, Tanglewood Apartments, Seneca Ridge, and Washington Square.
- A modified version of HOC Academy’s Back to School Event took place in August of 2022. HOCA hosted a “Drive Thru” Back to School Event to distribute backpacks and supplies, and gift cards. Supplies included hand sanitizer and masks. 377 youth served. The Back to School STEM Fair resumed in August of 2023 in partnership with East County Recreation Center. Six-hundred (600) youth received backpacks and supplies, and participated in the STEM Fair hosted by the Patriots Technology and Training Center. In FY25, 554 youth received backpacks and supplies at the Back to School STEM Fest, and HOCA added Escape Velocity Academy programs to the STEM Fair.
- Since re-engaging RSD customers, HOC Academy reconnected with Service Providers to expand programs, relaunch former initiatives like ***Girls Got IT! (NASA Goddard Collaboration)***, and established new partnerships to include:
 - ***Montgomery County Recreation*** – Partners with HOCA and other RSD programs to host youth programming;
 - ***Dare to Dream, Inc.*** – Facilitates the ESTEAM summer program for youth aspiring entrepreneurs connected to STEAM. There is a financial literacy component to the program as well;

- **Escape Velocity Academy** – Facilitates the Drone Soccer and Engineering summer program;
 - **University of Maryland Chemistry Department** – Facilitates workshops for youth participating in the summer STEM fieldtrip series;
 - **Mad Science of Washington D.C.** – Facilitates STEM Enrichment (Robotics);
 - **Drew Star Productions** – Facilitates audio engineering summer programs for middle and high school youth;
 - **First Generation College Bound** - Provides College Preparation Services to 11th and 12 graders based on college affordability and best fit model;
 - **Patriots Technology Training Center** – Provides youth STEM enrichment (Virtual Reality, Coding, E-sports/Gaming, Flight Simulator Exercises, and more);
 - **Career Catchers** – Provides employment training and resume writing services;
 - **Education Excellence Inc.,** - Facilitates workshops on Resume Writing, College Planning and Financial Literacy;
 - **A Wider Circle Career Counseling** – Provides monthly introductory group sessions that resulted in six (6) customer referrals for Career Counseling;
 - **Montgomery College Workforce Development, Continuing Education Services** – Facilitates Microsoft 365 Job Readiness Training Certificate Program to include Resume Writing, Google Workplace Basics, Excel Basic & Intermediate, Word and Power Point sessions; and
 - **ALSTNTEC, LLC.** – Facilitated several cohorts of the 10-Week Small Business Strategies Course, Business Legalization Services and mentorship, and monthly Business Webinars.
- Average HOCA Youth Program Participation – 889 (across all programs and services)
 - Annual Average HOCA AEWD Program Participation – 627 (across all programs and services)

HOCP Strategic Planning Matrix Data Points

Each recommendation and their subsequent components aligns with the MD Governor’s 2024 ENOUGH Initiative to create poverty-fighting opportunities driven by communities’ lived experience and expertise, data and cross-sector partnerships and the Stewards of Affordable Housing for the Future (SAHF) Outcomes Initiative.

**The SAHF Member Portfolio demonstrates that residents of properties with Resident Coordinator Services have significantly lower rates of eviction and overall negative exits from housing (SAHF, Strengthening Housing Stability Report, 2022)*

Each recommendation and their subsequent components represent a continuation of the *Promise Neighborhoods* “cradle to career” system initiated during the Obama administration and modeled off of the success of the *Harlem Children’s Zone* project to break the cycle of poverty through provision of wraparound education supports (see: <https://allincities.org/node/47511/print> and <https://promiseneighborhoods.ed.gov>).

Each recommendation further aligns with the Fannie Mae Healthy Housing Rewards Enhanced Resident Services Framework, which provides further affordable financing opportunities for LMI and workforce housing developers.

Recommendation #1: Young Children (ages 5 and under)

- **Preschool readiness**
 - High-quality early childhood education is about supporting children’s learning during the time when brain development is most rapid and is foundational to eliminating disparities in educational outcomes for children based on where they live, their ethnicity, and their families’ financial resources (Center on the Developing Child at Harvard University, 2021).
 - Less than half of Montgomery County kindergarteners demonstrate readiness entering kindergarten classrooms prepared to engage with the curriculum, with the greatest lags in language & literacy and mathematics. The proportion drops to 26% for “direct certified” low-income kindergarteners. (MD DOE, Readiness Matters Kindergarten Readiness Assessment 2024)
 - High-quality early childhood education translates into up to a 13% ROI and a contribution of up to \$163B to the US GDP (NAEYC)
- **Book-rich environments**
 - By age 3, there is a 30 million word gap between children from the wealthiest and poorest families (AAP, 2021)

- Reading books with young children does more than help them learn words and develop language. It also helps children to develop a variety of cognitive and socio-emotional skills, such as paying attention, setting goals, self-regulation, logical and abstract thinking and building empathy (Journal of the American Academy of pediatrics, 2018).
- Young children in Montgomery County need additional supports to achieve readiness by kindergarten in the language & literacy domains (MD DOE, Readiness Matters Kindergarten Readiness Assessment 2024)
- Supports the benchmark of reading proficiency by grade 3 as part of the MD College and Career Readiness Standard for Literacy (MCPS, 2024)
- College Savings Plans (CSAs)
 - As of the end of 2022, there were 128 active CSA programs in operation across 38 states and the District of Columbia serving approximately 4.9M children with primary goals of increasing the number of young people who complete college or career training and promoting economic mobility and/or asset building for young people (Prosperity Now, 2023).
 - Youth with just \$500 saved for college are 3x more likely to go to college and 4x more likely to graduate than those without savings (Center on Assets, Education, & Inclusion)
 - Child Savings Accounts programs are demonstrated to increase savings in low-income families. Providing seed funds or matching contributions has been shown to result in 6x more total savings than children without a CSA after seven years' participation (US Government Accountability Office, 2020).

Recommendation #2: Elementary/Middle School Youth (ages 5-10)

- Back-to-School Events
 - Ideal time to promote upcoming youth and family activities for the academic year and facilitate pre-registration.
 - Encourages parental involvement which correlates with students' improved test scores and social skills.
 - HOCA-MC Rec August 2024 Back to School Event collaboration served over 500 youth with backpack giveaways and provided information on local food and recreational resources to their families.
- STEM Summer Activities
 - Nationally, only 41% of US high school graduates are ready for college-level math and only 36% for college-level science (National Math and Science Initiative)
 - For the 2022-2023 academic year, only 10.2% of MCPS students met the College and Career Readiness benchmark for mathematics (MCPS, 2024 *interim measures).
 - STEM careers are expected to grow 10.8% between 2021 and 2031 (US Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2022).
 - Interest in STEM tends to wane during the middle school years, but students who are exposed to innovations in technology are more likely to remain interested in STEM (Chetty et al., 2019).

- Out-of-school Activities
 - Participation in extra-curricular activities in grades 7 and 8 promotes academic achievement and motivation for at-risk youth (NIH, 2016)
 - Participation in extra-curricular activities in middle school reduced the probability of drop-out for students with low academic and social competence (NIH, 2016).
 - Students who participate in both extra-curricular sports and arts clubs are likely to experience the broadest benefits in positive identities, behavioral engagement in class, and grades (NIH, 2016)

Recommendation #3: High School Youth (ages 14-17)

- Tony Davis Memorial Scholarships
 - The average in-state student attending a four-year college and living on campus spends \$27,146 per academic year (Education Data Initiative, May 2024).
 - The average cost of in-state tuition alone is \$9,750 for a four-year college and \$3,598 for a two-year college (Education Data Initiative, May 2024).
 - The average cost of books and supplies at public four-year institutions is \$1,220 annually, and \$1,467 at public two-year institutions, annually (Education Data Initiative, May 2024).
- Community Coaches (ambassadors)
 - Meaningful youth participation and engagement helps young people make healthier life choices and engage substantially more in community and civic services (Journal of Youth Development, 2006; National Council for Mental Well-Being, 2024).
 - Youth-serving organizations that actively involve young people in their work are often more relevant and more sustainable than programs designed, implemented and evaluated only by adults (Advocates for Youth, 2023)
 - Youth in youth-adult partnerships self-report improved executive function skills including, focus, self-regulation, and strategic thinking on associated tasks (Journal of Youth Development, 2017)
- College, Career, Financial Literacy
 - For the 2022-2023 academic year, only 53% of Montgomery County 10th graders met their MD College and Career Readiness benchmark in literacy. Only 10.2% met the benchmark for mathematics (MCPS, 2024 *interim measures)
 - Seventy of companies say that high school students who complete their programs are either “very likely” or “completely likely” to eventually land a college internship with their company. And 45 percent said that high school internships will “very likely” or “completely likely” turn into a full-time job at their company (SHRM, 2014).
 - Maryland received a grade of “B” with some of the strongest financial literacy education curriculum when compared with the other 48 states and the District of Columbia. Yet, financial education in public schools is highly variable, with content standards embedded into minimal coursework for other subjects or presented as standalone content via elective courses in MoCo high schools (The Nation’s Report Card, 2023; MD Public Schools Personal Financial Literacy Report, 2023).

Recommendation #4: Adults (ages 18-59)

- Community Health Worker Program
 - Doctors and other health clinicians have limited ability to address the full scope of social determinants of health during a typical office visit or hospital admission, and Community Health Workers are crucial to filling this gap (Leonard Davis Institute of Health Economics, 2023)
 - Benefits are well-documented to include improved access to healthcare services, increased health and screening, improved adherence to healthcare recommendations, and reduced need for emergency and specialty services (NIH National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute, 2014).
 - When trusted community representatives with a shared cultural and linguistic background can liaise between marginalized communities and mainstream systems, information and services become more accessible and leads to greater equity in health outcomes (California Health Care Foundation, 2024)
- Career Advancement
 - The unemployment rate has been increasing over the past 16 months in Montgomery County and is more than a full percentage point higher than this time last year (MD Department of Labor).
 - The cost of living in Montgomery County is among the highest in the nation, with the 2023 Self-Sufficiency Standard at \$22.39/hr. or \$47,294/yr. for a basic needs budget, without any benefits or subsidies. (University of Washington Center for Women's Welfare)
 - Middle-skills jobs (jobs requiring more than a high school diploma but less than a 4-year college degree) make up the largest portion of the labor market in all 50 states (52%), and provide a pathway to income equity for women and BIPOC communities, but face the greatest worker shortfalls (National Skills Coalition, 2020).
 - Many middle-skills jobs offer median incomes that meet or exceed the Self-Sufficiency Standard wage for cost of living in the DMV.
- Asset Building Workshops
 - Homeownership has historically been the primary pathway to economic mobility and generational wealth for African-Americans, yet Maryland's inventory is well below balanced levels at only 1.8 months of housing stock, while the average sales price continues to rise (Maryland Association of Realtors, June 2024).
 - Maryland has not seen a significant change in household net worth over the past five years and significant disparities remain between White household net worth, incomes, and homeownership and those for Households of Color (Prosperity Now, 2024).
 - Maryland has a liquid asset poverty rate of 16% and 12% have zero or negative net worth (Prosperity Now, 2024).
- HOC Works Tuition Assistance
 - The average in-state student attending a four-year college and living on campus spends \$27,146 per academic year (Education Data Initiative, May 2024).

- The average cost of in-state tuition alone is \$9,750 for a four-year college and \$3,598 for a two-year college (Education Data Initiative, May 2024).
- The average cost of books and supplies at public four-year institutions is \$1,220 annually, and \$1,467 at public two-year institutions, annually (Education Data Initiative, May 2024).
- HOC Works AEWD programs and events
 - Earnings that equal or exceed the cost of a family's basic needs for food, clothing, shelter, child care, health care, and transportation are an important threshold for predicting economic and social mobility.
 - Employment that offers higher wages, health and pension benefits, and PTO tends to result in more stable employment (Urban Institute, 2024, *Boushey, 2008)
 - Parent wage and employment status tends to affect child development trajectories (Education Resources Information Center, 2014).
 - Employment that pays a living wage has been shown to decrease depressive Sx, # of missed work days for illness, prenatal smoking and risk of early childbirth. It also increased odds of children completing high school and added an overall extra .25 years of education completed (Journal of American Medical Association, 2023; Society for Research in Child Development, 2017).
- HOC Works Small Business Development
 - Self-employed Latino households have on average 2x the wealth of their Latino household counterparts who are not self-employed (Hispanic Wealth Project, 2024).
 - Black women are the fastest growing group of entrepreneurs with the number of Black women-owned businesses doubling between 2014 and 2019 (Prosperity Now, 2024).
 - Black and Latino business owners who receive all the start-up funding they request generate three times more wealth than their peers who receive only part of the funding they request. Black and Latino businesses who receive growth funding increase their wealth by 45% more than those who did not (Capital One, 2023).

Recommendation #5: Seniors (ages 60+)

- Senior Companionship Program
- Senior Connection Partnership
- CKC Farms Gardening Programs
- Trust and Estate planning workshops
- Fitness and nutrition classes/workshops
 - Older adults are at higher risk for malnutrition (Alliance for Aging Research, 2024) due to chronic health issues and 25% report scrimping on food to offset healthcare costs (National Council on Aging, 2022)
 - Older adults are often at risk for social isolation – the health risks when prolonged are equivalent to smoking 15 cigarettes a day (National Council on Aging, 2021).
 - Nearly 1 in 3 adults over the age of 65 have incomes below 200% of the Federal Poverty Level and a number of factors put them at higher risk for financial scams (NIH, 2014)