

COMMUNITY SERVICES BLOCK GRANT (CSBG) FUNDED PROGRAM

Fiscal Year 2021

4th Quarter Narrative Report

Program: Affordable Housing Plus Program

Contract Analyst: Vincenza Githens

Organization: Cornerstones

Phone #: 703-324-3289

Program Description: Provide supportive services to individuals to ensure they do not return to homelessness once they enter permanent housing.

Program Outcome: Persons will move into permanent housing and do not return to homelessness.

Funded Amount: CSBG - \$73,822/GF - \$125,698 **Total:** \$199,520

Number of Clients Projected to be served for the year: 228

Number of Clients Projected to Achieve Outcomes: 217

Actual Number of Clients Served YTD: 140

Number of Clients Achieving Outcome: 140

Program Activities this Quarter:

As the pandemic continues the case managers continue to provide case management services to meet the needs of our clients. Case management services are still conducted via phone and or Zoom videoconferencing. If documents need signing, then case managers will meet with clients for 10 – 15 minutes for office visits while practicing social distancing. Case managers assist clients with applying for rental assistance, SNAP, unemployment, recertification, and other applications that they may need assistance with. Case managers are in the field about 2 days a week, going to the homes of the clients to drop off food, diapers, gift cards, household items, other necessities and to pick up documents as needed.

Describe how local partners are used to enhance your program:

In April & May, case managers continued to pick up food boxes at Cornerstones' food pantry to deliver to clients in need. The food boxes were provided by Western Christian Fairfax Ministries. Case managers also picked up food from Food for Others to deliver to clients who had limited food. This quarter we have continued to partner with Women Giving Back and the Clothes Closet in Herndon for clothes for our clients. For clients in need of rental assistance and/or utility assistance we continue to work with our partners at Herndon-Reston FISH, Fairfax County Coordinated Services Planning (CSP), and local churches.

Program Achievements:

- A few clients obtained new employment.
- Client completed 3 major goals on their service plan.
- Clients made payments to either pay off or reduce their past due rent balance.
- Client paid off \$7,000.00 in debt and their credit score has increased.
- Married couple paid towards some of their debts and increased their credit score.
- Client saved their money to purchase a vehicle.
- Client received certificate for the Passport to Homeownership through the Fairfax County Affordable Homeownership Program.
- Client's son got a scholarship to Old Dominion University for Fall 2021.

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Program Challenges This Quarter:

Our clients continue to face challenges with paying their monthly bills on time, such as rent and utilities. Some client's utilities bills are \$1,000+. Some clients do not want to ask for help and they just want to figure it out on their own. However, case managers are reaching out to clients to assist them with looking into resources for their past due rent and/or high utility bills and walking them through the process and giving encouragement. While there are some clients that do not reach out when they are in need, it appears that there are other clients that only engage with their case manager when they are in a crisis. Case managers are reaching out to their clients via phone, text message, emails, letters, and pop-up home visits to try to engage their clients.

Changes in Client Population:

This quarter we had 2 move-outs and 1 family moved-in to our program.

Staff Turnover:

None

Client Story:

We have a household of two, a single mother and her 18-year-old son. Her son just graduated high school with honors. He is a member of AVID (Advancement Via Individual Determination) is a nonprofit that changes lives by helping schools shift to a more equitable, student-centered approach. Through AVID the client's son has had many opportunities in regard to his educational achievement and as a result he will be attending Old Dominion University in Fall 2021. He has received a scholarship to attend Old Dominion University and he hopes to play on the football team as well.

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Program: Kids and Parents Engage

Contract Analyst: Vincenza Githens

Organization: Cornerstones

Phone #: 703-324-3289

Program Description: Improve the academic performance of targeted children and youth through Afterschool Out-of-School-Time (OST) programming which includes homework help and enrichment programming.

Program Outcome: Youth will have improved academic performance.

Funded Amount: CSBG (TANF) - \$145,056/GF -\$0 **Total:** \$145,056

Number of Clients Projected to be served for the year: 66

Number of Clients Projected to Achieve Outcomes: 50

Actual Number of Clients Served YTD: 57

Number of Clients Achieving Outcome: 14

Program Activities This Quarter:

- **Monthly Family Engagement Nights:** During in-person programming, Cornerstones Afterschool hosts 5 Family Engagement Nights during the school year. This year as we continued with virtual programming; the decision was made to host monthly family engagement nights (FEN) via Zoom. FENs occur the 3rd Thursday of each month and consist of a 90-minute agenda. This is a shortened format, as we must account for the fact that the event is virtual, and we do not host a family meal (as we would do if we were in-person). While the content varies with each FEN, the agenda framework is consistent: 1) Welcome and Staff Share; 2) Community Information and FCPS Updates; 3) Family Activity; 4) Family Share and Reflections; 5) Wrap Up and Program Reminders. We have found that making the FENs a monthly event with a condensed format has created consistent opportunities for community building, parent and family support, and delivery of essential information. This quarter FENs included an April Parent Meeting where parents received information regarding SOL schedules; end of school year information; and COVID vaccine education. The program year ended with an extended family engagement event. On the Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday of the event week families were able to schedule a time to come into the Herndon Neighborhood Resource Center to work with staff one on one to complete a "Family Community Thank You" project and contribute to the Afterschool Flag. Families identified community members who helped them and others during the COVID health crisis. They identified teachers, police officers, grocers, doctors, etc. Once the projects were completed, they were packaged for delivery with individualized thank you cards. Following the in-person portion of the event, Cornerstones Afterschool hosted program families for a virtual event. During the event each program youth received an end of year gift; perfect attendance awards were presented for program participation and family engagement attendance; each family received an encouragement/thank you card; and all families received a game night package with supplies for a "Minute to Win It" tournament.

- **Weekly Programming:** Moving our afterschool programming to a virtual format due to the COVID-19 health crisis meant that we had to rework our weekly format to accommodate new challenges. As a result, youth participants engaged in regular program activities Monday through Friday. Mondays and Wednesdays are designed as Academic Support Days with

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volunteer tutors and homework helpers providing one-on-one/small group support with assigned homework or academic enrichment activities. During Tuesday and Thursday, participants engage in project-based learning built around a six- to eight-week curriculum focused on helping our young people develop their Social Emotional Learning skills. On alternating Fridays, participants engage in Club Friday Activities: STEAM Club (2nd to 5th grade) and Art Around the World (6th to 8th grade).

How Local Partners are Used to Enhance our Program:

- Northwest Federal Credit Union Foundation: During in-person programming, NWFCU Foundation provides monthly support by hosting “Wacky Wednesday” in which they provide volunteers and program materials to support enrichment activity. This would be a “special guest” who provides the youth participants with a new experience. For example, it might be a musician who brings in instruments and engages the students in creating original songs. During the COVID-19 health crisis, they have provided non-perishable snack foods and quick meals to distribute to our families. These help to supplement the needs of our families who face food insecurity by providing snacks for the kids during their distance learning day and “afterschool” before program.
- Fairfax County Neighborhood and Community Services (NCS): During in-person programming, NCS provides space for the afterschool programming and supports programming efforts in both Herndon and Reston. In addition, NCS provides opportunities for program staff to engage in youth development trainings and access various resources to enhance program efforts.
- REACH USA: Through two of our program volunteers, we have been able to build a relationship in which members of this organization have engaged with us to provide volunteer support during Academic Support program days.

Program Achievements:

- 95% of our program families (all but 2) have participated in the monthly Family Engagement Nights. Families are actively engaged with the activities and information sharing.
- 98% of our students have demonstrated regular attendance during our second semester of program delivery. (We organize the program year into two semesters that model the school format but with different date ranges.)
- Movement to the “Talking Points” communication format where we previously used Remind App. Talking Points allows us to communicate with families in their preferred language and is consistent with the format many of the schools are using to communicate with families.
- Implementing the use of a google sign up to support families when registering for program opportunities that require pre-registration. The majority of our families (all but 4) have been able to successfully use this resource. Four of our families need extra assistance due to language barriers and challenges with technology and are assisted by staff.

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- During the third quarter we were able to provide our families with 4 food distributions (2 in February/ 2 in March) which included fresh produce, fresh meat, dairy, non-perishable items, and grocery gift cards.
- During the final quarter we were able to provide our families with 4 food distributions (2 in April/ 2 in May) which included fresh produce, fresh meat, dairy, non-perishable items, and grocery gift cards. We were also able to provide family snack bags that included snacks families could use for breaks during the school day and afterschool.
- We were able to retain 90% of our families and register two new families for the summer program (Summer Excite! 2021),

Program Challenges this Quarter:

- Creating a cost-efficient, consistent method of delivery for program materials and essential supplies (ex. food and masks).
- Connectivity for families and youth.
- We are noting for the difficulty we are having in collecting report cards to determine outcomes. As of August 9, 2021 we have been able to collect report cards for 16 youth representing 9 families. Of those youth we can report that 89% achieved the desired outcome. We are still working to collect report cards at an in-person family night event this coming on August 12, 2021, with staff returning to schools the week of the 16th we will be reaching out to the schools to obtain any missing report cards.

Changes in Client Population:

None

Staff Turnover:

None

Client Story:

At the end of our program year, we engaged each youth participant in an individual conversation based on the following questions (2nd and 3rd graders completed their reflections in a group setting):

- What did you learn this year?
- What was your favorite thing to learn this year?
- What is the one thing you can't wait to do when we are back in person (at the center)?
- What is something we did during the virtual program (this year) that you hope we keep doing?
- What did you like about the virtual setting? What did you like about being online this year?
- Do you have any additional comments or thoughts about the afterschool program?

As our final client story, below are two of unedited reflections:

Reflection #1

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My favorite thing we learned this year was mostly everything. It doesn't matter who you are, you feel comfortable in this program. What race you are, or what gender, or anything. When we get back to the building, I can't wait to talk to everyone. I'm excited for field trips and cooking. I hope we keep learning about different cultures and countries when we go back to the building. This year we learned stuff we would never learn in school. It doesn't feel like school.

Reflection #2

My favorite thing we learned this year was when we learned about Braille and exploring the packages we got for STEAM club. When we go back, I am most excited to see all of you guys. I am also excited to go to the park and play with the big Tic Tac Toe. I hope we keep STEAM club. We learn whatever we think of that we haven't learned, and it teaches you about how other people's feelings matter too and not just your feelings. It teaches you about disabilities and how they don't stop you, and how we all have to be nice to each other and make the world a better place. If you want to focus on your career and make the world a better place, you should go to this program.

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Program: Multicultural Center

Organization: Northern Virginia Family Service

Contract Analyst: Vannessa Calderon

Phone #: 703-324-3269

Program Description: Provide direct assistance and/or referrals for clients to be able to meet their basic needs (such as food, clothing, shelter, transportation, employment, medical services, etc.) and access community resources that promote stability.

Program Outcome: Adults have access to safety net (community resources) that promote stability.

Funded Amount: CSBG - \$191,656/GF - \$117,467 **Total:** \$309,123

Number of Clients Projected to be served for the year: 130

Number of Clients Projected to Achieve Outcomes: 123

Actual Number of Clients Served YTD: 228

Number of Clients Achieving Outcome: 228

Program Activities this Quarter:

Case management activities included assistance with employment needs, childcare, connecting clients with resources for rent assistance (CSP) and food (community pantries). In terms of direct assistance, diapers, wipes, donations of food, cloth masks, selfcare packets, blankets and gift cards were delivered to the clients' houses, among others. Activities related to the current pandemic included educating clients about the change of rules for unemployment benefits ending soon and discussing client's options for financial assistance through community resources. Many of our clients are vaccinated and those who are not willing to get vaccinated have been accessing free testing sites in the community and are following CDC recommendations.

Describe how local partners are used to enhance your program:

Clients are often referred to our community partner Food for Others when they struggle with food insecurity. Food for Others is a convenient resource for clients as they have the option to request what they need most and are able to go to the warehouse to pick up the food. Food for Others has also started providing diapers for clients while they pick up food should they have the need. The online referral system is also convenient for case managers to do the referrals and once clients are referred, they can go within 24 hours to get the food. Moreover, clients are screened for the USDA food program while there, and if found eligible, they will be able to pick up a USDA package on a monthly basis from Food for Others. This partnership is very important for us as it supports our clients with basic needs and is accessible via public transportation.

Program Achievements:

The Multicultural Center is proud of the continued service quality its staff has been able to offer during this last year. In a time when our diverse community is struggling more than ever, NVFS made sure its staff was able to respond to the increasing needs, by:

- Recognizing that the diversity of our clients is also represented in our staff, and making sure that everyone could keep their job during this crisis.

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- Adapting to the changing needs, by redeploying some of its staff to other programs and/or tasks. For example, our case managers started delivering food and other direct assistance to clients in need, with the help of co-workers.
- Providing the technology needed for people to be able to work from home.
- Increasing the resources available for staff to focus on their self-care and overall wellbeing.
- Allowing staff to work flexible schedules to accommodate competing priorities such as childcare.
- Offering a vaccination clinic for staff and family members

These and other decisions have made it possible for NVFS staff to safely become first responders during the last year, and to make sure we offer the best services to clients, without having to sacrifice our own wellbeing.

Program Challenges This Quarter:

Many clients are aware of the unemployment benefit ending and are worried about the loss of income and about finding childcare when they are forced to go back to work. The rent relief application is now done through CSP and is no longer an online application. Clients struggle to connect with a CSP worker due to long wait times to speak with a service provider, and after connecting, they still struggle to provide the needed documents. In addition, now that the rent assistance is through CSP some clients are reluctant to access these resources due to their lack of status and continued fear of public charge.

Changes in Client Population:

Regarding our client population, we have noticed an increase in clients with low literacy levels in their primary language; they are not able to read or write, which makes it more difficult to access services. Thus, clients have to rely on the support of their family and friends to access community resources. We have assisted clients in communicating with community partners and advocated for them after documenting their verbal consent as a way to show flexibility and continued support.

Staff Turnover:

None

Client Story:

Client is a 38-year-old single mother from El Salvador who came into services requesting help with several needs. Client learned about food pantries in the community, and she was referred to Food for Others for direct assistance. Client was not familiar with the school system in the US and did not know how to communicate with the school about her 10-year-old son's academic needs. The case manager took the time to explain to the client the role of school counselors, social workers, and parent liaisons in FCPS, and how each of them can assist her in understanding further and navigating the school system. Client needed to improve her English to increase her income and she was connected with virtual, evening ESL classes in the community, which she is now attending. Client is now connected with the parent liaison at her son's school. Client is also practicing English and working full-time to support her family.

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Program: Permanent Supportive Housing

Contract Analyst: Vincenza Githens

Organization: Pathway Homes Inc.

Phone #: 703-324-3289

Program Description: Provide support in moving into permanent housing if not currently housed, education on lease requirements and community rules, training on basic living skills that support housing stability (budget, care of self and personal space, etc.), assistance emergent and ongoing healthcare needs, conflict resolution and problem-solving skills training, advocacy in support to ensure housing rights are not violated, support in accessing community resources to sustain independent living in the community, advocacy with landlord as appropriate, social skills training to include interpersonal skills and assertiveness skills training and support in transitioning to other stable permanent housing as needed/preferred, to adults with severe mental illnesses and/or other co-occurring disabilities.

Program Outcome: To have access to affordable, accessible housing with the supportive services necessary to live as independently as possible in a community setting.

Funded Amount: CSBG \$97,899/GF - \$16,169 **Total:** \$114,068

Number of Clients Projected to be served for the year: 33

Number of Clients Projected to Achieve Outcomes: 30

Actual Number of Clients Served YTD: 34

Number of Clients Achieving Outcome: 32

Program Activities This Quarter:

Continued education, encouragement and assistance with obtaining vaccination for all clients. Clients continue to receive training in developing independent living skills needed for successful independent living, community integration, and accessing resources.

Typical activities include skill building around symptom management, finance & budgeting training, health and nutrition education, medication management, linking to and accessing resources. Most individuals are receiving support with making the necessary adjustments as businesses/practices are re-opening for in-person services. Clients are needing retraining and anxiety management regarding arranging transportation, allowing travel time, safety precautions in using public transportation and timeliness.

How Local Partners are Used to Enhance our Program:

Staff connect individuals to needed resources such as food banks, transportation, the CSB, and primary care physicians as needed. Partnering with DHCD to increase housing resources and support individuals in securing more independent or more accessible housing. Linking individuals with needed IT to support accessing services that are currently only available to them via remote access. Ongoing partnership with mental health and physical health treatment providers to better support individuals with communication, collaboration and an integrated approach to care. Staff assist individuals in identifying local agencies and resources that will promote the greatest level of individual independence and teach self-advocacy skills to support individuals in being able to access these resources independently.

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Program Achievements:

COVID vaccination rate is currently at 75% of the population. Two individuals were able to secure part-time employment. One individual was finally able to receive a medical procedure for his back that had been postponed repeatedly throughout the pandemic.

Program Challenges this Quarter:

One client served through this program has been refusing to adhere to medical recommendations for his psychiatric care, is functioning in a significantly decompensated state, has been hospitalized multiple times over the past six months and incarcerated twice related to assaultive behaviors. He is being evicted from his home related to physical assaults on his housemate. Staff made necessary referrals for a higher level of care to attempt to support him and he was subsequently offered alternative placement with a high degree of staff supervision and supports. Unfortunately, in his decompensated state, he has refused to accept the offered program/supports.

Changes in Client Population:

None

Staff Turnover:

None

Client Story:

Female client referred during the height of the pandemic related to her isolation, loss of face-to-face services, loss of access to the drop-in center and inability to visit with family who live out of the town. The isolation and lack of meaningful engagement, resulted in increased depression, anxiety and psychiatric symptoms. In addition to providing active engagement and skills training related to coping, staff were able to help her secure a cell phone and internet and provided training in independently accessing her providers from her apartment. She was also linked with an online prayer group and an online mental health peer support group that she continues to access independently. She has experienced significant psychiatric stability and is engaging in some form of social interactions at least twice per week. She has been able to focus and problem-solve which is allowing her to maintain her apartment cleanly and neatly and allowing her to attend to her daily needs without staff assistance. Most importantly is the self-confidence that she is now projecting. She reports that when the drop-in center is open to in-person visits, she will no longer need these in-home services. She is tentatively scheduled to discharge from services next month and she is actively engaged in the discharge planning and proactively putting schedules and plans in place to support her in continuing her new skills and resources independently.

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Program: Culmore Youth Outreach Program

Contract Analyst: Vannessa Calderon

Organization: Second Story

Phone #: 703-324-3269

Program Description: Provide youth with activities that encourage them to stay in school and improve their academic achievement which includes supervised recreation, homework assistance, enrichment activities and assistance with college applications.

Program Outcome: Youth will have improved academic performance.

Funded Amount: CSBG - \$78,225/GF -\$0 **Total:** \$78,225

Number of Clients Projected to be served for the year: 200

Number of Clients Projected to Achieve Outcomes: 160

Actual Number of Clients Served YTD: 227

Number of Clients Achieving Outcome: 174

Program/Service Activities This Quarter:

During this quarter, CYOP staff continued to work virtually due to COVID-19 from April until mid-June. Staff has been working with clients through several modalities including weekly phone calls with the teens and Zoom meeting sessions. Programs offered included tutoring sessions and ESL for new arrivals with our bilingual staff members. We were able to set up virtual sessions and review basic to intermediate English lessons to help close the language barrier. We also engaged youth in fun recreational zoom activities and got feedback on their online learning challenges. Staff throughout the fourth quarter continued to drop off food donations to CYOP youth's homes. This service has been especially important due to the difficult economic situation that most of our families still are facing. To support the teens and their families' staff has helped parents register for the COVID-19 vaccine, referred others to the Culmore Family Resource Center to apply for the Virginia Rent Relief Program and connect to other social services. On June 14th staff were able to safely open our doors to in person programming with limited capacity and restrictions. Over 100 teens were given flyers and invitation messages letting them know about the grand re-opening day of the teen center program. Staff did outreach in the neighborhood, parks and schools this month recruiting more teens to the program.

In April, staff met with Seniors to explore their post high school plans. Staff touched base on their college application process as well as providing information on employment opportunities or technical careers. Staff was able to help clients filling out the FAFSA, as well as college applications. In partnership with the Women in Technology staff were able to launch a program with the female teens on Girls in Technology. Here, the girls were able to discover and learn more about potential careers in STEM. Teens were able to complete the Fairfax County Strategic Survey to voice their needs and opinion of what is important to them and their community. Fifteen teens participated in a CYOP gardening activity, receiving flower and vegetable seeds, planting pots, planting soil and water. Teens created PowerPoint presentations on social media issues and awareness and created posters on environmental awareness. They participated in sexual assault awareness month in April by researching the annual campaign to raise public awareness about sexual assault and became educated on how to prevent sexual violence and how

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to receive help. Youth workers researched COVID-19 vaccinations information online to gain knowledge about the topic and impacts of the world pandemic crisis. Two Second Story Board members gave presentations on their careers to youth. They discussed how to access career paths in Law and Real Estate while going over the process of how they achieved success in their careers.

In May, the Youth Council participated in workshops on Human Rights, Mental Health, Family Values, Study Tips, Safety Tips, Hygiene Awareness, and ways to improve personal development and self-esteem/confidence. These were done in virtual sessions. As the month of May is mental health awareness month, staff spoke to clients about this topic, suicide prevention and ways to receive help in the Fall's Church and Fairfax areas. Due to the world pandemic a lot of teens have experienced depression, stress and boredom, therefore we discussed ways to increase fun interactive family activities. Throughout the month staff also provided the teens and their families informational sessions about the Covid19 vaccine. In partnership with the Health Department, staff hosted a conference to inform parents and guardians about the vaccine for children between 12 and 18 years old. This was a great opportunity for the teens and their parents to ask about any questions and to address their concerns with health professionals in a bilingual session. The Health Department was able to address concerns and provide direct verified information on resources and facts about the pandemic and the vaccines.

The program congratulates nine seniors who successfully graduated from Fairfax County High Schools receiving their diploma. Six will be going straight to college and three who will be seeking employment. This month staff produced senior picture day and gift bags for the seniors including snacks and refreshments (cupcakes), a certificate of completion of the program, graduation cards, picture frames and gift cards. With our Gang Prevention Grant, we were able to coordinate activities to empower our youth to not engage in gang activity. This month the program welcomed two guest speakers. The first was Francisco Klockner- Youth & Gang Violence Coordinator from Fairfax County Juvenile and Domestic Relations District Court. He came in person to talk to the teens about gang prevention, risk factors for joining gangs, conflicts, juvenile system, recruitment, positive community involvements. Our second speaker was Mrs. Maguina from social services who also came in person to speak with teen girls about self-esteem and confidence by inspiring them to reach their potential and not get involved within gang activities. Staff also organized and talked to George Mason University students to discuss upcoming College Preparation sessions for July 2021. The teen center created a garden inside the center with vegetables and in front of the building where teens helped plant flowers with staff. The garden is beautiful and amazing. The teens really enjoyed this activity learning about planting and why it's important to our environment. Teens will also take care of the plants and water them daily. This encourages responsibility and pride in their Teen Center.

How Local Partners are Used to Enhance our Program:

- Kentucky Fried Chicken and Food for Others are used to supply food for the Teens.
- BRAWS delivers feminine hygiene products to young female participants.
- Rotary Club of Vienna provided food donations, and a Zoom educational presentation.
- Steva Truck provided prepared meals to the teens.
- Western Fairfax Christian Ministries provided food donations.

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- Food for Others to provided groceries to the teen center families.
- INOVA Partnership for Healthier Youth. Helped teens apply for health insurance.

Program Achievements:

95% of our teens have successfully passed their grade level. 5% who needed greater assistance, are taking summer credit recover courses to improve their chances of successfully passing the school year. The nine seniors are excited that they accomplished the major milestone of graduating this school year. Staff worked with the seniors on scholarship prep, created letters of recommendations for three of the seniors for the Hispanic Leadership Alliance Scholarship & Justice High School Scholarship Fund. Staff also provided support and guidance to the seniors about additional resources for financial aid, selecting the proper college and reviewing college acceptance letters. The teens will continue in the program throughout the summer and thank staff for all their help and support through their transition. Four of the seniors participated in the youth worker program and have increased their leadership skills and created career plans, job search plans, resume writing and interviewing skills. These teens have been a part of the youth program for over three years. Seeing them grow within the youth worker program has been rewarding. Two of the seniors made the honor roll for the entire academic year of 2020-2021 and received recognition for their achievements from school. They also have been involved in Leadership programs at Justice High School, community involvement- Active Fairfax Transportation plan, and youth council within the teen center program.

Program Challenges this Quarter:

Some challenges included technology issues such as lack of online access due to insufficient WIFI. Many of the participants also dealt with a large number of distractions at home that hindered their ability to focus well in their online classes.

Changes in Client Population:

None

Staff Turnover:

None

Client Story:

Dany is an active participant in the program and has worked with staff directly throughout our physical closure. Dany worked with staff virtually on homework help, tutoring and ESL learning. Staff created an English learning plan and provided a laptop device for his weekly tutoring sessions with staff. Dany experienced major issues with online learning. His grades dropped and he had trouble connecting with teachers. He asked staff to help him improve his grades in his classes. During the 3rd quarter Dany improved his academic grade in English. Dany lives with his mother who lost her job due to surgery. Staff referred the family to the Culmore Family Resource Center for further help with rent assistance, food, hygiene products, and food delivery services. When school opened Dany felt more comfortable expressing himself in English. Dany will continue working on ESL at the Culmore Teen Center CYOP and receiving services as needed.

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Program: Second Story for Homeless Youth

Contract Analyst: Vannessa Calderon

Organization: Second Story

Phone #: 703-324-3269

Program Description: Provide homeless unaccompanied Fairfax County High School students with assistance in locating and affording safe, stable, appropriate housing.

Program Outcome: Individuals are successfully housed.

Funded Amount: CSBG (TANF) - \$106,009/GF – \$0

Total: \$106,009

Number of Clients Projected to be served for the year: 16

Number of Clients Projected to Achieve Outcomes: 14

Actual Number of Clients Served YTD: 14

Number of Clients Achieving Outcome: 14

Program Activities This Quarter:

Case management, individual therapy, and housing were provided to eight adults this quarter.

How Local Partners are Used to Enhance our Program:

Second Story for Homeless Youth partners with various non-profits and community-based groups to provide supportive services to the clients in the program. Agencies such as Fairfax County CSB, Food for Others, the Lamb Center, and KIND offer supportive services to clients. One of the strongest partnerships is with the Fairfax County Public Schools, who provide referrals to the program and support to the students already enrolled, including assistance with transportation, enrolling in school, and obtaining tutoring and financial support for school activities such as graduation. Lastly, BRAWS provides feminine hygiene supplies to youth in the program, which meets a critical area of need for homeless young women. These agencies are in part responsible for the success of the youth in the program.

Program Achievements:

We have continued to be able to provide program services with little disruption due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Clients are receiving as much of the supports, services, and tangible goods that we can provide, with some changes in procedures and protocols to ensure safety and social distancing. Second Story has been providing additional rental payments for youth who lost their employment to prevent them from becoming homeless during the pandemic. Recently, the schools partially opened in a hybrid manner, so we are seeing an increase in contact from school social workers and also seeing an uptick in applications from young people.

Program Challenges this Quarter:

We saw a small uptick in applications this quarter which may be due to settling down of COVID cases and increased vaccination rates. Challenges now seem to center on uneasiness about COVID variants and continued vaccination tentativeness.

Changes in Client Population:

All four youth who were eligible graduated from High School. Three youth completed the program successfully and were discharged to stable housing and six new clients were added.

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Staff Turnover:

None

Client Story:

Spring is a really exciting time for our high school seniors in the homeless youth program. They are beginning the last few months of their high school education and preparing for what is next. One amazing highlight we received this month was from "Zara." "Zara" reached out to her case manager from the program to happily report that she had been voted by her senior class as the valedictorian to speak at the graduation ceremony in June. "Zara" applied for the valedictorian opportunity and was voted by her peers and selected school staff as the selection. She came to the homeless youth program as a junior in November 2019 and has been living independently, supporting herself financially, and attending school full-time. Now, has this amazing accomplishment to add to her list of achievements. The homeless youth staff is extremely proud of "Zara" and all she has accomplished, especially receiving this distinguished honor from her graduating class. We are excited to see what she does next.

COMMUNITY SERVICES BLOCK GRANT (CSBG) FUNDED PROGRAM

Fiscal Year 2021

4th Quarter Narrative Report

Program: Second Story for Young Mothers

Contract Analyst: Vannessa Calderon

Organization: Second Story

Phone #: 703-324-3269

Program Description: Provide young women 18 to 22 years old, who are homeless single mothers and their children with safe stable housing, food, and clothing.

Program Outcome: Clients will have access to safety net resources that promote stability.

Funded Amount: CSBG (TANF) - \$64,414/GF -\$0 **Total:** \$64,414

Number of Clients Projected to be served for the year: 20

Number of Clients Projected to Achieve Outcomes: 16

Actual Number of Clients Served YTD: 17

Number of Clients Achieving Outcome: 16

Program/Service Activities This Quarter:

Case management, individual therapy, life skills groups, and parenting skills groups were provided to four adults and their four children this quarter. In addition, all children four months and older were assessed to determine if they had any developmental delays. Clients also participated in groups on parenting, financial education, time management and motivation, conflict resolution, communication, college readiness, self-care, setting boundaries, stress management, anger management, sewing, cleaning, and general driving/car maintenance, women's health, and first aid and CPR.

How Local Partners are Used to Enhance our Program:

The Young Mothers program continues to partner with various non-profits and community-based groups to provide relevant services to the clients in the program. Groups like the Financial Empowerment Center, the Chris Atwood Foundation, Workforce Innovation and Opportunities Act, Generation Hope, and Hilton International have provided life skills groups to the residents, based on their subject areas of expertise. The county has provided its Active Parenting program for parenting skills education. George Mason University provided information and assistance on job obtainment and retention. Community groups, such as a local church, provide monthly dinners where residents can enjoy good food, learn how to cook, and practice social skills. HomeAid, a local non-profit dedicated to improving shelter housing, helped YM in the past by renovating a townhouse to provide safe shelter for two families. These groups and more contribute to making the program a safe, educational, and supportive experience for the young mothers and children who live there.

Program Achievements:

During this quarter, we were able to continue to provide services and supports to clients during the COVID-19 pandemic, with a few changes in program protocols and procedures to provide safety to staff and residents during this challenging time. We provided extra support to clients who lost their employment and income sources so that their needs, and those of their children, could be met.

COMMUNITY SERVICES BLOCK GRANT (CSBG) FUNDED PROGRAM

Fiscal Year 2021

4th Quarter Narrative Report

Program Challenges this Quarter:

We had several potential YM clients who completed the application process and then decided not to move in with strangers due to worries about COVID-19.

Changes in Client Population:

One YM client completed the program and discharged to signing a lease for her own apartment.

Staff Turnover:

None

Client Story:

“Krystal” was living with a friend’s mother, and when she was asked to leave, she had to return home to a toxic living environment. Krystal’s mother’s moods are unpredictable, and she continually yells at her. The last time they argued, her mother came at her with an object and Krystal escaped through the window with only the clothes on her back. Since she is 7 months pregnant, Krystal reached out to Second Story for Young Mothers because she wanted to provide her child with safe, stable housing and to get the support needed to assist her in becoming self-sufficient. Since entering the program Krystal continues to work, and she has completed her WIOA orientation and TABE test to see which certificate programs she is interested in. She has begun financial management and paid off her credit card debt. She is saving for when she goes on maternity leave. Krystal has located and chosen local doctors and has begun researching what she needs to pack in her hospital bag. Staff completed a referral for Healthy Families, as well as READ, and she is working to increase her parenting knowledge. She has chosen local doctors. She hopes to obtain a certificate to be able to get better paying employment, pay off her school debt and save money for when she graduates from the program, as well as learn more about parenting and becoming self-sufficient.

COMMUNITY SERVICES BLOCK GRANT (CSBG) FUNDED PROGRAM

Fiscal Year 2021

4th Quarter Narrative Report

Program: Early Learning Center

Organization: United Community Ministries

Contract Analyst: Vannessa Calderon

Phone #: 703-324-3289

Program Description: Provide high quality childcare for children ages 6 weeks to 5 years old utilizing evidence-based curriculum and certified assessment materials to ensure children are provided with developmentally appropriate services that enhance their ability to move through the proper developmental stages and ensure academic success as they prepare for kindergarten.

Program Outcome: Children reach benchmarks supporting school readiness.

Funded Amount: CSBG (TANF) - \$86,235/GF - \$53,667 **Total:** \$139,902

Number of Clients Projected to be served for the year: 20

Number of Clients Projected to Achieve Outcomes: 14

Actual Number of Clients Served YTD: 15

Number of Clients Achieving Outcome: 10

Program/Service Activities This Quarter:

During the reporting period, the Early Learning Center (ELC) was forced to close due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The ELC is located in a Fairfax County Public School (FCPS). FCPS closed to in-person learning on March 13, 2020. We were given consent from FCPS to reopen the childcare center in the month of August. Due to unsustainably low enrollment levels, United Community decided to close the center until FCPS resumed in-person instruction.

How Local Partners are used to enhance our Program: None

Program Challenges this Quarter:

The ELC was closed due to the COVID-19 pandemic and unsustainably low enrollment. Without approximately 50 enrolled children, and with only 8-10 enrollees in August, we would hemorrhage tens of thousands of dollars each month. This financial loss would imperil the operations of the entire agency. A team at United Community is creating a re-opening plan, a significant lift, as we have lost the vast majority of our teachers and families due to extended closure. This team will determine when it is financially feasible to re-open the ELC.

Changes in Client Population:

The ELC was not able to provide childcare from March 13, 2020 through July 31, 2020. The ELC reopened in August and served up to 10 children but closed once again on August 31st due to low enrollment.

Staff Turnover:

All teaching staff, the Education Coordinator and the Assistant Director were laid off due to the ELC closure. The ELC Director remains on payroll, supporting our food insecurity efforts, and beginning the re-opening strategy in FY22.

Client Story:

None

COMMUNITY SERVICES BLOCK GRANT (CSBG) FUNDED PROGRAM

Fiscal Year 2021

4th Quarter Narrative Report

Program: Stepping Stones

Organization: United Community Ministries

Contract Analyst: Vannessa Calderon

Phone #: 703-324-3289

Program Description: Provide three-day emergency supply of food, supplemental nutritious foods, including fresh produce to individuals and households.

Program Outcome: Clients have improved access to emergency basic needs assistance.

Funded Amount: CSBG - \$277,281/GF - \$0 **Total:** \$277,281

Number of Clients Projected to be served for the year: 3,200

Number of Clients Projected to Achieve Outcomes: 3,200

Actual Number of Clients Served YTD: 6,584

Number of Clients Achieving Outcome: 6,584

Program Activities This Quarter:

Stepping Stones program provided full compliments of all contracted service activities – rental, food, dental/prescription assistance, and case management service. In addition to contracted service activities, the program continued to provide utility payment assistance, diaper and household supplies to the participants. With the conclusion of the Emergency Food and Shelter (EFSP) CARES and Phase 37 rental assistance conducted in the last quarter, the program was allotted additional \$28,423 in the EFSP Phase 38 rental assistance to County residents facing financial hardship and unable to pay their housing costs – rent, mortgage, HOA fees etc. This activity will continue in FY22. The most significant service activity was in the increase in the number of rental assistances to clients during this quarter. The program also continued to provide food delivery to homebound clients who are not able to come to the food pantry due to health issues, age and lack of transportation.

How Local Partners are Used to Enhance our Program:

The Stepping Stones program relies on the collaborative support of community-wide partners, including individuals, in its service delivery. During this reporting period, Stepping Stones collaborated with the following local partners:

The Fairfax Coordinated Services Planning system for service outreach and service coordination to the community. The program continued to collaborate with faith groups, Capital Area Food Bank, Whole Foods, Wegmans and South County food distribution to provide food assistance to clients. Our biggest partnership collaborative effort was in securing Amazon's food donation. This single partnership has boosted our food distribution service in both quantity and quality. It has drastically reduced our food expenses. With the resumption of the Sherwood Hall Lane farmer's market, our partner – Kiwanis Club is delivering unsold fresh produce to the pantry on a weekly basis. Our partnership with the DC Diaper Bank continued unabated during this reporting period. Northern Virginia Dental Clinic provided basic dental care to program participants in need of dental work.

Program Achievements:

The achievements made in the last quarter were maintained during this reporting period.

- Food distribution is still on going without disruption.

COMMUNITY SERVICES BLOCK GRANT (CSBG) FUNDED PROGRAM

Fiscal Year 2021

4th Quarter Narrative Report

- More than 280 clients received rental assistance during this quarter making it the highest number of rental assistances provided to client in a quarter! This effort was made possible with the additional funding from CCFP and revenue drive effort by the agency. Nearly \$100,000 was spent in rental assistance alone. An average of \$1,749.66 was distributed to each household. Households with more financial difficulties received up to 2 months rental or mortgage assistance in an effort to cushion the effect of their financial hardships.
- In addition to the program's rental assistance, Stepping Stones served 10 households from across the County through EFSP Phase 38 rental assistance. These households were not included in the program outcome count because the households were not registered in the Stepping Stones program.
- More clients received dental assistance with the support of Northern Virginia Dental Clinic during this quarter.
- Through our partnership with the DC Diaper Bank, the program distributed 36,515 diapers to 369 babies. This effort increased the participant's disposable income because funds that would have been used in purchasing diapers for their children went to defray the cost of other needs.
- The program recorded the lowest number of new clients tracked in our Covid-19 tracking sheet during this quarter making data management less challenging.
- Through our collaborative partnerships with Neighborhood Health, the Fairfax County Health Department and NCS, we maintained food distribution and household supplies to Covid-19 positive individuals and families who were in quarantine. Request for this service is winding down.

Program Challenges this Quarter:

With improved management of the pandemic and the continued recovery of the economy, there is still huge need in our client community both in their fiscal, mental and socio-economic wellbeing. The decrease in the spread of Covid-19 does not reflect the recovery rate from the devastating impact of the pandemic among our client community. Clients are still behind on their rent and utilities payments due to loss of income. It would take about 2-3 years for people to recover from the impact of the pandemic. The effects of Covid-19 is more pronounced among minorities, people living in poverty, older persons and persons with disabilities including people with underlying health issues. These groups form a bigger chunk of Stepping Stones clients. This explains why recovery is more challenging for some of the clients, as this has contributed in restricting clients from achieving their desired outcomes. It has been difficult for the clients who lost their jobs to obtain another employment. Those who have gained employment are still struggling to meet their monthly financial obligations.

Another big challenge the program encountered during this quarter was gathering all the demographic data elements information in preparation for the completion of the CSBG annual demographic report. Unlike the CCFP demographic report, CSBG requires demographic information for all clients served. Our current database was designed in line with the CCFP reporting format, which reported only the primary household member's demographic information. We are currently tracking the reports manually which is challenging.

COMMUNITY SERVICES BLOCK GRANT (CSBG) FUNDED PROGRAM

Fiscal Year 2021

4th Quarter Narrative Report

Changes in Client Population:

In comparison to the previous quarter, we notice a decrease in the following demographics during this quarter: new households/clients, female-headed households and households with children U-18. The elderly population remained the same at 71 in both quarters. While demand for food is gradually going down, which accounts for the decrease in new clients served during this quarter, demand for rental/mortgage and utilities have gone up significantly.

Staff Turnover:

There is a change in food services operation which now has a new director that will oversee everything food. In addition to the Director, 3 more staff will be added to the team. Stepping Stones is currently looking to fill a Case Manager position and add another Basic Needs Counselor position. The jobs have been posted.

Client Story:

Ms. Dorcas was referred to United Community by CSP for rental assistance in June. She is a mother of three young children, a seven-year-old and one year old twins. She has been working until the birth of her twins. She was forced to take time off from work to take care of them because the daycare she used in the past was closed due to the pandemic. Her husband is in their home country waiting for his visa interview to come to the United States. His visa interview that was originally scheduled in March 2020 has been put on hold for over a year due to the pandemic. She is expecting that his interview will be re-scheduled this June. According to her, this would be a very big relief for her if her husband's visa application is approved. She used her savings to pay for her March and April rent. She owes two months' rent for May and June. She needs \$3,750 to cover both month's rent and late fee charges.

CSP approved Dorcas for \$1,050 (this amount was based on the information Stepping Stones provided to CSP at the beginning of the year, which was the maximum). Stepping Stones was able to cover the total amount she requested because of the additional funding we received from CCFP. Her intake assessment with her Case Manager showed that Ms. Dorcas would need a lot of assistance to help her family until she goes back to work. She was registered for the weekly emergency food assistance; she is receiving diapers and formula for her twins and other needed household supplies including hygiene products.

Moving forward, Ms. Dorcas applied and has been approved for unemployment benefit. This will help her to take care of some of her monthly financial bills. She was also approved for SNAP. With her SNAP benefit and United Community's weekly emergency food, Ms. Doris would save money in her food budget and have more disposable cash for other family needs. She received information about United Community's Early Learning Center, which is scheduled to reopen on July 1, 2021 for her to enroll her twins when she eventually returns to work.