

YOUR WAY HOME

MONTGOMERY COUNTY

 Quarterly Newsletter



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YOUR WAY HOME 7TH ANNUAL SUMMIT RECAP

On Friday, June 7th Your Way Home was honored to host almost 200 community members, service providers, partners, policy makers, funders, and friends at the 7th Annual Summit: Housing for All, Equitable Solutions in Policy and Practice.

This year's summit highlighted our work around advancing equity which began just one year earlier during the 6th Annual Summit. Your Way Home continues its commitment to lead this conversation forward. The Summit kicked off with opening remarks by Dr. Valerie Arkoosh, Chair of the Montgomery County Board of Commissioners. . .





2019 SUMMIT RECAP CONT'D

Commissioner Arkoosh highlighted many of the successes of the Your Way Home partnership over the past year and the importance of the work of advancing equity. Most notably, she touched on the distinction between equity versus equality and how treating everyone the same, in a “colorblind” manner, is not truly giving people what they need to be successful.

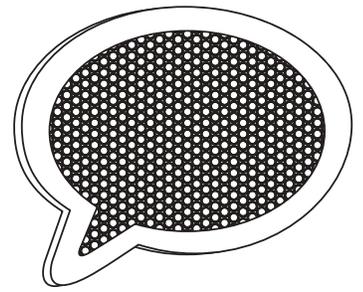
The keynote address was given by Amanda Misiko Andere, CEO of Funders Together to End Homelessness. Amanda gave a very powerful presentation about racial equity and getting the movement to “work woke”. Amanda highlighted the significance of collaborating for success and creating allies to center racial equity in all we do. She explained that we must not rush into this work, “People have become so woke to the data that they want to rush to the solutions. We have to slow down and sit in that space and be thoughtful. If we don’t do that, we’ll just put policies on top of existing racist structures”.

The Summit then broke into five breakout sessions around: Equitable Grantmaking, Partnering with Youth, Housing First, Affordable Housing, and Maternal and Early Childhood Health.

Following the breakout sessions was a lunch panel led by Tara Gaudin, Director of Health and Human Services for Montgomery County. Accompanying Tara were Amanda Misiko Andere, Karen Hudson of CHOP, and Nefertiri Sikout of the City of Philadelphia. The panel gave unique insight from these system change leaders on how they have successfully led social change efforts within their own organizations.

Following the panel was a scholarship presentation of the Meredith Anne Huffman Award presented by Marisa Ferst of the Genuardi Family Foundation, given to help maintain the housing stability of a deserving client. The day concluded with remarks from the 2019 Champion for Change award recipients, Ann Garcia, recently retired from Carson Valley Children’s Aid, and Johnathan Weiner of Wells Fargo.

For more information on the Summit and to view pictures from the day, please visit www.yourwayhome.org/2019-summit.



DID YOU KNOW YOUR WAY HOME HAS A BLOG?

Check out Your Way Home's latest blog by Data Manager, Greg Barchuk: *The Poverty Defense: How Poverty is Not Sufficient to Explain Racial Disparities in Homeless Populations*. This post talks about the myth we hear people use to “explain away” racial disparities in homelessness. This and other topics such as inclusivity, demographic disparities in homeless response systems, and others can be found on the Your Way Home blog in the “News” section of our website. If there is a topic you would like to hear about or if you are interested in writing a guest blog, contact Blair Dawson at bdawson@montcopa.org.

MONTGOMERY COUNTY
**OFFICE OF
HOUSING &
COMMUNITY
DEVELOPMENT**
FUNDING UPDATE

The Office of Housing and Community Development has proposed \$2,229,455 in funding for homeless assistance grants through its 2019 Annual Action Plan to HUD. A full listing of the projects can be found on the office’s webpage. Projects are currently in draft form while the public has the opportunity to comment for thirty days, from June 10 through July 10th. The final project listing will be authorized by the County on July 18th.

LGBTQ COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT PROJECT



LGBTQ COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT PROJECT

The LGBTQ Community Engagement Project is a pilot project funded by the HelathSpark Safety Net Resiliency Initiative and has been created to further understand and bring awareness to the unique needs of LGBTQ individuals experiencing extreme poverty in Montgomery County.

INTERIM REPORT

The Sprout Initiative is a school-based homelessness prevention pilot that works to stabilize families with young children who are imminently at risk of becoming homeless by providing social services and housing stability supports. The ultimate goal of the initiative is to demonstrate that stable housing can lead to better educational outcomes among vulnerable children.

The Sprout pilot worked to target children whose families were imminently at risk of homelessness in the North Penn School District. The program provided housing stability services for the family, while coordinating support for the child in order to increase key educational outcomes. Housing stability services included case management and financial assistance to the family. The initiative used a 2-Generation approach to coordinate care holistically for parents and children.

The program has successfully stabilized 22 families (40 children) during the pilot period. To read more about Sprout and the interim report visit the "Sprout" page of the Your Way Home website: <https://yourwayhome.org/sprout-initiative>.

Research conducted by the Center for Social Innovation for Your Way Home's Phase I Equity Evaluation suggests that Your Way Home policies and services may not be culturally relevant and responsive to the needs of LGBTQ individuals. National data provides a baseline for measuring impact. According to the True Colors Fund, "LGBTQ young people are 120% more likely to experience homelessness than their non-LGBTQ peers." According to the National LGBTQ Task Force, "nearly one in five transgender people have experienced homelessness. Among those who have accessed or attempted to access homeless shelters, one quarter reported being denied admission because of their gender identity."

Your Way Home has hired 3 part-time Community Advocates to conduct focus groups and interviews to gain a better understanding of the barriers that those identifying as LGBTQ, may face when attempting to access health and human services. Stay tuned for more information on this project!



Have you on-boarded a new employee at your organization? Register for the next YWH 101 and Clarity Training on October 10th. Looking for a training before October? Click here to access pre-recorded trainings on our website.