



Community Reach

of Montgomery County

NEWSLETTER November 2021

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HELPING OUR NEIGHBORS WITH THANKSGIVING



For many years, Reach has been a member of the Montgomery County Holiday Giving Coalition, providing Thanksgiving dinner baskets to be prepared at home to many neighbors who have requested assistance. In past years, Reach has been able to accept a list of about 250 families because of the generosity of supporters who committed to providing that many baskets of food and grocery gift cards.

The pandemic has been hard in many ways, but it has also shown the resilience and generosity of the community. This year, supporters committed to providing an additional 100 Thanksgiving Dinner baskets, allowing Reach to expand the referral list that could be accepted to 350 families. In addition,

Rockville United Church offered their building to be used for distribution once again so clients could be served directly at their cars. This again provided social distancing for volunteers, clients, and staff. Many volunteers made the work of checking clients off the registration list, and hauling baskets of food much easier.

Baskets that were not picked up by those who were registered were shared with Reach Holiday Giving and Faith partners, Food for All, Hughes United Methodist Church, Living Faith Lutheran Church, and Mt. Calvary Baptist Church. These organizations were all able to share the food with their constituents before the Thanksgiving holiday.

Thank you to all those who donated food, gift cards, and time. Below is a partial list of our generous Thanksgiving donors:

***Assured Partners/Early Cassidy & Schilling * Holton Arms School * Landon School
Living Faith Lutheran Church * PB Mares * New Day Preschool***

THANK YOU, GROUP VOLUNTEERS!

In October and November, many groups assisted Reach clients. Reach wants to especially thank Carefirst Blue Cross, NIH Federal Credit Union, and the Tinsdell neighborhood group and an anonymous individual volunteer. They all showed up to do some landscaping and rake leaves for our senior residents and our Rockland House. The CEO of NIHFCU even came equipped with a leaf blower and bagged leaves.



A local girl scout troop gathered cleaning supplies and made special trips to drop off what was collected at Reach's Rockland House and Jefferson House.

In early December, staff of Donohoe Construction will return for a second year to rake leaves for three Senior Reach clients. In addition, a number of organizations and groups are planning toy drives or working together to provide gifts for our clients.

These are only a few of the ways the Rockville and Montgomery County community support Community Reach of Montgomery County. In this season of Thanksgiving, Community Reach of Montgomery County, our [Mansfield Kaseman Health Clinic](#), [Housing Program](#), [Rockville Emergency Assistant Program \(REAP\)](#) [Language Outreach Program \(LOP\)](#) and [Senior Reach Program](#) staff want to offer a heartfelt "THANK YOU." To all the volunteers, donors, and supporters, this organization could not help care for the most vulnerable in our community without your generosity of spirit.

For more information about ways to help Reach, see the [How to Help webpage](#).

THE IMPORTANCE OF SPEAKING ENGLISH



Lidia came to the U.S. as a young woman with her husband and three very young children. Growing up in El Salvador in the midst of Civil War, neither she nor her husband had the opportunity to attend much school. When they arrived in the U.S., in addition to not speaking English, they could not read or write in Spanish.

Like most immigrants from Central America, Lidia and her husband found jobs and worked many hours for minimum wage while also parenting their children. She worked in the kitchen of a fast food restaurant. Even with all the time and energy required to keep food on the table and care for her children, Lidia felt a need to learn to read and write. She enrolled in the

Language Outreach Program (LOP) Spanish Literacy class and began the very hard work of learning these skills as an adult.

Once Lidia had mastered reading and writing in Spanish, she enrolled in LOP's English for Speakers of Other Languages classes. Studies state it takes at least seven years of study to become fluent in English. Beginning this journey was no small commitment. Lidia also stated that the LOP Director, Cecilia Rojas, or site coordinator called her if she missed a class. These calls helped her continue in the program even when her employment and parenting responsibilities were the most demanding.

Lidia is now an assistant manager of one of the largest fast food locations in Montgomery County. From her beginning in the kitchen making minimum wage, her responsibilities and her salary have increased exponentially. Lidia and her husband were able to purchase a home and feel financial security with these increases. Not only did learning English raise their standard of living. Lidia stated she feels much happier. She is more connected to her community, and more able to be a strong parent and advocate for her children. It is much better to be able to speak with her children's teachers without an interpreter present. There is more privacy and she can better voice her concerns; (however, Lidia's children are all successful adults or on their way to becoming adults).

Lidia not only credits LOP with helping her succeed. She also attributes much of her children's educational success to the program. The LOP children's program helped her children understand and complete homework assignments at a time when her lack of reading and English skills made it difficult for her to provide that support. All of her adult children have continued college level studies after high school. Lidia's oldest daughter is a nurse; two children are currently in college with plans to become teachers, and one daughter is in her last year of high school. Her oldest child is an essential worker at Whole Foods Market.

This article highlights two important issues to Reach. Being able to communicate in English is essential in the quest for financial security in Montgomery County; and immigrants bring great value to the community. Lidia's family pays income, property, and sales taxes, which provide funding for the services the community enjoys. Her children work or are training to work in fields that are important to the community's health. Together, they are an important part of the fabric of our County and communities.

Language Outreach Program winter classes in ESOL, Citizenship Test Preparedness, and Conversation will begin on January 3, 2022. To see the full class schedule, or to register, please see the Reach [LOP webpage](#).

DECEMBER HOLIDAY GIVING OPPORTUNITIES

Although Thanksgiving has passed, Reach's Holiday Giving Program is still in full swing. Reach hopes to serve close to 200 families with over 350 children for the December holidays.

In order to meet this high goal, Reach will need the assistance of supporters once again. All families who are served by Reach receive the opportunity to choose new, unwrapped gifts for their children who are twelve or younger. They receive gift cards to stores like Target, Walmart, and Five Below for their teenage children 13 - 17



years old. Families are also given a basket filled with the makings of a holiday dinner and a \$25 grocery gift card to purchase their entree. Everything is donated or funded by Reach supporters. In addition, it takes many volunteers to serve clients as they come in to pick up their holiday gifts.

For supporters who want to donate toys, food or gift cards, please contact [Andrea Kempner-Wink](#) or call the main Reach number at 301-637-0730 to arrange to drop off or request a pick-up of these items. Reach asks that full Holiday Dinner baskets be delivered on our distribution days, directly to the distribution location. Clients will be invited to pick up at 1010 Grandin Avenue's multipurpose room from 3pm to 7pm on Thursday, December 16, and at St. Francis Episcopal Church at 10033 River Road from 1pm - 4pm on Saturday, December 18. Dinner baskets can be dropped off up to an hour before and during the first two hours of distribution. To make arrangements to drop off at a different time, please reach out to [Andrea](#).

Volunteers are wanted to help with distribution both days, as well as transportation on Saturday. Toys and supplies are picked up by volunteers on Saturday, December 18 at Reach's Twinbrook office at 11am, transported, and set up at St. Francis Church. On Thursday and Saturday, volunteers are also needed to set up, check in clients, carry food baskets to cars, stock toys and help parents "shop" for their children. SSL hours are available for MCPS students. Volunteers must be 16 years old or older, or 12 - 15 years old if accompanied by a parent volunteer. Thursday volunteer shifts available are Thursday, 12/16 from 2pm - 5pm and 5pm - 7:30pm. Saturday, 12/18 shifts include the 11am - 1pm transportation shift, and distribution shifts from 12:30pm - 2:30pm or 2:30pm - 4:30pm. All volunteers must register in advance by contacting [Andrea Kempner-Wink](#), 301-637-0172.

For more information about holiday giving, see Reach's [Holiday Giving webpage](#).

Mark Your Calendar!

Monday, Dec. 13, 2021 5:30 p.m. - 7:30 p.m.
***ROCKVILLE CHAMBER HOLIDAY PARTY
& TOY DRIVE***

To benefit the Reach Holiday Giving Program
Fogo de Chao
11600 Old Georgetown Road, North Bethesda, MD

Thursday, Dec. 16, 2021 3:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.
DECEMBER HOLIDAY DISTRIBUTION

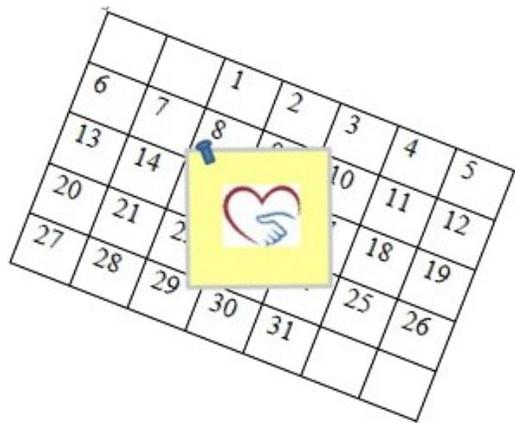
Multipurpose Room
1010 Grandin Avenue, Rockville, MD

Saturday, Dec. 18, 2021 1:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.
DECEMBER HOLIDAY DISTRIBUTION

St. Francis Episcopal Church
10033 River Road, Potomac, MD

Monday, Jan. 3, 2022
LANGUAGE OUTREACH PROGRAM WINTER SESSION

ESOL, Citizenship, and Conversation classes begin



SPOTLIGHT ON VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

PHOTOGRAPHER to document the work of Reach, our programs, events, and people. Our longtime volunteer photographer is "retiring" and Reach would like to find two or three volunteers who are available to take the spot. A current board member has agreed to be added to the list so we are looking for one or two more. Volunteers on the list will receive a request through email when a photographer is needed to document a specific event or when Reach needs pictures of program activities, portraits of staff/board, etc. Pictures at events may include candid photos of activities as well as group pictures.

JOIN A REACH COMMITTEE - Development, Finance, Faith Advisory, and Governance currently all meet online as standing committees. Help determine the success of Reach through your service. Short term committees also need new members.

CLIENT INTAKE COORDINATORS for Rockville Emergency Assistance Program (REAP). Are you a compassionate, detail-oriented person with a desire to help those in need? Work a four-hour shift weekly during business hours (ideally from 9am-1pm or 1pm-5pm) to help us assist Rockville residents facing eviction; provide County residents with referrals for low-cost dental and other services; and much more. Training is provided.

INTERPRETERS at the Kaseman Health Clinic are needed for four-hour shifts once each week between the hours of 9am and 5pm. Openings currently on Monday afternoon, Wednesday afternoon, Thursday and Friday. Help us ensure that our providers and patients can communicate clearly. Confidentiality is required.

DONATIONS REQUESTED:

For Kaseman Health Clinic & Housing Program:

C-Fold Paper Towels, Paper Towels, Hand Sanitizer, Antibacterial Hand Soap, Trash Bags, Disinfecting Wipes, Scouring Powder, Window Cleaner, Facial Tissue, Bleach, Disinfectant Spray, Dishwashing Liquid



For more information about these opportunities and others, please visit our [Volunteer Page](#) or contact [Andrea Kempner-Wink](#) at 301-637-0172.

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DONATE TO HELP OUR COMMUNITY

STAY CONNECTED



Community Reach of Montgomery County
1010 Grandin Ave #A1, Rockville MD 20851
301/637-0730 | Info@CMRocks.org | CMRocks.org

