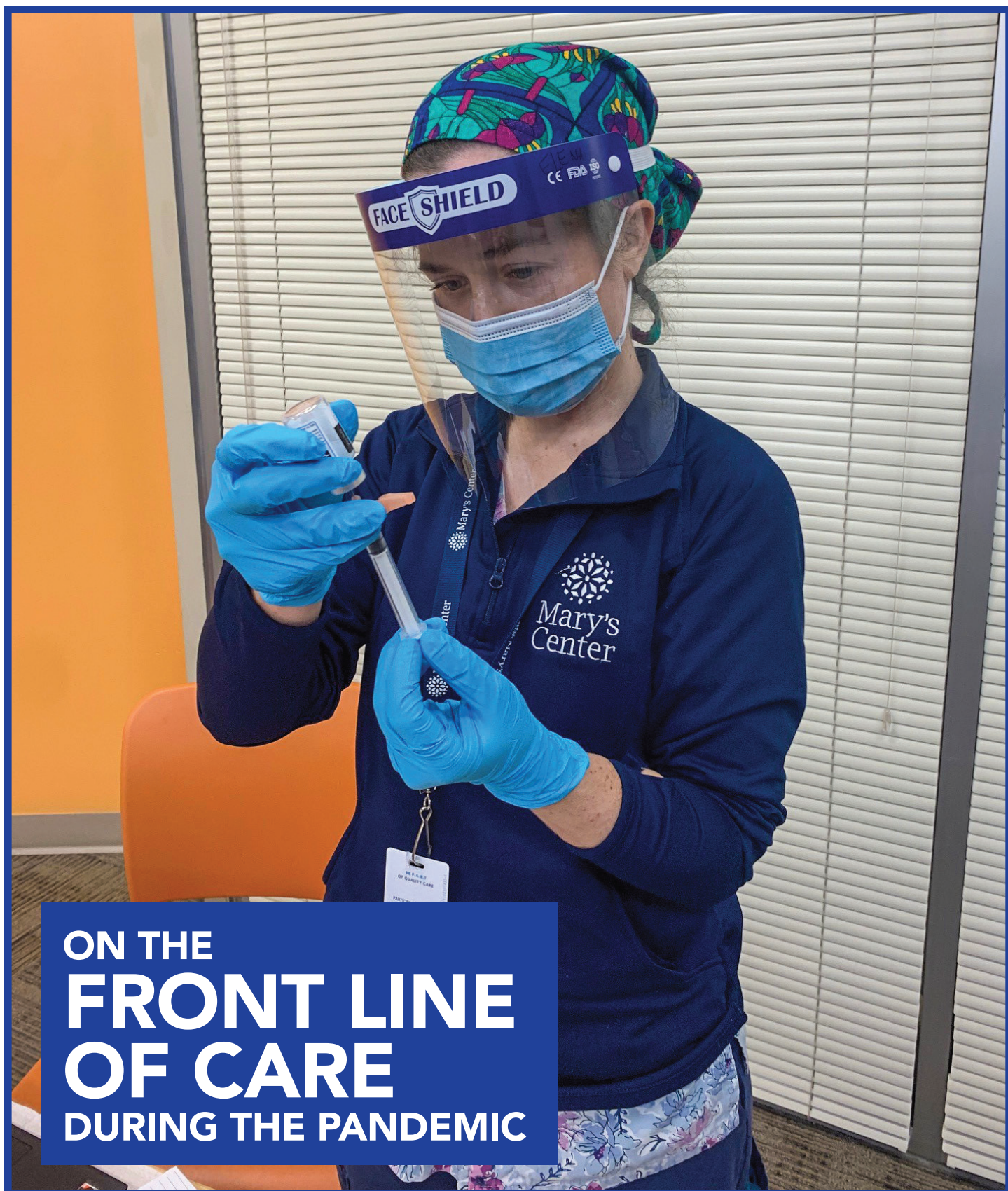


CONNECTIONS



ON THE
FRONT LINE
OF CARE
DURING THE PANDEMIC

HEALING THROUGH PERSEVERANCE AND INNOVATION

A MESSAGE FROM THE BOARD CHAIR AND THE PRESIDENT AND CEO

Dear Friends,

We will never forget this past year. We all experienced moments filled with fear and grief and for many of the families we serve, last year was especially devastating. However, thanks to your generosity, we successfully provided accessible, flexible healthcare and social support to neighbors at risk for suicide, homelessness, and hunger.

Amidst the chaos and unease, what kept our healthcare heroes grounded and our families supported was our commitment to extending empathetic, quality, and equitable care to everyone who needed our services. **We dedicate ourselves in 2021 to the task ahead – healing through perseverance and innovation.** With you as a partner, we will continue to enhance the social and economic mobility of the families we serve by helping build a pathway out of illness and poverty toward wellness and economic independence.

In December 2020, Mary's Center received its first doses of the Moderna COVID-19 vaccine, and we have been working closely with the District and Maryland to ensure the vaccine can be administered to all. In this issue of the Connections Newsletter, we shed light on our COVID-19 response efforts and leadership within the region. This vaccine is proven to be safe and effective, and we highly encourage each of you to get it when it is available for you.

Another major aspect in our path to healing and racial equity is emphasizing more of our advocacy efforts. This year, we opened our first fully dedicated advocacy position. Community health centers like ours serve as the first line of defense in times of crisis. By evolving our advocacy efforts, we will be better suited to address the long-existing inequities brought to light during the pandemic and ensure that our community's voice is directly heard.

Lastly, we are focused on innovation. By further developing our telehealth program, we can continue to meet the increased demand for our life-saving healthcare services. We will continue to work with local governments to improve direct relief efforts. Our Information Technology department recently partnered with the District to create the website for the DC Cares Assistance Program, which provides monetary relief for our struggling families.

On behalf of the more than 60,000 individuals that look to Mary's Center for direction, thank you again for standing with us as we heal and build hope through your acts of benevolence, courage, and selflessness. We truly are grateful for you.

In Solidarity,



Todd A. Cox, Esq.
Board Chair
Director of Civil Society
Wellspring Philanthropic Fund



Maria S. Gomez, RN, MPH
President and CEO



Todd A. Cox, Esq.
Board Chair



Maria S. Gomez, RN, MPH
President and CEO

NAME MARY'S CENTER IN YOUR WILL

Did you know Planned Gifts are a great way to care for the causes that matter most to you? Including Mary's Center in your estate plan will help ensure our life-changing work for generations to come.

Naming us in your will is simple. Here is some suggested language:

"I give and devise to Mary's Center, located in Washington, DC, all (or state percentage) of the rest, residue, and the remainder of my estate, both real and personal, to be used for its general support (or for the support of a specific fund).

Interested in learning more?
Call Heather Morgan,
Chief Development Officer,
at (202) 579-6198.

ON THE FRONT LINE OF CARE DURING THE PANDEMIC

When COVID-19 hit the nation, healthcare facilities needed to quickly pivot their delivery of care to protect the safety and health of patients and providers. The same is true for Mary's Center; we adapted our delivery of services and programs and became equipped to test and treat participants for the virus.

By investing in essential personal protective equipment (PPE), additional cleaning supplies, and tents for outdoor testing, Mary's Center responded rapidly to keep our participants and providers safe.



Director of Clinical Services, Elysia Jordan, RN, MPH, opens Mary's Center's first shipment of the Moderna COVID-19 vaccine.

Mary's Center is committed to protecting our community members from COVID-19 and will continue to work with local governments to administer the vaccine in the DC region. Visit <https://covidlink.maryland.gov/content/vaccine/> to learn about getting vaccinated in Maryland and <https://coronavirus.dc.gov/vaccine> for vaccination information in DC.

Shifting to Telehealth

To continue meeting the needs of our participants, we expanded our telehealth services by investing in more laptops and extra internet bandwidth. From March through December 2020, Mary's Center provided over 138,400 telemedicine appointments, including behavioral health, dental, medical, and nutrition.

Testing for the Virus

Since the start of the pandemic, Mary's Center has been a go-to testing site for the community. In partnership with the Montgomery County Department of Health and Human Services and the Latino Health Initiative, we have been providing ongoing free COVID-19 tests at our Silver Spring health center and other locations throughout Montgomery County.

The goal of this initiative is to reduce the impact of COVID-19 among Latino residents in Montgomery County by providing wraparound services including a health navigation phone line, COVID-19 testing, clinical follow-up, and case-management. Our Silver Spring Director of Operations, Zulma Aparicio, explained that the need for these resources is significant. From October 2020 through January 2021, Mary's Center "tested at least 150 individuals each week at our Silver Spring site and the positivity rate continues to rise," said Zulma.

Vaccination is key

A critical step to prevent the spread of COVID-19 is vaccination, and Mary's Center is playing a crucial role in vaccine dissemination. As of February 1st, Mary's Center has vaccinated over 800 individuals in the region, a figure that we hope is more than doubled by the time this newsletter is mailed. Our COVID-19 Vaccine Task Force is working with DC Health and the Health and Human Services Departments for both Montgomery County and Prince George's County in Maryland to vaccinate community members.

Vaccine Task Force member and Mary's Center's Director of Clinical Services, Elysia Jordan, RN, MPH, explained that community health centers play a critical role in getting community members vaccinated. According to Elysia, "without health centers, states would have difficulty ensuring that the most vulnerable patients would have access to COVID-19 vaccination."

COUNTING ON RELIABLE DONORS LIKE ALBERT LANG III



Albert Lang III (pictured above) and monthly donors like him give us the flexibility to respond to arising needs and emergencies throughout the year.

Community health centers nationwide are coping with the financial implications of the pandemic. From purchasing increased amounts of personal protective equipment to investing in the technology needed to meet the urgent expansion of telehealth services, these efforts are essential in keeping families healthy and supported. With the pandemic still raging, these expenses continue to impact thousands of health centers working tirelessly to support the fabric of our community.

Fortunately, generous supporters like Albert Lang III have played a crucial role in helping us navigate these challenging times. Albert's monthly donations enable Mary's Center to remain at the forefront of care.

This is Albert's story

Born and raised in the DC Metro Area, Albert has a deep appreciation for his community. At an early age, his parents instilled in him the importance of giving back – especially if you have the means to do so. "I remember my dad," recalled Albert, "anytime we'd walk by someone asking for money, he would reach in and give whatever he could. No questions asked. He taught me that giving back to your community is something that should come naturally."

As life progressed, Albert discovered his passion for communication and public health. That's when he came across Mary's Center. "I found out about Mary's Center while working at a public health organization," said

Albert. "I researched different ways of preventing chronic and infectious diseases, and Mary's Center was a model of excellence." Through the research, he came to understand that "by connecting individuals with wrap-around medical and social support services, they gain access to stronger futures."

Albert decided to invest

Becoming a monthly donor for Mary's Center wasn't a tough decision for Albert. Soon after learning about the health center's impact, he realized that he was "woefully short in giving back to organizations in DC that provide for change and also support the existing fabric of the community."

“Monthly gifts are a reliable revenue stream that the organization can count on throughout the year, which helps them plan accordingly, not to mention that it is a very convenient way to give.”

Since becoming a donor, Albert's investment in Mary's Center has continued to develop. Last year, he volunteered to serve on the Mary's Center Virtual Gala Visionary Committee. Through his volunteerism, he connected the organization to numerous businesses and individuals interested in investing in healthier futures.

In 2021, join Albert in providing quality healthcare, education, workforce development, and social resources year-round with a recurring gift. Become a monthly supporter by visiting www.maryscenter.org/donate and be sure to check the box that says, "Yes, I want to support Mary's Center year-round. Make this a monthly gift."

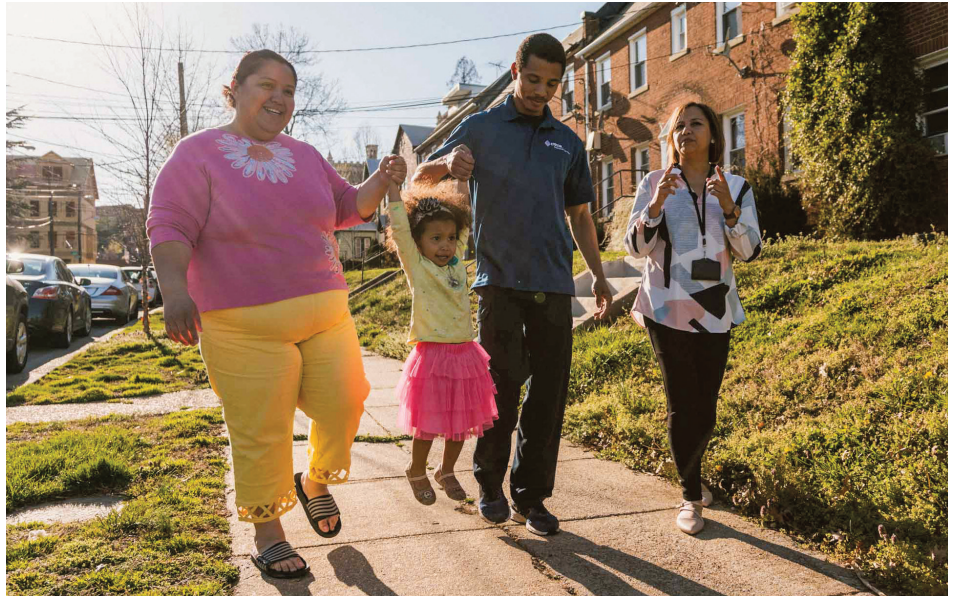
FAMILY SUPPORT HEROES

Throughout the COVID-19 public health emergency, the Family Support Workers (FSWs) at Mary's Center have been critical to supporting the overall health and well-being of our community. FSWs assess the social and emotional needs of the patient population while helping them navigate other essential services inside and outside Mary's Center.

When the pandemic hit and the economy shifted, there was a drastic increase in our community's need for additional support. As our participants faced housing and food insecurity as well as financial strains, our FSWs were at the center of helping families navigate these obstacles. "At Mary's Center we recognize that treating physical health alone is not enough," stated Director of Social Services Jessica Kaufman, MPH. "For the best possible health outcome, we need to address social, emotional, and educational needs." This involves FSWs supporting families through each chapter of life.

One significant role of the FSWs is supporting women before, during, and after pregnancy through the Healthy Start program. During the fall of 2020, FSWs from our home visiting program distributed infant blankets and postpartum care kits directly to new moms in their homes. They were extremely grateful for these deliveries since they have had to limit their public outings to minimize their risk of infection. For these mothers, it was a meaningful and unforgettable part of their postpartum experience.

FSWs connect participants to resources within Mary's Center as well as in the greater community.



Family Support Workers play an essential role in Mary's Center's efforts to provide emergency supplies like food, diapers, and money to ensure families keep their homes, and computers to keep children connected to school. Thank you to the many supporters who provided assistance for this critical direct relief to our families.

Throughout the pandemic, participants experienced a greater need for housing assistance and legal support in fighting eviction despite the federal ban. FSWs have been there to support participants with accessing complex cash and food assistance programs at the local and federal level. These resources have been essential to our community in meeting their basic needs during this unprecedented time.

While this past year has been a challenge for all, our staff has remained focused on leading our participants to healthier and brighter futures. Sasha Zients, a Mary's Center FSW, shared that helping her participants successfully overcome these obstacles has been very

rewarding. Sasha said, "I have found it both challenging and exciting to find innovative ways to support my participants. As a Home Visiting FSW, I have a dynamic and wide-ranging job. Some days I am working to secure housing. Other days I am simply a listening ear. I am kept on my toes, but I wouldn't have it any other way as I cherish being a witness to the triumphs of the individuals I work with."

FSWs like Sasha are true heroes to so many families during these times of uncertainty and great loss. Mary's Center is extremely proud of the successes of our participants and we feel privileged to be in their lives during one of the most challenging times.

If you are interested in learning more about the extraordinary work of our family support teams and other essential social services programs, please visit www.maryscenter.org/social-services.



CONNECTIONS

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ENVIRONMENTALLY
RESPONSIBLE PAPER



Social Services



Education



Behavioral
Health



Dental



Medical



SPECIAL CHARITABLE TAX DEDUCTION FOR NON-ITEMIZERS

When the CARES Act was passed in the spring of 2020, it included a special provision that allows taxpayers who claim the standard deduction to take an additional above-the-line \$300 tax deduction for qualified charitable contributions when filing 2020 tax returns. The COVID relief bill passed in December 2020 extended the \$300 charitable deduction for non-itemizers for 2021. An additional benefit for 2021 is that the maximum charitable deduction amount increased for married couples filing jointly from \$300 to \$600.

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