

2024 GRANT RECIPIENTS

18 Grants totaling \$62,513

ACADEMY ART MUSEUM

\$1,000

Founded in 1958, the mission of the Academy Art Museum (AAM) is to promote the knowledge, practice, and appreciation of the arts and to enhance cultural life on the Eastern Shore by making available to everyone the Museum's expanding collection, exhibitions, and broad spectrum of arts programs. This grant will support AAM's Free Family Bus Trips, which launched in 2023 with two successful trips, one to Baltimore and one to Washington. The program provides under-resourced children and their families the opportunity to explore regional museums and cultural institutions they may not otherwise have the opportunity to visit. Bus transportation, museum admission, and lunch are provided for all participants. These free field trips offer an innovative way to serve the community and have tremendous potential for impact.

www.academyartmuseum.org

BENEDICTINE SCHOOL FOR EXCEPTIONAL CHILDREN

\$4,889.73

"Bathroom Upgrades and Feminine Hygiene Product Access"

Founded over 60 years ago and based in the belief in the dignity of all people, Benedictine School's mission is to help children and adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities and autism achieve their greatest potential. Located in Ridgely, it is an accredited multi-functional year-round education and residential center for more than 150 children and adults with severe intellectual disabilities, multiple disabilities, and autism. The school offers a wide array of programs, including Functional Academics, Adult Services, Community Services and Training Center, and Rehabilitation Services. This grant will underwrite safety and accessibility upgrades to a women's locker room used by students, supported adults, staff, community members, and guests. The renovation project also includes the installation of feminine hygiene product dispensers and disposal receptacles in the locker room and four other restrooms across the campus. www.benschool.org

COMMUNITY MEDIATION UPPER SHORE

\$2,000

"Making Peace Possible for Women and Girls"

Founded in 2002 by the Maryland Mediation and Conflict Resolution Office, Community Mediation Upper Shore's mission is to build and provide community-based conflict resolution and peace building services at no cost. CMUS is committed to working together for sustainable peace and resilience in our community, where all will have the strategies, skills, and support to resolve conflicts at home, at school, and in the workplace. Trained volunteers mediate family conflicts, health and elder care, divorce and childcare issues, living situations, recovery from drug use, and loss or separation. Referrals are made through the courts, public schools, local management boards, community partners and others. Services are free to all. This grant will support CMUS operations that make it possible to provide mediation training and/or services to help women and girls resolve conflicts and build communication skills. www.cmusmediation.org

COMPASS REGIONAL HOSPICE

\$4,000

“Camp New Dawn Adult Retreat and Family Camp”

Compass is a fully licensed, independent, community-based nonprofit organization certified by Medicare and the state of Maryland, and accredited by the Joint Commission. Its mission is to provide comprehensive, professional and compassionate care and support to patients, caregivers and families who have found themselves facing a life-limiting diagnosis or loss. Since 1985, Compass has been allowing patients to spend their final months the way they choose, guiding loved ones after a life-limiting diagnosis, and showing individuals healthy ways to manage their grief. Today, the organization is a regional provider of hospice care, supportive care, and grief services in Caroline, Kent, and Queen Anne’s counties. The Hope and Healing Center’s wide variety of programs are designed for people of all ages who have experienced the death of a loved one. These programs, provided free of charge, are offered by social workers, grief counselors, a chaplain, and volunteers specially trained in the many facets and phases of grief. This grant will support Camp New Dawn’s Adult Retreat and Family Camp, which is designed for all types of families. During the adult retreat, children and teens are simultaneously attending Camp New Dawn; a four-day, three-night grief retreat. It was discovered that the youth were developing new coping skills, but once they re-joined their families, the adults often struggled to incorporate these new skills and emotions. Through family camp, they learn to communicate and face their grief together. www.compassregionalhospice.org

CRITCHLOW ADKINS CHILDREN’S CENTERS

\$3,166.80

“Tuition Assistance”

Critchlow Adkins Children's Centers' mission is to provide quality, financially accessible childcare for children ages 2–12 and their families in a nurturing, diverse, safe, and enriching environment. All five CACC's sites have the Maryland EXCELS Check Level 5 rating, are fully accredited, and have achieved these highest levels of excellence for over 30 years. Over the past five decades, CACC has remained committed to the vision of its founders who were concerned about the lack of available quality childcare for working families in Talbot County. The families receiving tuition assistance are families who struggle to afford the cost of quality, licensed daycare for their children. Data shows that quality early care programs help prepare children to be more successful in school both socially and cognitively. This grant will provide tuition assistance for single mothers who are working and/or going to school but still struggling financially to provide the best care and educational opportunity for their children in the Before- and After-School Care program. www.cacckids.org

FOR ALL SEASONS

\$3,746

“Bringing Girls and Women together with Color Me Closer Too”

For All Seasons was founded as a nonprofit in 1986 by a group of citizens – including the Fund’s current president, Karen Kaludis – concerned about child victims of sexual assault. Today, For All Seasons is one of the Shore’s largest outpatient mental health providers and is still the only Rape Crisis Center serving 22% of Maryland’s geography, representing nearly 200,000 people. For All Seasons’ team of nearly 100 professional staff members work in the Easton headquarters and out of satellite offices in each of the five Mid-Shore counties. This project harnesses the

therapeutic power of art therapy to foster connection and bonding between caregivers and young women over shared experiences. Licensed Clinical Art Therapist Jane Gordon, LCPAT, ATR-BC will complete a second edition of her Color Me Closer branded interactive art therapy workbook, a tool designed for paired engagement that promotes introspection and intergenerational bonding. Jane will also facilitate a public workshop, providing an intimate and impactful experience for 25 pairs of women and girls. The women and girls can engage in further art exercises at home, where the lessons and bonds from the workshop are revisited and reinforced. This grant will cover the initial costs for the “Color Me Closer Too” workbook. www.forallseasonsinc.org

GIRLS ON THE RUN OF THE GREATER CHESAPEAKE

\$4,565

“Program Access for Girls”

Girls on the Run of the Greater Chesapeake (GOTRGC) started in Annapolis in the fall of 2005 with 25 girls. GOTRGC has served over 20,000 girls since its founding and serves approximately 2,200 girls per year. It has served teams in Queen Anne’s and Talbot Counties since 2015, Caroline County in 2019, and welcomed teams in Dorchester County in 2023. In addition to the Mid-Shore counties, it also serves Anne Arundel, Baltimore, and Calvert counties and Baltimore City. GOTRGC provides girls in 3rd-8th grades with a positive, after-school youth development program that teaches social, emotional, and physical well-being at a critical time in their lives prior to adolescence. Participants learn to recognize their inner strength, increase their level of physical activity, imagine their possibilities, and confidently stand up for themselves and others through the innovative integration of fun physical activities, life-skills lessons, and impactful community projects. Running and other physical activities are used as a platform for teaching life skills and promoting positive social, emotional, and holistic health outcomes for girls. The curriculum includes lessons with the girl voice at the center, ensuring the program is both developmentally appropriate, and relevant and engaging for participants. During the 10-week program, the girls train for and complete a 5K race. This grant will fully underwrite registration fees for 26 Mid-Shore girls. www.gotrchesapeake.org

HAVEN MINISTRIES

\$5,000

“Homes of Hope Case Management and Client Education Program”

Haven Ministries has been assisting the poor in Queen Anne’s County for more than 20 years, and opened the Homes of Hope in July of 2022. These are two houses that sit adjacent to each other on a property in Stevensville, each with six double-bedded bedrooms where homeless women with children are provided longer-term housing (up to two years). The philosophy of Haven Ministries is that not only resources be provided to those in need but that training also be provided to help individuals to help themselves. Mothers participate in a year-long training program that utilizes the curriculum of a successful nation-wide program called "Getting Ahead in a Just-Gettin-By World". Clients follow a comprehensive guide while interacting with each other to learn life skills, including but not limited to childcare, housekeeping, budgeting, "smart" shopping, preparing for job interviews, and seeking employment. Learning these skills enables the mothers to better address challenges related to living independent, sustainable lives while caring for their children. This grant will address the expense of the management and training necessary for case managers and curriculum. www.haven-ministries.org

IMAGINATION LIBRARY OF TALBOT COUNTY**\$5,000***“Babies Bonding with Books”*

Imagination Library of Talbot County’s mission is to address the very important need to expose children birth to age 5 to literature and a vocabulary-rich environment by providing each child enrolled in the program with the gift of a new, age-appropriate, engaging book which is mailed to his or her home each month. As of the 23-24 school year, all of Talbot County's elementary schools are now Title 1 schools meaning that the poverty level is at least 40%. As the low-income level continues to grow in Talbot County, Imagination Library of Talbot County encourages all families, especially those who live at or below the poverty level, to enroll their children because every child should enter Kindergarten ready to learn how to read. Currently, 1,199 children are registered in the program - 76.6% of the eligible population! Because 90% of brain development occurs between birth and age 5, the first five years of life offer a critical window for learning. Preschool children who have limited exposure to books enter kindergarten a full 12 to 14 months behind their peers in terms of kindergarten readiness. By third grade, if they have not closed this gap, it becomes an achievement gap to continue throughout their schooling. This grant will fund the cost for 200 Talbot county young girls to receive 12 high-quality, age-appropriate books for one year. www.imaginationlibrary.com

KENT ATTAINABLE HOUSING**\$2,740***“Outreach to Rock Hall Residents”*

Kent Attainable Housing (KAH) is a nonprofit that was formed in April 2019 by three Kent County residents with a deep commitment to bettering the plight of the working poor among us who are stuck in the cycle of inter-generational poverty. The organization is attacking this problem by increasing the number of affordable homes in Kent County and preparing those with limited incomes to become financially secure homeowners with a major asset to pass on to their children. KAH has two primary programs: 1. constructing and renovating affordable housing for first-time home ownership and 2. applicant financial literacy and support services. The biggest obstacle faced by their target population is establishing and maintaining sufficient credit history and credit rating to qualify for a mortgage. Up to now the community outreach efforts to recruit applicants and build houses has focused on Chestertown and Butlertown. This grant would help add Rock Hall as a third focus area within Kent county. Rock Hall is a diverse community. This grant will help finance a direct mailing to each household in Rock Hall to engage more applicants to the program, as well as educate the community about the need for affordable housing for our working poor and how community members can support these efforts through volunteering and financial support. www.kentattainablehousing.org

OPEN DOORS PARTNERS IN EDUCATION**\$5,000***“High Quality Literacy Tutoring for Girls in Kent County and Area”*

Open Doors Partners in Education strives to increase the literacy rate of struggling readers by providing tutoring, offering educational enrichment opportunities, and increasing community awareness of learning differences in Kent County and surrounding areas. It uses the Orton-Gillingham Approach, a multisensory, structured, sequential, diagnostic, and

prescriptive way to teach literacy when reading, writing, and spelling does not come easily to individuals, such as those with dyslexia. Founded in 2020 for children in grades K-2, it quickly became apparent there were many outside that range who needed what Open Doors was providing, and the age range was expanded to include all ages. Tutoring is provided at no cost to Kent County Public school students and adults who live in Kent County who are falling behind in reading skills. Students enrolled in other schools and adults who live outside Kent County may also enroll in tutoring for a discounted cost. This grant will support the High Quality Literacy Tutoring for Girls in Kent County and Surrounding Community program through the purchase of Orton-Gillingham tutoring materials and program-related supplies to help address the issue of low and declining literacy rates in Kent County. www.opendoorsed.org

PARTNERS IN CARE MARYLAND

\$2,000

“Programs and Services to Empower Mid-Shore’s Older Women to Age in Place with Dignity and Respect”

Since 1993, Partners in Care (PIC) empowers seniors to lead vibrant lives within their communities while aging in their own homes. PIC plays a pivotal role in the lives of many older adults who encounter barriers when trying to access economic, social, and civic opportunities. Often, these individuals find themselves marginalized and underserved on multiple fronts. 80% of PIC’s members are women and 69% are low-income. Its programs are designed to empower these underserved older adults, including those in rural areas with limited service options. PIC serves as a safety net, bridging critical gaps through our comprehensive programs and services. This project helps to meet the non-medical needs of senior women in Talbot and Caroline Counties with door-to-door essential transportation, home handyman services, personalized support and advocacy, and social programs to engage and connect seniors. Through their volunteer-powered time-bank model of service delivery, any services provided by volunteers count towards accessing similar services for themselves, allowing everyone to participate in an exchange of their time, regardless of their budget. The grant will support Partners in Care’s outreach to find 21 new volunteers to meet the needs of Talbot and Caroline senior women living independently in the community. www.partnersincare.org/locations/mid-shore/

PINE STREET COMMITTEE

\$4,000

“Summer STEM for Girls”

Pine Street Committee’s mission is to work in partnership with Cambridge’s diverse community to provide underserved youth and adults with education, health and wellness, work skills, and cultural enrichment programs. It oversees a community center, The Cambridge Empowerment Center, that offers social and recreational opportunities for the entire community, regardless of age. Pine Street Committee runs a free, after-school enrichment program for children aged 5 to 13 to learn, play, and socialize after school. In the summer it provides a nine-week summer learning and mentoring program to help children maintain or improve their academics, especially in science, math, and technology - - areas of learning still affected by the loss of school time during the pandemic. This is especially true for girls living at or below the poverty level who have less exposure to STEM subjects and activities and therefore fall behind in reading and

vocabulary as well. “Summer STEM for Girls” can take up to 20 girls to participate in small group lessons that will meet twice weekly for nine weeks and culminate with a field trip to the Science Center. The lessons will use STEM kits, for example: "building a robot", as well as other teaching materials to learn about science and math subjects. This grant will underwrite program costs, including materials and supplies, STEM kits, and field trip.

www.cambridgeempowermentcenter.org

TALBOT COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

\$6,000

“Retreat for child victims of sexual abuse and non-offending caregiver”

The mission of the volunteer board of Talbot Community Connections (TCC) is to raise and distribute funds to enhance the Talbot County Department of Social Services’ (TCDSS) capacity to respond directly to problems of safety and well-being of all Talbot County residents. Its funds help individuals stay in the community, and families stay united in their homes. More than half the funds raised by Talbot Community Connections support the TCCAC, which provides a multi-disciplinary response to allegations of child abuse, and ensures that victims of child sexual abuse or assault and their non-offending caregivers have access to support services in a safe, culturally respectful environment in a child-focused setting. This grant will underwrite a retreat for 25 women and girls that will focus on re-establishing trust and communication between each set of caregiver and victim with the goal of improving support from the caregiver to the child. To be held at a secure location, both caregivers and victims can feel safe sharing feelings and participating in activities. Research demonstrates that parent/caregiver support is essential to reducing trauma and improving outcomes for victims and family members. The hope is for the families to recover, and rebuild resilience and well-being.

www.talbotcommunityconnections.org

TALBOT HOSPICE

\$5,000

“H.E.A.R.T.S. - “Helping Empty Arms Recover Through Sharing

Talbot Hospice has provided compassionate hospice services, integrated hospice into our lives and educated our community about hospice for more than four decades. Today, the organization’s Eleanor A. Koons Hospice House and Clark-Guthrie Center provide a range of home-based and inpatient hospice and end-of-life services for our citizens. Perinatal and/or infant loss and grief are recognized as traumatic life events. The Mid- Shore region has little to no services or opportunities for this type of support. The H.E.A.R.T.S. infant and perinatal loss program meets this need by providing group support for anyone who has lost any pregnancy or an infant up to the first year of life. Guided by members of the Bereavement Team at Talbot Hospice, participants share their stories and are given the emotional support they need to help them deal with their grief both individually and through shared experiences within this unique community. The goal of the program is to support every person who has experienced this kind of loss with facilitated support and peers to support them, wherever they are on their emotional journey. This grant will provide funding for targeted outreach, such as informational program materials for display in medical offices, to identify and offer help to those who have experienced perinatal or infant loss. www.talbothospice.com

TALBOT INTERFAITH SHELTER**\$1,405.47**

Talbot Interfaith Shelter (TIS) is dedicated to ending homelessness in Maryland's Mid-Shore by providing Shelter, Stability, Support, and a path to Success for families and individuals in need. The S4 Program helps men, women, and children to move from homelessness to self-sufficiency. This year, TIS is celebrating 15 years since the organization was founded and 14 years since first opening its doors to those in need in our community. TIS has the capacity to serve five families in the family shelter. The singles shelter, which opened in 2022, can house up to 5 men and 5 women, and the Transitional Housing Program can support up to 15 families. Currently, between the family shelters and Transitional Housing apartments, there are 54 guests, of whom 24 are children ranging from 18 months to 14 years and 6 are Seniors, 3 of them women. Due in part to a series of recessions, high housing costs, and a shortage of affordable housing, older adults are now the fastest growing segment of America's homeless population. This grant will help supplement the additional costs needed to support the senior women at TIS. Providing these items helps to provide our seniors with dignity and safety that ultimately leads to their well-being. www.talbotinterfaithshelter.org

TILGHMAN AREA YOUTH ASSOCIATION**\$1,000***"Building Strong Leaders"*

The Tilghman Area Youth Association (TAYA) mission is to enrich the lives of Tilghman youth, by connecting them to each other, their families, and their community. TAYA brings needed educational and social services to the island, and works with residents and other nonprofits to improve the quality of life. Started in 2003, under the auspices of the St. Michaels Community Center, TAYA has sponsored several important programs, including Tilghman After School Kids (TASK). TASK extends the learning day at Tilghman Elementary School, offering a safe, nurturing environment afterschool program for students each weekday. It offers different creative enrichment classes each day as well as time for exercise, homework, and nutritious snacks. An ongoing challenge is recruiting and retaining qualified staff. TASK has found that by educating and empowering young women, often "graduates" of the program, they not only develop skills to run a high-quality program, but it encourages these young women leaders to pursue their goals, while working in a meaningful capacity that supports not only themselves, and their families, but the organization and community as well. This grant will support costs associated with increasing employee training and professional development opportunities.

www.tilghmanyouth.org

YMCA OF THE CHESAPEAKE**\$2,000***"LiveSTRONG at the YMCA"*

The YMCA of the Chesapeake is the largest Human Service organization on the Eastern Shore; strengthening communities through youth development, healthy living, and social responsibility for 165 years. Across the Shore, the YMCA engages 45,000 members and their families, regardless of age, income, or background, to nurture the potential of children and teens, improves the Shore's health and wellbeing, and provides opportunities to give back and support neighbors. The YMCA of the Chesapeake operates facilities in Caroline, Cecil, Dorchester, Kent, Talbot,

Queen Anne's, Worcester, and Wicomico Counties in Maryland and on Chincoteague Island in Virginia. LiveSTRONG is a 12-week, small-group physical activity and well-being program for people affected by cancer. Each class is comprised of 6-12 participants that meet twice a week for 90-minutes each session. Throughout the program, participants work on cardiovascular conditioning, strength training, balance, and flexibility exercises. The program has shown to help survivors meet or exceed the recommended amount of physical activity, increase their cardio endurance, and improve their quality of life as well as decrease their cancer-related fatigue. LiveSTRONG creates a welcoming community in which cancer survivors can diminish the severity of therapy side effects, develop supportive relationships, and improve their quality of life. Not just a fitness program, LiveSTRONG is a lifeline for those with chronic illnesses. This grant will support female participants in the program. www.ymcachesapeake.org