



# Montgomery Coalition for Adult English Literacy

## FY16 FINAL REPORT

Contract #9711000042-AA

## INTRODUCTION

MCAEL is a community coalition of public, nonprofit, and business partners that support more than 60+ adult ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages) and literacy service programs, 800+ instructors and staff, and approximately 13,000 adult learners. Together, the coalition works to strengthen the community by helping adults gain the English literacy skills needed to reach their potential as parents, workers and community members.

In July 2015, the Montgomery Coalition for Adult English Literacy (MCAEL) was awarded an extension of Contract #9711000042 “to continue to promote English literacy, leverage private and public dollars for adult English as a Second Language (ESL) services, and assist ESL providers in building their capacity to increase the quality of ESL services they provide.” Under this contract, MCAEL allocates and manages grant funding to support direct services, through special authorization by the Montgomery County Council. In addition to providing direct financial resources, MCAEL is dedicated to strengthening the county-wide adult English literacy network with resources, training, collaborations and advocacy to support a thriving community and an optimal workforce.

MCAEL has recently grown to a staff of five people(4FTE: an Executive Director (FT), ESOL Program Manager (PT), ESOL Program and Instructional Coordinator (FT), Communications and Outreach Coordinator (PT) and Program and Administrative Assistant (PT). Additionally, MCAEL continues to maintain the services it provides through the dedication of board members and a dedicated cohort of volunteers.

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## MCAEL PROGRAM ACTIVITIES AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Throughout FY16, MCAEL undertook the following activities in line with the general purpose of the funding and the specific Scope of Services identified in Section II of the contract, with the following results:

### 1. Maintain a database of ESL providers, teachers, advocates and advocacy groups that serve the residents in Montgomery County or could be of benefit to ESL providers that serve Montgomery County residents.

- Conducted annual revision of provider programs database via survey, emails and individual follow- up calls - contacted over 60 ESOL programs/sent emails to 150+ provider staff. Collected information through 26 data points (e.g. name, location, time/day of classes, and #of volunteers).
- Staff and board continued to build a network of advocates, providers and instructors by promoting literacy through various public fora, individual meetings and local media appearances. Attended 50+ events around Montgomery County and Greater DC area including those in the following list.

- ✦ Committee for Montgomery Legislative Breakfast & monthly meetings
- ✦ Bethesda Chevy Chase Chamber of Commerce – (Events & Economic Development Committee Meetings)
- ✦ Interfaith Works Companies Caring Breakfast
- ✦ Montgomery Moving Forward Steering Committee Meetings & Symposia
- ✦ Montgomery County Chamber of Commerce Business Awards Dinner and Public Safety Luncheon
- ✦ Community Foundation Funders Roundtable and Anniversary Celebration
- ✦ IMPACT Now
- ✦ Down County Network Meetings
- ✦ National Coalition for Literacy Public Policy Annual Meeting
- ✦ Leadership Montgomery Homecoming and Celebration, and events throughout the year
- ✦ Montgomery County Public Schools Prekindergarten/Head Start Programs Annual Community Providers’ Collaboration Forum and Parent Outreach Open House
- ✦ Montgomery County Week in Review
- ✦ Comcast Newsmakers
- ✦ Gaithersburg Coalition Provider Meetings & City Nonprofit Focus Group

- Met with and continue to partner with other nonprofit organizations and government locally, regionally and nationally including:
  - Academy of Hope
  - Bethesda Urban Partnership
  - COABE (Commission on Adult Basic Ed)
  - Collaboration Council for Children, Youth and Families
  - College Tracks Montgomery County
  - Gilchrist Center/Office of Community Partnerships
  - Ethiopian Community Development Council,
  - Hispanic Business Foundation Maryland
  - Identity
  - Interfaith Works
  - Latino Economic Development Center (LEDC)
  - Lutheran Social Services
  - MAACCE (Maryland Association for Adult Community and Continuing Education)
  - Montgomery County Health and Human Services
  - Montgomery College
  - Montgomery College Foundation
  - Montgomery County Public Libraries
  - Montgomery County Public Schools
  - NCL (The National Coalition for Literacy)
  - Nonprofit Montgomery/ Nonprofit Roundtable
  - Nonprofit Village
  - Pre-Release Center, Montgomery County Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation.
  - ProLiteracy
  - WATESOL (Washington, D.C. Area Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages Association)
  - WATESOL (Washington, D.C. Area Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages Association), Maryland TESOL and TESOL (international)
  - World Education

## MCAEL in the Community

### *Coalition Building*

- Executive Director serves on Leadership Committee for Montgomery Moving Forward
- Executive Director serves on the Committee for Montgomery Board and in the Secretary position on the executive committee
- ESOL Program Coordinator serves on board of Maryland TESOL
- Corporate Volunteer Council
- Gaithersburg Coalition Meetings
- Executive Director was part of a four-day county delegation to El Salvador as part of Sister-Cities program
- MCAEL attends and participates in provider program graduations
- MCAEL attends and participates in Gaithersburg Provider meetings
- Attended the Montgomery County History Conference
- Attended the Montgomery County Urban Library Summit

### *Outreach*

- Coordinated Adult Education and Family Literacy Week (AEFL)
- Hosted information tables at:
  - World of Montgomery
  - New Americans Expo
  - Asian Pacific American Heritage Month Resource Fair
  - Community Providers Resource Forum
  - MCPS Back to School Fair
  - School Community United in Partnership (SCUP) Conference

### *Resource Development*

- Hosted a Spelling Bee fundraiser with 250+ attendees, 70 tickets sold, over 30 sponsors, over \$30,000 raised
- Benefit dinner hosted by Jeffrey Z. Slavin with 30 attendees and over \$1,000 raised

**2. Provide notice of funding and grants opportunities, national and state policy issues, best practices and professional development by e-mail alerts to County ESL providers. The contractor must provide at least one such notice per week.**

**Communications:**

- Communicated with individuals through the growing MCAEL community e-list.
- Total individuals touched by e-mail equals 2,625+ individuals on a monthly basis.
- Expanded MCAEL's role as a communication hub by utilizing Facebook and Twitter to disseminate information & connect community members. Increased Facebook likes from 332 in FY15 to 386 in FY16; increased MCAEL's Twitter followers to 496.
- Circulated 52 electronic e-announcements (July-June) to 184 provider staff and 779 instructors.
- Printed 30 posters that are displayed in each of the Montgomery County Public Libraries as well in the County's Executive Office Building.

**Announcements contained information on resources & opportunities including but not limited to:**

- Professional development trainings/ conferences (local, regional & national)
- MCAEL meetings and workshops
- Community meetings (e.g. Down County Providers, Workforce Mtgs)
- Awards and stipends and additional funding opportunities for instructors
- Surveys to gain feedback and insight on how to improve MCAEL provider and instructor meetings
- Donated supplies/books to member organizations (local & national)
- Current research, ESOL best practices/teaching tools
- Information on current issues – GED® & NCL/ Programme for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies (PIAAC)

**3. Administer grants to providers of adult English literacy services, with the purpose of supporting existing activities, expanding activities, and improving the capacity of providers to deliver high-quality services.**

- For FY16, MCAEL awarded \$950,000 in County-funded grants. The funding supported 17 organizations for 22 adult English literacy programs. (See Attachment 1: Grantee Award List for FY16.)
  - ESOL Adult Learner Enrollments in classes supported by MCAEL grant funding
    - Duplicated – 6,577 adult learners (shows learners who took more than 1 session)
    - Unduplicated – 4,328 adult learners

Thousands of additional learners were supported in non-funded programs through the larger coalition network & supported by MCAEL's provider services, including training for instructors.

- Grants Management FY16: worked with grantees to develop individual plans for program improvement; collected reports and collated class and student data from grantees at midyear; and submitted invoices and reports to the County throughout the year.
- Capacity/Quality FY16: 28 program staff participated in a half-day retreat that centered on grant requirements; individual action plans for program improvement related to established standards for adult English literacy programs; clarification of commonly used ESOL terms; and networking. TESOL Standards books were provided to all grant recipients to assist in the development/ management of their programs according to research based best practices.
- Capacity/Quality FY16: MCAEL program grantees continued to do peer evaluations as started in FY14. Grantees used the rubric created, based on the TESOL Standards, to visit one another's program and provide constructive feedback to one another and share best practices (the first such experience for many programs).

- Grants Management FY17: Facilitated FY17 grants process (January – June 2016) which included development and issuance of RFP that reflected priorities identified by the MCAEL needs assessment conducted in Fall 2015 (see below); recruitment and orientation of Grant Review Panel members; coordination of grant applicant interviews with panel members; collation and analysis of grant application data for panel members (such as analysis of cost per learner) to assist them in reviewing proposals; facilitation of a full-day panel meeting for deliberations on grant allocations; coordination of MCAEL board approval of recommendations; grant award notification; and publicity for grants distributed by MCAEL and funded through Montgomery County Government. For FY17, 23 programs implemented by 17 organizations will be funded at a total of 1,010,000 thanks to Montgomery County’s continued generosity.

**4. Conduct an Outcomes Project that measures the quality and effectiveness of ESL service delivery. Grantees/Providers receiving funds from MCAEL must submit demographic and performance data to MCAEL as a condition of their funding. MCAEL must ensure that Grantees/Providers comply with the established reporting requirements and all reporting deadlines.**

- As part of midyear and final reports, MCAEL continues to require grant recipients to submit data on number of classes, locations, and learners enrolled, as well as demographic information (gender, date of birth, country of origin, zip code) of learners. Efforts have been made to streamline reporting forms for ease of use and clarity.

**Definitions project:**

- In an effort to address the long-standing and recognized need for standardized definitions for MCAEL data reporting purposes, an advisory team was formed with program managers representing a diverse group of providers in the network, including Rockville Seniors, Chinese Culture & Community Service Center, Literacy Council of Montgomery County, CASA, and Linkages to Learning. With Alex Galen, from Montgomery College serving as the facilitator and project manager, the advisory team convened several times to tackle defining and clarifying terms like registration, enrollment, attendance, and advancement, among others, used on MCAEL’s data forms. The result of several months of work was an agreement on needed changes to the forms to be utilized during the FY17 grant year and beyond. This will enable MCAEL’s data reporting and analysis to be more consistent through the years.
- 2015 Needs Assessment: In response to a request from the Montgomery County Council Education Committee, in the fall of 2015 MCAEL conducted an assessment of the need for adult English classes in the county. The objective of the Adult English Language Learner Needs Assessment was to provide a more detailed picture of current English language learning needs and the existing barriers to learning. CountyStat assisted MCAEL to map U.S. Census data on the Limited English Proficient (LEP) population in Montgomery County and overlay this with FY15 student demographic data from providers in the MCAEL coalition, as well as FY15 class sites. Summary findings of this assessment are:
  - There are over 130,000 adults in Montgomery County who are limited in their English proficiency (LEP) (2014, American Community Survey)
  - MCAEL coalition providers served approximately 15,000 adult English learners. (FY15 provider data, from MCAEL grantees, Montgomery College, Gilchrist Center, and Literacy Council tutoring program)
  - Overall, MCAEL providers are serving 8% of the total LEP population.
  - MCAEL providers are serving 11% of the Spanish speaking population who are LEP.
  - MCAEL providers are serving 2% of the speakers of Asian and Pacific Islander languages who are LEP.
  - In Gaithersburg, where Montgomery County and MCAEL invested additional resources in FY15, 10% of the LEP population is being served (as compared to 8% county-wide), yet still programs are turning away learners.
  - This mapping exercise confirmed that areas of high need (with high density of LEP individuals and fewer class sites) are upcounty and East County.
- MCAEL presented the findings of this needs assessment to the County Council Education Committee on December 6, 2015. An online interactive [Storymap](#) was later developed based on this presentation; this is available on the MCAEL website.

- Based on the needs assessment, MCAEL identified 3 funding priorities for the Request for Proposals for FY17 capacity-building grants -- programs that: 1) are located in Upcounty and/or East County; 2) expand offerings to broaden the learner base to better serve underserved populations; and/or 3) offer weekend classes. Grant applicants were urged to use the [Storymap](#) to learn more about the LEP population in their particular areas, and to support their proposals.
- MCAEL engaged a consultant to look at MCAEL class and student demographic data going back to FY12, to see what trends there have been over the last 5 years. This project will continue into FY17.

**5. Offer 10 meetings per year for the 50 active ESL providers (non-profit and for-profit, large and small, secular and faith-based) already in the Coalition and others as they are identified. These meetings are required for grantees/providers receiving funds from MCAEL. Meetings will offer all MCAEL grantees/providers the opportunity to share information; work collectively on issues facing the teaching and funding of ESL; leverage their combined resources for increased funding and more effective delivery of ESL services, as well as better purchasing power.**

- Hosted 9 daytime meetings/workshops and 12 evening/weekend workshops (11 open to all program staff and instructors, including 3 Action Research Projects and 1 workshop specific to an organization) in order to help instructors and providers to network, collaborate and share resources and research-based practices. MCAEL provided a total of 76 hours of comprehensive professional development.

#### Provider Workshop Topics included:

- Peer Review
- Mid-Year check-in
- RFP Provider Meeting
- Transition Strategies
- Data Use/Purpose
- Outcome Definitions
- Annual Meeting – This was the second time MCAEL brought provider representatives together with MCAEL board members to discuss priorities, opportunities and challenges.
- Grantee Retreat

#### Instructor Workshop Topics included:

##### *Fall Workshops*

- ✎ Grant Informational Workshop (Briggs Center for Faith and Action - administrators and instructors)
- ✎ More Learning, Less Teaching (Sept)
- ✎ Implementing MCAEL’s ESOL Toolkit for Successful Job Seekers
- ✎ Ready, Set, Aim: Setting Goals and Objectives that Work
- ✎ Implementing MCAEL’s Technology Toolkit
- ✎ Gift of Gab or Teaching Curse? Strategies for Reducing Teacher Talk Time in the ESL Classroom

##### *Spring Workshops*

- ✎ More Learning, Less Teaching (Jan)
- ✎ More Learning, Less Teaching (Catholic Charities)
- ✎ Combining Textbooks and Lesson Plans: The Nuts and Bolts
- ✎ Learning Together: Making the Most Out of Pairs and Groups
- ✎ Differentiated Instruction: Strategies for Adult Learners
- ✎ Closing and Evaluating Lesson Plans

#### Professional Development:

- a. Through these workshops and meetings, MCAEL served/connected 256 unique individuals an increase of 56 from FY15 (staff and instructors) within 60 organizations an increase of 21 from FY15.
- b. Provider meetings/workshops scored 89% for “This meeting was helpful” and 88% for “I gained useful information from this meeting,” consistent with the past year.
- c. 53 staff/instructors attended a MCAEL workshop for the first time.

- d. Leveraged connections to course instructors including national and local teaching staff and experts from:
  - I. Montgomery College, University of Maryland(including UMBC), Prince George’s Community College, Anne Arundel Community College, Carlos Rosario International Public Charter School and Howard Community College in order to conduct relevant, timely and quality professional development. Workshops scored an **overall 92% rating for “I will use material from this training in the Adult ESOL classes I teach.” The average Workshop rating given by the participants: 91% (Outstanding/Very Good).**
- e. Held Provider Advisory Group meeting on September 3, 2015. This advisory group assists MCAEL staff with reviewing compiled data to determine how to best support programs in achieving quality programming and measurable outcomes utilizing research-based practices. In collaboration with the advisory group, priorities are set to work on for the upcoming semester.

**6. Provide information to the community and students seeking ESL and information resources through an electronically available Provider Directory listing ESL Providers in Montgomery County and their services, available on MCAEL's website. This website must also contain MCAEL's grant Requests for Proposals (RFPs) and links to other adult ESOL resources, such as advocacy, training, and other professional development and capacity building resources.**

- MCAEL printed and distributed 10,000 copies of the Provider Directory. Directories reached at least 154 organizations directly and another 250 *via* 15+ events in the County. Directories were distributed across the County through ESOL providers, other nonprofit organizations, businesses and MCAEL’s community mailing list. Print directories continue to assist individuals with finding initial classes and transitioning to other programs.
- Continued to update website and shared over 50+ news, jobs and data postings to the website. From July 2015 - June 2016, 8,235 individuals visited the MCAEL website (57.4% new visitors & 42.6 % returning visitors). The total users show an increase of 2.16%. The “directory”, “homepage”, “find a job/volunteer” and the “training & events” pages continue to be the most visited. Followed up by the grants page.
- Served as a “hotline” for ESOL questions in the Montgomery County. Answered calls/emails from individuals interested in literacy services for themselves or acquaintances as well as calls from volunteers interested in the field of ESOL (avg. 3 per week). Additionally, continued to connect individuals to services through partnerships with the PTAs, employers, and other civic organizations.
- Published comprehensive brochure of upcoming MCAEL Professional Development events.
- Supported providers with access to annual information/data to use in their fundraising grants. Created dashboards for MCAEL and providers to utilize for advocacy and fundraising purposes.

**1. Additional programs and support services offered through funding leveraged by MCAEL:**

- Thanks to the generosity of the Montgomery College Foundation, MCAEL granted TED Awards totalling \$4,875 providing 11 instructors with financial assistance to continue their professional development at the Montgomery College TESOL Training Institute. Additionally, with \$1,030 granted from MCAEL’s Dr. Deborah Bhattacharya Professional Development Award, 4 ESOL professionals (instructors, administrators, and program staff) received financial assistance to attend local, national, and international professional development conferences (i.e., MAACCE, ProLiteracy, and TESOL International).
- MCAEL continues to populate its in-house library with ESOL books which are donated by instructors/organizations and the publishers. The library enables instructors and providers to access books and other multimedia materials that can be used in their classes. MCAEL is also building an online library for instructors and provider staff.

## 2. MCAEL's adherence to general nonprofit best practice activities:

- MCAEL provided board orientation to 1 new board member
- Continued implementation of MCAEL's Strategic Plan 2015-2017
- Organized the third annual "MCAEL Grown-Up Spelling Bee for Literacy" which took place on April 20, 2016. This annual fundraising event, now in its 3rd year, has grown exponentially in its success. Corporate sponsorships increased, as did individual sponsors, and total attendance approached 300 people.
- Completed annual audit and was provided with an unqualified opinion by Saggar and Rosenberg, P.C.
- Financials: MCAEL continues to build on a solid foundation of board governance and over this past year enhanced the financial reporting to the Board to include budget comparisons to the past 2 fiscal years, as well as monthly reports that show actuals v. budget to date in additional detail. MCAEL started researching the possibility of establishing a line of credit for the organization and will be finalizing related policies.
- Continued website maintenance and design for maximum functionality. Created a monthly newsletter schedule for organization, provider and community updates in addition to instructor and learner highlights.
- MCAEL continues to leverage additional foundation grant funds through The Morris and Gwendolyn Cafritz Foundation, the Clifford and Deborah White Family Foundation, and the Montgomery College Foundation.
- In FY16, MCAEL has also been leveraging funds through an increasing base of individual donors. A generous former board member launched a matching gift campaign in late 2015, which resulted in a 25% increase in individual dollars raised. 100% of the board donated to MCAEL in 2015.
- Continued to improve donor database: Salesforce for nonprofits. Integrated iContact within database platform for improved tracking of communication with constituents.
- Executive Director, in collaboration with MCAEL staff and board, connected with several key people at the Montgomery County Government. Meetings conducted with County Executive Leggett and Special Assistant Chuck Short, individual County Council members, and presented to the Education Committee.

- ❖ EagleBank
- ❖ Saggar and Rosenberg, P.C.
- ❖ Comcast
- ❖ Holy Cross Health
- ❖ Social and Scientific Systems
- ❖ Lee Development Group
- ❖ Doris & Sanford Slavin Foundation

- ❖ Adventist Healthcare Inc.
- ❖ Montgomery College
- ❖ Lerch Early & Brewer
- ❖ Burness Communications
- ❖ Universities at Shady Grove
- ❖ PEPCO
- ❖ Eureka Facts
- ❖ Signal Federal Financial Credit Union